



ILM, MADAARIS AND STRIKES

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INTRODUCTION

An outstanding feature of western institutions of education is the attitude of liberalism. This evil of liberalism simply means the assertion of the *nafs ammaarah* (the lowly bestial and carnal desire in man) and the elimination of all the restraints divinely imposed on man. Liberalism is the destruction of culture, morality and spirituality. It brings in its wake anarchy, strife, mischief, immorality-*fitnah*, *fasaad*, *fisq* and *fujoor*. In Islam there is no place for this baneful attitude which rudely severs mans bond of obedience and love with Allah Ta'ala. But, with a heavy heart it must be observed that this evil of liberalism has crept into our Deeni Madaaris and have wrought havoc to the spiritual and moral lives of Deeni students.

The recent strikes and boycott of classes which occurred in some of our Deeni Madaaris are the consequence of this baneful influence of liberalism which has swept students from the bridge along which they were moving in the quest for true *Ilm* (the Knowledge of the Deen). This book is an appraisal of the vile situation which has arisen in Deeni Madaaris. In (his book, Hadhrat Maseehul Ummah sets out the causes, the motives, the evils, the destructive consequences and the final ruin of the spiritual and moral life of those who participate in such vile activity of anarchy and vandalism. The student activity of anarchy and mischief known as strikes and boycotts are examined in the light of the Shariah and the pronouncements of the Qur'aan and Hadith on the vandalism perpetrated by the victims of liberalism are explained.

The true purpose and meaning of Islamic knowledge are explained and the correct attitude and motive for the acquisition of Deeni knowledge are clarified. Without an understanding of these, the attainment of true *Ilm* is impossible. Without knowing the meaning and purpose of *Ilm-e-Deen* the quest for knowledge will prove fruitless and wasted. Therefore, it is imperative that everyone who contemplates to embark on the quest of higher Islamic knowledge read and understand the

contents of this book. A student who wishes to pursue the uphill task of Deeni Uloom, the path of which is littered with obstacles, impediments and dangers must as a necessity understand the meaning of his quest and must be able to set forth on the journey of Ilm in the light and spirit of the conception of the Shariah on this issue explained by Hadhrat Maulana Masihullah Saheb. If the one who desires to travel in search of higher Deeni Uloom, after having read this book, feels that he will not be able to subscribe to the conditions of acquisition of *Ilm* and that he will not be able to follow the austere pattern of life necessitated by *Ilm-e-Deen*, then let him remain at home. He should then content himself with a basic knowledge of the Deen, such knowledge requisite for the correct motion of the activities of his daily life.

It is vital to understand that Deeni Madaaris are not western colleges and universities. Western colleges and universities are institutions of liberalism and nafsani pleasures. They are institutions of self-exhibition and self-assertion. They are places which are the antithesis of Shari Uloom...they are the negators of the Uloom which gushes from the fountain of *Wahi* which emanates from the Being of Allah Azza Wa Jal, passes through the medium of Jibraeel (alayhis salaam) and making its first repository in the heart of Muhammadur Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Deeni Madaaris are such institutions, which are links in the Chain which is attached to that noble and illustrious Repository of *Ilm-e-Wahi*. Deeni Madaaris-or the true Madaaris of the Deen have necessarily to operate under the spirit and shadow of the austerity and privation of the Cave of Hira, the first Deeni Madrassah where the first lesson of Deeni *Ilm* was given by the Divine Command, *IQRAH!*

Thus the searcher of Deeni knowledge must remember that if he wishes to take admission to a Deeni Madrassah he should not go there and pollute the piety of the institution with his western attitude of liberalism. There is no room for extra-mural activity in a Madrassah. There is no room for student associations in a Madrassah. In a Deeni Madrassah the relationship is and must

necessarily be one of master and slave. The Ustaadh is the Master and the student his slave. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam.) said:

“The Ustaadh who teaches the student a single Aayat of the Qur’aan is the master of that student.”

Thus if the seeker of knowledge is genuine and if he can comprehend this conception of Deeni Uloom and if he can execute the lofty conditions and demands of the relationship of Ilm then only should he embark on the quest of higher Uloom. If not, let him remain at home and not bring down crashing on his head everlasting deprivation and spiritual and moral destruction- let him not be unjust to his soul by deliberately destroying his dunya and his deen.

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THE VIRTUES OF ILM (knowledge)

The virtues and significance of Deeni Knowledge are innumerable. The scope of this discussion excludes the presentation of an elaborate and exhaustive exposition of these virtues. There are special books dealing elaborately with this subject. Nevertheless, in the light of the principle: *a subject will not be discarded because of inability to attain it in totality*, it is proffered in brief that the importance of Deeni Knowledge is of such a degree that the entire arrangement of the external (*Zaahiri*) and internal (*Baatini*) dimensions of the universe is related to this very knowledge of the Deen. No act, religious or mundane, without Deeni knowledge is valid:

Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayhi) said in this regard:

“Deeni knowledge reforms the corrupted and instills life in the dead. One has just to observe the degree of refinement and moral character which imbues even uncultured persons on whom Deeni knowledge has cast its influence properly.”

It is clear from this statement of Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat (rahmatullah alayhi) that perfection of character, culture, lofty morals and true humanity are acquired by means of Deeni knowledge. In fact, these lofty standards of human life are confined to Deeni knowledge. They are attainable through the avenue of only Deeni knowledge. This achievement of true culture and refinement of character is not possible in any other way. This is no idle or superficial claim. Once Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat (rahmatullah alayhi) declared with much emphasis:

“I claim with emphasis that without Deeni knowledge it is impossible to acquire morality, intellectual and cultural refinement equilibrium in word and deed. Cultural and moral progress are dependent on Deeni knowledge.”

Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat (rahmatullah alayhi) has wonderfully and concisely explained in a nutshell all human excellences and

lofty attributes. As mentioned earlier, Deeni knowledge brings in its wake a superior culture and civilization no matter in which way the Deeni knowledge is acquired. The best and efficacious way of acquiring Deeni knowledge is through academic study of Arabic, in this regard, Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat (rahmatullah alayhi) said:

“Knowledge of the Deen has to be acquired no matter in which way. Its effect is most manifested, especially if acquired through the medium of Arabic. The lofty intellectual standard attained by studying the Deen through Arabic is indeed incomparable. When noble people acquire Deeni knowledge via Arabic, their intellectual standard and ability reach such heights which render kings and kingdoms insignificant to them.”

Once a British military officer (in India) being in full regalia struck awe and fear in the hearts of the simple village-folk. His manner, appearance and attitude truly over-awed the villagers. Any menial person could not muster up courage to even speak to him, so much awe and fear he commanded. This officer barked out the following question to a student of Deeni knowledge, who was studying at an Arabic Madrassah:

“What is the matter with all of you? Why do all who study Arabic shave their heads?”

(This was a reference to the practice among Madrassah students of removing all the hair from their heads.)

Without the slightest hesitation the student replied:

“What is the matter with all of you ? Why do all who study English shave their beards.?”

This quick and witty reply subdued the officer into silence.

Similarly, Sultan Alamghir (rahmatullah alayhi) questioned a student of Deeni knowledge, whose external appearance was haggard and pitiable. The Sultan posed the following question:

“How many cups of water are there in this pond [i.e. of the Jaami

Masjid of Delhi]?”

The student replied: Your question is incomplete.

Alamghir: In which way?

Student: Until the measure of the cup is not specified, your question cannot be answered. However, as a favor, I will nevertheless answer your question. If the cup is as big as the pond, the latter contains one cup; if the cup is half the size of the pond, the latter contains two cups and if the cup is one-quarter in size, the pond will contain four cups ad infinitum. The number of cups will always depend on the proportion of the cup to the pond.

Hadhrat Alamghir was thus silenced by this witty reply. Deeni knowledge improves ones natural capabilities.

THE DEENI ARABIC MADAARIS

It should now be clear that the Arabic Deeni Madaaris (plural of Madrassah) occupy a lofty and noble rank. The excellence of the men who emerged from the portals of these Madaaris bears ample testimony to the elevated pedestal, which these institutions occupied. The superiority of the products of the Deeni Arabic Madaaris once by far surpassed those who qualified from all the institutions of worldly knowledge. Not so long ago these Deeni Madaaris produced such unique Ulama who were the Imams of Knowledge of their times. Deeni knowledge and the reputation of the Ulama were perpetuated by these illustrious stars of superb knowledge. These noble men were masters of both exoteric and esoteric branches of knowledge.

Even in this day, it is not impossible for these Madaaris to produce such men of distinction. Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat (rahmatullah alayhi) said:

“People complain that nowadays men of the calibre of Imam Ghazali and Raazi are not born. I say under oath that even today such men or men greater than Ghazali and Raazi are possible.

Knowledge will not end at any time prior to Qiyaamah. Nubuwwat has terminated, but not Wilaayat and Ilm.”

In fact, Hakimul Ummat (rahmatullah alayhi) was a living example of such unique Stars of knowledge. Once Hadhrat Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayhi) was summoned to testify in a certain matter affecting the Muslim community. At that time he was 21 years of age and it was only one year after he had completed his academic studies at Darul Uloom Deoband. Since the matter pertained to the Muslim community, the court required expert evidence. The judge asked: “*Are you an Aalim?*”

Hadhrat Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayhi) thought to himself: If I say no, the European judge will not understand the Asian temperament and will say that the demand of the summons was not conformed to since the summons set out the need for an Aalim. This would be tantamount to bringing disgrace upon myself. If I say, yes, I am an Aalim, it would be contrary to the teachings of the *maslak* [spiritual path] I am following. I therefore, replied: “*The Muslims consider me as such.*”

The judge asked: “Do all Muslims accept you?”

Hadhrat Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayhi) thought: If I say no, it will be inviting disgrace in the presence of a kaafir. Moreover, it will have an adverse affect on the case. If I claim that all Muslims accept me, there was the possibility of me being called on to deal with Hindu-Muslim problems which arose frequently in Kanpur, and I have no desire to assume such responsibility. I therefore replied: “*There are two meanings of acceptance*”

The judge asked: What are the two meanings of acceptance?

Hadhrat Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayhi) replied: “One meaning is to acknowledge [i.e. to accept as the truth] and the other is to submit [to act in accordance]. In so far as acknowledging is concerned, all Muslims accept me. No Muslim can say that any law which I state is false. However, regarding submission, well, I do not possess the coercive power of the state to command this

acceptance. Thus, in this context, some accept me and some do not.”

After the session, the legal teams met and spoke in praise of the answers given. This in fact is the barkat of Deeni Arabic Madaaris. The nature of the knowledge imparted at such Madaaris produces creative and progressive intelligence. It must however be added that such intellectual elevation produced by Deeni knowledge goes hand in hand with *tarbiyat* (spiritual purification and development).

It is of the utmost importance that the true student of Deeni knowledge always keeps in mind his position. He must not conform to his desires. He has to dispel all alien ideas and concepts. Of necessity he must remain fully engrossed in his studies and abstain from all extramural activities (activities which are normal, necessary corollaries of secular education). The student in the quest of the lofty and celestial *Ilm* of the Deen cannot afford to indulge or participate in any activities other than his studies. If he adopts this pure and determined attitude, solitude and unity of purpose, he will be blessed with amazing progress in his knowledge, intellect and insight.

If the student of Deeni knowledge passes his student days in this sincere and concerted way, there will be no need for him to spend much time in the company of a Sheikh in the pursuit of spiritual reformation and development. Hadhrat Thaانvi (rahmatullah alayhi) once asked a buzrug (saint):

“Why is it that Ulama have to make so much less Mujaahada [striving against the nafs] in Sulook than others?”

The buzrug replied: *“During their days of acquiring knowledge they are involved in the greatest Mujaahada.”*

From this it will be understood that the efforts, unity of purpose, concentration, solitude, sincerity, etc., adopted by the student during his period of study combine to constitute the greatest and most efficient Mujaahada which subdues, tames, purifies and adorns the nafs, hence the little effort and time required for

this purpose after completion of the academic career. Students should now realize and appreciate the fact that their efforts of their student days will never go in vain. Such efforts produce a lofty stage of spirituality.

THE PRESENT SYLLABUS OF THE DEENI MADAARIS

The syllabus of the Deeni Madaaris is so designed as to develop in the student perfect intellectual capability. This syllabus presently operative in the Deeni Madaaris is known as *Dars-e-Nizaami*. In this regard, Hakimul Ummat Maulana Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayhi) avers:

“If an average student of average intelligence pursues the Dars-e-Nizaami course, he will develop amazing intellectual capability. No degree of any secular institution, be it Oxford, Cambridge or Harvard, can measure up to it.”

Mantiq (logic) permeates most of the text-books of this course. *Mantiq* plays a very important role in this syllabus. It produces sharpness in intellect, which in turn advances intelligence and creates far-sightedness. The study of *mantiq* is a great aid in the study and understanding of the Qur’aan Majeed. Hence, if the *Dars-e-Nizaami* is acquired correctly, with understanding and diligence, observing all the spiritual requirements attendant to Deeni knowledge, nothing more will be needed, The syllabus prepared by the *Aslaaf* (our pious forbearers) is comprehensive. It contains everything, but the condition for the successful manifestation of its effects is acquisition with proper understanding and fulfilling all necessary conditions and etiquettes.

AN OBJECTION

An objection or a query may be posed at this juncture. If in the past there emerged from the portals of these Madaaris great and illustrious men of outstanding spiritual and intellectual ability and rank, Ulama and Mashaaiikh of the highest order and calibre, Stars of guidance and perfection, then what has happened now?

