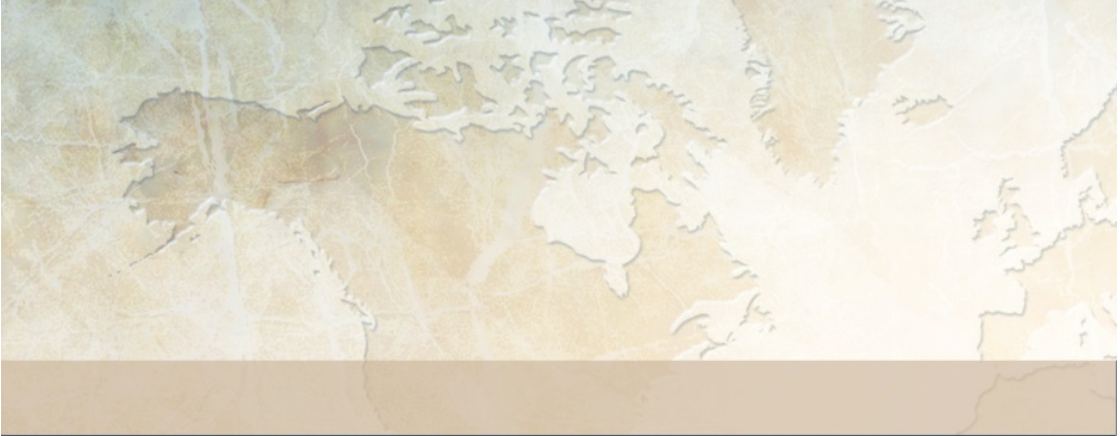


THE SCHOLARS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Need for reflection



HADHRAT MOULANA ABDUL HAMID IS'HAQ SAHEB
DAAMAT BARAKATUHUM



فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا
وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا

"...AND WHOSOEVER DESIRES TO MEET HIS LORD,
LET HIM WORK DEEDS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS AND
NOT ASSOCIATE ANY PARTNER IN THE WORSHIP
OF HIS LORD."

[SURAH AL-KAHF 18 : 110]





FOREWORD

All Praise is due to Allah Ta'ala, The Most Merciful,
The Most Beneficent, The Friend, The Protector and
The Inspirer of Faith.

May Peace and Blessings be upon the Beloved of Allah Ta'ala,
Rasulullah (ﷺ).

In this day and age of speedy communication and high technology, we observe how an expansive world, with huge continents, hundreds of countries, diverse societies and communities, all become a little global village.

The Internet opened up access to an entire world, without any travel and without any great effort. Social media has connected people from all walks of life, from different races, religions, etc. – at the touch of a button.

We find that millions of Muslims have also stepped onto this global platform, and for many, it is with noble intentions – to invite to Islam, to teach and propagate Islam, to correct the distorted views that many people have of Islam, and to serve the community of Muslims, globally – which is greatly rewarding.

However, like with any work of Dien, social media also offers tests for all who are serving the Dien of Allah Ta'ala. One such test is the test of Ikhlaas.

This compilation discusses the concerns that every Muslim should have when connecting on social media – especially for the

purpose of serving the Dien of Islam. It offers food for thought, caution and guidelines, taken from the teachings of our respected Sheikh, Hadhrat Moulana Abdul Hamid Is`haq Saheb (Daamat Barakaatuhum) and includes some important advices relating to Islaah and Tazkiyah.

Hadhrat Moulana's advices stem from a deep hearted concern and compassion that our efforts not be in vain. These advices should be appreciated on the note of well-wishing, just as a father would correct his child – wanting only the best for him.

Alhamdulillah, despite a busy schedule, Hadhrat Moulana gave time to proof-read and correct the Kitaab. Mufti Yusuf Desai, who is a Khalifa of Hadhrat Moulana, also assisted with proof-reading.

May Allah Ta'ala accept and make this a means of great goodness and a means of all of us taking heed of the need for Ikhlāas and the need for Islaah and Tazkiyah. May Allah Ta'ala grant us Ikhlāas in all undertakings and forgive us for our shortcomings.

May Allah Ta'ala greatly reward all those who assisted in the compilation of this Kitaab.

Sha'baan 1436 | June 2015

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Hadhrrat Moulana Abdul Hamid Is'haq Saheb
(Daamat Barakaatuhum)

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ مُنْشِئِ الْخَلْقِ مِنْ عَدَمٍ ثُمَّ الصَّلَاةُ عَلَى الْمُخْتَارِ فِي الْقَدَمِ
مَوْلَايَ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ دَائِمًا أَبَدًا عَلَى حَبِيبِكَ عَلَى رَسُولِكَ خَيْرِ الْخَلْقِ كُلِّهِمْ
يَا رَبِّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ دَائِمًا أَبَدًا عَلَى بَشِيرٍ نَذِيرٍ مُحَمَّدًا
مَوْلَايَ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ دَائِمًا أَبَدًا عَلَى طه سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ
بَلِّغْ سَلَامِي رَوْضَةَ فِيهَا النَّبِيُّ الْمُحْتَرَمُ

هُوَ الْحَبِيبُ الَّذِي تُرْجَى شَفَاعَتُهُ ... لِكُلِّ هَوَلٍ مِنَ الْأَهْوَالِ مُفْتَحِمٍ
يَا رَبِّ بِالْمُصْطَفَى بَلِّغْ مَقَاصِدَنَا وَ اغْفِرْ لَنَا مَا مَضَى يَا وَاسِعَ الْكَرَمِ

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قُلْ إِنْ صَلَاتِي وَ نُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝

**“SAY (O MUHAMMAD (ﷺ)): ‘VERILY, MY SALAAH (PRAYER),
MY SACRIFICE, MY LIVING, AND MY DYING ARE FOR ALLAH,
THE LORD OF THE WORLDS.’”**

[SURAH AL-AN’AAM 6 : 162]

Allah Ta’ala, in His Infinite Kindness, granted us the great distinction and privilege of being part of the Ummah of Rasulullah (ﷺ). Together with this, Allah Ta’ala also established a special brotherhood amongst the Muslims, and gave us duties and responsibilities whereby we can maintain this bond and unity.

We are directed to fulfil the rights of each other, protect and support each other; serve, care, share and wish well for each other. To also guide, correct and advise each other are in compliance with Allah Ta’ala’s Command of Amr bil Ma’roof and Nahy Anil Munkar¹ – and we should try to do so by adopting Hikmah (wisdom), compassion and mercy. May Allah Ta’ala grant us these qualities.

There are various Aayaat and Ahadīth that mention the gracious and noble qualities of the Believers with each other.

Allah Jalla Jalaaluhu mentions the friendship and association amongst the Believers as:

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ

“THE BELIEVERS, MEN AND WOMEN, ARE AULIYA (HELPERS/ FRIENDS/ SUPPORTERS/ PROTECTORS) OF ONE ANOTHER, THEY ENJOIN AL-MA’RUF (THAT WHICH ISLAM ORDERS ONE TO DO), AND FORBID FROM AL-MUNKAR (THAT WHICH ISLAM HAS FORBIDDEN)...”

[SURAH AT-TAUBAH 9 : 71]

Rasulullah (ﷺ) said:

الدِّينُ النَّصِيحَةُ

“Dien (religion) is well-wishing / sincerity.”²

So in the light of this friendship and brotherhood, some advice is being shared, addressing myself and those who are serving the

¹ ‘Amr bil Ma’roof and Nahy anil Munkar : Enjoining good and forbidding evil

² Sahih Muslim

Dien of Allah Ta'ala, as well as wishing well for all. These points are presented that we may all take precaution.

THE FIRST TO BE JUDGED

There is a well-known Hadīth, regarding the first people to be judged on the Day of Resurrection³. The **gist** of the Hadīth is that the three to be judged are:

- 1.) A Martyr,**
- 2.) A Scholar, who acquired the knowledge of Dien, taught it and who recited the Qur'aan Sharief, and**
- 3.) A wealthy man.**

Each one will acknowledge Allah Ta'ala's gifts upon him, and each one will say that he undertook his deeds for the sake of Allah Ta'ala alone. However, all three will be exposed as liars, since their actions were soiled with worldly motives and were not with Ikhlaas (sincerity).

The martyr fought to be called heroic and courageous; the Scholar or reciter of the Qur'aan Sharief utilised the knowledge of Dien, to gain honour, fame and name amongst the people, and the wealthy person desired and sought to be known for his generosity.

Since acceptance in the Court of Allah Ta'ala is based on Ikhlaas and rendering one's good deeds seeking only Allah Ta'ala's Pleasure, these men will not receive any reward on the Day of

³ Sahih Muslim 5032

Judgment. Their ambitions and aspirations were already fulfilled in the worldly life. **However, they will have to endure the punishment of the fire of Hell for contaminating their deeds, by pursuing the interests and ambitions of the nafs.** (May Allah Jalla Jalaaluhu save us all.)

Reflecting over this Hadīth, some points came to mind and are being shared so that we may become mindful, Insha-Allah.

The Hadīth mentions that even an ‘Aalim will be condemned to Jahannum because he sought name and fame... because he worked towards his name being remembered amongst the people.

OUR ASLAAF AND AKAABIR

We see with our great Imams, our Aslaaf and our Akaabir how Allah Ta’ala established their names in history and for all times – and we sometimes desire the same.

However, we must understand that this was not their desire. This was not their pursuit in life. This was not something they gave attention to because they had made ‘Fanaa’⁴ of their nafs (ego). They had annihilated their nafs.

They desired only Allah Ta’ala. They sought only Allah Ta’ala’s Pleasure. Allah Ta’ala then caused their names and their teachings to spread throughout the world.

⁴ Fanaa : Annihilation

Those who had Ta'alluq⁵ with them and those who appreciated their teachings shared their advices, lectures, books, etc. with others. ...Even today, we find that many transcribe talks, share audio-recordings and post notices of the programmes and visits of the 'Ulama and Mashaa'ikh.

Some have mentioned that they were guided by dreams to attend the programmes of some Sheikh and benefit from him. ...Allah Ta'ala has His system for the people to take guidance from His Friends.

And now we find that websites, blogs and social accounts are established in the names of our Akaabir – some of whom are no longer living. Their works and teachings are being spread via other people and benefitting on this global platform. **They did Dien's work sincerely and Allah Ta'ala spreads their work. They departed from the world but Allah Ta'ala keeps their work alive, for generations to come.**

So something that creates great concern and unease is that we find with the Internet and with the social networks that are in vogue, hundreds if not thousands of 'Ulama and Khuddaam of Dien share their achievements and accomplishments; even their Ibaadaat.

There are messages and updates from the individual himself or herself of what has been done and what is being done. Many even share the praises and compliments which others shower upon them.

⁵ Ta'alluq : connection / link / association

To announce and encourage towards programmes and courses where Dieni knowledge will be imparted, to want to share Dieni Ilm and to assist others in Dien are praiseworthy endeavours and greatly rewarding. **However, it is necessary for each of us to repeatedly check our intentions, lest the nafs is stealing from our A'maal (deeds) and taking its share of "name and fame".**

THE LAST WEAKNESS

Our Sufiya-e-Kiraam have said that the very last weakness to leave the Saalik – the Seeker of Allah Ta'ala – is Hubbe Jah (Love for fame). So not one of us can feel safe when up against an enemy like the nafs.

Hadhrat Khwaja Azizul Hasan Majzoob (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) had said very aptly:

***"Have no trust in the nafs, O Seeker!
Even if it becomes an angel, remain distrustful of it!
Recognise the snake of your nafs!
As soon as you are negligent, it bites!"***

None of us can accommodate the thought that there is 100% Ikhlāas – that there is no trace of Riyāa (show), no trace of Ujub (conceit/vanity) and no trace of the desire for name and fame in what we are doing.

We need to be very careful when it comes to ourselves, our A'maal and our Khidmat of Dien, and we need to work to safeguard and preserve them from the contamination and destruction of nafs and shaytaan.

If others are speaking well of a person and they are praising his or her efforts in Dien, then this is different. We are talking about **ourselves** and what we sometimes do to put ourselves forward, or what we do to place ourselves ahead of others, or what we do to invite attention to ourselves. This is where we diverge from the real goal, which is to do for Allah Ta'ala and seek His Pleasure.

...Again, we cannot help but think of our respected Asaatiza and seniors and how humble, modest and unpretentious they were, despite being great, great Imams, Mufasssireen, Muhadditheen, and Fuqaha. **SubhanAllah, they would not even introduce themselves with a title. They would even refer people to their contemporaries, just to avoid name and fame.**

Imam Shafi'ee (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) had given us a glimpse of his Tawaadhu (humility) when he said: ***"I wish that people learnt this knowledge from me without ascribing one letter of it to me."***

SubhanAllah! A statement that should make each one of us reflect over our own efforts in Dien. Sometimes, we wait for acknowledgement and credit to be given; and when we receive it, we broadcast it.

...Of course, honesty and sincerity demands that when we quote others, we give credit where it is due and mention their names. Doing so reflects one's integrity, uprightness and humbleness.

Our seniors have taught us that when sharing the teachings of others, we should present the source. This invites Noor, Barakah (blessings) and acceptance. It is unethical and dishonourable to pass off someone else's teachings as one's own.

THE MOSQUITO AND THE BED BUG

An analogy that comes to mind when comparing our predecessors in Dien and ourselves, is that of a mosquito and a bed-bug: The mosquito makes a noise when it works – but its noise generally becomes the reason for it being killed. The bed bug does its work silently... quietly... and then retreats. It goes back to base. Its work gets accomplished.

Our Aslaaf and Akaabir did Dien's work without any fanfare and their work was established for the benefit of the Ummah until the end of time. Look at the acceptance of Imam Bukhari's (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) works, as well as the other great Muhadditheen and Scholars. Allahu Akbar! What acceptance!

In our times, we see the works of Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ), Hadhrat Moulana Muhammad Zakariyyah (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) and others gain world-wide acceptance. Alhamdulillah.

Sadly, our condition is far removed from our Akaabir. Many of us seem to thrive being in the public eye and centre stage with our activities, endeavours and accomplishments.

We have to also take note and understand: **Our Aslaaf and Akaabir undertook the route of Islaah and Tazkiyah first. And when it came to Dien, they focussed fully on serving Dien, seeking Allah Ta'ala's Pleasure. Their sacrifices for the cause of Dien were also remarkable and offer us great inspiration.**

We, on the other hand, complete the 'Aalim course and consider this sufficient for serving Dien.

