

دینی اداروں و جماعتوں کی ذمہ داریاں

Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib
Allāhābādī

Responsibilities Of Religious
**INSTITUTES
AND
ORGANIZATIONS**



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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*, Maktabah Dār al-Ma'ārif Allāhābād has the honour of publishing several works on the important subjects of Hadīth, biographies and rectification of beliefs, character and actions. These have been approved by scholars who attested to their benefit both verbally and in writing. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward them.

At present, my respected father has the honour of presenting to you the fruits of his tireless efforts in the form of *Responsibilities of Religious Institutes And Organizations*. This work is the need of the time because just as certain evils have pervaded society in general, certain evils and wrongs have become common in the circles of education, training, rectification, instruction and propagation. These require concern and attention. Realization of this responsibility was felt by my respected father in a very painful manner. He therefore compiled the views and useful thoughts of the famous thinkers and opinion-makers of the past and present in a systemized way. Allāh willing, this book will prove equally beneficial to teachers, students, shaykhs, murīds, inviters, propagators, writers, compilers – in fact, for a vast majority of the Muslim nation.

All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*, Hadhrat Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad Rābī' Hasanī Sāhib – the Nāzīm of Nadwatul 'Ulamā' Lucknow – Hadhrat Maulānā Burhānuddīn Sambhalī Sāhib – the Shaykh at-Tafsīr at Nadwatul 'Ulamā' Lucknow – and Hadhrat Maulānā Muḥammad Hanīf Sāhib noted their views about this book. These are certainly causes of honour and esteem for us. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward them with the best of rewards.

May Allāh *ta'ālā* enable us – the members of the Maktabah – to carry out and complete our responsibilities in an excellent manner. Āmīn.

Muḥammad 'Abdullāh Qamar az-Zamān Qāsimī.

REASON FOR THIS PUBLICATION

Allāh *ta'ālā* blessed our Shaykh Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib Allāhābādī *dāmat barakātuhum* with a special pain for the rectification of the Muslim nation which is perceived by every person who remains in his company. Every moment is spent in worrying about how every member of the Muslim nation can come onto the path of success, victory and accomplishment.

I had the honour of meeting Hadrat when I went to Allāhābād on the first of Ramaḍān 1429 A.H. I noticed that he was extremely concerned about the Madāris. Why should this not be the case!? After all, the Sufi masters and the Ahlullāh are concerned about every level of society – the lowest and the highest.

The Madāris are the foundations and forts of our Dīn. Their internal and external progress is considered to be the progress of Islam and Muslims. The Caliph, Hārūn ar-Rashīd, said to Hadrat Junayd Baghdādī *rahimahullāh* with reference to his army:

هؤلاء جنود الإسلام

These are the soldiers of Islam.

Hadrat Junayd *rahimahullāh* replied by referring to his students and 'ulamā' and saying:

هؤلاء جنود القرآن

These are the soldiers of the Qur'ān.

In other words, if these soldiers comprise the army of Islam, our students and 'ulamā' comprise the army of the Qur'ān.

The students, teachers, lecturers and 'ulamā' of the Madāris are undoubtedly the protectors of Dīn. If even

a slight defect creeps into them, it will result in a major loss to the Muslim community. This is why our Hadrat [Maulānā Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib] was very much affected by this. He wanted the article, *The Causes Behind The Ineffectiveness of Our Madāris* – written by Hadrat Maulānā Mujibullāh Nadwī *rahimahullāh* in a very rectifiational tone – to be published as quickly as possible and distributed among the students, teachers and ‘ulamā’ of the Madāris. In this way, the students and even the teachers may learn of their shortcomings and try to rectify themselves.

Bearing in mind this concern of our Hadrat, we take the honour of publishing and printing this article. We pray to Allāh *ta’ālā* to make it useful to us and a source of our rectification. Āmīn.

All thanks are due to Allāh *ta’ālā* for having enabled Maulwī ‘Ubaydullāh Qamar az-Zamān Nadwī and Maulwī Fīrauz ‘Ālam Qāsimī to do the proofreading and typesetting. Maulwī ‘Abdullāh Qamar az-Zamān Qāsimī made arrangements for its publication and printing. May Allāh *ta’ālā* reward them all with the best of rewards.

Finally I advise myself and then request all students and teachers of Islamic sciences to continually study these most beneficial articles based on the Qur’ān and Sunnah. The administrators of the Madāris should occasionally assemble the students and teachers and read portions of this book to them. Allāh willing, this will produce righteous results.

Sher Muḥammad Mukrānī

Servant of Hadīth at Dār al-‘Ulūm Zakarīyyāh, Jaugwār
Presently at the Khānqāh, Dār al-Ma’ārif al-Islāmiyyah,
Allāhābād

AS A SOURCE OF BLESSING

I commence in the name of Allāh who is Most Beneficent, All Merciful.

By the oath of the sun and its rising brightness.

By the moon when it appears after the sun.

By the day when it brightens it.

By the night when it covers it.

By the sky and as He created it.

By the earth and as He spread it.

By the soul and as He proportioned it.

He then inspired it with the understanding of evil and righteousness.

He who purified it has indeed achieved his goal.

He who leaves it buried in the dust has indeed failed.

The Thamūd rejected out of their insolence.

When the most wretched of them rushed forward.

The Messenger of Allāh then said to them: "Beware of the she-camel of Allāh and its turn to drink water!"

They rejected him and hamstrung it. Their Sustainer then destroyed them because of their sins and razed them all.

He does not fear the consequences.

The entire Sūrah ash-Shams is presented as a source of blessing and goodness. After taking seven oaths, Allāh *ta'ālā* makes mention of the successfulness of purification [of the self] and failure for casting purification aside. He makes mention of a polytheist to serve as an admonition. May Allāh *ta'ālā* inspire us towards purification of the self and enable us to succeed in it. Āmīn.

SUPPLICATORY WORDS

Respected Ustādh Maulānā Muftī Muḥammad Hanīf
Sāhib¹ *dāma majduhum*

(Khalīfah of Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

I am aware of the activities and movements of the compiler of this book, Maulānā Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib. I had the opportunity of living with him for a long time and observing him from close quarters. All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*, the Maulānā is fully devoted to Dīn and is pained by the deviation of the Muslims. He conveys Dīn with all his heart and soul, and holds on dearly to love of Dīn. Based on his painful love for Dīn and importance which he attaches to it, he endeavours to rectify the Muslims whenever they get onto the wrong path. May Allāh *ta'ālā* – through His kindness – accept this work and inspire Muslims to practise totally on its teachings. Āmīn.

I pray that Allāh *ta'ālā* enables the Muslims to practise. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone.

¹ By the will of Allāh, Hadrat Maulānā is presently 105 years old. He was still very young when he presented himself to Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *rahimahullāh* for the sake of reformation and rectification. After spending some time with him, he proceeded to Madrasah Diyā' al-'Ulūm, Manī Kalā, where he studied until the pen-ultimate year of the 'ālim course. He then came to study Daurah Hadīth under Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *rahimahullāh* in about 1954 at the Khānqāh in Fataḥ Pūr Tālnarjā, district Mau. He remained with Hadrat in Gaurakhpūr and Allāhābād. In fact, even after Hadrat's demise, he remained as a teacher for a few years at Waṣīyyatul 'Ulūm, Allāhābād. He then proceeded to Madrasah Riyād al-'Ulūm, Gaurīnī. (Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī)

Was salām
Muḥammad Hanīf Jaunpūrī
28 Ṣafar 1435 A.H.

INTRODUCTION

Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Rābi' Ḥasanī Nadwī
dāmat barakātuhum

(Nāzīm of Dār al-'Ulūm Nadwatul 'Ulamā', Lucknow)

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلوة والسلام على سيد المرسلين خاتم النبيين سيدنا محمد
وعلى آله وصحبه الغر الميامين، ومن تبعهم بإحسان إلى يوم الدين، ودعا بدعوتهم
أجمعين. أما بعد:

Allāh *ta'ālā* perfected His religion of Islam with His Final Messenger, Hadrat Muḥammad ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. He also willed for its continuation and its preservation from changes. Allāh *ta'ālā* makes worldly means the means for the execution of His decisions. These means are not the actual causes. The actual cause is the One who wills for their execution. However, Allāh *ta'ālā* has concealed this in order to test man and see whether he considers Allāh *ta'ālā* to be the original cause in all matters or whether he considers the means to be the causes.

When Allāh *ta'ālā* willed for the preservation of His Book, the Qur'ān – and through it, His Dīn – He made human efforts the means for it. Subsequently, we find hundreds and thousands of people memorizing it. This system has been continuing from the very beginning and continues to this day. Since the biography of Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam and all the injunctions of the Sharī'ah are linked to the Qur'ān, the preservation of the Qur'ān entails preservation of the entire Dīn. These are in accordance with Allāh's decisions and a divine system so that Dīn remains and no changes whatsoever take place in it.

Allāh *ta'ālā* had not promised the same as regards religious affairs for religions before Islam. Rather it was left to the adherents of the respective religions. This

resulted in changes and alterations. The religion of Islam is preserved from them. However, preservation of Islam does not mean that every single Muslim will practise on every single injunction of Islam. The Sharī'ah made arrangements for the system of enjoining good and prohibiting evil for those who practise on the Sharī'ah so that they will be constantly addressed and their rectification will continue. All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*, Islamic history went through various phases wherein the duty of rectification was undertaken with full fervour and earnestness at times, and on a smaller scale at other times. This system continues to this day.

This sub-continent [India and Pakistan] had several great personalities in the last 40-50 years who fulfilled the duties of rectification and instruction. Their influence spread far and wide on a large scale. We find the contribution of Hakīm al-Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* to be most phenomenal. His associates and deputies carried on with his work most successfully. From among them, the work and contribution of Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib Fataḥpūri *rahimahullāh* was most effective in Allāhābād. His associates are now carrying on with his work. From among them, the efforts of Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib Allāhābādī are most glaring and extremely effective. The work of rectification and instruction which Hadrat Maulānā acquired from his elders is not restricted to that area of U. P. Rather, it has spread as far as Gujarat. Together with imparting religious sciences, he is carrying out the work of rectification through the Khānqāh system.

Hadrat Maulānā is extremely pained by the retrogression and deviation of Muslims in their day to day lives, and observes that not only the masses, but

even the educated circles are being affected. After seeing the need for rectification in this regard, he penned some very impressive articles and included quotations from other reformers as well. This has resulted in a most beneficial book.

The retrogression in Muslim society and the influx of various evils among them have caused the smallest work of rectification to become extremely important. This responsibility rests on Allāh's righteous servants and the scholars. The Muslim masses are distancing themselves from injunctions of the Sharī'ah. Various types of incorrect customs and innovations are becoming common among them. These are causes of Allāh's wrath. What is most unfortunate is that certain evils are becoming common in Islamic educational circles. This requires a lot of concern and attention. Our erudite 'ulamā' are perceiving this. Acting under this realization, Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib has perceived certain ills among the administrators of Madāris and those working in the field of rectification. He therefore prepared a book in which he draws our attention to the immorality and decadence which have crept into Muslim society. In so doing, he has compiled a most impressive and beneficial compilation on rectification and instruction. Apart from his own words, he quotes important articles and statements of spiritual masters and scholars of India. The first of these is written by Hadrat Maulānā Mujībullāh Nadwī *rahimahullāh* who had been the founder and patron of Jāmi'ah ar-Rashād, A'zam Garh. Together with quoting the perceptions and feelings of the 'ulamā', Hadrat Maulānā [Qamar az-Zamān] draws our attention to essential points of rectification in a most impressive manner and presents them in detail. This is a very important contribution from him in the field of rectification.

It is essential that this book - *Responsibilities of Religious Institutes And Organizations* – be studied in all Madāris and among all scholars who have religious sentiments. Since Allāh *ta'ālā* – solely out of His grace – enables people to emulate the words of His righteous servants, there is hope that – Allāh willing – as many people as possible will benefit from this book.

We express our heartfelt gratitude to Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib for this work and hope that it will be of tremendous benefit. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone.

Muhammad Rābi' Hasanī
Nadwatul 'Ulamā', Lucknow

FOREWORD

Hadrat Maulānā Burhān ad-Dīn Sāhib Sambhalī
dāmat barakātuhum
(Shaykh at-Tafsīr, Dār al-'Ulūm Nadwatul 'Ulamā',
Lucknow)

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلوة والسلام على رسوله الأمين، سيدنا محمد وآله
وأصحابه أجمعين.

From among the countless favours of Allāh *ta'ālā* on the Muslim nation is that reformers and well-wishers are periodically born among the Muslims (Allāh willing, this will continue). The efforts, courage and blessings of these reformers and special servants of Allāh *ta'ālā* have enabled this nation to remain on the straight path and will remain so (Allāh willing). From among these Allāh-fearing reformers is a distinguished scholar and pious elder of our era, Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib Allāhābādī – *may Allāh ta'ālā enable us to benefit from him for a long time and may his blessings spread far and wide*. He had the honour of benefiting from the company of Muṣliḥul Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib Fatahpūrī rahimahullāh and Baqīyyatus Salaf Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Muḥammad Aḥmad Sāhib Partāb Garhī rahimahullāh. Moreover, he has been occupied for about half a century in the fields of spiritual instruction, writing and compiling books. In other words, he has been carrying out the responsibilities of rectification and instruction via the pen and tongue. His influence is not restricted to Gujarat in India but also extends to different countries in Africa. The respected Maulānā produces written works periodically. Consequently, he has compiled and written about fifty books and booklets which are conveying considerable benefit to the community. May Allāh *ta'ālā* bless him in his life and teachings.

His teachings have gone beyond individuals and extended to religious centres and organizations. Just recently he produced a most beneficial and voluminous book titled *Responsibilities of Religious Institutes And Organizations*. It is a treasure house of facts and the essence of the worthy statements, pieces of advice and valuable exhortations of the elders of the past and latter generations. Every person, in fact every level of society – the masses, the elite, the ‘ulamā’, the post-graduate students, the literate and the illiterate – can make use of this book according to their capabilities. This book is like an “album” from which each person can derive benefit according to his ability. As for the true value and worth of this book, it can be gauged after an in-depth study of it.

I therefore request all those who are desirous of their rectification to inhale the beautiful fragrances of this beautiful garden and take benefit from its attractive flowers. I make a special request to them to certainly take benefit from the statements and teachings of Hadrat Hakimul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh*, Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, Hadrat Maulānā ‘Abd al-Bārī Sāhib Nadwī *rahimahullāh*, Hadrat Hakim al-Islām Maulānā Qārī Muḥammad Tayyib Sāhib Qāsimī *rahimahullāh* and Maulānā Mujibullāh Sāhib Nadwī *rahimahullāh*. This book is really a result of the erudite article written by the last named personality in this list. I will not be wrong if I say that this collection is actually a reflection of the valuable statements and actions of the senior reformers and thinkers of the Muslim nation of the last fourteen centuries commencing from the era of the Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum coming down to our present era.

I pray to Allāh *ta‘ālā* to accept this work, to make it accepted among people, and inspire the community to

benefit from it to the full. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward the great author in accordance with his high rank.

Was salām

Muḥammad Burhān ad-Dīn Sambhalī

Dār al-'Ulūm Nadwatul 'Ulamā', Lucknow

29 Safar 1435 A.H./2 January 2014

PRELUDE

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلوة والسلام على سيدنا ومولانا محمد خاتم النبيين، وعلى آله وأصحابه أجمعين، وعلى من تبعهم بإحسان إلى يوم الدين.

Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib quddisa sirruhu used to be restless about the reformation and rectification of the Muslim community. According to Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Anzar Sāhib rahimahullāh, Maulānā Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib rahimahullāh was a true manifestation of the statement of Allāh *ta'ālā*:

لَعَلَّكَ بَاخِعٌ نَفْسَكَ أَنْ لَا يُكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ

You may perhaps kill yourself over the fact that they do not believe.¹

He was constantly concerned and worried about the rectification of every individual and group of the Muslim community. This was observed by those who saw him, heard by those who attended his assemblies and read by those who read his writings and statements. This is why the 'ulamā' and Sufi masters conferred him with the title of Muṣliḥul Ummat (Rectifier of the Muslim Community) and this title became his distinguishing mark.

Hadrat Mufakkir-e-Islam Sayyid Abul Ḥasan 'Alī Nadwī rahimahullāh makes mention of this in his *Purāne Chirāgh*:

On seeing the Maulānā's restlessness and agitation, I spontaneously thought of Maulānā Muḥammad Ilyās Sāhib rahimahullāh. He had the same lean appearance, the same informality in speech,

¹ Sūrah ash-Shu'arā', 26: 3.

the same independence when addressing someone, the same stuttering in speech like that of Hadrat Mūsā *'alayhis salām*, the same predominance of *da'wah*, the same silence which is engrossed in thought, and the same quivering speech. Although there was a definite difference in them on the subject of *da'wah*, he was the same as Hadrat Maulānā Ilyās Sāhib *rahimahullāh* in his subject of love for Allāh *ta'ālā* and concern for his responsibilities. I had the opportunity of attending his morning and evening assemblies. There was a captivating feeling, while at the same time, an absolute balance between the intellect and *sulūk*. He would occasionally hold some of his devoted attendants by their heads and shake them, and direct their attention towards an important and necessary point.

Hadrat Hakīm al-Islām Qārī Muḥammad Tayyib Sāhib *rahimahullāh* writes in his assessment of *Khumkhānah Bāṭin* (the spiritual tavern):

Hadrat al-Hāj Shāh Maulānā Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib *dāmat barakātuhum* is an elegant flower from among the blooming flowers of the garden of Thāna Bhawan. All praise is due to Allāh, the land of India is perfumed with his fragrance. His rivers of knowledge, cognition and Sufism are flowing in the East and West, and hearts and minds are being irrigated from their waters.

From among the *khulafā'* of Hadrat Aqdas Maulānā Thānwī *quddisa sirruhu*, Hadrat is really an example of his shaykh and his methodology is exactly in line with his. Not only are his attendants and associates proud

of his achievements, but even his contemporaries, teachers and elders. When one gets close to him one feels as if he has reached Thāna Bhawan.

Similarly, Hadrat Maulānā ‘Abd al-Bārī Nadwī *rahimahullāh* applauded Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat’s rank in the fields of reformation and rectification in his phenomenal article, *Four Weeks In a Kahf (Cave)*.¹ He writes:

As for Hadrat Fataḥpūrī, I saw many excellent qualities collectively in Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Waṣiyyullāh Sāhib Fataḥpūrī Allāhābādī *rahimahullāh*, and it seemed as if the rare qualities of our mentor, A’lā Hadrat Hakīm al-Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Sāhib Thānwī *rahimahullāh* were now being presented right before our eyes.

These qualities are:

1.

لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ، إِنْ أَجْرِي إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ

I do not ask you for any wage. My wage is solely with Allāh.

This is the legacy of the Prophets ‘*alayhimus salām*.

¹ He remained in the Khānqāh of Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Waṣiyyullāh Sāhib in Fataḥ Pūr, Tāl Narjā, district Mau, U.P. for four weeks and penned his impressions in this article which was published in *Sidq Jadid*. This article is very beneficial and a real eye-opener. It is worth reading. (compiler)

During my entire one month stay here, and observing Hadrat in privacy and in public, I saw absolute internal reliance and total independence in serving Dīn and Allāh's creation. Let alone anyone having any monetary and influential pressure on him, there was not even a hint of such pressure. I searched for such pressure with my evil eyes but could not find it.

2. The necessary offshoot of the above is to teach and convey the injunctions of Dīn.

فَاصْدَعْ بِمَا تُؤْمَرُ

[O Muhammad] Pronounce openly what you have been commanded.

Rarely was an assembly of Hadrat devoid of this quality. Let alone any partiality, prejudice or flattery, it did not appear as if the countless seniors, juniors, 'ulamā', wealthy, masses and elite who frequented him experienced the slightest weight on their hearts.

3. As regards teaching, tutoring and training, he focussed more on practice than on knowledge. And in practising too, he emphasised actions of the heart. From the actions of the heart, he focussed on the essence of sincerity. Obviously, sincerity is the guarantor for the validity and correctness of all external and internal actions. Allāh's pleasure and displeasure, reward and punishment are all dependent on sincerity. The fact of the matter is that the absence, deficiency and defectiveness of this

quality results in the birth and proliferation of ostentation, hypocrisy, pride, desire for position, greed, covetousness, materialism, selfishness and all other moral and internal evils and ailments. In his system of training and instruction, Hadrat placed most emphasis on these evil traits – especially the illness of ostentation and hypocrisy, and provided treatments for it.

I have digressed from one point to another. What I was saying that in this “spiritual clinic” of Fataḥpūr, I saw special attention being given to the ailments of ostentation and hypocrisy. I cannot say anything about the condition of others, but when I looked at my own actions and deeds with these spectacles, I cannot describe the terrifying form which I saw. Muslims enjoy this special status that even their worldly engagements can be considered part of Dīn. But when these spectacles looked at my terrible condition, they found that works which are purely Dīnī works are very subtly attacked by the self and Satan. Allāh *ta’ālā* alone is the one who conceals [our sins] and He alone is the forgiver. If not,

When I prostrated on the ground, a voice from the ground called out: You rendered me impure by your ostentatious prostration.

I had never come across so much of focus on the destructive doctrinal and practical illnesses of hypocrisy and ostentation as I saw from the warnings issued by Maulānā Fataḥpūrī (may Allāh *ta’ālā* reward him). After all, there must be something about hypocrisy which caused the most senior

Sahābah *radiyallāhu 'anhum* to fear it so much.

4. The fourth point may appear to be incoherent but it had a lot of similarity with the Thānwī methodology. When any shortcomings were displayed as regards character and actions, Hadrat did not suffice with simple and superficial scolding and reprimanding. Rather, he was quite strict. In fact, his tone would change and he would be quite firm and stern. On the other hand, he was also very affectionate and merciful to the believers. He would display such affection and kindness that he himself would become restless at times. He would show concern and worry for the most personal of worries and illnesses through du'ā' and medical treatment, and guide the person in a manner which can only be hoped of from one's closest relatives and best of well-wishers. I myself experienced this affection and concern of his when I had a minor cold, and even when the worst of worries inundated me.

He then speaks about the general disregard of the madāris and institutes of rectification as regards individual and collective rectification and training. He says:

What I would like to say is that if the fundamental objective of Dīnī education and rectification is the creation of a Dīnī life in both the individuals and the ummah, then there is only one way to do it. In the light of Islamic teachings, instead of focusing on philosophical thinking, writing and oratory skills, there is a greater need for practical

rectification and reformation. In other words, the differentiation between the madāris and khānqāhs has to be wiped out, and it is essential to merge the two. If every Dīnī madrasah and institute is not a khānqāh at the same time, and its senior [principal] is not a shaykh and sālik, then the least the madrasah should do is to have a shaykh and mentor or a supervisor who would monitor the external and internal Dīnī ailments. This is incumbent. Sitting and remaining in the company of such a mentor should not be considered any less important than sitting for class lessons and lectures. Rather, it should be more. And the larger institutes [major dār al-‘ulūms] should never issue qualification certificates and chains of transmission as long as they are not satisfied with a student’s conformity of his actions with his knowledge. After all, according to the physician and reviver of this era [Ḥadrāt Thānwī *rahimahullāh*], the word “maulwī” strictly refers to an ‘ālim who practises on his knowledge. If the authorities were to issue a certificate without being satisfied with a student in this regard, it would amount to treachery and deception to the ummah. In fact, it is really those madāris and institutes which need such practising scholars.

The madrasah and khānqāh of Fatahpūr is actually a small unknown example of this combination. The most senior and erudite teacher of the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth is the very same most senior shaykh, mentor and discipliner. By the will of Allāh, the other teachers are also seekers treading the path

of Sufism. If students who are only interested in the external aspects of Dīn – in fact, if students who are only interested in worldly knowledge – were to be placed in such a place, how can they remain unaffected? How can they not embrace Islam and remain totally unmindful of their external and internal īmān and actions?!

The greatest attribute of the greatest “teacher of the Book” – Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* – was to teach the Book [Qur’ān] and wisdom together with purification. In fact, purification – that is purification of doctrines, actions, the heart and the external body – was given precedence over other things.

Unfortunately, madāris and khānqās of this nature are now merely in our imaginations. Hadrat Musliḥul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was very disturbed and affected when he read about the condition of the madāris and religious centres of Islamic Egypt as portrayed by Hadrat as-Sayyid ‘Alī Maḥfūz Miṣrī *rahimahullāh* in his well-known book, *al-Ibdā’ fī Maḍārr al-Ibtidā’*. Hadrat Musliḥul Ummat *rahimahullāh* quoted sections of this book and sent them to his honourable teacher, Hadrat ‘Allāmah Maulānā Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Balyāwī *rahimahullāh* who was the head lecturer at Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband. Hadrat Musliḥul Ummat *rahimahullāh* requested him to assemble the students of Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband and read the quotations to them. Allāh willing, they will prove beneficial to them. The quotations are as follows:

Disregard For Religious Matters

'Allāmah Sayyid 'Alī Mahfūz Miṣrī *rahimahullāh* writes:

(ومن البدع المذمومة) التهاون بأمور الدين حتى أصبح الوسط مختلا والمدرسة الاجتماعية اليوم تعلم النشأ فنون الفساد وضروب الضلال (ومن شبّ على شيء شاب عليه) فاستعصى الداء على المرشدين ولم يفلحوا في تقويم المعوج من أخلاق الأمة وتطهيرها من درن الرذائل حتى استولى عليهم اليأس من الإصلاح فاهملوا نصح الأمة وتعليمها أمر دينها وانضم إلى ذلك تلك البدعة المشؤمة. (بدعة حرية الأديان) فكانت من أكبر معاول الهدم لبناء هذا الدين الحنيف فساء الحال وصار كل إنسان يرى كل معقول جائزا لا أدب يمنعه ولا دين يردعه، وتمكن أعداء الذين من تضليل العامة بأغوائهم بكل ما يستهوي قلوب البسطاء فوضعوا لهم الشباك واحكموها والناس من كل حدب تنسل إليها وهم يعلمون أنها ما نصبت إلا لاغتيالهم ولكن عدم المبالاة بالدين جعلتهم كالأنعام بل هم أضل. ألا ترى طائفة المبشرين أحدثوا المستشفيات ودور التعليم وأحكموها فانهاالت عليها العامة وضعفاء الدين وهنالك الوبل. هنالك تدرس تعاليم الإنجيل على المرضى والتلاميذ الأحداث، فتصادف منهم قلوبا خالية من تعاليم الإسلام فتتهوى إلى وبال يدوم وضلال لا هداية بعده. كل هذا وخاسة المسلمين يجعلون أصابعهم في آذانهم حذر أن يسمعوا أنين الإسلام ويتعامون فلا يأخذون بحجز العامة وهم يتهافتون على ذلك تهافت الفراش على النار.

Among the despised innovations is the innovation of disregard in religious matters to the extent that the milieu has become spoilt and the social school is teaching the new generation various types of evils and varieties of deviation. (As stated in a Hadīth: A child who grows with a certain trait or habit will grow old with it). Consequently, the disease has become untreatable to the mentors and reformers, and they have failed in setting right the moral crookedness of the

Muslim nation and purifying it from the filth of base qualities. They have become despondent of rectification and therefore given up advising the community and teaching it matters related to religion. Add to it the wretched innovation of "freedom of religions" which is one of the biggest destroyers of the edifice of this pure religion. This has worsened the situation, resulting in every person considering every act to be permissible. Neither is any etiquette nor religiosity restraining and stopping him. The enemies of Islam are able to misguide the masses by deceiving them into doing anything which their naïve hearts desire. They placed strong traps for them towards which people are rushing from every direction. They know fully well that these traps have been set to capture them, but their disregard for Islam has reduced them to animals, if not worse. Do you not see how some Christian missionaries constructed hospitals and centres of education, and took full control of them. The masses and those weak in Islam have rushed headlong to them. This is the cause of the destruction. This is where the sick and young students are taught the Bible. These teachings then settle in hearts which are devoid of Islamic teachings – resulting in perpetual destruction and deviation after which there is no guidance. While all this is happening, the senior and elite Muslims are placing their fingers in their ears lest the cries and moaning of Islam were to fall in their ears. They are behaving like deaf people, and therefore not rescuing the masses who are falling headlong into the fire like moths.

وصفوة القول من أراد في هذا الزمن أن يستقيم على الطريق القويم يجد نفسه غريبا بين أهل الوقت لكثرة ما أحدثوا وما غلب على السنن الأصلية من البدع. وهذا الإبتداع قديم طال عليه الأمد حتى تأصل في نفوس الناس لا يعالجه إلا الأطباء الماهرون.

The gist of what has been said is that if anyone wants to remain firm on the straight path in our times, he will find himself a stranger among his contemporaries because of the many fabrications which they introduced and the innovations which overwhelmed the original Sunnah practices. This innovation is very old over which a long time has passed to the extent that it has embedded itself in the selves of people. It is only the expert physicians who can treat it.

فعن أبي الدرداء رضي الله عنه قال لو خرج رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ما عرف شيئا مما كان عليه هو وأصحابه إلا الصلوة. قال الأوزاعي فكيف لو كان اليوم. ونحن نقول لو خرج عليه الصلوة والسلام في زماننا هذا ما عرف شيئا حتى الصلوة.

Abū ad-Dardā' *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said: "If Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* were to come to you now, he will not recognize anything which he and his Companions had been practising except for *ṣalāh*." Al-Auzā'ī said: "What if he were to come now?" We say: "If Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* were to come in our time, he will not recognize a single thing; not even *ṣalāh*."

وعن أنس بن مالك رضي الله عنه قال: ما أعرف منكم ما كنت أعهد على عهد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم غير قولكم (لا إله إلا الله). قلنا بلى، يا أبا حمزة قال صليتم حتى تغرب الشمس أفكانت تلك صلوة رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم؟

Anas ibn Mālik *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said: From among the actions which were present during the era of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, I do not recognize any of them in you except for your saying *Lā Ilāhā Illallāh*." We asked: "Why not, O Abū Hamzah?" He replied: "You perform *ṣalāh* at the time of sunset. Is this how Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* used to perform his *ṣalāh*!"

فالسعيد من تحلى بحلمية السلف. ودواعي الفساد تجذبه من كل جانب، والله الهادي إلى سواء السبيل.^١

The fortunate one is the one who embellishes himself with the character of the pious predecessors while the invitations to corruption are attracting him from all sides. Allāh alone guides to the straight path.

(ومن البدع) السيئة العامة تهاون الخاصة من العلماء وطلاب العلم في أمر السنن والمندوبات كالصلوة أول الوقت، وحضور الجماعات من المساجد، والحرص على الصف الأول، وتسوية الصفوف، وأداء الرواتب، وصلاة الضحى، والخسوف، والكسوف، وكثيرا تقام الجماعات بين يدي طلاب العلم وهم عنها معرضون، ويصلون في آخر الوقت فرادى. وناهيك ما يكون منهم من التهويش على الجماعات بالمذكرة. وكثيرا ما يقع الخسوف والكسوف على مرأى ومسمع من العلماء ورجال الدين ولا يبدون أدنى اهتمام بأمر الصلوة والدعاء، لا جماعة ولا فرادى، كأنهم في أمن من هذه الإفزاز والمخاوف التي يخوف الله عباده، وكأنهم زعموا في أنفسهم أن لهم مكانة عند الله ومقاما رفيعا لا يؤثر فيه إهمال ما يأمر به الناس، ولم يعلموا أن إضاعة السنة من علائم إهمال الفريضة، وأن ترك السنن مدعاة للوقوع في البدعة، ففي الرسالة القشيرية عن بعض العارفين يقول لم يضيع أحد فريضة من الفرائض إلا ابتلاه الله بتضييع السنن ولم يبل أحد بتضييع السنن إلا أوشك أن يبتلى بالبدعة.^٢

Another widespread and evil innovation is the disregard by the elite 'ulamā' and students with respect to Sunnah and desirable acts such as performing *ṣalāh* at the beginning of its time, attending the congregation *ṣalāhs* in the masjid,

^١الإبداع في مضار الإبتداع، ص ١٦٢.

^٢الإبداع في مضار الإبتداع، ص ١٦٠.

enthusiasm for the first row in ṣalāh, straightening of the rows, performing the Sunnah and optional ṣalāhs before and after the compulsory ṣalāhs, and performing the ḍuḥā, khusūf and kusūf ṣalāhs. Very often the congregational ṣalāh will commence right in front of the students but they will turn away from it and perform it in its last time individually. Worse than this is when they engage in mutual discussions and disturb the congregation. Very often the ṣalāh for the lunar and solar eclipse will take place right before the ‘ulamā’ and people of religion but they will not pay the slightest attention to ṣalāh and prayer – neither in congregation nor individually. It is as though they are safe and secure from these calamities and terrors through which Allāh *ta’ālā* warns His servants. As though they are claiming that they enjoy a special and lofty position in Allāh’s sight on account of which they will not be affected by not doing what they order the people to do. They do not realize that discarding the Sunnah acts is a sign of giving up the obligatory acts, and that casting aside the Sunnah acts leads a person to falling into innovation. The *Risālah Qushayrīyyah* quotes the statement of a Sufi master who said: “When a person discards an obligatory duty, Allāh *ta’ālā* most certainly causes him to discard a Sunnah. When a person discards a Sunnah, he will soon fall into bid’ah.”

Reasons For The Ineffectiveness of Dīnī Madāris

The state and condition of Dīnī madāris and Islamic centres in India are not different from those in Egypt as described by Ḥadrat Sayyid ‘Alī Maḥfūz Miṣrī *rahimahullāh*. Ḥadrat Maulānā Muḥibullāh Nadwī *rahimahullāh* penned a very admonitory article titled *Reasons For The Ineffectiveness of Dīnī Madāris* which was published in his periodical, *ar-Rashād*, dated Jumādā al-Ūlā 1429 A.H. He writes:

At present there is a general complaint against the students and teachers of our Madāris that they are neither developing the capabilities and acumen of the past, their academic and practical blessings are not reaching the public, nor is any weight given to their opinions in common issues affecting the Muslim community. This is an undeniable fact. However, there are many reasons for it. I feel that the following are some of the reasons. If we endeavour in this regard, we could arrest the situation.

ما أريد بذكرها إلا الإصلاح ما استطعت

All that I desire from mentioning them is rectification as much as I can.

1. The present political and social era which has created a shallowness in the students who study in modern centres of learning has had an effect on the students of the Madāris. Instead of preparing themselves in a certain field, developing as much capability as possible and studying the knowledge of Dīn for 10-12 years, they are more enthusiastic about earning as quickly as possible through speeches, writings, attending functions and taking part in political rallies. The Arabic and Persian exams conducted by the Allāhābād Board are also influencing this shallowness to a large extent. Similarly, enthusiasm to practise a bit of Arabic writing and speaking with a view to going to the Arab countries has increased to such levels that it has taken the form of a tribulation. At least one thousand or two thousand students must be

qualifying from the Madāris of India every year, but you will find only one or two who distance themselves totally from material benefit, devote themselves to Dīnī knowledge, make service to Dīnī knowledge and its propagation their objectives, and sacrifice their entire lives in this path. The balance of them follow the same path as followed by the graduates of worldly centres of learning. In fact, not only many of them do not adhere to Islamic injunctions, rather respect for Dīnī values leaves their hearts.

2. Importance to dhikr and worship, sincerity and doing things solely for Allāh's sake and rectification of the self – all of which were collectively a distinguishing attribute of our Madāris is now, unfortunately, becoming a rarity. In fact, the consciousness to acquire this rarity is also disappearing gradually. We are extremely pained to see not only the students of Madāris but even their teachers not showing the enthusiasm which a modernist student has when he turns towards Dīn. Some students who leave their homes with a bit of enthusiasm lose even that much after coming into the Madrasah environment. This is the condition of external disregard. As for sincerity and devotion, these cannot even be seen. One cannot understand why and how this disregard and imperviousness crept into a place which has a religious environment by night and day.

Previously, if students perceived a defect in this regard, then after qualifying they would spend some time in the service of Sufi

masters and make efforts to acquire this treasure from them. Only after spending time with them would they occupy themselves in teaching Dīn or rendering some other Dīnī service. This is why their knowledge was beneficial, their propagation was effective, and every work of theirs would be a cause of blessings and goodness. It was the very same realization which caused Hadrat Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* to leave his post as head teacher at Madrasah Nizāmīyyah, adopt a life of a dervish and strive for many years. Only after all this did his pen produce a matchless book like *Ihyā' 'Ulūm ad-Dīn* which brought about a revolution in the lives of hundreds of thousands of people.

As a result of our inattention to this aspect, Allāh *ta'ālā* caused a decrease in the effects of our efforts and blessings. Even academic acumen has been taken away from us.

3. About 50-60 years ago, the administrators of the Madāris were by and large selfless pious people, and righteous and virtuous teachers. They all considered their responsibilities to be a Dīnī responsibility and therefore carried it out with absolute sincerity and devotion. Their hearts were pure from a quest for position, mutual malice, ostentation, class distinction and fanaticism. The administrators of the Madāris paid more attention to the monetary contributions of righteous wealthy people and sincere poor people than they did to the vast contributions of those affluent ones who were materialists. This resulted in blessings

in the contributions which they received and the general atmosphere was pure from show and ostentation.

However, the situation at present is that most of the Madāris have become targets of materialist businessmen, people of authority and politicians, and means for their honour and fame. Consequently, nepotism and partiality towards friends and relatives are becoming quite common. Students possessing astounding academic acumen are wasted away because of this nepotism, and unqualified people are given teaching positions. Consequently, the religious and moral life of the Madāris is gradually getting lost to materialistic and political values. There are a few exceptions.

Similarly, the legacy of the teachers had always been splendorous. The examples of sincerity, Allāh-consciousness, self-sacrifice and giving preference to others which they displayed can rarely be found in the religious history of the world. However, if these examples have not become extinct as yet, they are certainly becoming rare. Leave aside the examples of the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ‘anhum*, Tābi‘īn, Hadīth scholars, jurists and other past scholars, if we were to read the stories of sacrifice and devotion of many teachers in the recent past, we will be astonished.

The teachers who are presently working for salaries of 1 000-2 000 rupees monthly are also making immense sacrifices. But if only this sacrifice was accompanied by consciousness of one’s objective and a

vibrant awareness of the Hereafter. It would result in a new life for these Madāris. Unfortunately, most of their sacrifices are unconscious and unperceived. Consequently, it is neither having any effect on the environment of the Madāris nor creating any respect and honour in the hearts of the masses. Instead, their sacrifices are considered to be made out of compulsion and pressure. If the teachers were to carry out their responsibilities with the living perceptions of enthusiasm, zeal, asceticism and contentment, they would inject a new life into the students, and have a pleasant effect on the inside and outside environment of the Madāris.

4. The most important reason is that the administrators and supervisors do not have any lofty objective in their minds, the teachers do not strive to realize any lofty objective, and the very parents and guardians of the students do not have any blessed objective on account of which they send their children and wards to the Madāris. Instead, the Madāris have become businesses like other worldly businesses.

A businessman tries to make his business profitable without concern for what is lawful and what is not. Similarly, we have shifted the gaze of our Madāris from the True Provider and are trying to make them successful in the eyes of the contributors and donors. Efforts are made to make the Madāris successful in every way possible – whether lawful or unlawful.

A living example of this are the Madāris which participate in the Arabic and Persian exams of the Allāhābād Board. These Madāris provide fictitious accounts and call fictitious people to write the exams. The teachers allow them to copy with such insolence that even English educated people are seeking refuge from such practices. The students leave pieces of paper containing Qur'ānic verses and Ahādīth in the toilets. Neither do the students have any fear nor are the teachers discomfited by such practices. Instead, they aid the students. Consequently, the minds and brains of the students neither receive any enlightenment from their homes nor from their classes. In actual fact, the students of Madāris and those who are administrating them ought to identify lofty goals. This is essential in our present times and more so in India because after studying in a Madrasah, neither can one hope for a high position in society nor expect monetary and economic progress – except for the one whom Allāh *ta'ālā* wills.

In such a situation, the only thing which can save Madrasah students from the fear of financial distress, safeguard them against feelings of indignity in society, and keep them content with sufficient sustenance is to embed in their hearts and minds that their knowledge is not for material gains but for the Hereafter. This awareness must flow like blood in them that knowledge of Dīn is not for self-indulgence like other worldly people. Rather, they are acquiring this knowledge to convey the light of an Islamic life in their own minds and hearts, and to the minds and

hearts of others. They and their families are making physical sacrifices so that they can convey “spiritual sustenance” to the hearts and souls of Allāh’s creation.

If the administrators and teachers in the Madāris can develop a small spark of the sincerity, devotion, pain and focus of the pious predecessors, then – Allāh willing – a new life will be infused in the students. These forts of Dīn [Madāris] will then become the means of bringing about a revolution in the religious and social lives of Muslims, and rekindling the glorious history of our past. If just a tiny “feather” from the perfect example of our First Teacher *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* could fall on us, the Madāris will go through a complete transformation.¹

Hadrat ‘Allāmah Maulānā Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Sāhib Balyāwī *rahimahullāh* – the head lecturer at Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband – wrote the following letter to Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣiyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. The letter is quite long. The last portion of it is quoted here.

Respected Hadrat! You drew my attention towards the need for perfection and turned my focus to its importance. I too do not deny its need and importance. In fact, I consider perfection to be one of the important obligations of our time. Nowadays it is extremely difficult to find that level of perfection which was found in our pious predecessors. There are a few reasons for it:

(1) Weakness in angelic effects. The Sufis also include this among the effects.

¹ *Ar-Rashād*, Jumādā al-Ūlā 1429 A.H.

(2) Weakness and deficiency in human capabilities.

(3) A general economic backwardness.

(4) The rarity of the lawful in every station of life.

Another point of consideration is that Resurrection is certain and the removal of perfection [in people] is necessary for it so that Allāh's wrath can be vented on the universe. If perfection were to continue from one generation to the next, when will the removal of perfection which is one of the essential causes of Resurrection take place? Anyway, we have to strive for rectification and perfection as much as we can. In addition to the above-listed obstacles, there is one obstacle which has really imposed itself. I am referring to the germs of modern diplomacy.

We have to strive under these conditions. There are some students who have the ardent passion to preserve Islamic values. If we were to place just these students onto the path, I think a time will come when teachers and administrators will be compelled to change their ways. I will not display any type of shortcoming in my efforts to place the teachers on the right track. However, I do not find any like-minded person during these times of deviation. Under such conditions, I am in most need of your focus and attention.

Finally, I repeat my request to you to bear the discomforts of journeying so that you could address the students. I have many hopes in them but they cannot travel to

Allāhābād because of their dire circumstances. The teachers too may very well be influenced by your company.

I hope you are well. I am always in need of your lofty attention and righteous prayers.

Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Balyāwī
22 Dhū al-Hijjah 1383 A.H.

Note: After reading the warnings of these scholars – Maulānā Mujībullāh Sāhib Nadwī *rahimahullāh*, Hadrat ‘Allāmah Sayyid ‘Alī Maḥfūz Misrī *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat ‘Allāmah Maulānā Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Sāhib Balyāwī *rahimahullāh* – we are reminded to give more thought and concern to rectifying the shortcomings and deficiencies of our Madāris, friends and associates. It is also essential for us to present some pieces of advice and guidelines in the light of the Qur’ān, Sunnah and lives of the pious elders to those who are running these Madāris. This is so that the causes of the ineffectiveness which have enveloped our Madāris may be replaced by such effective causes and factors which would completely purify the causes of their ineffectiveness. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *ta’ālā*.

We will first present those predictions of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* with reference to the approach of the Resurrection which we are openly seeing among the masses and elite of the Muslim nation. In fact, this is resulting in our religious and academic centres succumbing to external and internal tribulations.

Before quoting the verses and Aḥādīth which make reference to these tribulations, I pray for those beloveds who assisted me in the compilation and arrangement of this book. For example, Maulānā Maqṣūd Aḥmad Sāhib, Maulwī Maḥbūb Aḥmad Qamar az-Zamān,

Maulānā Muḥammad Ḥusayn Aḥmad, Maulwī Kamāl al-Hudā, Maulwī Safiyyullāh Sufī Tarkesārī. They all assisted me in proof reading, translation and other tasks.

Maulwī Muḥammad ‘Ubaydullāh Qamar az-Zamān Nadwī and Maulwī Fīroze ‘Ālam Qāsimī put in a lot of work in correcting and typesetting the text. When there was a need to make changes, additions and subtractions to the text on several occasions, they did it with real enthusiasm.

May Allāh *ta’ālā* reward them with the best of rewards.

I am very much indebted to Maulānā Sher Muḥammad Sāhib Mukrānī for taking the responsibility of printing this important book with extreme courage. May Allāh *ta’ālā* reward him.

I now very respectfully and sincerely request the reader to cast aside all fanaticism, arrogance and self-conceit from his heart and mind, and to read this book with the spectacles of justice and equity. He must study and adopt – with an open mind and heart – the beneficial causes and etiquette which are presented in the light of the Qur’ān, Sunnah and lives of the pious predecessors. Allāh willing, this will be a cause for his own perfection and for the Muslim nation as well.

I request your prayer to Allāh *ta’ālā* for the acceptance of this insignificant service which was rendered and realized after extraordinary efforts and striving. May Allāh *ta’ālā* make it beneficial and effective, and a means for acquiring His pleasure. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *ta’ālā*.

Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābīdī
Dār al-Ma’ārif al-Islāmīyyah, Karīlī, Allāhābād
13 Rabī’ al-Awwal 1434 A.H./26 January 2013

As per our intention and resolution, we now take the honour of presenting Qur'ānic verses and Ahādīth on the subject of tribulations and other subjects.

PREFACE

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلوة والسلام على سيد المرسلين وخاتم النبيين، وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين، ومن تبعهم بإحسان ودعا بدعوتهم إلى يوم الدين.

An Age of Tribulations¹

The present era is undoubtedly an era of trials and tribulations. The tribulations too are of different hues and forms, different characteristics, bringing with them various types of results and consequences. Every moment brings a new tribulation and someone or the other is sowing dissension. There are external tribulations and internal ones, major ones and minor ones, they are befalling seniors and juniors, there are physical and monetary tribulations, and also creedal and spiritual ones. The economic and financial damage which these tribulations are causing are also posing dangers to our *īmān* and deeds. In fact, some of the tribulations are affecting our *īmān* and deeds directly.

The Wisdom Behind Ahādīth Which Describe Tribulations

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* went into a lot of detail on the subject of tribulations. The following are some of the reasons:

1. When some of the tribulations are known, we can make preparations to save ourselves from them.

¹ Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Yūsuf Sāhib Ludhyānwī *rahimahullāh* wrote a book on this subject which he titled *The Ḥadīth And Present Day Tribulations*. The book has been referenced and elucidated by Hadrat Maulānā Muftī Shu'aybullāh Khān Sāhib. It is a very scholarly and beneficial commentary. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward him. I consider it appropriate to quote the beginning portion of the introduction written by him because it contains several points and facts.

There are also those tribulations which are within man's choice. For example, one Hadīth states that there will be an increase in immorality and lewdness. These are obviously within man's choice. When something is within his choice, he has the ability to either do it or give it up. It cannot be that he has the ability to do it but not the ability to give it up and cast it aside. Knowledge of tribulations therefore becomes a means for him to protect himself from them.

2. Some tribulations are not within man's control. For example, the coming of Dajjāl. The reason for informing man about them is so that he becomes aware of their evil and it becomes easy for him to save himself from them. The coming of Dajjāl is obviously not within our control. Nor is it in our control to stop his coming. Yes, what man can do is make preparations to safeguard himself from the evil which will stem from that tribulation. This is why 'Allāmah Safārīnī *rahimahullāh* said that it is essential for every 'ālim to spread and proliferate the Ahādīth related to Dajjāl among children, men and women. This applies even more in our times where there is a deluge of tribulations and the paths of the Sunnah and Shari'ah have become obliterated.¹

What this means is that every member of the Muslim nation must be made aware of these tribulations so that he may seek ways of doing away with them and safeguarding himself from them. We have been taught that reciting the first three or ten verses of Sūrah al-Kahf is beneficial for protection against the evils and mischief of Dajjāl.²

الواع الأنبار: ١٠٦٢.

الترمذي ٢٨١١، مسلم ١٣٤٢.

3. There are some Ahādīth which specifically explain how we can protect ourselves from certain tribulations. An example was given above. This is another wisdom behind describing tribulations.

4. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam instructed us to stay far from certain tribulations. For example, he said that the Euphrates River will become dry and treasures of gold will become exposed in it. Do not take anything from there.¹

This tribulation could certainly not be prevented by the river not drying up or the gold not becoming exposed. However, it is possible and within man’s control not to take any of that gold.

5. Another reason for informing us about these tribulations is so that the ‘ulamā’ may continue warning the Muslim nation for the wellbeing of the Muslims, and continue striving for the rectification of their conditions. It is reported that Ḥaḍrat Hudhayfah radiyallāhu ‘anhu used to ask Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam about trials and tribulations while other Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum used to ask him about good things so that evil does not afflict them.

We learn from this that awareness of tribulations is a cause of their coming to the Muslims. Ḥaḍrat Hudhayfah radiyallāhu ‘anhu heard about them from Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam and conveyed them to us. After reading and hearing about them, we can now make preparations to safeguard ourselves against them.

6. The greatest reason for mentioning them is that they are from among the signs of the Resurrection. In this way, man will realize that the Resurrection is

البخاري ٦٥٨٦، مسلم ٥١٥٢.

drawing closer and closer. The more the tribulations, the stronger the indication of the closeness of the Resurrection. In this way, man will make preparations for the Resurrection and the Hereafter, he will develop a zeal for good deeds, and piety and obedience will be rekindled in his heart. 'Allāmah Ibn Hajar *rahimahullāh* explains this as follows:

الحكمة في تقدم الأشرطة إيقاظ الغافلين وحثهم على التوبة والإستعداد.¹

The wisdom behind the signs of the Resurrection coming first is that the heedless may be awakened, and they will be encouraged to repent and make preparations.

Thus, just as the appearance of signs is a cause of repentance, preparation and wakefulness, knowledge of the signs are also beneficial for these reasons.²

A Reply to a General Objection

In short, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* – out of his affection and kindness – apprised the Muslim nation of these tribulations. This explanation explains the objection which is generally made: When the arrival and appearance of these tribulations is certain and true, what is the benefit of informing us? How can we save ourselves from them?

All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā* the above explanation answers this question clearly, and the various wisdoms and reasons came to the fore.

Impudent Views Against Ahādīth Which Describe Tribulations

This also lays bear the error of those who ridicule and deride these tribulations when they are related to them. On hearing about the tribulation of Dajjāl, some people

افتح الباري: ٣٥٠١١١.

² *Hadīth Nabawī Aur Daur Hādīr Ke Fitne*, p. 20.

consider it to be rationally far-fetched and ridicule this reality. Similarly, they make audacious statements about other matters and express impudent views. It is extremely dangerous and hazardous to do this especially when these tribulations are proven from authentic Ahādīth. In such a case, ridiculing them and deriding them will entail ridiculing and deriding Ahādīth on whose basis the tribulations are accepted.¹

Admonition From Ahādīth Which Describe Tribulations

In short, there is a need to undertake a deep study of the Ahādīth which describe tribulations, try to put an end to those which are within our control, and make preparations to safeguard ourselves and others from those which are beyond our control. In all cases, we must be conscious of the Hereafter and hasten towards remorse, repentance, obedience, worship, abstinence, contentment, piety and purity. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone.²

I now present the article which was written by Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Yūsuf Sāhib *rahimahullāh* on the subject of current tribulations. It was published in the monthly *Ashraf al-Jarā'id*, dated February 2013. I am presenting it for the reader's information, and more for my own admonishment.

Tribulations And How to Gain Salvation From Them

Written by Hadrat Maulānā Yūsuf Binnaurī

If any deficiency comes in them (the 'ulamā'), then the destruction of the masses is inevitable. Similarly, if they discard their position; stay aloof from the duties of invitation, propagation, rectification and purification; and show no concern for the rectification of the Muslim

¹ Ibid. p. 21.

² Ibid. p. 23.

nation, the entire Muslim nation will be engulfed by corruption and evil deeds.

No matter what, the most serious tribulation for the Muslim nation is when its reformers become heedless of their responsibility. When this illness gradually retrogresses to the extent that 'ulamā' themselves become heedless of their own rectification and become prone to various [spiritual] ailments and tribulations, then a time comes on the Muslim nation when it reaches the brink of the most dangerous ailments. At such a time, the efforts of invitation, propagation and rectification are not expected to be fruitful. The blessed words of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* present the same scene as follows:

إذا رأيت هوى متبعا، وشحا مطاعا، وذنبا مؤثرة، وإعجاب كل ذي رأي برأيه¹.

When you see desires of the self being followed, greed of the self being obeyed, when preference is given to worldly motives, and every person disregards the opinion of everyone else...

When the matter reaches to such a level, a person must worry about his own self and put an end to his concern for the world. Alternatively, it could mean that the obligation of propagation falls off. It is another matter if someone displays great fortitude and still comes onto the field to render services despite such trying conditions. Anyway, when conditions are not so hopeless, one must never shift from the path of propagation and rectification.

The most serious catastrophe is that the tribulations which are raising their heads among the different reformational groups are extremely dangerous.

¹سنن أبي داؤد.

Although this is not the place for details, it is unavoidable to list a few points in this regard:

Focussing on Worldly Benefits

This tribulation is really flourishing nowadays. Whenever any Dīnī or academic service is rendered, the focus is on worldly benefits. The basis for this tribulation is hypocrisy. This is why many Dīnī and academic works are devoid of blessings.

Pleasing Everyone

No matter what is said, consideration is given to making everyone happy and not displeasing anyone. The basis for this tribulation is love for position.

Insisting on One's Own Views And Being Dogmatic

To consider one's own view to be correct, right, absolute and certain; while regarding the views of others to be unworthy of any consideration or regard. The person is convinced that his view is one hundred percent correct and true, while the views of others are one hundred percent wrong and false. This is the tribulation of being self-opinionated. Political parties are presently prone to this. One group cannot tolerate listening to what the other has to say nor will it give it the right to voice its opinion on the possibility that its view could be correct or that its objectives are the same as ours and that it is only the terminology which is different, or that there is merely a difference in expressing what is most important and what follows.

Evil Thoughts

Every person or every group assumes that every member of its group is sincere and his intentions are good, while all other groups which do not agree with it have ulterior motives, their intention is not correct, and they are actually based on ulterior motives. Conceit and pride are the causes of this disease.

Evil Understanding

When a person hears anything about his opponent, not only does he immediately express his aversion towards him but considers it obligatory to refute him in a detestable manner. A single statement of his opponent may have several meanings and explanations to it, yet he will select one that is derogatory and offensive. Have the following instructions been abrogated and cancelled:

إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ

Some suspicions amount to sin.¹

يَاكُمْ وَالظَّنَّ فَإِنَّ الظَّنَّ أَكْذَبُ الْحَدِيثِ

Beware of suspicion because some suspicion is the worst of lies.

Accusation

This includes belittling and deriding one's opponent, attributing unverified disgusting things to him, believing any point about the opponent which was conveyed to one without verifying it and then relating it in one's assemblies to entertain one's audience. Assuming one does not directly accuse him, to believe in unverified information is certainly against the following explicit text of the Qur'ān:

إِنْ جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوهُ

If there comes to you a sinner with any information, then verify it...²

¹ Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt, 49: 12.

² Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt, 49: 6.

The Zeal For Retribution

A person bears enmity, aversion or evil thoughts about another, but remains silent about it. However, no sooner he obtains a following or some authority, his silence disappears. As though this silence was not because of pardoning him and overlooking him, but due to his own inability, weakness and helplessness. He exacted his retribution the moment he got the strength, and mercy, kindness and pardon were all forgotten.

Love For Popularity

When any religious, academic or political work is done, a person wishes to obtain as much praises and appreciation as possible. This desire essentially stems from a dearth or absence of sincerity, and the desire for self-aggrandizement and ostentation. This illness has also crept into those who are doing genuinely good work. It is in effect a subtle form of polytheism. The weight of any religious or academic service increases in Allāh's sight only when it is accompanied by sincerity. This is the sole criterion for the acceptance of all deeds in Allāh's court. Newspapers, assemblies, processions and editorials are by and large links in this chain.

Oratory

This tribulation is becoming more and more common. Words are unlimited while actions are zero. There is an enthusiasm for words and speeches, while there is total disregard towards action and character.

لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ. كَبِيرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ

Why do you say what you do not do? It is most abhorrent in the sight of Allāh that you say what you do not do.¹

¹ Sūrah Saff, 61: 2-3.

A speaker delivers a lecture as if the pain of the entire world is in his heart, but when you look at his practical life, it is zero.

Propaganda

The parties which have come into existence – especially political parties – are completely immersed in false propaganda and relating inaccurate incidents. They are totally devoid of Dīn, morality, intellect and justice. They are merely imitating the ways of Europe. The newspapers, magazines, posters, radio and television are all manifestations of this.

Conspiratory Assemblies

If a few people agree on a certain point or they differ with a certain group, they will immediately form a party or assembly of their own. They will display a long list of aims and objectives, issue a statement in the newspapers for their own propaganda and publish their speeches to demonstrate that Islam and the country can only survive if they follow them. They will publish resolutions and statements with very attractive titles and flowery language. Division, disunity, dissension and factional fighting start in this way.

Zealous Partisanship

Everything done by one's party – no matter how wrong – is supported and defended. Criticising everything done by one's opposition is considered to be the most important obligation. Newspapers, magazines, photos, cartoons, cinema adverts, usury and gambling adverts, and other filthy articles of those who are claimants to Islam are published. However, since the person is a supporter of his party, he will overlook all this on the basis of his zealous partisanship and look at it with an appreciative eye. In short, the one who supports you is a genuine Muslim – irrespective of all his evils, while

the one who is your opposition – even his salāh and fasting are ridiculed.

Love For Wealth

A Hadīth states:

حُبُّ الدُّنْيَا رَأْسُ كُلِّ خَطِيئَةٍ

Love for this world is the root of all evil.

In reality, the common denominator in all tribulations is the love for position and wealth. Many people use the following verse as a proof for their love for this world and hankering after it.

رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً

O Allāh! Give us the good of this world.

Whereas it is obvious that it is one thing to be attached to this world and something else to acquire the necessities of life. We cannot deny the natural love a person has for wealth and comforts. However, when love for this world and love for wealth are so overwhelming that all the demands of the Sharī'ah of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam and Islam are disregarded totally, then this is certainly unacceptable. There is a need for balance and moderation. Let alone the masses, this tribulation is creeping into the elite as well.

A lengthy thesis is needed to shed light on all the above tribulations. May Allāh *ta'ālā* inspire us. We conclude these short references with a supplication which Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam made for love. The one who acquires his love and reaches the level of infatuation for his Sunnats will not be affected by these tribulations.

A Supplication For Immunity From Tribulations

اللَّهُمَّ ارْزُقْنِي حُبَّكَ وَحُبَّ مَنْ يُحِبُّكَ، وَحُبَّ عَمَلٍ يُقَرِّبُنِي إِلَيْكَ. اللَّهُمَّ ارْزُقْنِي مِمَّا أَحْبَبْتُ فَاجْعَلْهُ قُوَّةً فِيمَا تُحِبُّ. وَمَا زَوَيْتَ عَنِّي مِمَّا أَحْبَبْتُ، فَاجْعَلْهُ فَرَاغًا لِي فِيمَا تُحِبُّ. اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْ حُبَّكَ أَحَبَّ الْأَشْيَاءِ إِلَيَّ مِنْ نَفْسِي وَأَهْلِي وَمِنَ الْمَاءِ الْبَارِدِ.

O Allāh! I ask You for Your love, the love of the person who loves You, and the love of a deed which would draw me closer to Your love. O Allāh! Bestow me with what I love, and make it a source of help to me in fulfilling all that You love. And whatever You kept away from me of the things which I love [but were to my detriment), make them a source of freedom for me so that I may be able to fulfil all that You love. O Allāh! Make Your love more beloved to me than my self, my family, and more beloved than cold water [on a hot day].¹

Ahādīth on Tribulations

I now quote a few Ahādīth which predict certain tribulations towards the latter times. By having knowledge of these Ahādīth, we will – Allāh willing – be able to abstain from these tribulations and pray to Allāh *ta'ālā* to safeguard us against them.

﴿1﴾

عن زينب بنت جحش رضي الله عنها قالت: قيل (وفي رواية قلت): أنهلك وفيما الصالحون؟ قال: نعم، إذا كثرت الخبث.

Hadrat Zaynab bint Jahsh *radīyallāhu 'anhā* narrates that someone asked Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*: “Can we be destroyed even when righteous people are living

¹ *Ashraf al-Jarā'id*, February 2013, p. 18.

among us?” He replied: “Yes, when the filth [of sins] becomes excessive.”

We learn from this that when the righteous do not make efforts to remove evil, and there is a proliferation of sin and sinners, everyone will be seized by Allāh’s punishment. This is a major tribulation and calamity. A verse of the Qur’ān provides further testimony to it:

وَاتَّقُوا فِتْنَةً لَا تُصِيبَنَّ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْكُمْ خَاصَّةً وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ.

Continually guard yourselves against a sedition which will not afflict the wrongdoers among you alone. Know well that the punishment of Allāh is severe.¹

Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* explains the above verse as follows: “Just as it is obligatory on you to be concerned about your own rectification, it is obligatory on you to be concerned about the rectification of others through ‘enjoining good and forbidding evil’ physically, verbally – by remaining aloof or showing disapproval – and with the heart, which is the lowest level. If not, if you are going to treat them with gentleness, then when the punishment of Allāh befalls the evil-doers, it will – to a certain extent – befall those who were treating them with gentleness. If this is the case, you must guard yourself against a tribulation which will not befall them [the evil-doers] alone. (Rather, those who acted gently towards them will also be included in the punishment. The only way of saving yourself from this is to abstain from acting gently towards the evil-doers). Know well that Allāh *ta’ālā* is severe in punishment (fear His punishment and abstain from treating them with gentleness).”

In short, it is the duty of religious and righteous people to ensure that Dīn and righteousness prevail, and to

¹ Sūrah al-Anfāl, 8: 25.

strive for the vanquishing of irreligiousness and corruption. If they abandon this responsibility, and irreligiousness and corruption become predominant, everyone will be caught up in the punishment.¹

﴿2﴾

عن أبي سعيد الخدري رضي الله عنه عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: لتتبعن سنن من كان قبلكم شبرا بشبر وذراعا بذراع حتى لو دخلوا جحر ضب تبعتموهم. قلنا: يا رسول الله اليهود والنصارى. قال: فمن؟

Hadrat Abū Sa`īd al-Khudrī radiyallāhu 'anhu narrates that Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said: "You will most certainly imitate the ways of those before you at every step of the way. So much so that if they were to get into a lizard's hole, you will follow them." We asked: "O Rasūlullāh! Are you referring to the Jews and Christians?" He replied: "Then who else?"

Note: My respected brother, Maulānā Muḥammad Waliyullāh Nadwī ibn Mukarram Sufī 'Abd ar-Raḥmān, writes in his *Nubu'āt ar-Rasūl*:

تحقق النبوة هكذا وقع الأمر كما تنبأ به النبي الصادق صلى الله عليه وسلم حيث تتبعت أمته صلى الله عليه وسلم سنن الأمم السابقة واقتفت أثارها وحاكتها في عاداتها وتقاليدها عشرة وسلوكا. ولا تزال الحال على هذا المنوال إلى يومنا هذا حيث أعرضت الأمة المحمدية عن حضارتها الغنية الثمينة وعاداتها ورواسبها الرفيعة الممتازة وأقبلت نهم وإعجاب على حضارة غيرها من الأمم السابقة الحضارة المنهارة المستوردة التي سئم أهلها منها وأثبت عدم جدارتها ومسايرتها للحياة.

¹ *Hadīth Nabawī Aur Daur Hādīr Ke Fīṭne*, p.34.

² الحديث صحيح اتفق عليه الشيخان.

وطبقتها في جميع مرافق حياتها في سلوكها وملبسها ومأكلها ومسكنها وعشرتها بل في جميع مجالات حياتها. وصدق رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم حين قال: لو سلكوا جحر ضب لسلكتموه.¹

This Hadīth is considered to be authentic by Imām Bukhārī and Imām Muslim *rahimahumallāh*. Our condition is exactly as predicted by Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. His ummah has adopted the ways of past nations in such a way that their housing, eating, habits and mannerisms are emulated completely. The condition remains the same to this day. The ummah of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* has turned away from its rich and priceless civilization, and its lofty and distinguished ways and customs, and turned headlong to the civilization of past nations which they themselves are bored with, and whose unworthiness and inapplicability today have been proven. Its harms and disastrous consequences are openly seen, yet we are dying for that culture and those values in all aspects of life – ways, customs, clothing, food, shelter and social norms. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* relates this by saying that if they [Jews and Christians] were to enter a lizard's hole (due to their stupidity and immaturity), you too would do the same in emulation of them.

﴿3﴾

عن أنس بن مالك رضي الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: يأتي على الناس زمان الصابر فيهم على دينه كالقابض على الجمر.²

Hadrat Anas ibn Mālik *radiyallāhu 'anhū* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "There will come a

¹نبوءات الرسول، ص ٢٢٥.

²الحدیث بمجموع طرقه حسن. حسنه الترمذی فی جامعهه والسیوطی فی الجامع الصغیر، ج ٢، ص ٧٥٩ (ح ٩٩٨٨).

time when holding on firmly to Dīn will be like holding on to an ember.”

صدق رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ونحن نلمس مصداق هذا الحديث عيانا في زماننا هذا الذي كثر فيه العصيان وعم الكفران وأصبح الثبات على الدين شديدا على الإنسان.

يقول الإمام المناوي رحمه الله تعالى شبه المعقول بالمحسوس الصابر على أحكام الكتاب والسنة يقاسي بما يناله من الشدة والمشقة من أهل البدع والضلال مثل ما يقاسيه من يأخذ النار بيده ويقبض عليها بل ربما كان أشد، وهذا من معجزاته صلى الله عليه وسلم فإنه إخبار عن غيب وقد وقع.

ويقول المباركفوري: قال الطيبي: المعنى كما لا يقدر القابض على الجمر أن يصير لإحراق يده، وكذلك المتدين يومئذ لا يقدر على ثباته على دينه لغلبة العصاة والمعاصي وانتشار الفسق وضعف الإيمان.

وقال القاري: الظاهر أن معنى الحديث كما لا يمكن القبض على الجمرة إلا بصبر شديد وتحمل غلبة المشقة، كذلك في ذلك الزمان لا يتصور حفظ دينه ونور إيمانه إلا بصبر عظيم^١.

Rasūlullāh’s statement proved to be true. We openly see the manifestation of this Hadīth in our times wherein disobedience has increased, unbelief has become common, and it has become extremely difficult for a person to remain steadfast on Dīn.

Imām al-Munāwī says: Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* likened an intangible thing to something that is tangible. A person who adheres patiently to the injunctions of the Qur’ān and Sunnah has to face the same severity and hardship from

^١نبوءات الرسول، ص ٢٧٠.

the innovators and misguided ones as experienced by a person who takes a burning coal and holds it in his hand. In fact, he might have to face even more hardships and difficulties. This Hadīth is one of the miracles of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam because it predicts something of the unseen which has already occurred.

Maulānā Mubārakpūrī says that 'Allāmah Tībī raḥimāhullāh said: The meaning of this Hadīth is that just as a person cannot hold on to an ember for long because it is burning his hand, a religious person will not be able to remain firm on his religion on that day because of the overpowering influence of sins and sinners, the proliferation of immorality and the weakness of imān.

Mullā 'Alī Qārī raḥimāhullāh said: The obvious meaning of this Hadīth is that just as it is not possible to hold on to an ember unless one has extreme patience and the forbearance to endure hardship, similarly in that time the protection of one's Dīn and the light of one's imān will only be achievable through extreme patience and fortitude.

﴿4﴾

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: افتقرت اليهود على إحدى أو ثنتين وسبعين فرقة، وتفرقت النصارى على إحدى أو ثنتين وسبعين فرقة، وتفرق أمتي على ثلاث وسبعين فرقة.

Hadrat Abū Hurayrah radiyallāhu 'anhu narrates that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said: "The Jews became divided into 71 or 72 sects. The Christians became divided into 71 or 72 sects. My ummah will become divided into 73 sects."

Allāh *ta'ālā* prohibits the Muslims from emulating the Jews and Christians by becoming divided into factions. He says:

مُنِيبِينَ إِلَيْهِ، وَاتَّقُوهُ وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ. مِنَ الَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا دِينَهُمْ
وَكَانُوا شِعَابًا. وَكُلُّ حِزْبٍ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ فَرِحُونَ.

All turning to Him. Continue fearing Him, establish the ṣalāh and do not be of the polytheists who split up their religion and became sects, each sect delighting in what it has.¹

Commentary:

1. Hold on to the original Dīn while turning to it. If you do this solely for worldly motives, your Dīn will not be set right. Attention is then drawn to a few important principles of the natural Dīn, e.g. to continue fearing Allāh *ta'ālā*, establish ṣalāh, to keep away from obvious and subtle polytheism, to remain aloof from the polytheists, and to abstain from causing division in Dīn.

2. This means that people discarded the principles of the natural Dīn and thereby caused division in it. They became divided into many sects. Each one's beliefs were different and their creeds were divergent. Anyone who initiated a creed through evil and worship of desires got a group of followers and they became a sect within a short time. Thereafter, each sect is so overtaken and enraptured by its self-fabricated principles and beliefs – no matter how baseless these may be – that the possibility of their being wrong does not even cross their minds. (Tafsīr 'Uthmānī)

Tafsīr Mawāhib ar-Rahmān explains the above verse as follows:

¹ Sūrah ar-Rūm, 30: 31-32.

The Jews and Christians were divided into 72 sects each one believing itself to be on the truth and the others on falsehood. The translator says that Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* warned the Muslim nation – through revelation from Allāh *ta‘ālā* – that it too will follow in the footsteps of the Jews and Christians. The latter were divided into 72 sects while the Muslims will go further by becoming divided into 73 sects.

A narration of Hākim states that the Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum asked: “Which of these sects will be on the truth?” Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* replied: “Those who are on the belief system and creed on which I and my Sahābah are.” Another narration says that Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said: “You must continue following the main body of Muslims because those who separate themselves from the main body shall go into the Hell-fire.” The above verse also speaks out against those who break away from the main group. The main group refers to the era of the Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum. They were unanimously gathered around Dīn, even though they may have had certain differences in worldly matters. The first sect to break away from the Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum was the Khawārij. This is why the Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum referred to them by this title [which means, those who move away or shift away from the main group]. (*Mawāhib ar-Raḥmān*)

Note: Today the situation is even more strange. Leave alone parties and factions, the situation has deteriorated to the extent that each person establishes a creed in order to prove and demonstrate his own personality and individuality, and then wants to bring everyone under his wing. (Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān)

Bearing in mind the magnitude of this tribulation, Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh *rahimahullāh* used to repeatedly quote the following text to us from Hujjatullāh al-Bālighah, the *magnum opus* of Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Walī Allāh Sāhib Muḥaddith Dehlawī rahimahullāh. He used to read and explain it to us. In fact, he had also translated it but it could not be published.

إعلم أن الفتن على أقسام:

There are several types of tribulations:

(١) فتنة الرجل في نفسه: بأن يقسو قلبه فلا يجد حلاوة الطاعة ولا لذة المناجاة.

Man's tribulation with his own self in the sense that he becomes hard-hearted and therefore does not experience the sweetness of obedience nor the joy of supplication.

(٢) فتنة الرجل في أهله: وهي فساد تدبير المنزل وإليها الإرشاد في قوله صلى الله عليه وسلم: إن إبليس يضع عرشه...إلى أن قال...ثم يجيء أحدهم فيقول ما تركته حتى فرقت بينه وبين امرأته فيدنيه منه ويقول: نعم أنت.

Man's tribulations as regards his family. This refers to the destruction of family or domestic life. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* makes reference to it as follows: Satan places his throne on water and despatches his armies. The one who holds the closest position in his sight is the one who can cause the most corruption. One will come to him and say that he did such and such thing. Satan will say: "You did nothing." Another will come and say: "I stuck to a person until I caused friction between him and his wife." Satan brings him close and says: "You did an excellent job."

(٣) فتنة تموج كموج البحر: وفي فساد تدبير المدينة وطمع الناس في الخلافة من غير حق، وهو قوله صلى الله عليه وسلم: إن الشيطان قد يأس أن يعبد المصلون في جزيرة العرب، ولكن في التحريش بينهم.

A tribulation which strikes incessantly like waves of the ocean. This refers to the destruction of the system of government and people's unjustified greed for power. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* makes reference to this as follows: "Satan has given up hope in having worshippers in the Arabian Peninsular worshipping him. However, he is occupied in having them to fight among themselves."

(٤) وفتنة مليّة: وهي أن يموت الحواريون من أصحاب النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ويستند الأمر إلى غير أهله، فيتعمق رهبانهم وأخبارهم، ويتهاون ملوكهم وجهاهم، ولا يأمرن بمعروف ولا ينهون عن منكر، فيصير الزمان زمان الجاهلية، وهو قوله صلى الله عليه وسلم: ما من نبي إلا كان له حواريون. الحديث.

A creedal tribulation. It refers to the demise of the very special Companions of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and Dīnī matters being delegated to unqualified people. Their ascetics and scholars become too dogmatic while their rulers and masses become lazy. They neither enjoin good nor forbid evil. The era thus becomes an era of ignorance. Reference to this is made in the following statement of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*: "Every Prophet had a very special group of Companions..."

(٥) وفتنة مستطيرة: وهي تغير الناس من الإنسانية ومقتضاها: (أ) فأزكاهم وأزهدهم: إلى الإنسلاخ من مقتضيات الطبع رأساً دون إصلاحها، والتشبه بالمجردات والتحنن إليهم بوجه من الوجوه، ونحو ذلك. (ب) وعامتهم: إلى البهيمية الخالصة. (ج) ويكون ناس بين الفريقين: لا إلى هؤلاء وإلى هؤلاء.

A tribulation which afflicts from all sides. This refers to people changing from their humaneness and its demands. (a) The purest and most ascetic of them will be those who will creep away totally from the demands of their nature, but not their rectification; towards imitating them on mere outward things, inclining towards them in whatever way possible, and so on. (b) Their masses will lean towards pure bestiality. (c) There will be some who will be in-between both groups, neither of the first nor of the second.

(٦) وفتنة الوقائع الجوية المنذرة بإهلاك العالم كالطوفان العظيمة من الوباء والحسب والنار المنتشرة في الأقطار ونحو ذلك.

Atmospheric tribulations which will warn of the destruction of the world, e.g. major plagues, earthquakes, wild fires in different regions, and so on. (*Hujjatullāh al-Bālighah*)

Note: Even if you were to cast a cursory glance at the conditions in the world, you will realize that all these tribulations have already taken root. Unfortunately, we do not even perceive them, nor is there any concern to save ourselves and others from them.

Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh rahimahullāh used to say in this regard: “The tribulation of the heart is the source of all these tribulations. The other tribulations occur because of it. There has to be a fundamental concern for the rectification of the heart. If every member of the ummah shows concern in this regard and sets right his heart, the other tribulations will not even occur.”

This is why the Sufis not only encourage but emphasise the rectification of the heart. The corruption which we see throughout the world today is because of the tribulation of the heart. The situation is made worse when power and authority of governments

spread and proliferate these tribulations. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*.

I now quote a Hadīth from *Tirmidhī Sharīf* which demonstrates the appearance of punishments as consequences of certain evil deeds and vile mannerisms.

﴿5﴾

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: إذا اتخذ الفيء دُولًا، والأمانة مغنما، والزكوة مغرما، وتعلم لغير الدين، وأطاع الرجل امرأته وعق أمه، وأدنى صديقه وأقصى أباه، وظهرت الأصوات في المساجد، وساد القبيلة فاسقهم، وكان زعيم القوم أَرذَلهم، وأكرم الرجل مخافة شره، وظهرت القينات والمعازف، وشربت الخمر، ولعن آخر هذه الأمة أولها، فليرتقبوا عند ذلك ريحا حمراء، وزلزلة، وخسفا، ومسخا، وقذفا، وآيات تتابع كِنِظامِ بالٍ قُطِعَ سلكه فتتابع.¹

Hadrat Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: When booty is treated like personal wealth (i.e. the Islamic and public treasury which is normally for the inhabitants and deserving people, will be treated like personal wealth by the rulers and people of authority. They will spend it for their personal pleasures and comforts), trusts are used as booty, zakāh is considered to be a tax, knowledge will not be sought for the sake of Dīn (only for worldly purposes), when a man will obey his wife (instead of being the one in control, he will be controlled by her) and disobey his mother, when a man gets closer to his friend while distancing himself from his father, when voices will be raised in the masājid, flagrant sinners become leaders over tribes, the worst of people become leaders of nations, a man is respected out of fear for his

¹ سنن الترمذي، ج ٢، ص ٤٤.

mischief, when singing girls and musical instruments become common, alcohol and intoxicants are consumed openly, the latter people of this ummah curse the former peoples – then expect the arrival of a red hot wind, an earthquake, swallowing of the earth, deformation of people, the raining down of rocks, and the continuous falling of punishments one after the other like a thread of pearls which has broken and the pearls fall off one after the other.

﴿6﴾

عن علي كرم الله وجهه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يوشك أن يأتي على الناس زمان لا يبقى من الإسلام إلا اسمه، ولا يبقى من القرآن إلا رسمه، مساجدهم عامرة وهو خراب من الهدى، علماءهم شر من تحت أديم السماء، من عندهم تخرج الفتنة وفيهم تعود.

Hadrat 'Alī radiyallāhu 'anhu narrates that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said: There will soon come a time when Islam will remain only in name, only the words of the Qur'ān will remain, their masājid will be splendid but empty and devoid of guidance, their 'ulamā' will be the worst under the sky. Tribulation will emanate from them and return to them.

Islam Will Be In Name

Several things are listed as signs of Resurrection in this Hadīth.

1. The first to be mentioned is that a time will soon come when nothing of Islam except its name will remain. While explaining this, Mullā 'Alī Qārī rahimahullāh said: “In other words, none of the salient features of Islam will remain except those which remain in name, e.g. salāh, zakāh, hajj.”¹

¹ *Mirqāt*, vol. 1, p. 316.

What this means is that the word “Islam” and the name of Islam will remain. For example, from among the salient features of Islam, the names such as ṣalāh, zakāh and hajj will remain, but their reality and original purpose will not exist.

Today we find people heedless as regards the salient features of Islam. For example, there is a general disregard for ṣalāh. Those who perform it, do not perform it with its reality and essential nature (of sincerity, devotion to Allāh *ta’ālā*, humility, humbleness, fear of Allāh *ta’ālā*, expressing the greatness of Allāh *ta’ālā*). Instead, they carry it out superficially and consider themselves to be absolved. The same applies to other acts of worship and other salient features of Islam.

If this is the case with the fundamentals and salient features of Islam, those of lesser importance will be even more disregarded and discarded. In this way, the statement is true that Islam will remain in name while its essential and fundamental nature will not exist. This is clearly observed in our times.

The Qur’ān Will Remain In Words

The other point made is that only the letters and words of the Qur’ān will remain. Mullā ‘Alī Qārī *rahimahullāh* says: “This means that the sciences and etiquette of the Qur’ān will cease to exist. Only its external effect will remain, e.g. when it is merely read and written as a custom and habit, and not for the sake of acquiring knowledge and as a form of worship.”¹

This means that people will pay attention to the correct pronunciation of the letters and reading them in an excellent manner, but will pay no attention to pondering and reflecting over it, practising on its

¹ *Mirqāt*, vol. 1, p. 316.

injunctions and abstaining from its prohibitions. This too is openly seen nowadays. Some ‘ulamā’, qārīs and “religious” people have confined and restricted themselves to studying and teaching the Qur’ān, and worrying about the correct pronunciation of letters and reciting in a beautiful and melodious tone. They are totally heedless of and distant from the actual purpose and objective of all these efforts. The actual purpose is to acquire the sciences of the Qur’ān, ponder and reflect over its meanings, following its orders and abstaining from its prohibitions. Preference ought to have been given to these points first, while the previous points ought to be given second place.

Hadrat ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd *radiyallāhu ‘anhu*, Hadrat ‘Uthmān *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* and Hadrat Ubayy ibn Ka‘b *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* said: Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* used to teach the Ṣahābah *radiyallāhu ‘anhum* ten verses. He would not teach them more until they learn how to practise on these ten. They add: Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* used to teach us the Qur’ān and practising on it at one and the same time.

Hadrat Abū ‘Abd ar-Rahmān Aslamī *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* said: When we used to learn ten verses of the Qur’ān, we would not learn the next ten until we learnt what is lawful, unlawful, ordered and prohibited in the first ten.

Hadrat Ibn ‘Umar *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* continued studying Sūrah al-Baqarah for eight years. It took Hadrat ‘Umar *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* ten years to study Sūrah al-Baqarah. He slaughtered a camel when he completed this study. Hadrat ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* said: “It is difficult for us to memorize the words of the Qur’ān, but practising on it has been made easy for us. The latter generations will

find it easy to memorize the Qur’ān but difficult to practise on it.”¹

The Masājid Will Be Devoid of Guidance

The third point is that the masājid will be filled with external splendour and beauty, but devoid of guidance. Mullā ‘Alī Qārī *rahimahullāh* explains this as follows: “

“Lofty structures, embossed walls, illuminating chandeliers, laid out carpets, ignorant imāms and mu’adhdhins who will be paid from unlawful monies, and other evils will inhabit the masājid, while they [the masājid] will be devoid of guided people and those who direct towards guidance.”

Mullā ‘Alī Qārī *rahimahullāh* goes on: “There are two possibilities:

(1) The masājid will be empty of guidance because of an absence of those who direct towards guidance, who – through their instruction - benefit people in the different departments of Dīn and direct them towards the paths of goodness.

(2) The masājid will be deserted because of a presence of evil ‘ulamā’ who – because of their innovations and deviation - will lead the masses astray. In such a case, referring to them as guides is done by way of ridicule.²

In essence, the masājid will be deserted because evil ‘ulamā’ will lead the masses astray through their innovatory practices and acts of deviation. In this way, they will deprive the masses of guidance. This is what is meant by the masājid being empty of guidance. If we were to think about it, we find this happening in many places. Materialist-minded ‘ulamā’ and ‘ulamā’ who practise innovations have control of masājid. They

¹ *Tafsīr Qurṭubī*, vol. 1, p. 40.

² *Mirqāt*, vol. 1, p. 316 as in *at-Ta’līq as-Sabīh*, vol. 1, p. 168.

conceal the truth for their personal gains or because of their allegiance to innovatory practices, and they open the doors of falsehood to the masses. Consequently, the masses are going headlong towards polytheism, innovations, deviation and misguidance because of them.

Alternatively, the desertion of the masājīd or the absence of guidance in them will be as a result of an absence of genuine 'ulamā' to guide the masses in the correct manner. When there are no genuine 'ulamā', the ignoramuses will take control of the masājīd who will then spread incorrect and baseless teachings among the masses. In this way, the masājīd will be deserted and empty of guidance.

We see all these things happening nowadays. On one hand we find innovators having control of the masājīd and becoming the causes of deviation of the masses. On the other hand, we see genuine 'ulamā' being expelled from the masājīd and being stopped from expressing the truth. In this way, the masses are deprived of guidance, while misguidance is being proliferated. This is also the meaning of masājīd being deserted.

The Tribulation of Evil 'Ulamā'

The fourth point is that pseudo-'ulamā' will be the worst to inhabit earth. Tribulation will emanate from them and return to them.

The present point serves as an explanation of the previous point. In essence, the genuine 'ulamā' will be missing, while evil 'ulamā' will be spreading misguidance through their plotting and conniving. They will be the worst people of the time because instead of safeguarding and preserving the Dīn and the Sharī'ah, they will be corrupting them and making changes to them. Instead of taking people towards guidance, they

will be teaching them misguidance. Such people are obviously the worst of mankind.

From the above explanation we learn that evil 'ulamā' are the ones who apply to the Hadīth under discussion. They are the ones who spread deviation among the people. It is therefore not correct to apply it to the genuine 'ulamā' who teach the Dīn and Shari'ah to people. It is also incorrect to use this Hadīth as proof to speak out against 'ulamā' in general. This is not what is intended by this Hadīth. This is why the translator added the condition of "pseudo-'ulamā'".

The words "Tribulation will emanate from them and return to them" mean that these very same evil 'ulamā' will be the founders of tribulation. It is a well-known fact that:

فساد العالم فساد العالم

The corruption of a scholar is the cause of corruption of the world.

Thus, the corruption, tribulation and evil which spread in the world are essentially caused by the pseudo-'ulamā'. The tribulation will hover around them, they will be its epicentre, and its harms will afflict them. May Allāh *ta'ālā* protect the entire ummah from such evil 'ulamā'.¹

The founders of several deviated sects who led people astray by distorting Dīn or subjugating it to their intellects are these very same pseudo-'ulamā'. In actual fact, they are not 'ulamā'. Instead, they rise against the true 'ulamā' and against Dīn, call themselves 'ulamā', and try to win over the masses to their side by making big claims. When the true 'ulamā' expose their

¹ *Mirqāt*, vol. 1, p. 316 as in *at-Ta'līq as-Sabīh*, vol. 1, p. 168.

incorrect teachings and distortions, they [evil ‘ulamā’] deceive the masses by saying that these ‘ulamā’ only know how to issue fatwās of unbelief and flagrant sinning [kufr wa fisq] on people. They then speak out against the true ‘ulamā’ and cause the masses to have evil thoughts about them. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* makes mention of these pseudo-‘ulamā’ and warns us of their impure mischief.¹

The Muslim Ummah is Given Glad-Tidings of The Perfection of its Religion

Allāh *ta’ālā* says:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا.