Why do we no longer find such men of outstanding calibre being prepared by the Madaaris? The simple answer to this query is that Deeni knowledge is no longer pursued and acquired in the manner in which our illustrious predecessors did. Nowadays, their method and their attitude are no longer adopted. Their example is no longer adhered to. This then is the reason for the absence of such men of intellect, insight, intelligence, knowledge and spirituality. The attainment of the barakaat and the fruits of knowledge which were experienced long ago is possible only by following the ways and methods of those great souls who were outstanding Stars of success in the realm of Deeni knowledge. The methods and life-styles of our illustrious *Aslaaf* during their student days are extant in great detail in many books on their lives. A brief description will be presented here to facilitate insight into the matter.

The former noble Ulama of the Deen during their period of acquiring knowledge upheld all the conditions requisite for the acquisition of Deeni knowledge and they abstained rigidly from all such factors which constitute impediments and harms in the path of acquiring Deeni knowledge. They were therefore blessed with the wealth of Deeni knowledge, true knowledge, its barakaat and effects. A logical and an accepted requisite for the derivation of the fullest effect and benefit of anything is the combination of the following two ingredients:

- (1) Fulfilment of the conditions (*Sharaa-it*), and
- (2) Elimination of all obstacles (*Mawaani*)

Let us now examine in the light of the afore-stated logical principle, the state of those involved in the acquisition of Deeni knowledge. An examination will reveal that generally, no consideration is given to this principle. Its requirements are not met. Students accord no attention to the adoption of the shari (conditions) imperative to the acquisition of *Ilm* nor do they bother about the *mawaani* (obstacles and impediments). They fail to abstain from factors harmful and utterly destructive to *Ilm-e-Deen*. This uphill Path in the quest of the lofty and

celestial knowledge of the Deen is cluttered with many a pitfall, danger, harms and obstacles. But students of this knowledge no longer care to save themselves from these factors, which apply a strong braking effect on the acquisition of Deeni knowledge. In fact, the overwhelming majority of today's students are not even aware of the conditions and the impediments of Deeni knowledge. On the other hand, those who are aware of the conditions and impediments of *tahseel-e-Ilm* are overwhelmed by negligence, indolence and the greatest disaster of all, viz., liberalism.

SHARAA-IT OF ILM (KNOWLEDGE)

The first and foremost condition of knowledge is *ikhlaas* (sincerity). The student must be genuine in his quest for knowledge. This is absolute and imperative. If he fails in this fundamental and pivotal requirement, all his efforts in the quest of *Ilm-e-Deen* will be fruitless. In addition, his quest must be correct and true. Ilm is not attainable by mere desire and imagination by hopes and wishes without toil and labour. Ilm is no intellectual pastime. It is not an activity to fulfill the demand of leisure. Its attainment is difficult because it is not a cheap entity nor is it a substance of inferior quality. It is a priceless treasure, hence everyone is not in position to procure it. Ilm is not like a lewd woman to be prostituted by all and sundry. Its similitude is that of a royal princess of exceptional grace, modesty, chastity, beauty, charm and elegance. Her noble qualities have captivated a whole world. A thousand efforts too in her quest go in vain. It has thus been said:

“Knowledge will not give you even a part of it until you do not give up your whole to it.”

As long as the student of Deeni knowledge is not totally absorbed in knowledge, he will not acquire a share of true knowledge--of this knowledge of the Deen. This knowledge will not open up its Door to the one who refuses to submit himself in entirety to its dictates. The treasure of *Ilm* can never be

acquired by the student dwelling in negligence, indolence and in the pursuit of mundane comfort and luxury. It is imperative that the student sacrifices comfort and luxury and adopt difficulty, hardship and the correct ways and means of acquiring knowledge. Mere wishes and hopes will never avail in this field which demands toil and sacrifice. In this regard the Muhaqqiqeen have said:

“If the acquisition of this [Deeni] knowledge was by means of wishes, there would not have remained an ignoramus in creation. Therefore, strive and be not indolent for the consequence of regret is for the indolent.”

It is thus abundantly evident that nothing is attainable on the basis of wishes and hopes. Great effort, devotion and sacrifice are required. The correct ways and means have to be harnessed. One who merely desires knowledge, is not in the quest of knowledge. A claimant will be said to be a true searcher of knowledge only if he harnesses all the requirements, ways and means of knowledge. Adoption of the correct ways and means and the elimination of the obstacles are essential for success in every sphere of life. One who denies this fact or is not prepared to undergo the trials and rigours, nor devotes himself to the task or mission of his wishes, will never attain his desired goal of success. Such a person is merely building castles in the air.

Taking admission in a Madrassah, living there and engaging superficially in the study of books will never suffice. This type of student is like a man wandering aimlessly around a farmland. He does not adopt the ways and means of agriculture-he does not labour and toil, but he expects a harvest of crops. Everyone will label such a man as an ignoramus. It must now be perfectly clear that the first and foremost condition for the acquisition of Deeni Knowledge is a genuine quest and such a quest entails the cultivation of the ways and means.

It is essential that three facts concerning knowledge be understood otherwise there will remain ambiguity, deficiency and weakness in ones quest for *Ilm*. These three facts are:

- (1) Definition of *Ilm*.
- (2) The subject matter of *Ilm*.
- (3) The purpose and goal of *Ilm*.

A detailed explanation of these will now be presented.

THE CONCEPT OF ISLAMIC KNOWLEDGE

DEFENITION OF *ILM*

The written characters, the words and the teaching of the written words are not *Ilm* (knowledge). The study of books, instruction and all things related to tuition and study are mere external forms and representations of *Ilm* like pictures or images of objects are not the actual objects. Since the words represent and are indicative of *Ilm*, they are figuratively described as *Ilm*. Among the definitions of *Ilm* given by the authorities some appear hereunder.

- (1) Knowledge is *Noor* [Light] and ignorance is *zulmat* [darkness].
- (2) Knowledge is that entity which no thief can steal, no eliminator can eliminate, no divider can divide. Fire cannot burn it, the ocean cannot drown it and worms cannot devour it. It remains attached to the Aalim. Wherever he goes and in whatever condition he may be in.
- (3) Aini said: *“The Ulama differ in the definition of Ilm. Some say that, it is indefinable while others aver that it can be defined. The best definition is: Knowledge is an attribute among the attributes of the nafs. It produces perfect recognition in the metaphysical realm.”*

(4) Hadhrat Ali [radiallahu anhu] said: *“Ilm is an everlasting treasure which will not perish.”*

(5) Ziyaad Bin Labeed (radiallahu anhu) said: Nabi [sallallahu alayhi wasallam] while explaining a certain matter said: *That will occur when Ilm disappears.*

I [Ziyaad] said: *“O Rasulullah [sallallahu alayhi wasallam]! How will Ilm disappear while we are reciting the Qur’aan and are imparting the Qur’aan. to our offspring and they to their offspring until the Day of Qiyaamah?”*

Rasulullah [sallallahu alayhi wasallam] said: *“Alas! O Ziyaad! I thought you were among the most intelligent in Madinah. What! Do these Jews and Christians not recite the Taurah and the Injeel while they do not practice on anything of these Books?”*

In *Kaukab* it is said: *“Ilm has no reality if unaccompanied by amal [practice], like the Ahl-e-Kitaab who are like asses loaded with books, for they derive no benefit from their knowledge.”*

In *Mirqaat* it appears:

“An Aalim who does not act according to his knowledge is like a jaahil or worse. In fact, he is like an ass loading books. These people are like animals or more astray.”

These statements show that *Ilm* is not books or what is written in books. Words and expositions are not *Ilm*. These are merely indicators of knowledge or reflections of knowledge. They create in one the desire for the acquisition of knowledge.

When Allah Ta’ala desired to send the *Noor* of Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) into this lowly and material world so that *faidh* (spiritual benefit) may be imparted to creation, He did not send it (the *Noor*) in its original form, but dispatched that *Noor* via a medium because we lack the capability of deriving benefit from that *Noor* in its original state. Even if we can derive some benefit from that *Noor* in its original form, it will be limited and without our knowledge. It would have been a *faidh* which accrued to us unconsciously. It would have been like the light from the sun.

We derive benefit from it, but not by our volition. The relationship of instruction (*ta'leem*) and the acquisition of knowledge (*ta'allum*) could not have been established with pure *Noor* in its original state. Thus the true purpose would have remained unattained. And, the true purpose of the dispatch of this *Noor* into this material realm is, in fact, this *ta'leem* and *ta'allum*. Thus Allah Ta'ala sent Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) in material form, with a physical body for our benefit.

In the same way *Ilm* is too a *Noor* which Allah Ta'ala sent for our benefit in the form of words and inscriptions. Thus, *Ilm* is not mere words and inscriptions, but is in reality a *Noor* bestowed to us in the form of letters and words so that we may attain via this medium the *haqaiq*, *ma-aarif* and laws (i.e. the realities of the *Noor* of knowledge). Alas! By far and great, people are unaware of this transcendental reality. It is because of this ignorance that nowadays the acquisition of mere words and letters is considered a great achievement and excellence. But, the *Noor* of knowledge, true understanding and insight is not acquired thereby.

THE SUBJECT MATTER OF *ILM-E-DEEN*

The subject matter of this knowledge is the actions and the states of *mukallifeen* (those upon whom such actions and states are imposed). These states are the subject of discussion, scrutiny and categorization. In this regard it is ascertained whether these acts and states are true or false; permissible or forbidden. The degree of permissibility or prohibition, etc. is determined.

It will thus be evident that it is totally in conflict with the demand of this *Ilm* and highly improper for its votaries (those engaged in the pursuit of *Ilm*) to be indifferent and inept regarding their own actions and conditions. They cannot afford to ignore whether these are virtuous or immoral and permissible or forbidden. Since the demand of *Ilm* is to distinguish between vice and virtue, both intellectually and practically, the attitude of neglect and indifference of students of Deeni knowledge is totally negatory of the effect of *Ilm*.

Now when the very subject matter of *Ilm* is eliminated by this indifferent and indiscriminate attitude, then *Ilm* will not exist. It has been negated. There then remains no difference between *Ilm* and *Jahl* (ignorance). It is because of this that the Qur'aan-e-Hakeem describes evil acts that contradict the Shariah, as ignorance. Allah Ta'ala says:

“Verily, taubah [to forgive] is the responsibility of Allah for those who practiced evil in the state of jahaalah [ignorance].”

In terms of Allah's Promise, He will forgive those who perpetrated sin in ignorance. Hadhrat Mujaahid (rahmatullah alayhi), the Imam of Tafseer, said:

“Every perpetrator of sin against Allah, is a jaahil when he commits the sin.”

Even if the sinner happens to have the form of an Aalim, he is a *jaahil* at the time of committing sin. The illustrious Taabieen, Hadhrat Abul Aaliyah and Hadhrat Qataadah (rahmatullah alayhimaa) said:

“The Sahaabah-e-Kiraam are unanimous that every sin committed by man is jahaalah [ignorance] whether the sin is committed knowingly or not.”

Hadhrat Ikramah (rahmatullah alayhi) said:

“All affairs beyond the confines of Allah's Law are jahaalah.”

It is not difficult to understand why sin has been designated as *jahaalah*. For the sake of a temporary pleasure the sinner sacrifices an everlasting and superior pleasure which will be the consequence of obedience and abstention from sin. The sinner prefers the fleeting pleasure to the everlasting pleasure. He has chosen the inferior instead of the superior. His *jahaalah* is thus evident. He has chosen a disastrous and painful chastisement for the sake of momentary pleasure. Therefore, the man while indulging in sin cannot be an *aaqil* (intelligent). Everyone will brand as ignorant the person who strikes such a miserable and

calamitous bargain because inspite of being aware of the calamity, he knowingly invites it to settle on him.

Once when Hadhrat Abu Zar Ghifaari (radiallahu anhu) called someone: *“O son of a slave!”*

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said to him: *“There is yet jahaalah in you.”* (Bukhaari)

This comment of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) establishes that even an unbecoming statement is in conflict with the subject of knowledge and is in fact *jahaalah*. The Hadith Shareef also states:

“Two qualities do not combine in a hypocrite: a virtuous disposition and the understanding of the Deen.”

Knowledge of the Deen, high moral character and the gait and appearance of *Sulahaa* (pious and saintly ones) do not gather in a *munaafiq*.

Along with the acquisition of *Ilm*, cultivation and reformation of morals and the inculcation of all lofty attributes are imperative. Indifference to moral upliftment and contentment with mere letters and words (book knowledge) are the ways of *nifaaq* (hypocrisy). A *munaafiq* adopts some practice or form of the Deen with the ulterior motive of acquiring some worldly benefit, material or otherwise. He has absolutely no relationship with obedience, *ibaadat* and betterment of his Akhirah. He is, therefore, not at all bothered with self-reformation and spiritual progress. Hence, his knowledge proves of no benefit. In the Hadith Shareef we are instructed to seek protection against such knowledge which is futile and of no benefit.

“O Allah! I seek Your protection against a knowledge which does not benefit.”

In explaining this Hadith, Allaamah Suyuti (rahmatullah alayhi) said:

“i.e. it [the knowledge that does not benefit] does not adorn the character of the baatin which leads to beautiful external [Zaahiri] acts and secures future thawaab...”