NEED FOR ISLAAH

Completing and qualifying are not enough. Islaah and Tazkiyah are **essential** and will also have to be undertaken, and that too, under the guidance of a Sheikh-e-Kaamil.

In giving advice to the ‘Ulama-e-Kiraam, Sheikh Abdul Qader Jeelani (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) had said that once an ‘Aalim qualifies, he should not make haste in taking to the Mimbar.

Our Sheikh, Hadhrat Moulana Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Saheb (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) had quoted Sheikh Abdul Qader Jeelani’s (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) advice: ***“O ‘Ulama! Do not ascend the Mimbar immediately on completion of your studies. Spend some time in the company of a righteous Sheikh and learn Ikhlās! Then, Insha-Allah, the Mimbar will be yours. When you will deliver your talks, with the reality of Allah Ta’ala’s Ishq (Love) and Khauf (Fear) and Ma’rifat (Recognition), you will benefit the creation. If not, little benefit will be derived.”***

Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) had advised that an ‘Aalim, upon graduating, should spend at least six months in the company of a spiritual guide, **specifically for Islaah of the nafs.**

COMPANY OF A SHEIKH-E-KAAMIL

Hadhrat Moulana Qaasim Nanotwi (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ), Hadhrat Moulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) and Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) were brilliant Scholars, were par excellent in the sciences of Dien, yet they took Bay’at to Hadhrat Haji Imdadullah

(رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ), who was not an ‘Aalim. And each one acknowledged the great benefit of his Ta’alluq with Hadhrat Haji Saheb (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ).

Our Sheikh (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) had related to us that Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) had said: *“Before being blessed with the beneficial company of Hadhrat Haji Saheb, we undoubtedly possessed knowledge, but it was dormant. We possessed Imaan but it was Imaan of belief – an argumentative and an intellectual Imaan. After placing our hands in the hands of Hadhrat Haji Saheb (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) and commencing Zikrullah on his guidance, the doors of our hearts opened. Noor entered and filled up our hearts. Our Imaan advanced from I’tiqadi (belief) to Haali (reality) – Its sweetness and reality was then enjoyed.”*

Hadhrat Moulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) said, in respect to the great Barakah found in the Suhbat (company) of Hadhrat Haji Saheb (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ): *“We knew the names of the different mithais (sweetmeats), but it was only in Hadhrat Haji Saheb’s (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) company that we tasted the mithai.”*

...Meaning, that in spite of their learning and qualifications, they only experienced the reality, spirit and enjoyment of Dien in the company of a Wali of Allah Ta’ala.

No matter what expertise and proficiency an ‘Aalim may have, he should give quality time to keep the company of a Sheikh-e-Kaamil and complete the process of Islaah and Tazkiyah. He will then see the difference in his relationship with Allah Ta’ala and Rasulullah (ﷺ), as well as in his service to the Dien of Allah Ta’ala.

Otherwise, looking at the sad state of affairs, it seems as if many Scholars are caught up with 'public relations' work, than with giving 100% to Dien's work – and if our effort is name and fame and to become popular amongst the masses, then nafs and shaytaan have floored us.

Alhamdulillah, there is a lot of great work being done in the service of Dien and may Allah Ta'ala increase this. **However, if we want our endeavours to bear the noble fruits of Allah Ta'ala's Pleasure, of acceptance and of rewards, and for our work to be beneficial, then attention will have to be given to Islaah and Tazkiyah, and to correcting our intentions.** ...May Allah Ta'ala grant us the concern.

When accounts are opened on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other social media, are we inviting to Allah Ta'ala, to Dien, or to ourselves? Are we marketing ourselves via the Internet and social networks or are we working towards raising the flag of Islam?

PHOTOGRAPHS

Very sadly, there are so many Scholars today, throughout the world, who see some kind of need to upload their photographs, to have themselves videoed, and then these videos are uploaded and circulated – as if the whole world must know and must recognise that we are the Scholars of Dien.

The knowledge of Dien can easily be disseminated without people seeing the face of the Scholar. **This has been proven by our 'Ulama over 1400 years. There was no need then and there is no need now, for one's photographs or videos to be circulating.**

The audio recordings, audio-streaming, writings, etc. are serving the purpose perfectly – without the face of the Scholar being seen or published. Alhamdulillah, people are benefiting, throughout the world, via these mediums.

And in truth, all of us who claim to be followers and lovers of Rasulullah (ﷺ) should consider that there is not a single, image or sketch of the one who is the greatest after Allah Ta’ala, the Beloved of Allah Ta’ala and the most handsome of creation – Rasulullah (ﷺ). There is also not a single picture of any one Sahabi (رضي الله عنه). This attests to the fact that there is no need for us to be taking photographs or posting our photographs everywhere. There is absolutely no need.

It is possible that the need we perceive is due to the nafs seeking or even demanding attention.

PROTECTION

Our protection lies in not having our photographs circulating and not always announcing what we are doing or where we are going and who we are meeting – especially in these times where the ‘Ulama are subjected to interrogation, detainment, imprisonment and even persecution – on the slightest suspicion.

If we look at our Akaabir, there were no photographs of most of them – and if there was, it was just a passport photograph or visa photograph. As such, the secret police and spies – especially during the British rule in India – did not recognise some of the ‘Ulama, who they were seeking to arrest and imprison or kill.

There are incidents of ‘Ulama who escaped imprisonment and torture because the British did not know what they look like. Those ‘Ulama were so humble in their ways and dress and they were so unassuming that they were taken as ordinary villagers, even though the secret police crossed their paths many a time.

Let us learn from those great Scholars and follow in their footsteps of humility.

There is safety in being ‘low profile’.

THE SAHABA-E-KIRAAM رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ

One Khalifa of our Sheikh (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) related that on one occasion, Hadhrat Moulana Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Saheb (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) handed to him passport photographs to sort out some travel arrangements.

The Khalifa, in his love for Hadhrat Moulana (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ), decided to keep just one photograph for himself, which was spare – that he may see the picture of our Sheikh whenever he wanted to. He, himself, was not residing in Karachi – so he did not have the opportunity to always be with Hadhrat Moulana (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ).

Keeping the photograph was his secret – but nothing is kept a secret from Allah Ta’ala. Allah Ta’ala is “الْعَلِيمُ” (All-Knowing) and “الْخَبِيرُ” (All-Informed / Aware).

In making our Islaah, Allah Ta'ala uses different methods – and Allah Ta'ala is also so compassionate and so merciful in concealing our errors when correcting us.

In the Majlis that took place thereafter, Allah Ta'ala inspired in our Sheikh, Hadhrat Moulana Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Saheb (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ), to mention that the Sahaba-e-Kiraam (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ) had such deep and such intense love for Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) that we cannot fathom the depth and **sincerity** of their love. They could have drawn a picture or pictures of Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) – for the sake of remembrance or for the Ummah to come, that we may also see Rasulullah's (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) picture – but they did not do so. **Despite their eagerness to always be with Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and see him, not one single Sahabi (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ) had any sketch or image of Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). Then who is the Sheikh that his photograph has to be kept?**

The Khalifa later disclosed the incident, and said that he repented from his mistake and returned the extra photograph.

What then is our condition as Sheikhs and as 'Aalims and others, who deliberately choose to have our photographs and videos taken and circulated?

OUR CONDITION

Often, the person is fully aware that he is being photographed or videoed; or he, himself, is posing for a photograph or smiling into the camera – and sometimes the Scholar has taken his own pictures – 'selfies' – and then he shares these photographs.

At times, one cannot help but think that there is an obsession with the self. The impression given is that there is self-admiration and self-importance. ...Why would a person keep posting pictures of himself?

Yes, it is known that there are differences of opinions regarding digital photography, but who cannot see the great harms that this has led to in these recent years?

Just consider the serious repercussions of photography upon the Ummah - in the form of pornography. Perhaps every 'Aalim is dealing with hundreds of cases of Muslims who are addicted to pornography and the damage and destruction that follow. Where did it stem from?

Consider the Fitnah in the Haramain Shariefain with the majority of visitors interested more in selfies and in videoing and posting their pictures all over the Internet and social media networks, than with fulfilling the actual objective of Umrah, Hajj and Ziyarah.

...Our visits to the sacred lands of Makkatul Mukarramah and Madinatul Munawwarah are meant for the purpose of Ibaadah and gaining closeness to Allah Ta'ala and Rasulallah (ﷺ) – but we have made these blessed places for tourism and entertainment. **And when Scholars jump onto the bandwagon of these diversions and they also take and post photographs and videos of themselves whilst in the Haramain Shariefain, then how do we abate the Fitnah? How do we overcome the Fitnah?**

How distanced we have become from the blessed Sunnah of Rasulallah (ﷺ) who, in absolute humbleness, made

Dua: ***“O Allah, I ask of You a pilgrimage that contains no boasting or showing off.”***⁶

TRAP OF SHAYTAAN

This Fitnah of photography diverts us from the purpose of our lives. **And dangerously distracts us from our Khidmat of Dien and our Ibaadaat.** ...Squandering time by taking photographs, taking ‘selfies’ or videoing does not benefit a Scholar. A Scholar does not have any time to waste. In fact, a Muslim does not have time to waste.

Let us be intelligent. Recognise the plots and traps of shaytaan to impede and prevent us from our work and goal. **And know the nafs.**

Alhamdulillah, Allah Ta’ala has blessed us with an integrated camera, within ourselves, by giving us our eyes and the gift of sight. The eye is constantly capturing moment after moment, scene after scene; it is recording and storing away all kinds of pictures. ...SubhanAllah, we already have a camera working all the time - and such a remarkable camera!

...All four Imams of Fiqh clearly prohibited picture-making, and the majority of ‘Ulama – whether from India, Pakistan or Saudi Arabia, hold the view that photographs of animate objects is not permissible.

⁶ Sunan Ibn Majah, Hadith: 2890, Shamail Tirmidhi, Hadith: 334

THE VIEW OF ALLAMAH YUSUF BINNORI (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ)

Allamah Yusuf Binnori (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) was a great Scholar and Muhaddith of his time. He had compiled a Kitaab that is titled, **“Present Day Trials and Their Solutions”**.

In this book, Hadhrat Moulana (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) discusses this Fitnah of photography in much detail, which makes an important read for all of us who are regarded as ‘Ulama.

Hadhrat Moulana (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) explained that this Fitnah and curse of photography is not limited to itself; **rather it gives rise to many Fitnahs** – as we are seeing today. And despite it becoming so acceptable to the people, it will remain a sin. **The sin will not fall away.**

Allamah Yusuf Binnori (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) went on to explain: ***“Photographs play such a great role in spreading lewdness and evil that the very foundations of Taqwa, purity and leading a chaste life have been shaken to the core.”***

...This is what we find manifest all around us.

Hadhrat Moulana (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) also mentioned that if a person wants to disgrace another, he just alters, modifies and manipulates a photograph – to the extent of even attaching the head of a person to another body, in some compromising position, which is then the cause of complete ruin to the person’s respect and reputation in society. May Allah Ta’ala safeguard us all.

DIVINE PROTECTION

On one occasion, our Sheikh, Hadhrat Moulana Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Saheb (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ), mentioned an incident that had reached the media, of a woman who was participating in an election. She was forced to step down from the election due to certain photographs of herself, which were used as blackmail.

Hadhrat (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) then explained to us that sometimes, a person gets caught up in sins – especially in youth. However, Allah Ta’ala, in His Mercy, paves the way of guidance and repentance and the person changes his life. He becomes pious and righteous. The person could become a great Wali and Sheikh, with thousands of Mureeds and followers. ...What shame and embarrassment if some mischievous and malicious person were to then circulate those photographs of the Sheikh – taken in his past and taken while engaged in sins, of which he had sincerely repented from.

Hadhrat (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) said: ***“Allah Ta’ala has prohibited picture-making so that these pictures do not become a proof of one’s past, sinful life and in this manner Allah Ta’ala has safeguarded the honour, dignity and respect of His slaves.”***

Allah Ta’ala not only forgives; Allah Ta’ala conceals sins. Allah Ta’ala’s accepts Taubah, so much so, that Insha-Allah, the person will not have to even account for those sins that he sincerely repented from.

On the other hand, photographs and videos are proof, which we create. If enemies or rivals get wind of such photographs or videos, they use these to bring about humiliation and scandal for

the person. Otherwise, there are many who ignorantly and foolishly post their photographs all over the Internet and social media and these are then reposted – until thousands and thousands view those sins. It is then beyond the person's control to delete the evidence of his or her sins. And this remains a stigma, life-long.

If only we would appreciate Allah Ta'ala's Prohibitions from the depths of our hearts! There is nothing but goodness and protection for us.

TAQWA

Our pious predecessors would attest to a man's virtue and piety by his abstinence from what is sin and his abstinence from what is doubtful.

No matter what argument is presented, it is the safest course of action, and it is the demand of Taqwa, that a person avoids photographs, live broadcasts and video recordings.⁷

Nabi (ﷺ) said: ***'Verily Halaal is clear, and verily Haraam is clear. And between them there are certain doubtful matters many people are unaware of; therefore, who stays away from doubtful matters, he has protected his Dien and honour. And who gets involved in doubtful matters, he would fall into Haraam.'***⁸

If we consider what **secures** our Dien and what **curbs** Fitnah, we would not go to such great lengths and get so technical to prove

⁷ Due to government protocol, there is an allowance for passport, visa, etc. photographs.

⁸ Bukhari/Muslim

the permissibility of digital photography (of animate objects). Despite the various arguments presented in support of it, the clear warnings in the Ahadīth, regarding picture-making, should more than suffice for us. The words of Rasulullah (ﷺ) are so strong in their prohibition.

Alhamdulillah, we find that most of our senior and respected Mashaa'ikh and 'Ulama of **present day** prohibit digital photography and video recordings and they steer clear of it. They also look ahead and see the repercussions, long-term.

Our assertions and arguments and doing contrary to what the majority of the senior 'Ulama advocate and advise creates the impression that we place ourselves above them in learning and understanding. Our insistence on taking a different stance is also at odds with the Mubarak Sunnah and **seems** to suggest that our own technical views take precedence and supersede the Ahadīth.