Today I have perfected for you your religion in every way (in strength which caused the unbelievers to become despondent, and also as regards its rules and injunctions). (Through this perfection) I completed My favour on you (religious favour by perfecting the injunctions, worldly favour by giving you strength, and both these are included in perfection of Dīn). I approve of Islam as your Dīn (forever). (In other words, this Dīn will remain until the day of Resurrection. It will not be abrogated in favour of another religion. You should therefore be grateful for My favour by remaining steadfast on it).²

I have now perfected your Dīn for you. Everything with regard to the lawful, unlawful, compulsory, obligatory, noble character, beliefs, principles and regulations have been explained. I completed My favour on you by giving you a perfect Dīn after which you are not in need of any other religion and Sharī‘ah. I gave you authority

¹ *Ḥadīth Nabawī Aur Daur Ḥādīr Ke Fitne*, p. 94.

² Maulānā Muftī Muḥammad Shafī’ Sāhib ‘Uthmānī: *Ma’ārif al-Qur’ān*.

over the unbelievers. This means that this favour was conferred to you in two respects: (1) As regards power and authority by giving this religion superiority over all other religions:

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ

It is He who sent His Messenger with guidance and the true religion so that it may subdue all other religions.

And fulfilling the above promise. (2) As regards rules and injunctions, details about the lawful and unlawful, man's origins and destiny, his livelihood. Details in this regard are so complete and so perfect that whatever is going to take place in the future until the day of Resurrection, the rules and injunctions for it can be found in the light of this perfect Dīn (i.e. the Qur'ān and Sunnah). Alternatively we could say that completion of the favour refers to making wholesome and delicious things lawful, and making filthy and impure things unlawful. My favour to you was perfected in this way. It could also be said that the pillars of Dīn were completed by making hajj compulsory.¹

We now quote a few more details on this verse from *Ma'āriful Qur'ān* of Hadrat Maulānā Muftī Muḥammad Shafi' Sāhib rahimahullāh.

Allāh *ta'ālā* gives the glad tidings of three special favours to Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam and his ummah. (1) perfection of Dīn, (2) completion of His favour, (3) choosing the Shari'ah of Islam for this ummah.

¹ Maulānā Muḥammad Idrīs Sāhib Kāndhlawī: *Ma'ārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 2, p. 280.

Perfection of Dīn has been explained by Hadrat ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* and others as follows: All the limits, obligations, injunctions and etiquette of the true religion have been perfected today. Now there is no need for any addition to it nor any room for subtraction. This is why no new injunction was revealed after the revelation of this verse. The few verses which were revealed after it either contained themes of encouragement, warning, or emphasising the injunctions which had already been revealed.

This does not contradict the fact that the Mujtahid Imāms explain rulings to new issues and situations in the light of principles and Ijtihād. This is because just as the Qur’ān explained the limits and obligations of the injunctions of the Sharī’ah, it also delineated the principles of Ijtihād. The injunctions which are derived through them until the day of Resurrection are – in a sense – injunctions explained by the Qur’ān itself because they fall under the principles laid down by the Qur’ān.

In short, as per the explanation of Hadrat ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās *radiyallāhu ‘anhu*, the perfection of Dīn means that all the injunctions of Dīn have been perfected. There is neither a need for additions nor the possibility of subtractions through abrogation. After all, the coming down of revelation was to terminate immediately with the demise of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, and no Qur’ānic injunction can be abrogated with divine revelation. As for the outward additions to injunctions made by the jurists and Mujtahids in the light of the principles of Ijtihād, these are not additions in reality, rather elucidations and explanations of Qur’ānic injunctions.

Completion of favour refers to the rise and victory of Muslims, and the fall and defeat of their opponents. This was manifested with the Conquest of Makkah, the

wiping out of pre-Islamic customs, and the prohibition of polytheists performing hajj from that year.

At this point, it is worth reflecting on the use of the words in the Qur'ān. The word "perfection" is used with Dīn, and "completion" with favour, notwithstanding the fact that both appear to be synonyms.

However, there is a difference in their import as explained in *Mufradāt al-Qur'ān* by Imām Rāghib Iṣfahānī *rahimahullāh* as follows: "*Ikmāl* and *takmīl* (perfection) refers to the realization of the objective of a particular thing. The word *itmām* (completion) means there is no need for something else. Thus, *Ikmāl-e-Dīn* would mean that the purpose and objective of sending divine rules and injunctions have been fulfilled and realized today. *Itmām-e-Ni'mat* would mean that the Muslims are not in need of or dependent on anyone any longer. Allāh *ta'ālā* personally conferred them with victory, power and authority through which they can promulgate and disseminate the injunctions of the true Dīn.

Another noteworthy point is that "Dīn" is attributed to Muslims while "favour" is attributed to Allāh *ta'ālā*. The reason for this is that the predominance of Dīn is realized through the actions and deeds which are done by members of the ummah, while the completion of favour is undertaken directly by Allāh *ta'ālā*.¹

It becomes clear from the above explanation that the perfection of Dīn does not mean that the Dīn of the previous Prophets *'alayhimus salām* was imperfect or defective. The author of *al-Baḥr al-Muḥīt* quotes from Qafāl Marwazī *rahimahullāh* who said that the Dīn of every Prophet and Messenger was complete and perfect in relation to that time. In other words, the Shari'ah

¹ Ibn Qayyim: *Tafsīr Qayyim*.

and Dīn which Allāh *ta'ālā* sent to a Prophet in his time were complete and perfect in relation to that time and those people. However, Allāh *ta'ālā* had it in His knowledge from before that the Dīn which is perfect for that time and people will not be perfect for the next generation. Rather, it will be abrogated and a new Shari'ah will be promulgated.

On the other hand, the Shari'ah of Islam – which came down at the very end – is complete and perfect in every respect. It is neither restricted to a particular era nor to a specific region. Rather, it is complete and perfect for every era, region and people until the day of Resurrection.

The third favour which is mentioned in this verse is that Allāh *ta'ālā* selected the religion of Islam for this ummah - a religion which is complete and perfect in every sense, and on which salvation is dependent.

In short, this verse states that the religion of Islam is a great favour which was conferred to this ummah. This is the religion which is perfect and complete in every sense. No religion will come after it, nor will any additions and subtractions be made to it.

This is why when this verse was revealed, Hadrat 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* began crying while the other Muslims in general were rejoicing. When Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam asked him the reason for his crying, he replied: "I infer from this verse that your stay in this world is going to end soon because once the Dīn has been perfected, the need for sending a Messenger has been fulfilled." Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam affirmed what he said.¹

¹ *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr, al-Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ* and other commentaries.

This was proven true when Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* departed from this world just 81 days after the revelation of this verse.¹

I now take the honour of quoting the explanation of the above verse from *Tarjumān as-Sunnah* of Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Badr 'Ālam Sāhib Meerutī Muhājir Madanī rahimahullāh.

عن عمر بن الخطاب أن رجلا من اليهود قال له: يا أمير المؤمنين، آية في كتابكم تقرأونها لو علينا معشر اليهود نزلت، لاتخذنا ذلك اليوم عيداً. قال: أي آية؟ قال: الْيَوْمَ اكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا. قال عمر: قد عرفنا ذلك اليوم والمكان الذي نزلت فيه على النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم وهو قائم بعرفة يوم الجمعة.²

Hadrat 'Umar ibn al-Khattāb radiyallāhu 'anhu narrates that a Jew said to him: “O Amīr al-Mu'minīn! There is a verse in your Book which you people read. Had it been revealed to us – Jews – we would have celebrated that day as a day of festivity.” He asked: “Which verse are you referring to?” He replied: “Today I perfected your religion for you, completed My favour on you and chose Islam for you as your religion.” 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said: “We know fully well the day on which and the place where this verse was revealed to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. It was a Friday while he was standing at 'Arafah. (In other words, it is a day of two 'īds for us – a Friday and the day of 'Arafah).

Commentary: The Jews and Christians always treated Islam with vigilance and waited for every opportunity to display the superiority of their religion or to prove the inferiority of Islam. However, when this verse was

¹ Muftī Muḥammad Shafī' Sāhib: *Ma'ārif al-Qur'ān*.

² رواه البخاري ومسلم.

revealed during the exact season of hajj, there was no limit to their remorse. Despite having an extensive Sharī‘ah as that of the Taurāh, the glad tiding of perfection of Dīn was not given to them, but to someone whose downfall they were always awaiting. Thus when they could do nothing about it, in their desperation they came up with this one objection that if this verse had been revealed to them, they would have rejoiced to the extent of celebrating that day as a day of ‘īd. To their aversion, Hadrat ‘Umar *raḍiyallāhu ‘anhu* replied by saying: “O you immature people! Do you not know that the day of its revelation marked two ‘īds collectively. This single glad tiding actually comprises of three glad tidings. If each one was explained separately, the discussion will get too long. We will therefore suffice with the statement of Ibn ‘Abbās *raḍiyallāhu ‘anhu* in his explanation of this glad tiding. It is very concise yet comprehensive:

“We have perfected your religion for you today, so it will never be in need of any addition. We completed Our favour, so this religion will never be defective. We are forever pleased with this religion for you, so We will never be displeased with it.”¹

Although the Sharī‘ah of Mūsā *‘alayhis salām* was complete for his era, the need for some additions and subtractions were felt after some time. Moreover, it became so defaced that its followers earned the titles of “those who earned Allāh’s anger” and “those who went astray”. Muslims are rest assured that although the tempests of revolution will also come to them, the need for additions and subtractions will never be felt, or it will never become so defaced as to make them eligible for Allāh’s displeasure instead of His pleasure. In other words, this meant that this is the final and last

¹ *Ibn Kathīr*, vol. 2, p. 279.

religion, it will therefore be safeguarded against defacement and abrogation. And the greatest thing about it is that in the presence of Islam, no other religion will be accepted.¹

Divine Protection of The Qur'ān, Hadīth And The Ummah

Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

حٰخُنْ نَزَّلْنَا الدِّكْرَ وَآتَا لَهُ لِحَافِظُوْنَ

Translation and commentary: We revealed the Qur'ān (this is not an unsupported claim. Its miraculous nature is proof of this. One explanation of the miracle of the Qur'ān is mentioned in another verse wherein it is stated that no one can produce a chapter like it. The other miracle is that) We are its (this Qur'ān's) Protectors (and Guards). (No one can make any additions or subtractions to it as was the case with other books. This is a clear miracle which can be understood by everyone. The first miracle – that no one can compete with its eloquence, rhetoric and comprehensiveness – can only be understood by people of knowledge. However, the issue of additions and subtractions can be understood and observed by even an illiterate ignorant person).²

Just as Allāh *ta'ālā* promised the preservation of the Qur'ān, by His grace, the Hadīth is also included in it. After all, the meanings of the Qur'ān are those for whose instruction Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam was commissioned. The Qur'ān says in this regard:

لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ

¹ *Tarjumān as-Sunnah*, vol. 1, p. 507.

² Maulānā Muftī Muḥammad Shafī' Sāhib: *Ma'ārif al-Qur'ān*.

You have been commissioned so that you may expound to them what has been revealed to them.

The same meaning is taken for the following verse:

يُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ

He teaches them the Book and wisdom.

This is why Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said:

إِنَّمَا بُعِثْتُ مُعَلِّمًا

I have been sent as a teacher.

Since Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* has been commissioned to explain and teach the meanings of the Qur’ān, the words and actions through which he taught the ummah are collectively known as Hadīth.¹

Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Sāhib Partāb Garhī *rahimahullāh* used to say: This includes the protection of the ummah of Muḥammad *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* because his followers are the external means for the protection of the Qur’ān and Hadīth. These will be the ‘ulamā’ and Sufi masters of his ummah. In this way, Allāh willing, the entire ummah of Muḥammad *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* will be protected.”

In explaining the above verse, Hadrat Maulānā Muftī Taqī ‘Uthmānī writes:

Allāh *ta’ālā* makes it clear in this verse that although other divine Books were sent before the Qur’ān, they were for certain nations and specific eras. This is why Allāh *ta’ālā* did not give them the guarantee of protection until the day of Resurrection. Rather, their

¹ *Ma’ārif al-Qur’ān*, vol. 5, p. 281.

preservation was relegated to their addressees. This is mentioned in Sūrah al-Mā'idah.¹ However, since the Qur'ān is the last and final Book, Allāh *ta'ālā* personally took the responsibility of its preservation. Thus, there can be no changes and interpolations in it. Allāh *ta'ālā* ensured its preservation by allowing little children to memorize it in such a manner that even if an enemy were to destroy all copies of the Qur'ān [Allāh forbid], these little children can have it re-written without the slightest of changes. This in itself is a miracle of the Qur'ān.²

A Comprehensive System For Protection Against Tribulations in The Light of Ahādīth

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه فيما أعلم عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: إن الله يبعث في أمتي على رأس كل مائة من يجد لها دينها.³

Abū Hurayrah *radīyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "At the head of every century Allāh will commission a person in my nation who would renew for it its religion."

In his introduction to *Tajdīd-e-Dīn Kāmil*, Hadrat Maulānā 'Abd al-Bārī Nadwī *rahimahullāh* explains the difference between a Prophet and a Mujaddid. I am quoting it here for enlightenment.

¹ Allāh *ta'ālā* says: "We revealed the Taurāh in which there is guidance and illumination. By it did the Prophets who had submitted to Allāh pass judgement to the Jews. And so did the dervishes and scholars. This is because they were held custodians over the Book of Allāh and were appointed as guardians over it." (5: 44)

² *Āsān Tarjumah Qur'ān*, vol. 2, p. 800.

³ أبو داود، كتاب الملاحم.

The essential need for a Prophet is for him to convey Allāh's laws to the people. In other words, a Prophet is an intermediary who conveys from Allāh *ta'ālā* to the people. He does not say anything out of his own intellect, reasoning, knowledge and understanding. Rather, whatever he says is through divine revelation and after receiving it from Allāh *ta'ālā*. His revelation and teaching is pure from all error, while the Prophet himself is divinely protected against all error. However, this is not the case with a Mujaddid. After understanding the Qur'ān, Sunnah, and the injunctions and message of revelation and prophethood, he differentiates between right and wrong through his far-sighted *īmān*, pure mind, sound intelligence, accurate reasoning and correct opinion. He distinguishes Dīn from non-Dīn, divine teachings from human inventions, and Sunnah from *bid'ah*. He develops the qualities of adoration and acceptance by virtue of the purity, clarity, firmness and fortitude of his academic and practical life; and through the total and absolute emulation of the Prophet.¹

A Group of Reformers Which Will be Victorious And Helped

عن المغيرة بن شعبة رضي الله عنه عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: لا تزال طائفة من أمتي ظاهرين حتى يأتيهم أمر الله وهم ظاهرون.²

Hadrat Mughīrah ibn Shu'bah *radīyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: There will always be a group in my ummah which will continue helping until the arrival of Allāh's order.

The above Hadīth is narrated by Ibn Mājah with a slight difference. Imām Nawawī's explanation of the

¹ *Tajdīd-e-Dīn Kāmil*, p. 22.

² *أنبياء الرسول*، ص ٢١٤.

word *tā'ifah* (group) is quoted in the footnotes. He writes:

قال النووي يحتمل أن يكون هذه الطائفة متفرقة في أنواع المؤمنين ممن يقيم أمر الله من مجاهد وفقهه ومحدث وزاهد وأمر بالمعروف وغير ذلك من أنواع الخير، ولا يلتزم اجتماعهم في مكان واحد، بل يجوز أن يكون متفرقين في أقطار الأرض^١.

An-Nawawī said: This group is probably scattered among the believers. They are the ones who are upholding Allāh's orders. They could include the one who is waging jihād, a jurist, a Hadīth specialist, an ascetic, one who is enjoining good, and those who are engaged in other forms of good. It does not necessarily mean that they all have to be assembled at one place. Rather, they could be scattered in various parts of the world.

This means: Although there will be tempestuous "storms" against Islam and true Islamic beliefs, there will be a group of believers who will be involved in various types of good works, upholding the salient features of Islam and carrying out the works of reformation and rectification. These will be: the mujāhid, the jurist, the Hadīth specialist, the ascetic, the one enjoining good and the one forbidding evil. They will be helped by Allāh *ta'ālā*, they will be victorious and no one will be able to harm them in any way. It must also be understood that they will not necessarily be confined to one place. Rather, although they will be scattered over several regions, they will be considered to be one group.

^١ ابن ماجه مع الحاشية، ص ٢٠٨. نبوءات الرسول، ص ٢١٨.

عن معاوية بن قرة عن أبيه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إذا فسد أهل الشام فلا خير فيكم. لا تزال طائفة من أمتي منصورين لا يضرهم من خذلهم حتى تقوم الساعة. (ترمذي)

Mu`āwiyah ibn Qurrah narrates from his father who said: Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: Once corruption enters the people of Shām, there will be no good in you [as well]. (The first manifestation of this was during the era of Hadrat Mu`āwiyah *radīyallāhu 'anhu*). A group from my ummah will always be helped. Those who try to humiliate them will never be able to harm them. This will continue until the Final Hour.”

Imām Tirmidhī *rahimahullāh* quotes a statement of Hadrat 'Alī ibn al-Madīnī *rahimahullāh* via Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh*. He says that this victorious group refers to the Muḥaddithūn. He is correct but does not embrace the entire reality. Rather, it embraces all the Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah whether they are the exegetes, Hadīth specialists, jurists, Sufis or those waging physical jihād.¹

Note: Hadrat Maulānā Sa'īd Aḥmad Sāhib Pālanpūrī provided an excellent clarification of the victorious group which embraces the jurists, Hadīth specialists, mujāhidūn or those attending to the Khānqāhs through their spiritual efforts and programmes. All are servants of this pure Dīn who will be helped by Allāh *ta'ālā*. Allāh willing, these groups will remain until the day of Resurrection. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *ta'ālā*.

¹ *Tuḥfatul al-Ma'ī*, vol. 5, p. 571.

عن معاوية رضي الله عنه قال سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: لا يزال من أمتي أمة قائمة بأمر الله لا يضرهم من خذلهم ولا من خالفهم حتى يأتي أمر الله وهم على ذلك.

Hadrat Mu`āwiyah radiyallāhu 'anhu narrates: I heard Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam saying: “There will always be a group from my ummah which will remain firm on Allāh’s orders. They will neither be harmed by those who wish to humiliate them nor by those who oppose them. This will continue until Allāh’s promise [the day of Resurrection] comes and they will still be steadfast on the truth.”

An Unending Chain of People on The Truth

A previous Hadīth was quoted which made mention of evil ‘ulamā’ who will pollute the minds of people with the impurities of innovations and fabrications, and thereby immerse them into deviation. After reading this, a question comes up: Does this mean that Dīn will not remain preserved until the day of Resurrection? Will the doors of guidance be shut to the people because of these evil ‘ulamā’? The author answers these questions by quoting the second Hadīth in which Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said: “There will always be a group from my ummah which will remain firm on Allāh’s orders.” Another narration states: “There will always be a group from my ummah which will be waging jihād for the sake of Dīn and which will always be defeating the enemy.”

We learn from this that if there will be evil ‘ulamā’ on one side who will be leading people astray, there will be those pious servants of Allāh ta’ālā who will be inviting to Dīn and sacrificing their lives for it. They will remain steadfast on the truth; fight continually for the truth; expose the plots and conspiracies of those who are

desecrating Dīn, making changes to it, making additions and subtractions to it; and keep Dīn alive.

A narration of Hadrat Abū Hurayrah *radīyallāhu ‘anhu* and Hadrat Ibn ‘Umar *radīyallāhu ‘anhu* states that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said: “Every era will have just and reliable people who will inherit this knowledge (Dīn) while safeguarding it against the misinterpretations of the ignoramuses, claims of the worshippers of falsehood and the distortions of the extremists.”¹

Who are these people mentioned in this Hadīth? The ‘ulamā’ state that it refers to the scholars. Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* in *Kitāb al-I’tisām, Bāb Qaul an-Nabī sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam Lā tazālu tā’ifatun min ummatī* explains this group as *ahl al-‘ilm* (those endowed with knowledge). After quoting this Hadīth [in his Sunan], Imām Tirmidhī *rahimahullāh* quotes from Imām Ibn al-Madīnī who says that this group refers to *As-hāb al-Hadīth* (the Muḥaddithūn). Imām Hākim relates that Imām Aḥmad *rahimahullāh* said: “I do not know who else it can refer to if it does not refer to the Muḥaddithūn.”²

In short, the ‘ulamā’ who are occupied in preserving and spreading the Qur’ān and Hadīth; engaged in the work of propagation; bearing every type of difficulty for the sake of Dīn; and carrying out the responsibilities of saving the masses from innovations, fabrications, heresies and idolatrous practices; and showing them the true path will continue doing all this and their efforts will continue until the day of Resurrection. This is the meaning of “This will continue until Allāh’s

¹ البيهقي في السنن الكبرى: ٢٠٩\١٠. الطبراني في مسند الشاميين: ٣٤٤\١. الديلمي في مسند الفردوس:

٥٣٧\٥

² *Fath al-Bārī*, vol. 13, p. 293.

promise [the day of Resurrection] comes.” Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam said with reference to them: “They will not be harmed by those who wish to humiliate them.” This is because Allāh ta’ālā will protect them and provide them with the means to strengthen and fortify them.

Reconciling Two Conflicting Ahādīth

A doubt which could be caused by this Hadīth is that if genuine ‘ulamā’ will always be found until the day of Resurrection, it means that genuine ‘ulamā’ will be present in this world when the day of Resurrection arrives. Whereas another Hadīth states that the Resurrection will be established on those who are immersed in mischief and evil. Thus, the ‘ulamā’ who are on the truth ought not to be found at that time.

The ‘ulamā’ have given several answers to this. One of them is that there will be evil people in a certain region and genuine ‘ulamā’ in another region, i.e. Bayt al-Maqdis. Another answer is that the words “until Allāh’s promise comes” do not refer to the Resurrection but to the major signs of Resurrection. This means that when the major signs of Resurrection are manifested – e.g. the appearance of Dajjāl, rising of the sun from the West and so on – Allāh ta’ālā will raise the group which is on the truth from this world. The world will be left with only evil people. The Resurrection will then come upon them. This answer is more worthy of consideration.¹

عن عمرو بن عوف رضي الله عنه أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: إن الدين ليأرز إلى الحجاز كما تأرز الحية إلى حجرها. ليعقلن الدين في الحجاز معقل الأروية

¹ *Fath al-Bārī*, vol. 13, p. 177. *Irshād as-Sārī*, vol. 15, p. 272. quoted from *Hadīth Nabawī Aur Daur Hādīr Ke Fitne*, p. 97.

من رأس الجبل. إن الدين بدأ غريبا ويرجع غريبا فطوي للغرباء، وهم الذين يصلحون ما أفسد الناس من بعدي من سنتي. (رواه الترمذي)

Hadrat 'Amr ibn 'Auf radiyallāhu 'anhu narrates that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said: The Dīn will shrink from all over the world to the Hijāz just as a snake returns to its hole after having gone to far off places. Dīn will eventually take refuge in the Hijāz as a mountain goat takes refuge in the mountain tops. Undoubtedly, Dīn began like a stranger and will become a stranger once again. Thus, glad tidings to the *ghurabā'* - they are the ones who will rectify my Sunnah which was damaged by people after me.

This Hadīth shows that even at that time there will be reformers who will rectify and reform the ummah. They are given glad tidings by Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. (Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān)

The Merit of Worship During Times of Tribulation

Mujaddid Alf Thānī rahimahullāh says:

This is that era about which Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam gave glad tidings to the *ghurabā'*. He also said that engaging in Allāh's worship at a time of tribulation is similar to emigrating to him.

When the police force and army display even a little courage at times of tribulation and corruption, it creates some awe in the king. On the other hand, if they carry out countless duties and render numerous services during times of peace and stability, it is not considered. This shows that the real time for work and its acceptance is the time of tribulations. If you wish to be resurrected with the accepted servants of Allāh *ta'ālā* on the day of Resurrection, you will have to cast aside your own desires and follow nothing apart from the Sunnah way. Look at the Companions of the Cave! It was a time of tribulation. They did just one act, they

moved away from the place of evil and reached great heights because of that one act. You are, after all, the follower of Muḥammad sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. You are a member of the best of nations. Do not waste your time in play and amusement. Do not be attracted to futile things like a child.

We have shown you a treasure which is the essence of life. If we have not been able to acquire it, maybe you will.¹

The Concern of Hadrat 'Abd al-Qādir Jilānī For The Preservation of Dīn

Hadrat Shaykh *rahimahullāh* used to be intensely disturbed on seeing the religious and moral degeneration (whose biggest centre was Baghdad itself). He would observe the evil effects of a general religious deterioration which was pervading the Muslim world, and this would result in an Islamic fervour and religious self-respect to gush forth from his chest. There were times when he could not conceal these feelings of his heart and they would flow like oceans in his speeches and lectures.

He says:

“The walls of Rasūlullāh’s Dīn are falling one after the other and its foundation is being scattered. O residents of this land! Come and reinforce whatever has fallen and set right whatever has collapsed. This task cannot be accomplished by one person. Everyone will have to join in and carry it out together. O sun! O moon! O day! All of you come.”

He says elsewhere:

¹ *Maktūbāt Hadrat Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī Mujaddid Alf Thānī.*

Islam is crying. Yet these flagrant sinners, innovators, deviates, hypocrites and false claimants are attributing things that do not belong to Islam. Ponder over your predecessors and see how they used to enjoin good and prohibit evil, and still lived their lives. Then they passed away suddenly as if they had never existed. Look at how hard your hearts are! Even a dog seeks the wellbeing of his master by hunting for him, seeing to his cattle and protecting him. It then lolls its tongue out of happiness when it sees its master. It does all this despite receiving just a few morsels of food in the evening. On the other hand, you are filling your belly with various types of bounties from Allāh *ta'ālā*, but you do not fulfil the responsibilities for which you were given these bounties nor do you fulfil their dues. Instead, you break His orders and do not protect His limits.”¹

Note: Look at how Hadrat Sayyidunā ‘Abd al-Qādir Jilānī *rahimahullāh* is complaining about the degeneration of the ummah of his time and how he is encouraging towards its reformation and rectification. Consequently, many people responded to his call and they were able to accomplish a lot.

Every era had reformers who showed concern for the ailments of the ummah and undertook its reformation and rectification. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* himself predicted this:

¹ Maulānā Abul Ḥasan ‘Alī Nadwī: *Tārīkh Da‘wat wa ‘Azīmat*, vol. 1, p. 218.

Glad Tidings of Great Reward at The Time of Corruption

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: من تمسك بسنتي عند فساد أمتي فله أجر مائة شهيد. (رواه البيهقي وابن حبان)

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: “The one who adheres to my Sunnah at a time when my ummah becomes corrupt shall receive the reward of one hundred martyrs.”

Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh *rahimahullāh* has commented on this Hadīth. I am quoting the first portion of his commentary:

This Hadīth is a clear statement with regard to the reward of 100 martyrs for the person who holds on to the Sunnah at a time when the ummah is corrupt. Another point which we learn from this Hadīth is that a time will come when that era would be referred to as “corruption of the ummah”. This is because people will generally leave the path of the Sunnah and tread the path of unbelief and sin. However, there will still be some people who will be more knowledgeable and more righteous than others. They will hold on firmly to the Sunnah despite the proliferation of sin and immorality. These are the ones who will be eligible for this great reward of 100 martyrs.

We learn from the above that the time will be such that practising on the Sunnah will be synonymous to putting your life into danger. The overwhelming corruption will cause the majority of the people to be against the Sunnah. In such a situation, adopting the Sunnah will be synonymous to earning the opposition of people. This is why people will be hesitant to adhere to the Sunnah and adopting it would be similar to holding an ember. However, the person who adheres to the Sunnah without bothering about the opposition of people will be considered to be a great person, one who

has made an immense sacrifice, and a truly loyal person. The obstacles which he will have to face on account of his adherence to the Sunnah will be far more difficult on the self than giving one's life in battle. This is why Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam gave him the glad tiding of the reward of not one but one hundred martyrs.

We will now quote a few Ahādīth from *Minhāj al-'Ābidīn*, the last written work of Hadrat Imām Ghazzālī rahimahullāh.

My respected brother! Your Prophet sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam showed you the time when you must adopt a life of solitude. He provided detailed descriptions to you about the time and the people of that time. He also instructed you to resort to a life of solitude at such a time. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam most certainly knows what is best for us and he is more beneficent and affectionate towards us than our own selves. Thus, if you find your era to be as explained and described by Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam, you must hasten in carrying out his instruction. Accept this great advice and do not have any doubt or misgiving in this regard because Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam was fully aware of the conditions of your era which are most suited to you. Do not search for false excuses to deceive your self, or else you will be destroyed. The descriptions which we made reference to are mentioned in the following well-known Ahādīth.

Hadrat 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Ās radiyallāhu 'anhu narrates:

بيننا نحن حول النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم إذا ذكر الفتنة. فقال: إذا رأيتم الناس يرحب
عهودهم، وخفت أماناتهم، وكانوا هكذا - وشبك بين أصابعه - قلت: ما أصنع عند

ذلك جعلني الله فداءك. قال: إلزم بيتك، أملك عليك لسانك، وخذ ما تعرف، ودع ما تنكر، وعليك بأمر الخاصة، ودع عنك أمر العامة. (منهاج العابدين، ص ٦٥)

We were sitting with Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* when he began speaking about tribulations. He said: When you find that people's promises have become interpolated and their trusts have ended - he interlocked the fingers of both hands to demonstrate how mixed up everything will become. I [Hadrat 'Abdullāh] asked: "May I be sacrificed for you. What must I do at such a time?" He replied: "Remain in your house, restrain your tongue, do what you know to be right, leave what you know to be wrong, worry solely about yourself, and separate yourself from the affairs of the masses."

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said on another occasion:

ذلكم أيام الهرج، قيل وما أيام الهرج. قال: لا يأمن الرجل جليسه.

These are days of tribulation. He was asked: What are the days of tribulation? He replied: When a man will not be safe from even his companion who is sitting right next to him.

Hadrat 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates from Hārith ibn 'Umayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said to him: "If you live long, you will experience a time when there will be many orators and lecturers, while 'ulamā' will be few. There will be many questioners but few to give answers. There will many who will be desirous of leadership." He was asked: "When will this time come?" He replied: "When *salāh* will hold no importance whatsoever, bribery will be common, and Dīn will be sold for paltry worldly gains. You ought to pray for salvation from such a time."

Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* says: We have already witnessed in our time and in the people of our time whatever we explained in the light of these Ahādīth. One must therefore think carefully about one’s self. The pious predecessors unanimously agreed on warning about these matters in their respective eras. They gave preference to solitude, ordered it and advised it.

These people are undoubtedly our well-wishers and people of insight. Those who come after them are not better than them but worse.

This is also related from Yūsuf ibn Asbāt. He said: I heard Thaurī *rahimahullāh* saying: “I take an oath in the name of the Being who has no partner. Living a life of solitude and aloofness [from people] is lawful in these times.” I say: “If this was lawful in his time, it is compulsory and obligatory in our time.”

The Ahlullāh Fear Tribulations And Warn us of Them

Hadrat ‘Allāmah Muḥīyy ad-Dīn an-Nawawī *rahimahullāh* quotes a few couplets in his introduction to *Riyād as-Sālihīn*. These couplets make mention of how the intelligent ones fear tribulations. He says:

ان لله عبادا فطنا – طلقوا الدنيا وخافوا الفتنا
 نظروا فيها فلما علموا – انها ليست لحي وطننا
 جعلوها لجة واتخذوا – صالح الاعمال فيها سفنا

Allāh has servants who are intelligent. They divorced the world and feared temptations. They looked at the world and, when they realized that it is not an abode for the living, they considered it to be a deep ocean [which can only be traversed by ship] and adopted good deeds as ships in it.

¹ Imām Ghazzālī: *Minhāj al-‘Ābidīn*, p. 66.

Note: Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh rahimahullāh had these couplets written on a piece of paper which he used to keep by his head-side when going to sleep. He used to fear tribulations and emphasise on us to stay away from them. He used to teach this du‘ā’ to us:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْفِتَنِ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَّنَ، وَمِنْ يَوْمِ السُّوءِ، وَمِنْ لَيْلَةِ السُّوءِ،
وَمِنْ سَاعَةِ السُّوءِ، وَمِنْ صَاحِبِ السُّوءِ.

O Allāh! I seek refuge in You from all tribulations - those which are obvious and those which are concealed. I seek refuge in You from an evil day, an evil night, an evil hour and an evil companion.

I quote a letter which Hadrat Maulānā Muftī Muḥammad Shafi‘ Sāhib rahimahullāh had written to Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib rahimahullāh:

A Letter From Hadrat Muftī Shafi‘ Sāhib

Our respected leader Hadrat Maulānā Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib, *may his blessings remain eternal.*

As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh

It is a very strange situation that I am getting an opportunity to write to you after such a long time. Anyway, I am suffering from stomach and spiritual ailments. This is a time of tribulations. I am hopeful of your *du‘ā’s* for my righteousness all the time - in life and in death.

Was salām

Muḥammad Shafi‘, *may Allāh pardon him.*

27/5/1383 A.H.

Reply of Hadrat Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib

To the respectable Janāb Muftī Sāhib, *may your greatness and blessing remain eternal.*

As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa rah̄matullāhi wa barakātuh

I cannot describe the joy I experienced at receiving your letter. May Allāh *ta‘ālā* reward you. You are absolutely correct in what you wrote. I also believe the same thing. I tread very carefully and remain fearful all the time [with regard to this era of tribulations]. I pray for your respected self, constantly think of you and will continue thinking of you. Inshā Allāh, I request you for more prayer.

That is all.

Waṣiyyullāh, *may Allāh pardon him.*
9 Rajab 1383 A.H., Allāhābād

Note: Both the above personalities (Ḥad̄rat Maulānā Shāh Waṣiyyullāh Ṣāhib *rahimahullāh* and Ḥad̄rat Muftī Muḥammad Shafi‘ Ṣāhib *rahimahullāh*) were blessed with knowledge of the Qur’ān and Sunnah, and were conferred with khilāfat by Ḥad̄rat Ḥakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh*. Thus, together with their services in the fields of education and writing, they rendered sterling services in the field of purification of the selves and cleansing of the hearts. Despite this, they used to tremble and fear tribulations and temptations as is apparent from their above-quoted letters.

Remember! The correct and perfect service to Dīn and Sufism can only be rendered by personalities of this calibre. They are the ones who are worthy of being referred to as people of propagation and fortitude. People of this nature are born in every era.

Consequently, Ḥad̄rat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Ḥasan ‘Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh* says in his world-renowned book, *Tārīkh Da‘wat wa ‘Azīmat*:

The Era of The Islamic Ummah is Most Filled
With Changes

Bearing in mind that this is the final and universal religion, and this ummah is the final and universal ummah, it is natural for it to have contact with different types of humans in different eras. Furthermore, it will have to face a conflict which was never experienced by any other nation in history. The era which has been given to this ummah is the one which is most filled with changes and revolutions. Its conditions are so multifarious that the like thereof is not seen in any era of the past.

Divine Arrangements For The Continued Existence of Islam

Thus, Allāh *ta'ālā* made two arrangements for this ummah to combat the influences of the environment and to come out successful in the changing times and climes. The first is that He gave to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* complete, perfect and vibrant teachings which can easily combat every conflict and change; and which has the ability to solve the issues and problems of every era. Secondly, Allāh *ta'ālā* took it upon Himself (and history bears testimony to this) that He will confer to this Dīn such energetic personalities in every era who will apply these teachings to life, re-energize this Dīn either individually or collectively, and keep the ummah engrossed in action. The ability and power which this Dīn has to produce personalities of this nature has never been demonstrated by any other religion in the past. The extent to which this ummah proved itself to be a contributor to humanity – the like thereof cannot be found in any

other nation or community of the world. This is not an incidental matter. Rather, it is a result of divine arrangement that whatever capability and ability was required in whichever era, and whatever antidote was needed for whichever poison was provided to this ummah.¹

Future Reformers Are Predicted

عن عبد الرحمن بن العلاء الحضرمي قال: حدثني من سمع النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: إنه سيكون في آخر هذه الأمة قوم لهم مثل أجر أولهم، يأمرون بالمعروف وينهون عن المنكر ويقاتلون أهل الفتن. (مشكوة)

'Abd ar-Rahmān ibn al-'Alā' al-Hādrāmī said: A person who heard Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* saying related to me: The latter part of this ummah will have such people whose reward will be similar to the reward of the first part of this ummah [the *Sahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum*]. They will enjoin good, prohibit evil and fight against those who spread tribulations.

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at the virtue and merit of the people and group who – because of enjoining good, forbidding evil and fighting those who spread tribulations and mischief – will be similar to the first part of the ummah (i.e. the *Sahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum*). The author of *Mirqāt* explains this Hadīth as follows:

عن عبد الرحمن بن العلاء الحضرمي قال: حدثني من سمع النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول (أي النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم) أنه (أي الشأن) سيكون في آخر هذه الأمة قوم لهم مثل أجر أولهم، يأمرون بالمعروف (استئناف بيان)

¹ Maulānā Abul Ḥasan 'Alī Nadwī: *Tārīkh Da'wat wa 'Azīmat*, vol. 1, p. 10.

وينهون عن المنكر ويقاتلون (أي بأيديهم أو بألسنتهم) أهل الفتن (أي من البغاة والخوارج والروافض وسائر أهل البدع).¹

In other words, these people will physically and verbally fight those who spread tribulations and mischief. These fighters include writers who establish the truth and defeat falsehood through their writings, and remove tribulations and mischief in this way.

The author of *Mirqāt* considers the rebels, Khawārij, Shī'ah and all those involved in innovations in Dīn to be the spreaders of tribulations and mischief. I say that in our times it includes the Qādiyānīs and Parwezes as well. This is why the 'ulamā' have been carrying out the obligation of waging battle against these groups and continue to do so. Of special note in this regard is Maulānā Ismā'īl Sāhib Walī Tankārwi. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward him with the best of rewards.

All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*, in our times, there are various groups – such as the 'ulamā', Sufis, those involved in the work of da'wah, politicians and people in the government, and the wealthy and affluent ones – who are serving Dīn according to their own programmes. This is why they are certainly included among those who are serving Dīn. Unfortunately, we seem to notice shortcomings and defects in every group. The thought therefore came to my mind that the responsible members and leaders of each group be apprised in the light of the Qur'ān and Sunnah. In this way, once they acquire knowledge and cognition, their Dīnī activities will be in accordance with the Sunnah, and be accepted by Allāh *ta'ālā* and by people. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *ta'ālā*.

امرقاة المفاتيح: ج ١، ص ٤٢١.

We will first address – in detail – the ‘ulamā’ and those who are in charge of the administration of the madāris. This will be followed by the other groups. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta’ālā* alone. He guides to the path of rectitude.

Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī
Dār al-Ma’ārif al-Islāmīyyah, Karelī, Allāhābād
18 Dhul Hijjah 1434 A.H./24 October 2013

CHAPTER ONE
RESPONSIBILITIES OF 'ULAMĀ' AND
MADRASAH AUTHORITIES

قال الله تعالى:

إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ (الفاطر: ٢٨)

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم:

فقيه واحد أشد على الشيطان من ألف عابد. (رواه الترمذي)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الحمد لله الذي بنعمته تتم الصالحات، وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد النبي الأمي واله وسلم. وبالله استعين، وحسبي الله ونعم الوكيل. أما بعد!

Recitation of the Qur'ān, teaching the Qur'ān and wisdom, and purification of the self are so valued actions in Allāh's sight that Hadrat Ibrāhīm 'alayhis salām made a special du'ā' to Allāh ta'ālā to commission a Prophet from his progeny who would recite Allāh's verses, teach His Book and wisdom, and purify his followers from internal impurities. His du'ā' is as follows:

رَبَّنَا وَأَبْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِكَ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ
ط إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ.

O our Sustainer! Send to them a Messenger from among themselves who will recite to them Your verses and teach them the Book and wisdom, and purify them. Surely You alone are all-mighty all-wise.¹

Subsequently, Allāh ta'ālā accepted this supplication which emanated from the depths of Hadrat Ibrāhīm's heart.

The Acceptance of Hadrat Ibrāhīm's Supplication

Ibn Kathīr *rahimahullāh* quotes in his *Tafsīr* from Abū al-'Āliyah that when Hadrat Ibrāhīm 'alayhis salām made this du'ā', Allāh ta'ālā replied:

قد استجيب لك هو كائن في آخر الزمان

Your supplication has been accepted. A Prophet like this will appear in the latter eras.

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 129.

The same is reported by Hadrat Qatādah *rahimahullāh* and Suddī *rahimahullāh*. The recitation of Hadrat Ubayy ibn Ka'b *radiyallāhu 'anhu* further supports the view that it will be the Seal of the Prophets. Hadrat Ubayy ibn Ka'b's recitation reads as follows:

وابعث في آخرهم رسولا

In other words, send a Messenger at the end. We learn from this that the Messenger in whose favour Hadrat Ibrāhīm *'alayhis salām* had supplicated must be the Final Prophet. Allāh *ta'ālā* accepted his supplication.

أخرج أحمد والطبراني والبيهقي عن أبي أمامة قال: قلت يا رسول الله، ما بدء أمرك. قال: دعوة أبي إبراهيم، وبشرى عيسى، ورأت أمي أنه يخرج منها نور أضاءت له قصور الشام.^١

Imām Aḥmad, Tabarānī and Bayhaqī narrate from Abū Umāmah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* who said: I asked: "O Rasūlullāh! How did your prophet-hood commence?" He replied: "I am the manifestation of the supplication of my forefather, Ibrāhīm (when he prayed to Allāh: Send a Messenger from among them). Thereafter I am the result of the glad tiding of 'Īsā [*'alayhis salām*] when he gave glad tidings of my coming (a giver of glad tiding of a Messenger who will come after me, his name is Aḥmad). Then my mother saw a dream at the time of my birth – a light emanated from her and illuminated the castles of Shām."

Hadrat 'Irbād ibn Sāriyah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

إني عند الله في أم الكتاب لخاتم النبيين وإن آدم لمنجدل في طينته وسأنبئكم بأول ذلك دعوة إبراهيم.^١

^١ الدر المشور: ج ١، ص ١٣٩.

I was already recorded as the Seal of the Prophets in the Preserved Tablet when Ādam was still on the ground in mud and clay. The supplication of Ibrāhīm was the commencement of my prophet-hood.

We learn from this that Muḥammad Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* is the manifestation of the supplication of Ḥaḍrat Ibrāhīm *'alayhis salām*. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* is the final Prophet after whom no Prophet is to come. He was recorded as the Seal of Prophets by Allāh *ta'ālā* from even before. Ḥaḍrat Ibrāhīm *'alayhis salām* supplicated for his commissioning and Ḥaḍrat 'Īsā *'alayhis salām* conveyed the glad tidings of his arrival.²

Allāh *ta'ālā* relates the acceptance of the supplication of Ḥaḍrat Ibrāhīm *'alayhis salām* in the following verses:

يُسَبِّحُ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ الْمَلِكِ الْقُدُّوسِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ. هُوَ الَّذِي
بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ
وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِن قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ.

Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth glorifies Allāh, the sovereign, the holy, the mighty, the wise. It is He who raised among the unlettered people a Messenger from among themselves, reciting to them His verses, purifying them, and teaching them the Book and wisdom. Before this they were lying in manifest error.³

Three Objectives of Commissioning Rasūlullāh

Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Muftī Muḥammad Shafi' *Sāhib rahimahullāh* explains the above verses as follows:

¹مسند أحمد وغيره، الدر المنثور، ١٢٩.

² Maulānā Idrīs Kāndhlawī: *Ma'ārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 1, p. 291.

³ Sūrah al-Jumu'ah, 62: 1-2.

يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ

While mentioning Allāh's favours on the ummah, three qualities of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* are described in this verse. (1) Recitation of the Qur'ān, i.e. to read the Qur'ān and enable people to listen to it. (2) To purify them from every external and internal filth and impurity. Purification of the body, clothes, etc. is included in external purity. It also embraces purification as regards beliefs, actions, character and habits. (3) Teaching the Book and wisdom.

These three are Allāh's favours on the ummah, and also from among the objectives of commissioning Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* as a Prophet.

يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ: The original meaning of *tilāwat* is to follow and obey, but it is defined as reading the speech of Allāh *ta'ālā*. The word *āyāt* refers to the verses of the Qur'ān. The word *'alayhim* shows that one of the responsibilities and objectives of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* is to recite the Qur'ān to the people.

وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ: This is the second objective of commissioning Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. This word is derived from *tazkiyah* which means to purify. It is generally used for internal and spiritual purification. In other words, to purify from unbelief, polytheism, evil character and bad habits. Sometimes it is also used in a general sense to refer to external and internal purification. It seems as though this general sense is meant in this verse.

وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ: The Book refers to the Qur'ān, and wisdom refers to the teachings and guidelines of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* established either by his statements or his actions. This is why

many commentators of the Qur'ān explain the word “wisdom” in this verse as “Sunnah”.¹

Note: Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* gave a great glad tiding to the 'ulamā' of this ummah when he said:

العلماء ورثة الأنبياء

The 'ulamā' are the heirs of the Prophets.

It is therefore the responsibility of the 'ulamā' to carry out these three objectives – reciting Allāh's verses, purifying the self, teaching and studying the Book and wisdom – in the best way possible. It is such 'ulamā' who are eligible to be referred to as 'ulamā' rabbāniyyīn, regarding whom Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

وَلَكِنْ كُونُوا رَبَّانِيِّينَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تُعَلِّمُونَ الْكِتَابَ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ

Become the men of Allāh as you used to teach the Book and just as you yourself used to study it.²

Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan 'Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh* explains this verse as follows:

This verse of the Qur'ān is also a miracle on its own. In fact, it is a collection of miracles. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

وَلَكِنْ كُونُوا رَبَّانِيِّينَ

Rather become the men of Allāh.

Allāh *ta'ālā* uses the word ربانيين which includes *tarbiyah*. In other words, an 'ālim who, on one hand, has a connection with Allāh *ta'ālā*. His connection with Allāh *ta'ālā* is proper. He has the quality of sincerity

¹ Muftī Muḥammad Shafī': *Ma'ārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 8, p. 435.

² Sūrah Āl 'Imrān, 3: 79.

and devotion. On the other hand, he must have reached the level of *īmān* and *ihtisāb*. In other words, he also turns his attention towards inviting the people, training the people and reforming the people.

As a student of the Arabic language, I do not think that there can be a word that is so comprehensive, meaningful, that would demand such attention, and could invoke such thought. Allāh *ta'ālā* refers to the 'ulamā' of the ummah and the 'ulamā' of Islam as ربايين . He says: "become the men of Allāh." However, from the attributes of Allāh *ta'ālā*, the word رِب has been chosen. In other words, become 'ulamā' who have the element of *tarbiyah* in them. Who also have the capability of *tarbiyah*. This is what you refer to as 'ulamā'-e-rabbāniyyīn. These are the 'ulamā'-e-rabbāniyyīn in reality.

وَلَكِنْ كُونُوا رَبَّانِيِّينَ

Allāh *ta'ālā* will enable them to engage in teaching Islam, in propagating Islam, in reforming [people and society], in acting on the Sharī'ah, and in acting on the Sunnah. Their distinctive feature will be that of *īmān* and *ihtisāb*. And this is extremely necessary for the ربايين – that whatever they do, they do it solely for the pleasure of Allāh *ta'ālā*. They should have full conviction in the power and assistance of Allāh *ta'ālā*, and at the same time they should also hope for reward and recompense from Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Allāh *ta'ālā* then says:

بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تُعَلِّمُونَ الْكِتَابَ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ

As you used to teach the Book and just as you yourself used to study it.

That you should teach the Book to others. Together with this, the word *تدرسون* is added. This is something which we all have to ponder over. It means that it is still necessary for an ‘ālim-e-rabbānī, a complete ‘ālim to continue studying even after he has reached a level of perfection. His intellectual journey should continue. His intellectual progress should continue.¹

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at the enlightening and admonitory explanation which Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan ‘Alī Nadwī rahimahullāh gave to the above verse for the ‘ulamā’. It ought to be firmly embedded in our hearts. May Allāh *ta’ālā* inspire us all. Āmīn.

The Difference in Replies of Materialists And Believers

فَحَرَجَ عَلَى قَوْمِهِ فِي زِينَتِهِ، قَالَ الَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا يَا لَيْتَ لَنَا مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ قَارُونُ إِنَّهُ لَذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ. وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَيَلَكُمْ ثَوَابُ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِمَنْ آمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا، وَلَا يُلْقَاهَا إِلَّا الصَّابِرُونَ.

He appeared before his people in all his pomp. Those who sought the life of this world began saying: “If only we had the like of what Qārūn has been given. Surely he is endowed with great fortune.” Those who were given knowledge said: “Woe to you! The reward given by Allāh is better for him who believes and does righteous deeds. This [belief] strikes the heart of none but those who live with patience.²

Qārūn neither took a lesson from the destruction and annihilation of wealthy people before him nor did he pay any heed to the advice given to him by his own

¹ *Qur’ānī Ifādāt*, pp. 274-275. All praise is due to Allāh *ta’ālā*, this book is translated into English under the title, *Qur’ānic Teachings*, and is published by Zam Zam Publishers. (translator)

² *Sūrah al-Qaṣaṣ*, 28: 79-80.

people. He remained obstinate on his arrogance and conceit. One day he appeared before his people, the Banī Isrā'īl, in all his pomp and glory in order to display his position and authority to them. Consequently, when he appeared with all his self-adornment and display, the onlookers were left dazed. When those who were desirous of the world saw his pomp and authority, they said: "If only we also had the wealth, riches, position and authority which have been given to Qārūn. Qārūn is undoubtedly a very fortunate man for having acquired this authority and wealth." These people's gaze was turned away from the bounties of the Hereafter and they began wishing for the superficial beauty of this temporary world.

As for those who were bestowed with genuine knowledge and understanding; and who knew the reality of patience, contentment, reliance and self-respect – like Ḥaḍrat Yūsha' *'alayhis salām* and his companions – they said to the ignorant ones who were harbouring such wishes: "How sorrowful! How sad! Woe to you seekers of this world and prisoners of greed and avarice! Why are you hankering after this fleeting world and why are your mouths watering for it? Allāh's reward is thousands of times better than the wealth and riches of this world, and his [Qārūn's] power, authority, riches and adornment. You must believe firmly that Allāh's reward is reserved for the person who believes in Allāh *ta'ālā* and His Messenger, and does good deeds. The world is absolutely valueless in comparison to *īmān* and good deeds. As for what Qārūn owns, it is utterly and entirely useless and insignificant. The reward for *īmān* and good deeds is beyond our imagination. This word of advice of the *'ulamā'* does not strike any heart except the hearts of those who have patience. They are the one's who

exercise patience over the greed and avarice for this world.¹

Allāh *ta'ālā* prohibited His beloved Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* from raising his gaze towards this world. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

لَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَىٰ مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهِ أَزْوَاجًا مِنْهُمْ وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَاخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ
لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ. وَقُلْ إِنِّي أَنَا التَّذِيرُ الْمُبِينُ.

Do not cast your eyes on those things which We have bestowed as an enjoyment to different kinds of people, nor be grieved over them. Lower your wing for the believers. Say: I am indeed the plain warner.²

Hadrat Maulānā Shabbīr Ahmad 'Uthmānī *rahimahullāh* comments on the above verse as follows:

Do not cast your eyes at the fleeting worldly effects that have been given to the polytheists, Jews, Christians, and other enemies of Allāh and His Messenger *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* by asking yourself “why have they been given all this through which their wretchedness and mischief is increasing? Had this wealth been given to the Muslims, it would have been utilised in good avenues.” Let the unbelievers enjoy themselves for a short while. Allāh *ta'ālā* has bestowed you with the bounty of the Qur'ān before which all other bounties are totally insignificant. It is stated in the Traditions that if a person has been bestowed with the bounty of the Qur'ān and yet desires some other bounty given to someone else, then he has not recognized the value of the Qur'ān. Do not be grieved over their refusal to become Muslims. You should continue fulfilling your responsibility of conveying the

¹ Maulānā Idrīs Kāndhlāwī: *Ma'ārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 6, p. 73.

² Sūrah al-Hijr, 15: 88-89.

message and do not be excessively grieved and worried by those obstinate persons. The believers are eligible for your kindness and compassion. You should therefore deal with them kindly, soft-heartedly, compassionately and humbly. And say: Whether someone accepts or not, I shall explicitly convey the message of Allāh *ta'ālā*. I shall also clearly warn you of the drastic consequences of rejection and mischief.

Hadrat Shāh 'Abd al-Qādir Sāhib Dehlawī rahimahullāh writes: “It is not your duty to turn the hearts. This can only be done by Allāh *ta'ālā*. Therefore do not be grieved if anyone does not believe.”¹

Fear of Allāh – A Special Quality of 'Ulamā'

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ وَالذَّوَابِّ وَالْأَنْعَامِ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ كَذَلِكَ. إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ. إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ.

Of humans, animals and cattle there are so many colours in like manner. From among His servants, it is those who have understanding that fear Allāh. Surely Allāh is all-mighty, most-forgiving.²

Hakīm al-Ummat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī rahimahullāh writes in *Masā'il as-Sulūk*:

It is stated in *Ruḥ al-Ma'ānī* that this refers to 'ulamā' who have knowledge of Allāh's Being, His lofty attributes, praiseworthy actions and beautiful ranks. It does not refer to 'ulamā' who merely know the rules of Arabic grammar and etymology. The basis for fear is thus the first type of knowledge and not the latter.³

¹ *Tafsīr 'Uthmānī*, vol. 4, pp. 393-394 (English translation published by Madrasah Arabia Islamia, Azaadville, South Africa).

² Sūrah al-Fāṭir, 35: 28.

³ *Masā'il as-Sulūk* in the marginal notes of *Bayān al-Qur'ān*.

Hadrat Maulānā Idrīs Sāhib Kāndhlawī *rahimahullāh* writes on the subtle points of this verse as follows:

“From among His servants, it is those who have understanding that fear Allāh.”

This verse refers to those ‘ulamā’ who have knowledge of Allāh’s greatness and power, His injunctions, and his orders and prohibitions. They then follow Allāh’s orders. Their level of fear will depend on their level of knowledge. Fear of Allāh is dependent on knowledge and cognition. Knowledge is a prerequisite for fear, but not a complete cause. For example, purity is a prerequisite for salāh, but not a complete cause. If any knowledge does not result in the acquisition of fear, one must conclude that it is not considered to be knowledge in Allāh’s sight. An ‘ālim who does not fear Allāh *ta’ālā* is not an ‘ālim in Allāh’s sight even though the world may consider him to be an ‘allāmah. A poet says:

No matter how much knowledge you acquire,
if you do not practise on it you are still an
immature person.

Furthermore knowledge in this context refers to knowledge which is not confined to mere words but to a person’s entire condition and demeanour – where he is internally and externally dyed by it.

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ صِبْغَةً

Whose colour is better than the colour of Allāh?¹

A poet says:

If you spend your knowledge for the
embellishment of your heart, it will prove to

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 138.

be your beloved and helper. If you make it a means for your physical [outer] beautification, it will prove to be a snake. The essence of all sciences is for man to realize what his rank is on the day of Resurrection.

Purification of the self and rectification of deeds are the objectives of Dīnī knowledge. The objective of medical knowledge is preservation of bodily health. Its objective is not to merely memorize the names of medicines and their peculiar traits. It is impossible for a person to actually consume alcohol and not become intoxicated. Similarly, it is impossible for a person to really drink a goblet of Dīnī knowledge and not be “intoxicated” by Dīn. An ‘ālim of Dīn is one in whose heart knowledge of Dīn has taken root. A person does not become an ‘ālim merely by making statements and delivering lengthy talks. If he genuinely possessed Allāh’s fear in his heart, he would not have the audacity to commit sins.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ خَشْيَتِكَ مَا تَحُولُ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ مَعَاصِيكَ

O Allāh! I ask You for such a portion of Your fear whereby it would come as a barrier between me and committing acts of disobedience against You.

We learn from this that *khashyat* refers to that fear which comes as a barrier between a person and disobedience. If a person does not have such fear which comes as a barrier between him and sins, he must realize that he has not acquired genuine knowledge.

It is the duty of an ‘ālim not to consider the acquisition of formal knowledge to be his objective. Rather, he must make fear of Allāh his objective. He must pay particular attention to acquiring this fear. The desired

and required fear is the one which comes as a barrier between the self and Satan and disobedience.¹

A Few Points on The Commentary of The Above Verse

Consider the following points and wisdoms, and express gratitude to Allāh *ta'ālā* for this greatest of favours.

1. The word **إِنَّمَا** is used for confinement and limitation. Outwardly the words **إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ** mean: The fear of Allāh is confined to the 'ulamā'. In other words, the ignoramuses do not possess fear. Thus, it ought to be known that the word **إِنَّمَا** is similar to the one mentioned in the sentence **إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ** which means that the possession of intelligence is necessary for taking admonition. It is not possible for a person to take admonition without intelligence. Similarly here, the verse would mean that knowledge of Allāh's greatness and power is necessary for the acquisition of fear of Allāh *ta'ālā* – irrespective of whether such knowledge is acquired through studying, by remaining in the company of someone, through inspiration from Allāh *ta'ālā*, through His conferring it or through some internal fervour.

2. **إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ**: In other words, Allāh is all-mighty, all-supreme and all-powerful. He should therefore be feared. He is also most forgiving. He pardons those who fear Him. The word **عَزِيزٌ** demonstrates the need for fear, while the word **غَفُورٌ** demonstrates the fruit and result of fear.

¹ Maulānā Idrīs Kāndhlawī: *Ma'ārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 6, p. 412.

3. The word **غُفُورٌ** is mentioned after **عَزِيزٌ** so that the overpowering of fear does not result in a condition of despondence. In order to save a person from despair, Allāh *ta'ālā* gave him hope through His mercy and forgiveness. Reference is made to the fact that based on His power and might, there will certainly be some sort of interrogation in the end, but it will finally end with mercy. You should therefore not be despondent. Maintain your *īmān* between fear and hope. Constantly fear Him and do not become heedless while focussing on His might and power. Then focus on His forgiveness and mercy and do not lose hope.

4. The reason for the confinement and limitation in this verse is because the 'ulamā' are the heirs of the Prophets *'alayhimus salām* who fear Allāh *ta'ālā* the most. Thus, the 'ālim who does not possess Allāh's fear is not an heir of the Prophets *'alayhimus salām*. Furthermore, the 'ulamā' mentioned in this verse are only those who are heirs of the Prophets *'alayhimus salām* in both knowledge and practice. It does not refer to superficial inheritance. Understand well that when there is fear of Allāh *ta'ālā*, one's *Dīnī* and worldly affairs are set right. Thus, if you want to realize such a pure life, acquire knowledge of *Dīn* and practise on it until your practices become part and parcel of you.¹

5. The following merit of fear of Allāh *ta'ālā* is also worthy of consideration. Allāh *ta'ālā* makes mention of it at the end of *Sūrah al-Bayyinah*:

رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ، ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ رَبَّهُ

¹ Maulānā Idrīs Kāndhlawī: *Ma'ārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 6, p. 412.

Allāh is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. This awaits he who fears his Sustainer.¹

The merit and high rank of the ‘ulamā’ is also clearly proven from this verse. Those who couple īmān and good deeds with the fear Allāh *ta’ālā* shall have the honour of admission into Paradise as a reward from their Sustainer.

From the confinement and limitation of the verse **إِنَّمَا** **يَخْشَى** **اللَّهَ** **مِنَ** **عِبَادِهِ** **الْعُلَمَاءُ**, we learn that it is only the ‘ulamā’ who fear Allāh *ta’ālā*. Thus, it is proven from this that those ‘ulamā’ who fear Allāh *ta’ālā* are the ones who will be admitted into Paradise.

As for the question: which ‘ulamā’ are meant, this was explained and clarified previously from *Bayān al-Qur’ān* of Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānwī rahimahullāh and *Ma’ārif al-Qur’ān* of Hadrat Maulānā Idrīs Kāndhlawī rahimahullāh.

Let me add one point to this. Hadrat ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd radiyallāhu ‘anhu said: “Just that amount of knowledge which causes him to fear Allāh *ta’ālā* is sufficient for a person to be knowledgeable. And merely being proud over his knowledge is sufficient to render him an ignoramus.”²

Only ‘Ulamā’ Who Possess Fear Will Enter Paradise

‘Allāmah Rāzī rahimahullāh explains the words “this awaits he who fears his Sustainer” as follows:

المسألة الثانية: هذه الآية إذا ضم إليها آية أخرى، صار المجموع دليلاً على فضل العلم والعلماء، وذلك لأنه تعالى قال: ﴿إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ﴾. فدلّت

¹ Sūrah al-Bayyinah, 98: 8.

² *A’yān al-Hujjāj*, vol. 1, p. 38.

هذه الآية على أن العالم صاحب الخشية، وهذه الآية وهي قوله ﴿ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ رَبَّهُ﴾ تدل على انصحاب الخشية تكون له الجنة، فيتولد من مجموع الآيتين أن الجنة حق العلماء^١.

The second issue: When this verse is coupled with the other verse, then they collectively demonstrate the merit of knowledge and 'ulamā'. This is because Allāh *ta'ālā* says: "it is those who have understanding that fear Allāh." This verse shows that a person having fear is certainly one who is an 'ālim. And this verse: "This awaits he who fears his Sustainer" demonstrates that Paradise is solely for the one who has fear. Thus, it becomes clear from both verses collectively that Paradise is solely the right of the 'ulamā'.

The Merit of Knowledge And 'Ulamā'

Tafsīr 'Azizī states:

Allāh *ta'ālā* conferred His special fear to the 'ulamā' and said:

إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ

From among His servants, it is the 'ulamā' who fear Allāh.

Elsewhere He says that Paradise is set aside for those who fear Him.

ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ رَبَّهُ

Paradise is for those who fear their Sustainer.

We learn from these two verses that Paradise is specifically for the 'ulamā', and the reason for this is that Allāh *ta'ālā* allocated His fear specifically to them.

^١ التفسير الكبير، ج ١١، ٢٥٢.

If a person does not know of a thing, it is impossible for him to fear it.¹

Faqīh Abul Layth Samarqandī *rahimahullāh* said: “Attending an assembly of knowledge even if no benefit is derived from it or no ruling is learnt from it ensures the acquisition of seven feats.

- (1) The person is included as a student and receives the rewards which are promised to students.
- (2) He will be saving himself from sins as long as he remains in that assembly.
- (3) From the time students leave their houses with the intention of seeking knowledge, this person will be included in the reward which is promised to students.
- (4) He is included in the mercies which descend in the assembly of knowledge.
- (5) He remains in worship for as long as he listens to the discourses of knowledge.
- (6) When he is unable to understand a complex issue which is being explained and therefore feels broken-hearted, he will be included in the group of the broken-hearted.²

¹ *Tafsīr ‘Azizī*.

² The words broken-hearted (or *munkasiratul qulūb*) are actually part of a Ḥadīth:

في شرح الإحياء، روى أبو نعيم بسنده في الحلية عن مالك بن دينار قال قال موسى عليه السلام أين أبعيك؟ قال عند منكسرة القلوب.

The commentary of *al-Iḥyā’* states: Abū Nu‘aym relates in *al-Ḥilyah* from Mālik ibn Dīnār who said: Mūsā ‘*alayhis salām* said to Allāh: “Where should I search for You?” Allāh *ta’ālā* replied: “By the broken-hearted.”

- (7) The honour and dignity of knowledge and the disgrace of ignorance settle in his heart. He develops a dislike for sinners and ignorant people.

This is the condition of the person who does not derive any benefit from the assembly of knowledge. The immense rewards and benefits which will be accrued by the person who sits in the company of 'ulamā' can be gauged from this. For example, he will be blessed with the true recognition of Allāh *ta'ālā*, fear of Allāh *ta'ālā*, affinity with Allāh *ta'ālā* and so on.

Hadrat 'Alī radiyallāhu 'anhu said: Knowledge enjoys superiority over wealth for seven reasons:

- (1) Knowledge is the legacy of Prophets, while wealth is the legacy of Pharaoh, Hāmān, Namrūd and Shaddād.
- (2) Knowledge does not decrease when it is spent. Instead, it increases. On the other hand, wealth decreases with spending.
- (3) Wealth needs guards to watch over it, while knowledge guards over the person.
- (4) When a person passes away, he leaves his wealth behind, but takes his knowledge with him.
- (5) Wealth is something which is given to all – the believers and the unbelievers. The benefit of knowledge is given only to believers.
- (6) There is no human group which does not need one who is knowledgeable in Dīn [to guide it in its specific field]. On the other hand, there are many groups who have no need for wealthy people.

(7) On the day of Resurrection, knowledge will be a source of strength to cross the bridge over Hell, while wealth will be a cause of weakness.¹

Note: Glory to Allāh! What excellent virtues and benefits of knowledge. Students of Dīnī knowledge must specifically bear these in mind. They must never ever be caught up in an inferiority complex. Rather, they must consider this knowledge of Dīn to be superior to all branches of worldly knowledge. After all, its benefits are the most superior. In fact, they will be of use to a person in this temporary abode and also in the Hereafter. Bear this in mind and take admonition. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone.

¹ *Tafsīr 'Azīzī* (Persian), vol. 1, p. 171.

Quotations From *Akhlāq al-'Ulamā'*¹

الحمد لله الذي بنعمته تتم الصالحات، وصلی الله علی سیدنا محمد النبی الأمی وآله وسلم. وبالله استعین، وحسبني الله ونعم الوکیل أما بعد!

Allāh *ta'ālā* selected some of His creation and guided them to *īmān*. Then from among the believers He bestowed special favours to some by teaching them the Book and wisdom. He conferred them with understanding of *Dīn* and the method of apprehension. This practice of selecting and choosing certain people has been coming down through the generations. These people were conferred high ranks through the ascension of knowledge and embellished with the jewel

¹ *Akhlāq al-'Ulamā'* is a most beneficial and impressive book translated by Maulānā I'jāz Aḥmad Ṣāḥib A'zamī *rahimahullāh*. It is an excellent and flowing translation. I was most affected by this book and had a heartfelt desire to include sections of it in the present book.

The Maulānā passed away in Dhū al-Qa'dah 1434 A.H. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return. By Allāh's grace, he was an extremely righteous scholar who penned many books. He wrote a biography of Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyullāh Ṣāḥib *rahimahullāh* titled, *Sawāniḥ Ḥayāt Muṣliḥul Ummat* which was widely accepted. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward him with the best of rewards.

The author of *Akhlāq al-'Ulamā'* is Muḥammad ibn Ḥusayn ibn 'Abdillāh Ājurī. He was born around 284 A.H. Ājur is one of the districts of Baghdad, and this is why he is known as Ājurī.

Imām Ājurī studied under several scholars such as Abū Muslim Kajjī, Abū Shu'ayb Ḥarāfi, Yahyā ibn Ja'far Ḥalwānī and others.

He had a large number of students. He continued delivering lessons in Baghdad until 330 A.H. He then proceeded to Makkah and settled down there. He passed away on 1 Muḥarram 360 A.H. May Allāh *ta'ālā* shower him with His mercy.

of forbearance. It is through such personalities that the lawful is distinguished from the unlawful, truth is separated from falsehood, the beneficial is identified from the harmful, and the beautiful is recognized from the ugly. Their merit is great and their rank is lofty. They are the heirs of the Prophets and joy for the Auliya'. The fish in the oceans supplicate for them and angels spread their wings before them.

After the Prophets, it is the 'ulamā' who will intercede on the day of Resurrection. Pearls of wisdom are laid out in their assemblies. The heedless are brought to attention by looking at their character and actions. They hold a rank higher than that of the worshippers, and a position loftier than the ascetics. Their living is a boon and their dying is a calamity. Their programme is to remind those who forgot and teach those who are ignorant. There is no fear of harm from them and no danger of loss. Their excellent manner of disciplining creates enthusiasm in the obedient ones, and their beautiful admonition generates courage in those who have fallen short. The entire creation is dependent on their knowledge. Their statements are the proofs for the truth in the fight against falsehood. It is essential for the entire creation to obey them, while disobeying them is a most dangerous folly. The one who followed them remained on the path of guidance. The one who gave up following them went astray.

If the ruler of the Muslims is doubtful about any issue, it is essential for him to revert to the 'ulamā' and to act on their counsel. If the governors are uncertain about a ruling, the ruling of the 'ulamā' will be the final ruling. If judges face a difficult case, they will have to pass judgment in line with the view of the 'ulamā' and will rely on them.

They are lanterns for the people on behalf of Allāh *ta'ālā*, the glittering minarets of the cities, the capital

wealth for the maintenance of the ummah, and the fountains of wisdom. Satan is envious of them. The hearts of those who are on the truth obtain life from them, while the hearts of those of falsehood fall into the pits of death because of them. They are for the earth like the stars are for the skies. Their light shows the way in the pits of darkness on land and sea. When stars disappear, man is at a loss. When darkness is removed through their light, the gazes can get to work once again.

Verses Demonstrating The Merits And Rank of 'Ulamā'

Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قِيلَ لَكُمْ تَفَسَّحُوا فِي الْمَجَالِسِ فَافْسَحُوا يَفْسَحِ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ، وَإِذَا قِيلَ انشُرُوا فَانشُرُوا يَرْفَعِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ.

O believers! When you are asked to make room in the assemblies, then make room. Allāh will give you ample room. When you are asked to get up, then get up. Allāh will raise the ranks of those who believe among you and those who have been given knowledge. Allāh is aware of whatever you do.¹

Look! Allāh *ta'ālā* promises the believers that He will elevate their ranks, and gives additional glad tidings to the 'ulamā'. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ج وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ط وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

¹ Sūrah al-Mujādalah, 58: 11.

He grants understanding to whomever He wills. Whoever has been granted understanding has received immense good. It is only those who have intelligence that accept advice.¹

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا لُقْمَانَ الْحِكْمَةَ

We certainly gave wisdom to Luqmān.²

لَوْلَا يَنْهَهُمُ الرَّبُّنِيُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ عَنْ قَوْلِهِمُ الْإِثْمَ

Why do their dervishes and scholars not prohibit them from uttering sinful things.³

The words “dervishes” and “scholars” refer to the ‘ulamā’ and jurists. Allāh *ta’alā* says:

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَمَّا صَبَرُوا وَكَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يُوقِنُونَ.

We appointed from among them leaders, giving guidance under Our command, when they remained patient and believed with certainty in Our words.⁴

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجَاهِلُونَ قَالُوا سَلَامًا. وَالَّذِينَ يَبِيتُونَ لِرَبِّهِمْ سُجَّدًا وَقِيَامًا. وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اصْرِفْ عَنَّا عَذَابَ جَهَنَّمَ صلی إِنَّ عَذَابَهَا كَانَ غَرَامًا. إِنَّهَا سَاءَتْ مُسْتَقَرًّا وَمُقَامًا. وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا أَنْفَقُوا لَمْ يُسْرِفُوا وَلَمْ يَقْتُرُوا وَكَانَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ قَوَامًا. وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا يَزْنُونَ ج وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ يَلْقَ أَثَامًا. يُضَعَّفُ لَهُ الْعَذَابُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَيَجْزِيهِ فِيهِ جُزَاءً. إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ ط وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا. وَمَنْ تَابَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَإِنَّهُ يَتُوبُ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَتَابًا. وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَشْهَدُونَ الزُّورَ لا وَإِذَا مَرُّوا بِاللَّغْوِ مَرُّوا كِرَامًا. وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِّرُوا بِآيَاتِ

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 269.

² Sūrah Luqmān, 31: 12.

³ Sūrah al-Mā'idah, 5: 63.

⁴ Sūrah as-Sajdah, 32: 24.

رَبِّهِمْ لَمْ يَخِرُّوا عَلَيْهَا صُمًّا وَعُمْيَانًا. وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا
 قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا.

The servants of the Merciful are they who walk humbly on earth. When the ignorant ones address them, they reply: "Peace!" Who spend their night before their Sustainer, prostrating and standing. Who say: "O our Sustainer! Avert from us the punishment of Hell. Surely its punishment is inseparable." It is an evil resting place and an evil dwelling place. [The servants of the Merciful are they] who, when they spend, are neither extravagant nor niggardly; but are on a middle way between the two [extremes]. Who invoke no other sovereign with Allāh and do not kill the soul which Allāh has forbidden except for a just cause. And they do not commit adultery. Whoever does that has fallen into sin. The punishment will be doubled for him on the day of Resurrection and he shall remain therein disgraced. Except he who repented, believed and did some good deeds - for it is for such that Allāh shall transform their bad deeds into good deeds. Allāh is forgiving, merciful. Whoever repents and does good deeds - he truly returns to Allāh. [The servants of the Merciful are those] who do not participate in false deeds, and when they pass by frivolity, they pass on with dignity. Who, when they are reminded of their Sustainer's messages, do not fall upon them [as if they were] deaf and blind. Who say: "O our Sustainer! Give us in our wives and in our offspring the coolness of the eyes and make us leaders of the righteous ones."¹

The above verses explain the virtues of those who possess knowledge. The attributes and conditions as described in the Qur'ān are clear proofs of the virtue and merit of 'ulamā'. Allāh *ta'ālā* appointed them as

¹ Sūrah al-Furqān, 25: 63-74.

leaders for the creation so that the latter may follow and emulate them.

Hadrat Mujāhid *rahimahullāh* says that in the following verse, the word *hikmah* refers to knowledge and deep understanding.

يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ

He grants understanding to whomever He wills.

He says further that in the following verse:

وَأْتَيْنَاهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا

The words *hukm* and *ilm* refer to deep understanding, intelligence and knowledge.

Similarly, those who do not consider Hadrat Luqmān to be a Prophet say that the word *hikmah* in the following verse refers to intelligence, deep understanding and correct opinion.

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا لُقْمَانَ الْحِكْمَةَ

We certainly gave wisdom to Luqmān.¹

Hadrat Jābir *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* said that in the verse:

أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ

Obey Allāh and obey the Messenger. And obey those of authority among you.

The words “those of authority” refer to the jurists and scholars of Hadīth. Hadrat Mujāhid *rahimahullāh* also considers these words to refer to the ‘ulamā’ and jurists.²

¹ Sūrah Luqmān, 31: 12.

² *Akhlāq al-‘Ulamā’*, p. 12.

The Virtues of 'Ulamā' in The Light of Ahādīth

﴿1﴾

Hadrat Abū ad-Dardā' *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

ولفضل العالم على العابد كفضل القمر ليلة البدر على سائر الكواكب. إن العلماء ورثة الأنبياء، إن الأنبياء لم يورثوا دينارا ولا درهما، إنما ورثوا العلم. من أخذه أخذ بحظ وافر.

The superiority of an 'ālim over a worshipper is like the superiority of the full moon over all the stars. The 'ulamā' are the heirs of the Prophets. The Prophets did not leave behind dīnārs and dirhams as their legacy. They left behind knowledge. Whoever acquires knowledge has acquired a major share.

﴿2﴾

Hadrat Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

ما عبد الله بشيء أفضل من فقه ودين، ولفقيه واحد أشد على الشيطان من ألف عابد، ولكل شيء عماد، وعماد الدين الفقه.

There is nothing superior to Allāh's worship through knowledge and Dīn. A single 'ālim of Dīn is severer on Satan than a thousand worshippers. Everything has a pillar and the pillar of Dīn is knowledge of jurisprudence.

﴿3﴾

Hadrat Ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

فقيه واحد أشد على إبليس من ألف عابد.

A single jurist (scholar of Dīn) is severer on Satan than a thousand worshippers.

﴿4﴾

Hadrat Abū ad-Dardā' *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

ما سلك عبد طريقا يلتمس فيه علما إلا سلك به طريقا إلى الجنة، وإن الملائكة لتضع أجنحتها لطالب العلم رضى عنه، وإنه ليسغفر للعالم من في السموات ومن في الأرض حتى الحيتان في البحر.

When a person treads a path in search of knowledge, he is in fact treading a path to Paradise. The angels spread their wings for the seeker of knowledge out of pleasure with him. Whoever is in the heavens and the earth, even the fish in the sea, seek forgiveness for an 'ālim.

﴿5﴾

Hadrat 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Ās *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

إن الله عز وجل لا يقبض العلم انتزاعا، إنما يقبض العلماء حتى إذا لم يبق عالم اتخذ الناس رؤسا جهالا فاستلوا فأفتوا بغير علم، فضلوا وأضلوا.

Allāh *ta'ālā* does not snatch away knowledge all of a sudden. Rather, He takes away the 'ulamā' [one after the other] until when there is no 'ālim left, the masses will take ignoramuses as their leaders. They will be asked rulings and they will issue verdicts without knowledge. They will be astray themselves and will lead others astray as well.

﴿6﴾

Hadrat 'Ā'ishah *radiyallāhu 'anhā* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

إن الله لا ينزع العلم من الناس بعد أن يؤتيتهم إياه، ولكنه يذهب بالعلماء فكلما ذهب عالم ذهب بما معه من العلم حتى يبقى من لا يعلم فيضلون.

Allāh *ta'ālā* does not take away knowledge from the people after having given it to them. Rather, He takes away the 'ulamā'. Each time an 'ālim leaves this world, he departs with the knowledge which he had. Eventually those who have no knowledge will be left behind and they will all go astray.

﴿7﴾

Hadrat Hasan Basrī *rahimahullāh* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

إن من الصدقة أن تتعلم ثم تعلمه ابتغاء وجه الله عز وجل.

It is also an act of charity for you to study and then to pass on that knowledge for Allāh's pleasure.

Statements of The Sahābah on The Virtues of Knowledge

Hadrat 'Alī *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said:

كلام الحكيم حياة القلوب - كويل السماء غياث الأمم

The speech of a wise man is life for the hearts just as rain from the heaven is succour for the nations.

فمنطق الحكيم جلاء الظلام - وصمت الحكيم وعاء الحكم

The conversation of a wise man is a remover of darkness, and his silence is a treasure house of knowledge and wisdom.

حياة الحكيم جلاء القلوب - كضوء النهار يجلي الظلم

The life of a wise man is a light for the hearts just as the day light removes darkness.

Hadrat ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* asked his students: “Do you know how retrogression came into Islam?” They replied: “No.” He said: “The heaviness of an animal decreases gradually. Continuous use of a garment causes it to become worn out. Constant passing of a dirham from hand to hand causes it to become abraded. In the same way, when there are two ‘ālims in a place and one passes away, then half the knowledge of that place departs. When the second one passes away, all the knowledge departs.”

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at the excellent manner in which Hadrat ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* explained the decrease of an intangible thing. We, students, ought to bear it in mind.

Hadrat Mu‘ādh ibn Jabal *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* said: “Seeking knowledge for Allāh’s sake results in fear of Him. Striving for it is an act of worship. Revising it is glorification of Allāh. Exerting one’s self in researching it is jihād. A student’s studying is an act of charity. Explaining it to deserving people is a means of proximity to Allāh. This is because knowledge is an indication of the lawful and the unlawful. It is a friend in danger and a companion in solitude. Whether a person is experiencing good times or bad, it is a guide in all situations. It is an adornment for friends and a source of affinity with strangers. Through it Allāh *ta’ālā* confers high ranks to some people and appoints them as leaders over the people so that they may be emulated and their opinions may be practised upon. The angels embrace them with love so that their wings may touch them. Every creature on land and water supplicates for them – even the fish in the seas, insects, animals on land, cattle, the skies and its stars. This is because knowledge is life for the hearts, sight

for the eyes and strength for the bodies. Through it, slaves reach the ranks of noblemen and acquire the companionship of kings. They gain high ranks in this world and the Hereafter. Pondering and reflecting over knowledge is equal to fasting. Studying and teaching it is equal to *salāh*. Through it, Allāh's worship and obedience is enjoyed; and good interaction with His close associates is realized. The lawful and unlawful are identified through it. Knowledge is the leader of action. Action is its follower. The fortunate ones receive inspired knowledge while the wretched ones are deprived of it."¹

We mentioned the peculiarities and distinctive qualities of 'ulamā' very briefly and concisely. If a person ponders over just this much, he will realize the importance and greatness of knowledge and 'ulamā', and perceive a new enthusiasm for seeking knowledge within himself.

Etiquette And Duties of Those Studying Dīnī Knowledge

A true student presents himself with humility, restraint, dignity and decorum before the 'ulamā'. He gives as much consideration to etiquette as is possible. He does not lag behind in good works. If he is inclined towards solitude and privacy, he occupies himself in recitation of the Qur'ān, remembrance of Allāh *ta'ālā*, pondering over His favours and asking his self to be grateful. He seeks refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā* from the evils of his ears, eyes, tongue and self. If he sees the need to be among people, he chooses the company of people from whom he could derive benefit. These could be of three types: (1) A person who has less knowledge than him and wants to seek knowledge from him. (2) A person who is his equal in knowledge. His company is necessary because the two could discuss and revise

¹ *Akhlāq al-'Ulamā'*, p. 18.

academic matters so that their knowledge may be well preserved in their minds and hearts. (3) A person who is on a higher level than him in knowledge and is imparting knowledge solely for Allāh's sake. His company with the intention of acquiring knowledge is beneficial.

A person ought to remain in the company of such people. He must not recoil from their company because he can expect to derive tremendously from them. While occupying himself in these things, he must always fear his self getting him occupied in futile and baseless activities. He must be especially wary of his eternal enemy, Satan. He must not allow Satan to beautify evils to him or (even worse), to provide proofs of their goodness. This is happening quite a bit in today's times. May Allāh *ta'ālā* protect us.

A student ought to continually beseech Allāh *ta'ālā* for beneficial knowledge and seek refuge in Him from knowledge which is of no benefit. When reading the Qur'ān, he must try to fully understand the orders and prohibitions. He must memorize the Hadīth, Sunnah and stories of the Ṣahābah *radīyallāhu 'anhum* so that he can fulfil the rights of injunctions. He must fully consider the etiquette of knowledge and remain silent about futile matters. His silence must be of such a nature that his companions become desirous of his speaking. When there is an increase in his knowledge, he must fear that Allāh's evidence is being established against him. The more his knowledge increases, the more his fear must increase.

If someone has acquired a special branch of knowledge which the student could not acquire and the latter experiences grief and sorrow over it, he must not be heedless over this grief and sorrow. He must take stock of his self and reprimand it saying: "Why are you feeling grieved? O self! Beware of this and fear it. Let

not this grief become a calamity on you. If you really have to grieve, then grieve over the knowledge which you have already acquired and account of which Allāh's evidence has been established against you, yet you are not practising on that knowledge. If you are grieved by this, it is better than the knowledge which you could not obtain, while someone else got an opportunity of obtaining it. You do not know – had you acquired it, you may not have practised on it and Allāh's evidence against you would have been entrenched further.”

Think along these lines and, while seeking pardon from Allāh *ta'ālā*, beg Him to give you the benefit of whatever knowledge you have acquired thus far. Āmīn.¹

The Purpose of Acquiring Knowledge

One point must be understood with regard to acquiring knowledge, viz. Allāh *ta'ālā* has made His worship incumbent on us, and worship cannot be fulfilled without knowledge. We learn from this that the acquisition of knowledge is an obligatory duty on man. Furthermore, it must also be understood that it is not correct for man to remain ignorant. A believer should therefore seek knowledge with the intention of removing his ignorance and so that he can worship Allāh *ta'ālā* according to His order. Hence, every student should seek knowledge with the intention of being able to practise on Dīn according to Allāh's wishes. He must understand fully well that after acquiring knowledge, he must never consider it to be the fruit of his efforts and hard work. Rather, he must believe that Allāh *ta'ālā* – solely out of His grace and kindness – enabled him to acquire knowledge through which he is now able to carry out His obligations and abstain from unlawful things.

¹ *Akhlāq al-'Ulamā'*.

The Etiquette of Remaining in The Company of ‘Ulamā’

If a person wishes to be in the company of ‘ulamā’, he must pay special attention to certain points. He must sit respectfully before them and with humility from the heart. He must lower his voice before them. He must behave like a junior in their presence and find out things from them. Most of his questions must be with regard to obedience and worship. He must inform them that he is in need of whatever he is asking them about. Once he has received the information, he must express his gratitude and inform them that he benefited tremendously from them. If they become angry, the student must not display any traces of displeasure. Instead, he must think over what caused them to become angry, make up for it and seek their pardon. He must not vex them with too many questions. He must adopt a soft and simple interaction with them. He must not engage them in a discussion in a manner which shows that he knows more than them. A student must make a firm resolution to benefit as much as he can from them through humility and respect. He must neither argue with ‘ulamā’ nor get into disputes with foolish people. He must treat ‘ulamā’ with affection and decorum. The blessing of this is that Allāh *ta’ālā* will confer him with understanding of Dīn.¹

Definition of a Faqīh

Hadrat ‘Alī *radīyallāhu ‘anhu* asked: Would you like to know the sign of a genuine and real faqīh? A real faqīh is one who neither makes people despondent of Allāh’s mercy nor creates within them the audacity to commit sins. He must not make them smug about Allāh’s subtle planning. He must not hand over the Qur’ān to others. There is no good in a worship which is devoid of deep understanding. There is no good whatsoever in

¹ *Akhlāq al-‘Ulamā’*, p. 30.

jurisprudence which is devoid of understanding. There is no excellence in studying which is devoid of planning.