In this regard, Allaamah Suyuti (rahmatullah alayhi) expresses in poetic form, the translation of which is:

*“O you who abstain from the lofty character!
There is no pride in knowledge being accumulated
He whose knowledge adorns not his character
Will not benefit by his knowledge in the Aakhirah.”*

It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that the searcher of knowledge keeps in mind the subject matter (*maudhu*) of *Ilm* and pursues the acquisition of knowledge, holding aloft the rank and standard of his knowledge, remembering at all times and in all circumstances the permissibilities and the prohibitions, eliminating all vestiges of *jahaalah* from his every act and word; abstaining from the imitation and emulation of statements, actions, mannerism and etiquettes of all types of *juhaalah*, Yahud, Nasara, kuffaar, mushrikeen, fussaaq and fujjaar; refraining with an attitude of total disgust from the gait, appearance and styles in dress and demeanor of all such people; and striving ardently and enthusiastically to establish and imbue every movement and moment of rest with the hue of *Ilm*. This attitude is essential for the student embarked on the quest of Deeni knowledge. This attitude is in total conformity with the *maudhu* or subject matter of *Ilm-e-Deen*.

THE PURPOSE OF ACQUIRING KNOWLEDGE

We have been taught from the very initial stages, i.e. from the elementary text books, that no action of a mature, sane and intelligent person is devoid of purpose and aim. This view is agreed upon by all men of intelligence. Every person who initiates an act does so for either the acquisition of some gain or to ward off some harm. Thus, acquisition of benefit and warding off harm create the motive force for the adoption of the ways and means of any act.

It is this mental attitude dictated by benefit and harm, advantage and disadvantage which sets into motion the action for either the acquisition of advantage or the elimination of disadvantage. This mental condition is termed *niyyat* or intention. It can be virtuous as well as evil, sincere and insincere. Purpose and intent are thus of two kinds, viz, *Sahih* (correct and proper) and *Faasid* (corrupt and improper). Purpose and intention may, in other words, be said to be positive and negative. A correct and proper intention will be said to be positive while a corrupt and improper one will be negative. All negative factors, viz., such intentions and motives which are negatory of the true purpose of *Ilm*, have to be banished.

The purpose of acquiring *Ilm-e-Deen* should never be the pursuit of rank, high posts, respect, honour, fame, name, expertise in debating, lecturing, etc. The consequence of such improper motives in the pursuit of knowledge will be to expend effort merely in the attainment of book-knowledge and eloquence in speech. The student will direct his efforts so as to become a good orator and debater; to present talk in an alluring and captivating way. The effort will be for the mere purpose of such superficial gains--for an external facade--a shadow of knowledge. This type of student will gain proficiency in the art of review and criticism. The result of such improper motives will be the utilization of the proficiency gained for purposes of attaining aggrandizement, pride, vanity, show, fame, confrontation, self-esteem, obstinacy, refusal to concede ones error, searching for the faults of others, suspicion, abuse, and the desire to create a following. These baneful motives will generate greed and the lust to accumulate as much wealth as possible. This person is concerned with pleasing creation instead of the Creator. He becomes negligent and remains indifferent to his spiritual reformation and moral upliftment because of his corrupt motives. He is totally diverted from moral character and his moral depravity are the causes of strife and mischief on earth. Hence, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) sounded the gravest and the sternest of warnings for those who

contemplate the acquisition of knowledge on the basis of corrupt motives.

In this regard, Nabi-e-Kareem (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“He who seeks knowledge for a motive other than Allah should prepare his abode in the Fire.”

“Do not acquire knowledge so as to vie with the Ulama nor to dispute with the ignorant nor for gaining prominence in gatherings by means of it. For him who does so is the Fire, the Fire.”

“He who acquires for the sake of worldly gain such knowledge by means of which the Pleasure of Allah is sought, will not even smell the fragrance of Jannat on the Day of Qiyaamah.”

There are many other similar Ahadeeth in condemnation of acquiring knowledge for worldly motives. However, these cited here will suffice for one endowed with a healthy disposition. But one whose thinking and temperament are corrupted, will not benefit even if volumes of such Ahadeeth are cited. An intelligent person derives lesson from a single word whereas piles and volumes of books will not benefit one with a contaminated mind.

It is evident from the Ahadeeth that the knowledge of the Deen should not be pursued for any worldly purpose, be it of whatever nature.

Therefore, the pursuit of Deeni knowledge for obtaining a degree, certificate for livelihood, for the acquisition of wealth, rank, post, fame, honour, etc., will be the consequence of corrupt motives. Any of these purposes will indicate that the intention underlying the pursuit of *Ilm* is corrupt and unwholesome. The one and only purpose of Deeni knowledge is the obtaining of Divine Pleasure. It is imperative that this be well understood. Like other acts of *ibaadat*, the quest of Deeni knowledge is also an act of *ibaadat*. *Ikhlaas* (sincerity) is a prerequisite for all acts of *ibaadat*. The Shariah commands this

ikhlaas, for minus this condition, the act is utterly wasted and constitutes a calamity. Therefore, it is incumbent that *Ilm-e-Deen* be acquired solely for the purpose of securing the Pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. The searcher of Deeni knowledge should compulsorily and perpetually maintain intact the sincerity of intention in his mind. If he fails in maintaining fresh in his mind this one, true and pure intention and purpose of knowledge, the pursuit of *Ilm* will degenerate into a mere pastime. It will deteriorate into an empty profession devoid of inner power and spiritual force and lustre, which should accompany the knowledge of the Deen. Absence of the pure and correct intention will weaken the resolve of the student of Deen. In any confrontation with falsehood, diversions and impediments which are strewn along this uphill path of *Ilm-e-Deen* he will fail miserably. His emotions will overwhelm him and indolence will grip him. His *Ilmi* career will remain an idle occupation an exercise of futility and sport.

Thus, the purpose of acquiring Deeni knowledge is nothing but the cultivation of *Ridhaa-e-Haqq* or the Pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. The way in which this purpose is to be attained is *tazkiya-e-nafs* or the purification of the nafs. The nafs is mans inner propensity or faculty of desire. It may also be said that the actual purpose of Deeni knowledge is *tazkiya-e-nafs* because this is the basis on which will be attained the Divine Pleasure, the motive of *Ilm-e-Deen*. The student must as a necessity possess this niyyat of *tazkiya-e-nafs* when embarking on his quest for Deeni knowledge, for the influence and effect of this niyyat will dominate the student. If then, this was the niyyat of the student to attain self-purification there is no reason why the effect of his pure intention will not assert itself. There remains then no reason why capability and piety will not be acquired. In fact, the demand of *Ilm-e-Deen* is the purification of the nafs prior to the pursuit of such lofty knowledge. The student should, prior to embarking on his academic career, engage in *tazkiyah-e-nafs*. Only then should he enter the Path in quest of knowledge.

The proof for this claim is the fact that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) first adopted solitude and contemplation in the Cave of Hira. He practiced Mujaahada against the nafs. It was subsequent to *tazkiyah-e-nafs* that Knowledge, was bestowed upon Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). It was only thereafter that Wahi descended and Nabi (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was commanded: '*READ!*'

In view of this it should be understood that one becomes worthy of being a true bearer of *Ilm-e-Deen*, *Ilm-e-ilahi* and *Ilm-e-Wahi* only after spiritual purification of the nafs has been achieved and when the *baatin* (mans heart and soul) has been thoroughly reformed and adorned with lofty attributes of excellence and perfection.

This discussion has abundantly clarified that the correct and proper motive for the acquisition of *Ilm-e-Deen* is *Radha-e-Ilahi*. This is then the second condition (*shart*) for acquiring knowledge. This condition is also referred to as *Husn-e-Niyyat* (beauty of intention) and *Ikhlaas* (sincerity).

NIFAAQ

THE OPPOSITE OF *IKHLAAS*

The antonym of *ikhlaas* is *nifaaq*. On the basis of the principle, *things are recognized by reference to their opposites*, it is essential to be aware of *nifaaq* (hypocrisy). A proper awareness and understanding of the meaning of *nifaaq* will produce a corresponding awareness and understanding of *ikhlaas*. The perfection and elevation of *ikhlaas* increase in proportion to abstention from *nifaaq*. The greater the elimination of *nifaaq*, the higher the condition of *ikhlaas*. It is therefore necessary to elaborate on, the meaning of *nifaaq*.

Ikhlaas and *nifaaq* are two attributes which operate in every statement and every action. Like *ikhlaas* has stages, so too has *nifaaq*. The one is the antithesis of the other, hence both in their states of perfection cannot fuse in one place at the same time

because the combination of opposites in a single substratum is impossible. However, they can combine in a single sphere in their states of imperfection. The degree of the non-existence of *ikhlaas* will produce a corresponding degree of the existence of *nifaaq*, and the converse is also true, i.e. the degree of the non-existence of *nifaaq* will bring about a corresponding degree of the existence of *ikhlaas*. In the Hadith Shareef it is said:

“He in who there exist four attributes is a total [or perfect] munaafiq, and he in who there exists one of these four attributes, has in him one part of nifaaq.”

It should, therefore, be clear that *nifaaq* has stages. The aforementioned Hadith does not confine the attributes of *nifaaq* to four. On the basis of the principle, explicit mention does not negate that which is besides what has been mentioned, the reference in the Hadith to four attributes of *nifaaq* does not mean that *nifaaq* is confined to only four qualities. Confirming this claim another Hadith states:

“The signs [Aayaat] of a munaafiq are three.”

Another Hadith states:

“The signs [alaamaat] of a munaafiq are three.”

These Ahadeeth clarify the fact that reference has been made to some of the factors of *nifaaq*. Some Ahadeeth mention three while others again state four.”

Actually, there are a number of signs and factors of *nifaaq*, abstention from all being an absolute necessity. At all times one has to be alert to detect the signs of *nifaaq* so that one remains far, far from this destructive evil. There should be no resemblance whatever with the munaafiqeen who are more detestable than other kuffaar and *mushrikeen*, Greater Wrath and Punishment will be their lot. Total opposition to their ways, appearances, methods, etc. has to be practiced. An Imaan purified becomes the repository of the special grace and subtleties of Allah Ta’ala. Such lofty Imaan can therefore never brook the slightest vestige of *nifaaq* which is the antithesis of

ikhlaas. There is no fusion between the two. They cannot co-exist. The one repels the other.

The fundamental purpose of acquiring *Ilm-e-Deen* is the inculcation of divine attributes which imbues one with congeniality for the Deen. The qualities of trust, honesty, justice, reliability, truth and many other lofty attributes then imbue the student. Students of Deeni knowledge should register these facts in their minds and by constant rumination of these, create sincerity and adornment in their Imaan. In this way will they gain Divine Proximity.

No matter how sweet and affable aliens may appear, remain alert and extremely wary of them. Beware of their danger. Association and friendship with them bring ruin in their wake. Sheikh Saadi (rahmatullah alayhi) said:

“Those who are alert and wary of others, will keep their precious pearls protected.”

The Sahaabah-e-Kiraam were therefore, always alert. They were suspicious of their own nafs, never trusting it. They always took stock of their deeds, hence they felt very strongly the slightest weakness which developed in them. They always feared the contamination of *nifaaq*. Whenever they discerned any adverse conflict in their internal and external conditions, they would suspect themselves of having become the victims of *nifaaq*. Bukhaari Shareef reports the following Hadith:

“Ibn Abi Maleekah said: I met thirty Sahaabah of Nabi [sallallahu alayhi wasallam] all of whom feared the affliction of nifaaq upon their nafs.”

In the commentary of this Hadith it is said: *“None of them regarded themselves free of nifaaq.”*

Imam Hasan Basri (rahmatullah alayhi) said:

“It is only the Mu'min who fears nifaaq and it is only the munaafiq who feels secure from it.”

Imam Ghazali (rahmatullah alayhi) said:

“A man said to Huzaifah: I fear Allah, for perhaps I become a munaafiq. Huzaifah replied: If you were a munaafiq you would not have feared nifaaq. Verily, a munaafiq does not fear nifaaq. Only a Mu'min fears nifaaq and only a munaafiq feels secure from it.”

The sign of true Imaan, therefore, is the recognition of one's own faults and weaknesses, so much so, that one fears for the safety of one's Imaan. The true believer feels that his condition is like that of the *munaafiqeen*. An uncaring and self-assured attitude and indifference to one's faults and defects are ingredients of a hypocritical condition.

It will be apparent now that *nifaaq* was not confined to the age of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). When even the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam suspected themselves as victims of *nifaaq* whenever they considered in themselves a decrease in sincerity, then who can feel snug and regard his actions and states to have attained perfection in truth and sincerity. Who can now feel fully safe and free from hypocrisy when even weakness in *Ikhlaas* is a partial resemblance with the *munaafiqeen*? How can one be careless about one's spiritual reformation when the danger of *nifaaq* is constantly hovering over us ready to contaminate our Imaan?.

Imam Ghazali (rahmatullah alayhi) states in *Ihya-ul Uloom*:

“Huzaifah said: Today, there are more hypocrites than were in the time of Nabi [sallallahu alayhi wassallam]. During that time they concealed their nifaaq, but nowadays they exhibit it. Nifaaq is the opposite of truth and Imaan. It is a hidden condition.”

“When it was said to Hasan Basri that some claim that nowadays there is no longer nifaaq, he replied: O my brother! [Today their number is so great] that if they all died [now] you will be overwhelmed with fear [because of the desolateness of the earth by virtue of silence in the roads. [In other words, the world will become almost empty and an eerie silence will permeate it as a result of this emptiness.”

Hasan Basri or some other saint also said:

“If the munaafiqeen had to grow tails, then we would not have been able to set our feet on the ground [because the whole earth would be covered by their tails. This expresses their abundance].”

A similar expression is given in *Ruhul Maaani*:

“The signs of a munaafiq are three. When he speaks, he lies; when he promises, he violates it; and, when he is trusted, he abuses that trust.”