...Different degrees, titles, dynamic oratory and popularity can be very, very deluding. **The wisdom, experience and foresight – which we find with our seniors – offer fortification and safety for the Ummah. Let us respect, appreciate and accept their sound guidance.**

GUIDANCE AND WARNING

Allamah Yusuf Binnori (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) encouraged Mashwarah with the pious learned since they are blessed with wisdom and insight. Hadhrat Moulana (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) said: ***"If the correct Islamic Shura (consultation) is resorted to, it can be a means of closing the doors to many Fitnahs and misguidance."***

Together with this, Hadhrat Moulana (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) mentioned a very, very great weakness that is found within us: ***“A great Fitnah is vanity and vanity over one’s opinion. Yet it is very possible that there is some hidden agenda of one’s nafs or the hidden whispering of shaytaan which has crept in.”***

Nafs and shaytaan are extremely shrewd. And shaytaan adopts such strategies to defeat even the learned. He, himself, is an ‘Aalim. So we have to be very cautious. And we should be very distrustful of nafs and shaytaan.

We should also be wary of the pride and vanity that accompanies knowledge, which we have been repeatedly cautioned and warned of. Imam Al-Ghazali (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) had said: ***“People of knowledge are in greater danger of pride and arrogance than anyone else.”***

Sheikhul Hadīth, Hadhrat Moulana Muhammad Zakariyyah (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) had quoted Imam Ghazali (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ), who related in his Ihya that Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas’ood (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) said: ***“Yours is the age in which desires are restrained by Dīni knowledge; a time will soon come when Dīni knowledge will be subservient to desires.”***

This means that people will validate whatever pleases their nafs, using their knowledge of Dīn. May Allah Ta’ala protect us.

In regard to photography, we really only need to ask ourselves if the Beloved (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) would have advocated the same and allowed for himself to be photographed, videoed, etc.

IN THE LOVE OF RASULULLAH ﷺ

The mind goes to the temperament and character of Rasulullah (ﷺ). ...SubhanAllah, what beauty, what purity and what goodness!

Allah Ta'ala says:

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ ۝

“AND YOU ARE SURELY ON AN EXCELLENT STANDARD OF CHARACTER.”

[SURAH AL-QALAM 68 : 4]

بَلَغَ الْعُلَىٰ بِكَمَالِهِ كَشَفَ الدُّجَىٰ بِجَمَالِهِ
حَسُنْتَ جَمِيعُ خِصَالِهِ صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ

***“He attained the highest stage by his perfection,
He removed the darkness by his beauty,
Beautiful are all his achievements,
Send Blessings upon him and his family.”***

ﷺ

We all know that Rasulullah (ﷺ) was the epitome of self-effacement and modesty. There was such humility, that when walking, he (ﷺ) would ask the Sahabah (رضي الله عنهم) to walk in front, and he himself walked behind. That was his humbleness. Despite being Sayyidul Mursaleen⁹, Imamul Muttaqeen¹⁰, Sayyidul Kawnayn¹¹, **he did not seek any special attention or prominence.**

⁹ Sayyidul Mursaleen : The master of all the Messengers of Allah Ta'ala

¹⁰ Imamul Muttaqeen : The leader of all who are pious

¹¹ Sayyidul Kawnayn : The master of all created beings in both worlds.

We are aware that Rasulullah's (ﷺ) sight used to be focused more towards the ground, due to his modesty and bashfulness. And when he would look at something, he would not stare. He would look lightly. ...SubhanAllah.

The Sahaba-e-Kiraam (رضي الله عنهم) related all these beautiful details to us – **not only for reading and admiring, but for implementing in our own lives as well.**

The 'Ulama are described as the heirs of the Ambiyaa (عليهم السلام). Rasulullah's (ﷺ) said: *"The 'Ulama are the heirs of the Ambiyaa who bequeath neither Dinaar¹² nor Dirham¹³ but only that of knowledge; and he who acquires it, has in fact acquired an abundant portion."*¹⁴

We expect to find in the 'Ulama great similarity to the Ambiyaa (عليهم السلام), especially Rasulullah (ﷺ). However, we just cannot reconcile the scenario today with that of the Mubarak Sunnah: These days, the trend is of photographs, "selfies", making special arrangements for our talks to be videoed, styling ourselves like 'celebrities' and 'superstars', etc. ...**How do we reconcile all of this with the humble ways and mannerisms of the Beloved (ﷺ)?**

Would the beloved personality, Rasulullah (ﷺ), approve of photographs and videos circulating, which expressly draw attention to oneself, in the light of his humility and modesty – in the light of his beautiful and noble Sunnah?

¹² Dinaar : Gold Coin

¹³ Dirham : Silver Coin

¹⁴ Abu Dawud, At- Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah

In our claim of love for Rasulullah (ﷺ), where is the similarity in respect to humility and modesty? Should we not nurture these characteristics as well?

Allah Ta'ala informs us:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ
وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا ۝

**“CERTAINLY YOU HAVE IN THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH AN EXCELLENT EXAMPLE
FOR HIM WHO HOPES IN ALLAH AND THE LATTER DAY AND REMEMBERS
ALLAH MUCH.”**

[SURAH AL-AHZAAB 33 : 21]

قُلْ إِن كُنتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۚ
وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ۝

**“SAY (O MUHAMMAD (ﷺ)): IF YOU DO LOVE ALLAH, FOLLOW ME;
ALLAH SHALL LOVE YOU AND FORGIVE YOU YOUR SINS. AND ALLAH IS
MOST-FORGIVING, VERY-MERCIFUL.”**

[SURAH AAL-IMRAAN 3 : 31]

If our public image and gaining a huge following are what we give importance to, then very sadly, we have lost sight of the real goal.

SEEKING THE LIME-LIGHT

A student had a dream of a great and senior ‘Aalim and Sheikh of the time – a Wali of Allah Ta’ala. The ‘Aalim was seen as a young man, dressed in full western attire and without a beard. He was on a stage, moving around and entertaining the people – like perhaps how actors, musicians and others do.

The respected 'Aalim responded that seeing him in a dream, in that condition, was a reflection of many of the young Scholars who are taking to the stages of the world – participating in different shows, fairs and other programmes – and sadly, for many it is just 'show business'.

Many do not have the Shari'ah length beard of one fist length, wear the pants below their ankles and are caught up in a lot of intermingling - behaving in a manner which goes against the grain of the knowledge that Allah Ta'ala has blessed them with. Their style and approach is distinctly modern and western. **The dignity of the knowledge of Qur'aan and Sunnah is not apparent in their behavior.**

SOCIAL MEDIA

There is no denying that social media has also opened many doors of Fitnah. We now have thousands of our Muslim sisters following suit, and uploading their own photographs and videos. Some sisters – and also some brothers – send messages privately or publicly – which sometimes spells out as flirtation or infatuation, and then the problems that arise because of this.

Issues are brought to us, and reports are disclosed, which are very unsettling and which prompt us to speak out about these wrongs, that they be rectified, Insha-Allah.

There are many people – men, women, girls and boys – who post their photographs and other pictures that are impermissible and even indecent and shameless, and they cite the names of Scholars who post photographs of themselves and of others. **They present**

the Scholars as their Daleel (proof) for posting their own photographs – which, more often, is a display of sins.

...That people justify their sins, using the Scholars as evidence, should shake our hearts.

We should also keep in mind that by uploading our photographs and videos, our Muslim sisters can fall into the sin of looking at and admiring ghair-mahareem¹⁵ – all because we perceive some need for everyone to see us. And especially where an ‘Aalim is good-looking and handsome, then to a greater extent he should fear Allah Ta’ala and think that his photographs and videos can easily become a Fitnah for women.

These are things that easily sway the heart and create infatuation and Haraam love. This then spoils the gazes and the hearts of others.

The Scholars are meant to be a shield and protection for the Ummah, not a Fitnah for the Ummah.

A NOBLE EXAMPLE IN THESE TIMES

As a wonderful example, worthy of emulation:

There is a pious young ‘Aalim who resides in Pakistan. He is extremely handsome and wealthy. Previously, it was his habit to dress immaculately and he would leave a striking impression on people. His handsomeness would catch the eye of any person.

¹⁵ A ghair-mahram (singular) is someone whom one can marry.

On one occasion, he visited Hadhrat Moulana Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Saheb (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ). He was dressed in an untidy manner. His clothes were shabby and unappealing. Hadhrat (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) said to him: “*Why don’t you dress properly! Clothes are a bounty of Allah Ta’ala!*” Hadhrat (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) then quoted the Ayah from Surah Ad-Dhuha:

وَأَمَّا بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثْ ۝

“SPEAK ABOUT THE FAVOURS OF YOUR RABB (IN GRATITUDE AND WITHOUT PRIDE OR BOASTFULNESS).”

[SURAH AD-DHUHA 93 : 11]

The young ‘Aalim explained to our Sheikh (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) that he was in Makkatul Mukarramah and in the Haram Sharief, when an Egyptian woman saw him. At the time, he was impeccably dressed. On seeing him, she was so struck by his beauty that on expressing her admiration, she fainted.

...Imagine how handsome Nabi Yusuf (عليه السلام) must have been; and how handsome our beloved Rasul (صلى الله عليه وسلم) !

Hazrat Ayesha (رضي الله عنها) said in poetry:

***“If the friends of Zulaykha could see the blessed face
of Rasulullah (صلى الله عليه وسلم), they would cut their hearts
instead of their hands.”***

The young ‘Aalim said to Hadhrat (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ): “*Observing the response and reaction of that lady, I resolved that from that day onwards, I will dress like this - so that others do not fall into the Fitnah of being attracted to me.*”

Our Sheikh (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) was so extremely pleased, that in happiness, Hadhrat (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) embraced him and said: *“Masha-Allah, this is what a person should do.”*

Allahu Akbar! What Taqwa and virtue from a young man! How admirable and enviable that such a handsome and wealthy man would fear Allah Ta’ala to this extent! This is surely a lesson for all of us and an example worthy to be followed.

A WEAKNESS

Sadly, today, we want to attract the opposite gender. Many men – even ‘Ulama – say that if there is a woman or there are many women in their presence, they will set their topee right, and make their own presence felt in some way or the other **because they want to invite attention**. Some boldly and brazenly engage in idle chit-chat and humour with ghair-mahareem.

Many men say they are attracted to women who are in Hijaab and Niquaab, because of the style and the beautiful design of their Hijaab. **The purpose of Hijaab is to conceal and not reveal; it is to divert attention and not attract attention**. Unfortunately and very sadly, we have made Hijaab and Niquaab a fashion statement and a cause for attention. This then defeats its purpose.

Women write, disclosing their interest and Haraam feelings for the Scholars who are ‘celebrities’ on YouTube and on television. These Scholars make a ‘glamorous’ display of themselves – even at seminars and conferences, where women are also present and get to see them, meet them, view them on big screens, etc. – and this creates Fitnah.

...This attraction between man and woman is natural but it is not to be exploited and manipulated.

If Allah Ta'ala has blessed a person with beauty, then this is Sharaafat (honour). Do not make it **Shar** (evil) and **Aafat** (calamity).

COMMAND OF ALLAH TA'ALA

We should reflect over Allah Ta'ala's Command:

وَإِذَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُنَّ مَتَاعًا فَسْأَلُوهُنَّ مِنْ وَرَاءِ حِجَابٍ ط

“... AND WHEN YOU ASK (HIS WIVES) FOR SOMETHING, ASK THEM FROM BEHIND A PARTITION. THAT IS PURER FOR YOUR HEARTS AND THEIR HEARTS...”

[SURAH AL-AHZAAB 33 : 53]

This Ayah was revealed addressing the Sahaba-e-Kiraam (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ) and the noble wives of Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) who had already achieved the highest levels of purity and Taqwa. These rules of Hijaab were established to protect their purity to a greater extent. SubhanAllah.

When we examine our behaviour, we are so careless and heedless in spite of having this knowledge! May Allah Ta'ala give us the understanding and the concern.

...Whether male or female, we should also be watchful over our tone of speech: Adopting a charming, amiable demeanour when speaking to the opposite gender is totally unacceptable. This incites Haraam desire in the hearts. ...We are accountable for our behaviour.

Our sisters should keep in mind the Ayah, which, though revealed to the Ummahatul Mu'mineen (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُنَّ) are applicable to all Muslim women:

إِنْ اتَّقَيْتُنَّ فَلَا تَخْضَعْنَ بِالْقَوْلِ فَيَطْمَعَ الَّذِي فِي قَلْبِهِ مَرَضٌ وَقُلْنَ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا ۚ

“... IF YOU FEAR ALLAH, THEN DO NOT BE SOFT IN SPEECH [TO MEN], LEST HE IN WHOSE HEART IS DISEASE SHOULD BE MOVED WITH DESIRE, BUT SPEAK WITH APPROPRIATE SPEECH.”

[SURAH AL-AHZAAB 33 : 32]

DRESSING

A woman should dress appropriately and protect herself. She should not flaunt her beauty in public; nor upload photos and videos of herself on the Internet and on social media accounts. Nor should she post pictures of herself in Niqaab – because this too creates interest and desire. This is not in conformity with Hijaab and Taqwa.

...Allah Ta’ala, Who is The Most Beautiful and the Creator of Beauty, has kept His Beauty concealed. It is reserved for only the Jannatis, in the Hereafter. So our respected sisters should consider it a great honour that Allah Ta’ala has made them so beautiful, that their beauty too requires a veil. **Their beauty is also exclusive and is reserved for only certain people.**

Our respected sisters should appreciate this exclusivity which they have been granted and should not share their photographs on social networks for others to take Haraam pleasure from. They should also keep before them the pure example of Hadhrat Faatima (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا). When asked: ***“What is the best thing for***

women?”, Hadhrat Faatima (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا) immediately replied: ***“That they do not see men and men do not see them.”***¹⁶

Men should also not purposely dress and present themselves in such a manner that women become attracted, enamoured and infatuated.

By keeping ourselves simple and low-key, we are saved from so many Fitnahs. When we want to show ourselves and we market ourselves, we easily fall into Fitnah. ...**Noble and wise is the person who chooses to be inconspicuous and even obscures his beauty to save himself and others from Fitnah.**

RUJOO ‘ILALLAAH

Our Sheikh (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) would say that some ‘Ulama are extremely lax in regard to safeguarding their gazes and “relax” the laws of Purdah (تَعَوُّذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنْ ذَلِكَ)¹⁷ by integrating with strange women and chatting to them freely.