Maṭar Warrāq said: “I asked Hadrat Hasan Baṣrī *rahimahullāh* about a certain ruling and he gave me an answer.” I said: “O Abū Sa‘īd! The jurists differ with you on this issue.” He replied in astonishment: O Maṭar! Have you ever seen a faqīh? Do you know who a faqīh is? A faqīh is that ascetic and abstinent person who does not joke with those below him, abstains from finding fault with those above him, and does not seek the riches of this world through his knowledge.”

‘Imrān Manqarī says: “I said to Hasan Baṣrī *rahimahullāh* on one occasion with regard to one of his opinions: ‘The jurists do not say this.’ He replied: ‘Have you ever seen a faqīh? A faqīh is one who is disinterested with the world, desirous of the Hereafter, is a man of insight in Dīnī matters, and is strict in his adherence to Allāh’s worship.’”¹

The Method of Preserving Knowledge

Hadrat Ibn Mas‘ūd *radīyallāhu ‘anhū* says: If the ‘ulamā’ preserve knowledge and convey it to suitable people, they will become the leaders of their time. However, they have spent it to earn the pleasure of worldly people so that they may acquire some worldly gain from them. This is why they have become despicable in their eyes. I heard Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* saying:

من جعل الهموم هما واحدا، هم آخرته، كفاه الله هم دنياه، ومن تشعبت به هموم
أحوال الدنيا، لم يبال الله في أي أوديتها هلك.

¹ Ibid. p. 48.

When a person makes all his concerns and worries into just one concern and worry, i.e. of the Hereafter, Allāh *ta'ālā* will see to all his worldly worries. As for the one who wanders in the various valleys of worldly concerns, Allāh *ta'ālā* does not bother about which valley he dies in.¹

Two Types of 'Ulamā'

Hadrat Fudayl ibn 'Iyād *rahimahullāh* says that there are two types of 'ulamā' – an 'ālim of this world and an 'ālim of the Hereafter. The knowledge of the worldly 'ālim is fully visible and displayed. The knowledge of the 'ālim of the Hereafter is concealed. Follow the 'ālim of the Hereafter and stay far from the 'ālim of the world or else he may cause you to fall in his intoxication. He then read this verse:

إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْأَحْبَارِ وَالرُّهْبَانِ لَيَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ النَّاسِ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَيُصَدِّقُونَ عَن سَبِيلِ
اللَّهِ.

Many of the scholars and dervishes of the People of the Book devour the wealth of the people wrongfully and they hinder [others] from the path of Allāh.²

Hadrat Masrūq narrates that Hadrat 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said: “The one who possesses knowledge may speak. The one who does not must clearly state that he does not know, and that Allāh knows best. It is also something of knowledge to say that Allāh knows when one does not know.” Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

قُلْ مَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُتَكَلِّفِينَ

Say: I ask of you no wage for this [message] and I do not pretend to be what I am not.¹

¹ *Akhlāq al-'Ulamā'*, p. 57.

² *Sūrah at-Taubah*, 9: 34.

Do Not Give An Answer For Something Which You Do Not Know

Nāfi' *rahimahullāh* relates that someone asked Hadrat 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* about something which he did not know, so he replied: "I do not know."

'Aṭīyyah relates that someone asked Hadrat Ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* a simple question on inheritance. He replied: "I do not know." The man got up and left. Someone said to Hadrat Ibn 'Umar: "You should have given him the answer." He replied: "By Allāh, I do not know the answer."²

Yaḥyā ibn Sa'īd *rahimahullāh* relates that someone asked a question to one of the sons of Hadrat 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* to which he did not know the answer. The questioner said to him: "It is most astonishing that you are a senior scholar who is the son of a leader of guidance, and yet you do not know the answer!?" He replied: "In the sight of Allāh *ta'ālā* and the sight of those who possess His recognition, it is far more serious to say something without having knowledge about it or to relate a Hadīth from an unreliable narrator."

Hadrat Ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhu* used to say: "If an 'ālim finds it difficult to say 'I do not know', then he has reached his place of death." Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* quotes a statement of Hadrat Ibn 'Ajalān *rahimahullāh* who said: "When an 'ālim cannot say 'I do not know', you must conclude that he has reached his place of death." This was narrated by Imām Aḥmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullāh* from Imām Shāfi'ī *rahimahullāh* who narrated it from Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh*.

¹ Sūrah Sād, 38: 86.

² *Akhlāq al-'Ulamā'*, p. 72.

‘Abd ar-Rahmān ibn Mahdī *rahimahullāh* narrates that a person posed an academic question to Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh*. He replied: “I do not know.” The man asked: “Should I relate this to the people, that you do not know?” Imām Mālik said: “Yes, say to them that I do not know.”¹

The author then mentions a few weaknesses and shortcomings of ‘ulamā’ which we are not quoting. However, we make du‘ā’ to Allāh *ta‘ālā* to protect us from those weaknesses and shortcomings. Āmīn.

We now quote two articles on the responsibilities and character of ‘ulamā’. These are written by Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan ‘Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh* respectively. They are most beneficial and ought to be borne in mind by ‘ulamā’.

The Character And Duties of ‘Ulamā’

By: Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī

Respected ‘ulamā’! This is not the time to relax in your rooms, spend your time in solitude and to confine your efforts to your own salvation only. There is a need for you to go out onto the field and fulfil the duty of guarding and policing the Muslims, and steering them through your authentic knowledge and genuine actions. Guiding them should not be confined to a few juristical issues and rulings. Rather, you must prove yourselves to be lamps in every path of knowledge and practice. This does not mean that you must consider your own rectification and spiritual purification to be unnecessary. Rather, you must develop your own selves and also make efforts to develop others. After all, if a person has not rectified his self, how will he rectify

¹ *Akhlāq al-‘Ulamā’*, p. 73.

others? If a person cannot see himself, how will he show the path to others?

I also have to say this: Our 'ulamā' must make full efforts to become examples of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, the *Sahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum* and the pious predecessors. They must possess the qualities of self-sacrifice and monetary contentment. They must abstain from flattery and adulation of the affluent and powerful members of society. They must have high aspirations, lofty courage, and be fearless in searching for the truth and expressing the truth.¹

The Responsibilities of Educational Institutes

By: Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan 'Alī Nadwī

The fundamental right to live an honourable human life; fear of Allāh *ta'ālā*; human friendship; the courage and ability for self control; the practice of giving preference to collective benefits over personal benefits; respect for humanity; the zeal for protecting human life, wealth, honour and respect; giving preference to fulfilling rights over demanding rights; eagerness to defend and protect the weak and oppressed, and restrain the powerful and the oppressors; to be consistently undaunted and fearless before those who possess no virtue apart from wealth and authority; having the courage to speak out the truth even if it is against one's own people and group; the meting of justice for one's self and others; to have conviction in the supervision of a superpower [Allāh *ta'ālā*] and the fear of having to answer to Him – these are the real needs of a true and well-organized society, and a powerful and safe country. These are the guarantees for its protection. Teaching this and preparing a

¹ *Ta'mir-e-Hayāt.*

suitable environment for it is the first responsibility of the centres of learning.¹

The Need For And Importance of Assemblies of Dhikr in The Madāris

There is a need for special importance to be given to the remembrance of Allāh *ta'ālā* in the madāris so that Allāh's special mercy may descend.

I now quote a letter of Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth Maulānā Muḥammad Zakarīyyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh* which he wrote to Hadrat Muftī Muḥammad Shafī' Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Yūsuf Binnaurī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* wherein he stresses the importance of dhikr in the madāris. I earnestly request the reader to read it carefully. Allāh willing, the reader will acquire insight and admonition.

The Letter of Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth:

Addressed to Maulānā Muḥammad Yūsuf Sāhib Binnaurī and Muftī Muḥammad Shafī' Sāhib.

The new tribulations which are experienced by the madāris, the disinterest of students towards Dīn, their inattention, and their engrossment in futile activities have made me think – since many years – that there is a severe shortage, if not absence, of the dhikr of Allāh in the madāris. In fact, I see abhorrence for this line [of dhikr] in some quarters. I consider it to be extremely dangerous. The famous madāris of India – Dār al-'Ulūm [Deoband], Mazāhir al-'Ulūm, Shāhī Musjid Murādābād, and others – were founded and initiated by elders who were the most senior imāms in Sufism. It is through their blessings that these madāris are running to this day despite all the winds which are blowing against them.

¹ *Ta'mīr-e-Hayāt.*

I have been writing and speaking on this subject since many years and addressing the managers, administrators and elders of the madāris. I feel that if people like yourself pay particular attention in this regard, it will be more beneficial and more effective. I have been – to a certain extent – successful in this regard in Mazāhir al-‘Ulūm. As for Dār al-‘Ulūm [Deoband], I have written and spoken to Hadrat Qārī Muhammad Tayyib Sāhib several times. I am also addressing administrators of other madāris in this regard. I am extremely disturbed by the daily tribulations which the madāris are facing. I feel that the only way to protect ourselves from these tribulations is to engage in excessive dhikr of Allāh *ta‘ālā*. When there is no one to take Allāh’s name, this world will come to an end. If the pure name of Allāh *ta‘ālā* has so much of power that the entire world is existing because of it, the poor madāris are not even equal to a drop in comparison to the whole world. The influence and impact which the pure name of Allāh *ta‘ālā* will have in the continuation and preservation of the madāris is obvious. In the time of our elders, the large number of Sufi masters and dhākirīn which was to be found in these madāris is known to you. The severe decrease that has occurred now is also known to you. In fact, if I were to say that plots and excuses against this pure name [of Allāh *ta‘ālā*] are increasing by the day, then, based on my experience, I am not wrong.

It is therefore my wish that every madrasah must have a number of dhākirīn. Our elders have been against students getting occupied in dhikr, and I too do not agree with it. However, there must certainly be a number of dhākirīn from students who are on the verge of qualifying, those who have already qualified, or there must be a constant exchange of dhākirīn who are connected to you or to other elders. The madrasah

must make arrangements for their stay. I myself do not approve of the madrasah bearing the burden of their food arrangements. Instead, a few elders of the madrasah must take this responsibility or get a few sincere friends who will take the responsibility of seeing to one dhākir each – as used to be the arrangement for madrasah students in the past. However, the madrasah administrators must take some responsibility for their boarding. They will be housed in the madrasah, and a programme for dhikr laid down in a manner which would not impose on the students, those who are sleeping nor on those who are busy studying.

It is my wish for every madrasah to continuously have a few dhākirīn. In this way, there will be a lot of hope for security against internal and external tribulations. If not, the increasing internal and external tribulations will increase the further we move from the era of our elders.

That is all.

Was salām

Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth Sāhib, penned by Habībullāh.

20 November 1975, Makkah Mukarramah

Reply of Hadrat Muftī Muhammad Shafi' Sāhib

Our respected and honourable Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth Sāhib, may Allāh *ta'ālā* bless you with long life with goodness.

As-salāmu 'alaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh

I did not expect to receive your honourable letter so quickly and was astonished at the details which it contained. The fact of the matter is that since a long time all your affairs have been extraordinary and appear to be supernatural feats. May Allāh *ta'ālā*

perpetuate them and keep them eternal for the benefit of His creation. My eyesight does not permit me to read and write. I had your respected letter read to me several times by my friends. I felt that I should expand on your lofty statements and publish them. However, my health does not permit me to even dictate it to others. May Allāh *ta'ālā* bless me with some strength and courage so that I could accomplish this task. Your kindness and affection have always been on us. Your respected letter has – so to speak – bewitched me. May Allāh *ta'ālā* enable us to continue benefiting from your teachings.

I heard the entire section on the virtues of dhikr. A theme together with its title is coming to my mind. If Allāh *ta'ālā* enables me, I will publish it with a commentary. If not, publishing your respected letter verbatim will – Allāh willing - also be beneficial.

Was salām

Muḥammad Shafi'

14 Dhū al-Hijjah 1395 A.H., Thursday.

We now quote the last portion of the letter of Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Yūsuf Sāhib Binnaurī rahimahullāh.

Reply of Maulānā Muhammad Yūsuf Binnaurī Sāhib

It is clear that students generally pay no attention whatsoever to their rectification and reformation during the student days. This situation is most dangerous. If the teachers themselves do not possess this strong affiliation and students too are heedless about their rectification, there is no adherence to dhikr and du'ā', it is an era of tribulations, and the scene of *حفت النار*

بالشهوات (the Hell-fire is surrounded by desires) is before us at every step of the way, then there is no alternative to excessive dhikr of Allāh *ta'ālā*. I am in need of your

special prayers and supplications. We are suffering from the calamity of wasting time, and fear occupying ourselves in futilities.

Was salām
Muḥammad Yūsuf.

Knowledge Must Be Sought From Qualified People

By ‘Allāmah Shātibī *rahimahullāh*

من أنفع طرق العلم الموصلة إلى غاية التحقق به، أخذه عن أهله المتحققين به على الكمال والتمام.

وإن كان الناس قد اختلفوا هل يمكن حصول العلم دون معلم أم لا؟ فالإمكان مسلم ولكن الواقع في مجارى العادات أن لا بد من المعلم. وهو متفق عليه في الجملة...إلى: فلما ترك هذا الوصف رفعت البدع رؤوسها لأن ترك الإقتداء دليل على أمر حدث عند التارك، أصله اتباع الهوى.

The most beneficial ways of acquiring knowledge which would convey a person to the level of perfection is to acquire it from people who have established themselves on the level of perfection and completeness. People differ as to whether it is possible to acquire knowledge without a teacher. We accept that it is possible, but the reality and norms dictate that a teacher is essential. There is general unanimity in this regard... When these qualities are discarded, bid`ah will come into existence because when emulating one’s elders is discarded, it proves that the person wants to follow his own desires.

Although there are differences on certain subsidiary points, people unanimously agree that a teacher is essential for the acquisition of knowledge. This is also the general practice. The presence of a teacher is therefore necessary and essential. People say that knowledge was in the hearts of people. It was then

transferred to books, but the key to knowledge remained with people. This also proves that knowledge has to be acquired from a teacher. It becomes clear from this that it refers to both – ‘ulamā’ and the book – and nothing else. This point is established from a Hadith as well: “Allāh *ta’ālā* will not remove knowledge from the hearts of people. Rather, he will remove it by taking away the ‘ulamā’.” Since this is the case, it is proven that the ‘ulamā’ alone are the keys to knowledge. Knowledge should therefore be acquired only from those who have reached a level of perfection and erudition. This is a clearly understood point which is unanimously agreed upon by the intelligent ones. The following prerequisites are unanimously accepted for all sciences.

The person must know the principles of the science and also the things on which the understanding of the science is dependent. The person must be able to express the science proficiently. He must know the essentials which are related to it, and be able to remove the doubts and misgivings which come up regarding that science.

Three Signs of an Erudite ‘Ālim

There are a few signs of an erudite ‘ālim. These are in line with the above-mentioned prerequisites. The three signs are:

1. He practises on whatever he learns so that there is conformity between his words and actions. If there is any contradiction between the two he is not eligible for people to study under him nor is he worthy of emulation.
2. He must have acquired training from the masters of that science and remained in their company. Such an ‘ālim will be eligible to be described with the same attributes which his mentors have. This

was the norm with the righteous elders of the past. The first example of this is of the Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum who remained in the company of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam and preserved his words and actions. They then trusted and had faith in whatever those words and actions meant – irrespective of what they were and how they were issued and practised. On the occasion of the Treaty of Hudaybiyah, Hadrat ‘Umar radiyallāhu ‘anhu said to Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam:

ألسنا على حق وهم على باطل

Are we not on the truth and they [idolaters] on falsehood?

One of the benefits of companionship is that when there are occasions of making objections to the ‘ulamā’, a person will remain obedient and exercise patience until the principle is established through proofs.

Sahl ibn Hanīf said on the occasion of the Battle of Siffin: “O people! (Think carefully about your views.) had I been able to not accept Rasūlullāh’s instruction in the incident concerning Hadrat Abū Jandal, I would not have accepted it.” He said this when he experienced an objection. Despite this, these people cast aside their own views and practised on the view of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam until revelation came down which removed the doubt and objection.

This became a principle for later generations, i.e. the Tābi‘īn held on firmly to the Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum. They thus became experts in the sciences of the Shari‘ah and reached the peak of excellence. You can gauge the correctness of this principle by the fact that you will not find a genuine and well-known ‘ālim who did not study under an ‘ālim who was well-known and popular in his time. The one who does not possess this attribute will be from a deviated sect and opposed

to the Sunnah. This is why the objection is made against Ibn Hazm Zāhirī – he neither studied under the masters nor learnt etiquette from them. Erudite ‘ulamā’, the four imāms and other ‘ulamā’ like them were against his ways.

3. He follows those from whom he acquired knowledge and learns etiquette from their etiquette. You know about how the Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum emulated Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam, the Tābi‘īn emulated the Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum, and the scholars of each era emulated their respective teachers. It was because of this quality that Imām Mālik rahimahullāh distinguished himself over his contemporaries. When I say emulating them, it means one must do his utmost in adopting their qualities. After all, most of the ‘ulamā’ of that time had adopted those qualities. However, Imām Mālik rahimahullāh distinguished himself because he had done his utmost in adopting their qualities. When these qualities are discarded, bid‘ah will come into existence because when emulating one’s elders is discarded, it proves that the person wants to follow his own desires.¹

The Issue of Training And Rectification

By: Hadrat Maulānā Marghūb ar-Rahmān Sāhib²

On the occasion of a meeting of representatives which was held on 20-21 Muharram 1415 A.H., Hadrat Maulānā Marghūb ar-Rahmān Sāhib, principal of Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband, delivered the key address. Part of what he wrote on the subject of rectification and training is quoted

¹ *Adab al-Ikhtilāf fī Masā’il al-‘Ilm wa ad-Dīn*, pp. 173-177.

² He was a principal of Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband and passed away in 1430 A.H.

here. Study it carefully because it is most beneficial. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā*.

The Fundamental Issue is That of Training Students

After identifying the type of knowledge, a very important issue is that of training students. Based on the objective behind the establishing of madāris, this issue is the most important. It was not the objective of our elders to merely make our students aware of jurisprudence, principles of jurisprudence, Hadīth, tafsīr, beliefs and other sciences – as is the case with non-religious education. If the fact be told, this outward knowledge was a means, while the fundamental objective was for students to mould themselves in accordance with the excellent example of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. As per the clear statements of the Qur'ān and Hadīth, a true and perfect Muslim is not one who only knows the rules of salāh, fasting, zakāh, hajj and so on; or that he has superficial understanding of honesty, integrity, Allāh-consciousness and piety. Rather, a true and perfect Muslim is one who has conviction in these outward facts, practises on all the Islamic forms of worship, and at the same time is embellished with good character and Allāh-consciousness. Dīn is a combination of knowledge and practice. There is so much of retrogression nowadays that there are very few centres of learning which stress the combination of knowledge and practice. The madāris which impart outward knowledge are considered to be successful. Consequently, instead of serving Dīn, our “successful” students are rushing headlong towards other sources of income. In the past, the madāris did not need to stress too much on rectification nor was there a need to formalize it. Human society was very simple and even the Muslim homes were conducive to a Dīnī upbringing.

Furthermore, the teachers in the madāris used to be excellent examples for their students. This is why when they completed their studies, they did not get into the pure field of teaching out of their own accord. Instead, they would spend lengthy periods of time in the company of teachers and spiritual mentors. They would only commence teaching when they received permission from their teachers and mentors. Moreover, they were not the means and causes of the destruction of Dīn in the outside environment – as is prevalent today. This is why students of the past would be moulded in an excellent form by just a little supervision from their elders.

Presently, the entire situation has changed and we are faced with the need for a formal system of rectification. The environment in Muslim homes is going from bad to worse. The madāris too are content with outward knowledge. The systems which had been in place for academic training and character perfection are coming to an end. Students are not even bonding with their teachers. There is therefore a severe need for us to lay down a programme of action for the training of our students, and to strive to formalize it. Furthermore, preference should be given to hiring teachers who are embellished with excellent character and Allāh-consciousness.

Efforts must be made to make the madrasah environment such that students are encouraged towards good deeds and detest evils. Such plans must be put into action which would convey the students as close as possible to the fundamental objective. The spirit of sacrifice for the sake of propagation, teaching and raising the word of Allāh *ta'ālā* must be blown into them as was the distinguishing mark of their predecessors. May Allāh *ta'ālā* – through His grace and

kindness – steer us towards making such resolutions and provide us with ease to carry them out. Āmīn.¹

Note: Māshā Allāh, this is an excellent article on the subject of training. It ought to be put into action. May Allāh *ta'ālā* inspire us all. Āmīn.

My heart desires to quote a part of an article titled, *Qīm̄tī Lamh̄āt*, which was written by Maulānā Aslam Sāhib Amrohī.

Students Must Value Their Time And Valuable Moments

Time is the most valuable item in this world. If it is put to correct use, a person can acquire immense benefit in this world and the Hereafter. For example, if time is spent in reciting the Qur'ān, a person can accumulate thousands of rewards in a few seconds. The same can be said of dhikr and other acts of worship. We are promised innumerable rewards for merely saying *Subhānallāh*, *al-Ḥamdulillāh* and so on. If time is spent for the acquisition of worldly objectives, beneficial results can certainly be realized. No matter what objective a person spends his time in, he will certainly see success in it. Valuing time results in man's progress and he reaches heights which leave onlookers astounded.

On the other hand, the biggest loss to man is when he wastes his time. We could say that time is another name for man. Every person comes into this world for a specific period of time. Every moment which passes of his life is actually shortening his period of stay in this world. Time is a treasure which can never be brought back once it is wasted. This is why when any moment of life is spent in futility and useless activities, then there can be no worse deprivation than it. A person should be much more aggrieved by the wastage of time

¹ Quoted from *Tarjumān Deoband*, Jumādā al-Ūlā 1425 A.H./July 2004.

than the loss of the biggest of treasures. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

نِعْمَتَانِ مَعْبُودٌ فِيهِمَا كَثِيرٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ، الْصِّحَّةُ وَالْفَرَاغُ

The bounties of good health and spare time are two bounties regarding which many people are deceived.

In other words, these are two bounties whose rights people do not fulfil as they ought to. When they have good health, they are not cautious about how they use it. When they have spare time, they waste it in futilities.¹

We now quote a part of an article titled *Matā'-e-Waqt Kī Qadr* which was actually a lecture delivered by Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Salīm Dhorāt Sāhib. Hopefully one will realize the value of time. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone.

How Our Elders Valued Time

The extent to which our elders valued time can be gauged from the following: Hadrat Dāwūd Tā'ī rahimahullāh was a senior Sufī master. When having his meal, it was his habit to break pieces of bread quickly and leave them in water. He would then carry on with his work and eat the pieces after they have softened. Someone asked him: “Why do you not eat bread with curry as everyone else does?” He replied: “I calculated the time it takes to eat bread with curry compared to when it is eaten by softening it in water. I found that I could recite 50 more verses of the Qur'ān. I adopted this practice ever since that day so that I can have the added benefit of being able to recite 50 more verses.”

¹ *Qīmti Lamḥāt*.

Hadrat Surī *rahimahullāh* relates: I saw Hadrat Jurjānī *rahimahullāh* eating dry barley. I asked him: “Why are you eating dry barley?” He replied: “I calculated the time it takes to chew bread and eating dry barley. I found that chewing the bread takes extra time equal to how long it takes a person to say *Sub-hānallāh* 70 times. This is why I gave up eating bread since the last 40 years. I merely ingest dry barley.”

Shaykh Salīm Rāzī *rahimahullāh* was a senior scholar of the fifth century and Hāfiz Ibn Hajar ‘Asqalānī *rahimahullāh* is a commentator of *Saḥīḥ Bukhārī*. When the pens of these scholars used to get worn out due to excessive writing, they would occupy themselves in dhikr while reshaping their pens so that the time is not passed in doing just one task. Obviously, reshaping one’s pen is also an act of worship because it is for the sake of knowledge. Despite this, they were so particular about their time that they would spend it in dhikr.

Perception of the value of time is also a favour from Allāh *ta’ālā* which is not conferred to everyone. It is given to those fortunate ones who have concern for the Hereafter and have acquired the sweetness of Allāh’s remembrance.

Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* relates an extraordinary story of the well-known Sufi master, Hadrat Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham *rahimahullāh*. Hadrat Khidr *‘alayhis salām* came to meet Hadrat Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham. After exchanging mutual greetings and shaking hands, Hadrat Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham became occupied in dhikr. Hadrat Khidr *‘alayhis salām* was quite surprised and said: “You seem to be very unconcerned. People harbour hopes for many years just to meet me and are still not able to. Here I have come personally to meet you but you are not paying any attention to me!?” Hadrat Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-

ham replied: “The person who has left over time after meeting Allāh *ta’alā* may have the wish to meet you.”

Note: What he means is: “I am always occupied in Allāh’s dhikr. How am I going to get any spare time to meet you?”

The Value of Time in The Light of Ahādīth

There are several teachings of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* which direct us towards making the moments of life into valuable moments and not wasting them. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said:

خَيْرُكُمْ أَطْوَلُكُمْ أَعْمَارًا وَأَحْسَنُكُمْ أَعْمَالًا (مسند أحمد)

The best of you are those who have lengthy lives and the best deeds.

خَيْرُ النَّاسِ مَنْ طَالَ عُمُرُهُ وَحَسَنَ عَمَلُهُ (ترمذي)

The best person is one who has a long life and good deeds.

In other words, he has a long life and spends moments of his life in good deeds.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said:

إِعْتَنِمْ خَمْسًا قَبْلَ خَمْسِينَ: شَبَابَكَ قَبْلَ هَرَمِكَ، وَصِحَّتَكَ قَبْلَ سُقْمِكَ، وَغِنَاكَ قَبْلَ فَقْرِكَ، وَفَرَاغَكَ قَبْلَ شُغْلِكَ، وَحَيَاتَكَ قَبْلَ مَوْتِكَ (حاکم)

Seize the opportunity of five things before the onset of five: youth before old age, health before illness, affluence before poverty, free time before occupations, and life before death.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said:

نِعْمَتَانِ مَغْبُورٌ فِيهِمَا كَثِيرٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ، الصِّحَّةُ وَالْفُرَاغُ

The bounties of good health and spare time are two bounties regarding which many people are deceived.

In other words, it is a real loss to abstain from good deeds while enjoying good health and having free time.

Those Who Valued Time

My brothers! Those who valued time and saved themselves from futile activities were able to accumulate a lot for their Hereafter, and also left a lot for the Muslims after them.

Yahyā ibn Maʿīn *rahimahullāh* was a very senior Hadīth scholar. He wrote one million Aḥādīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* with his own hands.

ʿAllāmah Ibn Jarīr Tabarī *rahimahullāh* wrote 358 000 pages on Islamic sciences with his pen.

ʿAllāmah Muḥīyy ad-Dīn Nawawī *rahimahullāh* is the commentator of Saḥīḥ Muslim and the author Riyād as-Sāliḥīn, Kitāb al-Adhkār [and other books] He only lived to the age of 45. When the extent of his written works were calculated, it turned out that he used to fill four notebooks daily.

ʿAllāmah Sayyid Maḥmūd Ālūsī Baghdādī *rahimahullāh* is the author of Tafsīr Rūḥ al-Maʿānī. He used to teach 24 lessons a day. When he became busy with his tafsīr and issuing of fatwās, he used to deliver thirteen lessons during the day. He would then spend the night writing his tafsīr. The next day, he would hand over his written notes to his scribes. It is said that he wrote so much at night that several scribes would get together to transcribe his notes which would take them ten hours to complete.

An Astonishing Statement of Imām Rāzī

The great commentator of the Qurʾān, Imām Fakhr ad-Dīn Rāzī *rahimahullāh* left behind a treasure of 200 written works for the Muslim nation. Despite this, he used to say:

وَاللَّهِ إِنِّي أَنْتَأَسُّفُ فِي الْفَوَاتِ عَنِ الْإِسْتِعَالِ بِالْعِلْمِ فِي وَقْتِ الْأَكْلِ فَإِنَّ الْوَقْتَ وَالزَّمَانَ عَزِيزٌ.

By Allāh, I regret the time that was wasted in eating which kept me away from my occupation with knowledge. Time is a very valuable treasure.

My dear brothers! On one hand we have this group of our elders who used to value every moment and would still be remorseful. On the other hand we spare no efforts in wasting time. Despite this, not only do we not express remorse over it, we do not even perceive it.

Paradise Dwellers Will Also Regret Their Wastage of Time

Remember! When the people of Paradise will enter it and acquire all its bounties, they will still regret all the time which they had wasted. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

لَيْسَ يَتَحَسَّرُ أَهْلُ الْجَنَّةِ إِلَّا عَلَى سَاعَةٍ مَرَّتْ بِهِمْ لَمْ يَذْكُرِ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى (طبراني، بيهقي)

The people of Paradise will not regret over anything [of this world] apart from the time which passed in which they did not remember Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Hadrat Imām Shāfi'ī *rahimahullāh* acquired many beneficial points from the company of the pious elders. One of the points is:

الْوَقْتُ سَيْفٌ، إِقْطَعُهُ وَإِلَّا قَطَعَكَ

Time is a sword. Cut it in good work or it will cut you.

In other words, it will get you occupied in regrets and kill you like that.

Someone wanted to speak to the famous Ṭābi'ī, 'Āmir ibn 'Abd al-Qays *rahimahullāh*, so he said: "Stop the

movement of the sun for a short while so that I can speak to you.” (Since this is impossible, I do not have the time to speak to you).¹

Note: The importance of time can be gauged from all these statements and teachings. We must therefore value this valuable possession of time as much as we can and make it useful. Students are not excluded from this. Instead, they must spend more of their valuable time in acquiring knowledge and reach the peaks of knowledge and practice as was reached by our ‘ulamā’ and pious elders of the past. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta’ālā* alone.

Important Recommendations For The Wellbeing of Madāris

After joining Madrasah Amīniyah, Hadrat Maulānā Muftī Kifāyatullāh Sāhib initiated certain useful changes. They are as follows:

On the occasion of the 8th Annual Jalsah of Madrasah Amīniyah, he presented a paper containing certain recommendations. The gist of them are:

1. The objective of all madāris is one, viz. to proliferate and spread Islamic sciences. Therefore, as regards administration, all madāris must be attached to a single system. In other words, they must work with mutual cooperation and unity. They must not be opponents of each other.

2. These madāris are not progressing because their board members and administrators are not religious-minded and not ‘ulamā’. Instead, the majority of them are bound to modern norms and enamoured by modern western modes. They are totally ignorant of Dīnī sciences. The board members of some madāris are

¹ *Matā’-e-Waqt Kī Qadr*, p. 47.

‘ulamā’ and religious-minded, but their administrators have evil intentions. They understand academic matters very well, but are not trustworthy in monetary affairs. They consider the madrasah funds to be their own wealth and property. This is why there is a severe need for board members of madāris to be ‘ulamā’ and trustworthy people. All administrative and academic matters must be fulfilled according to their counsel and decisions. The administrators must have the fear of Allāh *ta‘ālā* in their hearts. They must accept their duties with a sense of responsibility and abstain from needless use of madrasah funds. If they are in need, they must spend according to the need in line with the trust which the community has placed in them.

3. A person who becomes a principal of a madrasah must spend all his time in the administration of the madrasah with full attention. He must devote his time to madrasah duties because a person cannot accomplish two tasks with full attention at the same time.

4. All principals and teachers must treat these guests of Allāh (the students) with affection and kindness. They must remove their difficulties and create an enthusiasm and zeal for knowledge in them.

5. There must be absolute caution when admitting students in the madrasah. Only those students must be admitted who have a yearning to acquire Islamic sciences. Before admitting a student, a certificate of good character must be obtained from his previous madrasah.

Note: Unfortunately, the madrasah administrators are not cautious in this regard. They admit a student even after learning about his bad character. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta‘ālā*.

6. In order to maintain the self-respect of students, the madrasah must not permit them to go to any invitation [for a meal] outside the madrasah. If a well-wisher wants to invite students, the principal must be informed one day in advance, and the food must be brought to the madrasah at the appointed time. The well-wisher's own people must then feed the students.

Note: Glory to Allāh! These are excellent principles and rules for the reformation of madāris which are most worthy of adoption.

A Noteworthy Speech¹

After praising Allāh *ta'ālā* and sending salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, Maulānā Iqbāl Sāhib said:

Whenever I present myself before Hadrat (i.e. Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib), I present myself as a student so that I could derive benefit from him. When I take leave from Hadrat, I experience a unique feeling and emotion by virtue of Hadrat's special focus and attention. It is beyond me to describe this feeling. Since Hadrat personally instructed me to address you now, I have no alternative but to take the courage and address you respectfully. May Allāh *ta'ālā* pardon me and inspire me to say something useful.

The Maulānā then said:

I advise the students to value Hadrat because he is certainly a Shaykh al-Mashā'ikh. People from all over

¹ This speech was delivered by the honourable Maulānā Iqbāl Sāhib of Lusaka, Zambia. It was delivered in Madrasah 'Arabīyah Bayt al-Ma'arif, Bakhshī Bazaar, Allāhābād. It was compiled by Maulānā Sābir 'Alī Sāhib Qāsimī Rajasthānī, Dār al-Ma'arif al-Islāmīyah, Allāhābād.

the world turn to him, and are always ready to invite him and take benefit from his company. Hadrat's presence is an immense bounty because he has the reality and spirituality before him. This is becoming a rare quality nowadays. Students must therefore acquire this treasure by remaining in his company and serving him.

I now advise the teachers that when teaching the words, they must create their meanings in the heart. In other words, they must create spirituality in the students. The elders said: "Those who do not have piety in their hearts and have love for this despicable world cannot be the recipients of Qur'ānic sciences and Ahādīth." Furthermore, teachers must consider their students to be their own children and treat them with love. They must work on the students so that they can achieve something before they leave the madrasah. They must pay special attention to mentally weak students. An intelligent student will be able to understand and work out the lesson on his own. On the other hand, a weak student will need the lesson to be repeated to him several times.

Hadrat Imām Shāfi'ī *rahimahullāh* taught a ruling to a student a few times but he did not understand it. The student felt ashamed and left the room. Hadrat Imām Shāfi'ī *rahimahullāh* went out to him and explained the ruling 70 times until he understood it. We learn from this that we ought to spend more time and focus more attention on weak students so that they could turn out into worthwhile products.

Teachers must also get up at night for tahajjud and then make du'ā' for their students. If they cannot do this daily, they must do it at least once or twice a week. They must present their servitude and humility before Allāh *ta'ālā* and say to Him: O Allāh! I am weak. I cannot do anything on my own. You show mercy on us

and bless us all with the wealth of knowledge and practice. Āmīn.

While remaining with Hadrat, a person must practise on the internal Sunnats together with the external ones. I myself heard Hadrat saying that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu *'alayhi wa sallam* said to Hadrat Anas radiyallāhu *'anhu*: “If you can get up in the morning while bearing no malice towards anyone, you should certainly do it. The one who practises on my Sunnah shall enter Paradise.” Malice is obviously not an attribute of our outer limbs. Rather, it is an attribute of the heart, regarding which Rasūlullāh sallallāhu *'alayhi wa sallam* said that it is his Sunnah not to have this attribute.

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu *'alayhi wa sallam* also said that the *'ulamā'* are the heirs of the Prophets. Just as an heir receives a share from every portion of the deceased's estate – like the inheritance of gold and silver, of land, buildings and other possessions – in the same way, Rasūlullāh sallallāhu *'alayhi wa sallam* taught us external sciences together with internal sciences. The Muslims – especially the *'ulamā'* – have to take a share of the internal sciences as well so that they can be the heirs of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu *'alayhi wa sallam* in the true sense of the word.

A special sign of the sincerity of teachers is that in addition to carrying out the tasks for which they are paid, they happily carry out other tasks which are not their responsibility. For example, the job of cleaning is not their responsibility. However, they consider this to be part of Dīn and therefore supervise the students to do it or do the cleaning themselves. Similarly, to wake up the students for salāh may not be their responsibility but to do it is a special sign of their sincerity.

Our dear students must also consider it essential to serve their teachers with absolute respect so that they may provide comfort to them, the teachers will be happy with them and make du'ā' for them.

Note: Māshā Allāh! Maulānā Iqbāl Sāhib mentioned two points which really need to be practised. (1) Teachers must work hard on students who are mentally weak. There are times when dim-witted students eventually become senior and erudite scholars. (2) When any task is delegated to a teacher or worker, it is essential for him to carry it out. However, in addition to this, if any additional work needs to be done by the administration, he must do it without hesitation. It is a sign of sincerity and dedication.

The third point which comes to my mind is that if any staff member of the madrasah has an urgent need, the administrators must come to his assistance. This is proof of their justice and equity. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Five Attributes of An 'Ālim-e-Rabbānī

Allāh *ta'ālā* says in the Qur'an:

فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِنْ كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ طَائِفَةٌ لِّيَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي الدِّينِ وَلِيُنذِرُوا قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ.

Why, then, did a section from each group not go forth so that they may acquire an understanding of religion and inform their people when they return to them so that they might be on their guard?¹

As per the above statement of Allāh *ta'ālā*, an 'ālim-e-rabbānī who is an heir of the Prophets is one who upholds the following:

¹ Sūrah at-Taubah, 9: 122.

He teaches people. The education which he imparts must be that of tafsīr, Hadīth, jurisprudence, Sufism, beliefs, Arabic grammar and etymology. An ‘ālim-e-rabbānī must not engross himself in principles and logic. Allāh *ta’ālā* says in this regard:

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ
وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِن قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ.

It is He who raised among the unlettered people a Messenger from among themselves, reciting to them His verses, purifying them, and teaching them the Book and wisdom. Before this they were lying in manifest error.¹

It is necessary for an ‘ālim-e-rabbānī to consider these points in the course of teaching and tutoring. If he comes across an unfamiliar word in the Qur’ān, he must explain it linguistically. If he comes across a difficult conjugation or construction, he must explain it through grammar and etymology. When explaining rulings, he must do it by presenting examples and clarify the essential objective. In order to highlight his object, he must present a prelude to a proof together with its essential element so that the result is observed quickly and automatically. Conditions and limitations which apply to definitions and general rules must be explained as and when they come. The reasons for limiting certain generalities must be explained. When coming across divergent creeds, explanations and texts, and two things are similar to each other but appear different, or are different to each other but appear similar, he must remove the apparent doubts which this causes. Similarly the misgivings with regard

¹ Sūrah al-Jumu‘ah, 62: 1-2.

to points which are essentially impossible must be refuted. As long as an 'ālim-e-rabbānī does not explain these things properly and does not apprise his students of them as and when they occur, he will not be able to provide full benefit to his students.

﴿2﴾

The second point whose preservation is the responsibility of an 'ālim-e-rabbānī is the constant encouragement towards the ṭarīqah. He must set aside a time when he sits with people, focuses his attention on them and instil the tranquillity of bond with Allāh *ta'ālā* in them. The fact of the matter is that he has to fulfil whatever is within his capability so that his evidence before Allāh *ta'ālā* is complete. Then we come to what is available to his capability. This includes company of the pious, other verbal and practical practices of Sufism, and to encourage his students by casting his influence on them. The rest is then left in Allāh's hands. The Qur'ānic instruction of "purifying them" makes reference to this.

﴿3﴾

An 'ālim-e-rabbānī must continually advise and remind his associates. Allāh *ta'ālā* addresses Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* in this regard:

فَذَكِّرْ إِنْ نَفَعَتِ الذِّكْرَى

So remind [them] if the reminder benefits [them].¹

An 'ālim-e-rabbānī must abstain from story-telling in the course of his lectures. The Ḥadīth collections state that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and the *Sahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum* used to continually advise

¹ Sūrah al-A'lā, 87: 9.

and admonish the people. *Sunan Ibn Mājah* states that the practice of story-telling was neither found in the era of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* nor in the eras of *Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr radiyallāhu ‘anhu* and *Ḥaḍrat ‘Umar radiyallāhu ‘anhu*. It is also stated that the *Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum* used to expel story tellers from the masājid. The point that is learnt from these traditions is that story telling does not come under the purview of advising and admonishing, it is blameworthy while advice and admonishment are praiseworthy. Story telling in this context refers to relating strange and supernatural stories, and going to inaccurate accounts when explaining the virtues and merits of deeds. When explaining these virtues, a story teller does not really want to engender the Sunnah in the people. Rather, he wants to demonstrate his power of expression, show innovativeness in his speech, and distinguish himself as an eloquent person among people. This is why he resorts to exaggeration in relating various stories and parables. In short, it is essential to differentiate between advice and admonishment, and story telling.

﴿4﴾

Another responsibility of an ‘ālim-e-rabbānī is “enjoining good and forbidding evil” in matters related to *wuḍū’* and *ṣalāh*. For example, he sees a person performing *wuḍū’* but not washing his feet properly. He must announce in a loud voice: “The punishment of Hell-fire is for the heels.” He sees a person not carrying out the essential postures of *ṣalāh* properly. It is his duty to tell him: “Go and repeat your *ṣalāh*. Your *ṣalāh* is incomplete.” In the same way, he must practise on “enjoining good and forbidding evil” in other matters such as clothing and manners of conversation. Allāh *ta‘ālā* says in this regard:

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ط
 وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ.

There should be among you a group that continually invites towards good, commands good deeds and forbids evil. It is they who have reached their goal.¹

Kindness and affection are essential ingredients for enjoining good and forbidding evil. Scolding, reprimanding and severity are the traits of kings. Allāh *ta'ālā* says in this regard:

وَجَادِلْهُمْ بَالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ

Argue with them in a way that is best.²

﴿5﴾

The fifth responsibility of an 'ālim-e-rabbānī is to see to the needs of students and the poor as much as he can. If he himself cannot do this, he must encourage his associates and like-minded people to do this.

If all five qualities are found in a person, you must not doubt him as an heir of the Prophets. He is undoubtedly the one who will be addressed as a “great person” in the angelic world. It is for a person like him that Allāh’s creation – even the fish in the sea – as mentioned in a Hadīth will pray for him. If you ever come across such a person, you must impose on your self to remain in his company. Never allow yourself to be deprived of his company because he is like “red sulphur”. Allāh *ta'ālā* knows best after that.

Furthermore, if a person holds the position of inviting and guiding towards Allāh *ta'ālā* but does not possess

¹ Sūrah Āl 'Imrān, 3: 104.

² Sūrah an-Nahl, 16: 125.

any of the above five qualities, then it means that he is deficient in this regard and will remain deficient until he sets himself right.¹

The Importance of And Need For The Establishment of Makātib And Madāris²

Education is the means of turning a human being into a real human being. The responsibility of education lies with the intelligentsia of a nation. The fulfilment of this responsibility is an extremely important obligation. It is therefore necessary for Muslims to be always concerned about their education, especially Dīnī and religious education. If the Muslims of this country become deprived of Dīnī education, how will they be saved from the influences of the customs, habits, religious and moral norms and conditions of the majority? We can easily gauge the effects of this influence from some areas of India where there is no proper system of Islamic education.

These thoughts were expressed by the head of the Dīnī Ta'lim Council of Uttar Pradesh, Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad Rābi' Hasanī Sāhib Nadwī at a conference in Bastī. He stated that since this is a secular state, concern for Islamic education rests on our shoulders. All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*, the Dīnī Ta'lim Council is giving full importance to this need. Every possible help is needed for this movement. Through the Council, there is a need for the madāris to increase the number of makātib. If there is any shortcoming in this regard, the damage will not be seen

¹ *Ta'mir-e-Hayāt*, Lucknow, 10 September 2011.

² This is a talk delivered by Hadrat Maulānā Rābi' Hasanī Sāhib Nadwī on the occasion of the Ta'limī Conference on 25th December 2011 in Bastī, in the name of the founder of the Dīnī Ta'lim Council, Qādī Muḥammad 'Adil 'Abbāsī Marḥūm.

immediately. However, after one or two generations, the Islamic identity of Muslims and knowledge of Islam will come to an end. This will be a major loss and a cause of Allāh's displeasure. Those who lagged in this regard will be interrogated by Allāh *ta'ālā*.

The deputy of the Dīnī Ta'līm Council, Hadrat Maulānā Sa'īd ar-Rahmān Sāhib A'zamī, expressed his views and said that Allāh *ta'ālā* created us for the leadership of the world. Unfortunately, we abandoned the path of leadership and chose the path of beggars. Consequently, we have to repeatedly go to the master and present our needs. The Maulānā addressed the government and frankly stated that they must not interfere with our creedal issues which are more beloved to us than our own lives. He added: Man must carry out Allāh's orders and see how – Allāh willing – the corruption and temptation in the world will come to an end.

Before this, the famous lawyer, Janāb Zafar Yāb Jilānī, addressed the audience in his unique manner. While speaking about the importance and benefit of Islamic education and highlighting the services of the Dīnī Ta'līm Council, he added that Muslims of today are extremely vigilant and observant. It is not easy to deceive them. We demand our rights from the government and beg of them. The government must give us our rights within the ambit of the law. It must not make fools of us behind closed doors. From the state level to the central government level, we are given nothing but promises. This will certainly cause astonishing results in the upcoming elections. Whoever disregarded Muslim issues will certainly be taken to account.

Maulānā Khālīd Rashīd Firangī Maḥallī who opened the conference appealed to the Muslims to give emphasis on education and to be ready with the strength of unity

and harmony in order to combat all obstacles. While shedding light on the 50 years of service rendered by the Dīnī Ta'lim Council, the general secretary of the Council, Dr. Mas'ūd al-Ḥasan 'Uthmānī said that just as Islamic education was important in the past, it is important today and will remain important in the future. The elders of the ummah irrigated this movement with their blood. It is now our turn to come onto the field and there is a need for fresh blood from our youth.

The Dīnī Ta'lim Council had the leadership of a great personality like Maulānā Abul Ḥasan 'Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh* in the past, and – all praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā* – it now has a brave and vigilant leader who possesses the lofty goal of Maulānā Abul Ḥasan 'Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh*, and also the pain and concern like that of Qādī 'Adīl 'Abbāsī. If there is any need, it is that the Muslim community must realize its responsibility and every member of the community must make this its concern.¹

The Importance And Benefit of Dīnī Madāris

The religion of Islam is being protected by our religious centres of learning which were established by distinguished 'ulamā' of Dīn and intelligentsia who possessed genuine and correct knowledge of Dīn. They are constantly challenged by those who have evil intentions against Muslims. If we are not able to understand these challenges, we will be destroyed as Muslims, and be reduced to a subjugated nation in the ranks of Western nations. It is therefore essential for us to look at our centres of learning which are like powerhouses for spreading knowledge among Muslims

¹ Quoted from *Rāshtarya Sahārā*, Lucknow, 28 December 2011.

and for keeping us attached to Islam with due importance.

The present era has become one of various challenges and demands on Muslims. There is an international effort to reduce the Muslim community ineffective, in fact, to wipe it out completely. Everywhere there are conspiracies to put an end to the existence of Islam and to sever the bond between Islam and Muslims. These conspiracies are taking place in the intellectual and academic fields, in the civilizational and historical fields, and in the political and cultural fields. Multidimensional schemes are plotted. If distinguished scholars and erudite 'ulamā' are not trained to combat them, the Muslim nation's very existence could be in danger.¹

A Few Recommendations to Administrators And Teachers in Madāris

The causes which could bring about a change in the madāris are now presented. To this end, we present an article written by Maulānā Mir Zāhid Sāhib, titled *A Few Recommendations to Administrators And Teachers in Madāris*. It was published in *Tarjumān Deoband*, page. 51.

1. Contact With Experienced And Expert Educationists

In order to run a religious organization and education centre on a distinguished pattern, a sincere bond must be established with an experienced and expert educationist who is cognizant of his responsibilities. He must then be apprised of conditions in the organization [or centre of learning], and the educational and rectification journey of the organization must be

¹ Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad Rābi' Ḥasanī Nadwī, quoted from *Ta'mīr-e-Ḥayāt*, 10 December 2011.

traversed under this steering. Allāh willing, this will certainly bring success.

2. Education And Tutoring Must be The Nucleus of Our Efforts

Just as it is essential for the head of a madrasah to possess the important qualities of sincerity, humility and trustworthiness, it is vital for him to have an academic temperament and scholarly enthusiasm. Based on the principle:

الناس على دين ملوكهم

People follow the religion of their leaders.

The temperament which the head possesses will generally be passed onto the teachers and students of that madrasah.

This quality has not just become rare but almost non-existent in us. We have cast aside the signpost to our destination, and replaced the academic focus and nucleus of all our efforts with acquisition of wealth and construction of buildings. This is why we see madāris progressing economically and with regard to its buildings, while the actual purpose of education and character building is almost zero in some madāris. We have become totally heedless of the glittering history of our past elders who always focussed their efforts on humans and did not lag in the least in making every type of sacrifice in order to rectify and develop their capabilities. In those days, our elders had very few buildings, but their focus was always on their goal.

This is why sterling work was accomplished in the fields of education and training. May Allāh *ta'ālā* inspire us all. Āmīn. Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān.¹

¹ *Islāhī Kalimāt*, p. 42.

3. Salaries For Teachers

During his caliphate, Hadrat 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* first initiated makātib for the education of children and appointed teachers to teach them. *Al-Muhallā* of Ibn Hazm and *Kanz al-'Ummāl* contain a narration of Wadīn ibn 'Atā' who said:

كأك بالمدينة ثلاثة معلمين يعلمون الصبيان، فكان عمر يرزق كل واحد منهم خمسة عشر كل شهر.

Three teachers used to teach children in Madīnah. 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* used to give each one 15 dirhams a month for his sustenance.

The narration of *Kanz al-'Ummāl* explicitly makes mention of 15 dirhams. The present narration mentions the word *yarzuqu* (to give as sustenance) instead of *ya'juru* (to give as payment). We learn from this that those who were teaching Qur'ān and Islamic sciences in those days used to accept a payment which fulfilled their needs. *Al-Fawākih ad-Dawānī 'Alā Risālati Ibn Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī* states with reference to 'Āmir ibn 'Abdillāh Khuzā'i: Hadrat 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* issued an order and appointed 'Āmir ibn 'Abdillāh Khuzā'i as the first teacher to teach children. He did not apportion a salary for him from the Islamic Treasury, but a stipend. He instructed him to write on a slate for children who were mentally weak, and to teach intelligent children verbally [without writing anything down]. In line with this order, Hadrat 'Āmir would remain in the maktab from morning to evening. Some people requested Hadrat 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* to give him a concession, so he was asked to commence teaching after fajr and continue until about 11am. He must recommence after zuhr and continue until 'aṣr. The remaining time was for his rest.

(4) A Teacher Must Be Cautious in Disciplining

It is stated that Hadrat 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* dispatched a person by the name of Abū Sufyān to teach the people who lived on the outskirts and in the desert. He used to beat the children who did not learn. Consequently, he lashed a child by the name of Aus ibn Khālid Tā'ī which resulted in his death. The boy's mother began crying and informed Hurayth ibn Zayd al-Khayl Tā'ī of the incident. In return, the latter killed Abū Sufyān.¹

We can gauge from the above that makātib and arrangements for teaching out of the cities were already initiated during the early eras of Islam. Hadrat 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* specified stipends from the Islamic Treasury for the teachers. The teachers were given various guidelines related to the system of teaching. However, no separate efforts were made for constructing buildings, and construction and beautification were not the objectives.

Today if we were to devote just half the efforts to the standard of education and character building in our madāris, and work on our students in this regard, considerable changes and improvements can be realized. Many of the complaints which we receive from the masses about our students will be reduced. O Allāh! Inspire us to do what You love and what You are pleased with.

5. Appointment of Capable And Sound-Natured Teachers

The fundamental progress and academic fortification of an institute are dependent on hard-working, selfless and sincere teachers. If they are of sound mind and

¹ Qāḍī Aṭ-har Mubārakpūrī: *Khayr al-Qurūn Kī Darsgāhe*, p. 338.

temperament, and spirited, the madrasah will certainly traverse the stations of progress day after day. The position of the teachers as regards the strength of the education system is no less than the back bone of the human body. Their responsibility does not stop at imparting knowledge. Rather, they have to bear the responsibility of creating a realization of the responsibility of character building in the young minds of their students. A teacher is an example for all children. His thinking, views, ways and habits, lifestyle and all other actions are subtly transferred to his students. If teachers adhere to the Sharī'ah and Sunnah, realize and value their position, and the qualities of affection, mercy and concern are overpowering in them, the new generation which will be prepared by them will undoubtedly have the same qualities.

The most important obligation on the administrators of a Dīnī organization is to appoint suitable teachers who, together with being qualified, have a Dīnī concern and character, and are of sound temperament.

6. Board Members Must Treat Their Teachers Well

While it is a laudable and praiseworthy position to be a principal, it is also a very heavy responsibility. It is essential for the head to be high-minded, far-sighted, forbearing and noble-minded. He must have the kindness of an elder and the love of a close relative. His treatment of and interaction with his subordinates must be so just and balanced that he considers their emotions and feelings on one hand, and does not trample their rights and hurt their feelings at the same time. He must consider the workers and teachers of the madrasah to be genuine well-wishers and builders of the madrasah, and believe that the madrasah is resting solely on the sincere academic efforts of these builders. A madrasah is not one which only has beautiful

buildings, striking hostels and attractive parks and gardens. The principal must therefore bear this in mind and not fall short in honouring, promoting and encouraging his subordinates.

The madrasah system is a system from Allāh *ta'ālā*. It is He who delineated a distribution of responsibilities. He selects some people for teaching and others for the august responsibility of principle-ship. The principle must never scorn any teacher and not treat anyone as a labourer.

Hadrat Maulānā Abrār al-Haq Sāhib rahimahullāh of Hardoi says: “The trustees and administrators must treat their assistants, especially the teachers, in an excellent manner.”¹

Nowadays we hear of some principals and rectors who are so low-minded that they refer to their teachers as their workers and are proud about it. The damage which this shallow-mindedness causes to these madāris is obvious. May Allāh *ta'ālā* protect us. Āmīn.

7. A Special Need For Clarity in Dealings

Islamic teachings impose on the believers to adhere to good character, acts of worship and social relationships. In the same way, clear guidelines are provided for the setting right of dealings and to maintain clarity and transparency in them. Qur'ānic verses and Aḥādīth provide just and ample proof for this. From among the fundamental weaknesses which have become the hallmarks of Muslim society is the habit of not maintaining clarity in dealings and transactions. Let alone the masses, even those who are considered to be educated are immersed in these weaknesses. In fact, we can go one step further and say that the administrators and heads of some of the

¹ *Majālis-e-Abrār*, p. 147.

madāris and makātib are also suffering from this chronic illness. Teachers have to “run after” the administrators for their salaries. Construction companies and labourers are seen running behind them for their payments. Any other person who has any monetary dealing with them is also not safe from their inappropriate dealings. Their dealings as regards the internal matters of the madrasah are also not clear. They are found to be reckless in keeping the income and expenditure accounts of the madrasah. This is undoubtedly a painful situation. It most certainly does not behove the position of an ‘ālim who is in charge of such an institution. There is a need for us to raise ourselves from this shallow course of action and to endeavour to construct our bright future.¹

An Admonitory Ḥadīth For ‘Ulamā’ And Other Servants of Dīn

حدثنا سويد بن نصر عبد الله بن المبارك حدثنا حيوة بن شريح حدثنا الوليد بن أبي الوليد أبو عثمان المدائني أن عقبة بن مسلم حدثه أن شفياء الأصبجي حدثه أنه دخل المدينة فإذا هو برجل قد اجتمع عليه الناس، فقال من هذا؟ فقالوا أبو هريرة! فدنوت منه حتى قعدت بين يديه، وهو يحدث الناس. فلما سكت وخلا، قلت له: أسألك بحق وبحق لما حدثتني حديثاً سمعته من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عقلته وعلمته. فقال أبو هريرة: أفعلم، لأحدثنك حديثاً حدثنيه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عقلته وعلمته. ثم نشغ أبو هريرة نشغاً فمكث قليلاً ثم أفاق. قال لأحدثنك حديثاً حدثنيه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في هذا البيت ما معنا أحد غيري وغيره.

Shafī al-Aṣḥuḥ related to ‘Uqbah ibn Muslim that he went to Madīnah when he suddenly saw a man around whom was a crowd of people. He asked them: “Who is this man?” They replied: “Abū Hurayrah.” Shafī says: I went close to him until

¹ *Tarjumān Deoband*, Rabī‘ al-Awwal 1430 A.H./April 2009.

I sat right in front of him. He was relating Ahādīth to the people. When he fell silent and was alone, I said to him: "I ask you on the basis of a right which I have over you and another right which I have over you (The first right is that he was an outsider and the other was as a student. Alternatively it could mean: the first right was of listening to Hadīth in an assembly, and the second was of listening to Hadīth in privacy) that you must most certainly relate to me a Hadīth which you heard from Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, understood it and fully comprehended it." Abū Hurayrah said: "I will certainly relate a Hadīth which I heard from Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, understood it and fully comprehended it." Abū Hurayrah then began sobbing. He regained his composure after a short while and said: "I will most certainly relate a Hadīth which Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* related to me in this house when there was no one apart from him and myself.

ثم نشغ أبو هريرة نشغاً شديدة ثم أفاق ومسح وجهه وقال: أفعل لأحدثك حديثاً حدثني رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أنا وهو في هذا البيت ما معنا أحد غيري وغيره.

Abū Hurayrah then started sobbing intensely. He regained his composure and passed his hands over his face. He said: "I will most certainly relate a Hadīth which Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* related to me in this house when there was no one apart from him and my self.

ثم نشغ أبو هريرة نشغاً شديدة ثم مال خارا على وجهه فاسندته طويلاً ثم أفاق. فقال حدثني رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أن الله تعالى إذا كان يوم القيامة ينزل إلى العباد ليقضي بينهم وكل أمة جاثية. فأول من يدعوه رجل جمع القرآن ورجل قتل في سبيل الله ورجل كثير المال.

Abu Hurayrah started sobbing intensely. He then leaned forward and was about to fall on his face. I supported him for a long time until he regained his composure. He said: Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* related to me: Allāh *ta'ālā* will come before His servants on the day of Resurrection to pass judgement on them. Every person will be sitting on his knees. The first persons to be summoned will be one who memorized the Qur'ān, a man who was killed in Allāh's cause, and a wealthy man.

فيقول الله للقارئ: ألم أعلمك ما أنزلت على رسولي؟ قال بلى يا رب. قال: فماذا عملت فيما علمت؟ قال: كنت أقوم به آناء الليل وآناء النهار. فيقول الله له: كذبت. وتقول الملائكة كذبت. ويقول الله له بل أردت أن يقال فلان قارئ، فقد قيل ذلك.

Allāh *ta'ālā* will say to the reader of the Qur'ān: "Did I not teach you the Qur'ān which I sent down to My Messenger?" He will reply: "Indeed, O Allāh!" Allāh *ta'ālā* will ask: "How much did you practise on what you learnt?" He will reply: "I used to perform *ṣalāh* through it in hours of the night and day." Allāh *ta'ālā* will say to him: "You are lying." The angels will also say: "You are lying." Allāh *ta'ālā* will say: "Rather, you wanted it to be said: 'Such and such person is a *qāri*.' (i.e. you did it for show). So it was said (i.e. you received the reward for your action in the world).

ويؤتى بصاحب المال فيقول الله له: ألم أوسع عليك حتى لم أدعك تحتاج إلى أحد؟ قال بلى يا رب! قال: فماذا عملت فيما آتيتك. قال: كنت أصل الرحم وأتصدق. فيقول الله له: كذبت، وتقول الملائكة كذبت. ويقول الله: بل أردت أن يقال فلان جواد، وقد قيل ذلك.

The wealthy person will then be brought and Allāh *ta'ālā* will say to him: "Did I not give you expansion [in sustenance] to the extent that I did not leave you dependent on anyone?" He will reply: "Indeed, O Allāh!" Allāh *ta'ālā* will ask: "What did

you do with the wealth which I gave you?" He will reply: "I used to maintain family ties with it and give in charity." Allāh *ta'ālā* will say to him: "You are lying." The angels will also say: "You are lying." Allāh *ta'ālā* will say: "Rather, you wanted it to be said: 'Such and such person is generous.' (i.e. you did it for show). So it was said (i.e. you received the reward for your action in the world)."

ويؤتى بالذي قتل في سبيل الله. فيقول الله له: فيماذا قتلت. فيقول: أمرت بالجهاد في سبيلك، فقاتلت حتى قتلت. فيقول الله له: كذبت، وتقول الملائكة كذبت. ويقول الله: بل أردت أن يقال لك فلان جري، فقد قيل ذلك.

The one who was killed in Allāh's cause will be brought. Allāh *ta'ālā* will ask him: "Why were you killed?" He will reply: "You ordered me to wage jihād in Your cause, so I fought until I was killed." Allāh *ta'ālā* will say to him: "You are lying." The angels will also say: "You are lying." Allāh *ta'ālā* will say: "Rather, you wanted it to be said: 'Such and such person is very brave.' (i.e. you did it for show). So it was said (i.e. you received the reward for your action in the world)."

ثم ضرب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم على ركبتي فقال: يا أبا هريرة، أولئك الثلاثة أول خلق الله تسعر بهم النار يوم القيامة^١.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* then hit me on my shoulder and said: "O Abū Hurayrah! These three will be the first of Allāh's creation whom the Hell-fire will burn on the day of Resurrection."

In explaining the above Hadīth, Hadrat 'Allāmah Muḥammad 'Awāmah advises students of today as follows:

^١ جامع الترمذي، المجلد الثاني، ص ٦٣.

ومما يجذر منه طالب العلم في أيامنا هذه انهماكه في القيل والقال، وكثرة السؤال، والفضول في الكلام، والأخذ في الجدل، المرء واغترابه في المسائل والمحفوظات، والنقول عن غير المتداول من الكتب لدى العلماء، وأخذه للعلم عن الكتب لا بالتلقي من أفواه العلماء عن طريق مصاحبتهم ومزاحمتهم عليه بالركب.

Among the things which a student of today has to safeguard himself are the following: rumours, excessive questions, futile conversations, getting into arguments, speaking about uncommon rulings and memorizations, quoting from books which are not commonly circulated among 'ulamā', acquiring knowledge from books and not from the speeches of 'ulamā' by way of remaining in their company and sitting as a student before them.

وكذلك انصرافه عن أدب العلماء وأخلاقهم مع سلفهم وشيوخهم، بل الإزدراء بمن يتأدب بأدب العلماء، ووصفه بأوصاف مزرية، تنفر الناس منه، وظن بعض الناس أن العلم ما هو إلا معلومات تحفظ أو تحفظ أسماء المصادر التي تبحث في مسألة كذا وكذا، ويتشدد بها في المجالس، أو تملأ حواشي الكتب، وتعليقاتها بأسماء هذه المصادر، وحينئذ يدعى صاحبها بالعلامة المحقق، وعالم الوقت، ومحدث العصر.

Similarly, turning away from the etiquette and mannerisms of the 'ulamā' which they had with their elders and mentors. In fact, deriding the one who adopts the etiquette and manners of 'ulamā', and labelling him with despicable names thereby causing people to be alienated from him. Some people assume that knowledge is merely facts which are memorized, or that it entails memorizing the names of the reference works from which such and such ruling is investigated. And that he must now be able to discuss them openly and confidently in assemblies, or fill the footnotes of books and comments with the names of these reference works. Unfortunately, such a person is then referred to as an

'allāmah, a research scholar, an academic of our time, and a Hadīth specialist of our era.

أو باللجوء إلى الوسائل المعاصرة (برامج الحاسوب) التي فتنت الناس وجعلتهم يظنون أنهم صاروا بها علماء حفاظا مجتهدين. استغنوا بها عن سؤال الشيوخ والعلماء عن كل صغيرة وكبيرة، وما دروا عن هذه البرامج أن استعمالها غير المختصين المتمكنين سوف تكون من أعظم الوسائل التي ستحقق فيهم قول رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: اتخذ الناس رؤساء جهالا، فسئلوا فأفتوا الناس بغير علم فضلوا وأضلوا.

Or to resort to contemporary means (such as computer software) which have really caused havoc to people and made them think that they have now become 'ulamā', memorizers and mujtahids. That they do not need to ask the 'ulamā' and scholars on any matter - big or small. They do not know that if non-specialists use such software, it will become one of the most major means for the statement of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* to apply to them: "The masses will take ignoramus as their leaders. They will be asked rulings and they will issue verdicts without knowledge. They will be astray themselves and will lead others astray as well."

وأبعد من هذا وذاك من لا يشتغل بشيء من العلم إلا بمعرفة ما طبع وما صدر حديثا، ومن حقه وأين مخطوطاته، وهو يظن أنه صار مرجع العلماء ومحط الفضلاء. والعلم فوق هذا وغير هذا. العلم هو الحفظ والفهم والعمل والتطبيق والتخلق والتعبد والتصون والتحقق والمحاسبة للنفس والمراقبة لله، والإهداء بهدي الأنبياء عليه وعليهم أفضل الصلوة والسلام، والإقتداء بسيرة أصحابه وتابعيه بإحسان¹.

Something which is even more fearful and dangerous is related to the one who is not occupied in knowledge. All he

¹ من صحاح الأحاديث القدسية بقلم حضرة العلامة محمد عوامة، ص ٦٠.

knows is what books were printed and published recently, who referenced them and where the manuscripts are. He then feels that he has become the resource for 'ulamā' and scholars, and that they must refer to him. This is not what knowledge is all about. Knowledge consists of memorizing, understanding, practising, applying, adopting good character in one's own life, becoming an ardent worshipper, protecting one's self, knowing the reality, self-appraisal, meditating on Allāh *ta'ālā*, following the ways of the Prophets, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, the *Sahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum* and those who followed them in goodness.

Note: Look at the enlightening and admonitory words of Hadrat 'Allāmah Muḥammad 'Awāmah to the 'ulamā' and students of Dīn. They truly and genuinely expose the reality. They have opened our eyes and awakened our hearts. It created a concern in our hearts to set right the pride and conceit within us and our independence from 'ulamā'-e-rabbāniyyīn because of our own incomplete knowledge. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward him for opening my eyes and reawakening my spirit.

Advice to Students of Dīn

It is out of our concern for the wellbeing and welfare of our students of Dīn that we are advising them to acquire knowledge and recognition of Allāh *ta'ālā* for His sake. In fact, they must acquire perfection and firmness in their knowledge so that it can be a cause of firmness of their īmān and steadfastness on īmān for others. The latter is a *fard-e-kifāyah*. It is essential for such students to establish a bond of rectification with a Sufi master so that they can acquire proper knowledge from him and remain concerned about rectification of the self. Allāh willing, this will be a protection from the evil qualities of the self (as alluded to by 'Allāmah 'Awāmah). The fact of the matter is that it is only

‘ulamā’ who combine knowledge, practice and rectification of the self who have the quality of true leadership in them. They are the ones whom the masses and the elite consider to be their guides.

It is the duty of such ‘ulamā’-e-rabbāniyyīn to render the services of specific da‘wah, viz. teaching, tutoring, lecturing, giving talks, deciding on cases, issuing fatwās, and writing and compiling books. It is also their duty to render general da‘wah. That is, they must apprise those who are engaged in the work of da‘wah of the correct Sunnah way. They must do this as a way of advice and concern, and encourage them to remain steadfast in this path. It is essential for these addressees to accept the words of advice of the ‘ulamā’ who are really Allāh’s witnesses on earth. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta’ālā* alone.

Just as specific da‘wah needs ‘ulamā’, there is a need for a group which carries out the services of purification of the self, maintaining a bond with Allāh *ta’ālā* and teaching the different forms of dhikr. This was an important objective of all the Prophets. May Allāh *ta’ālā* bring forth a special group of this nature out of His grace and kindness. May He help those of this group who are already present, and enable their blessings to spread far and wide with perfection. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *ta’ālā*.

Finally, I feel I have to clarify an important reality. Those who are experts in the modern sciences, who read Islamic literature and are also involved in certain Islamic services must not remain independent of the ‘ulamā’-e-rabbāniyyīn and the erudite Sufi masters. They must never ever vex pride over their knowledge which they acquired from books. Instead, they must continue with a programme of deriving benefit from the ‘ulamā’ so that the ailments which ‘Allāmah ‘Awāmah referred to (pride, conceit and independence from

‘ulamā’) are not found in them. They must lend an ear just as they are enthusiastic about speaking. If they do all this, then – Allāh willing – it will be a means for the acquisition of knowledge, practice, humility and submission. This will be a stepping stone to more progress in Dīn and a means for Allāh’s pleasure. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *ta’ālā*. (Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī)

How to Acquire The Desired Benefits of Muṭāla’ah

1. Before commencing with muṭāla’ah, make a conscious intention for it to be academically complete, you must be able to carry out the obligation of da’wah and tablīgh through it, you must be able to convey the message of Islam, and be of benefit to your people and country.
2. Ensure that you have presence of mind in the course of muṭāla’ah so that you are able to remember whatever you read and understand it correctly.
3. Important texts and fundamental points must be underlined with a pencil so that when you are looking at the discussion a second time, the underlined sections become firmly embedded in your mind.
4. Basic and essential themes must be noted with a pencil on the margin so that these can be remembered thoroughly.
5. Important themes or discussions which appeal to you must be noted in your diary with the name of the book and the page number so that if there is a need, it will be easy for you to refer to the source.
6. Have a separate notebook to note Ahādīth, literary points, sensible poems, historical events,

academic facts, rulings, fatwās and anything else which appeals to you in the course of reading.

This notebook will undoubtedly be the essence of many books which will be of use in future in your academic or practical life.

O respected tutor! Continue guiding your students in this regard so that they may become practising people in the future, and be included among those who possess the elements of Islamic culture and progress, and be enumerated among those who possess firm intelligence. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *ta'ālā*.¹

The Difference Between The Islamic View And Western View of Knowledge

By: Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Muhammad Wādih Rashīd Hasanī Nadwī

Just yesterday – 10 Rabī' al-Awwal 1435 A.H. – I [the author, Hadrat Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib] was in Dār al-'Ulūm Nadwatul 'Ulamā', Lucknow. I had the opportunity of meeting Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Muhammad Rābi' Hasanī Nadwī Sāhib who is the rector of Dār al-'Ulūm Nadwatul 'Ulamā', Hadrat Maulānā Burhān ad-Dīn Sāhib Sambhalī who is the Shaykh at-Tafsīr of Dār al-'Ulūm Nadwatul 'Ulamā', and Hadrat Maulānā Sa'īd ar-Rahmān Sāhib A'zamī who is the principal of Dār al-'Ulūm Nadwatul 'Ulamā'. I was overjoyed at the opportunity of meeting them. May Allāh *ta'ālā* elevate their ranks and inspire them to render more Dīnī and academic services. Āmīn.

¹ Maulānā Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābdī: *Tarbiyyat-e-Aulād kā Islāmī Nizām*, p. 572.

In the course of this visit, Maulānā Sayyid Maḥmūd Ḥasanī Ṣāhib presented several valuable books to me. One of them is titled *Nizām-e-Ta'lim wa Tarbiyyat Andeshe, Taqāde Aur Hal*¹ (compiled by Maulānā Muḥammad Wāḍih Rashīd Ḥasanī). Ḥadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Rābi' Ḥasanī Ṣāhib writes in the introduction to this book:

The learned author, Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad Wāḍih Rashīd Ḥasanī Nadwī (the head of education at Nadwatul 'Ulamā' Lucknow) has undertaken a deep study of the Western system of education. Together with acquiring the Islamic sciences, he has developed a good understanding of Western civilization, the Western lifestyle, Western thinking and philosophies and the Western system of education.

It is my [Ḥadrat Maulānā Qamar az-Zamān Ṣāhib] heartfelt desire to embellish this book with a few extracts from his book. Allāh willing, they will prove beneficial to the reader.

The Islamic View of Knowledge

The Islamic view to knowledge is that knowledge means recognition of Allāh *ta'ālā*. It distinguishes between beneficial knowledge and unbeneficial knowledge. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* sought refuge from unbeneficial knowledge:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ لَا يَنْفَعُ، وَمِنْ قَلْبٍ لَا يَخْشَعُ، وَمِنْ دُعَاءٍ لَا يُسْتَجَابُ لَهُ.

O Allāh! I seek refuge in You from knowledge which does not benefit, a heart which does not fear [You], and a supplication that goes unanswered.

¹ Which roughly translates as: The System of Education And Training: Challenges, Demands and Solutions. (translator)

Through knowledge and proper thinking, man is able to recognize the manifestations of Allāh's power in the universe and within his own self. He learns the principles, fundamentals and laws of life. The ability to know the limits of everything, to recognize the peculiarities of man's interaction, and the ability to differentiate between right and wrong is known as beneficial knowledge. In addition to this, Islam does not consider knowledge to be restricted to a single individual. Rather, it covers all members of society. It is not confined to worldly matters only, rather it concerns matters of the Hereafter as well. The Qur'an defines knowledge as follows:

إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ

From among His servants, it is those who have understanding that fear Allāh.

A Hadīth states that the 'ulamā' are the heirs of the Prophets. The fundamental task of the Prophets is education, together with purification, inviting towards good and rectification of society. Islam has bound knowledge to da'wah. According to Islam, the 'ulamā' emulate the Prophets through education, training, purification of the self, developing Allāh consciousness, propagation and instruction, rectification of society, establishing justice and equity, and removing slaves from the worship of slaves to the worship of Allāh *ta'ālā* alone. Consequently, no position and rank can equal the rank and position which an 'ālim has in Islam. Occasionally the ink of the 'ulamā' surpasses the blood of the martyr.

The Western based education which is presently in vogue in the Muslim world has restricted the circle of knowledge and confined it to the material sphere. Consequently, the purpose of knowledge today is to provide opportunities through which man will utilize

his academic and rational capabilities and acquire such means which would at least raise his standard of living, irrespective of whether he can raise the standards of his society or not. The Western concept of knowledge merely conveys human experiences, and facts and figures so that these capabilities can develop and the student can be taught how to use those means.

The Western View of Knowledge

As per the Western view, an ideal human is one who utilizes his capabilities and means for the realization of his material goals. He is not taught the rectification of beliefs, reformation of morals, setting right of human mannerisms, and consideration of human values and traditions.

In Western educational philosophy, the highest concept of life is that the means for power and authority, and the opportunities for prosperity and leisure must be provided. Furthermore, man must develop the ability and power to fulfil human needs and demands. The European educational view is restricted only to the individual. He has no concern whatsoever for human society. Nor does he have any interest in combined human rights, and social and mutual interactions. Rather, man is free to choose whatever means he wants for the fulfilment of his desires and pleasures. He is not restricted to any moral codes and human values. As a result of this European view, mutual rivalry, enmity, materialism, selfishness, self-interest, self-opportunity, moral degeneration and anarchy, liberty, self-advantages, self-conceit, pride, arrogance and other similar illnesses are becoming common. Western thinkers separate education from character building. In fact, they consider it essential to consider a child's natural inclinations and demands of his thoughts. They feel a child ought to be given free reign for the

realization of these inclinations and demands. They say that a child must be left free to choose the means for the fulfilment of his human needs and desires. He can fulfil his desires as he wills. He must not be restricted to any moral code or law. The present system of education is based on these Western concepts, ideas and purely material interests in which moral values have no room whatsoever.

The Destructiveness of The Materialistic Education System

Due to their rebellion against religion, morals, social traditions, human and moral values; and the materialistic education system which is based on the views of European materialistic philosophy, education today cannot produce a model and responsible human being who can construct society on correct plans and virtuous foundations, and give proliferation to the highest human values in life in whom there is a consciousness to fulfil the rights of fellow humans and the rights of Allāh *ta'ālā*. Due to the Western and materialistic education system, man has become refractory and wayward. Nothing except the use of force and severity can control him. This is why there is not much difference between an educated person and an uneducated one as regards morals, character, ways and mannerisms, dealings, transactions and domestic and social life. The only difference in their daily life is that one has knowledge and the other does not. On the contrary, the knowledge of an educated person is teaching him to be pleasure-seeking, self-conceited, and to become immersed in pleasures. It teaches him how to fulfil his animalistic desires and emotions, and how to gain control through his intelligence, shrewdness and plotting and planning. Consequently, the modern centres of learning and training have become the breeding places for corruption, vice and

terrorism. The life of the educated ones is now worse than that of the ignoramuses and the illiterate ones.

The biggest cause of the evils, and moral and rational deviations which are found in the educated class today is that the objective of education and training has been misunderstood. The educational and moral fibre have been explained incorrectly. And the most fundamental cause is the atheistic and materialistic philosophy of education which is in fact, the religion of the materialistic and agnostic Western culture. Unfortunately, the Islamic world has also adopted this materialistic and agnostic system of education, and this deviated concept of life.

The Cause of Conflict in The Muslim World

The sciences, arts, ideas, concepts, preferences, thoughts and philosophies which are included in the Western education system have been formulated by people who have an incorrect concept of knowledge. The lives of the majority of them were prone to disorder, disregard for religion and moral and intellectual deviation. Consequently, these deviated intellectual ideas, preferences and inclinations, and incorrect human experiences had an effect on ideas and religions. Unfortunately, the Muslim world also openly accepted those ideas, sciences, concepts and thinking patterns. The Muslim world assumed that their ideas are free from intellectual deviation, and mental deterioration and corruption.

As a result, this education system which is based on irreligious ideas and concepts created a mental conflict in Muslim society. Muslim society has its own identity. It has its own domestic and social system. It has its own unique system of mental training and formulation. It has its own values and traditions. It has a balanced and virtuous view and concept about man and the universe. Despite all the evils and ills which are

prevalent in Muslim society, it has a concept of one Allāh who is the creator, inventor and controller of this universe. He has power over everything and is independent from all, while others are dependent on Him. Realization and consciousness of this is deeply embedded in the veins of every member and individual of Muslim society, and he is saturated with these divine teachings. The reason for this is that from the time of his very creation, he hears and sees things which strengthen and fortify his belief in Allāh's oneness and concept of a Creator in the depths of his heart. His conviction is strengthened by the belief that Allāh *ta'ālā* alone sees and hears everything, has knowledge of the unseen, and is fully aware of the treacheries of the hearts and gazes.

A student's mental and ideological formulation and construction is not from books. Rather, the make up of his personality is affected by his teachers, educational environment, the place where he lives, the lives of thinkers, and those who hold positions of authority in the community. Consequently, if the teacher's life, nature of living, dealings and interactions, thoughts and ideas, concept of life and the universe, and practical life will be different from the concept of life which he is teaching from the books, and there will be a contradiction between the books which he is teaching and the life which he is leading, it will create rebellious emotions in the student. The reason for this is that man relies more on what he witnesses than what he hears. Textbooks cannot have the same effect on a student as can be done by the thoughts, ideas and lifestyle of the teacher. A student is unwittingly affected by his teacher's lifestyle. It has been observed on countless occasions that a student follows in the footsteps of his teacher as regards his manner of speech, movements, interactions and other affairs of his life. This is especially so when the teacher is a

distinguished personality who possesses impressive and captivating qualities. In such a case, the student will try to mould his life in accordance with his teacher's, and make him his role model. We could safely say that the selection of a teacher is no less important than the syllabus.¹

Note: Māshā Allāh! Look at the excellent manner in which Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad Wādih Rashīd Hasanī Nadwī Sāhib explained the difference between the Western and Islamic concepts of knowledge. His last statement is most impressive. The essence of which is that instead of changing the syllabus, there is a pressing and important need to obtain good teachers. This would rectify and reform the Islamic system of education.

Principles For The Effectiveness of Madāris

The desire came into my heart to conclude this chapter with a few guidelines and principles of rectification and reformation in the light of the Qur'ān, Sunnah, lives of the pious predecessors, and the statements of our 'ulamā' and mentors. Allāh willing, if we practise on them we will be able to make our madāris effective and useful. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone.

1. Bearing in mind that studying and teaching are important good deeds of Dīn, students and 'ulamā' must have correct intentions and sincerity in acquiring knowledge. This is why Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to constantly ask us – students – to rectify our intentions. He used to go at length in speaking about the need for this. Consequently, he first taught us the meaning of those verses in which Allāh *ta'ālā* speaks out against

¹ *Nizām-e-Ta'līm wa Tarbiyyat Andeshe, Taqāde Aur Hal*, pp. 68-72.

hypocrisy. He taught them first so that an aversion for hypocrisy may be created in our hearts and the value and importance of sincerity may be realized.

2. The 'ulamā' must not have any type of aspiration towards the wealthy and affluent people. They must neither ask them nor express their needs to them or else our ['ulamā'] talks and lectures will become ineffective. This is the reason why the Prophets '*alayhimus salām* announced to their people: "We do not ask you for any wage for our calling and inviting you to Allāh." Furthermore, the 'ulamā' will not be accused of greed which is an obstacle to education and training.

3. The 'ulamā' must ensure that they personally practise on whatever they preach to the masses. If they act on the contrary, the masses will most definitely have bad thoughts about them and never accept whatever they have to say.

4. It is an obligation on the teachers to consider their students as trusts on behalf of their parents. After all, students from different districts – in fact, from different countries – come to us for the sake of studying and training. And it is for this reason that their parents bear the hardship of separating their children from themselves and think to themselves: "Our child has gone to study Dīn and etiquette." It is therefore essential for teachers to be concerned with the students' education and training with love and affection. This is in line with the Hadīth:

كلکم راع وکلکم مسئول عن رعیتہ

Each one of you is a shepherd and each one of you is answerable for his flock.

Teachers must engender good character in them and then convey them to not only their parents but to the

entire Muslim ummah so that they can be of benefit to everyone. Just as students of secular sciences work hard and qualify as doctors, engineers and so on, and are then of benefit to their parents and their entire nation, students of Dīnī sciences must strive hard in their studies and prove to be of benefit for the reformation and rectification of the ummah of Muhammad Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*.

5. The first step in the journey of education and training is to embed the creed of tauḥīd and prophet-hood in the minds of children. Conviction in the Hereafter must be firmly embedded in their hearts. They must know that this world is not permanent, it will certainly come to an end. These beliefs are the fundamental pillars and principles of Dīn on which rest all other actions. If we are successful in this regard, Allāh willing, the other stations will be traversed easily.

6. Teachers must explain and clarify the virtue and importance of knowledge in an effective manner. The virtue of a science is based on its benefit. If the benefit of a science is more and eternal, its virtue is also accepted as being more. One can understand from this principle that no matter how useful knowledge of this world may be, it is restricted to this world. On the other hand, knowledge of Dīn is not confined to this world. It will continue even after the end of this world. It will only be completed after a person obtains Allāh's pleasure and is admitted into Paradise, which is undoubtedly the greatest bounty and benefit. Students are specifically advised to study books containing incidents and stories of the 'ulamā' of the Hereafter. This will strengthen and enlighten them further, encourage them to acquire knowledge of Dīn, do good deeds and create concern for the Hereafter in them.

7. It is the responsibility of teachers to select suitable people for perfection and firmness in

knowledge which is *fard-e-kifāyah* on the ummah. This has to be done so that the knowledge can be utilized for the important matters of Dīn. In other words, the objections which are raised by atheists and polytheists must be answered convincingly. To this end, it is essential for teachers to select students who are extremely sharp, noble-minded and spirited so that the objective can be realized.

In this regard, there is a most severe need to adopt the following statement of *Hadrat 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd radiyallāhu 'anhu*:

عن ابن مسعود رضي الله عنه قال: لو أن أهل العلم صانوا العلم ووضعوه عند أهلهم لسادوا به أهل زمانهم، ولكنهم بذلوه لأهل الدنيا لينالوا به دنياهم، فهانوا عليهم.

Ibn Mas'ūd *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said: Had the 'ulamā' safeguarded knowledge and given it to those who were eligible for it, they would have ruled over the people. However, they gave it to worldly people in order to acquire of their world. Consequently, they became disgraced in the sight of worldly people.¹

Note: Based on this, Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, a senior litterateur, says that it is essential for an 'ālim to possess three qualities. One of them is that he must not exchange his knowledge for wealth. He says:

لا يكون العالم عالماً حتى تكون فيه ثلاث خصال: لا يحقر من دونه، ولا يحسد من فوقه، ولا يأخذ على العلم ثمناً. (ابن عبد ربه)

An 'ālim cannot be a true 'ālim until he possesses three qualities: (1) he does not scorn the one who is below him, (2) he is not envious of the one who is above him, (3) he does not take any wage for knowledge.

¹ *Waṣīyyatul Ādāb*, p. 94.

8. A student must consider it essential to be in the company of a righteous shaykh and to emulate him. Whoever reached lofty ranks in the past did so because of this. 'Allāmah Shāṭibī *rahimahullāh* writes in *Muwāfaqāt*:

والثالثة: الإقتداء بمن أخذ عنه والتأدب بأدبه. كما علمت من إقتداء الصحابة بالنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم وإقتداء التابعين بالصحابة، وهكذا في كل قرن.

وبهذا الوصف امتاز مالك عن أضرابه. أعني بشدة الاتصاف به، وإلا فالجميع ممن يهتدى به في الدين كذلك كانوا ولكن مالكا اشتهر بالمبالغة في هذا المعنى. فلما ترك هذا الوصف رفعت البدع رؤوسها لأن ترك الإقتداء دليل على أمر حدث عند التارك، أصله اتباع الهوى.

The third is to emulate the one from whom he obtained his knowledge and to adopt his mannerisms. You know about how the *Sahābah* emulated Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, the *Tābi'in* emulated the *Sahābah*, and so did the ones of each era in respect of those who were before them.