Another sign of *nifaaq* is also given in the authentic narrations of Ahadeeth. That sign is: when the *munaafiq* disputes, he becomes abusive. A doubt arises at this juncture. These traits mentioned in regard to *nifaaq* sometimes are found in such muslims whose Islam is beyond reproach.

There is no doubt regarding their Imaan. In fact, nowadays a great many among even the Ulama are afflicted with these evils. The Hadith also corroborates this by saying:

“The majority of the munaafiqeen of this Ummah are its Qurraa.”

In this first epoch of Islam the term, *qurraa* (reciters) referred to the Ulama. The explanation of this doubt is: Since these evils are the characteristics of *nifaaq*, their presence in one creates resemblance with the *munaafiqeen*. In having these evil traits which are the special features of *nifaaq* one will be simulating the *munaafiqeen* in character. Thus the Hadith: *“He in who there exist four traits is a total Munaafiq”*, means that such a person has a very strong affinity and resemblance with the *munaafiqeen*. It does not mean that he is a *munaafiq* in the technical or actual sense—a hidden kaafir.

It is thus an established fact that even today there does exist *nifaaq* which corrupts *Ikhlaas*. Such *nifaaq* prevails extensively. It is therefore imperative that all Muslims in general, and students of Deeni Knowledge in particular, be aware and alert of

nifaaq so that they do not become embroiled in its corruptive and calamitous influences. It is incumbent to protect ones *Ikhlaas* and the perfection of ones Imaan by being ever alert of the danger of *nifaaq*.

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (radiallahu anhu) said:

“The signs of the munaafiq are three. When he speaks, he lies; when he promises, he violates and when he is trusted, he abuses that trust.”

Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Umar (radiallahu anhu) narrates that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“He in who there are four qualities is a total munaafiq. He in who there is one of these qualities, has in him a quality of nifaaq. [This nifaaq remains in him] until he shuns it. When he is trusted, he misappropriates; when he speaks, he lies; when he pledges, he betrays and when he disputes, he becomes abusive.”
[Bukhaari, Muslim]

When the student to the Deeni Madaaris is admitted as a student, he is required to sign a pledge. He signs the pledge to abide by all the rules and regulations of the Madrassah. Violation of this signed pledge comes within the scope of the Hadith:

“When he pledges, he violates.”

Such violation of one’s pledge is in conflict with Imaan. Submission, therefore, to the rules and regulations of the Madrassah is essential. It is necessary that the student goes through the written rules often so that these remain fresh in his memory. Thus will he be saved from the evil of violation of the pledge which he has signed.

In the Kitaab, *Al-Adaabun Nabawi*, in the commentary of the Hadith, *“In who there are four qualities....”*, it is said:

“In reality, these four qualities are major sins which bring spiritual destruction. They are such crimes which bring ruin in their wake. They do not emanate from a Mu’min whose heart is

filled with Isnaaa. This Hadith is a great pillar among the pillars of moral character on which is based the honour and elevation of nations.”

A nation in which these evil traits abound becomes contemptible.

Such a nation exists in a low state of moral degeneration. Its influence and standing as a self-respecting and independent nation will cease. Mundane and social hardships will engulf it. Corruption, anarchy, strife and mischief erupt in the wake of such moral degeneration. Peace and prosperity are destroyed.

Earlier it was mentioned that hypocritical traits are not limited to four. In Surah *Munaafiqoon*, *Tafseer Ibn Kathir* presents a Hadith from the Musnad of Ahmad. In this Hadith eight factors of nifaaq are mentioned:

“Abu Hurairah narrates that Nabi: [sallallahu alayhi wasallam] said: ‘Verily, the munaafiqeen have some signs by means of which they are recognised. [These are]: their greeting is curse [i.e. instead of greeting, they curse]; their nourishment is by plundering; their booty is wealth which has been placed in their trust; they do not venture near to the Musjids, and if they do, they indulge in nonsensical talk, they come to Salaat the very last and in pride, they love none nor do others love them, and during the night they lay sleeping [like logs] while during the day they wander around bellowing and screaming.”

In short, hypocrisy produces moral degeneration, pursuit of ulterior and baneful motives, misappropriation of trust and renunciation of the Deen. When mans moral fibre is destroyed, his tongue becomes abusive and noxious and his actions despicable and abhorrent. When the attribute of *amaanat* is annihilated, plundered wealth seems wholesome. *Khiyaanat* (misappropriation) then seems adorable. Affliction with pernicious motives makes one unconcerned with the rights of others. A man suffering from baneful motives recognizes nothing but his own desires. His heart is devoid of love and pity for others. People detest him. This is always the fate which

overtakes a selfish person. When indifference to the Deen sets in the heart, there remains no life in Salaat.

The true student of knowledge imbued with *Ikhlāas* will always abstain from these hypocritical acts and traits. He will never lay hands on the property of another without permission of the owner, be the owner present or absent. The true student of Deeni knowledge will have a natural aversion for the evil branches of *nifaaq*. He will not operate on the basis of ulterior and selfish motives. He will accord priority to the rights of others. In fact, he will prefer the rights of all aspects of creation and not give priority to his own demands. He will not dishonour or disgrace anyone. He will not injure anyone. He will treat all creation in the light of their being the children of Allah (خلق الله (اطفال الله)). He will thus endeavour to be a source of comfort for them. He will love all and in consequence he will be loved by all. He will possess true honour.

In particular, the true student of *Ilm-e-Deen* will meticulously observe the rules, advices and guidance of the Madrassah. The respect and honour of the Ustaadhs will be grounded in him. He will therefore be enthusiastic in rendering service to them. A student measuring up to this standard is looked on with love, honour and respect by all the Ustaadhs and officials of the Madrassah. Spiritual benefit (the barakaat and *fuyoodh*) of *Ilm* permeates his being.

A student of such lofty character is never neglectful nor indolent in his Salaat which is among the *Huqooq* (Rights) of Allah Ta'ala. He always presents himself in the Masjid in humility, with respect and on time. No vestige of abuse, vulgarity, misbehaviour and futility will be found in him.

The Hadith says: “*Verily, these two [Fajr and Isha] are the most difficult on the munaafiqeen.*”

Since these two Salaats entail sacrifice of sleep and comfort, they are most difficult on the hypocrites. If this difficulty is merely, a natural state then it will not be evil. In this natural

state, one will not be prevented from attending the Salaat on time. One overcomes the difficulty. In fact, such striving (Mujaahada) against the natural propensities is the means of procuring higher spiritual states and reward. However, if this sleep and comfort have become so loveable that they overshadow Salaat and eliminate the very intention of Fajr and Ishaa Salaat, then this will be the condition of the *munaafiqeen*. Conscious and deliberate abstention from Salaat is undoubtedly resemblance with the practice of the hypocrites. The Hadith shareef says:

“This is the Salaat of the Munaafiq, he sits waiting for the sun to become yellow until it settles between the two horns of shaitaan [i.e. very close to sunset]. He then stands up and makes four pecks in which he [barely] makes the thikr of Allah.” [Muslim]

According to this Hadith, deliberate procrastination of Salaat is evidence of the Salaat being considered insignificant, hence it being compared with pecks (the pecks of a fowl) to indicate the contempt in which Allah Ta’ala holds it. To consider Salaat to be insignificant is the attitude of the *munaafiqeen*. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Jamaat [Salaat] is of the ways of guidance. Only a munaafiq is negligent of it.”

“The munaafiq is contemptible because of his despicable acts.”

“Nonsensical, abusive and audacious talk are branches of nifaaq.”

About nonsensical conversation, another narration states:

“Verily, I fear for this Ummat every such munaafiq who will speak with wisdom and perpetrate, injustice.”

“The most fearsome object which I fear for my Ummat is every such munaafiq who has the ability of eloquent expression.”

Commenting on this Hadith, the authorities says that it means:

“One who has knowledge and whose tongue is glib with eloquence, but his heart and deeds are ignorant and his beliefs are corrupt. He misleads and deceives people with his evil and eloquence of speech.”

“His tongue operates glibly in knowledge and eloquence while his heart is corrupt and devoid of virtue. Rasulullah [sallallahu alayhi wasallam] feared such a munaafiq for his Ummat because he [the munaafiq] being versed in knowledge will obtain a following of people. People will follow him and he will lead them astray.”

Eloquence of speech and ability in oratory, be it for the masses or for academic discourse, minus virtuous moral character and perfection of Imaan, are not desirable by the Shariah. Far from being considered laudable, the Shariah brands as a *munaafiq* an eloquent orator bereft of Islamic moral character and perfected Imaan. In view of this grave danger, it is imperative that the student of Islamic knowledge, during his days of acquiring knowledge, while developing his academic ability, should to a greater extent pay attention to the purification and reformation of his nafs. His baatin has to be purified and adorned with the lofty attributes of excellence. He has to cultivate a superb moral character. He stands in no need of involving himself in the pursuit of developing the ability of oratory for public speaking. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“The similitude of a faajir [immoral person- - in one narration it is said munaafiq] who recites the Qur’aan is like a fragrant plant. Its smell is fragrant but its taste is bitter.”[Bukhaari, Muslim]

Commenting on this Hadith, *Kitaabul Aadaabun Nabawi* states:

“He is such a faajir or munaafiq whose Imaan is in name only and whose Deen is superficial. He recites the Qur’aan and memorizes it well. He is versed in the ways of tilawat and in the styles of pronouncing its words and in its symphony. But, it will

not descend his throat (i.e. it will not enter his heart, for he is insincere. Should you test him, it will become apparent to you that his heart is black, his breast dark, his character bitter and his actions pernicious. Rasulullah [sallallahu alayhi wasallam] compared such a person to a fragrant plant which has a bitter taste. This person recites the Qur'aan and you derive pleasure from his recitation just as you derive pleasure from the fragrance of the plant. But his heart and nafs are wrapped up in evil. You will taste his bitterness and experience his villainy when you have dealings with him. The Qur'aan has no effect on his nafs because his evil and hypocrisy are sealed on his heart. Advice and admonition have, therefore, no effect on him."

This Hadith and its commentary clearly indicate that superficial or shallow knowledge of the Qur'aan without reformation, adornment and perfection of Imaan and Deen upon which culture, character and social progress rest, has no merit. In fact, the person who recites the Qur'aan with beauty, observing all the rules of *tajweed* and *qiraat* while remaining unconcerned with the upliftment of his Imaan, has been branded as a *munaafiq*. This conveys then the error of considering the acquisition of *tajweed* and *qiraat* as the limits of perfection. Those suffering from this erroneous conception of outer-knowledge are not concerned with the acquisition of the knowledge of the Shariah--of both *zaahir* and *baatin* dimensions--nor are they observant of virtuous acts. The *tilawat* and *qiraat* of such persons have no beneficial effect on their internal conditions. Their hearts forever remain darkened. Their moral and social lives are corrupt.

In *Tahtaawi Alad Durr* it is said:

"The vilest of mankind is a faasiq who recites the Qur'aan and learns much the Deen of Allah while he puts himself at the disposal of an evil person. When he is in the mood he recites [the Qur'aan] as a mere past-time. Allah then seals the hearts of the reciter and the audience [of this reciter]."

Such recitation is only as far as the throat and does not penetrate into the heart. It is clear from this explanation of *Tahtaawi* that acquisition of knowledge for ulterior motives, not for the sake of Allah's Pleasure, but for worldly motives, is indeed a vile act.

Another fact of importance which emerges from the explanation of *Tahtaawi* is that it is evil to recite the Qur'aan as an idle pastime. Reciting the Qur'aan Shareef with such a careless and disrespectful attitude produces harmful impressions on the heart. Misuse of the Qur'aan-e-Kareem is to dishonour it and its consequence is the annihilation of the spiritual propensity of the heart. The heart is blinded and such blindness is described as the sealing of the heart.

COMPARABLE TO MUNAAFIQS

In a Hadith recorded in Nisaa'i Shareef it is said that women who refuse to submit to the authority of their husbands are among the *munaafiqeen*. The contract or agreement of Nikah as well as every other contract demand endurance and perpetuation. It has to be executed in the fullest measure. This demands patience and forbearance. Women who extricate themselves from the authority of their husbands and flee from them because of disagreement, arguments and when events in conflict with their temperament happen, are described in the Hadith as hypocrites.

Those students who abandon a Madrassah after having being admitted are in a similar category. Certain rules of the Madrassah or attitudes of the Ustaadh or officials may conflict with the likes and disposition of the student or he may discover greater material comfort elsewhere. As a result he leaves the Madrassah and seeks admission elsewhere. This move of the student is in violation of his pledge. He thus falls within the ambit of the aforementioned Hadith which describes disobedient wives as among the *munaafiqeen*.

Another Hadith states:

“The munaafiq is like a stray she-goat.”

In terms of this Hadith, domination by selfish motives, adoption of restlessness and vagrancy of disposition, failure to oppose emotions, failure to restrict and thwart desires, failure to accord priority to the Shariah, cowardice, weakness of attitude and impatience are all below the dignity of man and are comparable with the characteristics of a female goat and the attributes of the *munaafiqeen*.

It is necessary that the student of Deen always confronts with intelligence the vicissitudes of emotion and the tumults of temperament. He must not permit stray thoughts, emotional eruptions and baneful influences to dominate and overwhelm him. He must bear in mind the call of the Shariah and courageously divert his attention from all Islamically uncultural inclinations and corrupt attitudes and thoughts.

“He who seeks knowledge in order to dispute with the Ulama or to argue with the ignoramuses or to draw the attention of people towards him, Allah will enter him into the Fire.”