The same is found on the Internet and with social media: There is freedom to look at everyone and to also message each other privately and get to know others. In this way, the laws of Shari’ah are violated to an extreme. But this does not seem to affect our conscience – because we are becoming bolder and bolder on these public platforms. (تَعَوُّذُ بِاللّٰهِ)

¹⁶ Musnadul Bazaar, Vol. 2, Pg. 159

¹⁷ (تَعَوُّذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنْ ذَلِكَ) Na-uzu Billahi min zaalik : We seek Allah’s protection from that.

...So long as Ghairullah (anything besides Allah Ta'ala) is entertained in the heart, and these sins pollute the heart, when will Allah Ta'ala enter the heart?

Let us take an honest look, deep into our hearts. Let us work towards rectifying ourselves and purifying our hearts before we meet Allah Ta'ala.

Allah Ta'ala instructs us in Surah Al-Baqarah:

آمِنُوا كَمَا آمَنَ النَّاسُ

“BELIEVE AS THE PEOPLE HAVE BELIEVED

(I.E. THE SAHABA-E-KIRAAM (رَضِيََ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ) ...”

[SURAH AL-BAQARAH 2 : 13]

Let us introspect if our actions have similarity with the Sahaba-e-Kiraam (رَضِيََ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ), whom Allah Ta'ala also describes as:

يَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا تَتَقَلَّبُ فِيهِ الْقُلُوبُ وَالْأَبْصَارُ ۚ

“THEY FEAR A DAY IN WHICH THE HEARTS AND EYES WILL (FEARFULLY) TURN ABOUT...”

[SURAH AN-NOOR 24 : 37]

We should adorn and beautify our hearts and lives with the love and fear of Allah Ta'ala. We should not post photographs and videos of ourselves, or seek to invite attention from the opposite gender, or mix and interact with strange women. There should be sincere repentance from these weaknesses and those photographs, etc. should be removed and deleted. ...Let us seek to invite and attract Allah Ta'ala's Pleasure and Mercy instead.

We should also make Dua that Allah Ta'ala grants us recognition of our nafs.

THE CAUTION OF THE AULIYA ALLAH

On one occasion, we were with our Sheikh (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) and we were traveling by plane. Hadhrat (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) picked up the in-flight magazine and began to browse through it. When he turned the one page, there was a picture of a woman, who was dressed immodestly. So he immediately closed the magazine and called us. Hadhrat (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) said to us: ***"I can repent privately, but I am making all of you witness that from today I will never open an in-flight magazine again, as there is always a possibility that there are images of women in these magazines."***

Consider this concern and advice of an Aarif Billah. What about us?

Even the fleeting gazes on pictures of women – whether in magazines, on the Internet, profile pictures, display pictures, etc. have their effect on the heart.

I often say that if butter does not melt in front of fire, it is not butter. It just looks like butter. If a man says that freely mixing with women does not affect him; that no desire comes into his heart by looking, listening or speaking to ghair-mahram women, then he is not a man. He is, perhaps, some other specimen.

If we are not going to be cautious and not adopt measures for the protection of our hearts, then this fire of temptations and Fitnahs that is surrounding us will damage our Imaan and Dien. ...As said: ***"Where the ground is slippery, even an elephant can slip."***

We have heard from our Akaabir and we have also read authentic incidents of Huffaaz, who, upon casting lustful gazes and admiring strange women had to contend with the Divine chastisement where the entire Qur’aan Sharief was eliminated – wiped out – of their hearts! We have also dealt with many, many cases where people have given up their Imaan because of a pretty face or handsome face. They just throw away their passport of salvation; of Jannah. (Allah Ta’ala protect us all).

We should never be slack and inattentive to the schemes and deceptions of nafs and shaytaan.

LOWER THE GAZE

Sheikhul Hadīth, Hadhrat Moulana Muhammad Zakariyyah (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) had said that the sweetness and enjoyment of Ibaadat are totally lost due the sin of evil glances.

Whatever we see leaves imprints on the heart, therefore the Command to lower our gazes from Haraam. **Protecting the gaze is protecting the heart.** Allah Ta’ala instructs us:

قُلْ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ يَعْصُواْ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُواْ فُرُوجَهُمْ ۚ ذٰلِكَ أَزْكٰى لَهُمْ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيْرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُوْنَ ۝

“TELL THE BELIEVING MEN TO LOWER THEIR GAZE (FROM LOOKING AT THAT WHICH IS HARAAM) AND TO BE MODEST (I.E. TO PROTECT THEMSELVES FROM PROHIBITED DEEDS LIKE ADULTERY AND FORNICATION). THAT IS PURER FOR THEM. VERILY ALLAH IS AWARE OF WHAT THEY DO.”

وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَى جُيُوبِهِنَّ ۝

“AND TELL THE BELIEVING WOMEN TO LOWER THEIR GAZE (FROM LOOKING AT THAT WHICH IS FORBIDDEN) AND TO BE MODEST (I.E. TO PROTECT THEMSELVES FROM PROHIBITED DEEDS LIKE ADULTERY, FORNICATION, ETC.) AND NOT TO SHOW OFF THEIR BEAUTY EXCEPT ONLY THAT WHICH IS APPARENT AND LET THEM WEAR THEIR HEAD-COVERINGS OVER THEIR BOSOMS...”

[SURAH AN-NOOR 24 : 29/ 30]

These Commandments are to be practiced upon and applied in our own lives. They are not to be limited to reading only.

Our sight is an Amaanat (trust); our hearing, heart, imagination and everything else given to us are trusts. If we use these priceless bounties in the disobedience of Allah Ta’ala, then we will be guilty of abuse of trust (Khiyanat) and ingratitude of Allah Ta’ala’s bounties (Kufraan-e-Ni’mat).

Despite being so handsome himself, our Sheikh, Hadhrat Moulana Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Saheb (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) would say, on oath, that he had never cast an evil gaze at a woman in his entire life. This is a great achievement. Hadhrat Moulana (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) also lived in these times of Fitnah, of shamelessness and lewdness.

Hadhrat (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) had said, regarding himself: ***“Allah Ta’ala’s Fadhl, that whatever has been achieved was achieved by lowering the gaze! ...Despite my romantic nature, I keep myself far away from women; I keep my gaze away from women and I keep my thoughts away from women.”***

When a person is determined to please Allah Ta'ala, Allah Ta'ala will assist him. What is difficult will then be easy to overcome.

VIRTUE AND VICE

A Scholar is blessed with knowledge whereby he can easily differentiate between good and bad, truth and falsehood. What then is our knowledge if we cannot differentiate between the good and the bad?

It may seem inconsequential and petty to many, but sharing the messages of sisters, with their photographs, on one's social accounts, is falling deeper into sin. **The person is allowing for others to cast evil, lustful gazes at strange women. He, himself, exposes his own weakness. This also indicates one's consent and allowance for such photographs.**

A Sahabi (رضي الله عنه) asked Rasulullah (صلى الله عليه وسلم): *'What is Imaan?'*

Rasulullah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) replied: ***'When your good deeds give you happiness and when your evil deeds cause you grief.'***¹⁸

If we are content and comfortable and happy to share the pictures of women on our accounts, message or talk to strange women just for some fun and enjoyment, etc. let us reflect the condition of our Imaan, in the light of this Hadīth of our Beloved (صلى الله عليه وسلم).

Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri (رحمته الله عليه) said so concisely: ***"Evil deeds are the disease, and the 'Ulama are the cure. Now, if the 'Ulama become sick, who will cure the disease?"***

¹⁸ Musnad Ahmad

FEAR ACCORDING TO ONE’S KNOWLEDGE

Allah Ta’ala describes the true ‘Ulama as:

إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ

**“... IT IS ONLY THOSE WHO HAVE KNOWLEDGE AMONG HIS SLAVES
WHO FEAR ALLAH...”**

[SURAH AL-FAATIR 35 : 28]

A person fears Allah Ta’ala according to his level of knowledge; so naturally, the Scholars – the ‘Ulama – should have greater levels of fear. **If a person has knowledge but there is no fear, then he cannot be an ‘Aalim – in the true sense. Then his knowledge does not profit him; rather it harms him and can even destroy him.** May Allah Ta’ala protect us all.

Rasulullah (ﷺ) sought Allah Ta’ala’s protection from knowledge that does not benefit and a heart that does not fear Allah Ta’ala:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ لَا يَنْفَعُ وَمِنْ قَلْبٍ لَا يَخْشَعُ،
وَمِنْ نَفْسٍ لَا تَشْبَعُ، وَمِنْ دَعْوَةٍ لَا يُسْتَجَابُ لَهَا

“O Allah, I seek refuge in You from knowledge which does not benefit, from a heart that does not entertain the fear (of Allah Ta’ala), from a soul that is not satisfied and the supplication that is not answered.”¹⁹

¹⁹ Sahih Muslim

Let us acknowledge if we are in the wrong. Let us not justify. **Allah Ta'ala loves that servant who acknowledges his weaknesses and Allah Ta'ala dislikes when sins are justified.**

JUDGING AND ADVISING

Whatever is being conveyed is on a very general level and is with deep-hearted concern. These advices should not be misconstrued.

Judging a person and advising a person are two different things. The first, we leave to Allah Ta'ala. He is the Judge.

...When we, ourselves, do not know whether we will find acceptance and forgiveness in the Court of Allah Ta'ala, we are in no position to judge others. Hadhrat Moulana Sayyid Sulaiman Nadwi (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) would say:

*Whether we live like this or live like that,
What is left to be seen is how our stay there will be
(i.e. the Hereafter).*

The second is a duty that has been enjoined upon the Ummah – 'Amr bil Ma'roof and Nahy anil Munkar.

Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'aan Sharief:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ
وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ

“O MUSLIMS! YOU ARE THE BEST OF PEOPLES, RAISED FOR (THE GUIDANCE OF) MANKIND; YOU ENJOIN THEM TO DO GOOD DEEDS, AND PREVENT THEM FROM FORBIDDEN THINGS; AND YOU HAVE FIRM FAITH IN ALLAH.”

[SURAH AAL-E-IMRAAN 3 : 110]

Moreover, to correct, advise, teach, caution and warn is consistent with the Sunnah. This is what we will find in the Sunnah.

It is also Sunnah that compassion and mercy be shown to those whom we advise or teach. We should not look down upon any person or consider ourselves as better.

Rasulullah (ﷺ) adopted different methods in teaching and in correcting the people. Sometimes, he would rectify a wrong publicly – so that everyone may take heed. However, he (ﷺ) would address the people in such a noble manner whereby no person was named, embarrassed or disgraced. There was discretion and compassion. Rasulullah (ﷺ) would say: ***“What is the matter with some people...”*** or he (ﷺ) would direct the people to fear Allah Ta’ala or he (ﷺ) would adopt some other wise approach.

As people say, on an informal level: *“If the cap fits, then wear it.”*

We should take these advices for ourselves and think that these advices are most applicable to us first. Our minds should not go to others. Have Husne Zann²⁰ of others and the work they do.

Ikhlāas is the vital component that is required in our Khidmat of Dien. Ikhlāas will invite Allah Ta’ala’s Nusrāh and Rahmah and

²⁰ Husne Zann : Good thoughts / opinions

will effect and generate positive and successful reform and revival in this Ummah. Ikhlāas is what we are found wanting in.

NEED FOR IKHLAAS

On one occasion, a person said to Hadhratjee Moulana Yusuf Kandhlawi (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) that there are thousands of Jamaats traveling throughout the world but these great numbers have not created the revolution of change in the Ummah – as would be expected and as is desired. Hadhrat Moulana (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) replied: ***“Just three hundred and thirteen people are required and Insha-Allah, this revolution will be experienced.”***

Hadhrat Moulana Yusuf (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) mentioned three hundred and thirteen, alluding to the number of Sahabah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ) who participated in the Battle of Badr.

Despite their small number, their sincere faith in Allah Ta’ala and their sincere sacrifices invited the special Nusrah and help of Allah Ta’ala. They turned the tables of history with their remarkable victory against an army, which outnumbered them, three to one. Their Ikhlāas opened the doors for such a revolution, until all the tribes of Arabia accepted Islam and the light of Islam spread throughout the world. ...As we know, these three hundred and thirteen Sahaba-e-Kiraam (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ) hold a very special and exclusive status in the Court of Allah Ta’ala.

Hadhrat Moulana Yusuf’s (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) statement is not to be directed to the work of Tabligh alone. This applies to all the different works of Dien. **The need is Ikhlāas...** pure Ikhlāas, without any trace of

pollution and corruption from the nafs and shaytaan. May Allah Ta'ala make us of the Mukhliseen.

Being sincere to Allah Ta'ala, as well as to ourselves, is to also acknowledge our shortcomings, errors and misdeeds, and not justify them.

Hadhrat Aadam (عليه السلام) admitted his error:

رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنْفُسَنَا سَكَنَةً وَإِنْ لَمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ۝

**‘OUR LORD, WE HAVE WRONGED OURSELVES, AND IF YOU DO NOT FORGIVE US
AND HAVE MERCY UPON US, WE WILL SURELY BE AMONG THE LOSERS.’**

[SURAH AL-A'RAAF 7 : 23]

Shaytaan justified his disobedience:

أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِنْهُ ۚ خَلَقْتَنِي مِنْ نَّارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ مِنْ طِينٍ ۝

**‘I AM BETTER THAN HE. YOU CREATED ME FROM FIRE, AND HIM
FROM CLAY.’”**

[SURAH AL-A'RAAF 7 :12]

Hadhrat Aadam (عليه السلام) found special acceptance on his admission and Taubah. Shaytaan was rejected on his justification and his arrogance.

AN ANALOGY

Hadhrat Moulana Abrarul Haq Saheb (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) was the Sheikh of our Sheikh, Hadhrat Moulana Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Saheb (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ).

Our Sheikh (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) related that on one occasion, whilst on Safr, the driver of the car had to stop at one of the garages. A petrol tanker arrived, carrying thousands of gallons of petrol. Upon seeing the tanker, Hadhrat Moulana Abrarul Haq Saheb (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) asked: *“Why does this tanker have to fill up its own tank when it is carrying thousands of gallons of petrol?”*

The driver replied: *“The petrol is on its back and not in its engine.”*

Hadhrat Moulana Abrarul Haq (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) knew the answer and acknowledged the reply. Hadhrat (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) then said: ***“Those ‘Ulama who have loaded the knowledge of Dien, but do not have the petrol of the love and fear and recognition of Allah Ta’ala in their hearts, then understand that their knowledge is indeed loaded on them. Neither do they benefit from their knowledge, nor the Ummah.”***

SubhanAllah! This is the wonderful understanding of the Auliya Allah, who take lessons from everything around them.