It was because of this quality that Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* distinguished himself over his contemporaries. I mean this quality of emulating his seniors was intensely found in him. After all, the other 'ulamā' of his time who held leading positions also had this quality, but Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* was known for his strict adherence to it.

When these qualities are discarded, bid'ah will come into existence because when emulating one's elders is discarded, it proves that the person wants to follow his own desires.¹

9. Our teachers and educators must teach and train their students in such a way that during their student days their hearts are filled with love and

¹ *Al-Muwāfaqāt*, vol. 1, p. 93.

recognition of Allāh *ta'ālā* and embellished with the character of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. Moreover, their minds and brains must come out of personal lowness and shallowness, and climb towards the heights of knowledge and cognition. They must progress from mere words to their meanings. May Allāh *ta'ālā* inspire us to teach, train and tutor in this manner. Āmīn.

10. This is specifically directed to the students. Notwithstanding how qualified, capable and self-sacrificing your teachers may be, it is essential for you to have the thirst, quest, knowledge, determination and hard work. Respecting and honouring your teachers is vital so that they may focus on your education and training with all their heart, and guide you to their beneficial experiences and etiquette through which you can reach a level of excellence.

Students should never ever consider it belittling to acquire perfection from their elders. Hadrāt Maulānā Shāh Wasīyullāh Sāhib rahimāhullāh said:

“After the passage of such a long time when I have become so old and there remains no time to acquire anything, I came to understand that if there is anything which prevents man from acquiring excellence in any thing it is his pride and conceit. This is what prevents him from lowering himself before an expert. Every era has experts and people of excellence from whom it can be acquired. But because a person’s pride and conceit do not permit him to submit himself before them, he is unable to acquire anything and remains a fool. Man only becomes worthy when he casts aside his pride and conceit. I would like to draw the attention of the ‘ulamā’ specifically and say: The excellence which is not being acquired by students and ‘ulamā’ nowadays is because of their pride and conceit. This is what is destroying their path. If they

understand this and take the courage to discard these qualities, they can reach the level of excellence. Anyone who did acquire excellence did so by obliterating his self, humbling himself before others, and putting an end to pride and conceit. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone.”

The Need For Contemporary Education

It is established from the Qur'ān and Sunnah that such an amount of Dīnī knowledge is essential whereby a person has the correct beliefs, knows the obligatory duties and is able to practise on them. There is also a need for a group who has more than this elementary knowledge so that the services of issuing fatwās, passing judgement, enjoining good, forbidding evil and other duties can be rendered, and answers given to the objections raised by false creeds.

Similarly, there is a need for contemporary sciences. There are many matters in this world for whose fulfilment there is a need for these sciences. For example, printing, agriculture, construction works, politics, cupping and so on. There is therefore no harm in learning these sciences. In fact, they are *farḍ-e-kifāyah* as stated in *Shāmī*:

أما فرض الكفاية من العلم، فهو كل علم لا يستغنى عنه في قوام أمور الدنيا، كالطب والنحو واللغة...وأصول الصناعات والفلاحة والحياكة والسياسة والحجامة.

As for knowledge which is *farḍ-e-kifāyah*, it is every science which is essential for the fulfilment of worldly matters, e.g. medicine, grammar and language...fundamental crafts, farming, weaving, politics and cupping.¹

On the occasion of the opening of the Agricultural University of Lucknow in May 2012, the Imām of the

¹ *Fatāwā Shāmī*, vol. 1, p. 30.

Haram, Shaykh Khālid ibn 'Alī al-Ghāmīdī, was speaking to the students about the need for contemporary sciences. He said: "If these are learnt while safeguarding Islamic beliefs, then not only will this learning be beneficial but would elicit reward."

Advice to Students of Dīnī And Contemporary Sciences

I now present some words of advice of Hadrat Khwājah Muḥammad Ma'sūm rahimahullāh to the respected students. I hope they will read this section carefully.

I am saddened by our youth who are wasting their lofty talents in this temporary abode and are becoming infatuated by this bad-mannered woman. They are casting aside valuable pearls and immersing themselves in a few broken shells. The beauty of Allāh is displayed before us and the path [to Him] is wide open. But we are so ignoble that we are blocked and separated from this beauty.

Rasūlullāh's Glad-Tidings

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: سبعة يظلهم الله في ظله يوم لا ظل إلا ظله: إمام عادل، وشاب نشأ في عبادة الله عز وجل، ورجل قلبه معلق بالمساجد، ورجلان تحابا في الله اجتمعا عليه وتفرقا عليه، ورجل دعته امرأة ذات حسن وجمال فقال إني أخاف الله، ورجل تصدق بصدقة فأخفاها حتى لا تعلم شماله ما ينفق يمينه، ورجل ذكر الله خاليا ففاضت عيناه. (متفق عليه)

Abū Hurayrah *radīyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "There are seven people to whom Allāh *ta'ālā* will provide shade beneath His shade on a day when there will be no shade except the shade provided by Him. They are: (1) a just leader, (2) a youth who grew up in the worship of Allāh *ta'ālā*, (3) a person whose heart is attached to the masjid, (4) two people who love each other for the sake of Allāh *ta'ālā*, they meet for the love of Allāh

ta'ālā and part ways for the love of Allāh *ta'ālā*, (5) a person whom a woman of nobility and beauty tries to seduce, but he says: 'I certainly fear Allāh', (6) a person who gives in charity and conceals it to such an extent that even his left hand does not know what his right hand spent, (7) a person who engages in the remembrance of Allāh *ta'ālā* in solitude and his eyes flow with tears."¹

Every youngster, whether he is acquiring Dīnī knowledge or contemporary knowledge, must consider it to be his good fortune to be able to obey and worship Allāh *ta'ālā* and therefore adopt this in his life. In this way, he will be included in this glad tiding of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone. (Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī)

¹ *Al-Bukhārī*: 1423. *Muslim*, *Kitāb az-zakāh*: 91.

CHAPTER TWO

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SUFIS AND KHANQAHS

قال الله تعالى:

قد افلح من زكها وقد خاب من دسها (سورة الشمس)

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم:

ألا وإن لله أواني في أرضه، وهي القلوب، فأحب الأواني إلى الله تعالى أصفها وأصلبها

وأرقها (إحياء العلوم، ج ٢، ص ٢٦٥)

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

الحمد لله الذي أنعم فأجزل، وأعطى فأفضل، نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره ونعوذ بالله من شرور أنفسنا ومن سيئات أعمالنا، من يهد الله فلا مضل له، ومن يضلل فلا هادي له، وأشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له، وأشهد أن محمدا عبده ورسوله، صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وأصحابه وبارك وسلم.

This chapter contains the responsibilities of the Sufis and spiritual mentors. Based on the Hadīth:

العلماء ورثة الأنبياء

The 'ulamā' are the heirs of the Prophets.

The responsibilities which were essentially of the Prophets will now be obligatory on the 'ulamā' and Sufis because they are their heirs and representatives.

We are quoting a few Qur'anic verses, Aḥādīth and statements of the elders in this regard. Study this section carefully, Allāh willing, it will prove to be enlightening.

Allāh *ta'ālā* considers the commissioning of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* as a great and immense favour and bounty to the Muslim nation. We quote from '*Umdatul Bayān*¹:

¹ '*Umdatul Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān* is an extremely comprehensive tafsīr of Maulānā Abū 'Āmir Muḥammad Is-ḥāq Khān Sāhib al-Madanī. We take the honour of quoting from it. Another excellent book of his – *Tuḥfah-e-'Ilm wa Hikmat* – containing 50 Aḥādīth with commentary has been published. It is also a most useful book. It has been approved in most laudable terms by Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Qārī Muḥammad Tayyib Sāhib *rahimahullāh* former principal of Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband and Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Muḥammad

لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ ۗ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِن قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ.

Allāh bestowed a favour on the believers when He sent in their midst a Messenger from among themselves - he recites to them His verses and purifies them [from polytheism and other evils], and teaches them the Book and things of benefit whereas previously they were certainly in manifest error.¹

The Commissioning of a Prophet is a Great Favour of Allāh

It is clear from the above that the commissioning of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* as a Prophet is an immense and unique favour of Allāh *ta‘ālā* to the believers. Through this great Prophet and his coming to them, Allāh *ta‘ālā* removed people from the pits of animalism and bestiality to the honour and dignity of humaneness. He then blessed them with those phenomenal and unparalleled teachings which would place them on the pure path in this world and convey them to the eternally joyful bounties of Paradise. Thus, the commissioning of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* is a favour which is equalled by none. Those who did not value and appreciate this bounty and did not embrace it with their heart and soul are the worst of wrongdoers and the most unjust. We seek refuge in

Zakarīyyā *Ṣāhib raḥimahullāh*, the former Shaykh al-Ḥadīth of Mazāhir al-‘Ulūm Sahāranpūr. When I went to Dubai recently, Maulānā ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd *Ṣāhib Nadwī*, the imām of Musjid as-Salām Dubai, presented me with a beautiful print of this book. I then spoke telephonically with Maulānā Muḥammad Is-ḥāq *Ṣāhib al-Madanī*. This strengthened our bond further, and the Maulānā sent me a copy of his tafsīr, *‘Umdatul Bayān*. May Allāh *ta‘ālā* reward him with the best of rewards. (Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī)

¹ Sūrah Āl ‘Imrān, 3: 164.

Allāh *ta'ālā*. By rejecting this bounty, these people wronged Allāh's right to worship and servitude, and wronged Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* as regards his prophet-hood and messenger-ship. They also wronged their own selves by depriving themselves of success in both worlds and placing themselves on the path of destruction. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*. May Allāh *ta'ālā* protect us from every type of deviation and misguidance, enable us to always tread the paths of His pleasure, and may He always keep us under His shadow of mercies and affections in every situation and place. Āmīn.

A Human Prophet is in Itself a Great Favour of Allāh

The words “from among themselves” clarify this important and fundamental reality that a Prophet being a human and from his own people is in itself an immense favour and kindness from Allāh *ta'ālā* on His servants. Thus, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* was a human, from the Quraysh and from the Banū Hāshim so that people could follow and emulate him in every department of life and in every action. Had an angel who is pure from all human needs and demands been sent, he would not have been able to be an example for the people. After all, he does not eat, drink, get married, have a wife, have children, does not experience hunger, no thirst, is not affected by heat or cold, and so on. Furthermore, he does not experience and has nothing to do with any human impediments. How, then, could he become an example and model for human beings? Thus, for Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* to be a human and a mortal is in itself a great bounty and favour of Allāh *ta'ālā* which He conferred on His creation. This is why the words “from among themselves” have been mentioned separately. Thus, it is a favour upon a favour, and a bounty upon a bounty which Allāh *ta'ālā* conferred on His servants.

Despite this, there are many people of bid'ah who are not prepared to accept Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* as a human being. They place so much of emphasis on denying humaneness for a Rasūl that they have to resort to various types of fabrications for their claims. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*. In fact, the Messenger being a human is an immense favour and bounty of Allāh *ta'ālā*, and a demand of intellect and natural temperament – so that the world can follow and emulate him, which is the fundamental and real purpose of his coming into this world. Salutations and peace of Allāh *ta'ālā* on him.

The Greatness And Importance of Reciting Verses

This verse demonstrates the importance and greatness of reciting the verses of the Qur'ān because it is one of the primary objectives of a Messenger. The reason why it is such an important obligation is that through the blessings of the Messenger's recitation, the minds of the people will be illuminated and darkness removed. Recitation of the verses is thus one of the first objectives of messenger-ship and one of the first obligations of prophet-hood. Despite this, the ignorant and heedless Muslims of today neither have any time for recitation of the Qur'ān nor do they attach any importance to it – except for a few. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*. Worse than this is the claim of some deviates who say that there is no benefit in mere recitation. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*. Anyway, from the four objectives of commissioning a Messenger, the first which is listed here is that he recites Allāh's verses to the people. This shows that a person is in need of the teaching and coaching of a Messenger even for the recitation of the Qur'ān, and that recitation of the

verses is an important objective and goal of this pure Dīn.¹

The Importance And Greatness of Internal Purification

Internal purification is the second major objective and important obligation of prophet-hood. The verse states that the Messenger purifies and cleanses the internal self from the impurities of unbelief and polytheism, and from the base desires and filths of the self because these impurities and filths will cast man into Hell. Their purification is not possible without the benefaction of prophet-hood. From this we can gauge what a great favour and phenomenal bounty the commissioning of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* is, and which Allāh *ta‘ālā* conferred on His creation. All praise is due to Allāh *ta‘ālā* the Sustainer of the universe.

How unjust and how wrong those people are who turn away from this great favour. Such people are deprived of the light of the truth and guidance, and fall into various types of darkness. They fall from the honourable pedestal of humanity and fall into the disgraceful pit of absolute bestiality. They are deprived of the title of “the best of the creation” and become “the worst of the creation”. This is the worst loss and a most terrifying failure. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta‘ālā*. May Allāh *ta‘ālā* always protect us from every type of deviation, slip ups, loss and failure. Āmīn.

The Importance And Greatness of Teaching Dīn

The importance and greatness of teaching Dīn is also learnt from this verse. Teaching the Book and wisdom is the third major objective and important obligation of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* as a

¹ *‘Umdatul Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur’ān*, p. 671.

Messenger. This is so that people may learn what the Qur'ān is saying, what it wants from them and wherein lies their fortune and success. We learn from this that the meanings and implications of the Qur'ān cannot be understood without the teaching and explanation of the Messenger. Consequently, Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* taught the *Ṣahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum* with his words, actions and practices. Those same teachings of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* are known as *Ḥadīth* which is the first, most important and most reliable explanation and commentary of the Qur'ān. Thus, *Ḥadīth* is a proof, evidence and an important and fundamental source of Dīn. Rejecting it entails rejecting Dīn. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*.

The *Ṣahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum* were original Arabs and people of authority as regards Arabic. Yet, they too could not understand the Qur'ān without the teaching and explanation of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. How, then, can others understand it on their own? How can a non-Arab of today who neither knows the Arabic language and its modes of expression, nor did he learn formally under a teacher claim that he will undertake a self-study and understand it?! It is outrageous to make such a claim. The Qur'ān is not a book which can be understood by self-study. Had this been possible, the Qur'ān would have been sent down in the form of a complete written book, placed before the people, and they would have been told: "Here, read it by yourselves and understand it." But this was not what happened. On the contrary, arrangements were made for a great and unparalleled teacher and tutor who was trained and tutored for 40 years in a unique manner. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* himself says in this regard:

أدبني ربي فأحسن تأديبي

Allāh *ta'ālā* taught me etiquette in a most beautiful manner.

After this training and tutoring, this exceptional book was sent down via divine revelation. He was then instructed to teach it to the people, to clarify its meanings and implications to them, to explain its objectives and goals, and to elucidate the intent and purpose of the Being who sent it down. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

We revealed to you this Reminder so that you may expound before the people that which has come down to them, and so that they may contemplate.¹

Subsequently, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* explained and expounded to them completely and totally in the course of his 23-year period of prophet-hood and thereby fulfilled the responsibility of teaching and explaining to them. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward him with the best reward which a Prophet was rewarded on behalf of his ummah.²

Anyway, this verse explains the grand status of prophet-hood and the four objectives of commissioning Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* so that the world may realize this, value this bounty, embrace it, and be able to make it the means for their success in both worlds. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone. We learn from the above that teaching the true Dīn is the fundamental objective and mission of a Messenger because through it the true path and guidance become clear.

¹ Sūrah an-Nahl, 16: 44.

² *Umdatul Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān.*

A Special Angle to The Greatness of Commissioning Rasūlullāh

We are told in the verse under discussion that these people were certainly and definitely in error before this. For a great and extraordinary Messenger like this to be sent to them increases the extent of Allāh's favour to them. The ignorance and deviation of these people can be gauged from the fact that they used to worship idols which had been made by their very own hands. They used to call on them for the fulfilment of their needs and the removal of their problems. They used to bow before them and ask them for their needs. They used to follow false premises, eat unlawful and filthy things, bury their daughters alive, kill their children for fear of poverty and so on. Allāh *ta'ālā* appointed the greatest of His Prophets from among them and, in so doing, removed them from various forms of darkness and conferred them with this intensely bright light which is a unique light for providing man with success in both worlds, and deprivation of it entails deprivation in both worlds. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*.

It is an absolute fact and glaring reality that before the advent of Islam, the Arabs were ignorant about Dīn and Shari'ah, were deprived of the wealth of the truth and guidance, and completely unaware of prophet-hood and messenger-ship. They were wandering in the darkness of unbelief, polytheism and ignorance for a long period of time. Allāh *ta'ālā* – out of His grace, kindness, affection and consideration – guided the Arabs through the commissioning of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, removed them from the valleys of misguidance and deviation, and put them onto the straight path of guidance and the truth. In such a situation, for a person to turn away from the true Dīn and disregard it

smacks of real ingratitude and is a major injustice. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*.¹

In Sūrah al-Jumu'ah, Allāh *ta'ālā* describes four of His attributes and explains the sterling services of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*:

يُسَبِّحُ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ الْمَلِكِ الْقُدُّوسِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ. هُوَ الَّذِي
بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ
وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ.

Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth glorifies Allāh, the sovereign, the holy, the mighty, the wise. It is He who raised among the unlettered people a Messenger from among themselves, reciting to them His verses, purifying them, and teaching them the Book and wisdom. Before this they were in manifest error.²

Recognition of Allāh Through His Names And Attributes

The above verse states that Allāh *ta'ālā* is the king, He is pure from everything and He has control over everything. None can overpower Him, nor can anyone escape His grasp so as to save himself from the consequences of his doings. Bearing in mind that He is the True King, He alone has no partner, He is pure from every defect and shortcoming, He has power over everything, and He too is the all-wise; then who apart from Him can be the one who is eligible for worship? The different concepts and notions which people have about Him – concepts and notions which contradict His attributes – are all baseless. Allāh can be truly recognized solely through His attributes. Glory to Him. His names and attributes are those as mentioned in

¹ *Umdatul Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, vol. 1, p. 672.

² Sūrah al-Jumu'ah, 62: 1-2.

the Qur'ān and proven from the Hadīth. Therefore, His recognition can only be realized through them. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone.

The word *ummī* means unlettered – one who can neither read nor write. Before Islam, the majority of the Arabs were unlettered. They neither had a divine book nor did they know how to read and write. They were therefore referred to as *ummī*. This is why in the context of the present verse, this word refers to the Arabs.¹

The Commissioning of Rasūlullāh Was a Demand of Allāh's Attributes

It becomes clear from here that commissioning Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* was a completion of the demands of Allāh's attributes. This is why, after listing four of His attributes here, Allāh *ta'ālā* said: “It is He who raised among the unlettered people a Messenger from among themselves.” In other words, he is from their people, their tribe and from their species. They were fully aware of his descent, lineage, nobility and eminence. They also knew his lofty character and mannerisms fully well. They had no problem and difficulty in following him. Those who reject the humanness of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* are not only rejecting the many texts of the Qur'ān and Hadīth, but also rejecting these lofty meanings which are in total conformity with intellect and natural temperament. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Anyway, this is an immense favour and bounty from Allāh *ta'ālā* for having commissioned such a great Prophet from among themselves so that these people can emulate him in every part of their life. Thus, the

¹ *Ibn Kathīr, Ibn Jarīr, Maḥāsīn at-Ta'wīl* and others.

commissioning of this great Prophet and his arrival is a completion of the demands of those lofty attributes of Allāh *ta'ālā* which were mentioned previously. Since He alone is the True King of this universe, it demands that He sends to His subjects His Messenger who would convey His guidelines and injunctions to them. This Messenger will recite Allāh's verses to them and teach them the Book and wisdom. Based on His sanctity and purity, He willed to make arrangements for the rectification of His servants through His Messenger, and to purify their beliefs, character, actions and mannerisms. Since He is all-powerful and all-wise, He conferred the treasures of divine revelation and divine guidelines to them via His Messenger so that He could confer true and real honour to them. Glory to Allāh *ta'ālā*.

The Greatness of The Messenger And The Objectives of Commissioning Him

Allāh *ta'ālā* states in the verse under discussion that He sent to the unlettered people a great Messenger who recites His verses to them. The word *Rasūl* is in the indefinite case in the present verse. This is done to demonstrate greatness and prominence. It refers to the leader of the Prophets, Hadrat Muhammad Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. There was no one like him to this day, nor is it possible for anyone to be like him until the day of Resurrection. His prophet-hood and messenger-ship is for all peoples and all eras until the day of Resurrection. He alone possesses such great qualities – no one had them nor will anyone else have them in the future. It follows from this that for such a great and unique personality to be sent to the unlettered ones is a favour and bounty of Allāh *ta'ālā* which is unsurpassed and unparalleled. Those who still turn away from him are most unfortunate, deprived, ungrateful and unjust. We seek refuge in

Allāh *ta'ālā*. May He protect us forever and in every way. Āmīn.

Purification of The Self – An Important Objective of Prophet-hood

The verse goes on further to say that the Messenger purifies them, i.e. from the filths of unbelief and polytheism, the muck of filthy beliefs and characteristics, and the grime of evil deeds and mannerisms. He then purifies them in a manner whereby they can enjoy a pure life in this world, and enjoy the eternal bounties of Paradise in the Hereafter. Thus, purification of the self is an important objective because this is what turns a human being into a true human being. If not, man will fall into the pit of bestiality and remain nothing but an animal. In fact, he will fall even lower and become of:

أَسْفَلَ السَّافِلِينَ.....شَرُّ الْبَرِيَّةِ

The lowest of the low....the worst of creation.

Of which the world is filled.

Another fact which must be clear at this point is that this purification is essentially from Allāh *ta'ālā*. The Messenger is Allāh's representative for it and a means to it. This is alluded to in the following verse:

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يُزَكُّونَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ ط بَلِ اللَّهُ يُزَكِّي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا.

Have you not seen those who consider themselves to be pure? In fact, it is Allāh who purifies whomever He wills, and they shall not be wronged equal to a thread.¹

¹ Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 49.

This is why obedience to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* is considered to be obedience to Allāh *ta‘ālā*, as stated elsewhere:

مَنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ ۚ وَمَنْ تَوَلَّىٰ فَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا.

Whoever obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allāh. Whoever turns back - We have not sent you as a guard over them.¹

Consider another verse on the importance and benefit of purification of the self. In Sūrah ash-Shams, Allāh *ta‘ālā* takes seven oaths and says:

فَالْهَمَّهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا

He then inspired it with the understanding of evil and righteousness.²

Hadrat Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* and Ibn ‘Abbās *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* relate that when Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* used to recite this verse, he would make the following supplication in a loud voice:

اللَّهُمَّ اِنِّ نَفْسِي تَقْوَاهَا، اَنْتَ وَلِيِّهَا وَمَوْلَاهَا اَنْتَ خَيْرٌ مِنْ رَزَقِهَا.

O Allāh! Give piety to my self. You alone are its own and master. You alone are the best to purify it.³

A Hadīth in *Musnad Ahmad* quotes from Hadrat ‘Ā’ishah *radiyallāhu ‘anhā* who relates: My eyes opened one night and I noticed that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* is not on the bed. Because it was so dark, I began feeling around with my hands. My hands touched Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* who

¹ Sūrah an-Nisā’, 4: 80.

² Sūrah ash-Shams, 91: 8.

³ Muftī Muḥammad Shafī’: *Ma‘āriful Qur‘ān*.

was in prostration at the time and making this supplication:

اللَّهُمَّ اتِ نَفْسِي تَقْوَاهَا، وَزَكَّيْهَا أَنْتَ خَيْرُ مَنْ زَكَّيْتَهَا، أَنْتَ وَلِيِّهَا وَمَوْلَاهَا.

O Allāh! Give piety to my self and purify it – You alone are the best to purify it, You alone are its owner and master.¹

Another narration of *Muslim* and *Musnad Ahmad* states that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* used to make this supplication:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْعُجْزِ، وَالْكَسَلِ، وَالْهَرَمِ، وَالْجُبْنِ، وَالْبُخْلِ، وَعَذَابِ الْقَبْرِ. اللَّهُمَّ اتِ نَفْسِي تَقْوَاهَا، وَزَكَّيْهَا أَنْتَ خَيْرُ مَنْ زَكَّيْتَهَا، أَنْتَ وَلِيِّهَا وَمَوْلَاهَا. اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ قَلْبٍ لَا يَخْشَعُ، وَمِنْ نَفْسٍ لَا تَشْبَعُ، وَعِلْمٍ لَا يَنْفَعُ، وَمِنْ دَعْوَةٍ لَا يُسْتَجَابُ لَهَا.

O Allāh! I seek refuge in You from lack of courage, laziness, senility, cowardice, stinginess, and the punishment of the grave. O Allāh! Give piety to my self and purify it – You alone are the best to purify it, You alone are its owner and master. O Allāh! I seek refuge in You from a heart which is not submissive, a self which is not satisfied, from knowledge which is of no benefit and a du‘ā’ which is not answered.²

The Successful Self

Allāh *ta‘ālā* says further on:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّيْتَهَا

He who purified it has indeed achieved his goal.³

The reformation and purification of the self entails making one’s power of lust and power of rage subservient to one’s intellect. And making the intellect

¹ *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, vol. 4, p. 667.

² *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, vol. 4, p. 667.

³ *Sūrah ash-Shams*, 91: 9.

subservient to the Sharī'ah of Allāh *ta'ālā* so that both, the self and the heart, may be illuminated by the light of divine illumination.¹

Hadrat Ibn 'Abbās *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said: I personally heard Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam explaining this verse:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا

He said that the self which Allāh *ta'ālā* purified will be successful.

The Unsuccessful Self

Allāh *ta'ālā* says in this regard:

وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا

He who leaves it buried in the dust has indeed failed.²

Leaving the self in the dust means that the person leaves the reins of his self to his desires and his anger. He does not subject it to his intellect and the Sharī'ah. It is as though he becomes a slave of his lusts and desires. Such a person is worse than animals.³

The *Tafsīr Mazharī* states:

The one in whom Allāh *ta'ālā* created misguidance and was destroyed because of the creation of deviation has failed. Alternatively, it could mean that he chose misguidance for himself and destroyed his self in this way. He has failed.

Allāh *ta'ālā* then says:

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ بِطَغْوَاهَا إِذِ انْبَعَثَ أَشْقَاهَا

¹ *Tafsīr 'Uthmānī*.

² Sūrah ash-Shams, 91: 10.

³ *Guldasta-e-Tafāsīr*.

The Thamūd rejected out of their insolence. When the most wretched of them rushed forward.¹

A Wretched Man From The Thamūd

His name was Qidhār ibn Sālif. He was reddish in complexion, had green eyes and was a bit short. Others had advised him what to do and he took the responsibility of carrying out the vile act. This is why his wretchedness is more than others. Details in this regard are as follows:

The people of Hadrat Sālih *'alayhis salām* asked him to perform a miracle as a sign of his genuineness. They demanded that he produce a she-camel which is ten months pregnant from a certain rock. Hadrat Sālih *'alayhis salām* prayed to Allāh *ta'ālā* and the she-camel emerged from the rock and immediately gave birth to a young one. The she-camel used to drink all the water [which left the other camels thirsty]. Hadrat Sālih *'alayhis salām* set aside a certain portion of the water so that the other camels may also have access to it. He did this by saying to the people: "One day will be reserved for the she-camel, and one day for the other camels." The unbelievers could not accept this distribution so they planned to kill the she-camel so that they could have access to all the water.²

Allāh *ta'ālā* says in this regard:

فَقَالَ لَهُمْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ نَاقَةَ اللَّهِ وَسُقْيَاهَا

The Messenger of Allāh said to them: "Beware of the she-camel of Allāh and its turn to drink water!"³

¹ Sūrah ash-Shams, 91: 11-12.

² *Tafsīr Mazharī*.

³ Sūrah ash-Shams, 91: 13.

In other words, Beware! Don't ever think of killing it or depriving it of its water. Water is mentioned because it was the most likely reason why they planned to kill it. It is referred to "the she-camel of Allāh" because He made it a sign of Ḥaḍrat Sālih's prophet-hood and made it obligatory on them to respect it.¹

However, the unbelievers rejected Allāh's order and killed the she-camel. Allāh *ta'ālā* relates this incident as follows:

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَعَقَرُوهَا، فَدَمَدَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ فَحَسَّوْهَا، وَلَا يَخَافُ عُقْبَاهَا.

They rejected him and hamstrung it. Their Sustainer destroyed them because of their sins and razed them all. Allāh does not fear the consequences.²

Explanation: Due to their mischief, the Thamūd rejected Ḥaḍrat Sālih *'alayhis salām*. The above refers to the incident when the most wretched of the people volunteered to kill the she-camel. He was supported by a few people. When Ḥaḍrat Sālih *'alayhis salām* was informed of their plan, he said to them: "Beware! Don't ever think of killing this she-camel of Allāh *ta'ālā* or depriving it of its water." Water is mentioned because it was the most likely reason why they planned to kill it. It is referred to "the she-camel of Allāh" because He made it a sign of Ḥaḍrat Sālih's prophet-hood and made it obligatory on them to respect it. The people rejected him because they did not consider him to be a Prophet and then killed the she-camel. Consequently, Allāh *ta'ālā* inflicted a punishment on them which then fell on the rest of the people. Allāh *ta'ālā* did not fear any harm as a consequence of this destruction as is the case with kings of this world on certain occasions.

¹ *Guldasta-e-Tafāsīr, Tafsīr Mazhari.*

² *Sūrah ash-Shams, 91: 14-15.*

When they punish a people, there is the possibility that it might cause a rebellion in the land.¹

Note: Just ponder! Because these people did not purify their selves – i.e. because they were bent on transgression and rebellion – they opposed a clear order of Ḥaḍrat Sālih ‘*alayhis salām*. This resulted in the destruction of the entire nation. Similarly, nations are destroyed and punished because of their pride, arrogance, rebellion and self-conceit. In this regard, the stories of the destruction of Qārūn and Namrūd are related in the Qur’ān.

The Promise of Paradise For Giving Up Following One’s Desires

Allāh *ta’ālā* says:

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ، فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ

Whoever feared standing before his Sustainer and stopped his self from desires, then Paradise alone is his abode.²

A Sound Heart Will Be Beneficial in The Hereafter

Allāh *ta’ālā* says:

يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَلَا بَنُونَ إِلَّا مَنْ آتَى اللَّهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ

The day when neither wealth nor children will be of any use. Except he who comes to Allāh with a pure heart.³

Most commentators say that this means: Wealth and children will not avail a person on the day of Resurrection except for the person who has a sound

¹ Muftī Muḥammad Shafī‘: *Ma’ārif al-Qur’ān*, vol. 8, p. 754.

² Sūrah an-Nāzi‘āt, 79: 40-41.

³ Sūrah ash-Shu‘arā’, 26: 88.

heart. Wealth and children can be of benefit, but only for a believer. They will not benefit an unbeliever.¹

Hadrat Maulānā Shabbīr Aḥmad ‘Uthmānī rahimahullāh writes in his commentary to the above verse:

It is only a heart that is sound, healthy, untainted and pure from unbelief, hypocrisy and corrupt beliefs that will be of any help. Wealth and children will be of no help. If the unbelievers desire to save their lives by giving their wealth and children as ransom, this will not be possible. Expecting the charities, donations and righteous children to be of any benefit is only possible when one’s heart is pure from the filth of unbelief.²

The Importance of a Sound And Pure Heart

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam said:

ألا وإن لله أواني في أرضه، وهي القلوب، فأحب الأواني إلى الله تعالى أصفها وأصلبها وأرقها. أصفها من الذنوب، وأصلبها في الدين، وأرقها على الإخوان.³

Listen! Allāh *ta’ālā* has certain utensils on His earth, they are the hearts. The most beloved utensils in the sight of Allāh *ta’ālā* are the purest, firmest and softest ones. They are purest from sins, firmest on Dīn and softest to their fellow brothers.

The Soundness And Unsoundness of The Body is Dependent on The Condition of The Heart

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam said:

ألا إن في الجسد مضغة، إذا صلحت صلح الجسد كله، وإذا فسدت فسد الجسد كله، ألا وهي القلب.

¹ *Ma’ārif al-Qur’ān*.

² *Tafsīr ‘Uthmānī*.

³ إحياء العلوم، ج ٢، ص ٢٦٥.

Listen! There is a piece of flesh in the body. If it is sound, the entire body will be sound. If it is unsound, the entire body will be unsound. Listen! It is the heart.

Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Fakhr ad-Dīn Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, the former Shaykh al-Hadīth of Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband, explains the above Hadīth as follows:

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said that the human body has a piece of flesh around which revolves the soundness and unsoundness of the human body. It is the king of all body parts. If there is rectitude in the king, all the body parts will be sound. If ruin comes to it, the entire system of the body will get disturbed. This piece of flesh is the heart. The soundness and unsoundness of the heart that is mentioned here can be spiritual and medical. Even medically, the healthiness and sickness of the body parts depends on the heart. The spiritual system is based on it as well. The spiritual system means that when a person's heart is corrupt, the actions which are carried out by his body parts will be a reflection of this. The medical and nervous systems of the body are dependent on a cone-shaped piece of flesh [the heart]. On the other hand, the spiritual system of the heart depends on the Being with whom *īmān* is connected, and it is the place of intention. In the present Hadīth, the meaning is that the heart can steer and guide a person in his decision about what is lawful, unlawful and doubtful. Efforts ought to be made to keep it righteous. If the heart is righteous, it is also permissible to inquire from the heart. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "Ask your heart." The Qur'ān says:

إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَذِكْرَىٰ لِمَن كَانَ لَهُ قَلْبٌ أَوْ أَلْقَى السَّمْعَ وَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ

In this there is a [time of] contemplation for him who has a heart or who listens attentively.¹

This shows that the basis for rectitude is the heart, and this is why efforts must be made to rectify it.²

Note: This is why our Sufis consider this Hadīth to be most important and a pillar of Sufism as regards rectification of the heart. This Hadīth is most certainly worthy of it.

It is Also Necessary to Give Up Internal Sins

Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

وَذَرُوا ظَاهِرَ الْأَثْمِ وَبَاطِنَهُ

Give up external and internal sins.

This clearly shows that just as there are external sins such as speaking lies, adultery, consuming intoxicants, gambling, stealing, etc. there are sins of the heart which have to be essentially given up, e.g. pride, jealousy, greed, avarice and so on. Just as there are external acts of obedience such as ṣalāh, fasting, dhikr, Qur'ān recitation etc. there are internal acts of obedience whose adoption is essential, e.g. humility, reliance on Allāh, abstinence, contentment and so on.

This is why Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam prayed for the rectification of the external self just as he prayed for the rectification of the internal self. He said:

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْ سِرِّي خَيْرًا مِنْ عَلَانِيَتِي، وَاجْعَلْ عَلَانِيَتِي صَالِحَةً

O Allāh! Make my inner self better than my outer self, and make my outer self good as well.

¹ Sūrah Qāf, 50: 37.

² Idāh al-Bukhārī, vol. 4, p. 436.

Rectification of The Inner And Outer Selves Are Essential

Hakīm al-Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* writes in *Qaṣd as-Sabīl*:

The reality of sulūk and Tarīqat which are commonly known as Sufism is that a Muslim must embellish his internal and external selves with good deeds and save them from evil. Details in this regard are:

The fundamental objective is to please Allāh *ta’ālā*, and through Him, one has to carry out the orders of the Sharī‘ah completely. Some of the injunctions are related to the external self, e.g. ṣalāh, fasting, hajj, zakāh, marriage, divorce, fulfilling of rights of husband and wife, oaths, atonement for oaths, buying and selling transactions, following judgements and testimonies, bequests, distribution of inheritance, greetings, manner of speaking, eating, sleeping, sitting, standing, hosting guests and so on. All these are known as the science of jurisprudence.

Other injunctions are related to the internal self, e.g. love for Allāh *ta’ālā*, remembrance of Allāh *ta’ālā*, reducing love for this world, to be pleased with Allāh’s will, to abstain from greed, to have presence of heart when carrying out an act of worship, to carry out deeds with sincerity in order to please Allāh *ta’ālā*, to abstain from looking down on a person, not to be self-conceited, to suppress one’s anger and so on. These characteristics are referred to as sulūk, tarīqat and Sufism.

Just as it is compulsory and obligatory to carry out the external orders such as ṣalāh and fasting, it is compulsory and obligatory to practise on the internal actions as per the Qur’ān and Sunnah. It is more important to save one’s self from internal evils because they have an effect on the external actions. For example, when there is little love for Allāh *ta’ālā*, one

becomes lazy to perform ṣalāh, or if he performs it he does so by rushing through the different postures, miserliness causes him not to pay zakāh or perform ḥajj, pride or the overpowering of anger causes him to wrong a person. In short, the Shari'ah and Tarīqah are not two separate entities. Rather, Tarīqah means practising completely on all the internal and external orders of the Shari'ah. Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* defined fiqh in a manner in which all the internal and external actions are included.

However, the latter scholars – for the sake of ease – separated the external actions such as ṣalāh, fasting, ḥajj, zakāh, marriage, divorce, trade, leasing, etc. and named this fiqh. As for the internal actions such as sincerity, patience, gratefulness, abstinence, etc., their injunctions were collated separately and named Taṣawwuf and Tarīqah. Based on this definition, we could say that one is different from the other just as ṣalāh is a separate worship and fasting is another worship. Man's hand is a separate limb, and his leg is a separate limb. The eye is one thing, and the ear is something else. The heart, liver, etc. are all separate parts. However, the completion of man depends on all these parts collectively. One cannot be separated from the other.

Similarly, as per the definition of latter scholars, the science of beliefs, the science of fiqh and the science of Sufism are certainly different sciences. However, a complete human being or a believer and a Muslim can only be one who has these collectively. Following the Qur'ān and Sunnah can only be realized when all these sciences are followed. To adopt one of them and disregard the others is as destructive as protecting the

ears while losing the eyes, or keeping fast but disregarding *ṣalāh*.¹

Note: *Māshā Allāh!* This issue has been clarified and simplified in an excellent manner. This could only be the result of the investigative acumen of Hadrat Hakīm al-Ummat *rahimahullāh*.

Apart from *Qaṣd as-Sabīl*, Hadrat Hakīm al-Ummat Thānwī *rahimahullāh* fully explained the objectives, realities, duties, etiquette, and obstacles in the path in his books *Ta'lim ad-Dīn*, *at-Takashshuf* and other books. A study of these books is vital for ever seeker especially the *mashā'ikh*. In addition to this, a study of *Taṣawwuf wa Sulūk* of Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *rahimahullāh*, *Ma'ārif Sūfiyah* of this insignificant person, and *Shifā'-e-Dil* of my beloved Aḥmad Qamar az-Zamān Nadwī will – Allāh willing – prove beneficial. (Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān)

An Introduction to Sufism and Sufis

Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Walī Allāh Sāhib Muḥaddith Dehlawī *rahimahullāh* writes in his famous work, *Tafhīmāt Ilāhīyah*:

All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*. Salutations to Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*.

This most low servant of the 'ulamā' and Sufis, and this insignificant one who is attached to them, i.e. Walī Allāh ibn 'Abd ar-Raḥīm – may Allāh *ta'ālā* be extremely gracious to both of them (father and son) on the day of Resurrection – says: From among the many bounties of Allāh *ta'ālā* for which a person cannot thank Allāh *ta'ālā* sufficiently is the great bounty of sending Prophets *'alayhimus salām*. They are the conveyors of the unseen and guides to the path which

¹ *Qaṣd as-Sabīl*.

would take one close to Allāh *ta'ālā*. The reason for sending them is so that those who are to be destroyed later on will be done after evidence has been established against them. And those who remain alive will live after having received clear evidence. Allāh *ta'ālā* then chose heirs for the Prophets '*alayhimus salām*. They are the ones who spread and conveyed the sciences of the Prophets '*alayhimus salām*, revived their Sunnah and ways, and invited people to the same guidance to which they invited.

Three points are extremely important from among the things to which the Prophets '*alayhimus salām* invited:

- (1) Correcting the beliefs with regard to one's origin and destination, punishment and reward. The responsibility of spreading this science was fulfilled by the scholastic theologians of the Muslim nation. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward them for their efforts.
- (2) Correcting acts of obedience which take one closer to Allāh *ta'ālā* and explaining the different ways of taking benefit in accordance with the Sunnah. This responsibility was fulfilled by the jurists of the Muslim nation. Consequently, Allāh *ta'ālā* guided many people through them and many sects put right their crookedness.
- (3) Correcting one's sincerity and Allāh-consciousness. These two are the fundamentals of this pure Dīn which Allāh *ta'ālā* chose for His servants. Allāh *ta'ālā* says: "They were solely ordered to worship Allāh, devotedly worshipping Him [alone]. And that they establish ṣalāh and

pay zakāh. This is the path of strong minded people.”¹

Allāh *ta’ālā* also says: “The righteous ones are in gardens and fountains. Taking what their Sustainer gave them. They were doers of good before this [day]. They used to sleep but little at night. And in the hours of dawn they used to seek forgiveness. In their wealth there was a share for the beggar and the defeated. In the earth are signs for those who have conviction. And within your own selves [as well]. Will you not then see?”²

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said: “Deeds are dependent on actions.” This is in itself an encouragement towards sincerity. In answering the question of *Hadrat Jibrīl ‘alayhis salām*, what is *ihsān*? Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* replied: “*Ihsān* means to worship Allāh *ta’ālā* as if you can see Him. If you cannot reach this level, you must certainly realize that He is watching you.”

I take an oath in the name of the Being in whose control is my life, this third category is more intricate than all other objectives of the Shari’ah, and it is more deep as regards its source and origin. In comparison to all other Shari’ahs, it is like the soul is to the body. The Sufis are the ones who took the responsibility of upholding this science. These personalities became guided themselves first, and then became guides for others. They quenched themselves first and then quenched others. They reached great heights

¹ Sūrah al-Bayyinah, 98: 5.

² Sūrah adh-Dhāriyāt, 51: 15-21.

and accumulated large shares [of rewards]. Their excellence is solely for Allāh *ta'ālā*. Look at their all-encompassing goodness is and the perfection of their benefit!¹

Note: Just ponder! Look at how Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Walī Allāh Muḥaddith Dehlawī *rahimahullāh* lauded the Sufis and how he apprised us of their greatness and importance. If we still do not accept, it can be nothing but obstinacy. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*.

The Virtue of Sincerity

Hadrat 'Allāmah Shātibī *rahimahullāh* explains the importance of sincerity as follows:

ولذلك من سلم له في عمره خطرة واحدة خالصة لوجه الله نجا. وذلك لعز الإخلاص.

Based on this importance it is said that if a single moment of a person's entire life becomes solely and exclusively for Allāh *ta'ālā*, he will attain salvation. This is on account of the rarity of sincerity.²

Shaykh 'Abd al-Haqq Muḥaddith Dehlawī's Statement With Regard to Sufism

Although the sciences of Hadīth and tafsīr take preference over all other sciences as regards their essence, Sufism is also a commentary of the Qur'ān and an exposition of Hadīth. It is in effect their meaning and result. It is not separate from them nor in conflict with them.

It is a proof of misguidance to differentiate between the Sharī'ah and the Tarīqah. Those who do not practise on the Sharī'ah do not deserve to be called Sufis. They

¹ *Tafhīmāt Ilāhīyyah*.

² Ash-Shātibī: *al-Muwāfaqāt*.

could be referred to as the bāṭinīyyah and hashwīyyah – the digressers.¹

The Essence of Sufism is The Acquisition of Affinity With Allāh

While speaking about the objective of Sufism, Hadrat Shāh Walī Allāh Muḥaddith Dehlawī *rahīmahullāh* writes:

The affinity which the Sufis have with Allāh *ta'ālā* is a very great boon, but there is no worth in their customs. What I am saying will weigh heavily on many people, but Allāh *ta'ālā* has placed a certain responsibility on my shoulders and I will have to carry it out. I am not bothered by the comments of Zayd, 'Umar and others.²

Statements of Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī

1. The gist of the tarīq: This is the only way of reaching Allāh *ta'ālā*: Evil characteristics must depart, praiseworthy characteristics must develop, sins must be given up, inspiration for acts of obedience must be realized, heedlessness of Allāh must depart, and focus on Allāh *ta'ālā* must develop.”³

2. I said this many times to students and people in general: You must become firm on two things and I guarantee you will reach Allāh *ta'ālā*. (1) Abstain from sins. (2) Speak less and reserve a little time for solitude (for the sake of dhikr and contemplation).

3. The object of sulūk: The object of sulūk is to gain Allāh's pleasure. Then there are two things: (1) Knowledge of the path. (2) Acting on that knowledge. The path is only one. It entails adhering to certain internal and external actions. There are two things that

¹ *Hayāt Shaykh 'Abd al-Haqq Muḥaddith Dehlawī*, p. 295.

² *Tafhīmāt Ilāhīyyah*.

³ *Kamālāt Ashrafīyyah*, p. 177.

aid a person on this path: (1) Dhikr which can be done with continuity. (2) Companionship of the people of Allāh as much as possible. If you do not have the time to do this excessively, the alternative is to study the lives and statements of the pious elders. There are two obstacles to the object or the path: (1) Sins. (2) Becoming occupied in futile activities.

Thereafter, it is left to one's capabilities. Depending on a person's capabilities, he will either reach Allāh *ta'ālā* quickly or slowly. This is the gist of the Tariq.¹

4. The reality of affinity with Allāh: In reality, nisbat refers to a general bond with Allāh *ta'ālā*. Based on this general meaning, every believer – even if he is a flagrant sinner and immoral person – is a man of nisbat. The reason for this is that *īmān* in itself confirms a bond with Allāh *ta'ālā*. [This is the meaning of the following statement]:

وهو مناط صحة إطلاق النسبة، وقد تحقق بالإيمان

As for nisbat as defined by the Sufis, it refers to a bond with Allāh *ta'ālā* for whose essentials two things are most necessary: (1) Dhikr in abundance. (2) Continuity in obedience. Without these two, the nisbat as defined by the Sufis is not possible. This defined nisbat is not in itself within one's choice. Rather:

موجوده الترتب على الأمور الإختيارية. فكأنها إختيارية ولا يخفى أن كثرة الذكر والمحافظة على العبادة أمران إختياريان، لأن صدورهما عن الإختيار من البديهيات الأولية.

It is dependent on matters which are within one's choice. So it is as if it is within one's choice. There is no doubt that excessive dhikr and preservation of worship are within one's

¹ Ibid.

choice, after all, their enactment based on choice is from among the most obvious things.

In this defined nisbat, the seeker develops such a strong and deep bond with Allāh *ta'ālā* that overlooking it is extremely light both in quantity and quality.

ويكون صاحب النسبة العاشق المولع في عدم النسيان وعدم الذهول، وفي الإيتمار بالأوامر والإنتهاء عن النواهي.

A person of nisbat is an ardent lover who neither forgets nor overlooks even in carrying out orders and abstaining from prohibitions.

In short, a person of nisbat has a natural aversion to acting against the true Dīn like the rational aversion which the masses have. Any way, the purpose and essential goal of all forms of dhikr and spiritual occupations is to acquire the defined nisbat. The acquisition of this defined nisbat is obligatory because abundant dhikr is the opposite of meagre dhikr for which the hypocrites were castigated.¹

A Comprehensive Statement of Hadrat Gangohī

The objective of sulūk is nothing but developing an aversion for sins and a desire for acts of obedience. Restlessness and agitation over conditions are not the objectives. It is servitude which makes a person a true servant, not agitation.²

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at how clear the objective is defined by the head of the Sufis, Hadrat Maulānā Gangohī rahimahullāh. This is exactly what the Sharī'ah and Tarīqah is. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward him. Āmīn.

¹ *At-Tarā'if wa az-Zarā'if* of Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat.

² *Matkūbāt Rashīdiyyah*, p. 94.

A Statement of Hadrat ‘Allāmah Ibn Taymīyyah

قال لي يوما شيخ الإسلام ابن تيمية قدس الله سره في شيء من المباح: هذا ينافي المراتب العلية وإن لم يكن تركه شرطا في النجاة، أو نحو هذا من الكلام.

‘Allāmah Ibn Qayyim *rahimahullāh* says: My teacher Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymīyyah said to me about practising on certain permissible (*mubāh*) actions: “They negate reaching the lofty ranks even though not acting on them would not prevent one from salvation in the Hereafter.” Or he said something similar.¹

Note: Even the Sufis teach caution in using permissible things.

Four Ways of Making Khānqās Effective

1. A Khānqāh is essentially a place of purification and developing Allāh-consciousness. Those who reside there are therefore in a severe need for excessive dhikr and continuous obedience. This has to be the case so that a Khānqāh can maintain its identity. Unfortunately, due to shortcomings on our side, the Khānqāhs have become prone to lethargy and futility. Hadrat Hujjatul Islam Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* complains about the Khānqāhs of his time as follows:

The State of Khānqāhs in The Era of Imām Ghazzālī

I present a translation of the deplorable situation of the Khānqāhs as presented by Hadrat Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* (d. 505 A.H.)

The internal self of most of the Sufis of today is devoid of subtlety of thoughts and intricate actions. They are unable to engage in Allāh’s remembrance in solitude. Instead of becoming people who are engaged in dhikr and spiritual practices, they have become worthless

¹ *Madārij as-Sālikīn*, vol. 2, p. 26.

and useless. They have stopped moving towards Allāh *ta'ālā* and become inclined to others. Their selves are inclined to the internal. They have started to find action to be difficult. They consider working for a living to be very hard. Going around begging has become their occupation. The travellers lodges which are constructed in various cities by the kings and rulers have become their residences. They remain there, eat for free there, and take services from their followers and attendants while living in these lodges. They have made their Dīn and intelligence prone to disgrace, and are themselves disgraced. They claim that they undertake journeys to serve the masses, but the reality is that they want to acquire popularity by showing off the services which the masses render to them. They use their large numbers of followers as an excuse for accumulating wealth. They wear exclusive garments made of wool and silk. They converted the Khānqāhs into tourist spots. They use many words which are really against the Sharī'ah. Some of them adorn the true garments of the Sufis, emulate the elders in outward mannerisms and are then deluded into thinking that they are on the same level as the elders. In accordance with their baseless assumption, they feel that they become the equals of the elders in internal realities merely by emulating them in outward mannerisms. How sad! How sad! How foolish is the person who cannot differentiate between a swelling and fat. Such a person is therefore abhorred in Allāh's sight.

Undoubtedly, the immaturity and uselessness of such Sufis have prompted them to go on journeys and trips. At least if they went to perform *ḥajj* or 'umrah with sincerity, or went to visit a pious elder with a good intention – i.e. for practical and academic benefit – their journey would certainly be commendable. Unfortunately, cities after cities have become empty of

such devoted and sincere people. All religious matters have become weak and corrupt. As for Sufism, it has come to a complete end. However, the sciences have still survived because even when an 'ālim is not a practising one, although his corruption will be in his way of life, it will not be in his knowledge. He is thus still an 'ālim even if he does not practise on his knowledge. After all, practice is separate from knowledge, i.e. it is possible for a person to have knowledge but no practice.

Moreover, you must understand that Sufism means to empty your heart of everything apart from Allāh *ta'ālā*, and to consider anything against Allāh *ta'ālā* to be insignificant. Sufism is connected to the heart and the actions of the body parts. Thus, when actions will be corrupt, how will the original Sufism survive? In other words, it will become a target of corruption. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Note: Just ponder! Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* is not just a scholar of the 6th century of the hijrah, but a Mujaddid. He is writing about the condition of his era. What, then, can be said about the Sufis of our times? Notwithstanding this, there was never an era which was devoid of genuine Sufis, nor is it at present, even though they may be few in number.

There is a need for prayer and attention. We must establish a bond of love and conviction with them, and go to them with a genuine quest. Allāh *ta'ālā* will certainly enable us to enjoy their blessings and will certainly confer us with their goodness by His grace. This is because Allāh *ta'ālā* never allows a genuine quest to go to waste. It will remain in every era until the day of Resurrection. In other words, Allāh's doors of bestowal and hospitality will remain open until the day of Resurrection. All that is needed is a quest and sincerity.

The Sufis Must Also Be Bound to Spiritual Practices

2. The Sufis who are responsible for the Khānqāhs must remain bound to their spiritual practices and exercises according to their capability so that the seekers who frequent the Khānqāh may be satisfied and be able to benefit each other mutually.

In the course of a lecture which he was delivering at Majīdiyyah Islamic College in Allāhābād, Ḥadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Ḥasan ‘Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh* related the following incident which is a lesson and admonition for all of us who are connected to the Khānqāhs. I am quoting it here. He said:

All praise is due to Allāh *ta‘ālā*, I frequent the Khānqāhs. Just now I had the opportunity of visiting the Khānqāh of Ḥadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh *Sāhib rahimahullāh*. This is why I am relating this incident to you.

A shaykh was in his Khānqāh when two of his disciples began fighting with each other right in front of him. Someone said to the shaykh: “Look at how audacious these two are that they are fighting in your very presence!” The shaykh did not bother in the least. Instead of providing a reason verbally, the shaykh began pointing towards his knees. The person asked: “What is the link between this and that?” The shaykh replied: “The link is that I have a pain in my knees which caused me to miss out my spiritual practices for today. The misfortune of this has caused the scene which you see before you.”

Note: This is an excellent example for our admonition. It is highly possible that there are defects in our Khānqāhs, and these are caused because of our – shaykh’s and disciple’s – shortcomings, laziness, bad character and evil deeds. This is why we have to constantly gauge and assess our conditions and the

concern for rectification must continue for as long as we are living. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone. (compiler)

The Shaykhs Must be Cautious in Conferring Khilāfat

3. The shaykhs must be extremely cautious and guarded in conferring khilāfat. In fact, they must study and ponder over the prerequisites as laid down by the Sufi masters, and only then confer khilāfat.

Hadrat Maulānā Zafar Ahmad Sāhib 'Uthmānī rahimahullāh has written an enlightening article on the issue of bay'ah and khilāfat. I am quoting it from his biography, *Tadhkiratuz Zafar*.

The Criteria For Permission And Khilāfat

1. He must be a pious person.
2. He must have undertaken rectification of his self.
3. He must not have developed a mere academic affinity with the Tarīq but also a practical one.
4. He must have developed the capability to rectify others.
5. He must have developed the necessary firmness in the above-mentioned qualities.
6. It must be expected of him that although he only has the necessary firmness in the above-mentioned qualities, he will progress and eventually reach a level of absolute and total firmness.¹

Thus, every shaykh must check these criteria before conferring khilāfat. If not, the corruption and harm

¹ *Tadhkhiratuz Zafar*, p. 287 as quoted in *Aqwāl-e-Salaf*, vol. 5, p. 257.

that is caused by conferring a Dīnī or worldly responsibility to an unqualified person is clearly obvious.

Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat *rahimahullāh* has quoted the following in his book *Ta'lim ad-Dīn*. It is a very comprehensive statement, I am therefore quoting it here:

Shaykh Qiwām ad-Dīn *rahimahullāh* says: “O Sufi! The Qur’ān, Sunnah and lives of the pious predecessors are criteria in this path. By pious predecessors, I am referring to those who are genuinely worthy of emulation, not those who have been merely conferred with khilāfat, and are occupying a high position in a blessed place because they are the descendants of such and such Sufi and are therefore occupying his place.¹

Note: We learn from the above that to occupy a Dīnī, rectificational or tablighī position, it is essential for the person to have the necessary qualification and capability. A mere permission and khilāfat from a pious elder is not enough. The shaykhs must be very particular in this regard so that the path does not get maligned, and the Khānqāhs do not succumb to ineffectiveness.

When Positions Are Conferred to Unqualified People, Await The Resurrection

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال: بينما النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم في مجلس يحدث القوم، جاءه أعرابي فقال: متى الساعة؟ فمضى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يحدث. فقال بعض القوم: سمع ما قال فكره ما قال. وقال بعضهم: بل لم يسمع. حتى إذا قضى حديثه قال: أين أراه السائل عن الساعة؟ قال: ها أنا يا رسول الله! قال: فإذا ضيقت

¹ *Ta'lim ad-Dīn, Bāb Mawānī' at-Tarīq.*

الإمانة فانظر الساعة. قال: كيف إضاعتهما؟ قال: إذا وسد الأمر إلى غير أهله فانظر الساعة.

Hadrat Abū Hurayrah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that while Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* was addressing the people in an assembly, a Bedouin came in and asked: “When is the Final Hour?” Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* continued speaking (i.e. he did not turn his attention to the Bedouin). Some people (in the assembly) said: “Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* heard the man’s question but disliked it (because it was an interruption). Others said: “No. He did not even hear what the man said.” When Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* eventually completed his talk, he asked: “Where is the one who asked about the Final Hour?” The man said: “Here I am, O Rasūlullāh!” Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: “When trusts are broken, await the Final Hour.” The man asked: “How are trusts broken?” He replied: “When positions are conferred to unqualified people, await the Final Hour.”¹

Hadrat Maulānā ‘Uthmān Ghanī Sāhib, the Shaykh al-Hadith of Mazāhir al-‘Ulūm (Waqf) Sahāranpūr explains this Hadith as follows:

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said in reply to the questioner: “When trusts are broken, await the Final Hour.” What this means is that people who are considered to be trustworthy and upright prove to be treacherous. In such a situation, await the Resurrection. The person asked: “How will trusts be broken?” This question was posed in accordance with that era and situation, this is why he asked the question again out of surprise.

¹ Narrated by al-Bukhārī.

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* replied: “When positions are conferred to unqualified people, await the Final Hour.” In other words, a person who is not trustworthy will be delegated tasks of responsibility, and unqualified people will take up high positions. Hadrat Maulānā adds: This is what is happening nowadays. No one looks at who is qualified; rather the basis is on personal motives and contacts. Obviously when there remains no distinction between the eligible and non-eligible, and the qualified and unqualified, it will result in outright disorganization which is a major sign of the Resurrection.¹

Allāh’s Curse On Unqualified People Taking Charge Of Muslims

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said in a Hadīth: “When a person is delegated a responsibility for the general Muslims, and he then appoints a person solely on the basis of friendship – without ascertaining his suitability – he is cursed by Allāh *ta‘ālā*. Neither are his obligatory actions nor optional actions accepted until he is eventually cast into the Hell-fire.”²

Some narrations state: “When a person is appointed to a post and he knows that there are others who are more worthy and qualified than him, he has committed treachery against Allāh *ta‘ālā*, Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* and all Muslims.”

The pitiable condition which we see in most governments today is due to disregarding this Qur’ānic teaching. Positions are given on the basis of contacts, intercessions and bribes. Consequently, unqualified and unsuitable people take control of positions, cause

¹ *Naṣr al-Bārī*, vol. 1, p. 365.

² *Jam‘ul Fawā'id*, p. 375.

distress to Allāh's creation, and the entire system of government is destroyed.

This is why Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said in a Hadīth:

إذا وسد الأمر إلى غير أهله فانتظر الساعة

When positions are conferred to unqualified people, await the Final Hour.¹

The Nation Will Succumb To Disorganization When There Is No Consideration To Who Is Qualified And Who Is Not

Hadrat Amīr al-Mu'minīn Sayyidunā 'Umar radiyallāhu 'anhu said:

أرأيتم إن استعملت عليكم خير من أعلم، ثم أمرته بالعدل، أفضيت ما علي؟ قالوا: نعم. قال: لا، حتى أنظر في عمله عمل بما أمرته أم لا.

Tell me, if I were to appoint a leader for you whom I consider to be the best, and then I order him to establish justice, would I have fulfilled my obligation? The people replied: "Indeed." 'Umar radiyallāhu 'anhu said: "No. I cannot relieve myself of my responsibility until I check whether he does what I ordered him to do or not."²

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an excellent general principle he explained! All those who are responsible for educational and propagational institutes ought to bear this in mind. Unfortunately, people without qualifications take control of Dīnī and worldly positions either as inheritance or for political reasons. How, then, can proper work be expected from such people? It just

¹ Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Kitāb al-'Ilm; Ma'āriful Qur'ān, vol. 2, p. 446.

² Ishā'at-e-Islām.

compounds the ruin and damage. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*.

When There Is No Distinction In Ranks, People Will Be Destroyed

لن يزال الناس بخير ما تباينوا، فإذا تساوا هلكوا

People will continue enjoying good as long as distinction in ranks is maintained. When everyone becomes equal, they will be destroyed.

An Ignorant Leader Is As Good As No Leader

لا يصلح الناس فوضى لا سراة لهم – ولا سراة إذا جهالهم سادوا

When the people become equal without a leader or officer, their condition will never be rectified. If an ignorant person is appointed as a leader, in reality they have no leader.¹

One Should Not Become Content After Khilāfat

In order to further enlighten us and serve as an admonition, I am quoting a letter which Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth Maulānā Muḥammad Zakarīyyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh* wrote to Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Hāshim Jaugwārī *rahimahullāh* on the issue of bay'ah and khilāfat.

Attention: Maulwī Hāshim Sāhib, *may Allāh keep him safe*.

As-salāmu 'alaykum

I had the intention of giving you permission to accept bay'ah since many days but I felt that it would be much better if it was done verbally here in Sahāranpūr. However, my health is quite bad since the last few months

¹ Maulānā Habīb ar-Raḥmān Sāhib 'Uthmānī: *Ishā'at-e-Islam*, p. 470.

and we have no guarantee over life and death. This is why I am giving you permission via this letter. If any of Allāh's servant requests to pledge bay'ah at your hands, you must certainly accept. However, there is one point which I am experiencing since many years: When our associates receive permission [to accept murīds], they become very relaxed. This is extremely harmful.

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at what an important and essential advice Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth gave. It ought to be imprinted in our hearts. (compiler)

Khilāfat Is A Trust

Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *rahimahullāh* said: In past times, when the masters conferred khilāfat to a person or the 'ulamā' conferred a certificate of completion to a student, the person would become extremely worried. He considered the khilāfat and permission to be a trust from Allāh *ta'ālā*, and felt that it was a weighty responsibility which he had to uphold. People would continue fearing in this regard and beseech Allāh *ta'ālā* to enable them to fulfil the responsibility in an excellent manner. Now the situation has changed completely. People regard khilāfat to be a means for worldly gain. Dīn is no longer existent.

Previously, a person would receive khilāfat after many years of trials, tribulations and tests. Now there is neither any testing by the shaykhs nor any fear and trustworthiness in the disciples.

It seems as though people are just waiting to receive khilāfat. There is no distinction between those who are qualified and those who are not. How can Dīn remain in such a situation? This is how the path became

spoilt. You can now consider it to have ended. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*.¹

Hadrat Ibrāhīm Dasūqī Qurashī *rahimahullāh* used to say: O my children! Adopt the ways of the auliya' so that you may acquire happiness. If you took only the certificate of permission without adopting the character and ways of the auliya', and immediately displayed your certificate when any person reprimanded you, then listen: This is nothing but self-conceit. It is your duty to read your certificate carefully and to practise on the guidelines and pieces of advice which it contains. This will benefit you and you will attain distinction and piety. O children! This has always been the path to reach the stations of the auliya' and it will remain until the day of Resurrection.

Note: Glory to Allāh! What beautiful pieces of advice. If only the khulafā' of the shaykhs were to bear these in mind. It would benefit them and others as well.

Hadrat Mujaddid Sāhib Reprimands A Disciple For Asking For A Certificate Of Permission

What is your purpose in insisting so much for a written certificate of permission? You have already received permission to teach the path to others. If this is not enough, of what use will a certificate of permission be? It is not necessary to start striving for whatever idea comes to the heart. Many thoughts cross the mind but it is better and more appropriate to leave them aside. You ought to worry about yourself and about leaving this world with imān. The certificate of permission and your murīds will not avail you. If, in the course of your work, a person with a genuine quest comes to you, you may teach him the path. But do not make teaching the

¹ *Ma'rifat-e-Haq*, 1394 A.H./1974.

path your fundamental objective. Subjugate those of your matters which are harmful to you.

Note: It becomes clear from this letter of Hadrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī Shaykh Aḥmad Fārūqī Sirhindī *rahimahullāh* that teaching the path is of essence, permission and permission certificates are of no value.

Another personality by the name of Aḥmad Buzurg who was immersed in Allāh's love says in a couplet:

The capital wealth is to be immersed in Allāh's love. A person must therefore focus his attention to this. The spiritual chain of shaykhs is of no value before it.

The continuation of the spiritual lineage is in Allāh's control. One must therefore worry about his own responsibilities and not bother about the responsibilities of others.

The son of Hadrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī *rahimahullāh* completed the revivalist achievements of his father, and explained and clarified his teachings. He too was fully endowed with spiritual wealth. He writes to a seeker with real feeling and emotion:

I am astonished at that youthful enthusiasm who is wasting his lofty disposition to this lowly world, and is enamoured by its deception. He is casting aside priceless jewels for a few worthless bits. The beauty of Allāh *ta'ālā* is in full display and the path to Him is wide open. However, the deprived disposition is causing him to be blocked off from that Beauty.

It is so astonishing that the Real Beloved is present in this world and is right before us, yet we are heedless of Him. The goblet is filled with the drink of love, yet we are sitting fully conscious [in other words, we ought to

have drunk it and become intoxicated in His love].

We learn from this that the fundamental favour is Allāh's love and recognition. This is why we have to pray for these two favours. There is a well-known expression of the Naqshbandīyyah: "O Allāh! You and Your pleasure are our goals. So bless us with Your love and recognition."

Undoubtedly, true affinity with Allāh *ta'ālā* is only realized after love and recognition. This is one of the greatest favours according to the Sufis and the sole objective and goal of all the spiritual lineages. Unfortunately, no attention is paid to acquiring this nowadays. In fact, many do not even have knowledge of it. This is why a common tragedy today is that more attention and concern are shown to acquiring khilāfat instead of affinity with Allāh *ta'ālā*.

This is why whoever comes here, unhesitatingly states that he has khilāfat from such and such shaykh. Some shaykhs go to the extent of conferring khilāfat to the murīds of other shaykhs. This is unacceptable, in fact, it is in contradiction of the path because it will most likely spoil the person and could cause him to have evil thoughts about his shaykh.

Our elders went to the extent of concealing their supernatural feats, but today, people try to acquire popularity by revealing not genuine supernatural feats but thoughts and notions. This is totally impermissible in the Shari'ah and the Tarīqah. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Conceals His Supernatural Feat

On one occasion, Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* did something which convinced all of us that it was a supernatural feat. We were overjoyed

and began speaking about it. When Hadrat heard of this, he said: “I disapprove of it. Muslims are suffering and you are worrying about supernatural feats.” He warned us strictly against making mention of it.

Anyway, this has been the way of our elders. This is why true inhabitancy of the Khānqāhs will only be realized when principles and rules are adhered to; not when the ways of the elders are discarded. May Allāh *ta'ālā* inspire us all. Āmīn.

The Sunnah of Bay'ah

The illustrious Hadīth expert of India, Hadrat Shāh Walī Allāh Dehlawī *rahimahullāh* writes in *al-Qaul al-Jamīl* with reference to the Sunnah of bay'ah:

فاعلم أن البيعة سنة وليست بواجبة، لأن الناس بايعوا النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم وتقربوا بها إلى الله تعالى، ولم يدل دليل على تأثيم تاركها، ولم ينكر أحد من الأئمة على تاركها، كان كالأجماع على أنها ليست بواجبة.

Bay'ah is Sunnah, not obligatory. This is because people pledged bay'ah to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and sought proximity to Allāh *ta'ālā* through it. There is no proof to show that the person who did not pledge bay'ah committed a sin. None of the imāms disapproved of the one who did not pledge. The absence of their disapproval is like a unanimous decision on their part that it is not obligatory.

Note: If this bay'ah on fearing Allāh *ta'ālā* was obligatory, the one who abstained from it would certainly have been reprimanded. This shows that bay'ah is Sunnah. After all, the reality of Sunnah is that a prescribed action elicits proximity to Allāh *ta'ālā* without proof of its obligation.

The following Hadīth proves that bay'ah is Sunnah:

عن عبادة بن الصامت قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وحوله عصابة من أصحابه: بايعوني على أن لا تشركوا بالله شيئاً، ولا تسرقوا، ولا تزنوا، ولا تقتلوا أولادكم، ولا تأتوا ببهتان تفترونه بين أيديكم وأرجلكم، ولا تعصوا في معروف، فمن وفى منكم فأجره على الله، ومن أصاب من ذلك شيئاً فعوقب به في الدنيا، فهو كفارة له، ومن أصاب من ذلك شيئاً ثم ستره الله عليه فهو إلى الله إن شاء عفا، وإن شاء عاقبه. فبايعناه على ذلك. (متفق عليه)

'Ubādah ibn as-Sāmit *radīyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said while a group of Sahābah were sitting around him: “Pledge bay`ah to me that you will not ascribe any partner to Allāh, you will not steal, you will not commit adultery, you will not kill your children, you will not slander and you will not disobey me as regards any good which I command you with. Whoever among you carries this out shall be rewarded by Allāh *ta'ālā*. Anyone who commits any of these prohibitions and is punished for it in this world, then the punishment will be an atonement for him. If anyone commits any of these prohibitions and Allāh *ta'ālā* conceals it, it is left to Allāh *ta'ālā* to either pardon him or punish him.” We then pledged bay`ah to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* on this.

While explaining the above Hadīth, the author of *As'ad al-Mafātīh Sharḥ Mishkāṭ al-Maṣābiḥ*, 'Allāmah Abū Muḥammad 'Abd al-Ghanī Yūsuf Jājarwī Pākistānī, comments on the words “pledge bay`ah to me” by saying:

There are four types of bay`ah: (1) bay`at-e-Islam, (2) bay`at-e-jihād, (3) bay`at-e-khilāfat and (4) bay`at-e-ṭarīqat.

The 'Allāmah continues:

The bay`ah which is mentioned in the present Hadīth can only refer to bay`at-e-ṭarīqat. It certainly cannot

refer to bay'at-e-Islam because the addressees in the words "Pledge bay'ah to me" are the Ṣaḥābah radiyallāhu 'anhum who had already embraced Islam. It is useless for them to pledge bay'at-e-Islam. It cannot refer to bay'at-e-jihād because the Ḥadīth does not contain any theme which refers to jihād nor was it an occasion of jihād. It also cannot refer to bay'at-e-khilāfat because such a bay'ah is not done on the hand of a Messenger but on the hand of a Messenger's deputy. This bay'ah will therefore have to be bay'at-e-ṭarīqat which, in the definition of the Sufi masters, is known as bay'ah as-sulūk and whose one and only objective is to take a covenant of abstaining from sins.

Some 'ulamā' who are concerned with the external self claim that bay'at-e-ṭarīqat is a bid'ah. This is a serious injustice and smacks of compounded ignorance. The bay'ah which the Sufis refer to as bay'at-e-ṭarīqat is affirmed by the above Ḥadīth of Ḥadīrat 'Ubādah ibn Ṣāmit radiyallāhu 'anhu. A similar narration of Imām Bukhārī rahimahullāh reads thus: Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said: "Pledge bay'ah to me." The Ṣaḥābah radiyallāhu 'anhum replied:

قد بايعناك يا رسول الله

We already pledged bay'ah to you.

Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam repeated the instruction although they had already pledged bay'ah to him. This bay'ah could therefore be nothing but bay'ah as-sulūk.

This is further affirmed from the following verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِذَا جَاءَكَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتُ يَبَايِعْنَكَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ لَا يُشْرِكْنَ بِاللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَسْرِفْنَ وَلَا يَزْنِينَ وَلَا يَقْتُلْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ وَلَا يَأْتِينَ بِبُهْتَانٍ يَفْتَرِينَهُ بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِنَّ وَأَرْجُلِهِنَّ وَلَا يَعْصِيَنَّكَ فِي مَعْرُوفٍ فَبَايِعُهُنَّ وَاسْتَعْفِرْ لَهُنَّ اللَّهُ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ.

O Prophet! If believing women come to you in order to pledge to you that they will not ascribe any partners with Allāh, they will not steal, they will not commit adultery, they will not kill their children, they will not fabricate a slander between their hands and their feet, and that they will not disobey you in any good deed, then accept the pledge from them and seek forgiveness for them from Allāh. Surely Allāh is forgiving, merciful.¹

Thus, if the elders of Dīn have in mind the bay'ah of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and that is their objective, it will certainly be considered to be Sunnah.²

The Reality of Granting Permission to Accept Bay'ah

Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* used to say that the permission to accept bay'ah must be understood in the same light as the qualification certificate which is issued at the end of a student's studies. It does not mean that the student has reached a level of expertise in those sciences. Rather, the certificate is issued over the overwhelming expectation of the issuing authority. It means that the person has developed such affinity with those sciences that if he continues studying and practising on them, there is a strong hope that he will gradually progress until he reaches a level of expertise and mastery. If he, due to his neglect and ingratitude, wastes away his affinity and capabilities, the blame can never be levelled against the issuing authority. Rather, it is on the person himself.

Similarly, when a person is given permission to accept bay'ah, it does not mean that he presently has expertise in those qualities. Rather, it means that he

¹ Sūrah al-Mumtahinah, 60: 12.

² *As'ad al-Mafatih*, vol. 1, p. 210.

has developed affinity and that if he continues striving, there is a strong hope that he will develop expertise in them and reach a level of perfection.¹

The Naqshbandīyyah And Chishtīyyah Are Essentially The Same

Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* said: “The Naqshbandīyyah and Chishtīyyah are just separate names. The reality of all is the same, viz.

أُولَئِكَ حِزْبُ اللَّهِ، أَلَا إِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

They are the party of Allāh. Listen! Those who are the party of Allāh – they are the ones who have achieved their goal.²

Moreover, some Naqshbandīyyah have a Chishtī temperament and vice versa. This concept is similar to the one portrayed in the following verse:

وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا

We made you into groups and tribes so that you may recognize each other.³

The same can be said about the other spiritual families (e.g. Qādirīyyah, Suhrawardīyyah, Rifā‘īyyah). Unfortunately, people have made the restrictions into the objectives (and have become heedless of the fundamental objective of acquiring affinity with Allāh *ta’ālā*).

Thus, the shaykh who is a Chishtī must not train every disciple of his in the Chishtī way. Similarly, the shaykh who is a Naqshbandī must not train every disciple of his in the Naqshbandī way. Rather, it is the duty of the

¹ *Baṣā’ir Ḥakīm al-Ummat*, p. 37.

² Sūrah al-Mujādalah, 58: 22.

³ Sūrah al-Hujurāt, 49: 13.

shaykh to observe the capabilities of the disciple and prescribe a programme which would benefit him. Thus, a Chishtī may derive benefit from both lineages, and so can a Naqshbandī. In this way, from each one's disciples, some must be on the Naqshbandī way and others on the Chishtī way. It must have been understood that in order to be a Naqshbandī, it is not necessary to enter the Naqshbandī family.

The Chishtīyah concern themselves more with emptying one's self of evils while the Naqshbandīyah pay more attention to embellishing one's self with good qualities. A person who pays more attention to emptying his self is a Chishtī no matter which spiritual family he may be in. The one who pays more attention to embellishing his self is a Naqshbandī no matter which spiritual family he may be in. After entering into one family, it is not prohibited to tread the ways of another spiritual family. Instead, if there is more affinity with the other family, it is necessary for the shaykh to steer him in that direction.

Khwājah Mu'īn ad-Dīn Chishtī *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Bahā' ad-Dīn Naqshbandī *rahimahullāh* are one and the same. The objective of both is one. The only difference is in the system of rectification. The one who considers them to be different and derides one against the other will be deprived from both. Considering them to be two separate entities is similar to a squint-eyed person looking at one object but seeing two.¹

The Incorrect Practices of Disciples Also Corrupt The Khānqāhs

4. It is also essential for seekers to have the qualities of integrity, purity, quest and will. No matter how senior and illustrious a shaykh may be, if the

¹ *Ma'āthir Ḥakīm al-Ummat*, p. 531.

disciples do not have honesty and sincerity in them, the Khānqāhs will succumb to ineffectiveness.

We learn from this that the ineffectiveness of the Khānqāhs is not due solely to the shaykhs but due to the disciples as well. In other words, just as sincerity and capability are prerequisites for a shaykh, a genuine quest and will are also essential in a disciple. Only then will the Khānqāhs be truly inhabited and be able to display their true influence.

Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣiyyullāh *rahimahullāh* writes in '*ʿĀqibatul Inkār*':

While it is necessary to seek and search for a qualified shaykh (i.e. one who has the prerequisites for sheikhdom) it is most essential for the disciple to have a will, faith in the shaykh, sincerity and affinity. Just as this path cannot be traversed without a qualified shaykh, the absence of a will, faith, honesty and sincerity will certainly deprive a person even if he has a qualified shaykh. Hadrat Khwājah Muḥammad Ma'sūm *rahimahullāh* who was one of the most distinguished khulafā' of Hadrat Imām Rabbānī Mujaddid Alf Thānī *rahimahullāh* and an accepted Sufi master of his time, writes in *Maktūbāt Ma'sūmiyyah*:

The cause of a seeker's stopping in this path is nothing but his own laziness. When a genuine seeker chooses to remain in the company of a master and fulfils all the prerequisites which the seniors of the path laid down, then there is hope that he will certainly connect with Allāh *ta'ālā*.

If a seeker does not have the essentials of quest and will, the masters do not even refer to him as a seeker. They refer to him as a (*bul hawas*) slave of his desires. Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Ya'qūb Sāhib *rahimahullāh* writes in one of his letters to Munshī Muḥammad Qāsim Sāhib and quotes a couplet of

Hadrat ‘Ārif Shīrāzī *rahimahullāh*. Here too we learn that such a person is referred to as a *bul hawas*:

O Sa’dī! The jewel in the crown of love is extremely high. The hand of a false lover can never reach it.¹

Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* describes the qualities of a seeker and the essentials of seeking in *Qaṣd as-Sabīl*:

Together with repentance, a seeker must make a firm resolution that he will never abandon obedience to Allāh *ta’ālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* no matter how much his self may dislike it, no matter how much harm it causes to his life and wealth, no matter how much worldly benefit he stands to lose and no matter how much the creation disparage and criticize him. If he does not have courage of this level, he is not a seeker of the truth; he is a *bul hawas*.

The Mashā’ikh Must Keep Their Assemblies Pure From Backbiting And Carrying Tales

A person used to say with reference to Shaykh al-‘Ulamā’ Hadrat Hājī Imdādullāh Sāhib Muhājir Makkī *rahimahullāh*:

Someone came to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and said: “Such and such person has this to say about you.” He replied: “That person is better than you. At least he was considerate enough to say it behind my back while you have turned out to be so inconsiderate that you came and told it to me directly.” The man felt very humiliated and regretted his action, and never had the courage to carry tales again.

Note: This is something which ought to be emulated. If the elders and Sufī masters replied in a similar way to

¹ *Maktūbāt Ya’qūbiyyah*, p. 10.

tale-bearers, the door of carrying tales will be shut. It will be in total accordance with the Sunnah because we are ordered to disgrace such tale-bearers. It demonstrates wisdom of the highest level because the door to evils can be shut very easily. (Hakīm al-Ummat)

Note: Glory to Allāh! What a valuable note provided to us by Hadrat Hakīm al-Ummat rahimahullāh. It is most worthy of emulation especially by those who are seniors and leaders in Dīn. (compiler)

An Incident Related to a Student And Fudayl ibn Iyād

In order to serve as a lesson and admonition, we quote an incident which occurred between Hadrat Fudayl ibn 'Iyād rahimahullāh and one of his distinguished students. Read it attentively. It demonstrates the disastrous consequences of backbiting, carrying tales, jealousy and so on. May Allāh *ta'ālā* protect us.

A student of Hadrat Fudayl ibn 'Iyād rahimahullāh was on his death bed. Hadrat Fudayl went to him, sat at his head side and began reading Sūrah Yā Sīn. The student said: “O teacher! Do not read this sūrah.” Hadrat Fudayl rahimahullāh stopped reading. He then began reading the *kalimah* in an effort to encourage the student to read it. The student said: “I will not read this *kalimah* because I have nothing to do with it.” He passed away after saying this. Hadrat Fudayl rahimahullāh returned to his house and continued crying for 40 days without leaving his house. He then saw a dream in which the student was being taken towards the Hell-fire. Hadrat Fudayl rahimahullāh asked: “What was the reason for Allāh *ta'ālā* snatching away your *īmān*? After all you enjoyed a lofty position among my students.”

The student replied: “There are three reasons for this. (1) Carrying tales. I used to say to my classmates things which I did not say to you. (2) Jealousy. I used

to be envious of my classmates. (3) I had an illness so I went to a doctor for treatment. He said to me: 'You must drink a glass of alcohol once a year or else this illness will remain in you. I used to drink it and displeased Allāh *ta'ālā* in this way.'¹

Note: Just ponder. There used to be in the company of a very senior and erudite shaykh of the past, Hadrat Fudayl ibn 'Iyād *rahimahullāh*, scholars who used to carry tales and be envious of each other. Now what can be said about our time which is drawing closer to the Resurrection?! It will not be surprising if such people are to be found in the company of the shaykhs of today. In fact, it will be most regretful if the shaykhs themselves commit evils of this nature. To Allāh alone is our complaint.

The 'Ulamā' And Mashā'ikh Must Not be Content

Majma' al-Bihār states:

لا يقنع بدرجة من الدرجات إلا أحد الرجلين، إما غير مصدق لتلك النعمة الخطيرة، أو سفيه لا يهتدى للتجارة المربحة.

Only one of two persons can be content with the rank which he holds: (1) A person who does not even believe in that great bounty which he has. (2) A foolish person who does not know how to make a profitable business.²

The Responsibility of The 'Ulamā' And Mashā'ikh

Bearing in mind that the 'ulamā' and mashā'ikh are the heirs of the Prophets, it is essential for them to carry out orders and abstain from prohibitions as was required of the Prophets.

¹ *Minhāj al-Ābidīn* (Urdu), p. 266.

² *Majma' al-Bihār*, vol. 1, p. 64.

Allāh *ta'ālā* instructs Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* to order his family members to establish *salāh* and he himself must practise on it.

وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَاصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا ۖ لَا تَسْأَلْكَ رِزْقًا ۗ نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُكَ ۗ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلتَّقْوَى

Command your house people to establish *salāh* and you yourself remain steadfast on it. We do not ask sustenance of you. We provide you with sustenance. The good end is for piety.¹

Allāh *ta'ālā* says in another place:

وَاخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

Lower your wing for the believers.²

In other words, you must be affectionate towards the believers. Just as the believers are instructed to live in harmony, have mutual love and to be humble towards each other, you [Rasūlullāh] are ordered to be affectionate and kind towards the *Sahābah*.

Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ ۚ فَإِنْ يَكْفُرْ بِهَا هُولَاءِ فَقَدْ وَكَلْنَا بِهِ قَوْمًا لَيَسُوًّا بِهَا بِكْفِيرِينَ. أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ فَبِهِدْهُمْ افْتَدِهِ ۗ قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا ۗ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْعَالَمِينَ.

It is these to whom We had given the Book, the *Sharī`ah* and prophet-hood. If the people of Makkah reject these facts, We have appointed for these facts people who do not reject them. These were the people whom Allāh had guided. So you tread

¹ Sūrah *Tā Hā*, 20: 132.

² Sūrah *al-Hijr*, 15: 88.

their path. Say: I am not asking you for any wage for that. This is merely an admonition for the people of the world.¹

Allāh *ta'ālā* makes reference to prophet-hood. They [Prophets] are the ones to whom We gave the Book, wisdom and prophet-hood, and through which they were guided to the true path. You must not be grieved if these unbelievers of Makkah reject your path of guidance because We have already appointed for you a group of people who do not reject these things. They are the Muhājirūn and Anṣār who accepted the way of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* with their heart and soul. The Prophets who are referred to in this verse are those to whom Allāh *ta'ālā* conferred special guidance. So you too must follow their illuminated path. This means that you must follow their way of establishing tauḥīd and refuting polytheism, emulate them in their patience and forbearance, or adopt their praiseworthy character and approved actions. Say clearly to them: I do not seek any recompense from you for conveying the Qur'ān to you. This Qur'ān is a clear admonition for all people. The one who does not accept this advice can lament over his own deprivation and wretchedness.

The path of the accepted servants of Allāh *ta'ālā* who are mentioned in these verses was the path of guidance and they were all guided by Allāh *ta'ālā*. Before Ibrāhīm *'alayhis salām*, his forefather, Ḥadrat Nūḥ *'alayhis salām* was a monotheist and dedicated servant of Allāh *ta'ālā*. Then the progeny of Ibrāhīm *'alayhis salām* whose greatness was acknowledged in all Arab and non-Arab lands were also monotheists. Thus, anyone who desires the path of guidance must follow these personalities, be a monotheist like them, abstain from and abhor polytheism, and emulate them in their

¹ Sūrah al-An'ām, 6: 89-90.

character and actions. Tauḥīd and obedience to Allāh *ta'ālā* alone comprise the straight path which the Prophets had been treading. O Prophet! You too must tread their path and do not bother in the least about the rejection of these wrongdoers. Say to them: I do not ask you for any wage. This is solely an advice which is filled with wisdom. The one who wishes, may accept it; and the one who wishes, may reject it.¹

Just as Allāh *ta'ālā* instructed the entire Muslim nation to read the Qur'ān and establish ṣalāh, Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* was also instructed to do the same. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

أَتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ،
وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ، وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ.