THE ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE SAHAABAH

Of vital importance is that the student of Deeni knowledge respect, revere and honour all Sahaabah-e-Kiraaam. Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said in this regard:

“The sign of Imaan is to love the Ansaar and the sign of nifaaq is to have hatred for the Ansaar.”

Thus, love for the Sahaabah is the sign of Imaan and hatred for them is the sign of *nifaaq*.

In terms of the Qur'aan and Hadith, honour and love for the Sahaabah are Waajib (obligatory). The famous book on Islamic beliefs, viz., *Sharh-e-Mawaaqif* states:

“Honouring all Sahaabah is compulsory. In the same way, abstention from criticizing them is also compulsory because Allah Azza Wa Jal has praised them in His Kitaab in several places.....and, Rasulallah [sallallahu alayhi wasallam] loved and praised them in numerous Ahadeeth.”

In *Tirmizi Shareef* appears the following narration of Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Umar (Radiallahu anhu) who says that Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“When you see those who revile my Ashaab then say [to them]: The lanat of Allah on your evil.”

In *Jam'ul Fawaid* it is said:

“Do not abuse my Ashaab. Verily, even if any of you had to spend [in the Path of Allah] gold to the extent of Mount Uhud, it will not equal [in merit and thawaab] even a pound or half a pound of what they [the Sahaabah] spent in the path of Allah.”

“Whoever loves them [Sahaabah] loves them because of love for me. Whoever hates them, does so because he hates me.”

In another Hadith it appears:

“Thus, whoever reviles them, the lanat of Allah, of the Malaaiakah and of all mankind be on him. On the Day of Qiyaamah Allah will not accept any of his deeds.”

In *Musaayarah*, Allaamah Ibn Hummaam writes;

“The belief of the Able Sunnah Wal Jamaah is to assert the holiness of all Sahaabah by virtue of their justice and uprighteousness being established facts [Rasulullah-sallallahu alayhi wasallam- testified to this]. This belief is Waajib. It is likewise Waajib to refrain from criticizing them. Praise has to be lauded on them because Allah Ta’ala has praised them.”

Thus, to honour and love all the Sahaabah are necessary corollaries of Imaan. To abstain from honouring and loving them and to criticize them are signs of *nifaaq*. Therefore, all people of Imaan in general, and the searchers of Deeni knowledge in particular, should respect, love, revere and honour all Sahaabah of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). At the same time they have to refrain from any kind of criticism whatever of these illustrious personalities. This is a vital and important requirement of the highest degree.

SOME EVILS

A CONCISE LIST OF THE FACTORS OF *NIFAAQ*

There are numerous factors and signs of *nifaaq*. These are enumerated hereunder.

Indifference towards Salaat, indifference towards jamaat, breaking promises, speaking lies, misappropriation of trust, abusing, eloquence of speech and rhetoric to be perfections, to recite the Qur’aan Shareef in rhythmic tones as a mere past-time, refraining from the cultivation of moral character, indulging in disturbances, shouting slogans, uproarious behaviour, adopting liberalism, confrontation with Ustaadh, disrespect to seniors, speaking audaciously with Ustaadh, impatience, abandoning ones Madrassah, violation of ones

pledge (be it a verbal or a written pledge), riya, show and to neglect self-reformation.

This is a brief list of the factors of hypocrisy.

TAQWAA

A vital condition for the acquisition of the reality of *Ilm-e-Deen* is *taqwaa*, The nature of *taqwaa* consists of abstention from all sin, external (*zahir*) as well as internal (*baatin*).

In addition to abstaining from all the factors and acts of *nifaaq* it is incumbent to abstain from all aspects of kufr, shirk, judaism and Christianity. All immorality and sin must be shunned. Failure to inculcate *taqwaa* will result in the waste of a life-time of effort expended in the pursuit of knowledge. A life-time spent in acquiring knowledge will be of no avail since in the absence of *taqwaa* the inner reality (the *Noor* of knowledge) will not dawn upon one. True knowledge cannot be attained without the condition of *taqwaa*. Without *taqwaa* one cannot be a Molvi or an Aalim in the true sense of the word. An Aalim is not one who possesses mere proficiency in the Arabic language. In Egypt and Beirut numerous Christians are proficient in Arabic. In Europe there are even professors in the Islamic branches of studies. But, such men can never be leaders of the Deen. A Molvi or a practical Aalim cannot be produced without the inculcation of *taqwaa*. It is therefore essential that the student who seeks admission to a Madrassah for pursuing higher Deeni knowledge either first acquires *taqwaa*, (i.e. prior to involving himself in academic studies), or he engages himself in the elimination of the evils of the nafs and in moral upliftment and self-purification simultaneously with his academic studies. Only then will he acquire the treasure of true knowledge, i.e. the *Noor* of *Ilm*.

MUTAA LA AH

Mutaala-ah (مطالعة) is derived from the term *tuloo* (طلع) which means to rise, to emerge. This infinitive verb (i.e. the *masdar* (مصدر)) belong to the section known in *Ilm-e-Sarf* as *Baab Mufaaalah* (مفاعلة). A characteristic (خاصية) of this *baab* is *tadiyah*, i.e. transformation of the verb into the active state. Hence, the meaning of *mutaala-ah* will be: “to extricate, to bring out or to take out.”

Mutaala-ah here refers to the self-study of lessons prior to attending classes. *Mutaala-ah* comprises three aspects:

1. Solving all problems pertaining to *Ilm-e-Sarf*.
2. Solving all problems pertaining to *Ilm-e-Nahw*.
3. Establishing the actual meaning of the lesson.

Mutaala-ah does not mean merely to brush or glance over the words and rattle them off. The student of Deeni knowledge has to hear in mind the reality and importance of this system of self-study and engross himself therein. An important requirement for *mutaala-ah* is solitude. Success in *mutaala-ah* will be commensurate with the degree of solitude the student adopts.

Initially the student will experience difficulty in the exercise of correct and true *mutaala-ah* and in spite of expending considerable time in it he will perceive little progress (i.e. quantitatively). After having spent much time he may succeed in solving only one or two lines of the lesson. However, constancy in *mutaala-ah* will lead to improvement in ability and speed to solve the intricacies of the lessons. The sharpness in his intellect will increase considerably. Moreover, he will experience great intellectual pleasure from his *mutaala-ah*. The lessons will become grounded in his mind. This then is the way to create intellectual ability and progress.

It is therefore essential to sacrifice time and comfort in the exercise of *mutaala-ah*. The student must banish indolence from his itinerary. As far as is possible *mutaala-ah* must be undertaken before attending any lesson in class.

DARS ATTENDANCE

Regular and punctual attendance of classes as well as thorough attention to the lectures of the Ustaadhs are vital for the success of the student. Presence of body and absence of mind will not benefit the student. Maximum academic and spiritual benefit will be obtained by the attendance of the body, mind, heart and soul. Irregular attendance will deprive the student of the benefit of *Ilm*.

TAKRAAR

Takraar means to repeat the study of the lesson after having done it in class. Usually a group of students gather and the lesson already done in class is repeated. However, this system is not dependent on a number of students gathering. Therefore, the student should not wait in anticipation of a group. Even in solitude he should fulfill this requirement of takraar.

These are the three essential ingredients for the success of the student. Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat said in this regard:

If the student executes three duties, I guarantee that he will acquire [at least] book knowledge.

“[1] Mutaala-ah [2] Regular attendance and paying full attention. [3] Takraar.”

A fourth duty is also of importance although of a lesser degree than these three. This fourth factor is to daily refer to a section of previous lessons.

SOLITUDE

Among the conditions for the successful acquisition of *Ilm-e-Deen* is solitude. It is necessary that the student of Deeni knowledge adopts both physical and intellectual solitude. He has to emancipate his mind from all unnecessary association and

relationships. He must abstain from friendly relationships and gatherings. He must stay away as far as is possible from contact with people. He must totally shun diversionary and extramural activities. He must not go on tours and sight-seeing excursions. He has to abstain from newspapers, magazines, novels, etc. ,even if these pertain to historical matter.

The activities mentioned above are all diversionary and constitute calamities for the one plodding the uphill and long sojourn in the quest for the knowledge of the Deen. The searcher after the priceless treasure of *Ilm-e-Deen* cannot afford these impediments, for they create corruption and confusion in the mind and soul. They constitute fatal poisons for the peace of the mind, which is an entity of so much importance for the pursuit of Deeni *Ilm*. His fulfilment of the obligations and duties related to *Ilm* will be commensurate with the degree of his solitude and peace of mind. The greater the degree of his solitude, the greater the degree of his success in meeting the demands of the acquisition of *Ilm*. By means of solitude will the student unlock the door to progress and success.

“Verily, the Bearer of the
Quran is the Standard-bearer
of Islam.”

THE USTAADS

The student who recognizes the significance and the importance of Deeni knowledge, who regards knowledge as a priceless treasure, in whose heart there is embedded the love of Allah Ta’ala and Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), will most certainly honour the Ustaadhs and have love in his heart for them. Their respect will rank uppermost in his mind. Ustaadhs, in fact, are the links in the chain of transmission, instruction and guidance of Allah and His Rasul (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). That Chain links up with Allah Ta’ala via the agency of

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Ustaadhs ensure that such lofty and noble instruction and guidance reach the student.

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) described as his Khalifa (Representative) one who transmits his Shariah and Sunnah to others. Therefore, respect and honour accorded to the Ustaadhs are in reality respect and honour for Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). In Abu Dawood Shareef appears the following narration of Hadhrat Taa-oos (rahmatullah alayhi):

“Of the Sunnah is to honour four persons: an Aalim, an aged man, a sultan and ones father.”

The Hadith brands as a munaafiq the person who scorns at the Ulama and considers them as being insignificant. Allaamah Sharaani (rahmatullah alayhi) writes in *Uhood-e-Muhammadiyah*:

“A general promise has been taken from us by the direction of Rasulallah [sallallahu alayhi wasallam] that we honour, respect and revere the Ulama and [that we acknowledge that] we can never compensate their favours even if we had to hand over to them all the wealth we own or even if we have to labour for them all our lives.

The majority of students have failed to uphold this pledge and so have the mureeds in the path of Tasawwuf. This degeneration has reached the level where we cannot find a single one among them [students and mureeds] who fulfils the Waajib rights of his Ustaadhs. This is a grave disease and it indicates that Ilm as well as Rasulallah [sallallahu alayhi wasallam] who commanded us to honour the Ulama, are being treated with contempt.”

This should cause the student of the Deen to reflect. Allaamah Sharaani (rahmatullah alayhi) has demonstrated the high rank, importance and significance of the rights of Ustaadhs. All our wealth and all our services can never be an adequate compensation for the rights which they have over us.

Honouring seniors was an outstanding feature of our Akaabireen (former senior Ulama). Once a publisher requested Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayhi) to write a review on the translation of the Qur'aan Shareef prepared by Hadhrat Shaikhul Hind (rahmatullah alayhi). Hadhrat Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayhi) declined, saying that a review should be written by one who has the right of praising as well as the right to criticize. But, since Hadhrat Shaikhul Hind (rahmatullah alayhi) was the Ustaadh of Hadhrat Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayhi), he said:

“Should I write a review and laud praises, it will imply that I have the right of criticism as well. This implication is evil [when related to ones Ustaadh].”

The high degree of respect for an Ustaadh is evident from this noble attitude of Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat (rahmatullah alayhi) who could not tolerate even the idea of him criticizing or even possessing the right to criticize his Ustaadh. He regards even this implication as a violation of the honour and sanctity of ones Ustaadhs.

Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Qaasim (rahmatullah alayhi) said: *“Whatever one gains [in knowledge], is by virtue of respect for the Ustaadh. He who is disrespectful to his Ustaadhs will never gain knowledge.”*

The authorities of the Shariah have therefore averred:

“He who has no adab has no Ilm.”

Respect is not confined to only the Ustaadhs. All media and objects of knowledge have to be respected. On account of a relationship with *Ilm*, every Aalim, Haafiz, kitaab and even instruments of knowledge, e.g. pen, paper, ink, desks, Madrassah buildings, etc., have necessarily to be respected.

A GRAVE MISCONCEPTION

Some minds while conceding the need to uphold the rights, etc., of *Ilm*, claim that nowadays Ustaadhs of the former calibre do

not exist, hence there is no need to offer such great respect to Ustaadhs of the present age. They claim that Ustaadhs in general, suffer from spiritual ailments, e.g. greed, desire, etc., hence it is not possible to honour and respect such Ustaadhs. Needless to say, this is a shaitaani *waswasah* satanic deception which must be banished from the mind. The Hadith Shareef states the following statement of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam):

“The best of ages is my period, then that period following it, then that period which follows.”

The age which succeeded the period of Nabi-e-Kareem (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was of a lower degree in nobility, and the succeeding age was even of lesser rank. As time drifts further and further from the original source (i.e. Rasulullah sallallahu alayhi wasallam) degeneration and corruption sets in more and more, each succeeding age being more inferior to the preceding age. The above-cited Hadith implies that a generation cannot apply to it the standard of a previous generation, for the former generation has been bestowed with superiority and greater excellence than the generation which succeeds it.

In the light of the rule which has been stated in this Hadith shareef, we see that the Ulama of a former age being superior to the Ulama of the age succeeding it; the Sufis of a former age being superior to the Sufis of the age succeeding it; the Ustaadhs of a former age being superior to the Ustaadhs of the age succeeding it; the students of a former age being superior to the students of the age succeeding it, [*Not only this, We observe that even the ignoramuses of a former age being superior to the ignoramuses of the age succeeding it-Translator*]. Thus, degeneration in rank and quality is not confined to the Ustaadhs. It is a rule which applies to all strata of society and it is a natural circumstance which cannot be utilized to waive the rights of superiors or seniors. If the rank of the Ustaadhs has fallen then to a far greater extent has the rank of the students fallen, especially of such students who possess anarchistic

attitudes and have absolutely no consideration for even the Waajib huqooq of their Ustaadhs and seniors.