For the petrol of the Ma’rifat and Ishq of Allah Ta’ala, we require the Suhbat of the Ahlullah, the Auliya Allah. Allah Ta’ala directs us towards this:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ ۝

“O YOU WHO BELIEVE, FEAR ALLAH AND JOIN THE COMPANY OF THE TRUTHFUL ONES (THE PIOUS, THE AULIYA ALLAH).”

[SURAH AT-TAUBAH 9 : 119]

Our Sheikh, Hadhrat Moulana Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Saheb (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) had quoted Qaadhi Thana-ullah (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) as saying: ***“O ‘Ulama, whatever you have acquired and learnt from the Kitaabs, is the knowledge of Nubuwwah – which has an external dimension. If you want to acquire its internal light, you will only obtain this from the hearts of the Auliya Allah.”***

REALITY OF ILM

There is an incident that has been related from the life of Sheikh Abdul Qader Jeelani (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ)...

A son of Sheikh Abdul Qader Jeelani (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) had spent many years in travel, seeking the knowledge of Dien. On return home, Sheikh Abdul Qader Jeelani (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) requested his son to give a talk. The son presented a very impressive and articulate talk, replete with proofs. The audience listened but were unmoved.

Sheikh Abdul Qader Jeelani (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) then addressed the same congregation, in a few simple words, saying: ***‘I made the intention to fast today and set aside some milk for Suhoor. A cat came into my home and drank the milk. So the fast was kept without Suhoor.’***

The entire audience began to tear. Surprised, the son asked his father as to why his own discussion on Qur’aan and Sunnah did not stir any heart.

Reflect over the father’s response.

The father replied: ***“My dear son, you have travelled and traversed the lands of the physical world, in your quest for knowledge. You have not as yet traversed the spiritual world in your quest for Allah Ta’ala. This is the outcome of traversing the inner path to Allah Ta’ala. You have acquired the external dimension of Ilm, but you are yet to acquire its reality!”***

TAKE HEED

All those who have studied the Hadīth mentioned at the beginning – regarding those who will be judged first – are familiar that the narrator is Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) and when he commenced narrating this particular Hadīth, he fell unconscious three times before he was able to finally narrate the Hadīth. SubhanAllah! **He fell unconscious three times before narrating this Hadīth – which indicated to a message that carries great warning.**

The condition of unconsciousness that overcame Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) is understood, when the Hadīth is read and explained. We also read the Hadīth time and again. Does it create any fear or concern within our hearts?

...The merits and high ranks of the ‘Ulama are in its place. In spite of this there are destructive consequences when worldly and ulterior motives infect our services of Dien.

Like a computer virus can be the cause of corruption of files and deletion and loss of all work, the viruses of Riyaa, Ujub, Kibr and other sins have similar consequences. They destroy and delete all good works. May Allah Ta’ala protect us.

ANAA'NIYYAT²¹ AND FANAA'IYYAT²²

All of us – especially, we, who are in the Khidmat of Dien, need to maintain Taqwa, Khauf (Fear), Khashiyyat (awe) and Tawaadhu (humility) to a **greater extent**. We should introspect and reflect over our intentions when posting any achievements over social networks, or over the Internet, or broadcasting on radio or other media.

When our social accounts are just about '*I did this*', '*I said that*', '*I was here*', '*I was there*', '*Watch me here*' and '*Listen to me here*', then very sadly, we are still far from the reality of Fanaa`iyyat.

This “Ana”, “Ana”, “Ana” – all the time – reveals Anaa`niyyat. Allah Ta`ala dislikes this quality in His servant.

Let us take lesson from Hadhrat Shu`aib (عليه السلام) who said:

وَمَا تَوْفِيقِي إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

“... AND MY ABILITY TO DO THINGS COMES FROM NONE EXCEPT ALLAH...”

[SURAH HUD 11 : 88]

Hadhrat Moulana Jalaluddeen (رحمته الله عليه) had encapsulated this reality in these words:

***“All accomplishments are realized through Divine Grace,
And without His Favour nothing is achieved.”***

²¹ Anaa`niyyat : Conceit / self-importance

²² Fana`iyyat : Self-annihilation

We should learn to attribute our good deeds and our successes to the Kindness and Favour of Allah Ta’ala.

Allah Ta’ala informs us:

وَمَا بِكُمْ مِنْ نِعْمَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ

“AND YOU HAVE NO GOOD THING BUT IT IS FROM ALLAH...”

[SURAH AN-NAHL 16 : 53]

TAQWA AND TAWAADHU

The hallmark of our Aslaaf, our Asaatiza and our Akaabir was their Taqwa, Tawaadhu and Fana`iyyat.

Hadhrat Moulana Maseehullah Khan (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) once said: ***“Taqwa and Tawaadhu are the crux of Imaan.”***

The Majaalis of Hadhrat Moulana Maseehullah (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) were generally discussions of the teachings of his respected Sheikh, whom he had great love for – Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) – yet Hadhrat Moulana Maseehullah (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) was an ‘Aalim of an exceptional calibre, whose status is acknowledged by the Ummah at large.

Our Asaatiza would promote their seniors and the Ta’leem of their seniors and repeatedly acknowledged those who were instrumental in nurturing them spiritually – which indicated their humility, their appreciation and their modesty, despite being spiritual giants in their own right. **They chose to conceal themselves within the spiritual wings of their seniors, than to**

**flap their own wings and invite attention to themselves.
SubhanAllah!**

As someone so rightly said: *“These are our predecessors; present someone similar to them – even if all our gatherings were to be brought together!”*

Today, we do not even acknowledge who we are quoting and we pass it over as our teachings and Ta’leem. Sometimes we just promote ourselves. This is at odds with the qualities of Tawaadhu and Fana’iyyat.

A Saalik is constantly reflecting over his intentions and the reasons behind everything he says and does. ...So if we want that people must know us, applaud us, praise us, etc. then this spells out our insincerity.

In all the Kitaabs of our respected Sheikh, Hadhrat Moulana Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Saheb (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ), a person will read in the opening pages of the book:

“All the writings of this humble servant are in reality due to the combined blessings of the company of our spiritual guides: Hadhrat Moulana Abrarul Haq Saheb (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ), Hadhrat Moulana Abdul Ghani Phoulpoori Saheb (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) and Hadhrat Moulana Muhammad Ahmad Saheb (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ).”

This was Hadhrat Moulana’s (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) Ikhlāas, Tawaadhu and appreciation. ...**Were it not for sitting at the feet of our respected Asaatiza and Mashaa’ikh and learning from them, what would we know and what could we have conveyed and shared?**

THE BURDEN OF FAME

Hadhrat Abdullah ibn Mubarak (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) said: “Sufyaan Thauri (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) said to me: ***‘Beware of fame. Everyone I met warned me about fame.’***”

Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) also said: ***“Safety is that you do not desire to be known.”***

By Allah, name and fame comes with a huge burden – especially when it is sought. It is a difficulty and it is a greater test – but the nafs does not allow us to see that.

Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) described the nafs as our worst enemy: ***“Your worst enemy is your nafs which lies between your sides.”***²³

Both the Qur’aan Sharief and Ahadīth highlight the need to strive against the nafs. Let us not be unmindful.

If name and fame is sought and it comes, then it comes without the protection of Allah Ta’ala. It can even come with difficulty, detainment, imprisonment, etc. May Allah Ta’ala protect us all.

THE STORY OF THE PEACOCK AND THE HAKEEM

Hadhrat Moulana Jalaluddeen Rumi (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) had related a story in his Mathnawi Sharief of a peacock.

²³ Kanzul Ummal

The story goes that a peacock was busy pulling out its beautiful feathers and throwing them away. On seeing this strange sight, a Hakeem asked: *“O peacock, why are you pulling out your beautiful feathers? This is ingratitude!”*

The peacock replied: *“Too many calamities come my way due to these beautiful feathers. Hunters place traps that they may obtain these feathers and these wings. When I am vulnerable to this injustice and these trials, it is better to remove these feathers and be unsightly in my appearance. This frees me of the fears that I have, of being trapped. In my opinion, it is more important for me to save my life than to be concerned about my outer beauty. **For if life is protected, what harm is there if the form is unattractive?**”*

Our Sheikh, Hadhrat Moulana Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Saheb (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) explained that this is the reason why the Auliya Allah keep far away from name and fame. **Their outward condition is so humble and unassuming that many are not even recognised by the people as ‘Ulama, let alone Auliya Allah. They choose concealment for themselves, because they know the great test of name and fame. They try to avoid the traps of nafs and shaytaan.**

This concealment is what we found with our Aslaaf and Akaabir. This was their good understanding and intelligence. Where they could, they would shy away from the public eye.

Yes, if there is a need, then make known that one is an Aalim, Mufti, etc. There are times when it is necessary to present one’s qualifications.

Hadhrat Moulana Jalaluddeen Rumi (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) explained further:
“Fame takes away all bounds of comfort and brings many trials in its wake.”

If Allah Ta’ala wills for someone to be known, Allah Ta’ala will create the means – and such amazing means!

ALLAH TA’ALA’S CHOICE

Allah Ta’ala’s Sifaat are “الظَّاهِرُ” (The Manifest) and “الْبَاطِنُ” (The Hidden).

One of our Mashaa’ikh had mentioned so beautifully that Allah Ta’ala chooses, from amongst His servants, those who will become known to the creation – and their names will spread throughout the world. They become famous for their piety, deep understanding of Dien, etc. Allah Ta’ala’s attribute of “Az-Zaahir” is focussed on them. ...From their side, they do not make any effort to be known. Allah Ta’ala makes them known.

And for others, Allah Ta’ala chooses that they are hidden from creation, despite their great piety, high ranks and their closeness to Him. Allah Ta’ala’s quality of “Al-Baatin” is focussed on them.

This is His choice, with great Wisdom – and it is for each servant to accept and appreciate, and not endeavour to choose for himself or herself.

We all know that there are many Abdaal and other great Auliya Allah, whom Allah Ta’ala has kept hidden from the creation. And

perhaps these servants of Allah Ta'ala are more accepted and higher in rank than those who are known.

WHEN ALLAH TA'ALA MAKES ONE KNOWN

Qaasimul Uloom wal Khairaat, Hadhrat Moulana Qaasim Nanotwi (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) established a Madrasah – and it commenced under a tree, with just one teacher and one student. This was the humble beginnings of Darul Uloom Deoband, which is known as, Ummul Madaaris (Mother of Madaaris).

...Today, when we want to establish some Madrasah or institute, we want to do things on a very big scale right from the start, and for that we require advertisement and a lot of funding. We should read how the Darul Ulooms were established – and how Allah Ta'ala created Asbaab and means.

The effort was with humility and sincerity – and that became the means of Madaaris being established the world over. Allahu Akbar!

It has been related about Hadhrat Moulana Qaasim Nanotwi (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ), the founder of Darul Uloom Deoband – that despite being such a great 'Aalim, he was so humble that he preferred to be a Muqtadi and follow an Imam in Salaah, than make Imamat. SubhanAllah.

Naturally, someone has to make Imamat – but Hadhrat Moulana did not desire or aspire for any position, for himself. This is the lesson to take. **In his humility, he preferred following than to be**

followed. However, Allah Ta'ala willed that he would become an Imam for 'Ulama until Qiyamah!

It has been said that Imam Abu Hanifa (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) used to be very reluctant to make Imamah, but would be eager to call out the Azaan. This was due to his humility. Allah Ta'ala made him such an Imam for the Ummah – Allahu Akbar!

This is what the Hadīth conveys: ***“Whoever humbles himself for the sake of Allah, Allah elevates him.”***²⁴

Of course, that was their Haal and condition. If we have a post of Imamah, we should endeavour to fulfil it, seeking Allah Ta'ala's Pleasure alone.

Sadly, in our time, we arrange for our Imamah and Qira'ah to be photographed and videoed. This is what is now circulating. ...And to Allah Ta'ala is our complaint.

Is there a need for the photographs and videos? Even in the audio recordings / streaming, we should reflect over our intentions. It may be that we are satisfying the desire of the nafs for attention, for name and fame.

WELFARE

Alhamdulillah, globally, the Muslim community excels when it comes to generosity, welfare work and humanitarian aid. The big-heartedness, open-handedness and the charity services of the Ummah are most admirable and commendable. May Allah Ta'ala

²⁴ Al Mu'jamul Awsat Lit Tabarani 8307

increase all these good undertakings. ...However, even in this there is a need for Ikhlaas.

Yes, we have to raise awareness and encourage others to contribute towards the different projects to alleviate the plight of others but there is no need for us to take photographs of **ourselves** assisting the homeless, needy and others, and thereafter post these pictures on our social accounts.

In whatever we do, let us seek Allah Ta'ala's Pleasure.

If we are doing for Allah Ta'ala alone, we do not need the creation to see us, to acknowledge us, to congratulate us or to praise us. It is sufficient that Allah Ta'ala is All Aware – for it is Allah Ta'ala Alone Who will reward.

An incident comes to mind, which offers an ideal example of sincerity:

It has been related that during the Khilafat of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه), a very elderly, blind lady resided on the outskirts of Madinatul Munawwarah. Hadhrat Umar (رضي الله عنه) wished to assist her with her daily requirements and would travel out to her home early every morning, with food and other necessities. Each day he would find that someone had already brought provisions for her.

Keen to find out who outdid him every day, he decided to go to her home even earlier one morning. He found that the Khalifah himself, Hadhrat Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه), was secretly bringing and providing the elderly lady with her daily requirements.

Our Aslaaf and Akaabir did great charity work – much of which was done secretly and was only discovered after their demise. Here too, they understood the need for protecting their deeds. They also kept in mind the respect of the poor.

If we read our history, we will find that our predecessors would assist the poor, destitute, widows and orphans in such a way, whereby the dignity of these people was maintained and upheld.

So on a little self-analysis, we may find our nafs tainting and spoiling our good works. Each person is aware of his own condition.

...Having many followers, many likes and thumbs up, many fans and many retweets are not the objective.

DIVERSION

Whilst a great deal of Dieni work is carried out on Social Media and through the Internet, it remains a diversion for the majority.

Social media is such a distraction that sometimes even takes the Imam and Scholar away from his family responsibilities and other duties, from integrating, meeting with and benefiting the people in his locality.