Recite what has been sent down to you of the Book and establish ṣalāh. Surely ṣalāh restrains [man] from indecency and evil. The remembrance of Allāh is the greatest. Allāh knows whatever you do.²

Note: We learn from this that Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* was also advised to practise on the actions and characteristics which the Muslim nation was instructed to carry out and adhere to. Thus, the 'ulamā' and mashā'ikh who are the heirs of the Prophets definitely have to adhere to these actions and guidelines.

Shaykh al-Hind Advises The 'Ulamā'

The most important responsibility of the 'ulamā' and mashā'ikh is to strive to embellish themselves with the qualities of the 'ulamā'-e-rabbāniyyīn as described in the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. For example, piety, fear,

¹ Maulānā Idrīs Kāndhlawī: *Ma'ārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 2.

² Sūrah al-'Ankabūt, 29: 45.

abstinence, generosity, reliance on Allāh, contentment and so on. Furthermore, they must develop within themselves the qualities of the ‘ulamā’ of the Hereafter and be forever conscious of the title of “heirs of the Prophets” which was conferred to them by Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*.

I take the opportunity of presenting a few pieces of advice of Shaykh al-Hind Hadrat Maulānā Maḥmūd al-Hasan Sāhib Deobandī *rahimahullāh* who was a Shaykh al-Hadīth of Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband.

1. My first piece of advice is that all ‘ulamā’ must get together and make efforts to remove cowardice, disunity, disobedience, arrogance and pride from the Muslims who are within their respective circles. As for the differences which exist among the ‘ulamā’ themselves, these must be resolved with sincerity and purity of heart. If you do this, I can definitely say that it is a weapon before which no other weapon can succeed.

Victory or success requires two means, viz. material and spiritual. Both are included in the verse:

وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ

Prepare against them with the best of your ability.

If you do not have any material strength against other nations, you should at least develop spiritual strength within you so that Allāh’s angels may descend from the heavens to help you.¹

Note: Glory to Allāh! What comprehensive pieces of advice which ought to be imprinted on our hearts. There is a special need to practise on these words: “If you do not have any material strength against other

¹ Quoted from *Khuṭbah-e-Sadārat Shaykh al-Hind*.

nations, you should at least develop spiritual strength within you so that Allāh's angels may descend from the heavens to help you." (compiler)

2. It is also the responsibility of the 'ulamā' and mashā'ikh to make it a point to direct their students and associates towards internal rectification so that they are embellished with external and internal sciences and actions. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *ta'ālā*. When these personalities combine internal and external qualities, then whatever Dinī services they render will be of a completely different flavour. For this, we will have to study the lives of the past elders and adopt their ways in our lives.

3. It is the duty of the 'ulamā' and mashā'ikh to convince the people that they ['ulamā' and mashā'ikh] have no worldly needs and motives from them - as was the practice of the Prophets '*alayhimus salām*. In this way, the people will consider their admonitions and words of advice to be pure and transparent, and therefore accept them. If not, the 'ulamā' and mashā'ikh will be suspected of greed and ulterior motives, and no attention will be given to their teachings. Qādī Baydāwī *rahimahullāh* says in his commentary to the words:

لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا

I do not ask you for any wage in return for it [my inviting you towards Allāh].

خاطب كل رسول قومه إزاحة للتهمة وتمحيصا للنصيحة، فإنها لا تنجح ما دامت مشوبة بالمطامع.¹

¹بيضاوي: ج ١، ص ٣٧٧.

This was an address by every Messenger in order to remove all suspicion [of ulterior motives] and to demonstrate the sincerity of the advice. After all, advice which is adulterated by ulterior motives can never be fruitful.

4. It is the duty of 'ulamā' not to dispute over trivial issues – whether worldly or Dīnī. Instead, they must have a harmonious approach and be accommodating. They must neither backbite nor complain about anyone. They must neither scorn any person or group, nor treat them with scorn – neither explicitly nor implicitly. If not, this would lead to disunity, disharmony in the hearts, and could even lead to a desire for vengeance.

5. It is the duty of 'ulamā' of these latter times to bear in mind the teachings and guidelines of the Sahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum, Tābi'īn and pious predecessors when undertaking the rectification of people. The rectification of present day people will be achieved through the same teachings and guidelines. Imām Mālik rahimahullāh says in this regard:

لن يصلح أمر آخر هذه الأمة إلا ما أصلح أولها

The rectification of the latter part of the Muslim nation will only be achieved through the points which rectified the first generation of the Muslim nation.

Even today, the Qur'ān and the Sunnah of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam which are really fountains of rectitude and guidance are as clear as the sun and moon before us. It is only through their light that we can tread the path of guidance, and guide and rectify the Muslim nation. The Sahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum and Tābi'īn trod the same path and showed the way of rectitude and rectification to the Muslim nation. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone.

Exceptional Principles

Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Wasiyyullah Sāhib *rahimahullāh* paid particular attention to compiling a booklet titled *U*sūl *N*ādīrah in which he listed 17 principles for the rectification of the Muslim nation. We take the honour of quoting eleven of them. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone.

First Principle

This principle is certainly long but most beneficial, so read it carefully. (compiler)

He writes in his explanation to:

انقسام القلوب في التغيير والثبات

(The second heart) is the one which has been rejected and cast away due to its engrossment in desires of the self, and has become filthy and dirty because it became mixed up with evil and bad characteristics. The doors of such a heart are wide open for the devils but shut to the angels. The early stages of evil start from it in the sense that thoughts first pass through it. The heart then looks at its master – the mind – so that it may ask and inquire from it as to whether the thought is worthy of consideration or not. In the meantime, the mind is already subjugated and attracted to desires. It has already passed a long time in searching for strategies and taking resort to desires. This is why the self overpowers and rules the mind, and the mind in turn fully approves of the thought. The darkness of the thought permeates the entire heart because the army of the mind cannot repulse it (how can this army repulse it when its chief commander has joined with the enemy?). The authority of Satan becomes strong

because when the desires of the self permeate the heart, the extent of his rule expands.

The desires of the self then make themselves up and advance with victorious pride towards the intellect carrying with them hopes and wishes. The self displays to the intellect the lush garden of embellished deceptions. The government of *īmān* which believes in the promises and warnings of Allāh *ta'ālā* starts to totter and the light of conviction in the Hereafter becomes dim. This is because the black smoke of desires of the self rises up and goes towards the heart and encompasses everything around it until its light extinguishes. At such a time, the intellect becomes like an eye whose lids have become filled with smoke and it is unable to see. The overpowering of desire does exactly the same thing to the intellect until the power to think and observe vanishes completely. It becomes blind and deaf to any admonisher or adviser who wants to show or tell the truth to it. Desires pour forth, Satan takes control of it and the body parts also act in tandem with the desires. Consequently, sin makes its appearance in line with the decree of Allāh *ta'ālā*. The following verse makes reference to such a heart:

أَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهُهُ هُوَ ۖ أَفَأَنْتَ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِ وَكِيلًا. أَمْ تَحْسَبُ أَنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ
أَوْ يَعْقِلُونَ ۗ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا.

Have you seen him who makes his own desires his deity? Could you be held responsible for him? Do you think that most of them listen or understand? They are nothing but similar to cattle. In fact, they are farther astray from the path.¹

Allāh's decree has already been established against most of them, so they will not believe.

¹ Sūrah al-Furqān, 25: 43-44.

Allāh *ta'ālā* says: It is the same whether you warn them or you do not, they will not believe. (This is the condition of the hearts which are out of Islam and there remains no aptitude whatsoever in them). With respect to certain desires, there are some hearts which are exactly the same [as the previous ones] (although they are not out of Islam, they are intensely flagrant sinners in the sense that when it comes to certain desires, they are in harmony with these people) e.g. a person continually abstains from a certain evil, but when his eyes fall on a beautiful woman, he cannot control his eyes and heart. His intellect disappears and the control and restraint of his heart vanishes.

Take the following examples:

- (1) A person cannot restrain his self in matters related to authority, rule and pride. When the causes of these present themselves, he does not have the power to remain firm and resist himself.
- (2) A person cannot control his self when he is scorned and one of his faults are pointed out.
- (3) A person cannot control his self when acquiring money. Instead, he falls upon it like an impatient lover and completely forgets about his dignity and piety just as an impatient lover who forgets his piety when he finds his beloved.

All these things take place when the smoke of desires of the self continually rises towards the heart until it makes it pitch dark, causing the light of the heart to be totally eclipsed. The light of modesty, dignity and *īmān* also gets extinguished after this, and the self begins striving to acquire the wishes of Satan.

Second Principle

It is absolutely correct to say that practical and rational powers are almost paralysed (and the reason for this is that) rectification is dependent on a true realization, and the acquisition of a true realization is dependent on bearing in mind the statements and conditions of those who have true realization, and in genuine emulation of them. Nowadays no importance is attached to this. In fact, its need is not even acknowledged (how, then, can rectification be realized?).

Third Principle

It has been learnt from experience that when there is no special supervision of useless people, they cannot do any work on their own. The reason for this is that due to an absence of a realization, they do not have any value for work and its benefits. If they were to work, they would be convinced of its benefits and then value it. (If they did not even come to the level of working, how will they have a value for it?)

Fourth Principle

It has also been learnt from experience that when 'ulamā' have to worry about their livelihood, they cannot do any work. The first reason for this is that nowadays their resolution is weak and then they do not have a genuine quest. This is why they succumb to the obstacles to the Hereafter (i.e. earning a livelihood), and become useless with regard to the Hereafter. Thus, also long as the public does not cause them to have no worries about their livelihood, they cannot render any service to Dīn. (As regards their preoccupation with a livelihood) even if they are teaching in a madrasah, have a bond with a pious elder or themselves claim to have such a bond, they are like newly qualified 'ulamā' who cannot render any Dīnī service, and their claim will be superficial.

وجائزة دعوى المحبة في الهوى - ولكن لا يخفى كلام المنافق

It is very easy to make a verbal claim to love, and everyone can make such a claim. However, the reality is that the speech of a hypocrite cannot remain concealed.

Fifth Principle

Work can only be achieved through sincerity, but we do not have it. We only make claims to equality with the sincere ones while Allāh *ta'ālā* does not consider the sincere and insincere ones to be the same. As long as we do not purify our hearts of ostentation and show and include ourselves among the sincere ones, we will not be able to achieve anything. Every organization and every institution is in severe need of sincere people.

Sixth Principle

The fundamental reason for a lack of knowledge in the students is that the 'ulamā' and teachers (except for a few) themselves do not have a genuine interest in knowledge. How, then, will students develop an interest? (Like the teachers, even the students) do not have the slightest affinity with any science. This is the fundamental reason for the loss of knowledge, and it is the same reason for the loss in actions.

Seventh Principle

The masses can never revert to the 'ulamā' as long as they do not see special religiosity in them. This special religiosity is developed through praiseworthy characteristics and virtuous character. From among the praiseworthy characteristics through which they can become leaders is for them to have the quality of independence, and the absence of greed and pride.

Eighth Principle

In today's times, many people have destroyed rectification of the self and thereby destroyed

themselves through free ways, lack of restrictions, uncouth mannerisms, evil interactions, breaking of promises, bad character and disorganized ways. In this way, they are neither of any worldly use nor Dīnī benefit. The reason for this is that their very practical power has become useless and they destroyed themselves with their own hands. If they become aware of the fabrication of the self, it may be possible to reconstruct the two. The rectification of such people cannot be undertaken by anyone and everyone. Rather, only an expert reformer can do it. He alone will be able to apprise the person of the fabrications of the self and place him onto the path. He alone can remove him from this destruction and bring back the person's lost power of action. In this way, his worldly and Dīnī life can become reorganized and he can achieve success in this world and the Hereafter.

Ninth Principle

Rectification of the self is not possible without training. In our times, the condition of the seekers is such that due to the overpowering of the self, desires and greed; they cannot tolerate the slightest thing which is against the self even if it is from the 'ulamā' and muftīs. We see that when the genuine 'ulamā' speak out the truth, they are maligned in various ways. And the masses are joined by like-minded 'ulamā' in maligning the genuine 'ulamā'. How regretful! What a serious calamity!

Tenth Principle

Nowadays we see murīds and seekers looking for ways of gaining proximity to the mashā'ikh. Some of these mūrīds have no aim whatsoever of acquiring Dīn and reaching Allāh *ta'ālā*. Rather, they either make the mashā'ikh their objective or have certain worldly motives. It will not be far-fetched to refer to their actions as lunacy, and them as lunatics.

As for the murīds whose objective is Dīn, they can be divided into two categories: (1) Some of them acquire it [Dīn] through closeness with the shaykh, submission, complete emulation, rectification of deeds and character and a genuine quest. This is most praiseworthy and is what is really required. (2) Although the intention of some of them is Dīn through proximity with the shaykh, they do not make emulation, submission, rectification and informing the shaykh of their conditions the means towards realizing this objective. They confine it to mere outward and customary meeting with the shaykh, kissing his hand, offering tributes, adulation and flattery. A bond and proximity of this nature is not praiseworthy, and such a seeker is a false seeker. If he is not referred to as a lunatic, he can certainly be called a foolish person. His quest is correct and praiseworthy, so he cannot be called a lunatic, but his manner of acquiring it is incorrect. There is therefore no question about his foolishness. Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* says in this regard:

والفرق بين الحمق والجنون أن الأحمق مقصوده صحيح ولكن سلوكه الطريق فاسد، فلا يكون له روية صحيحة في سلوك الطريق والموصل في الغرض. وأما المجنون فإنه يختار ما لا ينبغي أن يختار، فيكون أصل اختياره وإيثاره فاسدا.¹

The difference between foolishness and lunacy is that the objective of the foolish person is correct, but his approach is wrong. Thus, he cannot make a correct decision in treading the path which would convey him to his objective. As for the lunatic, he opts for something which is inappropriate. Thus, his original decision and preference is corrupt.

¹ إحياء العلوم، ج ٣، ص ٥٨.

Eleventh Principle

In today's times people have a very low threshold of bearing difficulties in spiritual exercises. Their selves have become accustomed to the desire for comfort. Anyway, the desire for position and authority is already a natural trait in them. Therefore, if a person is from the fraternity of 'ulamā', he thinks to himself that people must look up to him as one who is from among the 'ulamā' of Allāh. If a person is in the garb of the Sufīs, he wants to be looked up to just as Junayd *rahimahullāh*, Shiblī *rahimahullāh* and Bāyazīd *rahimahullāh* were admired. But if you were to look at the person's actions, striving and spiritual exercises, it appears absolutely zero.

Note: These eleven principles are really core principles. Whether we are active in Madāris or we are attached to Khānqāhs, we generally do not want to do any work, but we are all seeking the fruits. We must understand that these are mere vain thoughts and wishes to see the good results and taste the sweet fruits of actions.

I now quote the principles of the Tarīqah from my book, *Tarbīyyat-e-Aulād Kā Islāmī Nizām*. Our senior 'ulamā' and mashā'ikh practised on them and were subsequently honoured with success and accomplishment.

Principles of The Tarīqah

Hadrat Sahl Tusturī *rahimahullāh* says: Our Tarīqah has seven principles: (1) to hold on firmly to Allāh's Book, (2) to follow the Sunnah, (3) to eat what is lawful, (4) to abstain from causing any harm to anyone, (5) to remain distant from sins, (6) to continually engage in repentance and (7) to fulfil rights.

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at the beautiful Shar'ī principles of the Tarīqah! They ought to be put into practice. (compiler)

Imām Abul Hasan Shādhilī *rahimahullāh* says: “When your exposition conflicts with the Qur’ān and Sunnah, hold on firmly to the Qur’ān and Sunnah and cast aside your exposition. Say to your self: Allāh *ta’ālā* guaranteed my protection and virtuousness in the Qur’ān and Sunnah; not in expositions and inspirations.”¹

Imām Abū Sa’id Khazzār *rahimahullāh* says: “Any internal which conflicts with the external is false. Consequently, we come across such ‘ulamā’-e-rabbāniyyīn who apprise us of the dangers of those who make claims to internal treasures. Such claimants feel that the compulsory and obligatory duties do not apply to them and they disregard the injunctions of the Sharī’ah. They give incorrect explanations to the Qur’ān and Aḥādīth, and discard the Islamic ways of character and behaviour. In fact, we find the ‘ulamā’-e-rabbāniyyīn even stopping us from intermingling with these fakes. They also distance themselves from their deviated and misguided statements, and expose their baseless thoughts and views.”

Ḥadīrat Abū Yazīd Bustāmī *rahimahullāh* said to some of his associates: “Come with me so that we could see that person who is popularizing himself as a walī.” They accompanied him to the person. When he emerged from his house and entered the masjid, he spat in the direction of the qiblah. On seeing this, Ḥadīrat Abū Yazīd turned around there and then, and did not even offer the salām to the person. On returning from there, he said: “When this person could not be true to just one of the etiquette of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, how could he be true to his claims of wilāyat?”

¹ ‘Abd al-Bāqī Sarūr: *Kitāb at-Taṣawwuf al-Islāmī wa al-Imām ash-Sha’rānī*, p. 75.

Abū Yazīd *rahimahullāh* also says: “If you see a person performing many supernatural feats – even to the extent of flying in the air – do not be deceived by him until you see how he is when it comes to orders and prohibitions, preservation of the limits of Allāh *ta’ālā*, and practising on the Sharī’ah.”

Imām Rabbānī *Hadrat Junayd rahimahullāh* says: “Our path is strengthened and supported by the Qur’ān and Sunnah. All paths for the creation are sealed except for the one who treads in the footsteps of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*.”

Imām Sha’rānī *rahimahullāh* writes in *al-Yawāqīt wa al-Jawāhir*: “The person who leaves the scale of the Sharī’ah for even a single moment is destroyed.”

There are ‘ulamā’-e-rabbānīyyīn who raised their voices for the truth and became fortresses against falsehood. Many senior and erudite writers quoted the statements of these ‘ulamā’-e-rabbānīyyīn in the fields of jihād and propagation, and rectification and reformation. Some of these statements are quoted below:

Shaykh Abū Zuhri *rahimahullāh* says: “According to Shaykh Faudah, Sufism had many unique qualities in the latter eras. It left very clear marks in this regard. The strong imān of the Muslims in western, southern and central Africa is really the results and fruits of Sufism.”

When Imām Sanūsī *rahimahullāh* intended the rectification of Muslims, he first adopted the path of Sufism. His system was in itself very unique because he first initiated the people as murīds, prepared special workers from among them, and established many Khānqāhs for this purpose. The first Khānqāh was established in a mountain near Makkah Mukarramah. He then moved with his Khānqāh to the desert of Libya. These Khānqāhs were sandy fields in the middle of the

desert. Water gushed forth from there through the efforts of his murīds. Orchards and fruit-bearing trees sprouted from there.

He steered them and taught them warfare and archery. He struck terror in the Italians for almost 20 years. This was a time when even the Uthmānī (Ottoman) Empire could not be of any help to the people of Libya. However, the Sanūsī defence continued from the Khānqāhs until Allāh *ta'ālā* forced the Italians to retreat and the Sanūsīyyah came to life again. We want it to live just as its initial life commenced on a strong foundation of Sufism.

The great thinker, Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan 'Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh* writes in *Rijāl al-Fikr wa ad-Da'wah al-Islāmīyyah* with reference to 'Ālim Rabbānī Shaykh 'Abd al-Qādir Jilānī *rahimahullāh*:

Approximately 70 000 people used to attend his assemblies. More than 5 000 Jews and Christians embraced Islam at his hands. More than 100 000 sinners pledged bay'ah at his hands, and he kept his door of bay'ah and repentance open. Therefore, none apart from Allāh *ta'ālā* knows the real number of those who entered through that door. The condition of those people was rectified and their religious lives improved. Shaykh 'Abd al-Qādir Jilānī *rahimahullāh* continued training and supervising them, and enabled them to traverse the stations of progress.

After repentance, bay'ah and renewal of their imān, these spiritual students began realizing their responsibilities. When the shaykh saw the qualifications of steadfastness, rectification and reformation in any of his disciples, he would permit them to accept bay'ah. Subsequently, his khulafā' spread throughout the world for the sake of inviting towards Allāh *ta'ālā*, joining the creation to Allāh

ta'ālā, rectifying their selves, and for the sake of waging war against polytheism, bid'ah, ignorance and hypocrisy. Consequently, the Islamic call spread, and centres of *īmān*, schools of Sufism, centres of *jihād* and assemblies of brotherhood and brotherly love were established all over the Islamic world.

His *khulafā'* and students trod the same path. They played a major role in creating the spirit of *jihād* and controlling the rebelliousness of desires and self-conceit. Had these people not been there, the materialism which had overpowered the government and the civilization would have swallowed this Muslim nation, and the spark of life and love would have been extinguished from the hearts of the members of this nation. Similarly, his *khulafā'* played a major role in spreading Islam to the far off places and regions where Muslim armies could not reach or where the power of the Islamic state could not be wielded. Through them, Islam spread to Africa, Indonesia, the Indian Ocean islands, China and India.

Our Ustādh Shaykh Muḥammad Rāghib at-Ṭabbākh *rahimahullāh* writes in *ath-Thaqāfah al-Islāmiyyah*: From among the great contributions and achievements of the Sufis is that whenever the kings and rulers intended to wage *jihād*, the majority of the Sufis used to prepare their *murīds* to go out for *jihād*. Since *murīds* are intensely obedient to their mentors, they used to be at the forefront in the ranks of the *mujāhidīn*. Sometimes, the Sufis themselves would join the army, fight in battle and encourage their *murīds*. This used to result in victory and help.

The gist of whatever we wrote above is that these personalities who were mentioned were 'ulamā'-e-rabbāniyyīn, pure Sufis and sincere people of the *Ṭarīqah* who held the reins of inviting towards Allāh *ta'ālā* in past times and conveyed the true message of

Islam to the masses. They were the ones who combined worship with jihād, created a harmonious relationship between the rights of Allāh *ta'ālā* and the rights of fellow humans, and fulfilled the rights of both. They were the personalities who raised their voices before the tyrants and remained firm against the deceptive colonialists. They were the ones who joined Islam to the truth and not to their mortal selves. They conferred authority to the injunctions of the Sharī'ah irrespective of whether they were in their favour or against them. If they committed a mistake, they would accept criticism. If they had a shortcoming, they would lend an attentive ear to advice. This is because they understood that they were also humans, they can err and they can also be correct. They knew that only the Prophets '*alayhimus salām* were divinely protected from sin.

May Allāh *ta'ālā* shower His mercy on Hadrat Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh*. One day he stood before the blessed grave of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu '*alayhi wa sallam* and said: "There is none among us who did not refute anyone or who was not refuted, except for the personality who is in this blessed grave." Saying this, he pointed towards the blessed grave of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu '*alayhi wa sallam*.

The historical and immortal stands which were taken by the genuine 'ulamā' and sincere proponents of the Sharī'ah of the past have been taken by a contemporary scholar and shaykh by the name of Sa'īd Nursī Turkī, who is known by the title of Badī' az-Zamān. When he perceived that some of his students and disciples have gone beyond the limits in showing respect and reverence to him, and believe that the truth is attached to his mortal self, he guided and steered them. He advised them saying: "Remember! Abstain from attaching to me the truth towards which I am inviting you. Instead, you ought to hasten in

attaching it to that sanctified fountain – the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*. You must understand that I am no more than a scout who points you towards the treasures of Allāh *ta‘ālā*. You must believe that I am not sinless. I may also commit a sin and I may also waver, and I fear that this could cause the truth to become tainted.”¹

Note: Look at how the true devotees were not smug about their conditions. This is why they used to prohibit their murīds from obeying them in matters against the Shari‘ah. A Hadith clearly states:

لا طاعة لمخلوق في معصية الخالق

Obedience to the creation is not permissible when it entails disobedience to the Creator.

I now quote some examples of worship and spiritual practices of a few senior ‘ulamā’ and Sufis (these examples portray the fruits of their practices, how they were witnessed by people, accepted by them, how they joined this group, and how they also demonstrated lofty conditions). All praise is due to Allāh *ta‘ālā*.

Hundreds And Thousands of Seekers Assemble in The Khānqāh of Hadrat Sayyid Aḥmad Kabīr Rifā‘ī

Some reliable and trustworthy ‘ulamā’ relate: “There were times when we saw about 10 000 people in the khānqāh, who were all hosted by his alms-house.” ‘Allāmah Ibn Jauzī *rahimahullāh* says: “I presented myself before him on the 15th of Sha‘bān. I saw approximately 100 000 people assembled in Khānqāh-e-Umm ‘Ubayd. All the arrangements for their accommodation and feeding were done by Sayyid Sāhib *rahimahullāh*.”

¹ *Tarbīyyat-e-Awlād kā Islāmī Nizām*, pp. 474-480.

All his characteristics and habits were an example of the character and habits of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*. He was extremely humble, modest and unassuming. He himself used to say: “I studied and pondered over all the ways of sulūk and ma‘rifat, but I did not find any way better than humility and self-effacement. This is why I selected these qualities for my self.”

He himself was very strict in emulating the Sunnah and emphasised it on his attendants as well. He constantly tried to wipe out the un-Islamic practices which were initiated by materialistic and pseudo-Sufis. He abhorred such people. He liked simplicity in food and clothing. He disliked worldly formalities and possessions of luxury. Shame and modesty were the overriding qualities in his life. So much so that when his clothes became dirty, it was his blessed habit to descend into the river, wash and rub his clothes while he was still wearing them, and then stand in the sun to dry them. He would remain standing in the sunlight for as long as his clothes were not dry.

‘Allāmah Shaykh Ibn Muhadh-dhab writes in his book, *‘Ajā‘ib Wāsīt*, that by the end of his life, he had 80 100 khulafā’. There was no city in Iraq which did not have a few of his khulafā’. As for his murīds, there was no count of them.

Through the chemical effect of his companionship, the fiery love in his heart, his steadfastness and his burning self; he continued instilling the heat of imān and love, sincerity, devotion to Allāh *ta‘ālā*, desire to follow the Sharī‘ah, and yearning for the Hereafter in his sincere and earnest murīds. He continued uprooting the evil atmosphere with full force through his determination, deep-seated knowledge, and the unseen help of Allāh *ta‘ālā*. He opened the doors of bay‘ah and repentance, and people from all over the

world began coming to him to renew their faith and covenant with Allāh *ta'ālā*; to abstain from unbelief, polytheism, flagrant sinning, immorality, oppression, tyranny, considering the lawful to be unlawful and vice versa, from introducing innovations in Islam and the Shari'ah, from falling headlong into the world, and from disregarding the Hereafter.

Hadrat Rifā'ī *rahimahullāh* continued his da'wah and jihād for about half a century. He fought against his surroundings which were filled with oppression, tyranny, serious Satanic whisperings and dangers, many deviations, acts of unbelief and baseless things. All this was a result of his sincerity, his abstinence, his concern for Allāh's creation, and devoting himself for the sake of da'wah and guidance. Consequently, his efforts were successful and bore fruits. The number of people who repented from ignorance and sins increased day after day, and the lives of thousands of people changed completely.

Hadrat Jilānī's Programme of Rectification

After completing his external and internal studies, he turned his attention to rectification and guiding people. He took up the responsibility of both teaching and guiding. His teacher and shaykh, Shaykh Maḥzamī initiated a programme of teaching and guiding in the madrasah. Soon thereafter, there was a need to expand the madrasah. His devoted followers extended the building and made it worthy for his assemblies. People began coming in droves, leaving barely any place in the madrasah. The whole of Baghdad began attending his assemblies. Allāh *ta'ālā* conferred him with honour and acceptance which was not even enjoyed by kings.

Shaykh Muwaffaq ad-Dīn ibn Qudāmah, the author of *Mughnī*, says: "I did not see anyone apart from him respected for the sake of Dīn." Kings and ministers

would attend his assemblies in a submissive way, and sit down respectfully. The number of 'ulamā' and jurists could not be counted. Four hundred ink pots were counted in a single assembly. These were brought to record his statements and words.

Services in the field of education

Together with possessing high ranks of spirituality and remaining fully occupied in the rectification of souls and character, he was not found lacking in teaching, lecturing, issuing fatāwā, correcting beliefs, and defending the Ahl as-Sunnah. As regards beliefs and principles, he was on the path of Imām Aḥmad *rahimahullāh* and the Ḥadīth scholars. The Ahl as-Sunnah and way of the pious predecessors received a lot of strength and support from him. On the other hand, innovations in beliefs and actions were severely affected. Ibn as-Sam'ānī says: "The status of those who followed the Sunnah increased on account of him, and they now had some weight."

In the madrasah, he used to teach one lesson of tafsīr, one of Ḥadīth, one of fiqh, and one on the differences among the imāms and their proofs. Lessons of tafsīr, Ḥadīth, fiqh, madhāhib of the imāms, principles of jurisprudence, and grammar were conducted in the madrasah from morning to evening. Tajwid was taught after the zuhr salāh. In addition to this, he was also occupied with issuing fatāwā. He generally issued these fatāwā according to the Shāfi'i and Ḥambalī schools. The 'ulamā' of Iraq used to be impressed by his fatāwā and speak highly of them.

His impact

The mere existence of Ḥadrat Shaykh *rahimahullāh* during this era of materialism was a living miracle of Islam, and a major divine support. His self, his excellent qualities, his influence, the effects of his

acceptance in Allāh's sight, the clear indications of his acceptance and honour in the eyes of people, the character of his students and those who were tutored by him, and their ways and lives – were all proofs of the truthfulness of Islam and the Islamic way of life. It was also an expression of this fact that Islam has the greatest ability to instil genuine spirituality, to culture the souls, and to create a bond with Allāh *ta'ālā*. And that its copious treasures are never short of rare jewels and gems.¹

His assembly

It is related that 400 people would sit in his assembly with pens and inkpots, and note whatever he said. He said: "In the beginning, I saw Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and Hadrat 'Alī *radiyallāhu 'anhu* in a dream. They were instructing me to deliver talks and lectures, and they placed their saliva in my mouth. Consequently, the doors of my speech opened up."

The Assemblies of Hadrat 'Abd ar-Rahmān ibn Jauzī

The large audiences which attended his assemblies

The greatest achievement of his life was his revolutionary admonitions and assemblies. His assemblies had affected the entire population of Baghdad. The Khulafā, Sultāns, ministers and senior 'ulamā' used to attend them with real enthusiasm and eagerness. He used to attract 100 000 people at a time to his assemblies. No assembly ever had less than 10 000-15 000 people. He swayed the crowds in such a manner that people would fall unconscious, they would tear their garments in ecstasy, people would be screaming, they would be crying profusely, and there was no count of the large number of people who used to repent. It is estimated that 20 000 Jews and

¹ *Tārīkh Da'wat wa 'Azīmat*, vol. 1, p. 221.

Christians embraced Islam at his hands, and about 100 000 people repented.

Ibn al-Jauzī *rahimahullāh* openly refuted innovations and other evil practices. He explained the Sunnah and correct beliefs. His unique oratory, erudition, and general acceptance by people did not give the *ahl al-bid'ah* any way to refute him. The Sunnah was widely proliferated through his exhortations, lessons and written works. The khalīfah and other leaders became strict adherents of Imām Aḥmad (who was considered to be the sign of the ways of the pious predecessors and the Sunnah way), and became inclined to his madh-hab.¹

The need to study the lives of the pious predecessors

Although he was a Ḥadīth scholar and a jurist, he never disregarded the need to study the inspiring stories and incidents from the lives of the pious predecessors for the sake of rectifying the heart and developing a yearning. He advises and relates his own experiences to the jurists, Ḥadīth scholars, students and 'ulamā' in both his books, viz. *Talbīs Iblīs* and *Sayd al-Khātīr*. He writes in *Sayd al-Khātīr*:

I concluded that engrossment in jurisprudence and listening to Ḥadīth are insufficient to create righteousness in the heart. A way of overcoming this is to also include inspiring stories and incidents from the lives of the pious predecessors in one's reading. Merely studying what is halāl and harām is not sufficient to create softness in the heart. This softness comes from reading Aḥādīth, stories, and the lives of the righteous. This is because they had acquired

¹ *Tārīkh Da'wat wa 'Azīmat*, vol. 1, p. 232.

the aims and purposes of the narrations. Their practising on the injunctions was not superficial and external. Rather, they had the fundamental purpose and the core of those acts of worship.

What I am telling you is based on my personal experience and after having tested this system. I noticed that the muḥaddithīn and students of Ḥadīth in general direct their full attention to Ahādīth which have high levels of transmission, and in relating as large a number of Ahādīth as they can. Similarly, the jurists in general focus their attention to polemics and knowledge through which they can overpower their opposition.

Now what softness and tenderness can these sciences create in the heart?! The people of the past would go to a pious elder merely to observe his ways and mannerisms; and not to obtain any knowledge from him. This is because their ways and mannerisms were the actual fruits of their knowledge. Understand this well. While you are studying fiqh and Ḥadīth, you must certainly include a study of the biographies of the pious predecessors, and the ascetics of this ummah so that you may develop softness in your heart.”¹

Note: We pray to Allāh *ta’ālā* to inspire us to not only study the lives of the pious predecessors but to imbibe their qualities as well. Āmīn.

Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī.

¹ *Tārīkh Da’wat wa ‘Azīmat*, vol. 1, p. 246.

CHAPTER THREE
RESPONSIBILITIES OF THOSE ENGAGED IN
DA'WAH AND TABLIGH

قال الله تعالى:

أُدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ (سورة هود:

١٢٥)

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم:

مَنْ رَأَى مِنْكُمْ مُنْكَرًا فَلْيُغَيِّرْهُ بِيَدِهِ فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِلِسَانِهِ، وَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِقَلْبِهِ،
وَذَلِكَ أَوْعَفُ الْإِيمَانِ (رواه مسلم)

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلوة والسلام على سيد المرسلين وخاتم النبيين محمد واله وأصحابه أجمعين، ومن تبعهم بإحسان ودعا بدعوتهم إلى يوم الدين. أما بعد!

عن الحسن أنه قال لن يزال لله نصحاء في الأرض من عباده يعرضون أعمال العباد على كتاب الله، فإذا وافقوا حمدوا الله، وإذا خالفوه عرفوا بكتاب الله ضلالة من ضل وهدى من اهتدى، فأولئك خلفاء الله.

Hadrat Hasan said: Allāh *ta'ālā* has certain servants on earth who are advisors. They will present the deeds of people against the Book of Allāh. When they find the deeds conforming with Allāh's Book, they will praise Allāh *ta'ālā*. When they find the deeds in contradiction to Allāh's Book, they will recognize the deviation of the deviated one and the guidance of the guided one in the light of Allāh's Book. Such people are the deputies of Allāh.¹

The obligation of enjoining good and forbidding evil is extremely important, yet we are just as heedless of it. I therefore felt a demand from my heart to first of all address myself and then the Muslim nation – especially the 'ulamā' – in this regard. I will first quote a few Qur'ānic verses, Ahādith and statements and articles of the senior elders from which we will gauge the importance and virtue of enjoining good and forbidding evil; the abhorrence of abandoning this duty, and the punishments which the one who abandons this duty is eligible for.

We pray to Allāh *ta'ālā* to accept this service of ours and to inspire us – His servants – to set right our personal and collective actions. Āmīn.

¹ *Ta'tifāt Muṣliḥul Ummat*, vol. 3, p. 186.

Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī

Qur'ānic Verses With Reference to Da'wah And Tablīgh

The Responsibility of The 'Ulamā' With Regard to Setting Right The Actions of The Masses

لَوْلَا يَنْهَاهُمُ الرَّبُّنِيُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ عَنْ قَوْلِهِمُ الْإِثْمَ وَأَكْلِهِمُ السُّحْتَ ط لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا
يَصْنَعُونَ.

Why do their dervishes and scholars not prohibit them from uttering sinful things and devouring the prohibited? Very evil is that action which they are doing.¹

Ḥadhrat Maulānā 'Ashiq Ilāhī Sāhib Muhājir Madanī rahimahullāh writes in his commentary, *Anwār al-Bayān fī Kashf Asrār al-Qur'ān*:

Ḥadhrat Ibn 'Abbās radiyallāhu 'anhu said: “There is no stricter verse in the Qur'ān than this one for the reprimanding of dervishes and scholars.”

Ḥadhrat 'Alī radiyallāhu 'anhu delivered a sermon one day. After praising Allāh *ta'ālā* and sending salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* he said:

“O people! People before you were destroyed because when they used to commit sins, the dervishes and scholars would not stop them. When they increased in their sins, a punishment descended on them. You should therefore enjoin good and prohibit evil before a punishment which befell them descends on you as well. Know well that neither is one's sustenance cut short nor does death come beforehand as a result of enjoining good and forbidding evil.”²

¹ Sūrah al-Mā'idah, 5: 63.

² Quoted by Ibn Kathīr, vol. 2, p. 74; *Anwār al-Bayān*, vol. 2, p. 134.

Note: This verse not only needs the attention of all of us (who belong to the group of ‘ulamā’ and Sufis even if our affiliation is just customary and in name) but ought to be practised upon. May Allāh *ta’ālā* inspire us to carry out this responsibility. Āmīn.

Propagating Islam-A Special Responsibility of The Messenger

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ ^ط وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ ^ط وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ ^ط إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ.

O Messenger! Convey whatever was revealed to you from your Sustainer. If you do not do this, you have not conveyed His message. Allāh shall save you from the people. Surely Allāh does not show the way to an unbelieving nation.¹

Explanatory translation: O Rasūlullāh (*sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*)! Convey (to the people) whatever has been revealed to you from your Sustainer. If (under the impossible supposition) you do not do this (it will be understood as if) you did not convey a single message of Allāh *ta’ālā* (because it is compulsory to convey the entire collection. Just as concealing all of it will result in this obligation left unfulfilled, in the same way, concealing some of it will result in this obligation left unfulfilled). (Do not fear the unbelievers in any way as regards propagation) because Allāh *ta’ālā* will protect you from the people. Allāh *ta’ālā* will most certainly not give any way to the unbelievers (to kill and destroy you).

Note: This promise was fulfilled to the letter. Although Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* was injured in some battles and the Jews – like cowards – gave him poison, no one could get together to kill him. The

¹ Sūrah al-Mā’idah, 5: 67.

realization of this prophecy is a miracle and a proof of his prophet-hood. It is mentioned in *Tirmidhī* that in the beginning, Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* had guards. When the above verse was revealed, he said [to the guards]: “You may all leave. Allāh *ta‘ālā* is protecting me.” This is also a proof of prophet-hood because reliance of such a level cannot be achieved without divine revelation.¹

Putting an End to Evil is a Responsibility of Muslims

وَاتَّقُوا فِتْنَةً لَا تُصِيبَنَّ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْكُمْ خَاصَّةً ۚ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

Continually guard yourselves against a sedition which will not afflict the wrongdoers among you alone. Know well that the punishment of Allāh is severe.²

Note: An important rule is explained in this verse. Muslims are not to restrict practising on the Shari‘ah to themselves only. It is also their responsibility that when an evil is spreading in society, they must make efforts to stop it within their capacity. If people are lax in this obligation and the evil consequences of this evil arrive, they will not be confined to those who committed it directly. Rather, it will also attack those who neither committed it nor stopped others from committing it.³

The Prophet Must Invite With Wisdom And Admonition

أُدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ ۗ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ.

Invite to the way of your Sustainer with wisdom and with kind admonition, and argue with them in a way that is best.

¹ *Bayān al-Qur‘ān*, vol. 1, p. 47.

² *Sūrah al-Anfāl*, 8: 25.

³ *Tauḍīh al-Qur‘ān*, vol. 1, p. 530.

Your Sustainer alone knows best him who strayed from His path, and He alone knows best those who are on the path.¹

Explanatory translation: (O Prophet)! Invite to the way of your Sustainer with knowledge and wisdom (i.e. with absolute proofs just as Hadrat Ibrāhīm 'alayhis salām disproved the divinity of the sun, moon and stars through absolute proofs, and invited to the oneness of Allāh *ta'ālā*). Invite with kind admonition (i.e. invite them to the truth in a soft manner which is pleasing to the heart. It must be for their wellbeing and not to humiliate them. Adopt the approach of Hadrat Ibrāhīm 'alayhis salām when he invited his father: “O my dear father! Why do you worship something which cannot hear, cannot see and cannot benefit you in any way?” This was a beautiful manner of invitation). If it reaches a point of debating and presenting arguments, then do it in a manner that is best. (In other words, establish your proofs and evidences in a manner which is not severe and harsh, and does not antagonize them. Look at the beautiful reply which Hadrat Ibrāhīm 'alayhis salām gave to Namrūd: “Allāh causes the sun to rise from the east, now you cause it to rise from the west.” On hearing this evidence, Namrūd was left astounded. Once you do this, you would have fulfilled the responsibility of inviting and propagating. There is no need for you to worry about who accepts your call and who does not). Your Sustainer knows fully well the one who deviated from this path (and did not come towards the truth despite the wise call, sound admonition and excellent arguments). And He alone knows those who will accept the guidance (He will reward or punish each person according to his actions. Your duty is to merely convey the message).²

¹ Sūrah an-Nahl, 16: 125.

² Maulānā Idrīs Kāndhlawī: *Ma'ārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 4, p. 427.

It is a Prophet's Responsibility to Rectify Allāh's Servants

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُدَّثِّرُ، قُمْ فَأَنْذِرْ، وَرَبَّكَ فَكَبِّرْ

O you who are enshrouded! Stand up and warn. Mention the greatness of your Sustainer.¹

The first order which is issued to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* in Sūrah al-Muddath-thir is that he must stand up. The literal meaning could be taken in the sense that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* was wrapped in a sheet and lying down. He must now get up. The other meaning is that he must get ready and prepared for the task which lies ahead. This would mean that he must take the courage and see to the responsibility of rectifying Allāh's creation. The word فانذر is derived from انذار which means to warn. However, this warning must be based on love and affection, like when a father warns his son of a snake, scorpion, fire and so on. This is the temperament of the Prophets *'alayhimus salām*. This is why they have the titles of *bashīr* and *nadhīr*. The word *nadhīr* refers to a person who warns of harmful things out of affection and concern. The word *bashīr* refers to a giver of glad tidings. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* is also referred to by these two titles in many places in the Qur'an. But in the present verse, Allāh *ta'ālā* suffices with the quality of warning because at the time of the revelation of this verse, the Muslims were very few in number. The rest were all unbelievers and idol worshippers who were not eligible for any glad tidings. Rather, they deserved to be warned.

The second order which is issued to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* is: "Mention the greatness

¹ Sūrah al-Muddath-thir, 74: 1-3.

of your Sustainer.” In other words, mention the greatness of Allāh *ta’ālā* by your words and actions. The word “Sustainer” is mentioned to demonstrate that the Being who is sustaining and nourishing this entire universe is alone worthy of greatness. The literal meaning of *takbīr* is to say “Allāhu Akbar” – Allāh is the greatest. This includes saying the *takbīr tahrīmah* and other *takbīrs* in *ṣalāh*, and also the *takbīr* of *adhān*, *iqāmah* and so on. These words of the Qur’ān do not make any reference to the fact that the word *takbīr* refers specifically to the *takbīr tahrīmah* of *ṣalāh*.¹

There is No Speech Better Than Inviting Towards Allāh

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِّمَّنْ دَعَا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَقَالَ إِنَّنِي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ.

Whose speech is better than he who invited towards Allāh, did good deeds and said: “I am from among the obedient ones.”²

This is the second condition of perfect believers, i.e. they are not content with their own *īmān* and good deeds. Rather, they invite others as well. Allāh *ta’ālā* says: Whose speech is better than the one who invites towards Allāh? We learn from this that the most superior of man’s speech is the one in which others are invited towards the truth. This includes all forms of inviting towards Allāh *ta’ālā* – by the tongue, by the pen or through any other means. The person who calls out the *adhān* is included in this because he is calling others to *ṣalāh*. This is why Hadrat ‘Ā’ishah *raḍiyallāhu ‘anhā* said: “This verse was revealed in reference to the *mu’adh-dhin*.”

The words “did good deeds” are mentioned after the words “and invited towards Allāh”. This means that two

¹ *Ma’ārif al-Qur’ān*, vol. 8, p. 611.

² *Sūrah Fuṣṣilat*, 41: 33.

rak'ats of ṣalāh should be performed between the adhān and iqāmah.¹

Sayyidunā 'Abd al-Qādir Jīlānī *rahimahullāh* writes the following in his commentary to the verse under discussion:

(وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا) وَأَصْلِحْ عَمَلًا، وَأَكْمَلْ إِيمَانًا وَإِعْتِقَادًا، وَأَتَمَّ مَعْرِفَةً وَتَوْحِيدًا (مِمَّنْ دَعَا) أَي: أُرْشِدَ وَهَدَى (إِلَى اللَّهِ) الْوَاحِدِ الْأَحَدِ الصَّمَدِ، الْمَسْتَقِلِّ بِالْأُلُوْهِیَةِ وَالرَّبْوِیَةِ، الْمْتَفَرِّدِ بِالْوُجُودِ وَالْدِیْمُومِیَةِ (وَعَمِلَ) عَمَلًا (صَالِحًا) مُطَابِقًا مُوَافِقًا لِمُفَادٍ لِمُفَادٍ مِثْرَبِ التَّوْحِيدِ، مُجْتَنِبًا عَنِ رِعْوَانَاتِ الْعُجْبِ وَالرِّیَاءِ، وَتَحْمِیْنَاتِ التَّقْلِیدِ وَالْهَوَى (وَوَّ) بِالْجُمْلَةِ (قَالَ) بَعْدَ مَا نَالَ أَوْلَا مَا نَالَ، وَفَنَى فِیْمَا فَنَى (إِنِّي مِنْ) زَمْرَةِ (الْمُسْلِمِیْنَ) الْمُسْلِمِیْنَ الْمُنْقَادِیْنَ، الْمَفُوضِیْنَ إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِیْعٍ مَا لَاحَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ بَرُوقِ تَجْلِیَاتِهِ الْجَمَالِیَةِ وَالْجَلَالِیَةِ، وَمَالَى أَيْضًا إِلَّا التَّسْلِیْمَ وَالرِّضَا بِعَمُومٍ مَا جَرَى عَلَيْهِ الْقَضَاءُ.

Whose speech can be better, whose deeds can be more righteous, whose *īmān* and beliefs can be more perfect, and whose recognition and *tauḥīd* can be more complete than the who invited and steered towards Allāh *ta'ālā* who is One, Independent, autonomous in divinity and godship, and matchless in existence and eternity? And he did good deeds in accordance with and conformity to the pure creed of *tauḥīd*, abstained from the frivolities of conceit and ostentation, and the fantasies of following customs and desires. In essence, after acquiring whatever he did, he said: I am from among the Muslims who have submitted, and handed over everything to Allāh *ta'ālā* all the effulgence of His beautiful and powerful manifestations. I too submit totally and am pleased with whatever fate and destiny have decreed.

¹ *Ma'ārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 7, p. 652.

² تفسیر الجیلانی: ج ۴، ص ۳۰۱.

وَذَكِّرْ فَإِنَّ الذِّكْرَى تَنْفَعُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

Continue reminding because reminding certainly benefits the believers.

Remain attached to your responsibility with calm. Continue reminding and explaining because it will be an evidence against the one who is not fated to believe, and beneficial to those who believe and those who were believers since before. Reminding contains many benefits and wisdoms for everyone. You must continue with it and do not be saddened by any person's refusal to embrace *īmān*.¹

Note: We learn from this verse that reminding is beneficial to believers. If reminding is not found, it would be of concern because it would certainly result in one of the two: *īmān* will either be weak or not present at all. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*. (compiler)

Few Ahādīth on The Importance And Virtue of Da'wah And Tablīgh

﴿1﴾

عن أبي سعيد الخدري رضي الله عنه قال: سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: من رأى منكم منكراً فليغيره بيده، فإن لم يستطع فبلسانه، وإن لم يستطع فبقلبه، وذلك أضعف الإيمان.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: Whoever sees a wrong must change it physically. If he cannot, he must do it verbally. If he cannot, he must consider it evil in his heart, and this is the weakest level of *īmān*.

Another Hadīth states that if the person can put a stop to it with his tongue, he must do it (e.g. in today's times

¹ *Ma'ārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 8, p. 170.

of evil and mischief, if an evil cannot be stopped physically, people must individually or collectively try to convince the person. Allāh knows best – compiler). If not, he must consider it evil in his heart. In this way, he will absolve himself.¹

Another Hadīth states that even if a person considers an evil to be evil in his heart, he is a believer, but there is no level of īmān below this.

﴿2﴾

عن النعمان بن بشير قال: مثل القائم في حدود الله والواقع فيها كمثل قوم استهموا على سفينة فصار بعضهم أعلاها وبعضهم أسفلها، فكان الذي في أسفلها إذا استقوا من الماء مروا على من فوقهم، فقالوا: لو أنا خرقنا في نصيبنا خرقا ولم نؤذ من فوقنا، فإن تركوهم ما أرادوا هلكوا جميعا، وإن أخذوا على أيديهم نجوا ونجوا جميعا.

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said: The similitude of the person who upholds the limits of Allāh ta'ālā and the one who transgresses them is like that of a group of people who boarded a ship after casting lots. Some of them went to the upper deck and others to the lower deck. When those who were in the lower deck needed to obtain water, they had to pass those of the upper deck. They thought to themselves that if they make a hole in the lower deck [in order to obtain water], they will not disturb those who were above them. If those who were in the upper deck allowed those in the lower deck to make the hole in the ship, they would all be destroyed. But if they stopped them, they would all be saved [from drowning].²

¹ *Faḍā'il-e-A'māl*, p. 275.

² *Al-Bukhārī*: 2493.

﴿3﴾

عن جرير بن عبد الله قال سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: ما من رجل يكون في قوم يعمل فيهم بالمعاصي يقدر على أن يغيروا عليه لا يغيرون إلا أصابهم الله بعقاب قبل أن يموتوا.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: If there is a person who is committing sins and there are people who have the power to stop him but still do not stop him, then Allāh *ta'ālā* will most certainly inflict a punishment on those people in this very world.¹

Note: Just ponder over the stern warning for not prohibiting evil! It is not only an advice to us but something which ought to instil fear in us. May Allāh *ta'ālā* protect us from such a punishment. Āmin. (compiler)

﴿4﴾

خياركم من ذكركم بالله رويته، وزاد في عملكم منطقه، ورجبكم في الآخرة عمله، (الحكيم عن ابن عمر) هذه كلمة نبوية وافق فيها نبينا عيسى عليه السلام، قال ابن عيينة: قيل لعيسى: يا روح الله من نجالس؟ قال: من يزيد في عملك منطقه، ويذكركم الله تعالى رويته، ويرغبكم في الآخرة عمله.²

The best among you is the one whom when you see him, he reminds you of Allāh, his speech increases your good deeds, and his actions encourage you towards the Hereafter. (al-Ḥakīm on the authority of Ibn 'Umar *radīyallāhu 'anhu*): This statement of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* coincides

¹ *Faḍā'il-e-A'māl*, p. 278. Narrated by Abū Dāwūd and Ibn Mājah.

² فيض القدير: ج ٣، ص ٤٦٧.

with a statement made by 'Īsā 'alayhis salām. Ibn 'Uyaynah said: Someone asked 'Īsā 'alayhis salām: "O Spirit of Allāh! In whose company should we sit?" He replied: "In the company of the one whose speech increases your good deeds, when you see him he reminds you of Allāh ta'ālā, and his actions encourage you towards the Hereafter."

An Explanation of Da'wah And Tablīgh¹

The literal meaning of da'wah is to call, and tablīgh means to convey. The first fundamental duty of the Prophets 'alayhimus salām is to call people towards Allāh ta'ālā and to convey His injunctions to them. All the teachings of prophet-hood and messenger-ship are explanations and details of this da'wah. The Qur'ān makes mention of these special qualities of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam, viz. he is instructed to invite towards Allāh ta'ālā and to convey Allāh's injunctions. Principles and etiquette of this da'wah and tablīgh were also taught to him. Allāh ta'ālā says:

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ

Invite to the way of your Sustainer with wisdom and with kind admonition, and argue with them in a way that is best.²

Wisdom refers to a certain manner of da'wah wherein consideration is given to the principles of the addressee and to opt for a way which would make an impact on his heart. The word "admonition" refers to speaking in a way which demonstrates one's concern and fellow-feeling. The words "kind admonition" mean that the tone must be soft and not injurious to the heart. Arguing in a way that is best means that if the matter reaches a point of an argument, it must not be harsh,

¹ Quoted from *Da'wat wa Tablīgh kī Shar'ī Haythiyat* of Maulānā Sayyid 'Abd ash-Shakūr Sāhib Tirmidhī.

² Sūrah an-Nahl, 16: 125.

hard-hearted, accusative towards the addressee and unfair to him. Softness must be adopted in the manner of speech. Proofs which are presented must be well-known so that the addressee can understand them easily and his doubts are removed. Other verses of the Qur'ān demonstrate that this approach is not reserved for the Muslims but applies when dealing with unbelievers as well. Hadrat Mūsā 'alayhis salām and Hadrat Hārūn 'alayhis salām were instructed to speak in a soft manner even when addressing an arrogant unbeliever like Pharaoh. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

فُؤَلَا لَهُ قُؤَلَا لَسِنَا

Speak to him in a mild manner.¹

The Spirit of Da'wah And Tablīgh

Apart from arguments and disputes, following wise principles when addressing a person and giving consideration to the occasion, bearing in mind the principles, tones and expressions of wisdom and prudence as adopted by the Prophets '*alayhimus salām*, and the approach which was adopted in order to make the da'wah and tablīgh acceptable and effective – these in reality make up the spirit of da'wah and tablīgh. A few examples are presented:

Prophetic Etiquette When Inviting to Allāh

When Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* used to engage in da'wah, tablīgh and give advice, he would be particularly aware of not burdening his addressee. Dedicated lovers like the Sahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum would never have felt weary from the talks of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. Despite this, it was his habit not to deliver daily lectures to them. Instead, he would address them a few days of the week

¹ Sūrah Tā Hā, 20: 44.

so that it does not interfere with their work and does not burden them.

A narration of Sahīh Bukhārī states on the authority of Hadrat 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd *radiyallāhu 'anhu* that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam used to address them on certain days of the week so that it does not become burdensome to them. He advised others to do the same. He said:

يَبْسِرُوا وَلَا تُعْصِرُوا، وَبَشِّرُوا وَلَا تُنْفِرُوا

Make things easy for people, do not cause difficulty. Give glad tidings of Allāh's mercy, do not make them despondent nor to develop dislike.

A major reason why lectures and tabligh are not so effective nowadays is that those who are carrying out this work are generally not considerate of these principles and etiquette. Lengthy lectures, advice at inopportune times, and imposing on an addressee without learning of his situation have become the norm. When inviting and rectifying a person, Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam was very particular about not humiliating him. This is why when he saw a person committing a wrong, then instead of addressing him directly, he would make a general address by saying:

ما بال أقوام يفعلون كذا

What is it with people that they are doing such and such thing!?

The one who was actually intended will get the message from this general address, he will feel ashamed and will make efforts to abstain from that sin.

Sometimes when an evil was committed by a person, he would attribute it to himself and try to rectify the situation. Allāh *ta'ālā* says in Sūrah Yā Sīn:

وَمَا لِي لَا أَعْبُدُ الَّذِي فَطَرَنِي وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ

Why should I not worship the One who created me and to whom you are to return?

This was essentially directed to the one who was not occupied in worship, but he addressed himself. It is obviously an indication of a very high level of love and affection for the Muslim nation. It is essential for every caller to consider this.

A special and important principle from among the principles of the da'wah of the Prophets *'alayhimus salām* is that the instruction which is to be issued to the creation in general must be commenced with from one's own family. In comparison to outsiders, it is easier for one's family to accept and to make them accept. Furthermore, the family members can be supervised all the time. When this verse was revealed:

وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَاصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا

Command your family with *ṣalāh* and you yourself remain steadfast on it.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* began going every morning to the house of Haḍrat 'Alī *radiyallāhu 'anhu* and Haḍrat Fāṭimah *radiyallāhu 'anhā* and would call out: "Get ready for *ṣalāh*, get ready for *ṣalāh*."¹

Another principle is that those who are carrying out the work of rectification and training must speak softly to their addressees so that they may get an opportunity to

¹ *Da'wat wa Tablīgh kī Shar'ī Haythiyat*, p. 19.

ponder and reflect over what is being said to them. When Allāh *ta'ālā* sent Hadrat Mūsā '*alayhis salām* and Hadrat Hārūn '*alayhis salām* to invite Pharaoh, He instructed them thus:

فُوَلَا لَهُ قَوْلًا لَّيِّنًا لَعَلَّهُ يَتَذَكَّرُ أَوْ يَخْشَى

Speak to him in a mild manner, perhaps he will ponder or might fear.¹

The Etiquette of Da'wah

If, despite adhering to the etiquette of da'wah, the addressee does not accept the truth, then the inviter would obviously feel offended. Sometimes it may well happen that when he does not see the effects of da'wah, he loses hope and gives up the task completely. Allāh *ta'ālā* therefore says the following as a way of consolation:

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ

Your Sustainer know well the one who goes astray from His path, and He knows well the one who is on His path.²

In other words, your task is to merely invite to the truth in accordance with the principles. As for whether the addressee accepts or not, you have no influence in this regard nor is it your responsibility. It is left solely to Allāh *ta'ālā*. He alone knows who will remain misguided and who will receive guidance. You must not worry about it. Continue with your work, do not lose courage and do not become despondent. We learn from this that this last statement is also from among the etiquette of da'wah.

¹ Sūrah Tā Hā, 20: 44.

² Sūrah al-An'ām, 6: 117.

The Obligation of Da'wah And Tabligh on The Muslim Nation

In following the footsteps of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, the Muslim nation is also obligated to carry out the obligation of da'wah and tabligh. This is gauged from the Qur'ān and Sunnah. In addition to one's own rectification, the responsibility of rectifying others has been placed on every Muslim through very clear teachings in the Qur'ān and Sunnah. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ

You are the best of nations who have been selected for the people. You enjoin good and you forbid evil.

In this verse Allāh *ta'ālā* imposes the obligation of enjoining good and forbidding evil on the entire Muslim nation. Furthermore, the superiority of this nation over other nations is because of this special task [of enjoining good and forbidding evil]. There are countless statements of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* in this regard. However, like all other injunctions of the Shari'ah, the obligation will apply according to each person's ability and capability. The more the capability a person has, the more the responsibility of enjoining good will apply to him.¹

Enjoining good and forbidding evil are obligatory on every person in accordance with his capability. However, this duty applies as follows: It is obligatory to enjoin good and advise when it comes to matters which are compulsory and obligatory. As for those which are optional and desirable, then it is desirable to advise [and not obligatory].

¹ *Da'wat wa Tabligh kī Shar'ī Haythiyat*, p.21.

Another essential etiquette which must be considered is that in desirable acts, the person must adopt a soft approach. When it comes to obligatory acts, he must first adopt a soft approach. If it is not accepted, he can resort to severity and strictness. Nowadays, people are strict when it comes to desirable acts, but are generally lax in reprimanding people when they leave out obligatory and compulsory acts. Where there is an overwhelming possibility of one's advice being accepted, the *mashā'ikh*, 'ulamā' and every Muslim who has knowledge of a sin, must endeavour to put a stop to it as much as he can. This is a duty on him whether he does it physically, verbally or – in the least – must have an abhorrence for it in his heart. Where it is felt that the advice will not be accepted or will result in enmity, it is not obligatory to stop the sinner, but preferable. Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* says:

There are two prerequisites for enjoining good. (1) Acceptance from the addressee is anticipated or – in the least – there is no fear of harm from him. (2) The addressee does not have knowledge of it. When he does not have knowledge of the evil, one can expect him to accept the advice. If he has knowledge, then in most cases it causes offence.”¹

Ever since Muslims disregarded this obligation and felt that it was the duty of the government and police to put a stop to sins and crimes, it resulted in a situation which we see everywhere nowadays. This is why the Qur'ān and Hadith place special emphasis on enjoining good and forbidding evil on the nation as a whole. The Qur'ān considers this duty to be from among the

¹ *Da'wat wa Tablīgh kī Shar'ī Haythiyat*, p. 24.

peculiar traits of the followers of Muḥammad ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam. The one who acts against this has committed a serious crime and is eligible for punishment. Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam said: “When sins are committed by a people and no one among them stops them, Allāh *ta‘ālā* will soon inflict them with a punishment.” Let alone the masses, even the ‘ulamā’ and righteous have very little realization of this need. They feel that it is enough to set right one’s own actions and it is not their responsibility to rectify others. If some people show some concern for da‘wah and rectification, they do not know the Qur’ānic teachings and the principles and etiquette of da‘wah as laid down by Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam. They would say anything to anyone without even thinking, and would then feel that they have fulfilled their obligation. Since this method is against the ways of the Prophets *‘alayhimus salām*, they actually throw people further away from Dīn and the injunctions of Dīn.¹

Hard-heartedness is The Cause of Ineffectiveness

A major reason for the ineffectiveness of the task of da‘wah and rectification is that the corrupt era in which we live and the abundance of ḥarām have generally caused people to become hard-hearted, unmindful of the Hereafter, and reduced their capacity to accept the truth. Yet others are caught up in the torment which Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam foretold:

In the latter times there will be people whose hearts will be turned over. The ability to differentiate between good and bad, lawful and unlawful will be removed from their hearts.

¹ *Da‘wat wa Tablīgh kī Shar‘ī Haythiyat*, p. 25.

In order for this important obligation of enjoining good and forbidding evil to be fulfilled, it is necessary for a group from the Muslim nation to be established specifically for da'wah and instruction. Its sole occupation must be to call people towards the Qur'an and Sunnah through words and actions. When members of this group find people to be lazy in good works or involved in evils, they must not be found wanting in directing the people towards good and stopping them from evil.

Obviously this obligation can only be fulfilled when members of this group have full knowledge of the rulings, and know the etiquette and ways of enjoining good and forbidding evil in accordance with the Sunnah. The following verse demonstrates the need and importance of a group which invites towards good, enjoins good and forbids evil:

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ.

There must be among you a group which invites towards good, enjoins good and prohibits evil.

The words "There must be among you a group" demonstrate the necessity of such a group. If a government does not carry out this obligation, it will be obligatory on all Muslims to establish a group. The verse then makes reference to some of the important attributes and distinctions of this group by saying "which invites towards good". In other words, the first distinctive attribute of this group will be that it will invite towards good, as though inviting towards good will be its highest goal.

The Meaning of Good

What is the meaning of good? Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* explained it as follows:

الخَيْرُ هُوَ اتِّبَاعُ الْقُرْآنِ وَسُنَّتِي

Good means following the Qur'ān and my Sunnah.¹

There cannot be a more comprehensive and incisive definition of good. The entire Dīn and Sharī'ah are encapsulated in it. Furthermore, the verse uses the word “invites” to show that this will be the group’s continuous occupation. In other words, the continuous and unending effort of inviting towards good will be its obligation.

A conclusion could have been made that enjoining good and forbidding evil must only be done when there is a need for them, i.e. when evils are noticed. However, by using the present tense, the verse shows that this will be the work of this group even if no evils are prevalent at a certain time or it is not the time for carrying out a certain obligation. For example, there is no compulsory ṣalāh from after sunrise until mid-day. However, this group will still encourage people to perform ṣalāh because once the time of ṣalāh enters, it is necessary to perform ṣalāh. Or for example, it is not the time for keeping fast as yet, the month of Ramaḍān is still far away, but this group will not remain unmindful of its responsibility. It will continue informing people from beforehand that once the month of Ramaḍān commences, they will have to keep fast. In short, the obligation of this group will be to continue inviting towards good.

Note: Glory to Allāh! What excellent points and wise words! (compiler)

The Levels of Inviting Towards Good

There are two levels of inviting towards good. The first is to invite non-Muslims to Islam. Every member of the

¹ Ibn Kathīr.

Muslim nation in general, and this group specifically must invite all the nations of the world to Islam through their words and actions. The second level is to invite Muslims. All Muslims in general and this group in particular must carry out the responsibility of tabligh among the Muslims and carry out the obligation of inviting towards good. Furthermore, one inviting towards good will be general – i.e. all Muslims will be taught the essential injunctions of Dīn and Islamic character – and the other will be specific, i.e. the creation of experts in the sciences of the Qur’ān and Sunnah. Another verse makes reference to this. It is explained further on.¹

Teaching Injunctions is Necessary Even During Jihād

فَلَوْ لَا نَفَرْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِنْهُمْ طَائِفَةٌ لِيَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي الدِّينِ وَلِيُنذِرُوا قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ.

Why, then, did a section from each group not go forth so that they may acquire an understanding of religion and inform their people when they return to them so that they might be on their guard?²

We learn from this verse that teaching injunctions and learning them for the sake of teaching are so important obligations that even at the time of jihād (which is the greatest acts of worship), it is obligatory for one group to fulfil this obligation instead of jihād. Why, then, will it not be obligatory at other times?

The verse goes on to mention another distinguishing attribute of this group: “They enjoin good and forbid evil.” The verse concludes by mentioning the wonderful

¹ *Da’wat wa Tabligh kī Shar’ī Haythiyat.*

² Sūrah at-Taubah, 9: 122.

end of this group: “They are indeed the successful ones.”

The first manifestation of this group was the Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum who took up the phenomenal task of inviting towards good, enjoining good and forbidding evil, and spread throughout the world within a short while. They subjugated the mighty empires of Rome and Iran and lit the lamps of piety.

A Few Guidelines For Propagators

If a person intends inviting a group whose beliefs and views are different from his own, then all that he has to do is invite that group to the points which they could agree on. When it comes to rectification and propagation, neither is harshness appropriate everywhere, nor is softness suitable everywhere. There is a place, occasion and limit for each. When it came to idol-worship, Hadrat Ibrāhīm ‘alayhis salām adopted a strict approach because its deviation is obvious. When it came to star-worship, he did not resort to so strict words. Rather, he made his people realize their folly through a specific approach. He did this because the powerlessness and incapacity of stars and planets are not as clear and obvious as that of idols which are made by one’s own hands. We learn from this that if the masses are caught up in an evil which is not clear to the common eye, then instead of being harsh and strict, the scholar and propagator must try to remove their doubts.

The Responsibility of ‘Ulamā’ And Mashā’ikh

لَوْلَا يَنْهَاهُمُ الرَّبَّيُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ عَنْ قَوْلِهِمُ الْإِثْمَ وَأَكْلِهِمُ السُّحْتَ ط لَيْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ.

Why do their dervishes and scholars not prohibit them from uttering sinful things and devouring the prohibited? Very evil is that action which they are doing.¹

The *mashā'ikh* and 'ulamā' of the Jews are severely reprimanded and asked: Why do you not stop the people from their evils? The Qur'ān uses two words in this verse: (1) *rabbāniyyūn* which translates as: people of Allāh, worshippers, ascetics – and in our language – dervishes, mentors or *mashā'ikh*. (2) *aḥbār*. The Jewish 'ulamā' are known as *aḥbār*. We learn from the above that the fundamental responsibility of enjoining good and forbidding evil rests with these two groups, i.e. the *mashā'ikh* and the 'ulamā'.

Note: I pray to Allāh *ta'ālā* with all my heart to inspire both groups to carry out this responsibility. Āmīn. (compiler)

The Sufi Way of Rectifying Actions

The Sufis are the ones who pay the most attention to the rectification of actions. These personalities have extracted from the above Qur'ānic teachings that the source of all evil deeds committed by man is the hidden powers which become man's fundamental nature. This is why when the Sufis undertake to control and put an end to those evils, they focus on those hidden powers. Once they rectify the hidden powers, all actions start to come right automatically. For example, a person's heart is overpowered by greed for wealth and this world. Consequently, he accepts bribes, devours interest and, if he gets the opportunity, will even resort to stealing and thievery. Instead of treating these crimes separately, the Sufis use a prescription through which the basis of those crimes is demolished, i.e. the fleeting nature of this world and consciousness of the poisoned

¹ Sūrah al-Mā'idah, 5: 63.

nature of worldly pleasures. Similarly, take the example of a person who is proud and arrogant, or overpowered by anger. He scorns and looks down on others, and fights with his friends and neighbours. The Sufis resort to a prescription of making the person conscious of his accountability before Allāh *ta'ālā* and being concerned about the Hereafter. In this way, these evils will automatically come to an end.

In short, we learn from this Qur'ānic reference that man has certain powers which become second nature to him. If they are good, man will automatically do good deeds. If they are evil, he will automatically rush towards evil deeds. Rectification of these powers is essential for complete rectification of the person.¹

Method of Da'wah²

In his book, *Manṣab-e-Imāmat*, Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Ismā'īl Shahīd rahimahullāh writes very clearly on the subjects of expression of da'wah and the method of da'wah. Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Muḥammad Aḥmad Sāhib Partābgarhī rahimahullāh has provided a simplified translation of certain sections in his book, *Kamālāt Nubūwwat*. I feel I ought to acquire the good fortune of including this blessed article in my book. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Expression of Da'wah

Observe the nature of the expression of da'wah. Through His unlimited wisdom and absolute power, Allāh *ta'ālā* teaches the Prophets *'alayhimus salām* the

¹ *Da'wat wa Tablīgh kī Shar'ī Haythiyat*.

² From *Manṣab-e-Imāmat* of Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Ismā'īl Shahīd rahimahullāh.

method of training people of different temperaments. Allāh *ta'ālā* demonstrates the extent of the power of speech and eloquent expression, and the ability to express what is in the heart which He conferred on them. He says with reference to Hadrat Dāwūd '*alayhis salām*:

وَأَتَيْنَاهُ الْحِكْمَةَ وَفَضَلَ الْخِطَابِ

We bestowed him with wisdom and decisive speech.¹

وَقُلْ لَهُمْ فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ قَوْلًا بَلِيغًا

and say to them words which would be of benefit to them.²

However, a point which ought to be pondered over is that the da'wah methodology of the Prophets '*alayhimus salām* is different from the teaching methodology of the experts in other branches of knowledge. The difference between the two is due to two reasons:

(1) Their da'wah is in the prevailing colloquial language and this is what they resort to in their interactions and conversations. They do not adopt the expressions of orators and writers because their speeches and writings are different. There are many Sufis who stick to prevailing expressions over those which apply to the reality. Many of the restrictions are incidental. They contain many repetitions which are resorted to solely for emphasis and to stress a point. A different theme cannot be expected from them [repetitions]. Many of the themes can be understood exactly from the words which are used and do need circumstantial sources to a certain extent. Many words move out of their original

¹ Sūrah Sād, 38: 20.

² Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 63.

meanings and are incorrectly used by both the masses and the elite.

Now that we have learnt this, we ought to ponder over the fact that speaking in the above-described manner is considered to be eloquent, but not eloquent when the original rule is applied.

(2) When it comes to the training and tutoring of the nation, the Prophets *'alayhimus salām* must be considered to be like affectionate fathers or intelligent teachers. They are constantly observing their wards with the eyes of rectification. When they see them doing an inappropriate action, they do their utmost to make them understand. Sometimes they would encourage them towards a good act in order to win them over. At other times, they resort to discipline and strictness to save them from evil. Sometimes they advise and counsel them, and at other times they adopt a light-hearted and humorous approach. There are occasions when they resort to allusions and hints, and there are times when they put them on the path through appropriate poetry. Sometimes they bring them to attention by relating a parable or incident to serve as a lesson. Then there are times when they speak to them very softly. If they see them doing an act which is against the path, they apprise them of it in the same soft manner or they themselves would carry out the act in a far better manner in their presence so that they would learn how to do it.

In short, this is a brief description of the different types of speech of these personalities. This is how their *da'wah* is manifested, and not on the methodology of teachers in the *madāris* who set aside a certain time for delivering a lesson, and then teach the rulings of purity, *ṣalāh*, *zakāh*, etc. irrespective of whether those rulings are actual or assumed. They continue explaining one ruling after the other. This methodology

is of the intelligentsia not the way of those who are training and tutoring.

What this means is that the benefit of their da'wah is bound to their companionship. Total benefit by virtue of remaining in their company for a long time is intermingled in their speech. There is very little evidence of deep-seated writing and formalities in speech. Instead, they have the overwhelming quality of benefiting the nation at large, and signs of formalities are suppressed. They like simplicity and desire informality.

Their da'wah occurs in two ways: (1) expression of wisdom, (2) admonitory speech.

Expression of Wisdom

By virtue of His special mercy, Allāh *ta'ālā* confers them with the power of speech so that they can express whatever is within their hearts, display it with proofs and substantiations, and shed light on intricate matters through parables and examples so that their claims are so clear and manifest before their audience that it seems as if intangible themes have been explained through concrete forms. And that these concrete forms have been impressed in their exact forms on their minds. This is manifested so clearly that every addressee learns of the reality and bears testimony to it with a genuine heart. Every sound-minded person experiences satisfaction in his heart. The intellect of every intelligent person accepts it, and every thinker applauds it. Although many addressees may not accept it due to the constriction in their chests and their unjustness, and may not acknowledge it verbally out of their fanaticism, they know from within their hearts that this is the truth while they themselves are acting out of pride and arrogance. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

وَجَحَدُوا بِهَا وَاسْتَيْقَنَتْهَا أَنفُسُهُمْ ظُلْمًا وَعُلُوًّا

They rejected them unjustly and arrogantly, though their hearts were convinced thereof.¹

Admonitory Speech

In most cases, they resort to encouraging and poignant statements to awaken the heedless ones, sensitize the ignorant ones, invigorate the cowardly ones and purify the impure ones. For example, they will speak to them about Allāh's love, the extent of His mercy, the severity of His wrath, the secrets between Allāh and His servants, the changing conditions of former and latter peoples, incidents related to punishment and reward, conditions of the grave and the Resurrection, and the nature of Paradise and Hell. They do this so that a type of enthusiasm is created in their audience, and they are so charged up internally that the hardness of their hearts disappears and is replaced by softness.

Although statements of this nature have been made by orators in every era, their sole objective in delivering the lecture is to reduce the audience to tears for a short while, for them to shout out heart-rending cries, and for them to go into a zeal and fervour – and nothing else.

On the other hand, the objective of the Prophets *'alayhimus salām* is not restricted to this. They want the fervour and zeal of their addressees to become means for carrying out Allāh's orders, to become firmly embedded in their obedience and submission to Him, and for the culturing of their character and the rectification of their deeds. This is what is known as sound admonition.

¹ Sūrah an-Naml, 27: 14.

These personalities sometimes resort to a third methodology which is known as argumentation.

Argumentation

Sometimes an obstinate person is silenced through a subtle innuendo or a fine point, although the reality is not exposed to him. For example, Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

أَلَكُمُ الذَّكَرُ وَلَهُ الْأُنثَى، تِلْكَ إِذَا قَسَمَةٌ ضِيْرَى

What! Are you to have sons and for Him are daughters? This would then be an unfair distribution.¹

Although it is baseless and impossible to attribute offspring to Allāh *ta'ālā* – whether male or female – since most of the opponents used to ascribe daughters to Allāh *ta'ālā* while they used to hope for sons for themselves, they were addressed in this subtle way.

Although most sound-minded people resort to this art of argumentation on the level of expertise, there is also a certain harm in it. In the case where subtle innuendos and fine points are resorted to, a person can no longer be considerate of Dīn and īmān, and thoughtful of etiquette. A witty person can unhesitatingly relate an innuendo according to the situation and think of a suitable explanation for it. He is convinced that this is an absolute achievement. However, this method is certainly not of the Prophets *'alayhimus salām*. Instead, their objective is to preserve Dīn and be considerate of etiquette while silencing the enemy of Dīn. This is what is known as sound admonition, and this is what the Prophets *'alayhimus salām* were ordered to do. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ

¹ Sūrah an-Najm, 53: 21-22.

Invite to the way of your Sustainer with wisdom and with kind admonition, and argue with them in a way that is best.¹

Argumentation is not really a part of inviting towards the truth but is from among its supplements and auxiliaries. This is why it is mentioned separately and not included under da'wah. All three have not been mentioned in one continuous sequence. Allāh *ta'ālā* did not say:

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَالْجِدَالِ الْحَسَنِ

Invite to the way of your Sustainer with wisdom, kind admonition, and sound argumentation.

Instead, He mentioned argumentation separately:

وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ

The difference between the third way – argumentation – and the first two – wisdom and admonition – is now clear.²

A Few Principles of Prophetic Da'wah

Hadrat Maulānā Muftī Muḥammad Taqī 'Uthmānī Sāhib writes:

My honourable father, Hadrat Maulānā Muftī Muḥammad Shafi' Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu* used to say that prophetic da'wah has a few distinguishing peculiarities. [They are]:

¹ Sūrah an-Nahl, 16: 125.

² *Kamālāt-e-Nubūwwat* of Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Sāhib Partābgarhī *rahimahullāh* which is a translation of *Manṣab-e-Imāmat*, pp. 1-29. 28 Rabī' ath-Thānī 1403 A.H.

1. Concern For The Ummah

The first peculiar trait of the Prophets *'alayhimus salām* is that they have such an intense concern for the rectification of the nation that it even surpasses their natural demands. In fact, when a Prophet “boils over” in his concern, he is provided with solace from Allāh *ta'ālā* and is addressed thus:

لَعَلَّكَ بَاخِعٌ نَفْسَكَ أَنْ لَا يُكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ

You may perhaps kill yourself over the fact that they do not believe.¹

Therefore the first trait of one inviting to Islam must be that he should have a share of this prophetic concern. We see in our elders of the past that the more a person had this concern, the more blessings there were in his da'wah and the more fruits it bore. Hakīmul Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* used to say that Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Muḥammad Ismā'īl Shahīd *rahimahullāh* used to be overcome by such a demand for da'wah and tablīgh like a hungry and thirsty person who is overcome by a demand for food and drink. Just as man cannot exercise patience over these natural demands, he cannot withdraw from da'wah when the occasion demands it. Consequently, Allāh *ta'ālā* blessed him with immense effect in his da'wah that thousands of people would repent from just a single lecture.

2. Attachment to Da'wah

The second distinguishing quality of the Prophets *'alayhimus salām* is that they remain completely occupied in da'wah without bothering about the results. They continue with their efforts in even the most discouraging situations. The moment they get an

¹ Sūrah ash-Shu'arā', 26: 3.

opportunity to convey their call to a person, they make full use of that opportunity and convey it to him.

My honourable father *rahimahullāh* used to give the example of Hadrat Yūsuf *'alayhis salām*. He used to say: Look at Hadrat Yūsuf *'alayhis salām*. He is imprisoned by the 'Azīz of Egypt for a period of time. There is no like-minded companion around him. While in this state, two fellow prisoners come to him to interpret their dreams. The question has no relationship whatsoever with religion. Yet, in his reply to them he first convinces them that he knows the interpretation to their dreams and will tell them shortly, but first he says something which appears to be totally unconnected. He says:

إِنِّي تَرَكْتُ مِلَّةَ قَوْمٍ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَهُمْ بِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ كَافِرُونَ. وَاتَّبَعْتُ مِلَّةَ آبَائِي
إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ

I have abandoned the religion of the people who do not believe in Allāh and who are rejecters of the Hereafter. I have followed the religion of my forefathers; Ibrāhīm, Is-hāq, and Ya'qūb.¹

يَصَاحِبِي السِّجْنِ ءَأَرْبَابٌ مُتَفَرِّقُونَ خَيْرٌ أَمْ اللَّهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ

O my fellow prisoners! Are several gods at variance better or Allāh, the one, the all-powerful?²

In this way, he conveyed his message before providing the interpretation to their dreams.

The essence of this attachment to da'wah is that a person is always searching for opportunities to convey his message. No sooner he finds an opportunity – no

¹ Sūrah Yūsuf, 12: 37-38.

² Sūrah Yūsuf, 12: 39.

matter how slight – he takes full advantage of it. He never tires or gets bored with da'wah. At the same time, it is essential for him not to become like a guard who is constantly behind people. Instead, he must convey his message in the most effective way and stop. If he sees them not practising on it and finds another opportunity later on, he must convey it to them. He must neither impose on them nor must he lose hope.

3. Affection For The Addressee

The third important element of the da'wah of Prophets *'alayhimus salām* is affection for the addressee. The stimulus behind the da'wah of the Prophets is nothing but affection. There is no taint whatsoever of displaying one's superiority or scorning the addressee. My honourable father *rahimahullāh* used to say that in most places in the Qur'ān, tablīgh and da'wah are described by the word *indhār* whose literal translation people only give as "to warn". However, the real meaning of *indhār* in the Arabic language refers to a warning whose stimulus is affection – like a father warning his son of a fire. If a tyrant ruler threatens or warns one of his subjects of a punishment, it will not be referred to as *indhār*. By using this word, Allāh *ta'ālā* is directing our attention to the point that the inviter who is advising a person neither dislikes the person nor scorns him. Rather, he is prompted by nothing but affection. For example, a doctor has no right to dislike a patient. A doctor who dislikes a patient can never succeed. Similarly, an inviter must not dislike even the worst of unbelievers, most flagrant of sinners or the most immoral of persons. Instead, he must abhor their actions, feel sorry for them, and sparks of mercy and affection must be perceived from his da'wah.

4. Wisdom

The fourth important trait of the da'wah of Prophets *'alayhimus salām* is that they search for occasions and places where their call can be most effective. Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Qāsim Sāhib Nānautwī *rahimahullāh* had a friend who was quite informal with him and had very liberal views. If one had to look at his dress and appearance, one would feel that he does not appear to be eligible for the Maulānā's friendship. It was a time when it was fashionable to shave off the beard. He was accustomed to this fashion, and his clothing was different from what the 'ulamā' and righteous used to wear. Some people used to express their astonishment at how Hadrat Nānautwī *rahimahullāh* could befriend such a person. Sometimes, people would even say to him: "Why don't you teach him and make him understand?" Hadrat Nānautwī *rahimahullāh* would always brush it aside and continue treating him in his informal way of friendship. Many days passed in this way. The man was present one day and Hadrat Nānautwī *rahimahullāh* said to him: "Bhāi, get me some garments sewn like yours." He asked: "Why?" Hadrat Nānautwī replied: "My heart desires to dress like you, it does not seem good for friends to dress differently. And here, take my beard and shape it like yours." The man was intensely embarrassed and said: "Hadrat! There is no need for you to change your appearance. Allāh willing, from today, my dressing and appearance will be like yours."

After relating this incident, my honourable father *rahimahullāh* used to say: "When an inviter to the truth has zeal, attachment and sincerity in his heart, Allāh *ta'ālā* instils wisdom in his heart through which he is able to gauge what to say and when to say it."

5. Sound Admonishment

The fifth principle is that he must adopt a style of speech and expression which is a reflection of softness, fellow-feeling and pain. My honourable father *rahimahullāh* used to say that when Hadrat Mūsā *'alayhis salām* and Hadrat Hārūn *'alayhis salām* were sent to Pharaoh, Allāh *ta'ālā* advised them thus:

قُولَا لَهُ قَوْلًا لَيِّنًا

Speak to him in a mild manner.¹

There could be no one more misguided than Pharaoh, and there could be no greater reformer and inviter than Hadrat Mūsā *'alayhis salām*. When an inviter like Hadrat Mūsā *'alayhis salām* is ordered to be soft to a misguided man like Pharaoh, what can be said of insignificant people like us?

My honourable father's method of da'wah and tabligh used to be – as far as possible – in line with the above mentioned principles. He was travelling by train on one occasion. An ultra modern officer was also present. Initially, the officer remained reserved due to strangeness but soon began speaking with my father. They spoke on various topics. My father was accustomed to providing comfort to his travelling companions and being of service to them. Consequently, he did the same with this officer. When it was the time of ṣalāh, my father got up quietly, performed his ṣalāh and returned. The officer said: "Maulānā! When you were getting up to go and perform your ṣalāh, I thought you would ask me to join you. However, since I was not mentally prepared, had you told me about ṣalāh I would have found it burdensome and would have probably offered some excuse.

¹ Sūrah Tā Hā, 20: 44.

However, your approach has impressed me so much that I am now fully prepared mentally and will also join you for ṣalāh in the future.”¹

Note: We make du‘ā’ to Allāh *ta‘ālā* to inspire us to carry out the responsibilities of da‘wah and tabligh in line with the above mentioned principles and etiquette. Āmīn. (compiler)

Education of Muslims

Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* writes:

There are many texts which, together with one’s own rectification, emphasise the rectification of others. Sūrah al-‘Aṣr was revealed specifically for this purpose. On the one hand it preconditions salvation to correction of beliefs and rectification of deeds – both of which are essential to save one’s self from destruction. On the other hand, it includes the teaching of beliefs and deeds to others as preconditions for success. Allāh *ta‘ālā* says:

وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ

[Who] enjoin each other with the true religion and enjoin each other with patience.²

Apart from this, there are many verses of the Qur’ān and Ahādīth which stress and give a lot of attention to enjoining good, forbidding evil, reminding and admonishing. Severe warnings are also issued against laxity and heedlessness in this regard. Furthermore, this has been a specific obligation of the Prophets *‘alayhimus salām*.

¹ *Al-Balāgh* – special issue on Muftī Muḥammad Shafi‘ Sāhib *rahimahullāh*.

² Sūrah al-‘Aṣr, 103: 3.

The different departments of Dīn such as issuing fatwās, teaching, writing and so on are all tools and preludes to this. Self rule (or government) whose need is accepted by all (in fact, the entire world is giving its life for it in the name of freedom and self autonomy) is subservient to this (objective of rectification of īmān and deeds) in Islam. We see this in the following verse where Allāh *ta'ālā* speaks about the objective of authority, He includes in it the objective of enjoining good and forbidding evil.

الَّذِينَ إِنْ مَكَّنَّاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَمَرُوا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ.