The above-stated rule emanating from the holy statement of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) effectively closes the door for the satanic deception-the deceptive and misleading arguments which shaitaan whispers into the minds of those students who totally disregard the rights of Ustaadhs and seniors. By instilling such deception into the minds of students, shaitaan desires to sever the ties which students have with their Ustaadhs and seniors. Such satanic thoughts sow suspicion in the mind for seniors. By the presentation of such false arguments (as the waiving of respect and rights because of the Ustaadhs being of a lesser calibre) shaitaan steers the students towards liberalism [*the evil which has swept into anarchy and immorality the institutions of the kuffaar -translator*] and anarchy. The satanic design envisages the dismemberment of the united Ummah. Shaitaan endeavors to split one from the other to facilitate his task of devouring the Ummah. It is relatively a simple task for shaitaan to capture people individually like the wolf catches easily the sheep which has strayed from the flock.

It should be borne in mind that if virtue and piety have diminished in the Ustaadhs as a result of the great separation from the blessed former epochs, then to a far greater extent has the degeneration set in the students. Students of today are also located at a point in time, which is far divorced from the golden epochs of Khairul Quroon (The Noblest of Ages). In general, the Ustaadhs are nobler than the students. Their superiority and rank above students are established Shari as well as logical facts. Intelligence concedes this. It is, therefore, incumbent upon students to hold their Ustaadhs in high esteem and to entertain good opinions about them. This is of absolute importance in this domain of *Ilm-e-Deen* since *faidh* (spiritual benefit) to the students is not possible without the agency of Ustaadhs. If the avenue leading to the fountain of *fuyoodh* is blocked, deprivation of spiritual gain is the compulsory consequence.

This is the realm in which operate the rooh and the lofty celestial forces and factors. Thus, if the road to this realm is sealed, the student is sealed off from the lustre, intuition, insight and perception which pertain to the spiritual realm and which are among the attributes of true *Ilm*. In this regard, some illustrious soul commented aptly:

“He who falls, falls because he shunned respect and honour.”

Some students struck by liberalism hold in Low esteem such Ustaadhs who naturally happen to have simple dispositions. They feel that such Ustaadhs do not deserve respect, hence they refrain from honouring them. This too is a dangerous ploy of shaitaan who ensnares the inexperienced and self-opinionated students into traps of spiritual calamity. It is therefore imperative that students ignore such evil thoughts which assault their minds. Irrespective of the inferiority of rank of an Ustaadh, he constitutes the medium for the conveyance of *Baatini faidh* from the Fountain of Faidh, viz., Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). *N’imats* (bounties) of Allah Ta’ala, no matter of which kind, do not reach man directly. This is a material world of means and agencies. There is a medium for everything in this world. The medium of securing the spiritual advantages of knowledge which emanates from the spiritual realm and diffuses into this mundane realm, is the Ustaadh. He is the students link. He joins the student to this golden and wonderful chain. Without his intervention there is no way of attaining the lofty gains radiating from the spiritual fountain. It is incumbent to honour as well as refrain from dishonouring the *N’imats* of Allah Ta’ala. Ingratitude is a grievous crime. Allah Ta’ala declares in the Qur’aan Shareef:

“Verily, if you are grateful, I will certainly increase [the bounties] for you. And if you are ungrateful, then, most assuredly, My Punishment is severe.”

To honour and appreciate the ways and means of knowledge are essential. It is incumbent to be grateful to those who are the medium of the wonderful, noble and lofty *N’imat* of Deeni

knowledge. To dishonour the medium is tantamount to dishonouring the N'imāt itself. In this regard the Hadith shareef states:

“He who is not grateful to man, is not grateful to Allah.”

Thus, to honour, respect, revere, praise and to be grateful to the medium through which the N'imāt of *Ilm* has reached us and is continually reaching us, are obligatory injunctions. Parents are the medium of one's physical existence in this material abode. Since they constituted the medium of one's existence it is incumbent upon man to love, honour, respect, revere and be grateful to them. This is incumbent even if they happen to be contaminated with kufr and shirk. Dishonouring, disrespecting and harming them are crimes of extremely grave dimensions. Similarly, Ustaadhs in Deeni knowledge are the medium for our academic and spiritual life and progress. To be grateful and to honour and love them are likewise incumbent and to be ungrateful, disrespectful and irreverential to them are prohibited.

One way of showing gratitude to ones Ustaadhs is to speak highly of their *ta'leem* (instruction) and to laud praise on them with sincerity. *Shukr* (gratitude) is shown in three ways:

- (1) Inculcation of love and honour in the heart.
- (2) Practical service rendered.
- (3) Verbal praise.

The third form, viz., verbal praise, is the simplest and the easiest to discharge. Therefore, he who refrains from even praising his Ustaadhs has indeed abstained from gratitude. It has been narrated:

“A servant who has not praised Allah is not grateful to Him.”

The student who praises his Ustaadh or at least concedes the favour of his Ustaadh over him, has to a degree discharged the requirements of shukr. The following Hadith supports this:

“He who praises, verily, he is grateful.”

“And, he who conceals [i.e. refrains from praising and overlooks the N’imat], verily, he is ungrateful.”

“Narrating the N’imat is shukr.”

It should now be manifest that it is haraam to engage in propaganda against ones Ustaadh. It is haraam to belittle them. It is haraam to bring them to disrepute. It is haraam to hold them in contempt. It is haraam to audaciously raise objections against them. It is haraam to criticize them. It is haraam to disgrace them.

SOME ADAAB OF USTAADHS

(1) The student should not walk in front of his Ustaadh nor should he sit in the place where the Ustaadh normally sits. He should not raise his voice in the Ustaadh's presence. He should endeavour to understand the attitude and disposition of the Ustaadh and act in conformity. If it seems that the Ustaadh has been overtaken by some worry then the student should not question the Ustaadh on such occasions. Postpone the query for another time. The student should not impatiently knock at the door of the Ustaadh and call him out, but should wait patiently until the Ustaadh emerges.

(2) The student should sit humbly in the presence of the Ustaadh and listen with attention to what he has to say. He must concentrate and not allow anything to divert his mind from the Ustaadh. He should not turn his attention to fellow-students when in the presence of the Ustaadh. He should not sit in the presence of his Ustaadh with rolled up sleeves or in any form of disrespectful attire. He should not fiddle or fidget with anything when in the presence of the Ustaadh. He should not lean against something nor should he unnecessarily cough or clear his throat

in the presence of his Ustaadh. The degree of his respect for his Ustaadh should be so high that he does not even turn the pages of the kitaab noisily in the presence of his Ustaadh.

(3) The student should at all times consciously cultivate respect for his Ustaadh. He must be obedient and have love for him. He should consider himself to be inferior to his Ustaadh. Respect and obedience to Ustaadhs should be outstanding features of the student of Deeni knowledge.

(4) The student must hold his Ustaadh in high esteem, entertaining good and high opinions of his Ustaadh. He must not take offence when the Ustaadh rebukes him. He should not allow his heart to be contaminated with any ill-feeling for his Ustaadh. At all times he should bear in mind that his Ustaadh is his medium for the acquisition of Deeni knowledge and spiritual advantage which ensues in the wake of such knowledge. He should not, therefore, close this door of the avenue of acquisition by disrespecting his Ustaadh. If he allows anything to upset his respect for his Ustaadh, the congeniality (*munaasabat*) and relationship of the heart upon which is dependent the transmission and acquisition of Deeni knowledge, will be eliminated. Suspicion will deprive the student of the *fuyoodh* and *barakaat* here on earth and in the Aakhirah the misfortune of such suspicion will apprehend the student.

(5) If due to some misfortune the student was disrespectful to the Ustaadh, he should make haste and with sincerity and in humility seek the pardon of the Ustaadh. He must show genuine regret for his misbehaviour. In this way the Ustaadhs heart will open up and the door of *faidh* will remain open.

(6) The student must not produce the arguments of others in refutation of his Ustaadh. Such an attitude is a demonstration of defective reliance on the Ustaadh.

(7) If anyone scandals or slanders the Ustaadh, the student should refute such calumny and defend his Ustaadh. Should the student lack the ability to put up a defence on behalf of his

Ustaadh, he must dissociate himself from such company involved in slandering his Ustaadh.

The above is a brief description of the duties and respects which the student of Deeni knowledge owes his Ustaadhs. The student imbued with a noble disposition and proper understanding will automatically perceive and understand the conception of Aadaab for the Ustaadhs. Our seniors were unique in this regard. Their respect for Ustaadhs was outstanding and they were true replicas of the former illustrious Ulama of the early epochs of Islam. Hadhrat Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayhi) said that whatever he had gained in the field of *Ilm* was the result of the respect and honour he had for his Ustaadhs. Hadhrat Maulana Yaqoob (rahmatullah alayhi) said likewise. Hadhrat Maulana Qaasim Nanotwi (rahmatullah alayhi) said:

“He who is disrespectful to his Ustaadh will not gain Ilm.”

ISLAAH

Another vital requirement is that the student enter into a relationship of Islaah (reformation of the self and spiritual development) with some Sheikh or Muslih (a qualified spiritual guide). Without such a relationship the acquisition of knowledge and the proper execution of the demands and conditions of *Ilm* is extremely difficult and normally not possible. *Ikhlaas* (sincerity) is achieved from the suhbat (companionship) of the *Saaliheen* (the pious saints). The great blessings emanating from such an association with the *Saaliheen* are the peculiarities, impressions, characteristics and spiritual effulgence of *Ilm*.

If by the suhbat of the *Auliya* one does not achieve total reformation, then too, at least the ability to recognize ones faults and shortcomings will be created in one. Such a realization is a sign of ones understanding being influenced by the *Noor* of *Ilm*, and this is the key to prosperity, fortune and success. Minus such pious association there will be no lasting benefit notwithstanding the obtainal of the written words in text books. Alas! Nowadays mere book-knowledge is considered

par excellence whereas such superficial knowledge only serves the cause of personal opinion. The *Noor* of understanding is not obtained in this way. The *Noor* of understanding is not procurable without a relationship with the Ahlullah. Hadhrat Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayhi) used to say:

“Nowadays students labour under the impression that they will involve themselves actively in righteousness after accomplishment of the academic career. This is a shaitaani affliction, the consequence of which is to be deprived forever from practicing virtue. Remember that nothing is like the first impression. The knowledge which one gains regarding an act of virtue or vice while engaged in the acquisition of Ilm produces a significant and a deep effect on the heart. If one derived benefit by giving practical expression to those early and initial impressions [while acquiring Ilm] then that first and deep effect will endure in the future. But, if the initial effect on the heart was ignored and left to wane into extinction, its renewal will not be simple.”

The student should therefore understand well that if during his student days while traversing through the huge volume of pages of the - Qur’aan and Hadith, the occasions (stated in these pages) and circumstances of *targheeb* (exhortation and advice) and *tarheeb* (admonition and warning) register no impact on his heart, then what hope is there for his future? How will exhortation and admonition influence him later in the future? When the student closes his eyes from the very inception, he has no justification in his expectation of gaining the ability in the future for practicing righteousness. If he is not concerned with practicing righteousness during his student days, his heart will not be influenced by exhortation and admonition in the post-academic period.

Students sometimes labour under the misconception that what is prohibited for others is permissible for themselves. This idea is a devilish affliction of the nafs. It is conceded that while engaged in the acquisition of knowledge there is not much time

for nafl *ibaadat* and forms of thikr. But, it should be mentioned that this non-availability of time for nafl applies only to such students who are engrossed in their studies. But, this never means that students should be careless about matters pertaining to halaal and haraam. Students are not exempted from the prohibitions and restrictions of the Shariah. They possess no licence to perpetrate falsehood, deception, scandal, slander, complaining, pride, vanity, show, jealousy, and the host of other evils. They dwell in deception by feeling that there is no need for them to be meticulous in the donning of Islamic attire and appearance. They have no right to be negligent and lazy in their Salaat. The following is the special advice which Hadhrat Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayhi) offered students of Deeni knowledge:

“I exhort students and people of knowledge not to rely on only academic study. They should as a necessity establish a relationship with a man of Allah.”

On page 54 it has been said:

Another fact to remember is that students of western education pay fees for their tuition, boarding and lodging. They, therefore, are entitled to demand what they had paid for if justice is not done to them.

This statement does not sanction strikes in secular institutions. In spite of secular students having the right to demand what they had paid for, they too, have no right to strike and create anarchy and mischief. They have to resort to orderly and responsible means to achieve their rights. (The author- Hadhrat Masihullah)

SUMMARY

So far the conditions and principles of the acquisition of *Ilm-e-Deen* have been discussed. The impediments in the path of acquiring Deeni knowledge will now be discussed. The

impediments and drawbacks of Deeni knowledge are listed hereunder:

Insincerity, corruption of intention, ulterior motives in the pursuit of Ilm, hypocritical attitudes, external and internal sin, evil acts, contemptible attributes, e.g. abstaining from taqwaa and neglecting study, unnecessary association, harmful relationships, futile activity, disrespect for Ustaadhs and having no suhbat with the Ahlullah.

The above all constitute serious impediments and destructive influences in the path of knowledge. However, the above are evils and obstacles singly. Then there is one great evil which is a conglomeration of all the abovementioned destructive factors. That act of combined evils is called a strike which have of recent reared its head in our Deeni Madaaris. Each and everyone of the above obstacles make up the ingredients of a strike or boycott of the Madrassah. This embodiment of evil brings about the disruption of *Ilm*. The gravity and evil of these strikes make it imperative that we elaborate on these disruptive, anarchistic and un-Islamic activities.