It takes a person away from Qur'aan Sharief, from Zikrullah, from constructive good deeds. One brother mentioned that it was his habit to read 5 Paras of Qur'aan Sharief every morning. With the introduction of the Islamic radio stations, etc. he was not even completing a ¼ Para in a day.

So much of time is sometimes spent in listening to the different programmes and even the entertainment on radio, and so much of time is spent in tweeting and updating social accounts. When will we have time to make Amal; to **practically** implement?

There are some who are occupied with posting and sharing all kinds of world news. There is a kind of fixation and preoccupation to share politics, economics, sports, entertainment and every other kind of news.

The different news agencies and reporters are already doing this – and they are doing this on every medium. We do not have to also become reporters for world news. Let us not lose our sense of direction. **We should be reporting the message of the Qur’aan Sharief and Hadīth. This is our work. Let it not be that shaytaan deceives us and misleads us. Recognise his tricks and ploys.**

Our Sheikh, Hadhrat Moulana Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Saheb (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) would say: ***“The work of the ‘Ulama is to teach Dien and to a greater extent, their work is to make the Islaah of the people.”***

Moreover, we must be very careful that we do not forget ourselves and our relationship with Allah Ta’ala, that we do not forget our families and their Islaah, and that we do not make Khiyaanat²⁵ of Madrasah time or work time, by spending that time on social media and on the Internet – whether just ‘passing time’ or even trying to sort out the ills of this world, but neglecting our duties and disregarding the problems near and around us.

²⁵ Khiyanat : Misuse / Abuse

Alhamdulillah there are sincere Khaadims of Dien, who use the Internet and social media for the propagation of Dien. Wonderful work is being done. **However, shaytaan uses the same to trap many of us. We have to be careful not to unwittingly get ensnared.**

TIME AND OUR AKAABIR

We should take lesson from our Akaabir in the matter of utilising the precious bounty of time. They were most scrupulous and prudent with their time, valuing every moment. They were also diligent in refraining from anything that was futile and that was not a means of gaining reward and closeness to Allah Ta'ala.

Hadhrat Hasan Basri (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) had said: *"I have met people for whom time was more precious to them than how you people zealously covet and protect gold and silver coins."*

And he (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) further said: *"Every day that the sun rises, it calls out: 'O Son of Aadam, I am Today: a new creation. Use me wisely for I shall never return to you until the Day of Judgment.'"*

In a Hadīth, Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) narrated that Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said: ***"Most of mankind are at a loss regarding two favours, good health and free time (opportunity)."***²⁶

²⁶ Sahih Al-Bukhari

Rasulullah (ﷺ) also said: ***“The people of Paradise will not regret anything (of this world) except that time void of the remembrance of Allah.”***²⁷

Sheikh Abdul Fattah Abu Ghuddah (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) wrote the book, **“Value of Time”** where, in great detail, the respected Sheikh presents the lives of our Aslaaf and their concern, value and use of time. Scholars and students of Dien – in fact, all of us – should read the book and take benefit, Insha-Allah.

HASHTAG CRAZE

Nowadays, the majority of the Ummah is seeing some kind of solution for the suffering of the Ummah in hashtags. There is encouragement to keep various hashtags “trending”.

Hashtags may create awareness but hashtags are not going to invite the Nusrat of Allah Ta’ala when the majority are sleeping through Fajr; when the majority have not established Salaah in their everyday lives, when the Ummah of Nabi Muhammad (ﷺ) – at large – cannot even be recognised as Ummatis.

Allah Ta’ala’s assistance will come when there is the **reality** of Dien in our lives - when there is Salaah, when there is obedience, when there is the Sunnah in our practical lives and when we give up sins. **Sins are huge obstacles that deprive us of Allah Ta’ala’s Nusrat.**

The need is Islaah and Tazkiyah. Each one of us needs to become a Mujahid against the nafs. If everyone had this concern and

²⁷ Tabraani / Bayhaqi

made this effort to establish Islam in their individual lives, the entire Ummah would be a force to reckon with today.

IKHLAAS

Alhamdulillah, as ‘Ulama, we know the great honour of Ilm-e-Dien. Allah Ta’ala selects for this Dien and uses for His Dien; this is His great Ihsaan and Karam upon us – for which we should express abundant Shukr. ...Allah Ta’ala rewards and compensates on our efforts and sacrifices, as well as upon our intentions.

Whilst the merits and virtues of the ‘Ulama are well known and often highlighted, we should also keep before us the demands of Ilm. There are responsibilities to be fulfilled and there is a need for Ikhlāas. The reminder always benefits the Believer and offers rectification and purification of our intentions and deeds.

If we do with other intentions, besides solely seeking the Pleasure of Allah Ta’ala, then Allah Ta’ala rejects. Allah Ta’ala will say on the Day of Qiyamah: ***‘Go to those who you showed off your deeds to, in the worldly life, then see if you can find any reward with them!’***²⁸ (May Allah Ta’ala protect us entirely).

Rasulullah (ﷺ) said: ***"He who does not acquire knowledge with the sole intention of seeking the Pleasure of Allah but for worldly gain, will not smell the fragrance of Jannah on the Day of Resurrection."***²⁹

²⁸ Musnad Ahmad

²⁹ Mustadrak of Al-Hakim / Shu’ab al-Iman of Al-Bayhaqi

This knowledge of Hadīth is such a treasure of guidance. Rasulullāh (ﷺ) is guiding us towards rectifying our intentions and making our goal the Pleasure of Allāh Ta’ala, so that we reap great rewards and enjoy the success of both worlds.

Our Sheikh, Hadhrat Moulana Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Saheb (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) would say: ***“How important the Suhbat of the Ahlullāh is for all those individuals who serve Dien! Sometimes an entire lifetime passes, and the person is a victim of ostentation.”***

Imam Shafi’ee (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) had advised that every person should have some deeds, which are kept hidden and not revealed to others, not even to one’s wife. It may be that that which was concealed is what benefits the most on the Day of Qiyamah.

...Again, this Nasihah is being shared with the concern that our efforts in serving Dien be accepted in the Court of Allāh Ta’ala and our efforts not go to waste because of nafs and shaytaan.

MOVE AHEAD

So much is expended for the Khidmat of Dien – so much of time, so much of money, so much of energy. Let it be that we have the correct focus and intentions in whatever we do. Let us strive in the direction of the Sunnah and let us imbibe the spirit of the Sunnah – which is most beloved to Allāh Ta’ala.

As Scholars of Dien, there should be no compromise on Taqwa. We should not ‘go with the flow’, seeking to gain favour and popularity with the people. As an Imam, as a Scholar, spend more

time in Dua' and Salaah for the suffering Ummah. Make a more concerted effort on those who are near, to be **practical** on Dien.

Because there is great deficiency in A'maal. Many are not even doing that which is required (of the Faraa'idh) – and many of those who are, are not doing so correctly.

Sometimes the main attention is directed to adults – and the Dieni education for the children of the Ummah is overlooked. There is a need for Makaatib. There is a need to invite the non-Muslims to Islam and there is a need for so much more to be done. Really, we cannot be content with what we are doing and we cannot be at ease when looking at the Ummah at large.

This entire discussion is not to discourage – rather to encourage. It is to rectify our weaknesses, to facilitate progress and enhance all the noble efforts carried out, Insha-Allah.

Work of Dien should not be stopped because of any weaknesses. We all have shortcomings. **The effort is to remedy the weakness, correct the intention and continue, with Istighfaar and humility and Dua.**

We have a duty and we should fulfil it to the best of our ability.

May Allah Ta'ala forgive me and forgive us all for our shortcomings and failings, grant us the recognition of our nafs, the Taufeeq of Islaah and Tazkiyah, grant us Ikhlāas and Maqbuliyat and save us from the deceptions of nafs and shaytaan.

TAZKIYAH AND THE AMAANAT OF DIEN

When Hadhrat Ibraheem (عليه السلام) completed the reconstruction of the Ka'bah Sharief, he made Dua to Allah Ta'ala for acceptance, and also made the Dua:

رَبَّنَا وَابْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِكَ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ^ط
إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ۝

“OUR LORD, AND SEND AMONG THEM A MESSENGER FROM THEMSELVES WHO WILL RECITE TO THEM YOUR VERSES AND TEACH THEM THE BOOK AND WISDOM AND PURIFY THEM. INDEED, YOU ARE THE EXALTED IN MIGHT, THE WISE.”

[SURAH AL-BAQARAH 2 : 129]

From this Dua of Nabi Ibraheem (عليه السلام) we learn the syllabus of Rasulullah (صلى الله عليه وسلم). This comprised of:

1.) يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِكَ (Recite to them Your verses).

This signifies the teaching of the Qur'aan Sharief.

Alhamdulillah, today, this is found in our primary Madaaris or Makaatib, where the Qur'aan Sharief and its rules of recitation are taught.

2.) وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ (Teach them the Book and Wisdom).

This refers to the comprehensive teaching of the Qur'aan Sharief and the Sunnah. This knowledge is acquired from our Darul Ulooms where the sciences of Tafsier, Hadīth, Fiqh, etc. are imparted in great detail and depth.

3.) وَزَكِّهِمْ (Purify them)

This signifies the department of Tazkiyah, which is the purification of the heart and soul from every kind of evil and sin.

Alhamdulillah, most of us have fulfilled the first two departments of learning, but have not given consideration to the third. We tend to be satisfied with two thirds of the mission of Rasulullah (ﷺ) and do not attach importance to the third department; whereas Tazkiyah is extremely important. **It is the foundation of success, of both worlds.**

Allah Ta'ala states:

فَذَٰ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا

“INDEED HE SUCCEEDS WHO PURIFIES HIS OWNSELF.”

[SURAH ASH-SHAMS 91 : 9]

During a visit to Sri Lanka, I met an ‘Aalim, Moulana Isma’eel. In our conversation, I mentioned the purpose of our trip, presenting an example. I said:

“If an Imam, whilst leading the Salaah, recites the verse:

رَبَّنَا وَابْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو آيَاتِكَ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ
إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ۝

“OUR LORD, AND SEND AMONG THEM A MESSENGER FROM THEMSELVES WHO WILL RECITE TO THEM YOUR VERSES AND TEACH THEM THE BOOK AND WISDOM AND PURIFY THEM. INDEED, YOU ARE THE EXALTED IN MIGHT, THE WISE.”

[SURAH AL-BAQARAH 2 : 129]

But he leaves out the words: وَنُزِّكْنَهُمْ (purify them), he will be given Luqma (i.e. he will be corrected).

*Similarly, this visit to Sri Lanka is to give Luqma. Generally, we have left out the **practical** side of وَنُزِّكْنَهُمْ .*

*...Alhamdulillah, we attended the Maktab, where we learnt to recite the Qur'aan Sharief. We also completed the course at the Darul Uloom, **but we left out Tazkiyah and jumped to Imamah, teaching, etc.***

Just as the Ayah will not be complete if a word is left out, so the purpose and objective of our worldly life will not be complete without Tazkiyah. Our efforts in the service of Dien will also be incomplete and deficient.

So Tazkiyah is an obligation; a must. ...This visit is a reminder for myself as well."

Alhamdulillah, Moulana appreciated the example and the great need to give attention to this branch of Tazkiyah.

Even though one has qualified and possesses the knowledge of Dien, there is a great need to rectify oneself spiritually and develop the reality of Ilm.

Sheikhul Hadīth, Hadhrat Moulana Muhammad Zakariyyah (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) related in his Fazaa'il-e-Sadaqaat, the distinguishing signs of the 'Ulama-e-Rabbaniyyeen as conveyed by Imam Ghazali (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ)

عليه) in his Ihya. **One outstanding sign of a true ‘Aalim is his interest and concern regarding this field of Tazkiyah and the effort to purify his heart.**

There is well-known incident, which has been related by some person – perhaps in humour – but it offers us a lesson.

A person was to undergo an operation. When taken into theatre, he became very nervous and agitated. The doctor asked him: *“What’s wrong?”*

He replied: *“This is the first operation in my life and I have a wife and young children. I am anxious about the outcome of this operation. What if I do not survive the operation?”*

The doctor, in trying to console him, said: *“Don’t worry my friend; this is also the first time that I will be operating on someone.”*

What will be the condition of that patient, knowing that the doctor has no experience?

If a doctor does not do housemanship; he has no training; then despite studying medical textbooks, he will not be able to carry out any surgery. Even with distinctions in theory, there are many conditions to be met before the scalpel can be used.

In the same vein, if an ‘Aalim passed his subjects with distinctions but did not give time to train under the guidance and supervision of a Sheikh, he will be a danger.

The 'Ulama are spiritual doctors and surgeons. People come to the 'Ulama for guidance and advice; for solutions to their problems. **But how can we be successful in our field and truly benefit the people if we have not learnt the skill of operating on spiritual hearts?**

Most of us are operating without practically learning how to. In fact, often, our own spiritual health is in need of attention, of medication. Sometimes, our own hearts require an operation so that we are cured of the cancerous tumours of Takabbur (pride), Ujub (conceit/vanity), Riyaa (show/ostentation), Hasad (jealousy), Hubbud Dunya (love for the world), and sins such as lustful gazes, lies, evil thoughts, Gheebat and so forth.

We all recognise these sins because we have knowledge of them. We even read their remedies and prescriptions in the Qur'aan Sharief and Sunnah, but Allah Ta'ala has still kept Tazkiyah as a separate department in Dien. And it is a fact, that for many, despite having in-depth knowledge of Dien, there is still difficulty in practising on that Ilm.

Just as we learnt to read the Qur'aan Sharief and just as we studied the Qur'aan Sharief and Sunnah under the guidance and supervision of our Asaatiza – who are experts in their respective fields, so we will have to do our Tazkiyah under the guidance of a mentor, who has mastered this field of Tazkiyah and Islaah.

Allah Ta'ala instructs us:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ ۝

**“O YOU WHO BELIEVE, FEAR ALLAH AND JOIN THE COMPANY OF THE
TRUTHFUL ONES (THE PIOUS, THE AULIYA ALLAH).”**

[SURAH AT-TAUBAH 9 : 119]

Our Sheikh, Hadhrat Moulana Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Saheb (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) had explained that we should remain with them until we become like them – that is, take from them the reality of Dien: That Akhlaaq, Ibaadaat, Mu’aasharaat and so forth, which is in complete conformity with the Sunnah of Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

Islaah and Tazkiyah cannot be stressed enough. Without spiritually rectifying ourselves, we cannot move forward.

Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Hasan Saheb Amritsari (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) presents a very noble example of an ‘Aalim who understood the need for purification of the heart and soul and his sincerity in undertaking this route to rectify himself. He was one of the senior Khulafa of Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ).

When Hadhrat Mufti Amritsari (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) requested Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) to accept him for Bay’at, Hadhrat Moulana Thanwi (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) stipulated four conditions:

1. Repeat your Daurah Hadīth, because you studied the final year of your Aalim course in an Ahle-Hadīth Madrasah.
2. Correct your Tajweed.
3. Obtain a NOC (No Objection Certificate) from your wife; that she certifies that you treat her well and keep her happy.
4. Write 40 letters requesting for your Islaah to be made.

Since Hadhrat Mufti Amritsari (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) was sincere in his quest, he repeated his final year studies at Darul Uloom Deoband. He studied Tajweed from a student of his and obtained a certificate from him, and he fulfilled the remaining conditions.

On humility and on this labour of cleaning the heart, Allah Ta'ala opens all doors of goodness.

On one occasion, Hadhrat Moulana Maseehullah (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) visited Sheikhul Hadith, Hadhrat Moulana Muhammad Zakariyyah (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) in Saharanpur. Hadhrat Sheikh (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) requested for all who were with him, to allow him some time alone with Hadhrat Moulana Maseehullah (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ).

When both were alone, Hadhrat Sheikh (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) began to cry profusely. On enquiring the reason, Hadhrat Sheikh (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) replied: ***“Students are graduating, yet they do not make their Islaah. They are the ones who are entrusted with this great responsibility of passing the Dien to others, but they do not have Dien in their own lives. ...What will be the condition of the Ummah?”***

This was the concern of our Akaabir – because this knowledge of Dien is a great, great Amaanat (trust) and responsibility.

We will also be questioned about our knowledge and how we acted upon it.

Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) informed us: ***‘[On the Day of Judgment], the feet of a person will not move until he is asked regarding:***

- 1.) His life; how did he spend it,
- 2.) **His knowledge; how did he act upon it,**
- 3.) His wealth; how did he acquire it (and)
- 4.) How did he spend it, and
- 5.) His body, how did he use it.³⁰

Hadhrat Abu Darda (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) had said: ***“Indeed, my greatest fear concerning standing on the Day of Judgment is that it will be said to me: ‘You learnt! What have you done with your knowledge?’”***

Allahu Akbar! When that was the fear of a Sahabi (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ), then what about people like us?

Alhamdulillah, a lot of Khidmat of Dien is being rendered throughout the world and may Allah Ta’ala increase all these noble efforts. However, there is a need for Tazkiyah and Islaah of weaknesses such as Takabbur, Ujub, Riyaa, love for name and fame, etc. – which creep into the greatest of works and which then render them null and void.

It must not be that we reach the Court of Allah Ta’ala, having expended our entire lives for His beautiful Dien, but nothing was done sincerely, for Him alone.

May Allah Ta’ala forgive us and protect us. May Allah Ta’ala grant us the concern and the Taufeeq to undertake this process of Islaah and Tazkiyah and grant us the success of both worlds.

³⁰ Tirmidhi

ITTAQULLAH | FEAR ALLAH

Allah Ta'ala describes the love of the Believers for Him as **intense**.

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ ط

**“... AND THOSE WHO HAVE IMAAN ARE MORE INTENSE IN THEIR LOVE
FOR ALLAH...”**

[SURAH AL-BAQARAH 2: 165]

Allah Ta'ala describes His friendship with the Believers:

اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ ط

**“ALLAH IS THE WALI (FRIEND / PROTECTOR/ GUARDIAN) OF THOSE WHO
BELIEVE. HE BRINGS THEM OUT FROM DARKNESSES INTO THE LIGHT.”**

[SURAH AL-BAQARAH 2: 257]

Our Sheikh, Hadhrat Moulana Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Saheb (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) had beautifully explained that many Aayaat are specifically addressing the Believers, and generally commence with: يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا (**O you who Believe...**)

Based on this love relationship, these words translate as: ***“O you who love me intensely...”*** - and then Allah Ta'ala, from His Side, lovingly presents His Commands to us - as a Friend, as a Protector, as a Guardian (Wali).

SubhanAllah! It is only for us to respond with obedience and gratitude.

From amongst the Rights of Allah Ta'ala is that we should love Him and also fear Him. Allah Ta'ala says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ۝

“O YOU WHO BELIEVE! FEAR ALLAH AS HE SHOULD BE FEARED, AND DIE NOT EXCEPT IN A STATE OF ISLAM.”

[SURAH AAL-IMRAAN 3: 102]

This fear is borne out of love. When a person loves another, then he fears displeasing his beloved. This is the nature of love: **Seeking to please the beloved and afraid to displease the beloved.**

This fear of Allah Ta’ala is balanced with **hope** in Allah Ta’ala, and this fear and hope will be established when we know Allah Ta’ala’s Attributes and recognise Allah Ta’ala. ...As is commonly said: ***‘Imaan is between fear and hope.’***

Allah Ta’ala mentions these qualities of the Believers:

يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا ۚ

“... WHILE THEY CALL ON THEIR LORD, IN FEAR AND HOPE...”

[SURAH AS-SAJDAH 32: 16]

Taqwa is to restrain and abstain from everything displeasing to Allah Ta’ala. This is what earns one the crown of Allah Ta’ala’s Friendship:

إِن أَوْلِيَاءَهُ إِلَّا الْمُتَّقُونَ

“... VERILY NONE ARE THE AULIYA EXCEPT THOSE WHO REFRAIN FROM HIS DISOBEDIENCE...”

[SURAH AL-ANFAL 8: 34]

Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas’ood (رضي الله عنه) explained the meaning of Taqwa as:

- Allah Ta'ala is to be obeyed and not disobeyed;
- Allah Ta'ala is to be remembered and not forgotten, and
- Allah Ta'ala is to be shown gratitude and not ingratitude.

FRIENDS

Allah Ta'ala presents His friendship, the friendship of His Messenger (ﷺ) and those who believe:

إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ
وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ ۝

“YOUR (REAL) FRIENDS ARE (NO LESS THAN) ALLAH, HIS MESSENGER, AND THOSE WHO HAVE BELIEVED - THOSE WHO ESTABLISH REGULAR PRAYERS AND REGULAR CHARITY, AND THEY BOW DOWN HUMBLY (IN WORSHIP).”

[SURAH AL-MAA'IDAH 5: 55]

Based on this relationship and friendship, we should be most appreciative of the well-wishing, guidance and direction from Allah Ta'ala, Rasullullah (ﷺ) and the sincere Believers.

THE COMMAND OF ALLAH TA'ALA

There are numerous Aayaat, wherein Allah Ta'ala commands the Believers to fear Him: Ittaqullah (Fear Allah).

وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ۝

“... AND FEAR ALLAH, AND KNOW THAT ALLAH IS WITH THOSE WHO RESTRAIN THEMSELVES.”

[SURAH AL-BAQARAH 2: 194]

وَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ۝

“... AND FEAR ALLAH THAT YOU MAY SUCCESSFUL.”

[SURAH AAL-IMRAAN 3: 200]

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ ۚ وَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ط

إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ۝

“O YOU WHO BELIEVE! FEAR ALLAH, AND LET EVERY SOUL LOOK TO WHAT (PROVISION) IT HAS SENT FORTH FOR THE MORROW. FEAR ALLAH, FOR ALLAH IS WELL-ACQUAINTED WITH (ALL) THAT YOU DO.”

[SURAH AL-HASHR 59 : 18]

We read these Aayaat and many more, where there is a clear Command to fear Allah Ta’ala, but the reality of these words does not seem to sink into the recesses of our hearts and move us in the direction of Taqwa.

We remain heedless.

We do not appreciate.

Yet from Allah Ta’ala’s side there is the reminder again and again of “Ittaqullah”, that we may be beneficiaries to His great bounties.

Implementing the Command of “Ittaqullah”, in our lives, bears the fruit of every good and is a prescription and a medication for all spiritual ailments.

This fear of Allah Ta’ala yields, produces and generates the noble qualities of righteousness, morality, sincerity, justice, honesty, trustworthiness, decency and all good.

Allah Ta'ala informs us that righteousness is the attribute of the one who fears Allah Ta'ala:

وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنِ اتَّقَىٰ

**“BUT RIGHTEOUSNESS IS (THE QUALITY OF THE ONE) WHO FEARS
(ALLAH TA'ALA)”**

[SURAH AL-BAQARAH 2:189]

THE COMMAND OF RASULULLAH (ﷺ)

In the Ahadīth, we read of the loving caution and guidance of Rasulullah (ﷺ) – who similarly, commanded us to fear Allah Ta’ala.

Hadhrat Abu Dharr al-Ghifari (رضي الله عنه) and Hadhrat Mu`adh ibn Jabal (رضي الله عنه) related that Rasulullah (ﷺ) said: ***“Fear Allah wherever you are. Follow up a bad deed with a good deed and it will blot it out. And deal with people in a good manner.”***³¹

This was the Command from our Beloved (ﷺ), who was full of mercy, compassion and concern for us.

لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُم بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ
رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ۝

**“THERE HAS CERTAINLY COME TO YOU A MESSENGER FROM AMONG
YOURSELVES. GRIEVOUS TO HIM IS WHAT YOU SUFFER; (HE IS) FULL OF
CONCERN OVER YOU AND TO THE BELIEVERS IS KIND AND MERCIFUL.”**

[SURAH AT-TAUBAH 9 : 128]

³¹ Sunan al-Tirmidhī

THE MOST EXCELLENT EXAMPLE

Rasulullah (ﷺ) set the most excellent precedent for the Ummah and was the epitome of the Command “**Ittaqullah**”. His entire life was an expression of love and fear for Allah Ta’ala – as is seen in his worship, speech, actions and in all of his Duas. He (ﷺ) said: *“I am the most knowledgeable of Allah among you and the most fearful of Him among you.”*³²

Rasulullah (ﷺ) also taught us Duas that expedite Taqwa:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّىْ نَفْسِيْ تَقْوَاهَا وَ زَكَّيْهَا اَنْتَ زَكَّاهَا اَنْتَ وَلِيُّهَا وَ مَوْلَاهَا

O Allah! Grant piety to my soul (nafs) and purify it, You are the Best of the ones to purify it; You are its Guardian and Patron.³³

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّىْ اَسْأَلُكَ الْهُدٰى وَ الثَّقٰى وَ الْعَفَافَ وَ الْغِنٰى

“O Allah! I ask of You, guidance and piety and chastity and to be free of depending on anyone (except You).”³⁴

THE CONCERN OF THE SAHABA-E-KIRAAM رَضِيََ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ

Despite their piety and closeness to Allah Ta’ala, the Sahaba-e-Kiraam (رَضِيََ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ) still concerned themselves with the matter of Taqwa. On one occasion, Hadhrat ‘Umar (رَضِيََ اللهُ عَنْهُ), who was well-known for his fear of Allah Ta’ala, asked Hadhrat Ubayy bin Ka’b (رَضِيََ اللهُ عَنْهُ): **‘What is Taqwa?’**

³² Sahih Bukhari

³³ Sahih Muslim

³⁴ Sahih Muslim

Hadhrat Ubayy bin Ka'b (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) asked in reply: *'Have you had the experience of walking down a path of thorns?'*

Hadhrat 'Umar (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) replied: *'Yes.'*

Hadhrat Ubayy bin Ka'b (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) asked: *'What did you do?'*

Hadhrat 'Umar (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) replied: ***'I tucked up my clothes and paid attention, walking very cautiously, so as not to be harmed by the thorns.'***

Hadhrat Ubayy bin Ka'b (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) responded: ***'That is Taqwa.'***

One of our Akaabir had explained that the Haqeeqat (reality) of Taqwa is to be alert and vigilant in all aspects of life. **A person should reflect and deliberate over whatever he intends to do and say. Accordingly, he will gauge for himself whether he will earn the pleasure or displeasure of Allah Ta'ala in what is to be undertaken.**

OUR FAILING

Very sadly, we do not appreciate the Command of Allah Ta'ala and His Rasul (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) when it is said to us: ***"Ittaqullah"***. So it is no surprise that today, if any person tells us to fear Allah Ta'ala, we take offence. We are annoyed.

Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ) said: ***"We met a people who loved being told, "Fear Allah." Today we find that people only become annoyed when they are advised to fear Allah Ta'ala."***

How true these words are.

This is the evident and sad difference between us and the Sahaba-e-Kiraam (رضى الله عنهم). Where they appreciated being told to fear Allah Ta'ala, where they sought to understand the concept of Taqwa and practice upon Allah Ta'ala's Commands, many of us become offended and think that our dignity is attacked. This is our pride and arrogance – for which we do not even care to acknowledge and make Islaah of.

We should take lesson from their humility and appreciation. Their conduct and demeanour reflects their pure hearts and their beautiful Ikhlaas.

When a person advises us to fear Allah Ta'ala or conveys some Nasihah to us, then we should not look at our position, our learning, our qualifications, and reject based on that. We should also not reject advice because the person is a subordinate, a layperson, a poor person or anyone else. **We should take heed of the advice. Pay attention to the advice. Appreciate it. Consider it Allah Ta'ala's Favour and Blessing.**

That person who encourages us to fear Allah Ta'ala is not an enemy. The person is a friend. He is, in fact, following the Sunnah of Allah Ta'ala and His Rasul (صلوات الله عليه وسلم). He is showing his concern and kindness. ...Of course, if our nafs is puffed up, it will be difficult to digest with humility and appreciation.

May Allah Ta'ala give us the concern, the understanding and the reality of piety in our Zaahir (external) and Baatin (internal).

Previously, it was a rare occurrence that a Muslim was involved in major sins. Now, the Muslim is sometimes the forerunner in

drugs, gambling, fraud and other vices. Zina (adultery/ fornication) has become a plague in the Muslim Ummah – but alas, heedlessness intoxicates and lust overpowers all senses.

In these times, we find even those who have knowledge of Dien, compromising on the great and noble quality of Taqwa.

Previously, it was unheard of, that an ‘Aalim would be willing and happy to take his photograph. Today, not only are photographs and selfies taken by Scholars of Dien, but even videos, etc. circulate freely.

When it is said: “**Fear Allah**”, we justify.

And to Allah Ta’ala is our complaint.