Those whom, when We give them power in the land, they establish *salāh*, pay *zakāh*, command good and prohibit evil.¹

In short, the fundamental objective of a true Islamic state or authority in the land is certainly not self autonomy. Rather, it is Allāh-autonomy. In other words, government and authority on Allāh's land are for the sake of following and promulgating Allāh's laws and injunctions. Acting against these injunctions is explicitly mentioned in the Qur'ān and Hadīth as the cause of all calamities in this world and the Hereafter. The servants of the Muslim nation have devoted books to this subject. This insignificant servant also compiled a book titled *Jazā' al-A'māl*. This subject has also been highlighted in the introduction to *Hayāt al-Muslimīn*.

How, then, can there be any doubt about the need for enjoining good and forbidding evil? The easiest, most

¹ Sūrah al-Hajj, 22: 41.

beneficial and most complete means for this are lectures and admonitions.¹

Enjoining Good And Forbidding Evil

By Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Waṣiyyullāh Sāhib *quddisa sirruhu*.

نحمده ونصلي على رسوله الكريم

Hujjatul Islam Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* has written very eloquently and impressively on the subject of enjoining good and forbidding evil in his book *Ihyā' al-'Ulūm*. He writes:

Enjoining good and forbidding evil is the greatest pivot of Islam and one of the most important duties for which Allāh *ta'ālā* sent all the Prophets *'alayhimus salām*. If its authority is destroyed and if knowledge and practise of it are put to an end, prophet-hood itself will be paralysed and religion will wane. Destruction will become common, deviation and misguidance will spread, ignorance will prevail, corruption will creep in, violations will break out, the lands will be devastated and the people will be destroyed. It may well be that people may not realize their loss in this world, but will certainly realize it in the Hereafter. Consequently, the thing which we feared took place. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return.

We notice that let alone not practising on this pivot, even knowledge of it has departed. Its reality has been obliterated and only its ritual remains. The hearts have been

¹ Hadrat Maulānā 'Abd al-Bārī Nadwī (khalifah of Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat): *Tajdid Ta'lim wa Tabligh*, p. 146.

overpowered and completely encompassed by flattery. Meditation on Allāh *ta'ālā* has been completely wiped out from their hearts. It has become extremely rare to find a genuine believer who does not bother about the criticism of anyone for Allāh's sake.

Advising, admonishing, enjoining good and forbidding evil are the special duties of the Prophets '*alayhimus salām*. They were commissioned specifically for this lofty purpose. They continually received revelation from Allāh *ta'ālā* for every single minor thing. They invited towards Allāh *ta'ālā* in the light of what was revealed to them and conveyed His injunctions without exceeding the bounds in the least.

The Prophets '*alayhimus salām* are taught the objectives together with the methodologies and procedures for realizing those objectives. They do not have their own choice in the adoption of procedures. When Allāh *ta'ālā* sent Hadrat Mūsā '*alayhis salām* to invite Pharaoh, He instructed him to adopt a soft approach. Allāh *ta'ālā* went to the extent of specifying what words he should utter. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

إِذْهَبْ إِلَى فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّهُ طَغَى، فَقُلْ هَلْ لَكَ أَنْ تَزُكِّي، وَأَهْدِيكَ إِلَى رَبِّكَ فَتَخْشَى

Go to Pharaoh for he has certainly transgressed. Then say to him: "Are you desirous of being purified? And that I show you the path to your Sustainer so that you may then fear [Him]?"¹

Similarly, Rasūlullāh *s*allāhu '*alayhi wa sallam* was taught the methodologies and procedures of teaching and propagating at every step of the way. This is why I say that the Qur'ān does not confine itself to the objectives. Rather, it fully explains the ways in which

¹ Sūrah an-Nāzi'āt, 79: 17-19.

those objectives can be realized. The procedures have not been left to our own opinions. We cannot do as we like in the field of rectification and training. No matter how senior a shaykh or scholar, he too will have to subject himself to the texts to carry out his programme of rectification. He will have to adopt the methodologies of the Prophets *'alayhimus salām* and subject himself to them. Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Walī Allāh Sāhib Muhaddith Dehlwī *rahimahullāh* writes:

A person who gets to the position of inviting towards Allāh *ta'ālā* and people turn to him, then he must do exactly as the Prophets *'alayhimus salām* did because he is their follower and emulator, he is not an originator.

When the methodologies of the Prophets *'alayhimus salām* are abandoned, rectification will not be achieved, as is observed in our times.

O Sa'dī! Do not think that you can reach the pure path without following Muhammad sallallāhu *'alayhi wa sallam*. Anyone who followed a path different from his was never able to reach his destination.

There are many etiquette and prerequisites of enjoining good and forbidding evil. The 'ulamā' extracted rules and regulations from the Qur'ān and Sunnah and compiled them into formal books. The book *Nisāb al-Ihtisāb* written by Imām 'Umar ibn Muhammad ibn 'Aud Shāmī Hanafī has been written specifically on this subject. It encompasses all the etiquette and prerequisites of da'wah and tablīgh. It includes many stories of the elders of the past. This book appealed to me greatly, so I am quoting a few extracts from it. I am making it the basic reference for my present book. He writes:

The 52nd chapter on the etiquette of disciplining:

﴿1﴾

When enjoining good, a person should advise in privacy if privacy is more appropriate. It is more effective and beneficial as an admonition and advice.

Abū Dāwūd *rahimahullāh* says: “If a person advises another in public, he has found fault with him. If he advises him in privacy, he has embellished him. If private advice is not beneficial to a person, he must certainly be advised in public.”

He first prohibited a public advice because it is not an advice but more of a humiliation. The difference between advice and humiliation is based solely on a public announcement and a private counsel. Yes, if a person is so shameless and immodest that a private counsel will not benefit him, it will be done publicly. In such a case, the person will himself be responsible for his humiliation and disgrace. The permission for a public counsel applies only if there is no fear of harm or evil repercussions from the person. If there is, it will be better to remain silent. *Ihyā al-'Ulūm* states that if you know that your advice will not make any impression on a person and that his temperament is such that he will persist, it will be better and more appropriate to remain silent. If there is the possibility of harm, it is essential to keep silent.

﴿2﴾

Enjoining good must be for the sake of acquiring Allāh's pleasure and with the intention of elevating Dīn. It must not be for one's self aggrandizement. If the intention is Allāh's pleasure and elevating Dīn, Allāh *ta'ālā* will help the person and inspire him to enjoin good. If it is for self aggrandizement, Allāh *ta'ālā* will

disgrace the person. In other words, He will not help him.

The author says that the intention must be Allāh's pleasure and elevating Dīn. That is, there must be no self aggrandizement in it. The crux of this is that enjoining good must be done with sincerity. It must not be for any self motives. Sincerity is obviously necessary in every matter of Dīn. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ

Totally devoted to Him in religion.

How, then, can sincerity in enjoining good which is such an important part of Dīn be pardoned? Study the lives and stories of the elders and see how much attention they paid to sincerity. They would start a Dīnī task with absolute sincerity but the moment they perceive the slightest taint of self aggrandizement, they would stop that task immediately. They could never tolerate the involvement of the self in a Dīnī task. It is not easy to do this. Firstly, it is difficult to even identify and realize that the self has now become involved and that Allāh-ness is no longer there. After realizing this, it becomes even more difficult and important to give up that task. Only the one who has a very high level of sincerity can do this. Bearing in mind how vigilant these elders were on their intention in the course of an action, how much they must have been rectifying their intention before the action? One can imagine how insincere it is to desire wealth, position and authority from a Dīnī task!

﴿3﴾

It is essential for the person who is enjoining good to be an 'ālim because an ignorant person cannot enjoin good and forbid evil. It is possible that, due to his

ignorance, he will command evil and prohibit good, resulting in the signs of hypocrites becoming manifest in him. Allāh *ta'ālā* says that the hypocrite males and females enjoin evil and prohibit good. This is obviously extremely repugnant, disgraceful and a completely upside down situation.

﴿4﴾

Enjoining good must be done in a soft and affectionate manner. The person must not be stern and hard-hearted. When Allāh *ta'ālā* sent Hadrat Mūsā *'alayhis salām* and Hadrat Hārūn *'alayhis salām* to Pharaoh, He instructed them to be soft towards him. The reason for this is that he is a oppressive and tyrant king. One must therefore think carefully before speaking and invite him to Allāh *ta'ālā* with suitable words. Allāh *ta'ālā* taught them to say these words:

هَلْ لَكَ إِلَىٰ أَنْ تَزُكِّي وَأَهْدِيكَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَتَخْشَىٰ

Are you desirous of being purified? And that I show you the path to your Sustainer so that you may then fear [Him]?"¹

Thus, we learn that softness and gentleness are from among the etiquette of enjoining good and inviting to Allāh *ta'ālā*. Most people consider the impositions of the Shari'ah to be difficult. If the inviter is also going to be hard and harsh, his call will not be accepted. Instead, most people will become rebellious. This is why Allāh *ta'ālā* commanded softness in da'wah. Allāh *ta'ālā* does not approve of harshness and severity for His servants. This is why as long as a task can be accomplished through softness, it must be adhered to. There is nothing but good in softness, there is no possibility of harm in it.

¹ Sūrah an-Nāzi'āt, 79: 17-19.

The Prophets '*alayhimus salām* were divinely protected from sin, but they still showed mercy to sinners and instructed others to do the same. Hadrat 'Īsā '*alayhis salām* has the following to say about how sinners should be treated:

لا تنظروا في ذنوب الناس كأنكم أرباب، أنظروا في ذنوبكم كأنكم عبيد، فإنما الناس مبتلى ومعافى، فارحموا أهل البلاء واحمدوا الله على العافية.

Do not look at the sins of people as though you yourselves are lords (do not look out of pride and scorn at them). Look at your own sins as though you are slaves and sinners because people are caught up in sin and also obedient. You should therefore have mercy on those who are caught up, and thank Allāh *ta'ālā* for obedience.

This Hadīth not only shows the prohibition of pride over sinners, but encourages towards showing mercy to them. This is the character of the Prophets '*alayhimus salām*. So what right do their followers have to deviate from their character?

Note: Glory to Allāh! What a beneficial point. It ought to be impressed on our hearts. (compiler)

If we follow procedures and follow the Sunnah, we will certainly be able to accomplish a lot. Just as softness applies to outsiders, it applies to one's family members and children as well. They can only be tutored by explaining to them in a soft affectionate manner. Unfortunately, the situation today is that a person cannot rectify some of his own habits but wants his children to be purified of every fault immediately. He will be harsh on them for the slightest mistake. This causes them to be discouraged and they do not become interested in any work. You should rather give them respite, explain to them in a soft manner, and rectify them gradually. Only then will rectification be realized.

Your hastiness and harshness will not rectify them; it could harm them further.

﴿5﴾

If a person experiences any hardship because of enjoining good, he must exercise patience and be forbearing. Allāh *ta'ālā* relates the advice of Hadrat Luqmān *'alayhis salām* as follows:

وَأْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَنْهَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأَصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا أَصَابَكَ

Enjoin good and forbid evil; and be patient over whatever afflicts you.

﴿6﴾

One of the etiquette which applies to the one who enjoins good is for him to practise what he preaches so that he may not be criticized for not doing what he preaches. Allāh *ta'ālā* relates the statement of Hadrat Shu'ayb *'alayhis salām* which he made to his people:

وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ أُخَالِفَكُمْ إِلَىٰ مَا أَنْهَكُمُ عَنْهُ

I do not want to go against you in what I am forbidding you from.

In other words, I myself practise on whatever I instruct you to do. I am not treading a particular path while directing you to a different path.

Another reason for the inviter to practise what he preaches is that Allāh *ta'ālā* warns:

أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ

Do you order people to do good while you forget your own selves?

A person should not get included in this warning. Allāh *ta'ālā* addresses the scholars of the Banī Isrā'īl and says: How is it that you order people to do good while you forget your own selves?! This, notwithstanding the fact that you recite the Book. Can you not understand even this much?

It is very far fetched for an intelligent person to worry about and strive for the rectification and benefit of others while he totally disregards the destruction and loss of his own self. As the saying goes: Start with your self first and then you can become a Sufī. None but a very foolish person will cast aside Dīn and piety which contain nothing but benefit, and be pleased with destruction.

The author of *Jalālayn* states that the interrogative particle in the word أَتَأْمُرُونَ actually applies to the word تَنْسَوْنَ and not أَتَأْمُرُونَ [it would therefore mean, do you forget your own self when you order people to do good]. The author of *Rūh al-Ma'ānī* says that the interrogative particle does in fact apply to أَتَأْمُرُونَ but is not a complete negation of enjoining good. Rather, it is a reprimand to the one who commands people to do good and forgets his own self.

The ruling which is extracted from this is that it is permissible for a non-practising 'ālim to admonish and lecture. Although this is correct, people hold on to this permission, continue delivering lectures, but totally disregard the warning that is issued here. This is why Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Muḥammad Anwar Kashmīrī Sāhib rahimahullāh used to say that the outward and obvious meanings of warnings must be taken. One should not resort to explanations and leeways so that the reprimand may be effective. If not, the purpose of a warning will be lost and this would cause a lot of

damage. A person is himself eligible for reprimand and Allāh's wrath, when people see a contradiction between his words and actions, they would lose confidence in him and give up their own good actions. They would think to themselves that if good deeds were essential, this person would certainly have done them. How many people there must be who abhor Islam after seeing the evil actions of such scholars. Their misguidance is more than their guidance. O how sorrowful!

If permission is taken from this verse and a person starts delivering lectures without practising himself, what proof does he have for his inaction? What will he say about those Aḥādīth which issue stern warnings of punishment for non-practising 'ulamā'?

Hadrat Anas *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: On the night of Mi'rāj I saw some people whose lips were being cut with scissors. I asked Jibrīl: "Who are these people?" He replied: "These are the orators of your ummah who used to order people to do good deeds but disregarded their own selves."

Look! We learn from this Hadīth that the cause for the additional punishment was that despite instructing people to do good deeds, they did not practise themselves.

The author says further:

Question: When an inviter does not do good himself or commits evil, is it permissible to command others to do that good or abstain from that evil?

Answer: Yes, because Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: Enjoin good even if you do not practise on it. Prohibit evil even if you yourself do not abstain from it.

He then writes: Such a person will get the reward for enjoining good and forbidding evil if he is sincere. He will also be sinning for acting against what he is enjoining and forbidding, if he does not repent. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*. However, a severe warning is issued against such a person. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: A person will be brought forward on the day of Resurrection and then cast into the Hell-fire. His intestines will come out of his body and he will walk around them just as a donkey walks around a millstone. The inmates of the Hell-fire will assemble around him and say: "O such and such fellow! What has happened to you? Weren't you the one who used to enjoin good and forbid evil?" He will reply: "Yes, I used to enjoin good but did not practise it myself. I used to prohibit evil but used to commit it myself." (This is why you see me punished in this way).

Now you can gauge for yourself from these Aḥādīth the blameworthiness and repugnance that are established against a non-practising orator. These are the ones who will be punished before the idol worshippers. It will not be wrong to say that they are included among those who have earned Allāh's wrath. After hearing these warnings and threats, how can a believer tolerate lecturing and advising others while being heedless and non-practising himself?

I consider it appropriate to quote certain sections of what Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* wrote on the subject of non-practice and studying and teaching for reasons other than Allāh's pleasure. He writes:

Hadrat Mak-ḥūl *rahimahullāh* relates: Ten Companions of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* related to me: We were studying in Musjid-e-Qubā when Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* suddenly entered and said: "You may learn whatever you want,

but Allāh *ta'ālā* will not reward you as long as you do not put it into practice.”

Hadrat Ibn Mas'ūd *radīyallāhu 'anhu* said [as a foretelling]: There will come a time when the sweetness of people's hearts will change to saltiness. At such a time, neither will the teacher nor the student benefit from knowledge. The hearts of the 'ulamā' will become like saline soil. Although rain water falls on such soil, there is no sweetness in it. This will happen when the hearts of the 'ulamā' will give preference to love of the world over the Hereafter. At such a time, Allāh *ta'ālā* will snatch away the springs of wisdom from their hearts and extinguish the lamps of guidance. When anyone from them meets you, he will portray himself verbally as if he fears Allāh *ta'ālā* while flagrant sinning will be clearly visible from his actions. Just imagine how fresh and moist the tongues will be, and how barren and dry the hearts will be! I take an oath in the name of Allāh apart from whom none is worthy of worship, the only reason for this state of affairs is that the teachers taught for reasons other than Allāh's pleasure, and the students studied for reason other than Allāh's pleasure.¹



One of the etiquette of enjoining good and forbidding evil is to carry out this task within one's ability. Allāh *ta'ālā* says with reference to Hadrat Shu'ayb *'alayhis salām*:

إِنْ أُرِيدُ إِلَّا الْإِصْلَاحَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ

All I want is rectitude as much as I can.

¹ *Fātiḥatul 'Ulūm*, p. 19.

﴿8﴾

Another etiquette is to believe that the inspiration for rectification is from Allāh *ta'ālā* and to place one's trust in Him. Allāh *ta'ālā* quotes the words of Hadrat Shu'ayb *'alayhis salām*:

وَمَا تَوْفِيقِي إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ أُنِيبُ

Whatever inspiration I get [for action and rectification] is solely from Allāh. I place my trust in Him and I turn solely to Him.

The Prophets *'alayhimus salām* used to adopt the means but their full trust was in Allāh *ta'ālā*. Similarly, their heirs resort to all the means which are available to them, but they believe that inspiration and rectification are from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone, and they rely solely on Him. This is why Allāh *ta'ālā* guides and rectifies many people through them. But now, people want to rectify through their talks and the power of their speech. Rectification was never achieved in this way nor will it ever be realized. Success will only be realized when the task is carried out in the manner in which it is supposed to be done. A poet says:

It is similar to unbelief to rely on your piety and intelligence in the path. Even if a seeker has thousands of capabilities, he must place his trust in Allāh.

﴿9﴾

After noting the above prerequisites and etiquette, the author writes:

قال العبد أصلحه الله تعالى، وللصوفية في الإحتساب شرط آخر، وهو لا يرى نفسه في احتسابه، فإن رآها فيها تركه.

The Sufis have one additional prerequisite, viz. if the person who is enjoining or forbidding finds that his self [motive] has joined in, he must stop this task [of enjoining and forbidding].

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an important prerequisite which the Sufis added. It demonstrates the importance which they attached to sincerity. It is similar to when Hadrat ‘Alī *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* had gained the upper-hand over an unbeliever and was about to kill him, the unbeliever spat on his face. Hadrat ‘Alī *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* released him immediately. The unbeliever was most surprised and asked: “Why did you release me when I spat on you?” He replied: “I was killing you for Allāh’s sake, but when you spat on me, my self became agitated and wanted that I kill you immediately. However, I thought that I was originally going to kill you for Allāh’s sake, but I am now killing you due to the agitation of my self. It is no longer for Allāh, this is why I released you.”

﴿10﴾

The person enjoining good and forbidding evil must fear none except Allāh *ta’ālā*. He must seek Allāh’s help and commence the task by placing his trust in Allāh *ta’ālā*. Allāh *ta’ālā* says:

أَتَخَشَوْنَهُمْ فَاللَّهُ أَحَقُّ أَنْ تَخْشَوْهُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

Do you fear them? Allāh is more worthy that you fear Him, if you are believers.

Note: On reading the stories of the elders, we learn that they used to practise on these etiquette, this is why they bore good results.

After explaining the etiquette of enjoining and forbidding in detail, the author quotes three additional prerequisites of enjoining good from *Shir'atul Islam*. He says:

وذكر في شرعة الإسلام وشرائط الأمر بالمعروف ثلاثة. صحة النية، وهو أن يريد به إعلاء كلمة الله تعالى. والثاني معرفة الحجة. والثالث الصبر على ما يصيبه من المكروه.

It is mentioned in *Shir'atul Islam* that there are three prerequisites for enjoining good. (1) The intention must be correct. In other words, he must do it to elevate Allāh's word. (2) He must know the proofs and evidences. (3) He must be patient over the dislikes which he experiences in this path.

These prerequisites must be found in the person before he can even commence with his task. If any of them are not found in him, he must not even intend to take up this task because instead of rectification, he will cause more destruction. The author adds:

ويجب ان يكون فيه ثلاث خصال. رفق فيما يأمر به وينهى عنه. قال الله تعالى: فَيَمَّا رَحْمَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ لَئِن لَّهْمُ. فإن الغلظة لا تزيد إلا فسادا. وحلم في ذلك عما يقال له من المكروه. وفقه كيلا يصير أمره بالمعروف منكرا.

When enjoining good, the person must have three qualities in him. (1) Softness in enjoining and forbidding. Allāh *ta'ālā* says: "It is out of Allāh's mercy that you are soft towards them." Harshness only increases the harm and evil. (2) Forbearance as regards the disagreeable things which are said to him. (3) Knowledge and understanding so that the good which he is enjoining does not result in evil.

Glory to Allāh! Look at what an excellent verse he presents to prove the need for softness and leniency. The Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum had slipped up in the Battle of Uḥud which resulted in a minor defeat. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam had the right to reprimand them but he remained soft towards them solely because Allāh’s mercy is showering on him. It was Allāh’s mercy which prompted him not to be harsh.

A Mentor Must Not be Harsh And Hard-Hearted

وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ فَظًا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَأَنَّفَضُوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ ۖ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ
وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ.

Had you been harsh, hard-hearted, they would have dispersed from around you. So pardon them and seek forgiveness for them and take counsel from them in all matters.¹

Look! The Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum made a mistake which caused many of them to be killed, and they suffered defeat because they left their guard. This was an occasion when one would normally scold and express disapproval. Despite this, Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam was lenient to them because he was a mercy to the worlds. He overlooked their mistake by virtue of this mercy. This is why Allāh says that it was because of Allāh’s mercy on you that you remained lenient towards them. Were it not for this, it would have been beyond human capability to treat them with softness and leniency.

Look at what an excellent point the author made on the necessity of softness.

¹ Sūrah Āl ‘Imrān, 3: 159.

فإن الغلظة لا تزيد إلا فسادا

Because harshness only increases the harm and evil.

The first proof:

فَيْسَا رَحْمَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِيُنْتَ لَهُمْ.

It is out of Allāh’s mercy that you are soft towards them.

This is a traditional proof on the obligation of softness and leniency, while the above-quoted statement “because harshness only increases the harm and evil” is a rational proof. From this, we can say:

فإن الرفق لا يزيد إلا صلاحا

Softness only serves to increase rectitude.

This is because love and affinity increase with softness, and reconciliation of the hearts is realized. When the heart accepts a person’s love and affection, it will impose on the addressee to accept what he says. On the other hand, harshness creates coldness and aloofness towards the advisor. In fact, it even leads to abhorrence. In such a case, he will not accept what he says.

The second quality which an enjoiner of good must have is forbearance so that he can bear whatever hardships he experiences in the course of enjoining good.

The third quality is that he must have knowledge and understanding so that the good which he is enjoining does not result in evil.

Enjoining Good And Forbidding Evil is Not Permitted to Everyone

The following is mentioned in *al-Kashshāf*:

لأنه لا يصلح إلا من علم المعروف والمنكر، وإن العلم كيف يرتب الأمر في إقامته وكيف يباشر، فإن الجاهل ربما نهى عن معروف وأمر بمنكر، وربما عرف الحكم في مذهبه وجهله في مذهب صاحبه، فنهاه عن غير منكر، وقد يغلظ في موضع اللين ويلين في موضع الغلظة، وينكر من لا يزيده إنكاره إلا تماديا، أو على من الإنكار عليه عبث، كالإنكار على أصحاب المآصر والجلادين وأضرابهم.

[Enjoining good and forbidding evil] is not permitted to everyone. It is only permitted to the one who knows what is good and what is evil. He also knows the sequence of laying down rules and how to do it. An ignorant person may forbid a good and order an evil. He may also know the ruling in his own madh-hab but not in the madh-hab of his addressee. This could result in forbidding him from something which is not evil. Sometimes, he [the ignorant person] may adopt harshness where softness is required and vice versa. Then he may reprimand people who would respond to the reprimand by becoming more rebellious. Sometimes he may reprimand those on whom such reprimand is a waste of time, e.g. prison authorities and executioners.¹

We learn from the above that in addition to having a correct intention, those who are enjoining good and forbidding evil must possess three additional qualities. Knowledge of good and evil. How and when to address the person so that it would be most effective. If he does not know this, he may very well forbid good and enjoin evil, or adopt harshness where softness is needed or vice versa. Consequently, instead of rectifying the person, he may cause more harm to him.

To sum up, the conditions for enjoining good as listed in *Shir'atul Islam* are that the person must enjoin with softness and leniency, he must be forbearing, and he

¹ *Al-Kashshāf*, vol. 1, p. 208.

must have knowledge of the time, place and situation when enjoining and forbidding. Thus, together with a correct intention, he must be embellished with all these qualities. The help and assistance of Allāh *ta'ālā* will only be received when all these qualities are combined. Man is accountable for both things, viz. he must set right his intention, and his methodology must also be correct. If he does this within the parameters of the Shari'ah, he will certainly be helped.

Anyway, the softness which is essential with sincerity is because when a person is advised in a soft manner, it develops affinity and love with the advisor. The addressee then accepts whatever is told to him. The other reason is that most people are hard by nature and are affected negatively by harshness. It causes them to become rebellious. The hardness therefore has to be combated with softness and leniency as was explained previously.

Forbearance is essential because people will certainly criticize and malign the advisor. If he cannot tolerate this, he will not be able to proceed with his work. This will result in him either giving up the work totally or creating a controversial situation which is most damaging. No rectification will be achieved, it will cause more harm.

It is essential for the advisor to disregard criticisms totally and continue with his work. Allāh *ta'ālā* will certainly display the fruits of his work after some time and his rightness will be shown to the people. People themselves will say that there is no danger in this person – nothing but good can be expected from him. People will then revert to him and genuine work will be achieved very soon. However, the precondition is that the work must be done according to the principles. In other words, the Sunnah and the lives of the Prophets

'*alayhimus salām* must be adhered to. We are taught to invite towards Allāh *ta'ālā* as follows:

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ.

Invite to the way of your Sustainer with wisdom and with kind admonition, and argue with them in a way that is best.¹

Hadrat Muslihul Ummat *rahimahullāh* concludes thus:

The work of *tablīgh* and *da'wah* is not something new which has suddenly come upon us today. Rather, the task of inviting towards Allāh *ta'ālā* was given to the Prophets '*alayhimus salām*. It was then carried out by their companions, and then their companions, and this continued until it came to us. Why, then, should we not learn the methodology of our elders, after all, it is a tried and tested methodology? It has been stamped with an official stamp. There is no fear of harm in it. If we invent a programme from our side, it will be an innovation. It will be something new in Dīn which will neither be approved by Allāh *ta'ālā* nor by Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*.²

The Manner of Enjoining Good to Our Contemporaries And Juniors

The manner of enjoining good to our contemporaries is now explained.

وإن كان مثلك في السن تتشفع إليه وترفق به ثم تأمر

If he is of a similar age to you, you must request him, be soft to him, and then instruct him.

وإن كان أصغر منك تضيفه وتحسن إليه بلطف ثم تأمر لئلا يضيق قلبه

¹ Sūrah an-Nahl, 16: 125.

² *Ma'rifat-e-Haqq*, Dhū al-Qa'dah and Dhū al-Hijjah 1384 A.H./April and May 1965, p. 28.

If he is younger than you, incline him towards yourself, and treat him with kindness and affection, and then instruct him so that he does not feel restricted (causing him to become aloof).

Now listen, I have to explain something specific. These limits which have been laid down are not for the admonisher alone. Rather, the Sufis and 'ulamā' are included. It is definitely not permissible for them to spy on their associates for the sake of rectification. It very often happens that a person commits an evil for the sake of rectifying others. This is obviously extremely evil. When Allāh *ta'ālā* wills to conceal the faults and shortcomings of His servants, what right does a shaykh have to go against this even if he has good intentions? If he learns of something while within the limits of the Shari'ah, it will be permissible for him to rectify the person as he feels appropriate.

The Sufis obviously rectify for Allāh's sake. It is therefore essential for them to adhere to the injunctions of Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Conclusion

I now conclude by saying: Allāh *ta'ālā* sent the Prophets *'alayhimus salām* to invite towards Allāh and He taught them the prerequisites and etiquette of da'wah. There are many verses in the Qur'ān on the subject of tablīgh and da'wah. It is essential for every person who holds this position to be cognizant of them.

The first point is that the person enjoining good must be sincere, he must have a good intention.

Secondly, he must have knowledge of the rules and regulations.

Thirdly, he must be forbearing so that if he experiences any hardship, he is able to bear it.

Fourthly, he must be soft and lenient. He must not be harsh and hard-hearted.

There is a Need For Harshness Sometimes

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* was generally soft and lenient in his admonition. However, it must be borne in mind that harshness and severity are sometimes needed for rectification and training. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ جَاهِدِ الْكُفَّارَ وَالْمُنَافِقِينَ وَاغْلُظْ عَلَيْهِمْ

O Prophet! Fight the unbelievers and hypocrites and deal harshly with them.¹

Rūh al-Ma'ānī states in the commentary to the above verse:

واستعمل الخشونة على الفريقين فيما تجاهدهم به إذا بلغ الرفق مداه

You may resort to harshness against the two groups for whatever reason you are waging jihād against them if you have reached the end of your tether in your leniency.²

We learn from this that there also comes a stage when softness and leniency have to be cast aside and harshness and severity have to be resorted to. This is in fact the order of the Shari'ah for that time, as Allāh *ta'ālā* instructed Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* to be harsh against the unbelievers and hypocrites.

Softness, leniency, harshness and severity are all proven in the life of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. However, a person must understand the occasions for each one and proceed accordingly so that

¹ Sūrah at-Taubah, 9: 73.

² *Rūh al-Ma'ānī*, vol. 28, p. 142.

he does not cause harm instead of doing good. Understand this well.

I conclude this article with the following supplication of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*:

اللَّهُمَّ وَفَّقْنِي لِمَا تُحِبُّ وَتَرْضَى مِنَ الْقَوْلِ وَالْعَمَلِ وَالنِّيَّةِ وَالْهَدْيِ إِنَّكَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ.

O Allāh! Inspire me to do whatever You love and approve of as regards my words, actions, intentions and ways. Surely You have power over everything.¹

An Earnest Appeal

This insignificant person, Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī, says: We have presented to the responsible members of each department of Dīn certain principles and etiquette in the light of the Qur'ān, Sunnah and lives of the pious elders. These definitely have to be put into action. It is essential to supplicate to Allāh *ta'ālā* to make it easy to practise on them. It is also essential that no individual or group should resort to baseless explanations and self-concocted commentaries of the Qur'ān and Hadīth in order to prove his or its self-fabricated course of action, views and opinions. Instead, he or it must proceed after seeking the advice of the elders. Many intelligent people opt for their own ways which generally result in their falling very short from the true objectives. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Unfortunately, there are many ignorant orators who give outlandish explanations and present rare rulings from the Qur'ān and Hadīth to support their own views and opinions which a person with basic education and

¹ *Ma'rifat-e-Haqq*, Dhū al-Qa'dah and Dhū al-Hijjah 1384 A.H./April and May 1965, p. 28.

fear of Allāh *ta'ālā* cannot accept. It is the duty of the seniors of each department of Dīn to abstain from discussing points which they are not sure of. Furthermore, they must stop their friends and associates from doing the same so that they do not become causes of disillusionment about the pure Dīn and the following statement of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* does not apply to them:

صَلُّوا وَأَصَلُّوا

They are astray and they lead others astray.

O Allāh! Enable us to identify the truth as the truth, and falsehood as falsehood.

In the following couplets, Maulānā Rūmī *rahimahullāh* prohibits the Muslim nation from doing such things and advises it to abstain from them. The translation and explanation are quoted from *Kalīd Mathnawī* of Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh*.

Translation and explanation:

Revive *īmān* (with a true heart), it is not enough to make a mere verbal proclamation. You have kept the desires of the self fresh within you (there are reasons for these baseless explanations. The baseless views of the *bid'atīs* stem from here: First a corrupt belief is adopted through promptings of the self, this is followed by distortion of texts which are not in line with one's beliefs). As long as desires of the self are fresh, *īmān* cannot be fresh. A Hadīth states:

لا يؤمن أحدكم حتى يكون هواه تبعا لما جئت به

None can be a true believer until his desires are subject to what I have come with.

This is because desire of the self is a lock for this door (of sciences and facts). Consequently, (facts cannot be exposed). This is why you have started providing baseless explanations through preserved words (preserved words refer to the words of the Qur'ān and authentic Hadīth. Since they are preserved, he refers to them as “bikr” because the word “bikr” in the meaning of a “virgin” is also preserved). You ought to (develop a change within you through which your ignorance is removed and the reality of the matter becomes clear to you). Do not go into baseless explanations of the Qur'ān (i.e. do not change them from their original meanings. The Qur'ān itself mentions that the Qur'ān is a dhikr: It is We who revealed the dhikr). You used your mental powers to give your own explanations to the Qur'ān. You ought to leave it in its original sense and change your ways of thinking (so your incorrect thinking is changed to a correct line of thought). You are explaining the Qur'ān solely on the desires of your self. Consequently, because of your (explanation) the clear meanings of the Qur'ān (which are extremely lucid and clear on the basis of Arabic and Shar'ī rules) have become crooked (and changed).¹



¹ *Kalīd Mathnawī*, vol. 1, p. 197.

We now quote a section from *al-Kalām al-Balīgh* of Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Fārūq Sāhib Utrānwī Allāhābādī (d. 1421 A.H.).

The Work May Be Little, But it Must be Done in The Correct Manner

Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānwī rahimahullāh says: “If the work is little but carried out in the correct manner, a person will not be taken to account for it. But if it is done in the incorrect way a person will be taken to account for it (even if some benefit is perceived).”

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an important point which every person has to essentially bear in mind. (compiler)

It is Not Permissible to do Anything Against The Shari‘ah in Order to Acquire Some Benefit

Even if there are some benefits and advantages in doing something which is against the Shari‘ah – but whose doing is not essential in the Shari‘ah – or there are other ways of acquiring it, and it is done with the intention of deriving that benefit, or the masses are not stopped from doing that because of the benefit which is seen in it, then this too is not permissible. A permissible act becomes an act of worship when done with the correction intention. But a sin does not become permissible even if there are thousands of benefits and advantages in it. It is neither permitted to commit that sin nor to remain silent when seeing it committed. This is a very clear and obvious rule. For example, if a person seizes wealth and oppresses with the intention of accumulating wealth and then helping the poor and needy with it, this oppression and confiscation can never ever be permissible. This is

irrespective of whether the act of oppression would bring thousands of other benefits.¹

Hadrat Thānwī *rahimahullāh* says in *Taqwīm az-Zaygh*:

There is a ruling in Hanafi fiqh that when an action is desirable for the scholars but is not required in the Shari'ah, and it causes damage among the masses, then the scholars must give it up. Yes, if it is required by the Shari'ah and some evils have crept into it, they must endeavour to wipe out those evils but not give up that action. For example, there are two issues with regard to sending reward (*isāl-e-thawāb*), specifying the person and the actual sending of the reward. The Shari'ah does not require one to specify the person although it is (in itself) permissible. However, since specifying the person causes damage among the masses, we will give up specification.²



Hadrat Maulānā Muftī Rashīd Aḥmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh* has made a very important point titled, *The Laws of The Shari'ah For Those Carrying Out Dīni Works*. We take the honour of quoting it from *Aḥsan al-Fatāwā*.

No Group is Permitted to Commit a Sin No Matter What The Advantage May be

No one has the right to make any changes to Allāh's commands for whatever advantage, to cast aside a command for whatever benefit, to commit a sin or join someone in a sin. There is no room for this irrespective of whether the advantage in it is to join people in the work of da'wah and tabligh, there is political advantage in it for the politicians or so that the madrasah

¹ *Islāh ar-Rusūm*.

² *Al-Kalām al-Baligh*, p. 376.

authorities may be able to continue the existence of their madrasah. Disobedience to Allāh *ta'ālā* is not permissible no matter what the advantage. After all, the madāris are there to preserve Dīn, yet Dīn is sacrificed for the preservation of the madrasah. This shows that they are not working for Allāh's pleasure, but for the fulfilment of their desires and self-indulgence. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*.¹

It is Not Permissible to do Anything Against The Sharī'ah For The Victory of Dīn

Maulānā 'Atīq ar-Raḥmān Sāhib Sambhalī writes the following in *al-Furqān* (Lucknow) dated Rabī' al-Awwal 1378 A.H.

The dream of establishing Dīn while destroying Dīn is also the dream of a lunatic. Allāh *ta'ālā* is not in need of His principles being cast aside in order to raise the flag in His name. This approach may establish the power of such a group which works in the name of Dīn, but for Dīn to be established in its true meaning - this never happened in the past and will never happen in the future.

If there is the option between adopting a certain evil or succumbing to slow progress in Dīn, then undoubtedly, the adoption of the evil can never be tolerated no matter how long it takes for the victory of Dīn. This is the spirit of the true Dīn and this is the guidance from Allāh *ta'ālā*. The true Dīn extends salām from a distance to a practical wisdom which demands the sacrificing of its principles. This is because it is these very principles which embody Dīn. If you break the principles of Dīn by your choice and the public which supports you also plays its part for your victory, then you must believe – with absolute grief and sorrow –

¹ *Aḥsan al-Fatāwā*, vol. 9, pp. 142-146.

that the power of this group can never be a means for a true religious revolution in any country. The examples of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam and the Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum reject such a view which opens the doors to sedition and playing around with Dīn.

The example of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam as presented to us in the Qur’ān is before us:

وَلَا تَطْرُدِ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْعَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ

Do not repulse those who call on their Sustainer morning and evening, seeking His pleasure alone.¹

In explaining the circumstances behind the revelation of this verse, the commentator, Khāzin, quotes from Sahīh Muslim as follows:

Sa’d ibn Abī Waqqās radiyallāhu ‘anhu narrates: Six of us were with Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam when the polytheists said to him: “Move these people away so that they do not become audacious towards us.” (After listing the names of the six companions), Hadrat Sa’d radiyallāhu ‘anhu says: A thought which Allāh ta’ālā willed came into the heart of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam and he became inclined to them [the polytheists]. Allāh ta’ālā then revealed this verse.

Kalbī says that the Quraysh leaders said to Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam: “Reserve a special day for us and one day for them [the Muslims].” Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam replied in the negative. They said: “Okay, when we come to you, you must turn your face towards us and your back towards them.” Allāh ta’ālā revealed the present verse.

¹ Sūrah al-An‘ām, 6: 52.

Imagine the great advantage in the Quraysh leaders lending an ear to the call of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*! Only then could it be expected of them to embrace īmān. If they embraced īmān, they would have been the keys to all the Arabs coming into Islam. Consequently, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* was most concerned about ensuring that Islam enters the hearts of the Quraysh leaders in some way or the other. The precondition of speaking to them was only this: “These people [Muslims] who are of a lower social standing than us must not be with us in the same assembly. Or, in the least, our distinction must be respected in the assembly.” Look at what a minor thing they were asking for. Once they tasted īmān, they themselves would have forgotten this distinction. However, despite this great advantage which was attached to the Quraysh leader’s embracing Islam, Allāh *ta’ālā* instructed Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* to cast aside this request of theirs. In fact, in the light of the above narrations, Allāh *ta’ālā* placed in his heart an inclination towards this request and then stopped him from acting on it. We can understand that by Allāh *ta’ālā* doing this, He wanted to make clear to us that for a Dīnī advantage, there is no room for anything which is against the spirit and general temperament of Dīn. As for the established principles and injunctions of Dīn [sacrificing them will definitely be impermissible]. The same Allāh who makes His unlawful things lawful for the sake of saving a life cannot tolerate giving us permission to lower ourselves from the lofty spirit of Islam for a few days just so that Islam may spread quickly and become victorious easily.

Allāh’s independence with regard to His Dīn has reached such a limit that – for the sake of Islam’s spread and domination – He cannot tolerate His Messenger showing disregard to the untimely or inopportune arrival of a believer. On one occasion,

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* was conversing with a senior polytheist or a group of them when a blind *Ṣahābī* (‘Abdullāh ibn Umm Maktūm *radiyallāhu ‘anhu*) arrived and tried to attract Rasūlullāh’s attention to himself. Rasūlullāh’s temperament would not permit the slightest offence to any of his *Ṣahābah*. However, out of consideration to the advantage of Islam, he considered his inopportune arrival to be burdensome and did not turn his focus to him. Look at how Allāh *ta‘ālā* reprimanded His Messenger *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*:

عَبَسَ وَتَوَلَّى أَنْ جَاءَهُ الْأَعْمَى

He frowned and turned away. Because there came to him the blind man.¹

Whereas the same Allāh was so concerned about the heavy temperament of His Messenger that He clearly and frankly warned the Muslims in *Sūrah al-Hujurāt* from disturbing him during his times of relaxation. When they are invited to a meal, they must depart the moment they finish.²

Note: Glory to Allāh! What an enlightening article which all ‘*ulamā’*, *mashā’ikh*, inviters and propagators must study and keep into consideration so that they are saved from excesses and shortcomings.

The Supplications of *Ḥadhrat Mūsā*

When Allāh *ta‘ālā* instructed *Ḥadhrat Mūsā ‘alayhis salām* to go to Pharaoh and invite him to the truth, he made the following supplications:

قَالَ رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي، وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي، وَاحْلُلْ عُقْدَةً مِّنْ لِّسَانِي، يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي.

¹ *Sūrah ‘Abasa*, 80: 1-2.

² *Al-Kalām al-Balīgh*, p. 380.

He [Mūsā] said: "O Allāh! Expand for me my chest, make easy my task and loosen the knot from my tongue so that they may understand my speech."¹

Hadrat Mūsā *'alayhis salām* had made these supplications after Allāh *ta'ālā* had instructed him thus:

إِذْهَبْ إِلَى فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّهُ طَغَى

Go to Pharaoh for he has become extremely arrogant.²

He is making claims to divinity. You must invite him to tauhīd. If he doubts your credentials, you must demonstrate these two miracles to him. (1) When you cast your staff on the ground, it will turn to a swiftly moving snake. (2) When you place your right hand under your left side, it will turn extremely brilliant without any blemish (such as leprosy).

When Hadrat Mūsā *'alayhis salām* learnt that he has been appointed as a Messenger who is being sent to Pharaoh, he supplicated for ease for carrying out this immense responsibility. He said: O Allāh! Give me more courage (so that I do not feel constrained when I am rejected or opposed in my tablīgh) and make this task (of tablīgh) easy for me (in the sense that the means of tablīgh are availed to me and the obstacles of tablīgh are removed). Remove the impediment in my speech so that people may understand what I say. Appoint someone from my family who would be my assistant, viz. my brother Hārūn *'alayhis salām*. Strengthen me through him and include him in (this task of tablīgh) with me. In other words, appoint him as a Prophet and instruct him with tablīgh so that both of us may carry out this task and my heart may feel reinforced. At the

¹ Sūrah Tā Hā: 20: 25-28.

² Sūrah Tā Hā: 20: 24.

time of tablīgh and da'wah, the two of us may engage in Your glorification (express Your purity from partners and defects), and mention Your excellent qualities. (When there are two people engaged in tablīgh, the speech of each one will be a support and emphasis for the other). Surely You are fully aware of our situation. You now fully well that we both need each other to carry out this task. Allāh *ta'ālā* said: (Every) request of yours has been approved, O Mūsā.

When Hadrat Mūsā 'alayhis salām was blessed with the honour of conversing with Allāh *ta'ālā* and conferred with prophet-hood and messenger-ship, he cast aside his trust on his own self and strength, and turned totally to Allāh *ta'ālā* because he knew that the responsibilities which come with this position can only be fulfilled with His help. Furthermore, whatever hardships and difficulties which would inevitably come in this path can only be borne with the courage bestowed by Allāh *ta'ālā*. This is why he made five supplications at this point:

(1) Expand for me my chest: Give it such expansion that it can bear the sciences of prophet-hood, and it can also bear the harsh responses of people when I invite them towards imān.

(2) Make easy my task: It was the result of prophetic understanding and foresight that he knew that the ease or difficulty in any task is not dependent on external planning. Rather, it is conferred by Allāh *ta'ālā*. If He wills, He can make the most difficult and weightiest of tasks easy. If He wills, He can make difficult the easiest of tasks. This is why a Hadīth teaches Muslims to ask Allāh *ta'ālā* to make easy for them their tasks:

اللَّهُمَّ الطَّفِ بِنَا فِي تَيْسِيرِ كُلِّ عَسِيرٍ فَإِنَّ تَيْسِيرَ كُلِّ عَسِيرٍ عَلَيْكَ يَسِيرٌ.

O Allāh! Be kind to us by making every difficulty easy for us. Surely it is very easy for You to make every difficulty easy.

(3) Loosen the knot from my tongue so that they may understand my speech: The background to the impediment in his speech is that when he was still being breastfed as an infant, he lived with his mother while she used to receive payment from the court of Pharaoh for her services. Once he was weaned, Pharaoh and his wife, Āsiyah, adopted him as their son. They took him back from his mother and began nurturing him. One day, Hadrat Mūsā 'alayhis salām held Pharaoh's beard and slapped him on his face. Another narration states that he was playing with a knife and struck Pharaoh on his head with it. Pharaoh became angry and wanted to kill him. Pharaoh's wife said: "O king! Do you want to do this to your own child who is not even in his senses as yet? If you want, you can test him and you will see that he cannot distinguish between what is harmful and what is beneficial." Pharaoh brought two trays, one had hot embers while the other had jewels, and placed them before Hadrat Mūsā 'alayhis salām. The wife felt that – as per the norm with children – he will see the burning ember which looks attractive and extend his hand towards it. On the other hand, jewellery is not attractive in the eyes of little children. In this way, Pharaoh will experience at first hand that whatever Hadrat Mūsā 'alayhis salām had done was due to the immaturity of little children. But this was no ordinary child. He was to become a Prophet of Allāh *ta'ālā*. He had an extraordinary disposition from the time he was born. Mūsā 'alayhis salām wanted to extend his hand towards the jewels, but Jibrīl 'alayhis salām caused him to extend his hand towards the tray with embers. He picked up an ember and placed it in his mouth, causing his tongue to get burnt. Subsequent to this incident, Hadrat Mūsā 'alayhis salām experienced an

impediment in his speech. The Qur'ān refers to it as a "knot" and Mūsā 'alayhis salām supplicated to Allāh *ta'ālā* to untie this knot.¹

The first two supplications were general in nature – he sought help from Allāh *ta'ālā* for all his tasks.

In the third supplication he requested the removal of an impediment which was peculiar to him. The ability to speak fluently and express one's self expertly are also necessary for da'wah. Another verse demonstrates that all these supplications were accepted. This shows that the impediment in his speech was also removed. However, when Hadrat Mūsā 'alayhis salām asked Allāh *ta'ālā* to send Hadrat Hārūn 'alayhis salām with him for the task of da'wah, he said:

هُوَ أَفْصَحُ مِنِّي لِسَانًا

He is more eloquent than me.

This shows that some traces of the impediment in his speech were still present. Moreover, when Pharaoh was highlighting some of the defects of Mūsā 'alayhis salām, he said:

وَلَا يَكَادُ يُبِينُ

He cannot even express himself properly.

Some scholars state that all that Hadrat Mūsā 'alayhis salām had supplicated for was that his impediment be removed to the extent that people may be able to understand him. That amount of impediment was removed. If slight traces of it remained, it does not negate the acceptance of his supplication.

¹ *Mazharī, Qurṭubī.*

(4) Appoint for me an assistant from my family: The previous three supplications were for himself. The fourth is for accumulating the means of carrying out the responsibility of da`wah. Hadrat Mūsā *‘alayhis salām* considered the most important of these means to be the appointment of a deputy or minister who would help him. The word *wazīr* literally refers to a person who carries a weight. Since the minister of a sultanate bears the weight of responsibility of his king, he is known as a *wazīr*.

This demonstrates the maturity of Hadrat Mūsā’s intellect. The first thing a person needs when initiating a task or movement is helpers and supporters. If a person can find such people who are in line with his way of thinking, all further tasks become easy. If he has the wrong helpers and supporters, all the means and resources will also go to waste. If we were to ponder over all the defects and ills which we see in the governments of today, we will conclude that the reason for them is the corruption, ineffectiveness, incorrect actions or absence of capabilities in the supporters, helpers and ministers.

This is why Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said that when Allāh *ta‘ālā* confers leadership to a person and he wants to do good, and wants to run the country properly, then Allāh *ta‘ālā* provides him with a good minister who helps him. If he forgets an essential task, the minister reminds him. When he intends doing a task, the minister helps him.¹

When Hadrat Mūsā *‘alayhis salām* asked for an assistant, as in this verse, he added “from my family”. In other words, this minister and assistant must be from my family and relatives. This is because there is

¹ *Nasa’i* on the authority of Qāsim ibn Muḥammad.

more affinity and likeness in characteristics, traits, views and dispositions among one's family members. This helps the task greatly provided the relative is known to have surpassed others in the carrying out of that task. It must not be a mere act of giving preference to relatives. Nowadays, integrity and sincerity are by and large missing, and concern for the actual task at hand has disappeared, this is why it is frowned upon when a leader appoints a relative as his deputy or minister. Where there is full confidence in a person's integrity, there is nothing wrong at all in appointing a righteous and more capable relative to a position. Rather, it is better for the conducting of important matters. By and large, the Khulafā Rāshidīn who came after Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* had family ties with him.

In his supplication, Hadrat Mūsā *'alayhis salām* first made a general request for an assistant from his family. He then specified who he would like by mentioning the name of his brother, Hadrat Hārūn *'alayhis salām*. He said: I would like Hārūn as my assistant so that I could get his help in carrying out the responsibilities of messenger-ship. Hadrat Hārūn *'alayhis salām* was three to four years elder than Hadrat Mūsā *'alayhis salām* and had also passed away about three years before him. He was in Egypt at the time when Hadrat Mūsā *'alayhis salām* had made this supplication. In response to this supplication, Allāh *ta'ālā* appointed Hadrat Hārūn *'alayhis salām* as a Prophet and informed him of it via an angel who went to him in Egypt. When Hadrat Mūsā *'alayhis salām* was sent to Egypt to invite Pharaoh, Allāh *ta'ālā* instructed Hadrat Hārūn *'alayhis salām* to receive

Hadrat Mūsā *'alayhis salām* at the entrance of the country. Subsequently, he did this.¹

Let him share my task: When Hadrat Mūsā *'alayhis salām* decided to make his brother his assistant, he already had the choice to do this. He asked Allāh *ta'ālā* to do it as a source of blessings. At the same time, he wanted Hadrat Hārūn *'alayhis salām* to join him as a Prophet. But no one apart from Allāh *ta'ālā* has such a right. This is why he made a separate supplication: Let him share my task [as a Messenger].²

The Importance of The Company of Dhākirīn

Finally, Hadrat Mūsā *'alayhis salām* said:

كَيْ نُسَبِّحَكَ كَثِيرًا، وَنَذْكُرَكَ كَثِيرًا.

So that we may glorify You abundantly and remember You abundantly.³

In other words, the advantage of making Hadrat Hārūn *'alayhis salām* my assistant and partner in prophet-hood is that we will glorify and remember You abundantly.

A question which comes up at this point is that the glorification and remembrance of Allāh *ta'ālā* are such that a person can do them as much as he likes even when he is alone. What does this have to do with having someone to join him? When we think about it, we conclude that a suitable environment and Allāh-fearing associates play a major role in the remembrance and glorification of Allāh *ta'ālā*. A person who does not have Allāh-fearing companions cannot do as much worship as the one who has such

¹ *Qurtubī*.

² Sūrah Tā Hā, 20: 32.

³ Sūrah Tā Hā, 20: 33-34.

companions. We learn from this that a person who wants to engage in Allāh's remembrance must also search for a suitable environment (i.e. the company of those who are engaged in Allāh's remembrance).

The supplications of Hadrat Mūsā *'alayhis salām* end here. He was given the glad tidings of the acceptance of all his supplications:

قَالَ قَدْ أُوتِيتَ سُؤْلَكَ يَا مُوسَى

He said: You have been granted whatever you asked for, O Mūsā!¹

The erudite commentator of the Qur'ān, Hadrat Maulānā Idrīs Sāhib Kāndhlawī *rahimahullāh*, provides a valuable and fine explanation of this supplication. He writes:

When Hadrat Mūsā *'alayhis salām* was instructed to go to Pharaoh, he made a few requests without which it would have been difficult to bear the responsibilities of messenger-ship.

The first thing he asked for was: O Allāh! Expand for me my chest so that I can bear the weight of messenger-ship and am able to respond to the objections and questions of the rejecters. This is not possible without expansion of the chest.

The second request was for ease in his matters. This was most essential because it is impossible to combat the enemies of Allāh *ta'ālā* without help and assistance from Him. Since the power of expression is also needed for *tablīgh* and *da'wah*, Hadrat Mūsā *'alayhis salām* asked for eloquence in speech. He said: O Allāh! Untie the knot in my tongue so that people may understand my speech.

¹ Sūrah Tā Hā, 20: 36.

The fourth request was the appointment of an assistant from his family, viz. his brother Hadrat Hārūn *'alayhis salām*. He will bear the weight with him, and help him in carrying out the responsibilities which come with prophet-hood.

Hadrat Hārūn *'alayhis salām* was elder and more eloquent than him, and there was no one better qualified than him at the time. This is why he made a specific request for his brother: “O Allāh! Appoint for me an assistant from my family. Hārūn, my brother. Increase my strength with him and let him share my task.” In other words, include him in the task of prophet-hood, and make him my partner in tabligh and da'wah so that I may get his help, and the two of us may engage in Your remembrance and glorification abundantly. Your abundant glorification and remembrance are means to peace of heart and focus, and the means for victory against the enemy. Allāh's remembrance is the weapon of a believer. We will get together and wield this weapon and combat Your enemies. By joining forces we will strengthen each other, and it will be a source of increase in blessings and effulgence. The darkness of unbelief will be removed or vanquished.¹ You are surely watching over us. In other words, You are fully aware of us. We desire Your pleasure and nothing else. You alone know fully well that these things are required in the course of tabligh and da'wah.

¹ We learn from this that collective dhikr results in strength and peace of mind. Hadrat Muftī Taqī 'Uthmānī Sāhib writes in the course of explaining this verse: “Although the glorification and remembrance of Allāh *ta'ālā* can be done alone, if good companions are available and the environment is suitable, this companionship automatically becomes an impetus for remembrance and glorification.” (*Tauḍīh al-Qur'ān*, vol. 2, p. 958)

Allāh *ta'ālā* said: “You have been granted whatever you asked for, O Mūsā!”¹

Three Essential Qualities in an Inviter

1. An Expanded Chest

Hadrat Maulānā Thānwī *rahimahullāh* explains an open chest to mean knowledge and forbearance. He writes in his translation of:

أَلَمْ نَشْرَحْ لَكَ صَدْرَكَ

Did We not open for you your chest?

Did We not expand your chest with knowledge and forbearance? Allāh *ta'ālā* conferred Hadrat Mūsā *'alayhis salām* with miracles and supernatural feats such as his glittering hand and the turning of his staff into a snake. Yet when Allāh *ta'ālā* instructed him to go to Pharaoh to invite him towards Allāh *ta'ālā*, he asked Allāh *ta'ālā* to expand his chest, i.e. to give him knowledge and forbearance. We learn from this that there is a special need for knowledge and forbearance in the field of da'wah and tablīgh. The duty of guiding to the truth is carried out through the light of knowledge. Forbearance enables a person to remain steadfast on the path in the face of obstacles and hardships which are borne in the path.

Unfortunately we do not feel the need for these two qualities, resulting in retrogression in the work of propagation. Nonetheless, arrangements for knowledge are to a certain extent made in the madāris and dār al-'ulūms, but there is no attention whatsoever to forbearance. Whereas this is one of the highest levels of character. It can be compared to salt in food. The importance and desirability of good character can be

¹ Maulānā Idrīs Kāndhlawī: *Ma'ārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 5, p. 112.

gauged from the following statement of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam:

بُعِثْتُ لِأَتَمِّمَ مَكَارِمَ الْأَخْلَاقِ

I have been commissioned to perfect good character.

2. Ease in The Work of Da'wah

For Allāh *ta'ālā* to make the task of da'wah easy for the person. An inviter can do nothing without Allāh's inspiration and His making things easy for him. Allāh *ta'ālā* alone can turn every difficulty into ease. This is why a person must continually supplicate to Allāh *ta'ālā* for ease.

3. Eloquence in Speech

Fluency in speech is also essential so that a person can convey what is in his heart in a beautiful manner. If this quality is found in a person, people will listen to him attentively and take an effect from his speech. If not, they will not even pay attention to what he has to say.

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at the important and essential things which Hadrat Mūsā *'alayhis salām* supplicated for before he could go to invite an obstinate and rebellious man like Pharaoh. It is most certainly a beautiful example for forthcoming generations. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone.

An Inevitable Stage of Da'wah

By Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad al-Hasanī *rahimahullāh*

One of the important and delicate stages of tablīgh and da'wah which one has to face is the stage of despair and despondency. Those who are affiliated to the work of da'wah in whatever way continually experience this. It very often happens that despite making an all out

effort in a certain city or region, there is no real success. Sometimes, all the prerequisites and causes of success are found but a terrible failure is faced. Sometimes, an inviter's spirit is broken by opponents, challengers and hardships in the path. He feels it is better for him to become aloof and stay in solitude. However, if a person ponders over the situation carefully, he will realize that these are the natural ups and downs of da'wah which will have to be encountered.

If the purpose of da'wah and tabligh is identified, we will probably not have to face much confusion and mental uncertainty. Behind this despondency and despair is the desire that the extent of work and the level of success which we want must be realized.

In most cases we have this zeal that such and such number of people must come under our influence, the extent of da'wah must be so wide, and the number of our followers and associates must be so much. However, if we think about this carefully, we can conclude that it is not correct. Thoughts naturally come to every person's mind. However, they have no value as an objective, and they must not become an obstacle in one's course of action and realization of one's objective. The Qur'an says in this regard:

لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَن ضَلَّ إِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ

Those who are gone astray can do you no harm as long as you are on the path.¹

If the Hereafter is before us in the true sense, if carrying out the orders of Allāh *ta'ālā* is more beloved to us than our emotions, if the joy of carrying out Allāh's orders and His pleasure are superior and more

¹ Sūrah al-Mā'idah, 5: 105.

valuable to us than the wealth of this world, then the temporary difficulties along the path and the short-term failures as regards the objectives of da'wah will – instead of breaking our courage – instil us with self-sacrifice, enthusiasm and happiness. Furthermore, they will become the means for our rectification, progress and culturing of our selves.

In this regard, there is a greater need for self-appraisal than appraisal of others. The wealth and immediate successes which come with Allāh's displeasure and disobedience to the Sharī'ah are of no value whatsoever to a believer. In the same way, the departure of the greatest worldly treasures which is experienced by obtaining Allāh's pleasure and practising on the injunctions of the Sharī'ah is never a cause grief and worry for a believer.

The entire system of rectification of people, guidance, rectitude, da'wah and tablīgh is for the sole purpose of our own rectification, it becomes a means for our own guidance and rectitude, our ranks may be elevated and our sins may be pardoned. Thus, if we receive this wealth with failure, then a thousand successes can be sacrificed for this outward failure.

If everyone is rectified in this world, if everyone becomes righteous and accepted servants of Allāh *ta'ālā*, if the winds of īmān and conviction blow everywhere, if the treasures of repentance and rectification pervade all places, but we receive no share of it, then it is the same whether we exist or perish.

If we view it in this light, we will realize that spreading and extending the circle of da'wah is not as essential as its stopping and depth.

Wherever we turn today – whether among the Arabs or non-Arabs, the East or West – we hear this call: “Muḥammad has become a rarity and Abū Lahab has

pervaded all”. But does this mean that we must give up the work of da‘wah? That we must give up all hope? Certainly not.

The Qur‘ān is filled with this delicate, essential and important stage of da‘wah. Those engaged in da‘wah and all believers will get as much help as they want from studying the Qur‘ān and reflecting over it. It contains an ointment for every injury, a remedy for every pain, and a comprehensive and satisfactory reply to every question and objection.

وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حَدِيثًا

Who is more truthful in speech than Allāh?¹

Rasūlullāh’s Glad-Tidings to Those Who Are Involved in Rectification When The Ummah Has Become Corrupt

By Hadrat ‘Allāmah Sayyid ‘Alī Maḥfūz

روى مسلم عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه والنسائي عن أبي مسعود رضي الله عنه أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: بدأ الإسلام غريبا وسيعود غريبا كما بدأ، فطوبى للغرباء.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said: Islam began like a stranger and will become a stranger once again. Thus, glad tidings to the *ghurabā’*.

ورواه الطبراني وأبو نصر في الإبانة عن عبد الرحمن بن سنة بلفظ (إن الإسلام بدأ غريبا وسيعود غريبا فطوبى للغرباء، قيل يا رسول الله: وما الغرباء؟ قال: الذين يصلحون عند فساد الناس.

¹ Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad al-Ḥasanī: *Jāda-e-Fikr wa ‘Amal*.

The above Hadīth has been narrated by at-Ṭabarānī and Abū Naṣr in *al-Ibānah* on the authority of `Abd ar-Rahmān ibn Sunnah with the words: “Islam began like a stranger and will become a stranger once again. Thus, glad tidings to the *ghurabā`*.” He was asked: “O Rasūlullāh! Who are the *ghurabā`*?” He replied: “They are the ones who rectify when people become corrupt.”

وفي رواية أنه سئل عن الغرياء فقال(الذين يحيون ما أمات الناس من سنتي). وجملة المقصود منه قد علم بالمشاهدة في أول الإسلام وآخره.

Another narration states that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu *alayhi wa sallam* was asked about the *ghurabā`* so he said: “They are the ones who revive my Sunnah which has been killed by people.” The purpose of this has been witnessed in the first and latter eras of Islam.

An explanation of the above Hadīth is as follows:

Allāh *ta`ālā* commissioned Rasūlullāh sallallāhu *alayhi wa sallam* in such a severe era of ignorance and after such a long gap between himself and the previous Messenger, that there was no sign or indication of the truth which could be recognized. Neither did truth enjoy any authority. Instead, people would adopt as their religion any deviated and baseless view and any fabricated religion on which they found their forefathers. Consequently, when Rasūlullāh sallallāhu *alayhi wa sallam* was commissioned by Allāh *ta`ālā* to go to them as a bearer of glad-tidings, issuer of warnings, inviter and a brilliant light, they combated his good with their evil, and changed his straight path into their fabrications. When he went against them as regards injunctions and the Sharī`ah, and differed with them on the basis of religion, they attributed every type of plot and conspiracy to him, and accused him with various types of lies and slanders. They would accuse

him of being a liar whereas he was so honest and upright that they had never experienced him speaking a lie in the past. Sometimes they accused him of being a magician and sorcerer, while they knew very well that he was neither a sorcerer nor did he claim to be one. At other times they would say that he was a madman although they had no doubt whatsoever about his perfect intelligence and sound mind. When he used to invite them to the One Creator, the all-wise, the all-powerful and the all-knowing, they would reply:

أَجَعَلَ الْإِلَهَةَ إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا، إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ عَجَابٌ

Has he made the worship of so many gods into just one God? This is something very amazing.¹

Whereas they used to attest to this true call at times of calamity:

فَإِذَا رَكِبُوا فِي الْفُلِّكَ دَعَوْا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ، فَلَمَّا نَجَّاهُمْ إِلَى الْبَرِّ إِذَا هُمْ يُشْرِكُونَ.

Once they boarded the ship, they began calling upon Allāh, placing all their trust in Him. Then when He brought them safely to shore, they immediately began ascribing partners to Him.²

When they used to be threatened with the torment of the Resurrection, they would reject the possibility of the Resurrection through proofs which they themselves used to observe, and they used to say:

إِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا ذَلِكَ رَجْعٌ بَعِيدٌ

What! Once we have died and been reduced to dust! This returning [to life] is very far-fetched.³

¹ Sūrah Ṣād, 38: 5.

² Sūrah al-'Ankabūt, 29: 65.

³ Sūrah Qāf, 50: 3.

When they used to be threatened with Allāh's displeasure and wrath, they would object to the authenticity of this inevitable information. They used to say:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كَانَ هَذَا هُوَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ فَأَمْطِرْ عَلَيْنَا حِجَارَةً مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ أَوْ ائْتِنَا بِعَذَابٍ
الْيَسِيرِ.

O Allāh! If this is the true religion from You, pour down upon us stones from the sky or bring upon us any other painful punishment.¹

When Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* used to perform a miracle, they would become distributed into different deviated sects. Out of their obstinacy, they would fabricate tales which a person having the slightest ability of differentiating truth from falsehood will not accept. They ought to present rational proofs for their claims but they have nothing but blind emulation of their forefathers. Allāh *ta'ālā* relates the debate which Hadrat Ibrāhīm *'alayhis salām* had with his people:

إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ. قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ أَصْنَامًا فَنَظَّلُ لَهَا عِكْفِينَ. قَالَ هَلْ
يَسْمَعُونَكُمْ إِذْ تَدْعُونَ. أَوْ يَنْفَعُونَكُمْ أَوْ يَضُرُّونَ. قَالُوا بَلْ وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا كَذَلِكَ
يَفْعَلُونَ.

When he said to his father and his people: “What do you worship?” They replied: “We worship idols and we remain devoted to them all day.” He said: “Do they hear you when you call them? Or are they able to benefit you in any way or cause you any harm?” They replied: “No. But we found our forefathers doing this.”²

¹ Sūrah al-Anfāl, 8: 32.

² Sūrah ash-Shu'arā', 26: 70-74.

Just as these people opted for blind emulation of their forefathers instead of providing absolute proofs, the people in the time of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* did the same. Consequently, they rejected all those things which they feared would bring an end to their rule and authority. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* was out of their norms and customs, and he had brought a system which was in opposition to their unbelief and misguidance. They tried through their planning to shift Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* from his path in the name of family ties so that he may come to agreement with them – even if it is in certain times and situations – and keep him content so that through his agreement with them, they could maintain their weak and shaky foundation. However, when Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* remained firm and steadfast on the truth, held on firmly to what was purely right, practised on it and rejected everything else, Allāh *ta‘ālā* revealed this sūrah:

Say: O unbelievers! I do not worship what you worship. Nor do you worship what I worship. Neither can I worship what you worship. Nor can you worship what I worship. To you is your way, and to me is my way.¹

When the unbelievers lost all hope of convincing him, they initiated enmity, severed all ties, peace-loving people became his antagonists and even his sincere friends became his bitter enemies. Those who were closest to him in lineage became the most distant in their bond and love, e.g. Abū Lahab and others. His most beloved relatives became the most hard-hearted toward him. Can there be any rejection worse than this?

¹ Sūrah al-Kāfirūn, 109: 1-6.

However, Allāh *ta'ālā* did not leave him to himself nor did he allow the unbelievers to gain the upper-hand over him. Instead, He guarded and protected him, and personally undertook to guard him until he conveyed the message of Allāh. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ

Allāh will protect you from the people.

In the course of its revelation, the pure Shari'ah separated those who followed it from those who did not, and distinguished truth from falsehood. But this was done through a unique wisdom, i.e. by reconciling the senior unbelievers with the injunctions of the Shari'ah. Subsequently, the Arabs were reminded of their forefather, Hadrat Ibrāhīm *'alayhis salām* while the non-Arabs were reminded of the Prophets who were sent to them. After mentioning several Prophets, Allāh *ta'ālā* said:

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ فَبِهِدْهُمْ ائْتَدِهِ

These were the people whom Allāh had guided. So you tread their path.¹

Allāh *ta'ālā* also said:

شَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّى بِهِ نُوحًا وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّى بِهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ
وَمُوسَى وَعِيسَى أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا فِيهِ، كَبُرَ عَلَى الْمُشْرِكِينَ مَا تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَيْهِ.

He has placed a path for you in the religion - the very same path towards which He had ordered Nūh, and the order of which We sent to you, and the path towards which We had ordered Ibrāhīm, Mūsā and 'Isā - uphold the religion and do

¹ Sūrah al-An'ām, 6: 90.

not cause divisions therein. That towards which you call the polytheists weighs heavily on them.¹

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam* continuously invited them towards the Shari‘ah. One by one people slinked away from the oppression and transgressions of the unbelievers and joined his ranks. When they learnt of the opposition, their self-respect overtook them and they became the guiding lamps. Some Muslims went and sought refuge with certain tribes. The latter protected them lest they would be accused of concealment, breaking of promises and disregarding neighbourly rights. Other Muslims – who out of fear for hardships and death – embraced their Dīn and chose to emigrate. There were yet other Muslims who had no helpers nor any place of refuge. They had to bear untold hardships, difficulties, various types of torments, death, etc. which would not have been borne by even mountains. Consequently, some of them succumbed to erring while others became mountains of patience and fortitude for which they hoped to be rewarded. Allāh *ta‘ālā* eventually gave them the concession to utter the word of unbelief externally. Some of them were compelled to resort to this concession in order to save their lives while their hearts were fully imbued with īmān. This was also a type of estrangement.

Whatever the open enemies of the truth did, they did because of their ignorance of wisdom, and did not know that the Dīn which Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam* came with is in fact the truth; it is not his own religion. When a person is ignorant of something, he becomes antagonistic towards it. Had he understood the matter and been aware of it, it would have created

¹ Sūrah ash-Shūrā, 42: 13.

harmony and disagreement would have been unheard of.

Thereafter, Islam continued expanding during the life of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and the major portion of the era of the *Sahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum*. This path remained level and straight until some people deviated from the Sunnah path and focussed on deviated innovations. For example, the innovations of the Qadarīyyah and Khawārij. These were matters which Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* had predicted. He had said:

يقتلون أهل الإسلام ويدعون أهل الأوثان، يقرؤون لا يجاوز تراقيهم

They will kill Muslims and spare the idolaters. They will read the Qur'ān but it will not go beyond their collarbones.

This will be followed by numerous sects as predicted by Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*:

افترقت اليهود على إحدى أو ثنتين وسبعين فرقة، وتفرقت النصارى على إحدى أو ثنتين وسبعين فرقة، وتفرق أمتي على ثلاث وسبعين فرقة.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: “The Jews became divided into 71 or 72 sects. The Christians became divided into 71 or 72 sects. My ummah will become divided into 73 sects.”

عن أبي سعيد الخدري رضي الله عنه عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: لتبتعن سنن من كان قبلكم شبرا بشبر وذراعا بذراع حتى لو دخلوا جحر ضب تبعتموهم. قلنا: يا رسول الله اليهود والنصارى. قال: فمن؟

Hadrat Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī radiyallāhu 'anhu narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: “You will most certainly imitate the ways of those before you at every step of the way. So much so that if they were to get into a lizard's

hole, you will follow them.” We asked: “O Rasūlullāh! Are you referring to the Jews and Christians?” He replied: “Then who else?”

The first Hadīth applies specifically to the bid'atīs, while the second includes all oppositions. The proof of this is that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: “So much so that if they were to get into a lizard's hole, you will follow them.” One of the striking traits of every bid'atī is that he invites others towards bid'ah. He encourages those who ask him and others as well [towards bid'ah]. The reason for this is that when it comes to actions and creeds, it is man's innate nature to ask others to follow and emulate him.

This is what becomes the cause of disunity, hatred and enmity between those who practise on the Sunnah and those who do not. Islam had the power of resistance from its very beginning and during its youth. Rather, it was victorious and the Muslims were also victorious. They were in the majority. Obviously, when there are many followers and supporters, there can be no estrangement. As for the others – whether they were on this path or, were on the path but created innovations in it – they did not enjoy such power and authority which could pose a threat or which could weaken the successful and victorious army of Allāh *ta'ālā*. Consequently, the caravan of Islam proceeded with absolute steadfastness, unity and strength; and continued expanding. Anyone who separated or moved away from it was overpowered and vanquished. Anyone who opposed it was expelled and boycotted in society.

Then there came a time when disunity came into the unity of Islam, and its strength was replaced by weakness. This had been predicted. Now the situation was that the one who moved away from Islam increased in power and authority, and the numbers of the opponents increased. There is no doubt that power

goes to the stronger one. Subsequently, innovations and personal desires colluded against the group of the Sunnah. Most people became distributed in different groups. It has been the norm of Allāh *ta'ālā* that those who are on the truth were fewer than those who were on falsehood. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

وَمَا أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتَ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ

Most people are not those who have conviction no matter how much you may will it [to be so].¹

It is also essential for the information which Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* gave about the state of estrangement which will embrace Islam once again will certainly have to be realized. In such a situation, the followers will either be finished off or reduced to a minority. Right becomes wrong and vice versa, Sunnah becomes bid'ah and vice versa, and people curse and castigate the Ahl as-Sunnah just as the bid'atīs were castigated in the past. The bid'atīs wish to unite the forces of deviation and misguidance, but Allāh *ta'ālā* does not approve of it until His promise is fulfilled. This is why all these sects cannot unite against the Sunnah despite their majority. This fact is known to the one who has studied Islamic history and the various changes which it went through. It is essential and inevitable for one group to remain firm and steadfast on the Qur'ān and Sunnah until Allāh's order descends. However, it is essential for them [Ahl as-Sunnah] to constantly remain in a state of jihād, war and defence against the deviated sects and the efforts which the latter make in trying to win over new adherents. Allāh *ta'ālā* rewards them with great rewards for their striving and efforts.

¹ Sūrah Yūsuf, 12: 103.

In short, the Qur’ān and Sunnah have left no room for anyone to say anything as regards the true path. The Dīn is complete and perfect. Happiness is confined to what has been laid down [in the Qur’ān and Sunnah], and every objective and goal must be restricted to them. Anything which is contrary to them is misguidance, deviation, and a slander against Allāh and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, and would lead to one’s loss. The one who holds on to them [Qur’ān and Sunnah] firmly is in fact holding on to a firm rope, and he alone will acquire every good of this world and the Hereafter. The authenticity of this call is based on such proofs and evidences that there is no room for any doubt or misgiving.

However, the person who confines himself to treading the path with this group which Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* referred to as “the vast majority”, bears the qualities which the *Ṣahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum* had, abstains from the innovations which the ‘ulamā’ have explained, and intends to remain steadfast on the straight path, he will automatically find himself a stranger among his contemporaries. This is because customs and norms have taken precedence, and innovations are in conflict with the Sunnah. If this has already occurred in past times, what can be said of our times which are also further away from the era of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*!?

Hadrat Abū ad-Dardā’ *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* said: “If Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* were to come to you now, he will not recognize anything which he and his Companions had been practising except for *ṣalāh*.” Al-Auzā’ī said: “What if he were to come now?” ‘Īsā ibn Yūnus said: “What would Auzā’ī say if he were to come in our time?”

Hadrat Anas ibn Mālīk *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* said: “From among the actions which were present during the era of

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, I do not recognize any of them in you except for your saying *Lā Ilāha Illallāh.*” Those who were present asked: “Why not, O Abū Hamzah?” He replied: “You perform ṣalāh at the time of sunset. Is this how Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* used to perform his ṣalāh!?”

There are many other statements and incidents which demonstrate that customs and innovations had overpowered the injunctions of the Shari‘ah in past times, and as time continued, the situation became more and more serious.

However, the fortunate and inspired person is he who revived the Sunnah, invited towards Allāh *ta‘ālā* and opposed the baseless customs and norms of people even if they claim that their way is the Sunnah way. Furthermore, he did not fear any criticism from such people who claimed that he is a fundamentalist in Dīn and an extremist in actions. This criticism, denigration, cursing and other offences are nothing compared to what was endured by those who enjoined good, forbade evil and acted on Allāh’s Dīn. Hadrat Uways Qarnī *rahimahullāh* says in this regard: “Enjoining good and forbidding evil have left no friend for a believer. When we enjoin good, people play around with our honour and they even find flagrant sinners to support and defend them. By Allāh, they made very serious accusations against me. I take an oath by Allāh that I will most certainly carry out my obligation.”

This is that station when Islam will become like a stranger as it was in the beginning because the adherents to true Dīn will either be non-existent or very few, while the opponents will be in the majority. Now Dīn is only existent in name and form, and it has

become a manifestation of the authentic Hadīth. We ask Allāh *ta'ālā* for inspiration and guidance.¹

Indirect Worship Must be Followed by Direct Worship

Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَ فَأَنْصَبْ وَإِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَارْجِعْ

So when you have finished [your task], devote yourself [to Allāh's worship]. And to your Sustainer turn [all your] attention.²

In other words, once you have completed your efforts of inviting towards the truth and conveyed the injunctions, you must devote yourself to another striving, i.e. *ṣalāh*, remembrance of Allāh, supplication and seeking forgiveness. This is the explanation given by most commentators. Other explanations have also been given but the above one is closest.

The essence of the above explanation is that Rasūlullāh's *da'wah* and *tabligh*, showing the path to Allāh's creation and concern for their rectification were great acts of worship. However, these are for the benefit of the creation in the sense that he had to focus on their rectification and make arrangements for it. The import of this verse is that he must not be content with this indirect form of worship. Rather, whenever he gets an opportunity, he must turn directly to Allāh *ta'ālā* in solitude and beg Him for success in every task. The fundamental objective for which man is created is Allāh's remembrance and His direct worship. It is probably for this reason that finishing the first – indirect worship – is mentioned. In other words, it is

¹ Maulānā Sayyid Ghiyāth ad-Dīn Sāhib Mazāhirī: *Sunnat wa Bid'at* (translation of *al-Ibdā' fī Maḍār al-Ibtidā'*), p. 39.

² Sūrah al-Inshirāḥ, 94: 7-8.

there for a certain need and it can be completed. As for the second task – focussing on Allāh *ta'ālā* – it is something which a believer can never complete. Rather his entire life and all his powers are spent in it.

We learn from this that the 'ulamā' who are engaged in teaching, propagating and rectifying the creation must not be neglectful in this regard. They must have some time reserved for focussing on Allāh *ta'ālā* and His remembrance, as is borne out from the lives of the 'ulamā' of the past. Without this [time of solitude for Allāh's remembrance], one's teaching and propagating are not effective, and there is no effulgence and blessing in it.

The word *fansab* is derived from *nasab* whose actual meaning is tiredness and fatigue. Reference is made to the fact that worship and Allāh's remembrance must be continued to the extent that a person experiences tiredness and fatigue. It must not be confined to the comfort and happiness of the self. Adhering to a spiritual practice is in itself difficult and tiring even if it is very short.¹

An Important Advice of Rasūlullāh to The Ummah

Hakīm al-Ummat Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* compiled an important book titled *at-Takashshuf 'an Muhimmāt at-Taṣawwuf* which comprises 330 Ahādīth. He concludes this book with the following Ḥadīth. We quote the Ḥadīth, its translation, explanation and the special du'a' of Ḥaḍrat Thānwī *rahimahullāh* and present it to the reader as a gift in the hope that the ummah of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* may practise on it, obtain internal and external cure from it, and acquire success

¹ Muftī Muḥammad Shafī': *Ma'ārif al-Qur'an*, vol. 8, p. 773.

in this world and the Hereafter through it. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *ta'ālā*.

عن أبي أمامة رضي الله عنه قال مر النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم في يوم شديد الحر نحو بقيع الغرقد، فكان الناس يمشون خلفه، فلما سمع صوت النعال وقر ذلك في نفسه، فجلس حتى قدمهم أمامه لئلا يقع في نفسه شيء من الكبر. (ابن ماجه)

Hadrat Abū Umāmah *radiyallāhu 'anhū* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* passed by Baqī` al-Gharqad [the graveyard of Madīnah] on an intensely hot day and the people were walking behind him. When he heard their footsteps, it weighed heavily on him. He therefore sat down until all the people passed him. He did this so that no effect of greatness may settle on his heart [in other words, he may not feel proud that people are walking behind him].” (Ibn Mājah)

Commentary

The elders of the path must constantly worry about their personal rectification:

I end this book on the theme of this Hadīth because it is appropriate for the end to contain a warning. This is done so that the warning will awaken the reader into emulating and practising on the knowledge and deeds which this book contains. Moreover, it is also in emulation of the Qur'ān because the last verse to be revealed is:

وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ، ثُمَّ تُوَفَّى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ

Fear the Day in which you will be returned to Allāh and each soul shall receive in full all that it earned. And they will not be wronged.

I therefore state that by pondering over this Hadīth, let alone the eyes of the imperfect souls, even the eyes of

the perfect ones (i.e. the *kāmilīn*) are opened. The error of those becomes obvious who, after assuming perfection, become unconcerned about constantly watching their own condition. It should be clearly understood that when the elders complete their tasks, they should not sit back. Like the novice, they should pay particular attention to rectifying their deeds and constantly fear the changing of their condition. There is absolute good in this. Allāh says:

فَلَا يَأْمَنُ مَكْرَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ

None is safe from the plot of Allāh except the people who are losers.

اللَّهُمَّ أَعِنَّا عَلَى الْإِسْتِقَامَةِ مَعَ الْقُبُولِ وَالْكَرَامَةِ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى خَيْرِ خَلْقِهِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ.

O Allah! Help us to remain steadfast with acceptance and kindness in this world and on the day of Resurrection. Salutations to the best of His creation, Muḥammad, and all his family and Companions.

Men of Da'wah

Hadrat Maulānā Abul Hasan 'Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh* compiled a book titled *Tārīkh-e-Da'wat wa 'Azīmat* which comprises several volumes. Some of the personalities whose lives are detailed in this book are:

1. Hadrat 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz *rahimahullāh* (d. 101 A.H.)
2. Hadrat Hasan Baṣrī *rahimahullāh* (d. 110 A.H.)
3. Hadrat Imām Ghazzālī *rahimahullāh* (d. 505 A.H.)
4. Hadrat Shaykh 'Abd al-Qādir Jīlānī *rahimahullāh* (d. 561 A.H.)

5. Hadrat ‘Allāmah Ibn Jauzī *rahimahullāh* (d. 597 A.H.)
6. Hadrat Shaykh al-Islam Hāfiz Ibn Taymīyyah *rahimahullāh* (d. 728 A.H.)
7. Hadrat Hāfiz Ibn Qayyim *rahimahullāh* (d. 791 A.H.)
8. Hadrat Ibn Kathīr *rahimahullāh* (d. 774 A.H.)
9. Hadrat Ibn Rajab *rahimahullāh* (d. 791 A.H.)
10. Hadrat Khwājah Mu‘īn ad-Dīn Chishtī *rahimahullāh* (d. 627 A.H. or 633 A.H.)
11. Sultān al-Mashā‘ikh Hadrat Khwājah Nizām ad-Dīn Auliya’ *rahimahullāh* (d. 725 A.H.)
12. Hadrat Shaykh Sharaf ad-Dīn Yahyā Minyarī *rahimahullāh* (d. 786 A.H.)
13. Hadrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī Ahmad Sirhindī *rahimahullāh* (d. 1034 A.H.)
14. Hadrat Khwājah Muḥammad Ma’sūm *rahimahullāh* (d. 1079 A. H.)
15. Hadrat Shāh ‘Abd ar-Rahīm Sāhib *rahimahullāh* (d. 1131 A.H.)
16. Hadrat Shāh Walī Allāh Sāhib Muḥaddith Dehlawī *rahimahullāh* (d. 1176 A.H.)
17. Hadrat Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Muḥaddith Dehlawī *rahimahullāh* (d. 1239 A.H.)

I am quoting a short discussion on Hadrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī *rahimahullāh* from *Tārīkh-e-Da’wat wa ‘Azīmat* to serve as an example.

Hadrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī Ahmad Sirhindī

Hadrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī’s revivalist work commenced in an era when there was a complete mix

up of Sunnah and bid'ah, Sharī'ah and philosophy, and Islamic Sufism and yoga. He depicts the situation in a letter which he wrote to Khwājah Muḥammad 'Abdullāh:

There are so many innovations at present that it seems as if the oceans of darkness are overflowing and the light of Sunnah is blinking in this stormy ocean like a fire-fly in the darkness of the night.

Hadrat Mujaddid Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was in the midst of an era in India when the reins of power were slipping from the hands of the Muslims, Islam was being eradicated and the Sunnah was disvalued in the Khānqāhs. An audacious announcement was being made:

The Sharī'ah and Tarīqah are two separate entities. The path and norms of each are different, and their laws are different from each other.

Hadrat Mujaddid Sāhib *rahimahullāh* clearly announced that the Tarīqah is subservient to the Sharī'ah. The Sharī'ah takes precedence over conditions and observations. Practising on a single injunction of the Sharī'ah is more beneficial than a thousand-year's of spiritual exertion. Following the Sunnah is superior to a siesta and remaining awake at night. The practices of the Sufis are not proofs when it comes to the lawful and unlawful. We need proofs from the Qur'ān, Hadīth and books of jurisprudence. The spiritual exertions of the deviated sects cannot bring proximity [to Allāh *ta'ālā*]; they actually take a person further away from Him. Unseen forms and shapes are

included in play and amusement. The imposition of the Sharī'ah can never fall away.¹

After his departure, his sons and khulafā' took up the task whereby hundreds of thousands of people were rectified. This was followed by Hadrat Shāh Walī Allāh Muḥaddith Delhawī *rahimahullāh*, his sons and his students who rendered services to every department of Dīn through their writings, speeches and written works.

We now quote brief aspects from the lives of the latter personalities of da'wah from *Dār al-'Ulūm kī Pachās Mithālī Shakhṣīyyāt* of Hadrat Maulānā Qārī Muḥammad Tayyib Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone.

Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Qāsim Nānautwī (d. 1297 A.H.)

Hadrat Hujjatul Islam Maulānā Muḥammad Qāsim Sāhib Nānautwī *rahimahullāh* established Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband which is really a divinely-inspired madrasah. Hadrat Maulānā Qārī Muḥammad Tayyib Sāhib *rahimahullāh* writes about him as follows:

After 1857 C.E. the power of the Muslims in India was destroyed and there was a complete change in conditions. The greatest achievement of Dār al-'Ulūm in these changing times was that it did not allow changes to take place in the Muslims as regards their Dīn, creed and society. It did not allow them to drown in the changing times. It kept them steadfast on Islamic simplicity and the ascetic characteristic of Dīnī culture. However, it did this with the wisdom that as far as the masses were concerned, the internal limits and lawful leeways which were inevitable in a changing society were not disregarded. However, it did not permit the

¹ *Tārīkh Da'wat wa 'Azīmat*, vol. 4, p. 245.

circle to extend to the extent that the simple Islamic way of life was maintained and the imitation of outsiders in their modern culture and society was not allowed to overwhelm Muslims. Islamic self-respect and Islamic self-defence were maintained. Intimidation and an inferiority complex were not allowed to embed the hearts. The freedom of one's emotions were fully preserved. Instead of imitating outsiders, the desire to make the Sunnah the criterion of life was kindled in the hearts. Through this, the desire for piety, righteousness and purity remained alive in society at large.¹

After Hadrat Shāh Walī Allāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, it was Hadrat Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd *rahimahullāh*, Hadrat Shāh Ismā'īl Shahīd *rahimahullāh*, Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Qāsim Sāhib Nānautwī *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Maulānā Rashīd Aḥmad Sāhib Gangohī *rahimahullāh* who preserved the Islamic spirit and undertook successful measures to advance the Islamic movement. Hadrat Nānautwī *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Gangohī *rahimahullāh* strove tirelessly for creedal and social reformation. They affirmed Islamic issues through rational proofs. They opposed destructive customs and norms. These personalities considered the establishment of Dīnī madāris to be essential for the realization of the lofty ideals of Islamic beliefs, social norms, religious education and training, and political efforts. To this end, Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband was the first to make its appearance. Allāh *ta'ālā* blessed the movement of Dār al-'Ulūm with the honour of acceptance. People from the length and breadth of the country responded to its call. The dense clouds of superstitions, customs, polytheism and innovations which had enveloped India began to dissipate

¹ *Dār al-'Ulūm kī Pachās Mithālī Shakhṣīyāt*, p. 27.

gradually. In their place, people began practising on the injunctions of the Qur'ān and Sunnah. The aims and objectives for which Dār al-'Ulūm was established included the following:

- To teach the Qur'ān, tafsīr, Hadīth, beliefs, theology and other related sciences.
- To convey complete Islamic teachings to all Muslims.
- To serve Islam through rectitude, guidance and propagation.
- To rectify and reform actions and character.¹

Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind Maulānā Mahmūd al-Hasan (d. 1334 A.H.)

Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Qārī Tayyib Sāhib rahīmahullāh writes as follows:

Being the head teacher at Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband is considered to be the most important and most responsible position. The one who held this position is known by the name of Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind Mahmūd al-Hasan *quddisa sirruhu*.

Some people may not recognize the sun, but who in the academic circles does not know this unique personality and his blessings? He was a gnostic in the academic field, a great mujāhid in the practical field, immersed in Allāh in the moral field, a sincere leader in the political field, a man of unique intelligence in the rational field, an unparalleled litterateur in the field of poetry and literature, an erudite shaykh in the field of personality. If we were to assume that Dār al-'Ulūm was the sky, we

¹ *Dār al-'Ulūm kī Pachās Mithālī Shakhṣīyyāt*, p. 56.

could say that its sun at that time was the blessed personality of Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind.¹

Hadrat 'Allāmah Shāh Muhammad Anwar Kashmīrī

Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Shāh Anwar Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was one of the head teachers at Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband and one of the outstanding students of Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind *rahimahullāh*. He was an expert in all the rational and traditional sciences. He was unequalled in his memory. He wrote several scholarly and well-known books. His Hadīth discourses were most popular in his era and enjoyed a special distinguished position. His deep knowledge had made Hadīth lessons into a combiner of various sciences and arts. His lessons – via transmission and narration – left no room for future tribulations. Even today, distinguished and erudite 'ulamā' are by and large his students who embellished centres of learning in India and Pakistan, e.g. Muftī Muḥammad Shafi' *rahimahullāh*, Maulānā Shāh Waṣiyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, Maulānā Idrīs Sāhib, Maulānā Muḥammad Yūsuf Binnaurī *rahimahullāh*, Maulānā Hifz ar-Raḥmān Sāhib, Maulānā Badr 'Ālam Sāhib and others *rahimahumullāh*.

He paid particular attention to the refutation of Qādiyānism. He considered it to be one of the most serious tribulations. He himself wrote major works on this subject and also got his students to write in this regard. He used to lend enthusiastic support to those who were occupied in this work. Hadrat Maulānā Muftī Muḥammad Shafi' Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Idrīs Sāhib Kāndhlawī *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Badr 'Ālam Sāhib Meerutī Madanī *rahimahullāh* took a special part in joining him in his refutation of Qādiyānism. They

¹ Ibid. p. 64.

strove tirelessly through their writings and speeches in an effort to put an end to this tribulation. In short, Hadrat Shāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* spent the last breath of his life in refuting Qādiyānism and was fully occupied in uprooting it completely. This demonstrates his quality of dislike and hatred for Allāh's sake. It is a clear sign of love for Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and a clear proof of his being an heir of the Prophets *'alayhimus salām*. Important extracts from Hadrat Shāh Sāhib's writings and articles on the subject of refutation of Qādiyānism – especially the court case in Bahāwalpūr where he delivered in-depth and academic speeches in proving the blasphemies of Qādiyānism – have been collated in *Naqsh Dawām* which is written by his son, Hadrat Maulānā Anzar Shāh Sāhib. The book presents the views of the elders of Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband on the subject of Qādiyānism in an academic manner. Other related sciences, principles and objectives of Dīn have also come to the fore.¹

Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī
(d. 1362 A.H.)

Hakīmul Ummat Mujaddidul Millat Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* needs no introduction. His qualities were most unique and he himself was a manifestation of the saying: The appearance of the sun is proof of the beginning of the day.

Hadrat Thānwī *rahimahullāh* combined the Sharī'ah and the Tarīqah, knowledge and Allāh-recognition, Dīnī insight and juristical acumen, and was on the pedestal of perfection by virtue of his piety and purity. Observing Hadrat's knowledge, virtue, asceticism and piety used to revive memories of the masters of the past. He was undoubtedly the heir and inheritor of the

¹ *Dār al-'Ulūm kī Pachās Mithālī Shakhṣīyyāt*, p.129.

sciences and blessings of the pious predecessors. Thousands of servants of Allāh *ta'ālā* acquired the eternal treasures of conviction and Allāh-recognition by virtue of the effect of his companionship and blessed teachings. Many of those who were thirsty for Allāh-recognition had their thirst quenched at this fountain of recognition.

Whether it is dealings and social relationships, politics or beliefs and acts of worship – in short, there is no department of Islam in which Hadrat *rahimahullāh* did not render revivalist services. There is no section of Dīn which he did not revive and rectify, and regarding which he did not provide guidelines through his writings, statements and speeches. His written works are to be found on every subject of Dīn. Whether it is tafsīr, Hadīth, jurisprudence, Sufism, recitation of the Qur'ān, philosophy and logic – and many other sciences and arts, Hadrat *rahimahullāh* has erudite and wise researches and unique and matchless achievements for this era.

Note: He rendered the service of da'wah in his own unique and powerful way which could only have been achieved by a reviver of the time. If his teachings are applied even today, they will have a special benefit for the rectification and training of the ummah. In fact, they will enjoy a high status in this regard. (Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān)

Hadrat *rahimahullāh* also established a Majlis Da'watul Haq and laid down its rules and principles. Hadrat Maulānā Abrār al-Haq Sāhib Hardo'ī *rahimahullāh* then advanced this work which is especially active in Bangladesh and here as well, and people are deriving Dīnī benefit. O Allāh! Give it more progress.

Hadrat *rahimahullāh* said on one occasion: When the Madrasah at Deoband was established and its

foundation was laid, Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khān said: “What danger can it pose? All that will happen is a few more *Qul huwallāhs* will be read.” He did not know that this very group [of Deoband] which is like Ḥadīrat Mūsā ‘alayhis salām will cause his sorcery to be reduced to smithereens. Undoubtedly if this group was not established in India, the springs of atheism and agnosticism would have gushed forth all over India. What reason is there for them to not gush forth? However, as per the law of Allāh, this group was a manifestation of the saying: Every Pharaoh meets his Moses, and regarding which Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* had said:

لا تزال طائفة من أمتي منصورين على الحق، لا يضرهم من خذلهم

A group from my ummah will always be helped for the truth. Those who try to humiliate them will never be able to harm them.

Were it not for this promise, their plots and conspiracies were as described by Allāh:

وَأَنْ كَانَ مَكْرُهُمْ لِتَرُونَ مِنْهُ الْجِبَالَ

Their plot is not such as to move mountains.¹

All their plots and plans were focussed on their enmity towards Islam.

However, Allāh *ta‘ālā* promises:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

It is We who revealed the remembrance [Qur’ān] and it is We alone who are its protectors.

¹ Sūrah Ibrāhīm, 14: 46.

This one group was created in the light of this divine protection plan of Allāh *ta'ālā* because – as per Allāh's norm – man's existence has also been made one of the means for the preservation of Dīn. Allāh *ta'ālā* makes mention of a similar promise elsewhere in the Qur'an:

يُرِيدُونَ لِيُطْفِئُوا نُورَ اللَّهِ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَاللَّهُ مُتِمُّ نُورِهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ

They seek to extinguish the light of Allāh with their mouths, but Allāh will perfect His light even if the unbelievers dislike it.¹

The same sequence has been carrying on between the deviates and the guided ones. As for the current corruption-filled and trying times when Islam is surrounded from all sides and all the enemies are grinding their teeth to completely obliterate Islam and Muslims, a false god has made his appearance in the 14th century of Islam and left no stone unturned to completely wipe out Islam and Muslims. It was Allāh *ta'ālā* alone who protected them. Although many Muslim masses, leaders and like-minded maulwīs fell into the trap, Allāh *ta'ālā* was most merciful to the Muslims or else the entire matter would have been rendered upside down. Allāh *ta'ālā* created a group which identified and understood his plots and conspiracies, and apprised the public of him. Although every type of accusation and slander were levelled against this group, it practised on the teaching:

لَا يَخَافُونَ لَوْمَةَ لَائِمٍ

They do not fear the criticism of any critic.

And continued expressing the truth. The provision of such means is a result of the same mercy [of Allāh *ta'ālā*] or else those leaders and like-minded maulwīs

¹ Sūrah aṣ-Ṣaff, 61: 8.

had already decided to shut their eyes and destroy the Muslims. May Allāh *ta'ālā* give us the understanding and intelligence, and may He protect us.¹

Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ilyās (1364 A.H.)

He is from among the distinguished graduates of Mazāhir al-'Ulūm Sahāranpūr and trod the path of Sufism under the tutelage of Hadrat Maulānā Khalīl Ahmad Sahāranpūrī *rahimahullāh*. His elder brother, Hadrat Maulānā Yaḥyā Ṣāhib Kāndhlawī *rahimahullāh*, had taken him to Gangoh where he had the honour of pledging bay'ah at the hands of Hadrat Gangohī *rahimahullāh*. He lived with his brother in Gangoh for 8-9 years and studied there during this period. He went to Deoband in 1326 A.H. to attend the classes of Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind *rahimahullāh* and attended his *Tirmidhī* and *Bukhārī* lessons. He performed *hajj* in 1334 A.H. and settled down permanently in Nizām ad-Dīn, Delhi after the demise of his elder brother. He placed his trust in Allāh *ta'ālā* and commenced the work of da'wah and tablīgh. He worked very hard by day and night and established many makātib in the area. He initiated a programme of public da'wah and tablīgh through house visits. This began spreading with great success. By virtue of his sincerity, Allāh *ta'ālā* blessed him with such success within a few years that tablīghī groups began to be despatched to different areas and regions. This was followed by the work of reformation and tablīgh on a very principled programme in the entire sub-continent.²

¹ *Al-Ifādāt al-Yaumīyyah*, vol. 6, p. 328.

² *Dār al-'Ulūm kī Pachās Mithālī Shakhṣīyyāt*, p. 142.

Shaykh al-Islam Hadrat Maulānā Husayn Ahmad Madanī (d. 1377 A.H.)

When Hadrat ‘Allāmah Muḥammad Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* left Deoband for Dābhel, Hadrat Maulānā Husayn Ahmad Madanī *rahimahullāh* was appointed as the head teacher at Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband in Shawwāl 1345 A.H. He was an erudite and famous Hadīth scholar. His Hadīth discourses enjoyed wide acceptance. He wrote several books on the subjects of Sufism and politics. He remained the head teacher and education head at Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband for a period of 32 years from 1345 A.H. to 1377 A.H. During this period, 4 483 students studied *Bukhārī Sharīf* and *Tirmidhī Sharīf* under him and qualified from the Daurah Hadīth course.

In addition to his services in the field of education, he took an active role in politics. He was appointed as the chairman of Jam‘iyyatul ‘Ulamā’ on several occasions during this period. He was from among the leading members of Jam‘iyyatul ‘Ulamā’ and the Congress. He played a leading role in India’s fight for freedom [from the British]. He was imprisoned several times and eventually achieved independence for the country.

On the whole, he was a phenomenal scholar, a Sufi master, a mujāhid, a brave and determined graduate of Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband. As regards the themes and comprehensive nature of his Hadīth lessons, they were considered to be unique and matchless in the Islamic world. The student number at Dār al-‘Ulūm increased each year by virtue of his greatness, popularity and attraction.¹

Note: He rendered many services in various places in the fields of religion and rectification. He initiated the

¹ *Dār al-‘Ulūm kī Pachās Mithālī Shakhṣīyāt*, p.159.

Khānqāh system and circles of dhikr through which hundreds and thousands of Muslims acquired rectitude and righteousness. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward him. (compiler)

Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyullāh Sāhib (d. 1387 A.H.)

He was from among the distinguished 'ulamā' and Sufi masters of Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband and from among the senior khulafā' of Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī rahimahullāh. His programme of rectification and nurturing was exactly like that of Hadrat Thānwī rahimahullāh. He was first based in A'zam Garh, district Mau and then in Gorukhpūr. He then established his madrasah and khānqāhs in Allāhābād.

Although purification of the souls was his fundamental focus, he continued a programme of teaching and lecturing. He used to teach *Bukhārī Sharīf* and other books. He also had a programme of delivering talks and lectures for which he used to travel to the villages. Many senior scholars and affluent people were reformed under his tutelage. Hundreds and thousands of Allāh's servants benefited spiritually from him and this region [of Allāhābād] was spiritually perfumed through his presence. Towards the latter part of his life he used to go frequently to Mumbai. A group of disciples and associates was established there and countless people came onto the correct creed.

He passed away at sea on 22 Sha'bān 1387 A.H. while he was travelling for hajj. This traveller to the hajj was – in this way – presented to the Lord of the Ka'bah. He was laid to rest in the Red Sea. Towards the end of his life he used to be overcome by emotion and would very often quote the following couplet of Mirzā Ghālib:

We are disgraced when we die. We should
rather drown in the sea so that neither

would our body be carried nor would we have a grave.

In addition to conferring spiritual blessings to thousands of Allāh's servants, he wrote many books.¹

Hadrat Maulānā Hifz ar-Rahmān Sāhib Siyuhārwi (d. 1382 A.H.)

He was born to an educated feudal family in 1318 A.H. in Siyuhārah, district Bijnaur. He was named Mu'izz ad-Dīn and the future affirmed that he was aptly named (Mu'izz ad-Dīn means, a person who brings honour to Dīn). Hifz ar-Rahmān was his historical name. His father, Maulwī Shams ad-Dīn Siddiqi belonged to an honourable, religious and educated family; and had pledged bay'ah at the hands of the famous Sufi master Hadrat Maulānā Faḍl ar-Rahmān Ganj Murādābādī rahimahullāh.

Education

Acting under the request of his mother, his father admitted him in Madrasah Fayḍ 'Ām in Siyuhārah. He also studied a few books in Madrasah Shāhī Murādābād. However, he completed most of the Dars Nizāmī texts at Madrasah Fayḍ 'Ām.

After completing his studies in Siyuhārah, he took admission in the famous Asian centre of learning, Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband. He had the opportunity of studying under intellectual masters like Hadrat 'Allāmah Sayyid Anwar Sāhib Kashmīrī, 'Allāmah Shabbīr Aḥmad 'Uthmānī, Hadrat Muftī 'Azīz ar-Rahmān Sāhib 'Uthmānī and Miyā Asghar Husayn Sāhib. The education and training which he received in Deoband served to increase his capabilities.

Three qualities of a mujāhid

¹ *Dār al-'Ulūm kī Pachās Mithālī Shakhṣīyyāt*, p. 169.

Allāh *ta'ālā* blessed this mujāhid with three qualities which enabled him to be an excellent leader for the Muslims and through which, not only did his own personality gush forth, but also gave a fresh and energetic message to the Muslims of India who had been reduced like slaves. The three qualities which he possessed were reflection, bravery and oratory. By virtue of his ability to reflect and ponder, he was able to understand the demands of the time, his bravery would enable him to put that into action, and his oratory skills enabled him to convey his message.

Hadrat Maulānā 'Abd al-Qādir Sāhib Rāipūrī *rahimahullāh* was conducting an assembly (in Siyuhārah at the residence of Muftī Jamīl ar-Rahmān Sāhib, the deputy Muftī of Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband). In that assembly, he said with reference to Maulānā Hifz ar-Rahmān Sāhib:

I am prepared to give my entire life's dhikr and other spiritual practices in exchange for Maulānā Hifz ar-Rahmān's efforts which he made to save the Muslims during the period of political turmoil in Delhi.¹

His focus was not only directed at the protection of the lives and property of Muslims. Rather, he wanted Muslims to live in their country with dignity as equal citizens. In other words, just as they must be at ease with regard to their lives, wealth, honour and dignity, they must be at ease with regard to practising their culture, religion and religious customs – all these must be protected. Furthermore, they must be free to do whatever they considered to be religious as they had been doing in the past.

He said in this regard:

¹ *Bis Barhe Musalmān*, p. 943.

We are to live here (in India). We are to stay here with dignity with all those rights which are enjoyed by every honourable citizen. We can undoubtedly be wronged but we will never allow ourselves to be enslaved. If we rejected slavery at the hands of the British, we cannot accept slavery at the hands of the majority of India. We will live here as free citizens. This right will be enjoyed by not only Hifz ar-Raḥmān, Abul Kalām and affluent Muslims, but by the millions of Muslims who are in the Indian Union. They will all live as honourable citizens. Pakistan has been established; the issue of justifying it or opposing it is over. All the Muslims of the Indian Union are now passengers on one ship. The pain of one is the pain of all. The humiliation of one is the humiliation of all.

These were the ideals which the mujāhid had adopted and for which he spent all his energies.¹

Note: No sooner the country got freedom, it was overtaken by frightening and terrifying waves of robbery, plunder, killing and murder. However, Maulānā Hifz ar-Raḥmān Sāhib *rahimahullāh* placed his head in his hands and proceeded with a few associates. He then rendered those services which were so valued by Maulānā ‘Abd al-Qādir Sāhib Rāipūri *rahimahullāh* that he was prepared to exchange his many year’s worship and spiritual striving for them. Unfortunately, communal riots are continuing one after the other after independence [from England]. As for the rioting and plunder which took place in September 2013 in Muzaffarnagar, they have blotted all the riots and plunder of the past. The tongue and pen cannot

¹ *Bis Barhe Musalmān*, p. 929.

describe them. It seems as though there is no person in our country who, let alone removing evil, cannot even speak out against it. Every person seems to be saying:

لَا مَلْجَأَ وَلَا مَنجَا مِنَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا إِلَيْكَ. اللَّهُمَّ كُنْ لَنَا وَاجِعُنَا لَكَ. رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ.

There is no refuge and no safety from Allāh except to Allāh. O Allāh! You be there for us and make us for You. O Allāh! Accept from us, surely You are all-hearing, all-knowing.

Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yūsuf Binnaurī (d. 1397 A.H.)

He was from among the illustrious students of Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Muḥammad Anwar Sāhib Kashmīrī rahimahullāh and a custodian of his sciences through whom many of his teacher's knowledge was proliferated. He enjoys a special rank in the academic world. He possessed matchless Arabic and Persian literary skills. He could converse in Arabic without any reservation. He used to speak fluently and flowingly in this language. He had a unique style of writing Arabic. He wrote several books which include a comprehensive and eloquent commentary of *Tirmidhī Sharīf* in which he expresses himself as a Hadīth scholar and jurist. Its Arabic and way of expression is eminent and contains a treasure of facts. His deep-seated knowledge and juristical acumen are both displayed. He travelled to Egypt, Beirut, Syria, Hijāz, Iraq, Afghanistan and other countries. He was the first to introduce the 'ulamā' of Deoband to Egypt. The newspapers and periodicals of Egypt used to publish his scholarly articles with much enthusiasm. This resulted in not only discussions about his erudition in Egypt and Syria, but an acceptance and acknowledgement of it. He used to be

invited with much reverence and respect to scholarly assemblies of the 'ulamā'.¹

We now quote the eye-opening, erudite and important achievements of Ḥadrat Maulānā Sayyid Muḥammad Yūsuf Sāhib Binnaurī *rahimahullāh* from *Nuqūsh Raftagā* of Ḥadrat Maulānā Muftī Muḥammad Taqī 'Uthmānī Sāhib.

The Maulānā's Important Achievements

The most distinguished scholarly achievement of the Maulānā is his leadership in the Khatm-e-Nubūwwat movement. The demand to label Qādiyānīs as a non-Muslim minority had been continuing for many years. Thousands of Muslims made great sacrifices to this end in 1953. However, the official and legislative manner through which Allāh *ta'ālā* enabled this issue to be solved in 1973 was realized under the leadership of Maulānā Binnaurī *rahimahullāh*.²

The Maulānā went to Islamabad in 28 Shawwāl 1397 A.H. to participate in the Islamic Advisory Council where he delivered a very fundamental and short, but comprehensive, speech which turned out to be his last speech.

Sometimes, issues which were not part of the agenda would be touched on in the Council sessions. Some members requested the Maulānā to deliver a speech over television. The Maulānā had agreed to speak over radio but excused himself from going on television by saying: "It is against my temperament." During the same period, unofficial discussions were taking place with regard to the permissibility or impermissibility of utilizing films as a means for propagation after

¹ *Dār al-'Ulūm kī Pachās Mithālī Shakhṣīyyāt*, p. 191.

² *Nuqūsh Raftagā*, p. 99.

destructive and immoral themes are removed from them. The gist of the Maulānā's reply was:

I would like to make a fundamental point in this regard. We have not been imposed by Allāh *ta'ālā* to make people into genuine Muslims in any and every way possible. Yes, we are certainly imposed to utilize whatever lawful means there are for the propagation of Dīn and to exert all our efforts in this regard.

While Islam certainly instructs us to convey the message of Islam, at the same time it teaches us dignified ways and etiquette of propagation. We have to carry out the duty of propagation while remaining within those ways and etiquette. If we are successful in our efforts while working within those etiquette, then we have achieved our objective. However, assuming we do not achieve total success through the lawful ways, we are not imposed to invite people to Dīn by opting for the unlawful ones and turning a blind eye to the etiquette of da'wah, and in this way try to make people adhere to us without any regard for the lawful and unlawful ways of propagation. If we are able to make just one person to stick to Dīn through lawful ways and means while adhering to the etiquette of propagation, we are successful in our efforts of propagation. If we adopt unlawful means and are able to influence a 100 people, then there is no value whatsoever for such a success in Allāh's sight. The reason for this is that when tablīgh is done while breaking the laws of Dīn, it will not be tablīgh of Dīn but of something else.

Films by their essential nature are against the laws of Islam. We are therefore not imposed to propagate Dīn through them.

The Maulānā's Last Advice to All Who Are Engaged in Da'wah

If a person accepts our da'wah through lawful and dignified ways, we will lay down our heart and soul for him. However, if a person is not prepared to listen to anything about Dīn without first watching a film, we are excused from inviting him to Islam through films.

If we do not adopt this stand and we use films as means for tablīgh out of consideration to the temperament of people, then tomorrow women who are not in hijāb will be used for the same purpose. Assemblies of dancing and music will then be used to invite people towards Dīn. In this way, we will be breaking one injunction after the other of the Sharī'ah in the name of tablīgh.

Maulānā Muftī Muḥammad Taqī 'Uthmānī Sāhib sums up as follows:

This was the Maulānā's last speech before the Council. If we were to ponder over it carefully, we will realize that it was his final bequest to all those who are involved in the propagation of Islam, and which ought to be embedded in our hearts.¹

¹ *Nuqūsh Raftagā*, p. 105.

Hadrat Maulānā Qārī Muhammad Tayyib Sāhib
(d.1403 A.H.)

The personality of Hadrat Maulānā Qārī Muḥammad Tayyib Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was extremely broad and comprehensive as regards time and in the metaphysical sense as well. His time-circle extended to 88 years. Even if his early years were removed, it would still be 70 years. It is also very wide in the metaphysical sense because his life encompassed all these angles and corners: knowledge; erudition; insightfulness; broadness and firmness in knowledge; service to Islam; a programme of reformation, lecturing and instruction; a link based on rectification and propagation with the masses; and bay'ah and spiritual instruction. The fact of the matter is that (at least in India) rarely would you find an academic and religious personality who is loved by all, who enjoys general popularity and acceptance, and has the confidence of various religious organizations and groups as enjoyed by him. Together with this, he had the opportunity of serving and advancing a great, exceptional and world-renowned centre like Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband.

It was due to his general acceptance, comprehensiveness and aloofness from discord that a more balanced and unanimously accepted leader for the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (a representative body for various groups, organizations and centres) could not be found from the very first day of its inception until his demise. He remained its leader from the day of its inception until his demise after being elected unanimously.

He had the honour of being from the progeny of the founder of Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband, Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Qāsim Nānuatwī Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. He remained the principal of this august institution for almost fifty years. The institution progressed to such

levels under his principal-ship that those who saw it in its early stages never dreamt that it would progress in such leaps and bounds. He protected and steered this institution during very stormy times. He linked his name and life to the name and life of this institution so strongly that when one thought of the institution, one would immediately think of him, and vice versa. If only he had left this world without the blemish of having distanced himself from it towards the end of his life.

A major peculiarity of man is that he is able to stomach things which are said against him and bear the worst of statements against him. I found Qārī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* extremely magnanimous and strong-willed in this regard. Those who knew him unanimously state that Qārī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was extremely noble-minded, with very sweet character, soft by nature, soft in his mannerisms, and soft in speech.

One of Qārī Sāhib's greatest achievements was that he made Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband the most beloved institution to all, he made it known to the people without any contention, and created a link between it and the people. He travelled to various parts of the sub-continent before partition [of India and Pakistan], and after partition he travelled to Pakistan on several occasions, went to South Africa, England and finally America.

When it came to the rectification of the masses, lectures and spiritual instruction, he followed the style of Shaykh of the era, Hakīmul Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh*. He distinguished himself as an excellent speaker whose talks focussed on da'wah and rectification. Thousands of people benefited from his speeches, thousands of hearts developed respect for Dīn and noble thoughts about 'ulamā'. Rarely would one come across such an excellent speaker and orator, with so many facts and

such an illustrious countenance. When the first glance falls on him, the heart testifies that he is naturally innocent. It seemed as if he did not even have the capability to cause any harm. People take illegitimate benefit from this excellent trait or weakness in such a harmless person, and he also becomes a target of elimination and appointment.

Qārī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was an extremely strong and dignified person, and an embodiment of humility and good character. Qārī Sāhib was a valued member of Nadwatul ‘Ulamā’. Fellow members and authorities at Nadwatul ‘Ulamā’ used to look up to him as a senior pious personality. The last time he came to Nadwah was for the Islamic Studies Conference where he delivered a speech. I also had the benefit of his company in my position as a member of the Consultative Assembly of Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband, and being with him on several occasions. There were times when he had to listen to harsh criticism, but he would bear it by virtue of his magnanimity and noble-mindedness. On one occasion he had to hear a very harsh statement but did not respond to it. Later on, I learnt from some of his close associates that he suffered a fever on account of it.

Qārī Sāhib was a light and lamp from the family of the founder of Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband. While I am affiliated to the family of Hadrat Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd *rahimahullāh* whom Maulānā Nānautwī *rahimahullāh* and Maulānā Gangohī *rahimahullāh* not only had faith in, but loved dearly. A glimpse of this bond can be gauged from the book *Delhi Aur Uske Atrāf* which is written by my father, Maulānā Hakīm Sayyid ‘Abd al-Hayy Sāhib *rahimahullāh* (a former rector of Nadwatul ‘Ulamā’). The author describes his visit to Deoband and Gangoh, and provides details on the expressions of

faith and love in Sayyid Sāhib *rahimahullāh* by the senior and pious personalities of these areas.

Not too long before his demise, Qārī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* came to Lucknow (when he was inconvenienced to come to lay the foundation stone for a certain institution or place). I had the honour of meeting and shaking hands with him. While shaking hands with me, he said: “My heart desires to come to Rāi Bareilly to spend a few days with you.” This in itself is a great honour for me.

Unfortunately, he bid farewell to this temporary abode on 6 Shawwāl 1403 A.H./17 July 1983 and joined his noble forbears whose monuments of services to Islam and reformation of Muslims are to be found throughout India. What excellent companions!¹



From all the above articles, it is gauged that these personalities were certainly “Men of Da’wah” who, through their majestic souls and spiritual blessings, removed the Muslim ummah from the darkness of polytheistic acts and innovations and illuminated them with the light of imān, purified them from evils and made their selves pure and chaste.

At the same time, we must take into consideration the manner of studying his book – *Tārīkh Da’wat wa ‘Azīmat* – as stated by Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abū Hasan ‘Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh*. He writes:

I did not restrict myself to the academic achievements, researches and quotations from the writings of historical personalities. Instead, the spiritual angle of their lives, their bond with Allāh *ta’ālā* and their

¹ Maulānā Abul Hasan ‘Alī Nadwī: *Purāne Chirāgh*, vol. 3, p. 144.

character traits have also been highlighted. Firstly, it is a common characteristic of the early men of da'wah and thinkers that together with their academic achievements and engrossment, they had a special bond with worship and turning to Allāh *ta'ālā*. This has a unique influence on their success and acceptance. Their biography is incomplete without making mention of this. Secondly, it is the right of the one reading this voluminous book and extensive record of history, and a silent study of his effort and time that he must not restrict himself to only obtaining historical facts. Rather, he must also obtain a share of freshness in his heart and soul, and a desire for action.¹

Through the grace and kindness of Allāh *ta'ālā* and the prayers of Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyullāh Sāhib Fatahpūrī Allāhābādī, Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Sāhib Partābgarhī and my father, Sultān Aḥmad Khān Sāhib rahimahullāh and their attention, I [the compiler] undertook to write *Aqwāl-e-Salaf* which contains the spiritual practices, acts of obedience, practical explanations of the Qur'ān and Sunnah, and stories of da'wah of the 'ulamā' and Sufi masters. A considerable amount of material can be found in it. Allāh willing, a study of this book will prove beneficial.

Furthermore, just recently I went to Kashmīr – on the 30th Rajab and 1st Sha'bān 1434 A.H/10 and 11 June 2013. I delivered a talk in Jammū and Kashmīr. The people there, especially the 'ulamā', received me very well. I also obtained a copy of *Shāh Hamdān-Hayāt Aur Kārnamē* which is a biography of a reformer of this region, Hadrat Sayyid Mīr 'Alī Hamdānī rahimahullāh. I read this book with much enthusiasm and was very impressed by his excellent qualities, academic and

¹ Maulānā Abul Ḥasan 'Alī Nadwī: *Tārīkh Da'wat wa 'Azīmat*, vol. 1, p. 10.

practical achievements, and his lofty spiritual conditions. In fact, after reading this book I realized my own unworthiness and it created in me a special zeal for my rectification. I pray to Allāh *ta'ālā* to bless me with success by His grace and kindness. Āmīn.

I then undertook to condense this book which is now on the verge of completion. Maulwī Safiyyullāh Sufi Tadkeshwarī and Maulwī Raḥmatullāh Sāhib are transcribing it. I intend making efforts to have it published. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone.

Specific Guidelines For Each Group

1. Every religious service must be rendered with the intention of obtaining Allāh's pleasure, and this intention must be permanently and continuously renewed. Sometimes the intention is correct in the beginning but changes later on. Consequently, instead of earning rewards, a person becomes eligible for Allāh's punishment.

2. If an 'ālim or shaykh is rendering the service of education and rectification on a personal and individual level, it must be acknowledged. Similarly, if a group is doing the work of propagation in accordance with correct principles, it must be supported and each one must help the other. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَى

Help each other in matters of goodness and piety.

3. Never do anything which is unlawful for the sake of the guidance of others because:

لا طاعة لمخلوق في معصية الخالق

Obedience to the creation is impermissible if it entails disobedience to the Creator.

4. A group must not deride another group which is on the truth for its own existence and progress. At the same time, the retrogression and fall of another group must not be considered to be a step for one's own existence and progress because such a thought can become the cause for the group's own retrogression and fall. Understand this well.

5. A person may be conferred a qualification certificate, position, leadership, or khilāfat only after ascertaining his suitability and capability. Unsuitable persons most certainly spoil the work; they never contribute to it. This is observed. The most important guideline is that a person must be practically active in his task and strive hard for it. At the same time, there has to be academic moderation because – leave alone the masses – even some scholars do not possess this quality. This takes one further away from the task and also causes mutual conflict and disunity.

6. Those who are serving Dīn must consider the lives and ways of the pious predecessors. They must learn about their lives by reading their biographies or listening to them so that no matter what religious or academic service they are rendering, they are inspired to do it in accordance with Allāh's pleasure. The world-renowned book, *Tārīkh-e-Da'wat wa 'Azīmat* of Ḥadrat Mufakkir Islam Maulānā Sayyid Abul Ḥasan 'Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh* is most beneficial for this purpose. In addition to this, his book, *Idhā Habbat Rīḥ al-Īmān*, will prove extremely inspiring. May Allāh *ta'ālā* enable us to study these books and to follow a course of action in line with them. Āmīn.

7. Finally, every group and every individual who is serving Dīn is advised not to be boastful about his services. Rather, he must consider it to be an inspiration from Allāh *ta'ālā*, be thankful to Him, and also fear that it is not a deferment from Allāh *ta'ālā* as

stated in a lengthy Hadīth of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu
'alayhi wa sallam as quoted in *Bukhārī Sharīf*:

إن الله ليؤيد هذا الدين بالرجل الفاجر

Sometimes Allāh enables an immoral person to support this
Dīn.

We learn from this that Allāh *ta'ālā* sometimes takes
Dīnī services from an immoral and sinful person.
However, he will not receive even an iota's reward in
the Hereafter because of his flagrant sinning and
immorality. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*.

We must bear in mind this pitiful condition and make
the following du'ā':

O Allāh! Pardon our sins and mistakes. We
are sinners while You are the One who
pardons. O Allāh! You are virtuous while we
have committed the most serious and
countless crimes. We have remained in the
prison of disobedience for years and years.
We are finally remorseful over our doings.
We have always been engulfed in sin and
disobedience. We have been the comrades
of the self and Satan. O Allāh! We are prone
to sins by night and day. We have been
heedless of Your commands and
prohibitions. Not a single moment passed
without us committing sins, and we never
carried out an act of obedience with presence
of heart. This slave who had fled from Your
court and destroyed his honour through sins
has returned to it.

The following du'ā' must also be made:

O Allāh! I hope for Your forgiveness through
Your grace and kindness because You

Yourself said: “Do not despair of My mercy.” The ocean of Your grace and kindness is shore-less. Only Satan can despair of Your mercy. O most Generous One! My self and Satan have cut off my path. Now it is only Your mercy which can come to my intercession. I hope that You will purify me of my sins before the grave reduces me to soil. O Allāh! Take me from this world with the light of īmān at the time when You remove my soul from my body.¹

Note: Glory to Allāh! What a comprehensive and effective du‘ā’ which ought to be included in one’s practices. In fact, it ought to be made into an amulet for life. May Allāh *ta’ālā* inspire us and bless us with acceptance. Āmīn.

Was salām

Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī

¹ *Pandnāmah Ḥaḍrat Farīd ad-Dīn ‘Attār*, p. 6.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESPONSIBILITIES OF WRITERS AND COMPILERS

قال الله تعالى:

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ. خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ. اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ. الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ. عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ.

قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم:

أول ما خلق الله القلم، وأمره أن يكتب ما هو كائن إلى يوم القيامة.



All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*, salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*.

Writing and compiling is a very intricate and important responsibility. It also has certain rules and etiquette from the Sharī'ah. These must be adhered to so that the pen does not succumb to disrespect and a page is not blackened without verification. I felt I ought to provide the rules and etiquette of this art in the light of the Qur'ān, Hadīth and writings of the pious so that writers and authors may be protected from superfluous, redundant, unimportant and unverified matters. May Allāh *ta'ālā* inspire me and accept from me. Āmīn.

Was salām

Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī

Madrasah 'Arabīyyah Bayt al-Ma'arif, Bakhshī Bāzār,
Allāhābād

6 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1434 A.H.

Rules And Etiquette Related to Writing

سبحان الله والحمد لله، ولا اله الا الله، والله اكبر، والصلوة والسلام على رسوله
الأطهر والأعطر، وعلى أصحابه الذين كلهم أزهر وأنور. اما بعد!

All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*. salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. The first revelation to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* in the cave of Hirā' comprised of a few verses. They are:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ. خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ. اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ. الَّذِي عَلَّمَ
بِالْقَلَمِ. عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ.

Read in the name of your Sustainer who is the creator of all. He created man from a clot of blood. Read, and your Sustainer is the most bountiful. Who taught by the pen. He taught man what he did not know.¹

The words “taught by the pen” are included in this first revelation. It demonstrates the importance, value and position of the pen. Based on this importance and bearing in mind that the pen is needed for writing and authoring, the commentary to the following verses of Sūrah al-Qalam is presented:

ن وَالْقَلَمِ وَمَا يَسْطُرُونَ. مَا أَنْتَ بِمَجْنُونٍ.

Nūn. By the pen and what they write. You are not, by the grace of your Sustainer, a mad-man.²

The letter nūn is from among the *hurūf-e-muqatta'āt* which have been brought at the beginning of many sūrahs of the Qur'ān. The meaning of these letters is

¹ Sūrah al-'Alaq, 96: 1-5.

² Sūrah al-Qalam, 68: 1-2.

known to Allāh *ta'ālā* alone or made known to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. The ummah is prohibited from delving into their meanings.

Hadrat Qatādah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* said that the pen is a great bounty of Allāh *ta'ālā* which He gave to His servants. Some scholars say that Allāh *ta'ālā* first created a pen known as the pen of destiny which recorded the destinies of all the creations. He then created another pen which the inhabitants of earth use to write and will write. This second pen is mentioned in Sūrah al-'Alaq. Allāh knows best.

If, in the verse under discussion, the pen of destiny is meant, it will be the first creation. This demonstrates its importance and greatness over everything else. This is why it was appropriate to take an oath by the pen. If the general meaning of pen is taken – which includes the pen of destiny, the pens of angels, and the pens of humans in general – then an oath has been taken by it because all major works in this world are carried out through it. It is well-known that the pen was more effective than the sword in the conquest of countries.¹

The Reality of The Pen And its Far-Reaching Consequences

A short article titled *The Reality And Power of The Pen And its Far-Reaching Consequences* written by Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth Maulānā Ikrām 'Alī Sāhib Bhāgalpūrī (a lecturer at Ta'lim ad-Dīn, Dābhel, Gujarat) is presented here.

Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

ن وَالْقَلَمِ وَمَا يَسْطُرُونَ.

¹ *Ma'ārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 8, p. 530.

Nūn. By the pen and what they write.¹

Teaching and learning have a major role in distinguishing man from other animals. Man can learn from others and teach others. There are two ways of learning, by the tongue and by the pen. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam fulfilled the duties of propagation in both ways. Verbal propagation was more, and some kings and nations were invited via letters. In this way, the obligation of written propagation was also fulfilled.

The spoken and written word have been accepted as evidence both religiously and socially. The author of *al-Hidāyah* makes reference to this as follows:

الكتاب كالخطاب

The written word is like the spoken word.

In other words, the written word is like the spoken one as regards its acceptability as evidence. The written word holds a lot of importance because it is an excellent way of recording and preserving sciences. It is an exceptional tool for conveying benefit to the forthcoming generations. As long as the written word remains on pages, the writer's name remains alive even after his death. The statements and instructions of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam were reviving the dead hearts while he was alive. After his demise, his statements and instructions which are present in the form of Hadīth are reviving the dead hearts of those who read them, and providing solace and peace to restless hearts. Even today, people can mould themselves according to the noble character of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam and become embodiments of excellent character. Similarly, people

¹ Sūrah al-Qalam, 68: 1-2.

are reading about the lives of the Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum and the Auliya’ and imbibing the qualities of the friends of Allāh *ta’ālā*. In short, the history of the past and latter generations, their conditions and statements, in fact Allāh’s revealed Book, are all preserved by virtue of writing. They will remain preserved for as long as the world exists. The importance of writing is clarified in the Qur’ān as follows:

وَلَا تَسْمُوا أَنْ تَكْتُبُوهُ صَغِيرًا أَوْ كَبِيرًا إِلَىٰ آجَلِهِ ۗ ذَلِكُمْ أَفْسَطُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَأَقْوَمُ
لِلشَّهَادَةِ وَأَذْنَىٰ آلَا تَرَ تَابُوا

Do not display laziness in writing it whether the transaction is small or big until its appointed time. In this there is full justice according to Allāh and the best way of maintaining the evidence, and likelier that you will not fall in doubt.¹

The importance of writing can also be gauged from Sūrah al-Qalam wherein Allāh *ta’ālā* took an oath by the pen. It is common practice to take an oath in the name of something which is great and important. When Allāh *ta’ālā* takes an oath by a certain thing, what doubt can there be as regards its greatness and magnificence?

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam addressed the Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum about four days before his demise. He said: “Bring a pen and ink. I will dictate to you something which if you practise on, you will never go astray after me.”

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam delivered an eloquent speech on the occasion of the Farewell Pilgrimage. Abū Shāh, from Yemen, requested that this

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 282.

comprehensive speech be noted. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* addressed a Sahābī:

اكتبوا لأبي شاه

Write for Abū Shāh.

A Sahābī said: “O Rasūlullāh! I hear many of your talks but I forget them.” Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said:

استعن بيمينك

Take help with your right hand.

In other words, note them down. There is a famous saying:

العلم صيد والكتابة قيد

Knowledge is a prey, and writing it is a security.

When a prey is open, it will flee. It has to be tied to safeguard it from running away. In the same way, the way to safeguard knowledge is to fasten” it by writing.

Right at the beginning of Sūrah al-Baqarah, the Qur’ān introduces itself as a book:

ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ

In other words, the Qur’ān is a compilation of the written word.

A Hadīth states that on the day of Resurrection the blood of the martyrs will be placed on one pan and the ink of the ‘ulamā’ will be placed on the other pan. The ink will outweigh the blood.

The importance of writing can also be gauged from the statement of Hadrat Ka‘b Aḥbār radiyallāhu ‘anhu who said: “Knowledge of writing was first given to Ādam

'*alayhis salām*, and he was the first person to start writing.”

Hadrat Dahhāk rahimahullāh is of the opinion that the art of writing was first taught to Hadrat Idrīs 'alayhis salām.

Anyway, we can easily conclude from all the above that Islam gives a lot of importance to writing, and that people of every era – without consideration to religion and nationality – perceive its importance.

While the importance of writing has been gauged from the above, the importance of the pen can also be gauged. This is because the existence of writing is impossible without the pen. Allāh *ta'ālā* took an oath by the pen: “Nūn. By the pen.” Hadrat Hasan Basrī rahimahullāh explains “nūn” and “the pen” as the pen and ink. A Hadīth states:

أول ما خلق الله القلم، وأمره أن يكتب ما هو كائن إلى يوم القيامة

Allāh *ta'ālā* first created the pen. He then ordered it to write whatever is to happen until the day of Resurrection.

Hadrat Qatādah rahimahullāh says: “The pen is a great bounty of Allāh *ta'ālā* which He gave to His servants.”

The imām of tafsīr, Hadrat Mujāhid rahimahullāh quotes from Abū 'Umar who said that Allāh *ta'ālā* created four things with His own hands: (1) the pen, (2) the Throne, (3) Paradise, (4) Ādam '*alayhis salām*.

The pen is such a bounty of Allāh *ta'ālā* that in its absence, neither would Dīn remain upright nor would the business of the world remain intact. The pen is that bounty of Allāh *ta'ālā* through which a person is removed from the darkness of ignorance and conveyed to the light of knowledge. The first sūrah of the Qur'ān makes mention of the pen:

عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ. عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ.

Who taught by the pen. He taught man what he did not know.¹

People have gone to the extent of saying that the pen is considered more effective than the sword in conquering countries. Abū Hātīm Bastī *rahimahullāh* conveys this theme in the following couplets:

إذا أقسم الأبطال يوماً بسيفهم - وعدوه مما يكتب المجد والكرم
كفى قلم الكتاب عزا ورفعة - مدى الدهر أن الله أقسم بالقلم

When the brave warriors take an oath by their swords on any day, and they consider them [swords] to be the things which bring glory and nobility, then the pens of writers will suffice for their honour and superiority for ever and ever because Allāh took an oath by the pen.

Anyway, the pen and writing are the most valued things in the sight of the scholars. It is the best weapon for the removal of ignorance and darkness from the world. The world was never independent of it nor will it ever be independent of it in the future. This is why this weapon can never be disregarded. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone. I place my trust in Him and I turn to Him alone.²

Hadrat Thānwī's Statement

We now quote an important statement of Hadrat Hakīmūl Ummat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* from *Ādāb al-Akhhbār*.

All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā* and salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. The first point

¹ Sūrah al-'Alaq, 96: 1-5.

² Maulānā Rashīd Aḥmad Sāhib Farīdī: *Namūna-e-Salaf*.

that is necessary to know in this regard is that penning something down has exactly the same rule as saying it verbally. If saying something verbally earns reward, writing the same thing will also earn reward. If it is sinful to say something, it will be sinful to write it as well. In fact, one additional thing happens as regards reward and sin when it is written down. This is because the written word is something which continues and is read by people over a long period of time. Thus, as long as that written word exists and people derive either good or bad from it, the writer will continue being rewarded or punished. It is therefore the duty of every writer to weigh himself against the following criterion before he can lift his pen. This criterion is in reality a general picture of those etiquette which I would like to present to the reader in detail.

The best way and most comprehensive principle to save one's self from religious sin and Shar'ī blame when it comes to writing articles and writing in newspapers is that when a person decides on writing something, he must first ask himself whether it is permissible for him to write it or not. If it is permissible, he may take the next step. If not, he must not taint his hand merely to please people and thereby besmirch himself for the sake of old inauspiciousness. If he is not an expert on rulings of the Sharī'ah, it is essential for him to consult an expert. This is a general rule of the Sharī'ah not only for writing newspaper articles but for every type of written word. It must be borne in mind by every Muslim. We now present a few details in this regard in point form.

﴿1﴾

When an incident entails speaking out against someone or is highlighting the harm of a person, it must never be published until considerable Shar'ī proof

is obtained. This is because it is not permissible to make a false accusation or fabricate a lie even against an unbeliever. How sorrowful! Writers of today are heedless in this regard. Rarely would you find a page in a newspaper which does not contain any of this.

﴿2﴾

It is essential to remember that in order to obtain a Sharī proof, a mere rumour or an article in a newspaper is most definitely not enough. Rather, a Sharī testimony is necessary. Countless experiences as regards all newspapers of today have made this an undeniable fact that many articles and incidents are published in the newspapers while the poor fellow regarding whom they are published does not even know anything about it. This is done wittingly sometimes, and mistakenly and erroneously at other times. Thus, if a newspaper quotes a statement or incident via another person, it cannot be proven according to the Sharī'ah. However, if the incident does not contain a cause to harm, castigate or find fault, then such a weak proof will suffice, it may be quoted and published.

﴿3﴾

If an incident related to a fault or sin of a person is proven through Sharī proof, it is still not permissible to publish it and include it in newspapers. Even in such a case, the Islamic obligation is to speak to the person in privacy, and explain to him out of Islamic concern. If he does not accept after explaining to him and you have the power, you may stop him by force. If not, you must convey the truth to him and thereby absolve yourself from your duty. Apart from the Sharī prohibition of publishing it and humiliating the person publicly, it is proven through experience that instead of any benefit in this, it always proves to be detrimental. This is why

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* emphasised this point in several Ahādīth that if a fault or sin of your fellow brother is proven, you must not disgrace him. Rather, you must conceal his sin.

A person came to Hadrat ‘Uqbah ibn ‘Āmir *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* and said: “Some of our neighbours consume alcohol. I think I should go and report the matter to the police.” Hadrat ‘Uqbah *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* said: “Do not do that. You should rather explain to them and frighten them.” The man replied: “I have already taken all those steps but they are not desisting. This is why I will go and inform the police now.” Hadrat ‘Uqbah *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* said: “Do not do that because I heard Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* saying:

من ستر عورة فكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا مُؤَدَّةً فِي قَبْرِهَا. (رواه أبو داؤد، والنسائي، وابن حبان في صحيحه، والحاكم، وقال صحيح الإسناد - الترغيب والترهيب، ص ١٠٣)

The person who conceals the fault of another shall receive the reward of reviving a girl who was buried alive.

Hadrat Mukhallad ibn Maslamah *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* relates: When I was the governor of Egypt, the guard informed me that a Bedouin was at the door and he wanted to meet me. I shouted out [from upstairs]: “Who are you?” He replied: “Jābir ibn ‘Abdillāh.” On hearing the name Jābir, I looked down and said: “Should I come down or will you come up?” Hadrat Jābir *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* replied: “There is no need for either of the two. I have merely come to you to verify a Hadīth. I have heard that you relate a Hadīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* with regard to concealing the sin of a Muslim.” Hadrat Mukhallad said: “Yes. I heard Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* saying that the one who conceals the fault of a Muslim is as if he has removed a girl who had been buried alive from

her grave.” On hearing this, Hadrat Jābir radiyallāhu ‘anhu mounted his camel and departed.¹

Hadrat Ibn ‘Abbās radiyallāhu ‘anhu narrates that Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam said:

من ستر عورة أخيه ستر الله عورته يوم القيامة، ومن كشف عورة أخيه كشف الله عورته حتى يفضحه بها في بيته. (رواه ابن ماجه بإسناد حسن - الترغيب والترهيب، ص ١٠٤)

The one who conceals the sin of his brother, Allāh shall conceal his sin on the day of Resurrection. The one who exposes the sin of his brother, Allāh shall expose his sin to the extent of disgracing him in his very own house.

In short, even if a Muslim’s fault or sin is proven through eye-witnesses or Shar’i proofs, it must be concealed. He must be advised in privacy because this has been proven to be more effective and more beneficial.

﴿4﴾

However, if a Muslim’s fault or sin is proven by Shar’i proofs and its harm extends to himself, and he is considered to be the wronged party, its evil can be publicized. Allāh *ta’ālā* says in this regard:

لَا يُحِبُّ اللَّهُ الْجَهْرَ بِالسُّوءِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ إِلَّا مَنْ ظَلِمَ

Allāh does not like the evil of anyone to be exposed except he who has been wronged.²

Imām Mujāhid *rahimahullāh* says that this verse means that Allāh *ta’ālā* does not approve of anyone

¹ Narrated by at-Tabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ*, quoted from *at-Tarhīb wa at-Tarhīb*, p. 104.

² Sūrah an-Nisā’, 4: 148.

criticizing or complaining about another. However, if a person is wronged, it is permissible for him to complain about the one who wronged him, to publicise what happened to him, and to expose his wrong to people.¹ However, even in this situation, instead of announcing and publicising it, it is better to mention it before those who can do something about it.

﴿5﴾

If a newspaper contains an incorrect article against someone which is worthy of refutation, then all that one has to do in reply to it is to say: "Such and such newspaper has this to say. This is my reply to it." The personality of the person must not be attacked because it has not yet been proven through Shar'ī proofs that the article is really from that person.

﴿6﴾

An article which does not criticize a person or is not injurious to him may be published provided publishing it is not detrimental to a specific or general advantage of a Muslim. If there is the slightest possibility of this, it must not be exposed to people in general. It can only be exposed to those who have rational and Shar'ī control of the matter. The reason for this is that the person may have not realized the harms of exposing it. The following verse makes reference to the harms of similar gatherings and rumours.

وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مِّنَ الْأَمْنِ أَوِ الْخَوْفِ أَذَاعُوا بِهِ

When there reaches them any news of peace or fear, they popularize it.²

¹ *Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī*.

² *Sūrah an-Nisā'*, 4: 83.

However, a Muslim ought to abstain from quoting it merely as a piece of information. Rather, he must create some religious or worldly benefit from it. The following Hadīth is the traditional proof for this:

من حسن إسلام المرء تركه ما لا يعنيه

An indication of the beauty of a person's Islam is his abstaining from matters which are of no benefit.

The rational proof for this is that a piece of information is not the objective in itself. Rather, it is always an impetus for something else but takes on the form of an objective. The objective is actually an action which is related to the information. For example, you quote this information about a certain person that he donated several thousand rupees to a certain madrasah, masjid or other good cause. Thereafter you pray for the donor's progress and encourage other Muslims to do the same. Take another example, mention is made of a calamity which struck a Muslim group or Muslim individual. You pray for the person, encourage Muslims to do the same, and also persuade them to help him financially. Or, a person has passed away. You tell people to take a lesson from it and to make preparations for their own selves.

In short, daily events and incidents are excellent admonitions but people need to be apprised of them. Hadrat Shaykh al-'Arab wa al-'Ajam Maulānā Maḥmūd Hasan Sāhib Muḥaddith Deobandī *rahimahullāh* rightly said in the following couplet:

The ups and downs of the world are
admonitions from Allāh *ta'ālā*. Listen! Every
change is making this announcement.
Understand it well. Understand it well.

Rarely would you find an incident or piece of information which does not have consequences or from

which religious or worldly benefit cannot be envisaged. However, even if there is such an incident, there is no harm in mentioning it merely to please the soul. In fact, it is – to an extent – required by the Sharī‘ah provided there is moderation in it. Rasūlullāh’s *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* engaging in occasional light-heartedness was based on the same wisdom. Hadrat ‘Alī *radiyallāhu ‘anhū* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said:

أجموا هذه القلوب، فاطلبوا لها طرف الحكمة فإنها تمل كما تمل الأبدان. رواه ابن عبد البر في العلم، والخرائطي في مكارم الأخلاق، وابن السمعان في الدلائل. (كنز العمال، ج ٣، ص ١٣٦)

You should also give these hearts some rest (from thinking and pondering) by searching for light-hearted words of wisdom for them (through which the fatigue of the heart may be lifted) because the hearts also become fatigued like the physical bodies.

﴿7﴾

Themes which are against the Sharī‘ah and baseless beliefs of deviated sects should first of all not be published. If they have to be published out of necessity, a refutation and convincing reply to them must certainly be published in the same newspaper. It must not be left for the next issue of the newspaper because there are many people who will probably not see the next edition. If – Allāh forbid – they fall into confusion, the publisher will be the cause of it.

﴿8﴾

If one has to publish the wrongs and oppressions which have been committed by unbelievers against Muslims, then as long as they have not been proven

through Shar'ī proofs, they may be published in general words, e.g. acts of oppression are being committed against Muslims of such and such place. Muslims must try and put a stop to those acts and help the oppressed Muslims with their lives and wealth in lawful ways.

﴿9﴾

The editor of a newspaper must always be a person who has expertise on all the Islamic sciences, or, at least, consults the 'ulamā' in all matters and has the welfare of Islam at heart. If not, we know fully well that newspapers are very successful tools for the propagation of irreligiousness and lack of restrictions.

﴿10﴾

A book which is detrimental to Dīn, a medication which is unlawful in the Shari'ah or any matter which is destructive according to the Shari'ah must never be advertised, nor should pictures be included in newspapers.

These are a few pleas which stem solely from pain and concern. Although they cannot be expected to be useful in these poisoned times, they are made in the hope that a pious servant of Allāh *ta'ālā* may be inspired to practise on them and rectify the situation. All praise is due solely to Allāh *ta'ālā*.¹

The Pen – A Means of Knowledge

Just recently I had the honour of visiting Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Rābi' Sāhib at Dār al-'Ulūm Nadwatul 'Ulamā'. He said to me: “By Allāh's will, the

¹ *At-Tarā'if wa az-Zarā'if*, pp. 90-99.

work which you are doing through the pen is very concrete and long-lasting.”

He then gave me his latest scholarly work, *Qur’ān Majīd Insānī Zindagī Kā Rehbar-e-Kāmil*, which contains very important themes. He himself writes something related to the pen. A portion of it is quoted here.

The Importance of The Qualities of Knowledge And Intellect

Allāh *ta’ālā* conferred man with knowledge and bestowed him with excellent capabilities over the other creations. He specifically enabled him to acquire knowledge and increase it, and thereby gave him an opportunity to become the most useful creation. Knowledge is the means through which man can learn about the conditions and experiences of other humans. He is able to learn the harmful and useful experiences which others have, and – through his intellect – he is able to safeguard himself from similar harmful experiences and derive benefit from the useful ones. The intellect also enables man to increase his knowledge and helps him to take useful work. These two qualities – knowledge and intelligence – are special bestowals from Allāh *ta’ālā* through which man surpasses other creations.

In the same way, human speech is also a great bounty of Allāh *ta’ālā* conferred on man. Through human speech, the exposition of one person’s knowledge is made before others. He is able to express his intentions and conditions to others. This quality is not found in animals. Their knowledge is the result of their restricted observations. It is very little and confined to their own selves. On the other hand, man can convey his knowledge to others through human speech. This knowledge can then be expanded and conveyed to others.

The Benefit of The Pen

In a similar vein, the pen extends the means of knowledge and makes it more long lasting. It is the pen which makes knowledge and facts which have been acquired over the centuries useful. Allāh *ta'ālā* makes reference to this bounty of His as follows:

الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ. عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ.

Who taught by the pen. He taught man what he did not know.

We ought to know that the bounties of knowledge, the power of speech and the pen have not been given to man without purpose. Rather, man was to be given the distinguished task over the other creations, viz. to run a proper social system on earth. This is why these means have been given to man. At the time when the Qur'an was revealed, it was essentially for the purpose of removing him from the progressive and regional circles and admit him into a loftier circle. It was a time when means and resources appropriate to it were to be sought. Before this, man used to resort to his regional and racial circles in accordance with his likes and desires. He was using knowledge solely for his external and material objectives. By and large, he had been disregarding the knowledge which his Creator had been giving him through divine revelation via the Prophets *'alayhimus salām*. Now, through His final Prophet [*sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*], Allāh *ta'ālā* steered man on a more comprehensive and wider level to that knowledge which went beyond material progress, and which helped him to make him worthy of that desired work and position, which will be the means for his fundamental success and guidance. As per the need for this, the Creator of the universe was giving him knowledge which was suited to this end – knowledge which would encompass all angles of human

advancement and steer him wholly towards the highest level of human life.

This had been given to man previously through divine revelation via the Prophets *'alayhimus salām* in accordance with the demands of their respective eras. But now – through the final revelation which came in the form of the Qur'ān – man was given it in a more wholesome and perfect form. The knowledge which we have been given through the Qur'ān has been presented in a very impressive and lofty style of speech while giving full consideration to man's environment, his mental situations, psychological emotions, demands of his communal life, its challenges and appropriate solutions for it. The difference between good and bad has been shown to man, and he has been given knowledge which would have been impossible for him to acquire through his personal efforts.¹

Arranging of Books, Pens, Ink And Other Knowledge-Related Tools

I feel I have to quote the writing of Hadrat 'Allāmah 'Ali Muttaqī *rahimahullāh* on the subject of the virtues of knowledge and its religious position. The article contains many facts which Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* quoted in his book *Waṣīyyatul Ikhlās*.

اتفق المحققون على أن أفضل الأعمال ما ينفع بعد موته كالبقيات الصالحات الوارد في الكتاب العزيز، والسابعة واردة في الحديث من تعليم، وإجراء نهر، وحفر بئر، وغرس نخل، وبناء مسجد، وترك مصحف، أو ولد. قال: ونشر العلم أفضلها، فإنه أبقى إذ مثل النخل والبئر ليمحي بعد مدة، ولا علم، يبقى أثره إلى يوم الدين. قال: وله أسباب

¹ Maulānā Muḥammad Rābi' Nadwī: *Qur'ān Majīd Insānī Zindaqī Kā Rehbar-e-Kāmīl*, p. 40.

كـتـدرـيس، ووقـف كـتـاب، وإعـارـتـه، وإعـطـاء كـاغـذ، أو مـدـاد، أو قـلـم. العـمـدـة فـيـه تـعـلـيم
عـامـي أو صـبـي المـهـجـاء حـتـى يـتـفـرغ عـلـوم حـمـة، فـهـو لـغـرس شـجـرة يـتـفـرع عـلـيـه أـغـصـان
وأثـمـار، وإعـانـة بـالـكـاغـذ كـهـبـة الأـرض، والمـدـاد كـالبـذـر، والقـلـم كـآلـة الحـرث. (مـجـمـع
الـبـحـار، جـ٢، ص ٤٢١)

The scholars unanimously state that the most virtuous deeds are those which will benefit a person after his death which are referred to as *al-bāqiyāt as-sālihāt* (deeds of enduring effect) in the Qur'ān, and are listed as seven things in the Hadith. They are: (1) acquiring knowledge, (2) causing a river to flow, (3) digging a well, (4) planting a date palm, (5) constructing a masjid, (6) leaving behind a copy of the Qur'ān, (7) leaving behind a righteous child. However, the spreading of knowledge is the best of all because it is most long lasting. For example, a tree or well may dry up after some time, while the effect of knowledge remains until the day of Resurrection. The next point is that there are many ways of spreading knowledge, e.g. teaching, donating a book [to an institute], loaning a book, or giving writing paper, ink and a pen. The best in all this is to teach the masses or to teach a child from the basics until he or she qualifies after acquiring all the different sciences. The similitude of teaching is like that of a person planting a tree which has many branches and it produces fruit. Thus, giving writing paper to a student is similar to giving him a piece of land. Providing ink to him is like giving him seeds. Giving him a pen is akin to giving him the tools for planting.

Merits of The Tools of Knowledge

Do you see how Hadrat 'Alī Muttaqī *rahimahullāh* mentioned the merits of the tool of knowledge together with the merits of knowledge itself. Once the merit of knowledge is established, the merits of the means and

ways of acquiring it will automatically be established. There is a principle:

الشيء إذا ثبت، ثبت بلوازمه

When something is proven, it is proven together with its essential components.

This is why all the tools of knowledge become respectable and worthy of respect together with knowledge itself. What, then, can be said of the rank and position of the teacher and student?

The Benefit of Books

Books are the most important tools of knowledge. They are means for acquiring knowledge, its continued existence and its memorization. If the books are means for worldly knowledge, worldly knowledge will be acquired. If they are Dīnī books, Dīnī knowledge will be acquired. In short, whether knowledge is of this world or of Dīn, books are important means for its acquisition. This is an obvious fact because if there were no books, how much could people preserve through verbal transmission? Furthermore, if a malicious person wanted to make some changes in-between, he would have been able to do it. In this way, nothing – whether related to worldly issues or Dīnī issues – would have been safe from obliteration, addition and interpolation. Consequently, there would be no reliability whatsoever in knowledge and differences would have become common. People who compiled the various sciences in books have rendered us a great favour and made knowledge water-tight.

Look! Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* is not with us. Yet we are able to learn about each statement, action and teaching of his. This is through the blessing of books. Similarly, over 1 400 years have passed since the revelation of the Qur’ān. Despite this, we can still

show which verse was revealed in Makkah and which was revealed in Madīnah. Which was revealed during the day and which at night. Which was revealed in public and which in solitude. How can we do all this? It is by virtue of books. Similarly, Sayyidunā ‘Abd al-Qādir Jilānī *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Khwājah Ajmerī *rahimahullāh* are not present today. Rūmī, Ghazzālī, Junayd, Shiblī, Sa’dī and Hāfiz *rahimahumullāh* are not here today. From among the kings, Jahāngīr and ‘Ālamgīr are not here at present. Plato, Socrates, Bū ‘Alī and Fārābī have also departed. Despite this, we are able to learn about their lives, statements, system of government, speech and researches. All this is possible through books.

In short, together with the greatness and importance of knowledge, the importance and need for books is obvious. Now even if an erudite scholar were to say anything contrary to this, it will have to be explained in a way that leaves no contradiction. I will quote a couplet of Akbar Allāhābādī *rahimahullāh* as an example, and then explain it according to my understanding. He said:

Dīn is not born from books, lectures and
wealth. It is born from the gaze of the pious
elders.

This is a well-known couplet which is quoted by all and sundry. However, if you take its outward meaning, the importance of books is wiped out completely because it seems that Dīn is born from one and only one avenue, viz. the gaze of the pious elders. Someone could misunderstand this and say that all these treasures of books, libraries, study houses, madāris, makātib, etc. are useless and futile. If they have no influence whatsoever in giving birth to Dīn, no one will pay any regard to them and no religious person will have anything to rejoice over from them. Bearing in mind

this misunderstanding, this couplet needs to be explained. This is how I understood it:

Dīn is one thing and *tadayyun* is something else. Dīn is to be found in books. Obviously, knowledge of Ḥadīth is to be found in Ḥadīth books, knowledge of juristical issues is to be found in books of jurisprudence, knowledge of tafsīr is to be found in tafsīr books, knowledge of language and literature is to be found in linguistic and literary works. These are all related to Dīn. As for *tadayyun*, i.e. the practical application of Dīn to come into a person, this comes from the company of a person who is *mutadayyin*. A *mutadayyin* person is one who develops the practical aspects of Dīn within himself. In other words, he has the quality of *tadayyun*. Now this *tadayyun* cannot be acquired without a *mutadayyin* person because *tadayyun* is not the quality of a book, but of a *mutadayyin* person. Thus, the word “Dīn” which is mentioned in the above couplet is not in its outward meaning. Rather, it comes in the meaning of *tadayyun*. Or the word “love” may have been left out and it could mean “love for Dīn”.

Now this is correct to a certain extent because what he is saying is that despite the profusion of books and knowledge, the reason we do not find Dīn in people is that they want to acquire Dīn (in the meaning of *tadayyun*) from books whereas *tadayyun* ought to be acquired from a *mutadayyin* person.

Let me add one point here: *tadayyun* is nevertheless a quality of a *mutadayyin* person. Even the genuine knowledge of Dīn cannot be acquired from books. Our teacher Ḥadrat Maulānā Anwar Shāh Ṣāhib *rahimahullāh* used to say:

A person will not even be able to know how to perform rukū' merely by studying a book. If people were to perform rukū' solely from

studying books, they would have fallen into serious differences. One person would have said one thing and another person would have said something else. There would have been harsh differences on the limit and extent of rukū'. However, all these things have become easy by virtue of observing the practices of the ummah.

In short, the need for books is acknowledged because books contain laws. However, knowledge of the laws is known to the law-makers. Let alone *tadayyun*, even knowledge is to be found by one who has knowledge of the book and the law. Thus, we can neither do without books nor people of knowledge. We cannot do without books because the sciences are codified and recorded in books. We cannot do without scholars because knowledge is not an attribute of books but an attribute of scholars. In other words, knowledge is found in a scholar. This is why it is inevitable to remain in the company of scholars to acquire knowledge.¹

We now quote an article of Maulānā Shu'aybullāh Khān Sāhib about the pen from his book *Hadīth Nabawī Aur Hādīr Ke Fitne*.

The Proliferation of The Pen

عن ابن مسعود رضي الله عنه قال بين يدي الساعة تسليم الخاصة، وفشو التجارة حتى تعين المرأة زوجها على التجارة، وقطع الأرحام، وفشو القلم، وظهور شهادة الزور، وكتمان شهادة الحق.

Hadrat Ibn Mas'ūd *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: Some signs will appear before the Resurrection. For example, offering salām only to specific

¹ Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyullāh Sāhib: *Waṣīyyatul Ikhlās*, vol. 4, p. 21.

people, the proliferation of trade to the extent that women will help their husbands in their businesses, severing of family ties, proliferation of the pen, false testimony becoming common, true testimony being concealed.

‘Allāmah Ibn Barr *rahimahullāh* says that the words “proliferation of the pen” mean that there will be multitudes of books and writers. There will be large numbers of writers and compilers who will write books. There will be a proliferation of books in this way. This applies fully to our times. Every Tom, Dick and Harry, scholar and ignoramus has become an author. These self-appointed researchers write books wherein they present their views and thoughts without differentiating between the truth and falsehood, and lead the masses astray in this way. You find one ignorant fellow writing a tafsīr. Another claims to be a researcher in Hadīth. Another is voicing his opinion on juristical matters and fatwās. Another is criticizing the imāms and leaders of the past in the name of research. Books are given beautiful titles, typeset in attractive ways and printed expertly. They are then proliferated and an unrestrained tempest is caused.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* is speaking about the same tribulation and tempest of the pen in the above Hadīth. As for using the pen for the propagation and preservation of Dīn, and for researching and proliferating Islamic sciences, the Hadīth is not referring to this because this has been coming down to us from the earliest of Islamic eras. The eminent imāms of Islam have scattered millions and millions of pearls of knowledge in various books through their pens, and have also compiled such

books. A single author has authored numerous books from which people are deriving benefit.¹

The Art of Condensing

Many ‘ulamā’ rendered the academic service of condensing books. Bearing in mind that some books are lengthy, people in general cannot benefit completely from such books. Once they are condensed, they prove to be by and large more beneficial.

This insignificant person [Maulānā Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib] translated and condensed the book *Tarbīyyatul Aulād fī al-Islām* which is written by ‘Allāmah Sayyid ‘Abdullāh Nāsīh ‘Alwān. Many ‘ulamā’ approved of it. Furthermore, I also condensed the four volumes of *Tarjumān as-Sunnah* of Hadrat Maulānā Badr ‘Ālam Sāhib Muhājir Madanī *rahimahullāh* into two volumes. The ‘ulamā’ also expressed their approval. A few evaluations of ‘ulamā’ are to be found in both books.

When I came across the book *Man Shāh Jahānam* of Muftī I’jāz Arshad Qāsimī and read the evaluations of ‘ulamā’ in it – especially the evaluation of Maulānā Nūr ‘Ālam Sāhib – I was overjoyed and satisfied with it.

I quoted the entire section on *The Art of Condensing* and the initial section of *The Art of Translating*. I also quoted a code of etiquette so that those who are doing these works [of condensing and translating books] may read it and carry out their tasks accordingly. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta’ālā* alone.

The art of condensing books is quite a tricky and difficult art. A person needs very strong understanding and perception when condensing a subject. The slightest negligence and disregard can destroy the

¹ Maulānā Shu‘aybullāh Khān: *Hadīth Nabawī Aur Daur Hādīr Ke Fitne*, p. 184.

concentration of the condenser. The objective of condensing is to present the core of the subject in the least words possible. When reducing the number of words, it is essential to bear in mind that the original spirit of the subject is not affected. The condenser's objective must be presented in clear words. When putting an end to unnecessary lengthiness, it is crucial to maintain the comprehensiveness, meaning and perfection of the subject.

Removing unnecessary details and presenting the most important facts in a concise manner is an art on its own. The reader can succumb to mental distraction when a writing is prolonged. The more beauty and attraction in journalistic subjects, the more thought-provoking and effective they will be. Ineffectual words weigh heavily on the reader. This is why the objective must be clarified in the least words possible. Generally, inexperienced people cause a subject to become complex and difficult after it has been condensed. Condensing must be enlightening and resplendent. The original objective must be totally clear after the subject has been condensed. The original meaning of the subject must not be wiped out even after reducing the number of words. It must be free from "knots" and "wrinkles".

The most important point which the condenser must focus on is that the subject must be presented in as few words as possible while the original theme must not be lost. While abstaining from allusions, it is better and more appropriate use simple language. Condensing must not be regarded as clarifying or explaining because when the person starts to clarify or explain points, the words become more than the original. Whereas when there is condensing, about two thirds of the words are removed. To encapsulate the entire subject in one third of the words is really what

condensing is all about. However, if they go a bit more sometimes, there is no harm in it because each condenser's style is different from the other's. There are those who resort to many words when condensing, while others are bent on condensing and conciseness.

The first step in condensing is to study the subject deeply and for the condenser to grasp the central theme. This is why it is vital to read the entire article with full concentration. If the article is lengthy, important points must be highlighted along the way so that they would aid the person when condensing the article. While condensing the article, removing superfluous points and compiling the most important points, the person must ensure that he maintains the flow and continuity, and that he creates easiness and gracefulness so that the reader does not perceive any complexity and experiences satisfaction after reading it. These are the marks of a successful condenser.¹

Note: By and large, I am involved in the work of condensing. May Allāh *ta'ālā* enable me to render this service in line with the above principles. Āmīn. (compiler)

The Art of Translating

Translating is also an art on its own. According to Dr. Jones, a British litterateur, a translation entails: "Conveying a thought from one language to another without changing the meaning in any way." When translating, appropriate and most suitable words must be used in such a way that the thoughts and emotions of the original writer are clearly to be found in the translation. The translator must necessarily be focused on the central thoughts of the writer so that there is no difference in the meaning or sentiment.

¹ *Man Shāh Jahānam*, p. 118.

At present there is a lot of elegance in the art of translating. There are many scholarly works in various languages for improving the art of translating. Many universities offer formal courses and training for translating, and diplomas are issued. Efforts are also being made to bring translations in line with modern techniques. Some modern countries have also started using computers as means of translation.

When translating, an effort must be made to translate every word. However, special focus must be given to ensuring that the sentence is not disjointed. Rather, it must be appealing and flowing. Expert translators create such gracefulness and beauty in their sentences that they sometimes surpass the original as regards their excellence and comprehensiveness. It is vital for the translator to bear in mind every sentence and every paragraph of the original writer. The translator may change the sequence in order to create a flow in the subject, but he must never forget that the original author enjoys certain moral rights over him. The more the author's emotions and sentiments are expressed in the translation, the more successful the translation will be. It will be most fraudulent to present glimpses of one's own views in a translation.

A translator will first have to fathom the depths of the subject, understand it well and focus on the central thought of the author so that the translation can be intelligible, precise and effective from all angles. It is obvious that if a translator cannot understand something as he ought to, it will certainly result in a defect in the translation. It is therefore essential for the translator to grasp the spirit of the original. If not, he could encounter several difficulties.

It is a major error to translate by estimation and circumstantial evidence. Sometimes, in their hastiness, newspaper offices read an article on the surface and

translate it via its context. This sometimes results in embarrassment for the translator. Anyway, it is necessary for translators in newspaper offices to be fast so that as much can be accomplished in as little time as possible. It will be better if simplicity and gracefulness in words are considered. When a translation is for a newspaper, newspaper language will have to be used. If it is for a literary periodical, it will be vital to ensure that the language of the translation is in line with the nature of the periodical so that the reader does not experience any heaviness. However, it will never be acceptable to interfere with the steadiness of the subject.¹



The author of *Fann-e-Idārat*, Dr. Miskīn 'Alī Hijāzī, sheds light on certain moral codes. He writes:

1. Truthfulness: A journalist must as far as possible present the truth. In the light of religious teachings truthfulness enjoys a sanctified position not only in journalism but in one's normal day to day life. No matter what a journalist writes or presents, he must be fully convinced of its authenticity. He must sift out all facts and – as far as possible – be convinced that they are correct.

2. Impartiality: No matter what a journalist presents, he must do it with impartiality. News and other journalistic themes are nonetheless related to society and life. Bearing in mind that a journalist is a member of society and is living within the normal activities of life, he may be partial as regards various affairs and issues. He may have his own views also. He may present what he considers to be correct in the form of an appraisal or criticism. But when it comes to news

¹ *Man Shāh Jahānam*, p. 120.

and information, he must set aside views and present the news with absolute impartiality.

3. Respectability: Although incidents which occur in society may be published on the basis of their authenticity, there are many things which are unutterable. Islam teaches us not to proliferate evil and conceal faults. Social values and morals demand that inappropriate, immoral and exposed matters be concealed. Matters of this nature should not even be given a place in the newspapers. Although some people are of the view that in order to cleanse society of evil, the evil and its seriousness must be mentioned. And in this way people will learn of the real situation. However, in practical life, mentioning inappropriate things proves to be more harmful and less beneficial.¹

Journalistic Code of Ethics

The famous journalist and soul of the battle for [Indian] independence, Maulānā Muḥammad ‘Alī Jauhar compiled a code of ethics which he published in his English newspaper, *Comrade*, on 6 June 1913. This code has been appreciated by many. The points of this code are as follows:

1. A newspaper must be pure from personal issues. Neither should too much be written against an enemy nor should one be praised to the level of raising him to the heavens. Differences of opinion must always be maintained within the limits of principles.
2. Nothing must be written with a view to demonstrating one’s power of the pen nor to win the applaud of people. Rather, it must be firm and appropriately serious.

¹ *Man Shāh Jahānam*, p. 155.

3. The objective of a newspaper must be for the benefit of the people. It must never be for the objective of causing harm to another nation. Newspapers must also be free from religious discussions.

4. Newspapers are compilations of news. Authentic and verified news must always be published.

5. An editorial must not be for the mere sake of filling a space. It must be written on an important and recent incident. Hard work, research and study must be put into it. It is expected of a journalist to relate incidents with absolute authenticity. He must bear in mind that the level of authenticity must be so high that a historian must be able to use his writings as bases for the codification of historical data. A journalist is not merely an exponent of public opinion, he is a guide. He must not restrict himself to supporting the masses. Rather, he must steer and teach the masses through his journalistic acumen.¹

Note: May Allāh *ta'ālā* inspire us to fulfil the tasks of writing, compiling, translating and condensing in the light of the above mentioned principles and etiquette. Āmīn. (Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān)

¹ *Man Shāh Jahānam*, p. 275.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESPONSIBILITIES OF POLITICAL PARTIES

قال الله تعالى:

أَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ (سورة الأنعام: ٦٠)

قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم:

ما من وال يلي رعيته من المسلمين فيموت وهو غاش لهم إلا حرم الله عليه الجنة.

(متفق عليه، مشكوة، ص ٣٢١)

الحمد لوليه والصلوة على نبيه وعلى آله وصحبه المتأدبين بآدابه. أما بعد!

I take the honour of presenting a few extracts from *Hujjatullāh al-Bālighah* – the *magnum opus* of Hadrat Maulānā Shāh Walī Allāh Muḥaddith Dehlawī *rahimahullāh* on the subject of political organization. Allāh willing, one will be able to differentiate between correct Shar'ī political organization and the incorrect one. This will make it ease for politicians to identify their responsibilities.

Political Administration of a Country

وهي الحكمة الباحثة عن كيفية حفظ الربط الواقع بين أهل المدينة، وأعني بالمدينة جماعة متقاربة تجري بينهم المعاملات، ويكونون أهل منازل شتى.

Siyāsat-e-madīnah refers to that branch of knowledge which deals with the manner of protecting the bonds and interactions among the residents of a city. By “city” I am referring to a people who live together, have mutual dealings, and are residents of many houses.

والأصل في ذلك: أن المدينة شخص واحد من جهة ذلك الربط، مركب من أجزاء وهيئة اجتماعية، وكل مركب يمكن أن يلحقه خلل في مادته أو صورته، ويلحقه مرض. أعني حالة غيرها أليق به بإعتبار نوعه. وصحة، أي حالة تحسنه وتجمله.

The fundamental point in this regard is that the “city” is treated as a single person vis-à-vis that bond. It is made up of several parts and a collective form. It is possible for every whole [entity] to develop deficiencies in its essence and form, or for it to be afflicted by an ailment. By an ailment I mean a different condition which is most suited to it as regards its category. And by “good health” I mean a condition which makes it attractive and beautiful.

ولما كانت المدينة ذات اجتماع عظيم، لا يمكن أن يتفق رأيهم جميعاً على حفظ السنة العادلة، ولا أن ينكر بعضهم على بعض من غير أن يمتاز بمنصب، إذ يفضي ذلك إلى مقاتلات عريضة: لم ينتظم أمرها إلا برجل اصطاح على طاعته جمهور أهل الحل والعقد له أعوان وشوكة. وكل من كان أشح وأحدّ وأجرأ على القتل والغصب، فهو أشد حاجة إلى السياسة.

Bearing in mind that a “city” is a huge collective unit, it is not possible for its inhabitants to have a unanimous opinion about preserving the path of justice. It is also not possible that some will not reprimand others even though there is no distinguished position which separates one from the other. This will lead to long and drawn out disputes. Thus, the affair of the city can only be managed by a person to whose obedience all the decision makers have unanimously agreed upon, and a person who has supporters and wields authority. The one who is most desirous, most hot-headed, and most audacious in shedding blood and forceful seizing needs a political administration the most.¹

ومن باب كمال الحفظ: بناء الأبنية التي يشتركون في الإنتفاع بها، كالأسوار، والربط، والحصون، والشغور، والأسواق، والقناطر.

The construction of buildings for collective use of citizens, e.g. fences, highways, forts, borders, markets and bridges, are included in the responsibility of protection of the country.

ومنه حفر الآبار واستنباط العيون، وتهيئة السفن على سواحل الأنهار.

It also includes the digging of wells, the drawing out of springs, and having boats ready along the river banks.

¹ *Rahmatullāhi al-Wāsi'ah-Sharḥ Hujjatullāh al-Bālighah*, vol. 1, p. 464.

ومنه حمل التجار على الميرة، بتأنيسهم وتأليفهم، وتوصية أهل البلد أن يحسنوا المعاملة مع الغرباء، فإن ذلك يفتح باب كثرة ورودهم، وحمل الزراع على أن لا يتركوا أرضا مهملة، والصناع على أن يحسنوا الصناعات ويتقنوها، وأهل البلد على اكتساب الفضائل، كالخط، والحساب، والتاريخ، والطب، والوجه الصحيحة من تقدمه المعرفة.

It includes getting the traders to freight grain by attracting them and winning them over, emphasising on the citizens to treat foreigners with affection because this will open the doors for an increase in traders coming into the country, encouraging farmers not to leave any land bare and useless, encouraging craftsmen to manufacture high quality and expertly made items. And encouraging citizens to learn merits such as calligraphy, accounting, history, medicine, and the correct ways of advancing their knowledge.

ومنه معرفة أخبار البلد ليتميز الداعر من الناصح، وليعلم المحتاج فيعان، وصاحب صنعة مرغوبة، فيستعان به.

It includes having knowledge of what is happening in the country so that the corrupter can be distinguished from the well-wisher, the needy one may be identified so that he could be assisted, and a beneficial craftsmen may be identified to obtain his help.

Arrangements For a Country's Defence

The protection of the country and its progress is realized through several arrangements. Shāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* makes mention of four types:

1. The construction of buildings and structures which provide general benefit, e.g. city walls, boundary watch-out points from where the army protects the boundaries of the country, forts (the well-defended buildings in which the ruler's family or army live, like

the Red Fort [in India]), control lines, markets, bridges and so on.

2. Wells to be dug and springs to be prepared for water and irrigation purposes. Lakes and dams be made for similar purposes. Boats to be kept ready along the banks of large rivers for the transportation of goods and people.

3. (a) Grain and other foods are the basic needs of a country. If a country is not self-sufficient in this regard, the local and foreign traders must be used for the importation and exportation of grain. Local traders must be provided with incentives while foreign traders must be attracted. It must be stressed on the local citizens to treat foreigners well so that it increases the flow of foreign traders, and the necessities which a country needs may be obtained.

(b) Farmers must be encouraged not to leave any land barren and useless. They must do as much farming as possible so that not only are the country's needs fulfilled, but it could come into a position where it can export grain.

(c) Not only should handicrafts and trades be proliferated, rather craftsmen must be encouraged to produce high quality and strong goods so that the local products may enjoy a high position in the market.

(d) Citizens must be encouraged to acquire merits and expertise [in different fields] such as calligraphy, accounting, history and medicine. They must be encouraged to develop expertise in the correct ways of progress and foresight. All possible means and incentives must be provided to them for this.

4. The conditions of the city must be observed with vigilance so that the corrupter and well-wisher may be distinguished. People must keep away from the first

and monitor him. The second must be made a associate or he must be won over. It is also essential to win over friends.

By making inquiries about the conditions in the country, the poor will be identified and it will now be possible to assist them. Expert craftsmen will also be identified and the country will be able to benefit from them.

Vital Attributes of a Ruler

The following fourteen attributes are essential for the ruler of a country:

1. Desirable character. If the ruler does not have sound character, he will become a burden to the country.
2. Bravery. If the ruler does not have the quality of bravery and courage, he will not be able to stand up to those who go to war against him. The citizens too will look at him with scorn.
3. Forbearance. If the ruler is not forbearing and tolerant, he will destroy the population with his force and wrath.
4. Wisdom and sagacity. It is only through these qualities that a ruler can come up with beneficial and useful plans.
5. He must be intelligent, he cannot be a lunatic.
6. He must be mature, he cannot be a minor.
7. He must be free person, he cannot be a slave.
8. He must be a male, he cannot be a female. Running a country is a very heavy responsibility which cannot be placed on the undeveloped shoulders of a woman. A woman cannot bear the

responsibilities of government while maintaining her identity.