STRIKES

IRRECONCILEABLE WITH KNOWLEDGE OF DEEN

THE NATURE OF A STRIKE, ITS ILLEGALITY AND PROHIBITION

In the very first instance of boycott of classes in a Deeni Madrassah entails the disruption of the bond which exists between the participants in the strike and their Ustaads who in reality are the benefactors and helpers of the students. These Ustaads with whom the relationship is being severed, lead and guide these students along the labrynthal avenues in the quest for knowledge of the Deen—the *Noor of Ilm-e-Deen*. It is therefore obligatory in terms of the Shariah to maintain intact this scared bond without which the *Noor* of knowledge and

understanding is unattainable. Disruption of this sacred relationship occasions corruption, anarchy and moral degeneration. To cut asunder this holy bond is prohibited by the Shariah which warns of a calamitous chastisement for such disruption. Strikes in a Deeni Madrassah fall within the purview of the following Qur'aanic Aayat:

‘They disrupt that (bond) which Allah has commanded to be maintained and (thereby) they spread anarchy on earth. Indeed, they are the losers.’

The prohibition and evil of the corrupt and disruptive activity called strike should now be manifest.

THE DALAAIL OF THE PROHIBITION OF STRIKES IN INSTITUTIONS OF DEENI ULOOM

In the previous page the prohibition of strikes in Deeni Madaaris has been briefly described. A detailed account of the Shari arguments regarding this prohibition will now be presented so that the unlawfulness of these acts of anarchy may be well understood.

The reality or nature of a strike is the disruption of the relationship which the students have with the Madrassah authorities. The authorities of the Madrassah refer to all those connected with the operation and functioning of the institution. Hence, authorities comprise the principal, Ustaadh, those in charge of the library, boarding and lodging, etc.. All of these people are in actual fact the helpers and benefactors of the students along their journey in the quest of Deeni knowledge. Without the assistance of these aids and benefactors, acquisition of Deeni knowledge in the present environment is normally impossible.

Ta'leem [teaching] of the Deen is an *ibaadat* of vital importance. All of these assistants in the Madrassah (the principal, Ustaadh, etc.) are the aids in this important *ibaadat*. Allah Ta'ala commands in the Qur'aan Shareef: ***"Aid one another in virtue and piety."***

In this supreme *ibaadat* of acquiring *Ilm* they are our helpers, our benefactors. It is obligatory to maintain a healthy relationship of love and respect with the benefactors. The hadith shareef states;

"He who is not grateful to people is not grateful to Allah."

This law of gratitude stated in the Shariah applies for every benefactor, be he an Ustaaddh or a non-Ustaadh. However, in so far as Ustaadhs are concerned, the degree of gratitude is very high indeed. The lofty rank of the Ustaadh demands greater love, respect and honour. Nabi-e-Kareem (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"He who teaches another an Aayat of the Quraan is the master of that person."

This hadith asserts explicitly the lofty status of the Ustaadh, it describes the Ustaadh as being the master and owner of the student who in terms of the meaning of this hadith is the 'slave' of his Ustaadh. Respect and honour being necessary requirements of such a lofty status are quite evident.

DISRUPTION OF THE SACRED BOND IS UNLAWFUL

Since respect and honour for Ustaadhs as well as other helpers in the Deeni process are commanded by the Shariah, disruption thereof will fall within the scope of the following Qur'aanic Aayat:

"They sever [disrupt] that [bond] which Allah has commanded to be maintained and [in this way of disruption] they spread anarchy on earth."

Thus, the striking students who disrupt their sacred bond with their benefactors of the Madrassah by means of their activity of anarchy are among the creators of strife, corruption and mischief which the above-stated Aayat deprecates. The evil of those guilty of spreading mischief and anarchy is viler than murder. The Qur'aan Shareef declares:

"Fitnah is greater than murder."

"Fitnah is severer than murder."

From the foregoing students should understand the evil of strikes or boycotts and they should steer clear of such acts of anarchy, for the evil and corruption of these disruptive acts bring in their wake loss, deprivation of Deeni knowledge and spiritual calamity of vast magnitude for themselves.

STRIKES-JABAR FIT—TABARRU'

Jabar means to exercise pressure, to compel, to use force.

Tabarru' means to be kind, to bestow favour, to be beneficent.

The act of a strike in actual fact is to compel favour--to impose on others the demand to bestow favours. The strikers seek to pressurize the authorities into acceptance of their demands. They employ such measures which are designed to put maximum pressure on the Madrassah authorities with a view to compel the authorities to accede to their demands. The aim is to employ means and ways of pressure so as to render the Madrassah authorities helpless, thus forcing them to submit to the demands of the students.

Let us examine the nature of the demands put forward by the striking students—demands which they strive to obtain by the application of threats and force. Do their demands pertain to any *waajib* (compulsory) *haq* (right)? Is there any such compulsory right of the students, which is binding on the Madrassah authorities and which could justify the employment of pressure, threat and force by the students to acquire it? There is no such *waajib* right which the students have over the Madrassah authorities, which entitles them to resort to the dastardly disruptive act of anarchy, viz., a strike. On the contrary, it is an undisputed Shari fact that subordinates (in this context, students and offspring) have no right to apply pressure, threaten, compel and adopt disrespectful attitudes towards Ustaadhs and parents even in the obtainal of *huqooq-e-waajibah* (compulsory rights). The Shariah does not countenance such means to be used by subordinates against their seniors.

When such agitation involving pressure and compulsion is not permissible in relation to even obligatory rights (rights which have to be fulfilled), the degree of prohibition of the exercise of pressure and force in relation to the obtainal of non-obligatory rights will be by far greater. When in fact there are no waajib rights to discharge then the injustice and prohibition of such agitation are vastly magnified, in this connection it should be observed that the so-called rights which are demanded by the striking students are nothing other than *tabarru'*. They are demanding that the Madrassah authorities bestow such favour upon them, which conform to their (the students') desires and fancies. They, by their anarchistic activities of strikes, apply pressure on the authorities so as to extract from them acts of kindness and favour. The relationship of *tabarru'* emanates from the side of the Madrassah authorities and the recipients of the favours of this bond are the students who are now endeavouring to make use of pressure to secure more favours. In simple terms, the students are greatly indebted to the Ustaadhs and Madrassah authorities for the numerous favours which they obtain. But, instead of showing appreciation and gratitude they retaliate in a way which is *jabar fit tabarru'*-- utilization of pressure to secure favour.

It has to be remembered that everything and all services of the Madrassah are available to the students gratis. The students in our Deeni Madaaris make no payment for anything. The Madrassah levies no fees of any kind. Boarding, lodging, tuition, etc., are all free. To us, students have no right to make demands. Members of the community who contribute towards the upkeep of the Madrassah do not stipulate that their contributions be utilized specifically and solely upon the students. Contributions are for the general upkeep and operation of the Madrassah. Therefore, the straightforward and clear-cut reply to such unjustified demands made by the striking students is: *if you are not pleased with the arrangement and system of the Madrassah or its Ustaadhs then do remove yourself to some other institution of your liking. Your demands are unacceptable.*

ABUSE AND EVIL

In the unjustified attempt to compel acceptance demands, students perpetrate evils which are most contemptible and disgusting, moreso, since they are supposed to be the searchers of Ilm-e-Den. Assuming that the system does require overhaul and reformation, are these to be achieved by the deployment of disgusting ways and means?

The honourable Ustaadhs and Madrassah authorities are subjected to disgusting behaviour. A torrent of abuse is hurled against them. They are reviled and insulted in public lectures, pamphlets and newspaper articles. They are slandered and brought to disgrace. Such vile treatment is not permissible with even any Muslim. How shall we then describe such devilish and disgusting treatment by students against their Ustaadhs who are their medium in the Chain of true *Ilm* which emanates from the fountain of Knowledge, viz., Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam)?. Indeed, what can one say about these satanic onslaughts unleashed by subordinates against their benefactors whom the Shariah has blessed with lofty status? Most disgraceful and vile!

PRESSURE AND INTIMIDATION

Intimidation is also a favourite weapon which the strike-leaders employ in their acts of anarchy. Should some pious student of noble disposition and healthy mind and attitude dissociate himself from such evil activity, the strikers resort to intimidation. They employ force to prevent such students from attending classes. What an anomalous situation! The strikers consider themselves to be patriots. They consider themselves to be faithful to the nation and the institution and they brand as traitors and sell-outs those students who disagree with their views and methods. This is indeed a corrupt and inverted logic.

The strikers in their intimidation of god-fearing students, create many difficulties to prevent these obedient and conscientious students from attending classes, and the worst of their methods

is the disruption of their acquisition of *Ilm*. Ta'leem (tuition of the Deen) is disrupted and brought to a halt by the evil acts of vandalism and anarchy of the strikers. The authorities reluctantly close down the Madrassah. In this case the sin of depriving the searchers of *Ilm* from Deeni knowledge settles squarely on the shoulders of the anarchists. They come within the purview of Allah's declaration:

"They prevent [others] from the Path of Allah"

At times the situation gets out of hand. The haraam strike degenerates into such riotous disturbances which threaten the safety of the Madrassah library and property. The Madrassah authorities are constrained to seek police intervention, the consequence of which is irreparable harm to the lofty dignity, rank and honour of these Deeni institutions. At times the very existence of the Madrassah is threatened. The evil and harm of this anarchistic and vandalistic act termed *strike*, in the final analysis settles over the entire Muslim community.

COLLABORATION WITH ALIEN ELEMENTS

During strikes, aid is also sought and obtained from alien non-academic circles which have absolutely no relationship with *Ilm-e-Deen*. Strange people of dubious motives and background offer sympathy to the students. Such alien elements offer their collaboration to the students who fail to discern the ulterior motives which these aliens are seeking to fulfill under cover of the student-strike. In the course of their ostensible sympathy for the students, the aliens seek to establish their control in the Deeni Madaaris.

Then there are the newspapers which excel in distortion, exaggeration and falsification. Grossly inaccurate reports regarding the situation are published by the newspapers. In the attempt to enlist support for their demands Muslims seek the aid of such media which are even inimical to Islam. The public at large is influenced by false reports. The public's confidence in

the Deeni institutions is thus shaken and considerable Deeni and spiritual harm result to the general Muslim community.

ELEMENTS OF CORRUPTION AND THE SIMPLICITY OF THE MAJORITY OF STUDENTS

Unfortunately in the assembly of students there exist always some corrupt elements who operate under the guise of being students of the Deen. In actual fact, they are not pursuing Deeni knowledge and although physically present among the students, they have ulterior and pernicious motives. They are devoid of the characteristics and attributes of Deeni students and are clandestinely engaged in fomenting their evil schemes of corruption. Once a student was caught stealing. The Madrassah caretaker exclaimed in surprise: "A student of Arabic also steals!" Hadhrat Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayhi) said:

"No, a student of Arabic does not steal. Yes, it is the thief which pursues Arabic who steals."

The creation of disturbances, riotious behaviour, uproar, intimidation, mischief, anarchy, harming others, falsification of the truth, trampling on the rights of others, and endangering life and property are not the activities of students who are genuinely in search of *Ilm-e-Deen* . True students of the Deen abhor such evil. There is a natural revulsion for such destructive acts of anarchy and vandalism among all true students in pursuit of Deeni knowledge. Such anarchistic acts are the deeds of only those who have absolutely to truck with knowledge.

The elements of corruption set up particular and isolated incidents as smokescreens and incite and mislead the general body of students who are simple and gullible. Without investigating and ascertaining the truth and the facts of the matter, a tumult is created. But such an attitude and way are in conflict with the principles of the Shariah. The Qur'aan Shareef says:

"O People of Imaan! If a faasiq comes to you with some information, investigate it so that you do not harm any people in ignorance"

Explaining this Aayat, Hadhrat Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh) comments in *Bayaanul Qur'aan*:

"The information [referred to in the Aayat] does not refer to information in general, but means such information which is harmful to anyone if acted on. This is established by the

sentence: انتصبيوا قوما بجهالة

Thus the information of a *faasiq* or a suspected *faasiq* is unacceptable."

It does not behove the dignity of a Mu'min to be so gullible and be deceived by false and misleading information. A Mu'min does not deceive nor is he deceived. In particular, it is surprising that students of Deeni knowledge fall prey to baseless rumours and allow themselves to flow along with the tide without pondering and even realizing the ulterior and pernicious motives of the instigators of the disturbances and without taking into consideration the consequences of such anarchy and the fact that the Shariah forbids such villainy. When reports of a corrupt nature are made, they should neither be accepted nor be publicized. On the contrary the matter should be brought to the notice of the Madrassah authorities who will formulate the correct decision after having made a thorough investigation. In this connection Allah Ta'ala says:

"When a report of either safety or danger reaches them, they publicize it. If they refer the matter to the Rasool and those in authority among them, the intelligent among them [would after probing the matter] recognize it [i.e. whether it is true or false]. If the favour and mercy of Allah was not upon you, then most certainly, you would have followed shaitaan, excepting a few."

This gracious Aayat of the Qur'aan-e-Kareem establishes with great clarity the Shan rule for such occasions and circumstances.