Sheikhul Hadīth, Hadhrat Moulana Muhammad Zakariyyah (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ) included in his Fazaa`il-e-Sadaqaat, the different distinguishing signs of the ‘Ulama-e-Rabbaniyyeen, as related by Imam Ghazali (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) in his Ihya. Amongst these is the fear of Allah Ta’ala. Imam Ghazali (رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ) said: ***“They wear a true expression of being inspired with the fear of Allah Ta’ala. His greatness, magnificence and fear are manifest from their every gesture — from their dress, from their actions and personal habits, from their speech and even from their silence.”***

DUTY-BOUND

Hadhrat Abu Sa’eed al-Khudri (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) reported: Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said: ***“Let not one of you belittle himself.”***

They said: “O Messenger of Allah, how can any one of us belittle himself?”

He said: “He finds a matter regarding Allah, about which he should speak up but he does not. Allah the Exalted will say to him on the Day of Resurrection: What prevented you from speaking up about such-and-such? He will say: It was out of fear of the people. Allah will say: **Rather, it is I who deserved to be feared.**”³⁵

Hadhrat Abu Sa’eed al-Khudri (رضي الله عنه) narrated that Rasulullah (ﷺ) said in a sermon: “**Verily, fear of people should not stop a man from speaking out the truth that he knows.**”³⁶

NOBILITY

Allah Ta’ala says in the Qur’aan Sharief:

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ ط إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ۝

“VERILY, THE MOST HONOURABLE OF YOU WITH ALLAH IS THAT (BELIEVER) WHO HAS TAQWA [I.E. ONE OF THE MUTTAQUIN (PIOUS)]. VERILY, ALLAH IS ALL-KNOWING, ALL-AWARE.”

[SURAH AL-HUJURAT 49: 13]

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) narrated that Rasulullah (ﷺ) was asked: “*Who are the most honourable of the people?*”

³⁵ Sunan Ibn Majah 4008

³⁶ Al-Mu’jam al-awsat of al-Tabrani.

Rasulullah (ﷺ) said: ***“The most honourable of them in Allah’s sight are those who keep their duty to Allah and fear Him...”***³⁷

Hadhrat Samurah (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) reported that Rasulullah (ﷺ) said: ***“Nobility is in the fear of Allah.”***³⁸

May Allah Ta’ala grant us the understanding and the Taufeeq of humbling ourselves for our own Islaah and Tazkiyah, seeking His Pleasure, and appreciating when it is said to us, “Fear Allah”.

³⁷ Sahih Bukhari 6/211

³⁸ Sunan At-Tirmidhi 3271

LET THEM MEET US ON OUR TERMS

In recent times, we find the development of utilizing television and other video channels, as a medium to spread the message of Islam. Unfortunately and sadly, we even find some Scholars of Islam choosing to spread the teachings of Dien in this way. They host various programmes on television, or are interviewed on television, or they have their talks and lessons videoed and circulated via the Internet.

Despite the substantiation given, that this is required for the propagation of Islam and for the defence of Islam, not only is this a great compromise on Dien, it opens the doors to Fitnah³⁹ and sin, and has us unwittingly playing right into the hands of the enemies of Islam. We now even have our women choosing the same methods of propagation, via television, YouTube, etc.

Despite the fact that the 'Ulama are a fortification for the Dien of Islam, **the measures of protection and security they employ for Islam will have to be in conformity with the requisites of Islam. This is a must.**

Whilst it is plainly evident that the disbelievers are utilizing television and films in their attack against Islam, and even use their women in their war against Islam, this does not justify following suit in repelling their attacks. They even sketch filthy cartoons in their hatred and attack against our Beloved Nabi (ﷺ), but it is understood that we will not counter and respond in the same way.

³⁹ Fitnah: mischief / evil / trial

...Whereas their assaults and condemnation are via immoral and corrupt ways, we cannot adopt the same course of action, in defence. As Muslims, and as 'Ulama, there is a demand to maintain the dignity of Islam, and not debase ourselves by taking on the same line of attack - that is, of immorality and vice.

Let them meet us on our terms, instead of us meeting them on their terms. Why should we compromise?

During the era of Rasulullah (ﷺ) and the Khulafa-e-Rashideen (رضي الله عنهم), in Makkatul Mukarramah and thereafter in Madinatul Munawwarah, Islam witnessed the greatest of threats and attacks that shall probably ever be made against it.

However, the answer to these attacks was always given on our (Islam's) platform and not on the platform of the Kuffaar – that is, Islam counter-attacked all those assaults and objections solely on the basis and with the aid of the Qur'aan Sharief.

The work of the Kuffaar and hypocrites was to object – and even today, many object just for the sake of objecting and creating doubts; not to understand or wanting to understand. ...The Qur'aan Sharief presents answers to **all** the objections levelled against it. At the same time, Allah Ta'ala explains that these answers will only satisfy those who believe and those who are sincerely searching for the truth.

From the fact that Aayaat (verses) were revealed in answer to the objections of the disbelievers, we learn that it is our prime duty to provide answers to the doubts that the enemies of Islam attempt to create within the minds of Muslims. Thus, we should be more concerned about removing doubts from the Muslims and making them strong.

To do this however, there are more than enough permissible avenues that could be utilized; viz. the Masjid Mimbar - especially on the Day of Jumu'ah, pamphlets and literature, the talks of the 'Ulama-e-Kiraam, etc. The Internet is now being used by thousands of 'Ulama and other Muslims, to spread the message and teachings of Islam, **within the parameters of Islam.**

When we have sufficient means available, we just cannot allow ourselves to become followers of the enemies of Islam in choosing those methods of propagation which go against the grain of Islamic principles, and which open doors of Fitnah.

Those who are interested in knowing and following the true religion, will always be able to find the road to Islam, **without us adopting impermissible means and methods of Da'wah (Inviting to Islam). Over the centuries, millions have entered the fold of Islam without the means which are available today.**

Allah Ta'ala is Al-Haadi (The Guide). And Allah Ta'ala uses some of His servants as mediums for the guidance of others. **However, in the efforts made to guide or invite others, the means to the end have to be legitimate and acceptable to Allah Ta'ala. We cannot go the route of sin to win people over to Islam.**

Today, to a great extent, the enemies of Islam are giving more and more publicity to Islam, which becomes the means of more and more people enquiring about Islam, learning about Islam and accepting Islam. Inadvertently, they are doing a service to Islam, with their own resources.

May Allah Ta'ala grant us sound understanding and the ability to do the work of inviting others, on Allah Ta'ala's terms, without any compromise and without conceding to the terms of the disbelievers.

IN THE SERVICE OF DIEN

An extremely wealthy businessman has to sign a cheque of millions. He has many pens in his pen holder, but he will choose one.

Figuratively speaking, if that pen boasts: *"I have signed a cheque of millions!"* ... This is the foolishness of the pen. The businessman could have chosen any other pen.

For those of us who are in the Khidmat of Dien, we should keep this example before us.

Allah Jalla Jalaaluhu has billions of servants. Out of His sheer kindness and favour, He chooses someone to render some Khidmat of Dien. ...Just like that pen is the means of a transfer of millions of Rands, Dollars or Pounds, there are those servants who are the means of conveying and transferring the knowledge of Dien to others, or become the means of transferring people from Fisq⁴⁰ and Fujur⁴¹ to Taqwa⁴² and righteousness, from Kufr⁴³ to Imaan, from Jahannum to Jannah. **However, the real Giver and the actual Doer is Allah Ta'ala. Let us not forget that.**

We should not boast of what work we are doing; rather we should be most thankful and appreciative that we are being used to do some Khidmat of Dien – that Allah Jalla Jalaaluhu selected us from amongst billions, despite our many shortcomings and weaknesses.

⁴⁰ Fisq: Transgression

⁴¹ Fujur : Immorality

⁴² Taqwa : Piety and abstinence from sins

⁴³ Kufr : Disbelief

Moreover, a pen is, after all, a pen. It holds a limited amount of ink. After using it for some time, the ink dries up or finishes. Either the cartridge is replaced or the pen is replaced.

Similarly, we have limitations and this worldly life has to come to an end. We are used for a certain period of time, and then we are replaced. **If, like a pen, we 'dry up' – that is, we 'dry up' our intentions and carry out our deeds for name, fame and material gain, and we 'dry up' the rewards of our Khidmat of Dien, with boasting or pride and arrogance, we can easily be replaced.**

No one is indispensable. Allah Ta'ala has many servants to serve as replacements. And Allah Ta'ala is not in need of us; rather it is His Favour upon us.

In the same way, if, figuratively speaking, a cheque of millions was made out, and that cheque page boasts: *"I am worth millions."* ...This is its folly and ignorance. That amount of money could have been written on any other cheque.

Allah Ta'ala is using us for some Khidmat of Dien; which is in reality, priceless. Its rewards cannot be truly explained or fathomed, but will be enjoyed in both worlds, if there is Ikhlāas (sincerity).

We should continuously express our Shukr (gratitude) to Allah Jalla Jalaaluhu for the bounty of serving His beautiful Dien. If we entertain pride and conceit, and we boast of the little we do, these are big "mistakes", which will invite big losses.

Whilst from Allah Ta'ala's side, there is no mistake and no error, in worldly transactions, when there is a mistake made writing a

cheque, 'CANCELLED' is written across the cheque. The cheque is thrown away in the waste paper basket, and another cheque is utilized.

Similarly, if the person considers his Khidmat, to be his achievement and boasts about it, then 'CANCELLED' will also be 'written' - so to say - across the person's Khidmat, and he will lose the great rewards that could have been his.

Like that cancelled cheque is thrown away in the waste paper basket, this person is sometimes totally cut off from the Khidmat of Dien, or his Khidmat is not accepted in the Court of Allah Jalla Jalaaluhu, and sometimes there is even punishment which will be his lot in the Hereafter. May Allah Ta'ala protect us all.

In a lengthy Hadīth⁴⁴, we have been told that the men, who will be judged first, on the Day of Resurrection, shall be a man who was martyred, a man who acquired knowledge and taught it and who recited the Qur'aan Sharief, and a man to whom Allah Jalla Jalaaluhu had been generous and had given great wealth.

These men will acknowledge Allah Ta'ala's favours upon them, and will claim that they carried out these deeds for His sake alone. However, each one will be exposed as a liar, for their deeds were contaminated with other intentions, and were not solely to earn the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala.

The martyr fought only to be called brave and courageous, **the Scholar or reciter of the Qur'aan had sought to gain a reputation – he sought name and fame**, and the third person acted thus, to be called generous and to be acknowledged for his generosity.

⁴⁴ Sahih Muslim 5032

Since deeds are according to their intentions, each one secured what he had sought through his deeds, but will not receive any reward on the Day of Judgment. In fact, each one will have to endure the punishment of the fire of Hell. (May Allah Jalla Jalaaluhu save us all.)

Just as a person can simply write out another million on another cheque, so Allah Ta’ala can replace with someone else.

...Allah Ta’ala uses whomsoever He wishes to. It is His Favour upon the person. However, acceptance will only be known on the Day of Qiyamah.

We, who are rendering the Khidmat of Dien, yet are caught up in sins and disobedience should be greatly concerned by the Hadīth wherein Rasulullah (ﷺ) said: ***“Allah will strengthen His Dien, even if it be by the means of a sinful person.”***⁴⁵

May Allah Ta'ala grant us recognition of our nafs, Taufeeq of complete Islaah and Tazkiyah, Ikhlaas in whatever Khidmat is undertaken, and acceptance, despite our shortcomings and failings.

⁴⁵ Sahih Bukhari 3062

PROTECTION FROM MINOR AND MAJOR SHIRK

On one occasion, Rasulallah (ﷺ) had said that ascribing partners to Allah Ta'ala (through seeking name, fame, doing things for show, etc.) creeps into a person's heart, quieter and more secretly and more unseen than a black ant walking on a black rock in a black night (totally unnoticed).

Out of fear and concern, Hadhrat Abu Bakr Siddique (رضي الله عنه) asked Rasulallah (ﷺ) as to how one can be saved from it.

Rasulallah (ﷺ) then directed him to the following Dua, and said that if recited, a person will be freed from minor and major shirk.

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ اَعُوْذُ بِكَ اَنْ اُشْرِكَ بِكَ شَيْئًا وَّ اَنَا اَعْلَمُ
و اَسْتَغْفِرُكَ لِمَا لَا اَعْلَمُ

Translation: O Allah, I seek protection in You from that I ascribe partners to You knowingly and I seek forgiveness from You for those things which I do not know.

[Kanzul Ummaal, Page 816]

...Insha-Allah, whoever reads this Dua will be saved from all forms of show (Shirk), the small and big of it, the hidden and public of it.

FOR ALLAH ﷻ

“Write your life for Allah Ta’ala – like how the Sahaba-e-Kiraam (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ) wrote their lives.

They wrote their lives with their blood, with love, obedience, sacrifice, sincere commitment to Islam and adherence to the Sunnah of Rasulullah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).

Each and every Sahabi’s (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) life story was a love story that ascended the confines of this temporary world – because their love relationship had its connection in the heavens, with Allah Ta’ala, the Creator of the Universe!

They wrote their lives for Allah Ta’ala and His Rasul (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and Allah Ta’ala ‘wrote’ His Eternal Pleasure and their honour in His Kalaam, the Qur’aan Sharief, for all times, and Allah Ta’ala presented their lives for all of mankind to take lesson from and draw inspiration from, until the end of time.”

- Hadhrat Moulana Abdul Hamid Is`haq Saheb
(Daamat Barakaatuhum)

Hadhrat Moulana Abdul Hamid Is`haq Saheb's (Daamat Barakaatuhum)

talks, books and Malfuzaat can be accessed from the website

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In this day and age of high technology, we find that social media has connected people from all walks of life, from different races, religions, etc. at a touch of a button.

Millions of Muslims have also stepped onto this global platform and for many, it is with noble intentions – to invite to Islam, to teach and propagate Islam, to correct the distorted views that many people have of Islam, and to serve the community of the Muslims, globally – which is greatly rewarding.

However, like with any work of Dien, social media also offers tests for all who are serving the Dien of Allah Ta'ala. One such test is the test of Ikhlāas.

Taken from the teachings of our respected Sheikh, Hadhrat Moulana Abdul Hamid Is'haq Saheb (Daamat Barakaatuhum), the advices herein, will Insha-Allah offer valuable guidelines for those serving Dien.



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