9. He must be of sound opinion, he must not be a stupid person.
10. He must not be deaf.
11. He must not be blind.
12. He must not be dumb.
13. He must have a strong backbone. In other words, people in general must have accepted his family's seniority, and must have observed his and his forefathers' grand achievements.
14. He must have won over the people's confidence. In other words, they must be convinced that he will not display any shortcoming in rectifying the country.

The need for the above listed qualities are accepted by a sound intellect, and unanimously acknowledged by all people notwithstanding the vast distances between different countries and the differences in their religions. The reason for this consensus is that people realize that the objective behind appointing a leader cannot be achieved without the above listed attributes. If people see a defect in the ruler as regards any of these attributes, they consider him unsuitable and their hearts disapprove of him. If they remain silent, they do it with disapproval.¹

We now quote a comprehensive article on political administration from the book *Ashraf wa Akmal Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam* of Hadrat Maulānā Muftī Muḥammad Sāhib Pālanpūrī.

¹ *Raḥmatullāhi al-Wāsi'ah-Sharḥ Hujjatullāh al-Bālighah*, vol. 1, p. 473.

Shar'ī Political Administration is Based on Mercy

Just as the present Western political system is based on dishonesty, fabrication, conspiracies and deception; the Islamic political system is based on mercy and kindness. While demonstrating the consideration of the injunctions of the Sharī'ah to the situations of a time or era, the learned author devotes an entire chapter on the Shar'ī political system and engages in a very academic and powerful discussion.

What is a Shar'ī political system? He writes:

إنها القانون الموضوع لرعاية الآداب والمصالح وانتظام الأحوال

Siyāsat is a law which has been laid down for the consideration of etiquette, matters of common good, and for the systemization of conditions.

إن السياسة فعل ينشئ من الحاكم لمصلحة يراها وإن لم يروا بذلك الفعل دليل
خبري.

Siyāsat is an action which emanates from the ruler for an advantage which he sees, even if there is no narrated proof for that action.

Going further, a political system can be divided into two categories, a just political system and an unjust one. The Sharī'ah considers an unjust political system to be unlawful while it commands us to adopt a just one. This is that political system which imposes on the oppressor to fulfil the right of the oppressed.

This political system is a part of Dīn. Some of the decisions of a Shar'ī political system do not seem to be in line with the previously mentioned injunctions, but in reality they are in accordance with the fundamental objectives of the Sharī'ah. They are referred to a

political system out of consideration to the definition [of a political system].

إنما هي عدل الله ورسوله^١

In reality it is the justice of Allāh *ta'ālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*.

In short, in a Shar'ī political system, the Dīnī and worldly advantages of the masses are considered and efforts are made to protect them from loss.

A Shar'ī political system is a very delicate issue and any excesses or shortcomings could result in destruction. It requires a lot of intelligence, sagacity and wisdom. If there is excessive leniency, it could result in the usurpation of rights. If there is excessive strictness, it could result in oppression and harshness. This is why Hadrat 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* wrote to the judge, Abū Mūsā Ash'arī *radiyallāhu 'anhu*:

ألفهم ألفهم فيما أولى إليك

Resort to as much wisdom as possible in matters which confront you.

What this means is that the thing which the khulafā' and rulers who are at the head of a Shar'ī political system need the most after knowledge of the Shari'ah is intelligence and prudence.

A Shar'ī political system has to provide every type of ease to Allāh's creation and protect them from every type of harm. This principle is based on the following verse of the Qur'an:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

^١حواله: جامع التعزير الخاتمة في السياسة.

We sent you [O Muḥammad] solely as a mercy to the world.

Some scholars provide the following explanation to this verse:

ومن الرحمة الإذن لهم على لسانه صلى الله عليه وسلم في جلب المصالح ورفع المفاسد عنهم، ومعلوم أن للناس مصالح تجدد بتجدد الأيام، فلو وقف الإعتبار على المنصوص فقط لوقع الناس في الحرج الشديد وهو مناف للرحمة.

The meaning of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* being a mercy is that Allāh *ta'ālā* permitted people - through Rasūlullāh's verbal proclamation - to acquire all that would be useful to them and remove all that would be harmful to them. Obviously, new needs will constantly come up as the times change. In such a situation, if we were to restrict ourselves only to the injunctions which are in the texts, people will fall into severe problems. And this contradicts the quality of mercy.

الأصل في الأشياء الإباحة

The fundamental ruling in things is that of permissibility.

However, when the Sharī'ah considers something to be unlawful or intellect considers it evil, it becomes unlawful. The 'ulamā' provide a few examples in this regard:

﴿1﴾

The Qur'an prohibits us from speaking ill of the gods of the polytheists:

وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ.

Do not abuse those whom they worship apart from Allāh. Consequently, they will begin to abuse Allāh offensively without understanding.¹

وهذا كالتنبيه بل كالتصريح على المزح من الجائز لئلا يكون سببا في فعل ما لا يجوز

This is like a warning, in fact, an express prohibition against lawful joking so that it does not become a cause of an impermissible action.

Speaking ill of false gods opens the door to speaking ill of the True Deity [Allāh], and this results in evil, corruption and mischief. This is why we are prohibited against it.

﴿2﴾

Allāh *ta'ālā* prohibited Hadrat Mūsā 'alayhis salām and Hadrat Hārūn 'alayhis salām from speaking harshly to Pharaoh.

فَقُولَا لَهُ قَوْلًا لَّيِّنًا

Speak to him in a mild manner.²

This is because harsh speech creates aversion and causes impediments on the path of da'wah. This notwithstanding the fact that Allāh *ta'ālā* had convinced Mūsā and Hārūn '*alayhimas salām*:

قَالَا رَبَّنَا إِنَّا نَتَخَفُ أَنْ يَفْرِطَ عَلَيْنَا أَوْ أَنْ يَطَّغَى. قَالَ لَا تَخَافَا إِنِّي مَعَكُمَا أَسْمَعُ وَأَرَى

They said: "O our Sustainer! We fear that he may break forth upon us or go into a rage." He said: "Do not fear. I am with you both. I hear [all] and I see [all]."³

¹ Sūrah al-An'ām, 6: 108.

² Sūrah Tā Hā, 20: 44.

³ Ibid. 45-45.

﴿3﴾

Pharaoh asked Mūsā *'alayhis salām*:

قَالَ فَمَا بَالُ الْقُرُونِ الْأُولَى

He said: "What is the position of the past generations?"¹

This is a very emotional issue because people have confidence in their elders, they are not prepared to hear anything bad about them. Pharaoh's goal was for Mūsā *'alayhis salām* to say something bad about the past peoples in order to stir up the masses against him. However, Mūsā *'alayhis salām* did not allow Pharaoh to realize his objective. He replied:

قَالَ عَلَّمَهَا عِنْدَ رَبِّي فِي كِتَابٍ

He said: Knowledge thereof is recorded by my Sustainer.²

﴿4﴾

Hadrat Mūsā *'alayhis salām* gave this answer under a Shar'ī political system which covers an immense Dīnī advantage. If people were to consider it today, there will be no religious and political conflicts.

It is the same Shar'ī political advantage which is considered to be a part of Dīn and on which the Sahābah *radiyallāhu 'anhum* practised.

إن الصحابة رضوان الله عليهم عملوا أموراً مطلق المصلحة لا لتقدم شاهد الإعتبار.

The Sahābah *radiyallāhu 'anhum* used to consider prudence and wisdom in many matters. They did not have any witness before them in their dealings.

¹ Ibid. 51.

² Sūrah Tā Hā, 20: 52.

﴿5﴾

The Treaty of Hudaybiyah is an excellent example of practising on a Shar'ī political expediency in a collective life. Some of the conditions of the treaty were certainly unacceptable. However, Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam – in his far-sightedness and looking at the future – accepted those conditions. This, notwithstanding the fact that the feelings of the Sahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum were injured.

﴿6﴾

Makkah was experiencing a drought for some time before the Treaty of Hudaybiyah. During this period, the enemies of Islam were assisted in every way possible so that they are not destroyed. Here too, Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam resorted to a Shar'ī political expediency by showing mercy and kindness to them. He focused on future benefits while casting aside the immediate emotions of anger and vengeance.

Caution in Prohibiting Evil

The Qur'an commands prohibiting evil together with enjoining good. However, it adds that when reprimanding and prohibiting could cause a worse evil, we should desist from reprimanding and prohibiting. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

من رأى من أميره ما يكديه فليصبر

When a person sees a hateful thing in his leader, he must bear it patiently.

Zeal and hastiness have caused many tribulations in the Muslim nation. We learn from this that hastiness and lack of planning severely affect the curtailing of

evils. People tried to put an end to evils but caused the birth of worse evils.

Ibn Qayyim *rahimahullāh* relates an incident from his teacher, 'Allāmah Ibn Taymiyyah *rahimahullāh*. It was during the period when the Tartars were ravaging the Muslim lands. He was with a few of his companions and they passed by a few people who were consuming alcohol. His companions wanted to stop them but he restrained them by saying:

إنما حرم الله الخمر لأنها تصد عن ذكر الله وعن الصلوة، وهؤلاء يصدهم الخمر عن قتل النفوس وسيب الذرية وأخذ الأموال، فدعهم.

Allāh *ta'ālā* prohibited alcohol because it keeps a person away from Allāh's remembrance and from *ṣalāh*. These people are such that their alcoholism is keeping them away from murder, plunder and robbery. So leave them to what they are doing.

How much of consideration a ruler or Islamic judge has to give to the conditions of the time, the mindset of people and their temperaments is explained by the author with an incident. A person came to Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and said: "Impose the penal punishment on me." Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

أليس قد صليت معنا؟ قال: نعم. قال: فإن الله قد غفر لك ذنبك أو حدك.

"Did you not just perform *ṣalāh* with us?" He replied: "Yes." Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "Allāh *ta'ālā* has forgiven you your sin or your punishment."

The person was so much affected by this pardon that he repented from his alcoholism and said to Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*: "O Rasūlullāh! I would have considered it humiliating to give up alcohol out of fear for your lashes. Now that you pardoned me, I take

an oath that I will never touch that cursed thing again.”

We learn from this that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam assessed the person’s temperament – that he is a dignified and noble-minded person, and that pardoning him will make a greater impact on him as opposed to imposing the punishment on him. Consequently, this is what happened.¹

We now quote an article from *Insān Kāmil Sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* of Muḥammad ibn ‘Alawī Mālikī al-Ḥusaynī. The original is in Arabic. We present its translation here.

Political And Military Wisdoms

There are explicit examples from the pure life of our master, Muḥammad sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam, which demonstrate his perfect political insight and wisdom. In the light of these examples we can say with what intelligence and far-sightedness he solved issues, removed differing opinions, entered into covenants and upheld them, and if he had to free himself from an issue, he did it in a most beautiful manner. As a result of his sharpness and intelligence, he would acquire spiritual and physical wisdoms, benefits and advantages, evil would be removed, the means would have been provided, and every task would be carried out in a manner that was suited to it. He experienced unprecedented success. His success was so unique that despite carrying out worldly matters, they did not affect his worship, asceticism, humility, piety and mercifulness in any way.

It is a fact that his pure life provides an exceptional guide for the guidance of the Muslim nation and for the

¹ Muftī Muḥammad Pālanpūri: *Ashraf wa Akmal Sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, p. 91.

fulfilment of and adherence to injunctions. This, he demonstrated not only in words but in action. He left behind clear guiding principles and directives which are essential for rulers to adopt. When Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* went to Madīnah, a long time had not passed since the incident of Bu‘āth which took place between the Aus and Khazraj. The old enmity between these two tribes was causing new incidents to unfold daily. To make matters worse, the Jews were igniting a separate fire of sedition. The *Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum* who emigrated to Madīnah had just one fear, i.e. they were under the refuge of a nation which was not liked by their families.

In short, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* had to deal with a very complex situation in Madīnah. However, by virtue of his perfect wisdom and sound planning, he understood the situation and occasion, and grasped the entire situation fully. This is undoubtedly a proof of his acumen and it clearly demonstrates that he was the one to solve every issue. He immediately commenced the work of constructing a masjid and laid the foundations for the rectitude and success in Dīn and this world from the same masjid. Islamic leadership commenced from here, and the call towards Allāh *ta‘ālā* was raised here. All the fundamental political, military and administrative lines were drawn from this masjid. Delegations were received in the same masjid and the system of education was initiated from it as well.

It was as a result of his political acumen that when he saw an absence of mutual affinity among the people of Madīnah because of their differences in beliefs, he laid down such laws in his system where the rights of all people are preserved, they are free as regards their beliefs, and the object of guaranteeing their lives, wealth and honour was fulfilled. All citizens of the city

were made equally responsible to join hands collectively and defend their city from any type of injury. Whether in peace or war, they would guarantee the defence and protection of each other. These rules were penned in a formal covenant which reads as follows:

In the Name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

This is a covenant between the Quraysh and the believers of Yathrib. It also applies to those who are affiliated to the two groups and engage in trade with them. They are all one.

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* then made it clear that the Jews who joined the Muslims will be helped by them, no wrong will be permitted to be perpetrated against them, and the Jews of the Banū ‘Auf are one nation with the Muslims. The Muslims will adhere to their religion while the Jews will adhere to theirs. They are joint adherents to the covenant. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* then made similar agreements with the remaining Jewish tribes.

The covenant added: The Jews and Muslims will each bear their own expenses. If anyone goes to war with the signatories of this covenant, the signatories will join forces to wage war against them. Their mutual relationships will exist on the foundation of well-wishing, goodness and mutual benefit – not on sin and causing harm.

All signatories to the covenant will not be allowed to shed any blood in the city of Yathrib. Neighbours will also enjoy the same rights as enjoyed by the signatories to the covenant.

If any dispute arises among the signatories, a decision will be passed by Allāh *ta’ālā* and His Messenger *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*.

The moment this covenant was signed, the entire power of Yathrib was at the feet of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. The covenant itself demanded that in the case of dispute, the decision will have to be passed by him. The foundation stone for the Islamic state was laid from the moment this covenant was signed.

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam passed judgements on the foundations of equality. Allāh *ta'ālā* was made the authority in the application of the penal code. In other words, the Shari'ah of Allāh *ta'ālā* and Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam was made the source over those who did not promulgate this Shari'ah. This, at a time when tyrant and oppressive forces were totally free to do as they pleased, and were beating the guilty and the innocent with the same stick.

Rasūlullāh's political vision can be gauged from the following incident. A dispute arose between an attendant of Hadrat 'Umar radiyallāhu 'anhu and an Anṣārī during the Banī Mustaliq expedition. The Anṣārī called on his fellow Anṣār while the attendant summoned the Muhājirūn. This posed the danger of an intense fight between the two. The leader of the hypocrites, 'Abdullāh ibn Abī Salūl wanted to add fuel to the fire. Zayd ibn Arqam radiyallāhu 'anhu was seated near 'Abdullāh at the time when the latter said: "Did you see what the Muhājirūn did? They are fighting with us in our own hometown. They are boasting over us about their wealth and property. Their similitude is as described by someone: 'If you fatten your dog, it will bite you.' By Allāh! When we return to Madīnah, the noble people will expel the despicable ones from the city."

Hadrat Zayd ibn Arqam radiyallāhu 'anhu related all this to Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. Hadrat

'Umar *radīyallāhu 'anhu* said: "O Rasūlullāh! Instruct someone to go and kill Ibn Abī [Salūl]." However, the wise and prudent one *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* replied: "O 'Umar! How will it look when people will say that Muḥammad is ordering for his companions to be killed?" Saying this, he immediately instructed the army to get ready to go back although it did not seem to be the time for departure. Anyway, he continued travelling with the army for that entire day and the night. This continued to the morning and also the following day. The intense heat was troubling them and the entire army was exhausted. He stopped, and the moment the army dismounted, they all fell into a deep sleep.

The reason why Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* continued travelling in this way without stopping was so that the people may be saved from falling into the tribulation and succumbing to their anger and wrath.

When 'Abdullāh the son of 'Abdullāh ibn Abī Salūl heard of this incident, he came to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and said: "I have received information that you intend killing my father for the statement which he made. If you intend doing this, instruct me and I will chop off my father's head and present it to you. By Allāh! The Banū Khazraj know that there is no one apart from me who can take revenge for my father's death. This is why I fear that if you order someone apart from me to kill my father, my self will not permit me to let my father's killer to go untouched. In this way, I will end up killing a Muslim in exchange for an unbeliever and be punished in Hell for it."

Do you know what reply the wise, affectionate, merciful and knower of the temperaments of people – Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* – gave?

He said: “No O ‘Abdullah! You should rather be lenient towards your father. We will be with him as long as he is with us.”

This practical political wisdom of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* had such a far-reaching impact that whenever Ibn Abī Salūl committed any mischief [against Islam and Muslims], his people would reprimand him and remind him of this statement of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*.

A major proof of Rasūlullāh’s far-sightedness can be gauged from the conditions which were made during the Treaty of Ḥudaybiyah. The treaty appeared to be humiliating to the Muslims and even ‘Umar *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* felt that its conditions identified the Muslims as the weak ones. However, after some time, the Muslims realized how far-sighted and sharp-sighted Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* was in the sense that the outcome of the Treaty of Ḥudaybiyah completely satisfied the Muslims.

One of the outcomes of the Treaty was that the lives of the weak Muslims in Makkah were guaranteed. The unbelievers’ interaction with them guaranteed their own lives. The unbelievers’ with Muslims, their going to Madīnah, listening to the words of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* from the Muslims, and so on resulted in their starting to embrace Islam.

The conditions which the Muslims had considered to be humiliating became sources of their honour and power. Allāh *ta‘ālā* humiliated the polytheists in everything from which they desired honour, and defeat in whatever they felt was their victory. Honour belongs to Allāh, His Messenger and the Muslims.¹

¹ *Insān Kāmil Ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, p. 348.



The last major work of Hadrat Hakīm al-Islam Qārī Muhammad Tayyib Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was his book, *Maqāmāt Muqaddasah Aur Islām Kā Ijtimā'ī Nizām*. He discusses the holy lands of Makkah, al-Quds, Mt. Sinai, their universal centrality, the foundations of their sanctity, their far-reaching effects, and the obligations which we owe to these lands. He speaks about the universal Islamic movement and analyzes it in the light of traditional proofs, rational testimonies and natural demands. He makes it clear that the present retrogression of Muslims can neither be cleared nor can they enjoy peace without resorting to the centrality of the holy lands. We now quote a few points on the political system from this book.

The Sharī Position of The Political System in Islam

It has been – to a certain extent – made clear that Islam is a comprehensive and communal religion. The course of life which Islam presents is not confined to the mutual relationship between the Creator and the creation. Rather, complete guidelines have been given for the civilization and civics of human society, their mutual cooperation and support, the paving of political and social relationships, and their stabilization in a natural system.

It entails a complete political system, a system of leadership, a consultative parliament, the criteria for electing members, principles for establishing personalities, deterrents for preventing domestic troubles, the penal code together with the rules of retaliation, defence from outside attacks, military power for expanding of boundaries, and also jihād and waging war. In short, together with spiritual and moral culturing and training, a material and political system, and a system of power and authority for these two

[material and political systems] has also been laid down. This is not just a fragmental part of Islam but an intrinsic part of it. All the parts of Islam – whether norms or worship, society or livelihood, civilization or religiosity, peace or war – have been encapsulated in a purely communal and organizational colour and presented in that way. But, provided they are accompanied by morals and character, and spirituality and a bond with Allāh *ta'ālā*. To put it in another way, Islam has not laid down any political system or organizational programme which is separate from Dīn and whose nature is different and aloof from Dīn. Rather, Dīn itself has been made a political and communal system whose political temperament takes on the same colour as that of worship, which – together with force and power, there is kindness and loyalty; with power and authority there is humility for Allāh's sake and rectitude – are mixed and part of the same temperament.

Allāh *ta'ālā* laid down such a form and appearance for this Dīn that whenever Dīn and its departments are established in their original colours, they would result in communalism and politics, and a universal social system will be established. Thus, its every political action is religion, and every religiosity is a political action. We can therefore say that politics is not a part of Islam but is Islam in its entirety. In other words, collectivism and inclusiveness are its distinguishing peculiarities which, if they are separated from Islam, will entail separation from Islam itself and a rejection of Islam. This reality has been expounded in a Hadīth related in *Musnad Dārimī*:

لا إسلام إلا بجماعة، ولا جماعة إلا بإمارة، ولا إمارة إلا بطاعة

There is no Islam without a collective group, there is no collective group without a leadership, and there is no leadership without obedience.

Consequently, this group, leadership and rule are not confined to the countries and regions of Islam but found in our domestic lives, while on a journey, when at home, and even in our acts of worship. To hear and obey are not restricted to the government and jihād, rather, they are to be found in society and in all moral dealings. Books dealing with this topic are filled with details in this regard.

Anyway, since the whole of Islam is filled with political administration and its moral system has taken on the splendour of kingship, it was inevitable that together with a centre of worship and devotional qiblah [Makkah and the Ka'bah], there had to be a political centre and an organizational qiblah at which all the political ups and downs end, and from which the shields of Islamic power flow. At the same time, bearing in mind that the Islamic political system is not one of pomp and show, rather it is dyed and immersed in Dīn and religiosity, wherein every part of it is dyed in the colours of Dīn and Allāh-worship, this sanctified political system had to have a sanctified centre which – on the basis of its local peculiarities and geographical distinctions – wherever it had the capability of becoming the international political centre, it also had to encompass an extraordinary Dīnī and religious pull and attraction.¹

The Cunning Plot of The Enemies of Islam

The enemies of Islam understood this secret and were trying to forever paralyze the Muslims' superficial

¹ Hadrat Qārī Muḥammad Tayyib Sāhib: Maqāmāt Muqaddasah Aur Islām Kā Ijtimā'ī Nizām, p. 618.

authority over these centres so that these fountains – each of a special type – which are gushing forth all over the Muslim world and spreading throughout humanity may be dried up. The sly foxes of Europe did not try to attack Islam or its Islamic centres directly because they could not succeed in this. Instead, they distracted the inhabitants of these sanctified lands with the toys of Western society and materialism. They incited their psychological and sexual inclinations and diverted them with the attractions of Western goods and commodities. This naturally resulted in their becoming enamoured by Western civilization and material advances, and getting lost in their society. They became infatuated by the colourful attractions of technological advances, and became engrossed in trying to mould their lives around them. This eventually led to changes in their views and opinions. Their Dīnī and religious values started to slacken. The respect for the salient features of Allāh *ta'ālā* gradually decreased and their thirst was now quenched by the glitters of outward forms, designs and fashions. In this way, they were first made into worshippers of the West and distanced from Islamic mores and values. In this way, the enemies of Islam who would have carried out their objectives with their own hands now accomplished them at the hands of the Muslims themselves. Now, the very people [Muslims] who are inhabiting these sanctified lands are striving to see whether Europe has surpassed them in this materialistic field or they [Muslims] have beaten them to it.

Another dark angle to this cunning plot is that instead of the Muslims understanding the technological advances of Europe and surpassing them as competitors in this field and presenting their own goals and objectives to them [West], they confined themselves to practical use of those advances, and sacrificed their own views, ideas and even beliefs to them. They also

became mentally enslaved to the West. Consequently, the intellectual and creedal capital of the Muslims gradually became lost. Eventually, the religious central importance of the original centres to which their international dignity was linked no longer remained in the minds. In this way, their international forces became incapacitated and their religious unity was shred to bits. While combating their sly adversaries, they became their friends and antagonized their own people.

وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

Satan beautified for them that which they were doing.¹

The first way in which these Western efforts poisoned the hearts and minds of Muslims and proved to be destructive and a serious tribulation was that it removed from their hearts and minds the harmony between religion and politics. This separated religion from politics and both became susceptible to weakness and emaciation. Neither did religion remain preserved nor did politics continue. In fact, the expression of the Christians: “Render unto God what is God’s and unto Caesar what is Caesar’s” became embedded in the Muslims as well. Muslims remained prone to this tribulation for a long time and the foundations of Muslim territories continued to be excavated. The self-autonomy of the sanctified lands themselves was to a large extent destroyed. The other Muslim regions were affected by this according to their own rank and position.

They did awaken to a certain extent, initiated freedom movements and also sang the slogans of harmony between religion and politics. However, they had before

¹ Sūrah al-An‘ām, 6: 43.

them only the Western political system which is advanced in the name of land and geography. They therefore began proving that this was the twin brother of religion whereas a political system of this nature is not even remotely connected to religiosity. The Western political system is based on diplomacy while the Islamic political system is based on honesty, sincerity and morality. The objective of the former is materialism while the latter's is spiritualism. The goal of the former is position and authority while the latter's is for Allāh's authority to reign supreme. The aim of the worldly political system is to dispute for one's continued existence, resulting in a proliferation of disputes and fights. The hallmark of the Islamic political system is to obliterate one's self for one's continued existence [in the Hereafter], resulting in peace and tranquillity spreading in the world. Obviously when two conflicting things become one, the only outcome will be that both will cease to exist. The consequence of this is that religion becomes weak without its political system, and a political system devoid of religion will be susceptible to oppression and tyranny. Kingship remains and khilāfat disappears.

Anyway, the slogans of keeping religion separate from politics resulted in Muslims remaining suppressed, and their claims that religion and politics were one also did not permit them to move forward. The reason for this was an absence of a mental focus in both cases. The Dīn which was removed from politics was a Dīnī political system, so Dīn was left discarded. As for the political system which was attached to Dīn, it was a problem-prone superficial system. Thus, the land became one of tyranny and oppression, and nothing could remain upright on its own.

Islam is undoubtedly a compendium of religiosity and politics. Dīn cannot be separated from politics, nor can

politics be separated from Dīn. Islam considers politics to be religion, and religion to be politics. Islam's fundamental claim is:

لا إسلام إلا بجماعة

There can be no Islam without a group.

This in itself clearly means:

لا جماعة إلا بالإسلام

There can be no group without Islam.

Islam opened the doors of leadership, khilāfat, hearing and obedience together with the doors of ṣalāh and fasting. It says that jihād and retribution are essential elements of Dīn and are eligible for reward in the Hereafter just as spiritual exertion and striving on the self are. However, just as Islam holds a distinguished position over all religions, its political system is also a distinguished and genuine system. It holds its own unique identity from the superficial [man-made] political systems.

Obviously, Dīn can only come up with its own political system, not with the political systems of self-opinionated people. Thus, only when the political system of Dīn comes forward, will Dīn progress. And only when Dīn moves forward will its political system come to the fore. Separating one from the other or pairing one with a foreign system will neither enable Dīn to triumph nor a political system. Thus, Muslim can only establish their Dīn with its political system. And this political system can only rise from its centres. Whether these centres are of Dīn and worship or of war and politics, as long as they do not come forward with a centrality, a genuine system of Dīn and politics cannot be established. This is why the Sharī'ah accorded a central role to these three centres and gave guidelines

which are suited to each one so that these centres can realize their objectives without outside participation and without foreign influence, and fulfil their goals which have been attached to them in a natural and Shar'ī sense.¹

The Lamentable Condition of Politics

The fact of the matter is that a genuine political service is a very blessed service to mankind, but very severe shortcomings are found in it. This is why the politics of today are the most maligned of all evils. The reason for this is that there is no question of service to mankind, there is no will and no intention to serve humanity. Rather, it is taken to be a means for acquiring personal benefits such as power and wealth. No matter how much of another's life and wealth is destroyed in the process, there is no consideration of it whatsoever. In fact, the politics of today are based on oppression, tyranny and injustice. This is why corruption and evil have pervaded the entire world. There is no one to feel sorry for the deplorable situation of the oppressed and no one to respond to the cries of the downtrodden.

We now quote a few extracts from *Islām Aur Siyāsī Nazriyāt* of Hadrat Maulānā Muftī Taqī 'Uthmānī Sāhib.

The Mutual Bond Between Islam And Politics

The Position of Politics in Islam

Nowadays there are two views to Islam and politics, and both are on extremes. One is of secularism which believes that like other religions, Islam is a personal and individual affair of man, and affects man's personal life. It has nothing to do with politics and governing. This view was adopted as a repercussion

¹ Hadrat Qārī Muḥammad Tayyib Sāhib: *Maqāmāt Muqaddasah Aur Islām Kā Ijtimā'ī Nizām*, p. 661.

after the evils of Christian theocracy were exposed. Secularism was accepted in the world after the prevalence of democracy. This view was further strengthened from the actions of certain religious circles that not only confined all their efforts to beliefs, acts of worship and – at the most - moral reformation, but criticized those who went beyond this circle and became involved in certain political activities. [The criticism which was levelled against them was] why should a religious person soil himself in politics? This view actually developed after basing Islam on other religions, whereas such a comparison is absolutely wrong. Islamic guidelines and teachings are not restricted to beliefs, acts of worship and morals. Rather, Islam gives us very important rulings on monetary dealings, politics and governing without which a complete picture of Islam is not possible. Allāh willing, some of these injunctions will be detailed further on.

Some people adopted the other extreme of rejecting secularism with such severity that they made politics alone the sole objective of Islam. In other words, they said that the sole purpose and goal of Islam is to establish a just political system in the world, and that all other injunctions of Islam are subservient to this fundamental objective. Therefore, the one who is working for the supremacy of Islam in the field of politics is the only one who has found the fundamental objective of Islam. As for those who move away from politics and occupy themselves in rectification of the self, education, propagation or rectification of society; and have nothing to do with politics are narrow-minded and oblivious to the fundamental objective of Islam.

These are two extreme views which are based on ignorance of the real status of politics in Islam. The fact of the matter is that Islamic guidelines, teachings and

rules of life apply to every department of life which includes politics. However, it is also incorrect to consider politics to be the fundamental objective and subjugate all other injunctions to it. This could be understood from the following example. Islam has provided many detailed injunctions for trade and business. However, if a person says that trade is the fundamental objective of Islam, it will be absolutely wrong. Or, Islam has detailed rules and regulations for marriage. But, based on these rules and regulations, it can never be said that marriage is the fundamental objective of Islam. In exactly the same way, Islam lays down fundamental guidelines and rulings related to politics, but – based on these guidelines and rulings – one cannot say that this is the fundamental objective of Islam.

Allāh *ta'ālā* clearly explains the purpose behind man's creation:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

I created jinn and man solely for My worship.¹

Worship means servitude, and servitude includes all lawful ways of worship, and obedience to Allāh *ta'ālā* in all matters of life. The word *'ibādat* (worship) is derived from *'abd* which literally means “a slave”. A slave is imposed to obey every order of his master. But he does not worship his master. Therefore, his obedience is not an act of worship. However, Allāh's relationship with His servants is one of obedience, and also of worship. Therefore, his action is known as an act of worship.

Worship can be divided into two. One whose sole objective is Allāh's worship and nothing else, e.g. *ṣalāh*, fasting, *ḥajj*, *zakāh*, *qurbānī* and so on. These are

¹ Sūrah adh-Dhāriyāt, 51: 56.

direct acts of worship. The second type of worship is where an act is done for worldly benefits. However, the act is done in accordance with Allāh's injunctions and adherence to these injunctions is to obtain Allāh's pleasure. Such an act becomes an act of worship. Take the example of trade. If it is done while adhering to Allāh's laws and to obtain Allāh's pleasure, it becomes an act of worship in the sense that a person is rewarded for it. However, this is an indirect worship because trade in itself was not a worship; it became one due to obedience and a good intention. The same applies to politics and governing. If they are done in accordance with Allāh's laws and for His pleasure, they will also be acts of worship, but indirect ones. This is because, like trade, they were not acts of worship in themselves. They became acts of worship by virtue of obedience and a good intention. Thus, since Allāh *ta'ālā* laid down worship as the purpose of man's creation, both types of worship are included in it, and both together are the objectives of man's creation. It is clear from this explanation that a worship which is eligible to be called a direct worship is of a higher level than the one which is an indirect worship. There are many forms of indirect worship, one cannot be singled out and considered to be the purpose of man's creation. Rather, all indirect forms together with direct forms collectively make up the purpose of man's creation.

However, we also have to bear in mind that these indirect forms of worship are of different levels of importance. The more general and all-embracing the effects of an indirect worship, the more important it will be. If a political system is established according to the Shari'ah and a true Islamic state is established, then through it, all direct and indirect forms of worship are not only easy to be fulfilled but their circle in practice becomes wider. This is why it is more important than

the other indirect forms. It will not be wrong to give more importance to it because of this reason. However, making it the sole objective of Islam overturns the entire sequence of preferences. If this notion settles in the mind that politics and governing are the sole objectives of Islam, this mind set gives birth to several other evils.

The first harm is that when the establishing of a political system is made the fundamental objective, all other things become subservient to it. Consequently, actions which are direct forms of worship no longer remain fundamental objectives. Rather, they become subservient to the fundamental objective. Their importance is therefore decreased. Whereas we learn from the Qur'ān that political power is a means, while direct forms of worship are the fundamental objectives. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

الَّذِينَ إِنْ مَكَّنَّاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَمَرُوا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ.

Those whom, when We give them power in the land, they establish ṣalāh, give zakāh, command good and prohibit evil.¹

Look! The objective of authority is that they establish ṣalāh, pay zakāh, and so on. This clearly demonstrates that worship is the fundamental objective and that authority is promulgated because it is a means of achieving this objective.

Hadrat Muftī Taqī 'Uthmānī Sāhib continues:

¹ Sūrah al-Hajj, 22: 41.

The Nature of Islamic Injunctions With Reference to Politics

The other point is that Islam has certainly provided many rulings on the subject of political administration. However, it did not lay down a detailed plan on government. It gave principles and rulings, but how should they be promulgated? What should their practical application be? Islam did not specify these details. Rather, it left them to the scholars and thinkers of each era. The principles which Allāh *ta'ālā* laid down through the Shari'ah are unchangeable – they cannot be changed. Their guidelines are eternal. However, the detailed practical procedure which Muslim scholars adopt in the light of those principles and in total adherence to them through consultation – that is permissible.

For example, the Qur'ān says:

وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ

Prepare against them with the best of your ability.

This principle is laid down and a few examples are given, but details with regard to what types of weapons, etc. must be used – this is left to the scholars of each era who will try to muster their forces according to their respective situations, insight, experiences and needs.

In the same way, Islam gave principle guidelines with regard to political administration. As for the number of courts which need to be established, how administrative powers must be divided, whether there should be ministers or not, if there should be than how many, should it be an individual type of rule or consultative one, should the legislature have two houses or one, the type of consultative process which it must have, etc. etc. – all these details have not been

laid down by Islam. The reason for this is that all this falls within the ambit of the permissible. The scholars of each era can decide in the light of situations and conditions, and practise accordingly. Therefore, when we speak about the Islamic principles of political administration, we must not expect to find all these details in the statements and writings of the jurists. These details are neither found in the Shari'ah nor is there a need for them to be there.

The Shari'ah comes where the Shari'ah feels that people will go astray if they are left to their intelligence and understanding. When it comes to all permissible actions, most of them are left to man's intelligence and insight. In this way, on one side we find that the principles of political administration in Islam are unchangeable; and on the other side we find that there is so much room for flexibility that they can be laid down according to the demands and needs of each era and place. While remaining within the principles, changes can take place in different eras and times. Thus, when we speak of an Islamic political administration, it is not about a fixed system of government where all minute details are fixed forever. Rather, it refers to those fundamental principles and injunctions which have been laid down by the Qur'an and Sunnah.¹

Political Striving And Rectification of The Self

Another very important point to bear in mind is that in Islam the fundamental objective of political striving is not the acquisition of power and authority. Rather, it is to acquire Allāh's pleasure via reformation of a political system and to bring it in line with Allāh's injunctions. Therefore, it is not essential for the individual or group that is striving to this end must personally take control

¹ *Islām Aur Siyāsī Nazriyāt*, p. 172.

of power and the rectify the system of government. Instead, if it can be achieved by the present rulers or by any other person or group, there is no need for them to personally take over the reigns of authority. For political striving of this nature, it is vital for those who are striving for it to be absolutely sincere, and be pure from love for name, fame, and a desire for position.

However, when we look at it in practice, when people become active in this field, they are inevitably faced with popularity, acceptance among the masses and love for fame. Man then forgets his original objective and becomes concerned about which action of his will earn him acceptance among the masses, and which deed will earn him credit. Consequently, instead of providing proper guidance to the masses, the leaders of political parties and movements start following the desires and wants of the masses. Instead of making decisions on the basis of genuine and real success and wellness for the country and people, they are made on the basis of how the masses can be appeased. This is the feature of a secular democracy, not of an Islamic political system. When the intention itself is for fame and popularity, the direction of the entire movement is incorrect and Allāh's help is lost. This is why it is necessary for the leadership of political movements to be in the hands of people who have passed through the stages of spiritual training, and have – to a large extent – divested themselves of love for fame, popularity and concern for acceptance.

Character Development For Entering Into Politics

If we look at the life of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, we can divide it into two parts – the Makkan life and the Madīnan life. The thirteen years of the Makkan life were passed without jihād, no government and no political system. Instead, the order is that when the other strikes you, you must not retaliate.

وَاصْبِرْ وَمَا صَبْرُكَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

Remain patient. Your patience is only possible through Allāh's help.

You are not permitted to strike back.

Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* says that the order of patience – i.e. do not raise your hands in reply to the oppression which is committed against you – was not only because the Muslims were weak at the time, because they were no less weaker in Madīnah also. If 313 weak people who had just eight swords and two horses could face a fully armed army of 1 000, then here [in Makkah] if two hands were raised against them, they could have at least raised one hand in response. They were not so weak that they could not raise at least one hand. We learn from this that the prohibition [of not fighting back] was not merely due to weakness. Rather, the reason was that this entire period of thirteen years was a period of personality building. People's character was being built. The moral fibre was being constructed. Their hearts were being cleansed of love for fame, love for wealth and other ailments of the self. Their hearts were being irrigated with concern for the Hereafter. Another reason for this was that when man goes out for political striving, the field is extremely thorny. The tribulations of love for fame and love for wealth trap him. This is why his personality is first constructed. His heart is nourished with concern for the Hereafter. Allāh consciousness is firmly embedded in the heart. Once Allāh *ta'ālā* purified the Muslims of Makkah from these base characteristics, such an Islamic government was established in Madīnah which was never seen before in the entire world nor will anyone see anything like it after that. However, thirteen years were spent in

patience for this government, and the character of individuals was constructed during this period.

This is why it is especially vital for those who bear the weight of political leadership of this ummah to have passed through the stages of spiritual training to the extent that their hearts are filled with virtuous characteristics, and who have purified their hearts from love for fame, position, and the desire for acceptance and popularity among the masses. Or, in the least, they must have full control over these emotions. This is the fundamental station of the Islamic political system which cannot be realized without salvation from these “thieves” of the self.¹

Only Allāh’s Fear Can Tame a Ruler

عن معقل بن يسار قال سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول ما من وال يلي رعية من المسلمين فيموت وهو غاش لهم إلا حرم الله عليه الجنة. (متفق عليه، مشكوة، ص ٣٢١)

Ma`qil ibn Yasār *radīyallāhu `anhu* narrates: I heard Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu `alayhi wa sallam* saying: When any ruler who is appointed over a group of Muslims passes away having deceived them, Allāh *ta`ālā* will most certainly prohibit him from Paradise.

This is a unique style of the Qur’ān and Hadīth. They do not restrict themselves to pressuring the masses and elite only through rules and principles, rather, it wants to instil the fear of such a power in their hearts who is with them all the time. Rules and regulations are vital and are found in full detail in Islam, but if the minds which carry them out are free and do not have the fear of any divine or at least human force, then no

¹ *Islām Aur Siyāsī Nazriyāt*, p.165.

matter how perfect the rules and regulations may be, they will not prove to be effective. In fact, sometimes, the wording of man-made rules are so flexible that when the need arises, unlawful measures can be adopted in the light of those very same rules and regulations. If they do not resort to this flexibility, they will add certain clauses which would fulfil this need of theirs. However, when it comes to the Islamic way of life – whether individual or collective – any type of deception is considered to be destructive. Therefore, the overseer of its laws is man's conscience, and his breaking of the law is a cause of reproach to his conscience itself.¹

Bribery is a Most Serious Crime in The Sharī'ah

عن عبد الله بن عمرو قال لعن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم الراشي والمرتشى.
(رواه أبو داؤد، ورواه أحمد والبيهقي في شعب الإيمان عن ثوبان، وزاد "والرائش" يعني
الذي يمشي بينهما). (مشكوة، ص ٣٢٦)

'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates: Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* cursed the giver and receiver of a bribe. A narration of Thaubān adds the word *rā'ish* which refers to the one who arranges the bribe between the two.

عن أبي أمامة أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال من شفع لأحد شفاعة فأهدي له
هدية عليها فقبلها فقد أتى بابا عظيما من أبواب الربوا. (رواه أبو داؤد. مشكوة، ص
٣٢٦)

Abū Umāmah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: If a person intercedes on behalf of another [even in a lawful matter], and the latter gives him a gift for interceding on his behalf and he accepts

¹ *Jawāhir al-Hikam*, p. 145.

the gift, then he has approached one of the major doors of usury.

The prohibition and status of bribery is obvious from the above Hadīth. The essence of it is that three persons are considered to be criminals in the perpetration of this crime. Islam considers it insufficient to merely lay down rules for the curtailment of crimes. Rather, it also places emphasis on changing the mind-set and the society. Man's consciousness has been imposed by a power that is encompassing him at all times – in private and in public. This is why we find in many places in the Qur'ān where rules and regulations are explained, the order to fear Allāh *ta'ālā* is included. In this way, attention is drawn to the fact that whatever we do – whether in privacy or public – is fully known to Me. I [Allāh] see and hear it directly, and I also have two angels who record every single action of yours. More than that, your actions leave an effect on your body parts which bear testimony to your actions in this world and will literally speak out against you in the Hereafter.

Even today, a police officer can see a person from a distance and determine that he stole a certain item. He then apprehends him solely on the basis of his experience and detection. What this means is that there were certainly some effects of the theft on his body and face which enabled him to detect that he was the criminal. How, then, can one doubt as to how one's actions will testify on the day of Resurrection? The word *la'nat* (curse) is the last word which Allāh *ta'ālā* used against Satan to demonstrate how far he has been flung away from Allāh's court. The same word is used with reference to bribery.

If a person's heart is not affected by this last word, how will a mere law have an effect on him? Look at the absolutely wrong steps taken by governments. In order

to investigate a case of bribery against rulers, another court knows as the “anti-corruption” court is established. The only outcome of it for the masses is that previously a bribe was given in one place, and now it is given in two places. No one thinks that if the anti corruption officers are trustworthy, why did they not be appointed in the first place? The first officers [who were accused of accepting a bribe] will naturally feel that if the government believes us to be acceptors of bribes, we should rather start accepting them now. In other words, their mind set automatically becomes criminal. I have personally heard that when there are many investigations on bribery cases, the corrupt officers say: “It is now extremely dangerous to accept a bribe. So instead of bribing me with 100, you will now have to pay me 1 000. If not, I will not be able to get the job done for you.” Thus, as long as the mind set is not changed and our society is not changed, it is not possible to put an end to crimes.

Human force and compulsion can only be effective to a certain extent. The only thing which can really be effective in private and public, and on an individual and collective level is the fear of Allāh *ta‘ālā*. This cannot be acquired by Islamic education alone, but Islamic training and rectification. If there is no training and rectification, the educated person becomes an educated jinn who proves to be more dangerous than an uneducated jinn. This is because he becomes accustomed to philosophical ways of committing crimes. In other words, instead of committing crimes in the dark of night, he will commit them in the light of day while in government uniform. Therefore we say that as long as there is no Dīnī training and rectification, mere laws against bribery will not put an end to it. Rather, it is essential to make efforts in every way possible to realize that there is a force [Allāh *ta‘ālā*] that is watching us in private and public. You can give

this whatever name you like, it essentially means *taqwallāh* (fear and consciousness of Allāh *ta'ālā*).

The reality of a bribe is exactly like a stolen item. In fact, it is an open act of thievery. To make matters worse, people refer to it as a “right” and collect it by saying: “Give us our right.” Before a person can pay a bribe, he will stand outside the office, hurl verbal abuses and is then compelled to pay the bribe respectfully. Once he leaves the office, he will start cursing the person and his children [for having compelled him to pay the bribe].

The *Sharḥ as-Sunnah* relates from Abū Humayd Sā'idī *radīyallāhu 'anhu* that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* appointed a person to collect zakāh. As he went around, people gave them the zakāh of their wealth and also offered gifts to him. However, it was an era of trustworthiness, so he kept both types of wealth separate. He then came to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and clearly said: “This is the zakāh, and this is what I received as gifts.” Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* felt that this was a very important matter so he went onto the pulpit and said with much disapproval: “I send people to collect zakāh and they come back and tell me: ‘This is zakāh, and this is what I received as a gift.’ They should rather sit in their parent’s house and see who comes and offers gifts to them.” Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* then listed several other points to express his disapproval.¹

If you had to keep the second *Hadīth* of *Ḥaḍrat* Abū Umāmah *radīyallāhu 'anhu* before you, you will realize how cautious a ruler has to be in order to save himself from bribery. If you want to save yourself from unlawful wealth or, in today’s definition, you want to serve

¹ *Mishkāt*, Kitāb az-Zakāh, p. 157.

people, you must not legalize bribery and do not be under the misconception that if people do not call you a briber directly that they consider you to be innocent. Or if the government cannot find you guilty or turns a blind eye out of expediency, that you will escape the grasp of Allāh *ta'ālā*. Remember well that if you do not pay for it today, you will certainly be caught tomorrow.

إِنَّ بَطْشَ رَبِّكَ لَشَدِيدٌ

Surely the grasp of your Sustainer is severe.

Leadership is Attractive in The Beginning But Results in Remorse

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال إنكم ستحرصون على الإمارة وستكون ندامة يوم القيامة، فنعم المرخصة وبئست الفاطمة. (رواه البخار، مشكوة، ص ٣٢٠)

Hadrat Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: There will come a time when you will be desirous of leadership whereas it will be a cause of remorse for you on the day of Resurrection. Leadership is like a wet-nurse – she is most beloved when she starts breastfeeding but is disliked when she weans the infant.

The same applies to leadership. It is appears very attractive in the beginning but when its consequences come to the fore, it seems most terrifying.

It is very difficult to make minds which are heedless of the Hereafter about the attractiveness of leadership in the beginning and its evil consequences in the end. However, a point which could be understood by today's minds is so clear that it does not need too much of thinking and reflection. In fact, it is clearly visible from current incidents in the world. A person assumes the

seat of leadership but before he can settle down properly, death hovers around his head. This is the result of the changes in time and the foolishness of people. However, even if we had to disregard this, it is the duty of a ruler to think rationally about how many people's comfort he has taken the responsibility of. He will realize that it is no playing matter to take on such a position.

If governing means playing around with the lives and wealth of people – as has become the norm nowadays – then it is another matter. However, if we were to ponder over the many responsibilities which have to be borne by the parents of one family – e.g. the children's health, food, shelter, education and training – and how difficult it is to fulfil all this in the proper manner, then far more complex responsibilities have to be shouldered by a ruler over not just a few people but millions of them. It is no easy task to fulfil all this in a successful way. However, the sweetness of governing and the greed for authority cause a person to disregard all this and he feels as if the destiny of Allāh's creation is in his hands, he can change it as he wills and continue pacifying his arrogant self. Is this what governing is all about? Is this what not only Islam but humanity and dignity demand?

Remember this well: The making or the spoiling of a single ruler entails the making or spoiling of an entire nation. If he is on the right path, there can be no one more fortunate. If he is corrupt, then this wretched fellow will continue earning the curses of history even after he leaves this world. How, then, can an intelligent person happily take on these responsibilities whose fulfilment are certainly beyond man!?

Another point which has to be borne in mind is that when a husband has a miniscule type of government over his few wives and is unable to fulfil his

responsibilities to them, how difficult it will be for a ruler to succeed in fulfilling the rights of millions of people? This is why the most unqualified person for leadership in Islam is the one who has the most desire for leadership.¹

The Most Unqualified Person For Leadership is The One Who is Most Desirous of it

عن أبي موسى قال دخلت على النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أنا ورجلان من بني عمي، فقال أحدهما: يا رسول الله، أمرنا على بعض ما ولاك الله، وقال الآخر مثل ذلك. فقال: والله لا نولي على هذا العمل أحدا سأله ولا أحدا حرص عليه. وفي رواية قال: لا نستعمل على عملنا من أراد. (متفق عليه، مشكوة، ص ٣٢٠)

Abū Mūsā *radīyallāhu 'anhu* narrates: I and two of my cousins went to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. One of them said: “O Rasūlullāh! Allāh appointed you as a leader, appoint us as leaders over some of what Allāh appointed you over.” The other cousin said something similar. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: “By Allāh! We do not appoint anyone to this position who asks for it nor anyone who is desirous of it.” Another narration states: “We do not appoint for our work anyone who is desirous of it.”

عن عبد الرحمن بن سمره قال قال لي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لا تسأل الإمارة فإنك إن أعطيتها عن مسألة وكلت إليها، وإن أعطيتها عن غير مسألة أعنت عليها. (متفق عليه، مشكوة، ص ٣٢٠)

'Abd ar-Rahmān ibn Samurah *radīyallāhu 'anhu* narrates Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said to me: Never ask for leadership because if you are given it after asking for it, Allāh's help will not be with you and you will have to take care of it yourself. But if you are given it without asking for

¹ *Jawāhir al-Hikam*.

it, Allāh *ta'ālā* will help you in carrying out its responsibilities.

To take on a responsibility which is beyond one's capability is a harbinger of disgrace and humiliation.

عن حذيفة رضي الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لا ينبغي للمؤمن أن يذل نفسه، قالوا: وكيف يذل نفسه، قال: يتعرض من البلاء لما لا يطيق. (رواه الترمذي وابن ماجه والبيهقي في شعب الإيمان. مشكوة، ص ٢٤٤)

Hudhayfah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "It is not for a believer to disgrace himself." The Sahābah *radiyallāhu 'anhum* asked: "How can a person disgrace himself?!" He replied: "By taking on a burden which he does not have the strength to bear."

The Sahābah *radiyallāhu 'anhum* were naturally endowed with lofty minds. With the arrival of Islam, their minds became so lofty that they could not imagine their selves bringing on their own disgrace and humiliation. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* demonstrated to them that sometimes an honourable task may bring on disgrace. Every person knows that he must abstain from tasks and actions which are directly disgraceful. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* took them one step further and explained to them that to fall into an honourable task whose consequences are humiliating is also not the mark of a Muslim.

We do not know how our Muslims could trap themselves into the humiliating act of establishing ties with the Jews. If those who are hungry for power were

to understand this point, at least every wise person would have strove to avoid this.¹

There is no Place For Partisanship And Sectarianism in Islamic Society

عن عمرو بن شعيب عن أبيه عن جده قال خطب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عام الفتح ثم قال: أيها الناس، إنه لا حلف في الإسلام، وما كان من حلف في الجاهلية فإن الإسلام لا يزيده إلا شدة. (رواه أبو داؤد، مشكوة، ص ٣٠٣)

'Amr ibn Shu'ayb *raḍiyallāhu 'anhu* narrates from his father who narrates from his grandfather that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* addressed them on the occasion of the Conquest of Makkah. He announced: "O people! There is no friendship agreement in Islam. Islam does not oppose any agreement which has been reached in Jāhiliyyah, rather it strengthens it further."

Before the advent of Islam, all the Arabs were divided into parties and tribes. Disharmony existed in all families and wars broke out between tribes. One of the greatest bounties from among the many bounties which Islam brought to them was that of unity and harmony. Reference is made to this as follows:

وَأذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا

Remember the bounty of Allāh on you when you were enemies of one another, then He cast love in your hearts, now you became brothers by His grace.²

It was due to these disputes that the Arabs always lived a life of fear and apprehension. This is why they felt the

¹ *Jawāhir al-Hikam*, p. 154.

² *Sūrah Āl 'Imrān*, 3: 103.

need for each tribe to establish a strong covenant with another tribe which would come to its help at times of enmity and friendship. They used to refer to this as a treaty of alliance. Consequently, if one ally killed a person, another person who was not the criminal would be apprehended and punished according to the norm of those days. This, so to speak, was a cooperation for war and fighting.

From among the many things which Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* announced on the occasion of the Conquest of Makkah was his rejection of this incorrect treaty of alliance. The essence of it was that Islam opposes this type of partisanship and sectarianism. As for new treaties and covenants for good causes, there was no need for them because the teaching of Islamic brotherhood did away with them. This is why there is no place for partisanship in Islamic society – neither for friends nor for foes.

Present day governments consider an opposition party to be essential. The reasons for it are known to the educated class. However, I feel that the reality of it is mere imitation of and intimidation by progressive nations. These people turned their focus on the essentiality of opposition parties in progressive nations, but they totally disregarded the other side. That is, in what situation, what society, and under what philosophies did they consider this essential for the sake of keeping the government on its guard. Do pseudo-progressive nations have the capability for this? If you observe with an impartial eye, you will realize that if you want to cause disunity among the members of government, this title [opposition party] is enough for it, and a natural and necessary outcome of it is that it [the opposition party] will always find fault with anything which the ruling party proposes.

On the other side, the ruling party will immediately resort to measures to defend its stand. The result of this is that instead of looking at the reality of the situation, the spirit of partisanship comes into play. People do not look at where the success or failure of the country lies. Rather, they are forced to think about how their party will triumph. This is why Islam teaches us to be above party politics. It stresses on every member of government to personally ponder and reflect over the pros and cons of an issue. Unfortunately, our dispositions have become so ignoble that instead of looking at the good and benefit of the nation, we desire our personal protection and aggrandizement. In such a situation, even if the opposition party was made into a circus, there would be no benefit in it.

The spirit of Islam is that the service which is rendered to Muslims must be based on sincerity and must be solely for Allāh's sake. There must be no room for concession, consideration, opposition, agreement, flattery and fear. No matter which party is ruling, it is the compulsory duty of each of its members to carry out the responsibilities of the opposing party without looking at who is in the majority and who is in the minority. If our objective is one, then what we can achieve by pondering over it collectively, we will never be able to achieve it had we been in a conflict situation. It is another matter if you cannot understand this after having fallen into this incorrect practice.¹

The Current Situation Within The Country And Beyond

The terrible condition of religious and political leaders is getting from bad to worse. Personal benefits are given importance at every level. Even the avenues of rendering services and responsible positions are used

¹ *Jawāhir al-Hikam*, p. 158.

for the acquisition of personal benefits. The masses are compelled into living lives of poverty and want. Whenever a need is felt to shed the blood of innocents in the path of personal benefits, it is done without reservation. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*.

The drop in moral and social values is so drastic that incidents of robbery and murder are increasing, cheating and fraud is the order of the day, a brother does not trust his own brother, nor does a neighbour trust his neighbour. Each person is forced into his own circle. The one who was testified for his innocence has turned into a person from whom refuge is sought. Those who were affiliated to religion have also started committing serious crimes. The greed for wealth and property has surpassed its bounds. We can frankly state that the absolute cause of this tumultuous state is solely and nothing but love for this world and love for name and fame. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* referred to it as follows:

حب الدنيا رأس كل خطيئة

The love for this world is the root cause of every evil.

For many years India had been priding itself over its family system and had been giving full importance to the pure knot of marriage. However, the present deplorable situation has caused the drop in values to such an extent that there are cracks in the relationships between parents and children. It seems as though the principles of differences in rank are coming to an end. The greed for dowry and the absence of patience and forbearance are causing the husband to subject his life partner to oppression and tyranny to the extent that he is prepared to take her to the brink of death. Even the wives do not feel it undignified to taint the honour and respect of their husbands. This is why the children of today are not respecting family

traditions. Consequently, the noblest of families are sliding toward ignobility. Whereas the maintaining of differences in rank is an essential element for the fortification of the family unit. The absence of this element will most certainly subject the family to disunity and dissension.

A most important feature of our beloved country is that humanity is given preference over wealth and riches. Consequently, people have always been encouraged to work after understanding the needs of everyone. Weighing less and selling goods through deception have always been frowned upon. However today, lies, deception and amassing of wealth have become the order of the day. Inflation has crossed the limits. Consequently, ordinary citizens cannot obtain necessities when they are needed. Even if they are obtained, they are at such exorbitant prices that the entire day's budget is rendered upside down. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Old traditions and values have certainly made the culture of India a living eternity. A harmony between the East and West has been created here. Every new item which is considered new to India has been adopted. However, every old tradition or value has not been discarded in its place. This is why our culture is still vibrant. Unfortunately, the incidents which are occurring under the present conditions are tearing down all the old values and ranks to bits. Serious crimes like falsification and forgery are being committed on a large scale. Respect and honour for elders, recognizing the value and esteem of parents and teachers, and encouragement to practise on these values are being cast into the cold rooms. This is causing corruption and mischief to spread on a large scale.

We will not be wrong if we were to refer to India as the breeding ground for religions. The message of all religions – the message of peace, harmony, unity and agreement – has been considered to be our country’s – India’s - own possession for centuries, adopted by it, and preserved by it. ‘Allāmah Iqbāl conveyed the same message to the masses in the following couplet:

Religion does not teach us to bear a grudge.
We are Indians, and India is our land.

Every Indian has been holding on to this religious value for centuries.

Ever since those who were at the forefront of putting an end to the purity of religion behind the veil of the caste system and began taking personal benefit, and imposing their superiority became their mindset, religious values began to wane. Ordinary simple-minded people were stirred into detesting adherents of other religions through fiery speeches. We now find riots in the name of religion. People who had once been defending each other are now prepared to kill each other. No one is safe even in his own house. Religious messages are filled with inflammatory themes. The ancient traditions of the country are being scattered. And worst of all, the funeral bier of secularism is about to be carried. A point of consideration is that anti-country and anti-religion elements may be able to benefit from anti-country and anti-religion activities for a short time. However, the loss is totally and absolutely to the country, to every Indian without any differentiation, and to the beliefs which are based on religious purity. This terrifying game of religious intolerance has completely destroyed religious values, and its disastrous consequences which we see before us are starting to make us think seriously over the entire matter.

India is a democratic country. Everything is more or less confined to political ways and mores in a democratic country. Apart from the livelihoods of the citizens, education and training, health and medical provisions, farming and agriculture, trade and commerce, roads, water and electricity, all other necessities are intrinsically confined to the political parties, their leaders, and those who make up the government. Constructive discussions, constructive questions and answers and positive thinking alone can aid the country in progressing in the right direction. Every action of theirs has to be for the benefit of the country and to the advantage of the masses in every way. The first responsibility is to ensure the provision of essentials to the masses. As long as their sacrifices are not included in serving the masses, we cannot hope for positive results. Personal motives can never be accepted as parts of political values. If this is allowed, there is the fear of playing around with the safety of the country.

On the other hand, we generally observe that political values have become so rare that the well-being of the masses and a safe environment for them have fallen into danger. We also see the igniting of the fires of communal riots for the sake of personal and political gain. It has become a norm among political parties to cast the country into the fire of partisanship and sectarianism. Dissension has become so common that a particular strata of society is accused of every wrong. These are the very same political leaders who are seen as examples for the ordinary man. Now, they are themselves committing various crimes. They have gone to the extent of injuring their character by committing appalling evils such as adultery. Their comforts, luxuries and personal motives have left the country and the masses far behind. The absence of political values has put the democratic system into danger. In

the light of all the above references, we can say without any hesitation that it is absolutely essential to set right the values of our country.

May Allāh *ta'ālā* create such dignified leaders and reformers who can convey the entire country to righteousness and success. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *ta'ālā*.¹



From the above article we can very well learn the state of present day politics. It seems as if the political leaders of our times do not even know the meaning of politics. If this is the case, how can they carry out their political responsibilities correctly? Nowadays, there is more corruption instead of rectification, and more destruction than construction. There is neither personal tranquillity nor collective peace. The entire world has become a Hell for all sections of the community. You are probably more aware than us of the deplorable conditions and rioting. These are the painful conditions of our country which you read. It is certainly a cause for grief and lamentation.

However, this situation is not confined to our country. Bribery is the order of the day in other countries especially Pakistan. Our own people in the Sarhad region [of Pakistan] are terrorized and brutalized. It causes real sorrow to us when even Islamic tolerance no longer exists. More so when Pakistan was established in the name of Islam. On the other hand, our fellow countrymen show some consideration and decorum in this regard.

¹ Muḥammad 'Imrān: Quoted from *Rāshtarya Sahara Lucknow*.

As for the Muslim countries, their situation is getting from bad to worse. There is a proliferation of mutual killing, murder, oppression and tyranny. The leaders of these countries are generally ignorant of Islamic injunctions and totally fearless of accountability before Allāh *ta'ālā* and His wrath. And they are personally leading their people astray. When they have to seek advice and counsel, they go to the enemies of Islam and Muslims. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا بِيْطَانَةً مِّنْ دُونِكُمْ لَا يَأْلُونَكُمْ خَبَالًا

O believers! Do not take anyone as a confidant other than your own [people]. They spare no effort in ruining you.¹

Hadrat Shaykh 'Abd al-Qādir Jīlānī *rahimahullāh* explains this verse as follows:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا﴾ مقتضى إيمانكم أن ﴿لَا تَتَّخِذُوا بِيْطَانَةً﴾ صديقا وصاحب سر، تستودعون سرائركم عنده ﴿مِّنْ دُونِكُمْ﴾ أي الكفار دون المؤمنين، واعلموا أنهم ﴿لَا يَأْلُونَكُمْ﴾ لا يمنعون عنكم ولا يقصرون في شأنكم ﴿خَبَالًا﴾ ضرا وفسادا بل ﴿وَدُّوا﴾ رجوا دائما ﴿مَا عَنَيْتُمْ﴾ أي ضرركم وهلاككم.

O believers! The demand of your faith is that you (Do not take anyone as a confidant) a friend and intimate with whom you share your secrets (other than your own [people]) i.e. the unbelievers to the exclusion of believers. Know well that (They spare no effort) they do not desist from you and leave no stone unturned (in ruining you) in causing you harm. Rather, (they yearn) they always desire (for you to remain in as much suffering) i.e. they desire your harm and destruction.²

¹ Sūrah Āl 'Imrān, 3: 118.

² *Tafsīr Jīlānī*, vol. 1, p. 301.

In conclusion I say that it seems as if Islamic values and character are far-fetched. Let alone human values, even human customs have departed from our lives. Consequently, the land is constricted on us despite its wide expanse. The entire world is overcome by immorality, disrespect and bad character. Neither is the shepherd concerned about the destruction of his flock, nor is the flock bothered about obeying its shepherd. Neither do seniors have a desire to show mercy to their juniors, nor do the juniors have the zeal to show respect to their seniors. As though the entire humanity is being ripped off of not only Islamic culture, but human culture. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī.

28 Dhū al-Hijjah 1434 A.H./3 November 2013

CHAPTER SIX
RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE WEALTHY

قال الله تعالى:

وَأَنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ

Responsibilities of The Wealthy

The biggest responsibility of wealthy people is to spend their wealth in good causes. Allāh *ta'ālā* listed the qualities of the righteous ones and stated that one of their qualities is that they spend a portion of their wealth. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

وَمَا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ

And what We provided them as sustenance, they spend (thereof).¹

Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Idrīs Kāndhlawī *rahimahullāh* writes in his commentary to this verse:

They set aside a portion of the wealth which We gave to them and spend from it periodically in Our cause. The word “spend” is used in its general meaning which includes zakāh, optional charities and every other type of spending in the cause of Allāh *ta'ālā*. Some scholars include spiritual spending, i.e. the passing on of knowledge, under the general meaning of this word. Allāh *ta'ālā* first made mention of imān which is the root of all good deeds. He then spoke of ṣalāh which is the most superior physical act of worship. He followed it with monetary worship in the form of zakāh and charities.

We could put it in another way by saying that “they establish ṣalāh” refers to the good actions of the righteous and the words “they spend (thereof)” refer to their good character. Allāh *ta'ālā* says that they spend “thereof”, i.e. a portion of what We gave them. In other words, they neither squander their wealth nor waste it in unnecessary avenues.

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 3.

By bringing the words “And what We provided them as sustenance” before “they spend (thereof)”, reference is made to some sort of importance and specification. In other words, they always set aside some of their wealth for charity and spending in Allāh’s cause.

The Seven Categories of Spending in Allāh’s Cause

There are seven categories of spending in Allāh’s cause. They are:

1. Zakāh.
2. Sadaqatul Fitr.
3. Charities such as giving to the poor, hospitality to guests and loans to the needy.
4. Waqf – e.g. construction of masājid, madāris, wells and travellers’ lodges.
5. Hajj expenses.
6. Jihād expenses.
7. Obligatory spending such as on one’s family, wife and parents [and those who fall under the ruling of parents].¹

In addition to righteous believers having the quality of physical acts of worship, they have the quality of spending their wealth. Allāh *ta’ālā* says in this regard:

وَفِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ لِّلسَّائِلِ وَالْمَحْرُومِ

In their wealth there was a share for the beggar and the defeated.²

¹ Maulānā Muḥammad Idrīs Kāndhlawī: *Ma’ārif al-Qur’ān*, vol. 1, p. 46.

² Sūrah adh-Dhāriyāt, 51: 19.

The word “beggar” in this context refers to the poor person who expresses his need to people and they help him. The word “defeated” refers to the one who, despite being poor, bankrupt and needy, does not express his need to others due to his noble character. He is therefore deprived of people’s help.

The present verse describes a quality of the righteous believers: When they spend in Allāh’s cause, they do not restrict themselves to giving to those who express their needs to them [beggars]. Rather, they also look for those who do not express their needs to others and make inquiries about them. The purpose of this verse is to demonstrate that these righteous believers do not confine themselves to physical acts of worship like performing ṣalāh and spending the night in worship. Rather, monetary worship is also a major part of their lives. In addition to giving to beggars, they are on the search for people who, due to their self-respect, do not go around begging.

By using the words “In their wealth”, reference is made to the point that they do not count their spending as a favour. Rather, they understand that the poor have a right in their Allāh-given wealth. Conveying it to the poor is not a favour on their part, rather it involves absolving themselves of a responsibility.¹

Many religious works require large amounts of money without which works cannot be accomplished no matter how academic the work is. Thus, just as it is the responsibility of those endowed with knowledge to serve Dīn, the same applies to the wealthy. Both classes of society must help and cooperate with each other in rendering this service. If not, the work of Dīn

¹ Muftī Muḥammad Shafī‘: *Ma’ārif al-Qur’ān*, vol. 8, p. 160.

will be destroyed, we will all be held responsible, and none will be able to save himself from its consequences.

Maulānā Abul Ḥasan 'Alī Nadwī Directs The Wealthy to Spend Their Wealth

Ḥadrat Maulānā Abul Ḥasan 'Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh* addresses the wealthy class with his pain-filled heart and directs their attention towards spending their wealth. He says:

The value and benefit of the wealth of Muslims lies in it being of help to Islam. If not, it will be a treasure of Qārūn, a cause of disgrace in this world, and accountability in the Hereafter.

Unfortunately, even during these trying times in its history the Islamic community in India has not proven that it is aware of this danger and concerned about the future. Its affluent people are devoid of giving preference to others and sacrificing. Even now, large amounts of Muslim money are spent on despicable and childish pursuits, functions, entertainments, name and fame, false flattery of the rulers, ignorant pacification of empty Dīnī sentiments, or in those customary works which do not bring any noteworthy benefit to the Muslim community. Even the most terrifying events have not truly awakened them nor brought any real change in their lives. Let alone practising on the following Qur'ānic instruction, the affluent have not even pondered over it:

وَأَنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ

Spend in the cause of Allāh and do not cast your hands into destruction.

They have not demonstrated any seriousness and high aspirations in striving for the revival of the Muslim community and its continued existence. Our issue of

education and many other plans for the preservation and fortification of our community have not been initiated due to a lack of resources. This is an extremely terrifying situation. If – Allāh forbid – the Muslim community cannot continue as a community, the presence of individuals will be merely an animalistic existence which will neither bring any joy to any conscientious person nor be eligible for any honour.

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at the pain with which Hadrat Maulānā Abul Hasan 'Alī Nadwī *rahimahullāh* directed the attention of the affluent towards striving for the revival and continued existence of the Muslim community. It will be most sad and regretful if it still does not create a realization of their responsibilities within them. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone.

On observing these conditions, Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *rahimahullāh* used to say: It is the responsibility of the 'ulamā' to teach the wealthy to spend their wealth and to encourage them in this regard. The reason for this is that just as it is their responsibility to direct the people towards ṣalāh and zakāh, it is their specific duty to direct them to spend their wealth in good causes. If not, the Muslim community will completely disregard this duty, resulting in loss in this world and the Hereafter, and nothing else. We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*.

The Need For Wealth at Every Step

Wealth is needed at every step of the way. The means of acquiring it through trade, agriculture and so on must certainly be adopted. There is no harm in this. Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *rahimahullāh* says in this regard:

The need for wealth is clearer than the sun. This is because wealth is what supports man in his life. The vehicle of life cannot move without it. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

وَلَا تُؤْتُوا السُّفَهَاءَ أَمْوَالَكُمُ الَّتِي جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ قِيَامًا

Do not hand over to the dim-witted your wealth which Allāh has made a means of your livelihood.¹

The reason for this is that wealth is the means for the acquisition of our food, drink, shelter, household goods – in short, all the necessities of our life. Thus, we need wealth at every step of the way. There is no one who denies its need. Neither can a learned person deny it nor an ignorant person. So much so that even religion acknowledges its necessity. In fact, it will not be wrong if we say that Islam encourages the acquisition of wealth.

I present a few narrations which are just proofs for my claim. I am not quoting the entire words of the Hadith out of fear for lengthiness. I will suffice with the translation.

﴿1﴾

Hadrat ‘Amr ibn ‘Aṣ *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* narrates: Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* summoned for me. When I presented myself before him, he said: “Come after having worn your clothes and donned your weapons.” I carried out his order and returned to him. He was performing wuḍū’ at the time. He first inspected me from top to bottom and said: “O ‘Amr! I think I should appoint you as a commander over an army and despatch you so that Allāh *ta’ālā* may give you booty [by being victorious]. May Allāh *ta’ālā* keep you safe and sound. I desire to see wealth with you.” I said: “O Rasūlullāh! I did not become a Muslim for the sake of wealth. I embraced Islam for the sake of Islam. I became a Muslim so that I may enjoy your company in

¹ Sūrah an-Nisā’, 4: 5.

this world and in the Hereafter.” Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘*alayhi wa sallam* said:

يا عمرو نعمًا بالمال الصالح للرجل الصالح

O `Amr! If a man is pious and righteous, and he also receives righteous and pure wealth, then what an excellent thing pure wealth is for a righteous man!

Look! Encouragement towards lawful wealth is found in this Hadīth.

﴿2﴾

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘*alayhi wa sallam* states in another Hadīth:

من أخذ بحقه فنعم المعونة هو

If a person takes wealth with its due right, i.e. he acquires it through lawful ways, and spends it in the correct places, then it is an excellent aid and support.

﴿3﴾

Hadrat Sa`īd ibn Jubayr radiyallāhu ‘*anhu* narrates that where the Qur`ān refers to the world as a “possession of deception”, it refers to when it stops him from his quest for the Hereafter. However, if the same wealth prompts him towards earning Allāh’s pleasure and becomes a means for the Hereafter, then it is also:

نعم المتاع ونعم الوسيلة

An excellent possession and an excellent means.¹

¹ *Ta`līfāt Muṣliḥul Ummat*, vol. 1, p. 92.

It is The Duty of Wealthy People to Fulfil Their Dues With Sincerity

The fundamental gratitude for wealth and possessions is to fulfil their dues with sincerity as established from the Qur'an and Sunnah. It is also vital not to count one's favour or to denigrate a person after helping him to fulfil his need.

We now relate the story of Qārūn from the Qur'an. It serves as an admonition to those who are deceived and arrogant on account of their wealth. Every wealthy person must study this carefully and take a lesson from it.

The Story of Qārūn Must be Read by Every Wealthy Person

إِنَّ قَارُونَ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمِ مُوسَى فَبَغَى عَلَيْهِمْ، وَأَتَيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْكُنُوزِ مَا إِنَّ مَفَاتِحَهُ لَتَنُوءُ بِالْعُصْبَةِ أُولِي الْقُوَّةِ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ قَوْمُهُ لَا تَفْرَحْ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفَرِحِينَ. وَابْتَغَى فِيمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ، وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا، وَأَحْسِنْ كَمَا أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ، وَلَا تَبْغِ الْفَسَادَ فِي الْأَرْضِ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ.

Qārūn was one of Mūsā's people but he behaved arrogantly towards them. We had given him such treasures that carrying the keys thereof would tire a group of strong men. When his people said to him: "Do not be conceited. Allāh does not like those who are conceited. Seek, with that which Allāh has given you, the abode of the Hereafter and do not forget your portion of this world. And do good [to others] as Allāh has done good to you. Do not seek to cause corruption in the land. Allāh does not like those who cause corruption."¹

Qārūn was from the nation of Mūsā *'alayhis salām*. According to Ibn 'Abbās *radīyallāhu 'anhu* and others,

¹ Sūrah al-Qaṣaṣ, 28: 76-77.

he was a cousin of Mūsā *'alayhis salām*. This is the view of most commentators.

He used to read the Taurāh in a very melodious voice. However, like Sāmīrī, this wretched fellow was also a hypocrite. He began rebelling against the Banī Isrā'īl on account of his excessive wealth and wanted to have control over everyone. Allāh *ta'ālā* blessed him with so much of wealth and treasures that a group of strong men would find it difficult to carry the keys to all his wealth. In other words, he had so many keys to his treasures that a group of strong men found it difficult to carry them. This is why he used to go around boasting and bragging. The righteous and pious people of his community advised him not to be conceited because Allāh *ta'ālā* does not like those who are conceited. The righteous ones from the Banī Isrā'īl advised him that it is not good to be conceited over one's wealth. The same well wishers advised him to seek the Hereafter through the wealth which Allāh *ta'ālā* gave him. In other words, he must neither be smug over this temporary abode nor be boastful over the fleeting wealth. Instead, he should make it a means to earn the Hereafter. A poet says:

You can prepare your Hereafter through this
world. O beloved ones! Purchase the
Hereafter [with good deeds] or else you will
regret.

At the same time, do not forget about your share of this world. In other words, spend on yourself according to your needs and comforts. Spend your remaining wealth in Allāh's cause and earn the Hereafter through it. This is because the only share of man in this world is what he sent forward. As for what he left behind, that will go to others. The only share of this world for man is that with which he can do good deeds, spend in Allāh's cause and accumulate for himself in the treasures of

the Hereafter. This is what will help him after he dies. A poet says:

Even if you get hold of the treasures of
Qārūn, they will not remain except what you
spend in Allāh's path.

Some scholars say that the words “your portion of this world” refer to man's burial shroud. When he is about to leave this world, the only thing which he will get of it is the shroud. Man should therefore focus on the fact that his portion of this world is only the two sheets of the funeral shroud. He must not be proud over his wealth and riches.

The next advice which is given is that he must do good to others as Allāh has done good to him. This forms gratitude to Allāh *ta'ālā* for His bounties and through which His bounties will increase. Do not cause corruption in the land by disobeying Allāh *ta'ālā*. Surely Allāh *ta'ālā* does not like those who cause corruption. Disobedience to Allāh *ta'ālā*, defying Him and spending the wealth which He gave in His disobedience are all acts of corruption.¹

Note: O you affluent ones of our times! Bearing in mind that Allāh *ta'ālā* related in so much detail about Qārūn's wealth and his terrible end, understand this well that He did it solely to serve as an admonition and advice to us because Qārūn did not live to act on this advice. Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat *rahimahullāh* used to say that the conditions and punishments of the Banī Isrā'īl and other nations which Allāh *ta'ālā* related are all lessons and admonitions for the followers of Muḥammad *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. When they read the verses in which these misguided peoples are

¹ Maulānā Muḥammad Idrīs Kāndhlawī: *Ma'ārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 6, pp. 70-71.

mentioned, they must fear Allāh *ta'ālā*, seek refuge in Him and abstain from committing the same criminal acts so that they may be saved from His punishment. Inspiration is from Allāh *ta'ālā* alone. (compiler)

The Qārūnī Condition of The Wealthy

It is very sad to say that the weddings of the wealthy of today are adorned with thousands of bulbs and lights, accompanied with dancing and music. It becomes difficult to differentiate between the weddings of our people and the weddings of non-Muslims. A full display – similar to that of Qārūn – is made of their wealth, riches, attendants and servants, and adornment and beautification. Money is spent without any reservation. This happens while in this very country there are so many Muslims who are forced into living lives of poverty, hunger and even homelessness, but we do not even have any feeling for them. Whereas Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said that when the Muslims of the East experience any difficulty, the Muslims of the West ought to feel the pain for them. Unfortunately, let alone joining them in their pain and discomfort, Muslims are even heedless of praying for them.

The same situation prevails when it comes to feeding guests in weddings. The ways of others which are totally in conflict with the Sunnah are adopted. Arrangements are made to feed people in such a way that they eat while standing and walking about. How can weak men and women eat peacefully in this way? When these people have not even eaten properly, how will they make this du'ā':

اللَّهُمَّ أَطْعِمْ مَنْ أَطْعَمَنِي، وَاسْقِ مَنْ سَقَانِي

O Allāh feed the one who fed me. Give drink to the one who gave me to drink.

It will not be far-fetched if they return to their homes cursing the host and speaking ill of him. The fact of the matter is that all these transgressions are caused by excessive wealth and ingratitude to Allāh *ta'ālā* for His bounties. This is why Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said that he does not fear too much about poverty for his people but fears affluence for them.

It is certainly due to this affluence and excessive wealth that these domestic, social and national trials and tribulations are appearing. As a result, not only are homes upon homes being destroyed, but even countries after countries. May Allāh *ta'ālā* keep us all under His refuge. *Āmīn*.

Very often, when the Qur'ān and Hadīth speaks in praise of wealth, they certainly make mention of the need for piety and Allāh-consciousness. Man can reach great heights through wealth provided it is accompanied with piety. Mention of this is made towards the end of Sūrah al-Layl. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

وَسَيُجَنَّبُهَا الْأَتْقَى الَّذِي يُؤْتِي مَالَهُ يَتَزَكَّى، وَمَا لِأَحَدٍ عِنْدَهُ مِنْ نِعْمَةٍ تُجْزَى، إِلَّا ابْتِغَاءَ
وَجْهِ رَبِّهِ الْأَعْلَى، وَلَسَوْفَ يَرْضَى.

He who fears [Allāh] the most shall be kept away from it. Who gives his wealth in order to purify his heart. He owes no favour to anyone which he has to pay back. But only seeking the pleasure of his Sustainer who is the most high. In time, he will be pleased.¹

In other words, whatever he spends in Allāh's cause is not done for show. Rather it is for Allāh's pleasure. Consequently, he is protected against the Hell-fire. Spending in this way brings moral purity to a person. It is gauged from certain traditions that these verses were

¹ Sūrah al-Layl, 92: 17-21.

revealed in reference to Abū Bakr *radīyallāhu ‘anhu* who used to spend a lot of his wealth in Allāh’s cause. He had bought Bilāl *radīyallāhu ‘anhu* and other slaves and set them free. Nevertheless, these words are general in meaning and contain glad tidings for every person who has these qualities. These short sentences conceal an entire world of bounties. In other words, he will receive such rewards in Paradise for his good actions that he will be pleased in the true sense of the word.¹

Like Extravagance, Miserliness is Also Evil

Up to this point you read about the wastage and extravagance of the wealthy. Now read about their stinginess. When these same people who burn thousands of rupees in weddings are asked to buy small booklets [on Dīn] and distribute them in the wedding, through which the status of a wedding will be gauged and people will learn a few rulings of Dīn, their stinginess prevents them from spending a few hundred rupees and they find it very burdensome. In fact, worse than this, previously they used to invite their workers, but now they refuse to invite some of their relatives because of ill-feelings over trivial issues. How, then, will Allāh’s mercy shower on such weddings where countless causes of His displeasure are found? Allāh *ta’ālā* says:

إِنَّ رَحْمَةَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

Allāh’s mercy is close to the doers of good.

I earnestly request political leaders who are people of position and authority, and wealthy people who are possessors of wealth and property that if they act on the following instruction of Allāh *ta’ālā* – the best of

¹ *Āsān Tarjumah Qur’ān*, vol. 3, p. 1934.

judges – they will certainly be successful in this world and the Hereafter, and be conferred with a good end. The verse reads as follows:

تِلْكَ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فَسَادًا، وَالْعَاقِبَةُ
لِلْمُتَّقِينَ.

That abode of the Hereafter – We shall give it to those who do not seek to exalt themselves in the land nor to cause corruption. The blessed end is for those who fear.¹

Finally, we quote this supplication of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* wherein he sought refuge from that wealth which will be a cause of punishment.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ امْرَأَةٍ تُشَيِّبُنِي قَبْلَ الْمَشِيِّبِ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ وَلَدٍ يَكُونُ عَلَيَّ
وَبَالًا، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ مَالٍ يَكُونُ عَلَيَّ عَذَابًا.

O Allāh! I seek refuge in You from a woman who turns me grey before old age. I seek refuge in You from children who are a cause of evil to me. I seek refuge in You from wealth which is a cause of punishment to me.

Āmīn.

Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī

Dār al-Ma'ārif al-Islāmīyyah, Kareli, Allāhābād

23 Muḥarramul Ḥarām 1435 A.H./28 November 2013.

¹ Sūrah al-Qaṣaṣ, 28: 83.

AN APOLOGY AND A PLEA

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلوة والسلام على سيد المرسلين. أما بعد!

We certainly wrote on some of the weaknesses which are in the 'ulamā', mashā'ikh and seniors of other religious departments. We state, as an apology, that our sole purpose in doing this was so that we cleanse and purify our hearts even more, perfect our Islam and imān, and be blessed with the honour of Allāh-consciousness in our acts of worship. I pray that Allāh *ta'ālā* inspires us all in this regard, and conveys defective and worthless people like us to lofty ranks and stations. Āmīn.

Bearing in mind the conditions and incidents – in fact, the misfortunes – which our madāris, 'ulamā' and students of Dīn are faced with, I humbly say that no matter how many practical shortcomings there may be among the 'ulamā', mashā'ikh and Dīnī groups, they are in reality the ones who are rendering services to this Dīn. It is through their efforts that Islamic consciousness, signs and features are upheld. It is these personalities who are fulfilling the posts of teaching, educating, passing judgements, issuing fatwās, propagation and inviting towards Islam. If they give up these religious and academic services, then whatever work is presently done will not only go into decay but will succumb to desertion.

Even though irreligious people may consider these services to be defective, they can never make these servants of Dīn and 'ulamā' their prisoners. In fact, they can never make them the targets of their attacks. Hadrat Maulānā Rūm *rahimahullāh* rightly says:

When the government remains in the hands of frauds and traitors, innocent people like Manṣūr will be hung to death.

Bearing in mind that these personalities are helped and inspired by Allāh *ta'ālā*, even if they are temporarily put through calamities by irreligious people, they continue serving and helping Allāh's Dīn through Allāh's inspiration. Allāh willing, a group of this nature will continue to exist in every era. May Allāh *ta'ālā* enable us to love this group and to assist it so that we too can have the opportunity of being included among them. At the same time, we pray that Allāh *ta'ālā* keeps us and them safe from the evils and tribulations of the misguided ones and those who have earned Allāh's wrath. Āmīn.

All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā* for His favours that he enabled me to complete this book today – 28 Dhū al-Hijjah 1434 A.H./2 November 2013. All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā* that it was also on this date – 28 Dhū al-Hijjah 1395 A.H./1 January 1976 when the foundation for Madrasah 'Arabīyyah Bayt al-Ma'ārif, Bakhshī Bazaar, Allāhābād, was laid with a handful of friends without any means and riches. Imparting the teachings of the Qur'ān and Sunnah commenced on that day and is continuing to this day. May Allāh *ta'ālā* enable it to continue into the future. May He make this book beneficial and useful to the Muslim community. May He reward all those who assisted me in its preparation, especially Maulānā Maqṣūd Aḥmad Sāhib (a lecturer of Hadīth at Madrasah 'Arabīyyah Bayt al-Ma'ārif, Allāhābād) who checked and re-checked this book several times and made me even more satisfied with the work. Similarly, Maulānā Muḥammad 'Ubaydullāh Nadwī and Maulānā Fīroz 'Ālam Qāsīmī put in a lot of effort in the computer typesetting and correction of this work. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward all of them with the best of rewards and make it a means for His pleasure. Āmīn.

Was salām.

Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī

Bayt al-Adhkār, Waṣīyābād, Allāhābād
28 Dhū al-Hijjah 1434 A.H.
3 November 2013



English translation completed on 13 Safar 1436 A.H./06 December 2014. We pray to Allāh *ta'ālā* to accept this humble effort and to make it a source of our salvation in this world and in the Hereafter.

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ

As with all human endeavours, there are bound to be errors, mistakes and slip-ups in the translation. I humbly request the reader to inform me of them so that these could be corrected in future editions. Constructive criticism and suggestions will be highly appreciated. I can be contacted via e-mail: maulanamahomedy@gmail.com

Was salām
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