Any reports and rumours inimical and adverse towards the orderly establishment, operation and functioning of Deeni knowledge should in terms of the Qur'aan be reported to the authorities of intelligence and insight who will decide the issue properly. Their advice has to be heeded and acted on. Contravention of this Shar'i command and taking the matter into one's own hands and spreading such adverse rumours and reports will be obedience to the nafs and shaitaan. In consequence, one will be deprived of the Fadhl and Rahmat of Allah Ta'ala. Adherence to the above-stated Shar'i rule, will Inshaa'Allah, avert fitnah and nip the anarchy in the bud.

THE AIM OF JAMIATUT TALABAH (ASSOCIATION OF STUDENTS)

On the occasion of a student-strike, the acceptance of the demands of Jamiatut Talabah is tendered. The student association puts forward its demands which are accorded priority by the students. The instigators of the strike are usually the officials of the student association. In the desire for positions in the organization, students are motivated by nothing but aggrandizement. They seek self-glory which is fatal in the acquisition of Deeni knowledge. Experience bears testimony to the destructive influence of the desire for self-glory on Deeni knowledge. The whole exercise of Jamiatut Talabah is the deception of the nafs which seeks to side-track students from their true purpose by playing on their egoistical feelings.

In reality, there is no need for a body such as Jamiatut Talabah. Ostensibly the aim of the association of students is to foster the practice of lecturing and writing among students. However, these activities can be pursued under the guidance of Ustaadhs. When the whole system of education operates under the guidance of the Ustaadhs, there is no logical reason why the Ustaadhs cannot train students in the field of lecturing and writing. However, it must be emphasised that training in the field of lecturing and writing is not at all necessary if the student has developed academic ability (*isti'daad*). Our great and

illustrious forbearers in Deeni Uloom whose innumerable works on the Deen decorate the firmament of knowledge, never underwent any training in lecturing and writing. They never trained under any programs devised by any jamiatut talabah. The actual requirement is sound *isti'daad* (capability) in Deeni knowledge. In addition to *isti'daad* is *adab* (respect) for the Ustaadhs. Along with this vital ingredient, the *isti'daad* of the student will glitter with spiritual lustre. Allah Ta'ala will bestow by His fadhl all excellences and ability of lecturing and writing on the student.

(The people of intelligence are): those who fulfil the pledge of Allah and they do not violate the pledge. And those who uphold (that bond), the upholding of which Allah has commanded and they fear their Rabb, and they fear the awful punishment.

(Surah Ra'd)

And, those who violate the pledge of Allah after having enacted it, and they sever (that bond), the upholding of which Allah has commanded, and (thereby) they spread anarchy on earth, upon them is la'nat (curse) and for them is the evil abode.

(Surah Ra'd).

THE CONSEQUENCES OF DISRESPECTING USTAADHS

Allah forbid! Should Ustaadhs be dishonoured, the student instead of pursuing *Ilm-e-Deen* will be diverted, deprived and his time and energy will be squandered, misused and destroyed in anarchistic activities of corruption. *Fitnah* and *fasaad* will become his occupation. Even if he does acquire some proficiency in lecturing and writing, it will be wasted. The speeches and writings of such corrupt elements are devoid of blessing and

substance. Their learning is shallow and consists of a mere outer-shell. History bears amply testimony to the fact that others never derive any benefit from students who engineered conspiracies and intrigues of mischief and strife against their seniors. Those who were disrespectful to their Ustaadhhs derived no benefit out of their learning nor did others. A spell of misfortune and loss settled over such students. Their lives were hemmed in on all sides by misfortune and calamity. What can be a greater calamity than becoming entrapped into the snares of the nafs and shaitaan thereby bringing ruin upon one's own life by the annihilation of one's Deen and worldly goodness?

The aforementioned explanation has now shown that strikes perpetrated by students in Deeni Madaaris are in reality *jabar fit tabarru'*, ingratitude, disrespect for the honourable Ustaadhhs, suspicion, slander and accusation of the authorities, spreading corruption and anarchy in Deeni institutions, ruining their lofty reputations, endangering these bastions of Deeni *Ilm* and depriving others of Deeni benefit by shaking their confidence in these abodes of Shar'i Uloom.

By the grace of Allah Ta'ala, the illegality of this conglomeration of evil, viz., strikes, has been explained in detail with accompanying proofs and arguments.

SOME BASIC FACTS

For better understanding of the nature of student-strikes in Deeni Madaaris, the corrupt motives beneath such activities and the Deeni harm resulting therefrom, certain facts will be outlined.

THE ACTUAL DISEASE

The actual disease and the Root cause of the corruption of *strikes* which have nowadays afflicted our Deeni institutions is the attitude of liberalism which has crept into our Madaaris. Liberalism is on the increase. This disease of liberalism is spreading at an alarming rate among students while the

measures instituted to combat it are extremely weak. The future thus bodes ill. This cancerous disease is setting in deeply in the ranks of the students of Deeni knowledge.

Liberalism in attire, liberalism in appearance, liberalism in thinking, and attitude coupled to love for modernity have wrought havoc and untold destruction on the moral characters of students. The destructive activity of liberalism described as strike, has its roots in an environment of liberalism. Since this disease is on the increase, there is a need to explain the evil in some detail so that the majority is not misled by a handful of instigators and so that the correct measures be adopted to combat this cancer.

Since the Fitnah of a strike is always the machination of a very small percentage of evil elements it is the obligatory duty of the students of the Deeni Madaaris to act responsibly, intelligently and with far-sightedness when anarchy is being fermented. Students should not be ensnared into the meshes of the mischief of the corrupt elements bent upon sowing mischief and anarchy in the interests of their baneful motives. However, inspite of the great insight and responsibility needed on such occasions it has been observed that the students fall prey to gullibility and flow along in an emotional tide whipped up by the miscreants. A few emotional slogans, deceptive and shallow arguments overwhelm and mislead the students. Insha'Allah, after presenting some guiding principles, the superficial and deceiving arguments of the ring-leaders of strife and mischief will be examined and answered.

THE ORIGINAL PURPOSE OF THE STUDENT OF *ILM*

The true and actual purpose and aim of the student pursuing knowledge is the acquisition of *Ilm-e-Deen*. To achieve this goal peace, order and smooth operation of the various departments of the Madrassah are imperative. Therefore, in the interests of attaining their own goal, students should do nothing which will interfere with the smooth functioning of the Madrassah, for any disruption here will defeat them in their purpose. The following

is an important principle which students should remember: *When confronted by two misfortunes and there is no way out other than accepting one misfortune, then opt for the lesser misfortune.*

Now even if there are some defects in the system of the Madrassah, then in terms of the above-stated principle, students should patiently bear the faults and defects of the system. Between a strike and toleration of deficiencies in the Madrassah management administration, the lesser misfortune is the latter. The student's purpose of *Ilm-e-Deen* is attainable inspite of the deficiencies which may be existing in the system of the Madrassah whereas the greater evil of a strike brings about total disruption, anarchy and chaos which make the acquisition of the purpose impossible. Once the greater evil has been resorted to, the consequences are disastrous, for the student's presence in the Madrassah is utterly defeated and he is deprived of reaching his goal.

A management or system with deficiencies is tolerable, but the irreparable damage inflicted on *Ilm* by the unlawful and anarchistic activity, of a strike is Islamically unbearable. In the majority of cases remedial measures can be instituted to cure any defects in the system when order and sanity prevail, if not immediately, then later. On the contrary, the confrontation and abuse directed against the Ustaadh's and the Madrassah authorities are in diametric opposition to the laws of the Madrassah, of the Shariah and the demands of the lofty rank of the Ustaadh's. Nothing, but chaos and corruption ensue in the wake of the vandalistic activity of the student's strike. The harm is traumatic and beyond redemption because the student who participates in these acts and scenes of abuse and vulgarity remains perpetually deprived of the spiritual benefit, grace and the radiance of the *Noor* of knowledge emanating from the realm beyond this material and physical plane. The avenue of such radiant and true knowledge is forever sealed off upon the participants in the anarchy which brings disgrace and dishonour

upon the Ustaadhs. May Allah Ta'ala protect us from such calamity and ruin, Ameen.

In view of the colossal spiritual disaster which acts of vandalism bring in their wake, intelligence, insight and sanity require that the students of Deeni knowledge tolerate patiently the temporary inconveniences and pin-pricks of mismanagement because the alternative to such toleration is to bring crashing down on their heads the great misfortune and calamity of being forever deprived of true *Ilm*.

THE AFTERMATH OF STRIKES

The state of chaos and disorder engineered by the elements of corruption, in which confrontation, intransigence and audacity were demonstrated is of temporary duration. After cessation of the hostilities the students once again have to come into contact and deal with the self-same Ustaadhs and authorities whom they reviled yesterday. Apologies are then tendered and excuses are offered. If our students of Deen did not allow themselves to become the victims of deception and shallow arguments advanced by the elements of dissension and mischief and if they had ruminated over the consequences which will stem from the strike, they would not have swam with the tide of baatil bringing utter ruin to their future success.

DISAGREEMENT IN ALL SYSTEMS

Our honourable students should Understand that the handful of elements which comprise the student leadership cannot assume control of the Madrassah. They lack the qualifications and the ability to ensure the proper administration of the institution. The community has no reliance on such destructive agitators. The only contribution which these elements of anarchy can make is to create obstacles in an order and system which is already in operation. They lack the expertise to operate the Madrassah successfully for even a single day. *Ta'leem* is dependent on the functioning of the Madrassah, hence any

deficiency in the management will be tolerated in the interests of the lofty and wonderful spiritual gains of *Ilm-e-Deen*.

After all, there is no earthly order, scheme or system which is to the full satisfaction of everyone. There are bound to be conditions and rules which will not be to the liking of all and sundry. But, the interests of one's purpose dictate, toleration of irritants and aspects of the system which do not seem appealing to the individual's tastes. Right inside one's home exists many irritants. However, one takes all these in stride. Man remains patient in the face of disobedience of his family. Circumstances constrain him to be patient and resign to the situation. However, the student whose stay in the Madrassah is a temporary phase seeks to exercise authority in a domain in which he has no right of authority, and that too, in a most disgusting way. On the contrary, he should concentrate on his actual purpose, adopt patience, understanding and engross himself in the task of *Ilm* with courage and firmness. Why does he have to destroy his own future bothering about some scheme and conspiracy dressed up in the form of reformation?

Assuming that the Madrassah authorities bow to his pressure of disruption and concede his demands, e.g. the dismissal of an Ustaadh or effecting some change to the syllabus to conform to the nafs of the strikers, instituting changes in the management, etc., the student should see what has he actually gained by extracting such concessions under compulsion? Do students realize the miserable bargain which they have struck? Do they realize what have they obtained in exchange? They have in fact destroyed their entire learning. Deeni knowledge does not nestle in the hearts of corruption. Is this then intelligent? Does intelligence exhort one to ruin one's entire spiritual wealth in exchange for such miserable gain?

WHO SHOULD BE APPOINTED AS LEADER?

Intelligence and foresight require that a leader be one who possesses capability and is qualified to lead his followers to their destination. But this cannot be said about the student-leadership

which foments anarchy and strife. Can the strike-leaders guide students and deliver them to their ultimate destination? Thought in the matter will prove that these elements themselves, are victims of emotions and are diverted from their own goal and destination--the acquisition of knowledge. How can they then act as the guides of others? Their ability and energy are confined to misdirection and to divert from the path of knowledge those already set on this Road. They will only mislead you and strand you rudderless in the middle of a stormy ocean of strife. They are no asset and no benefit for the students. This has been proven time and again.

NO MANAGEMENT CAN APPEASE ALL

It is an accepted fact that any system or management, no matter how perfect, will not be wholly to the liking of everyone. Most assuredly there will always be some rules and factors in the system or management which will not conform to the liking and wishes of everyone. The very factors which are preferred and pleasing to some are displeasing to others.

The incorporation of some unpalatable factors in any system, arrangement or administration is only natural. No management is without such factors. Principles and laws are enacted in the interests of the general public. The benefit and advantage of any particular person or group do not feature in the formulation of the principles. Our students should understand that a Madrassah is an institution consisting of various departments. Our honourable students should bear in mind that persons of the different departments have been appointed to execute the tasks and duties of their respective departments. Even if defects exist in a large institution with an elaborate system of administration, students should understand that while such faults deserve rectification, they have at the same time to be patiently tolerated while they exist. The whole system, and functioning of the institution cannot be made to suffer disruption and anarchy on account of a few deficiencies and weaknesses. Should it be made a principle that a few faults in the administration justify

the cessation of the Madrassah by means of anarchy, then on the basis of the same principle, not a single system, be it spiritual or mundane, will be able to operate for any length of time because of the presence of faults or assumed faults in every system and administration.

For the smooth and successful operation of an institution it is essential to tolerate the few unpleasant factors because along with these are numerous other factors of excellence in its set-up. Furthermore, what may seem to be unpleasant to some may be pleasing to others. In the gardens of the earth are flowers as well as thorns. In order to derive advantage of the excellences and goodness of an institution or of some personalities, their faults will have to be tolerated. A wiseman has well said: *"Do you not realize that advantages and disadvantages are strung together in a single string?"*

All people admire the glittering moon of the fourteenth night, but it too has its blotches.

THE ESSENTIALITY OF OBEDIENCE

It is only natural that no institution can function properly without a code of rules and no code or system of law and order can operate without a management. For the effective functioning of the system it is necessary to have a head or a superintendent who will be the superior of all those connected to the various branches of the institution. All subordinates will be obliged to adhere to the rules of the institution within the confines of the Shariah.

Regarding the principles, rules and regulations of the institution, if the criterion in their formulation be the wishes and fancies—the likes and dislikes— of the subordinates, no system will be able to function properly. Submission and proper execution of all the rules are essential for the smooth operation of an institution. An institution's success will be commensurate to the degree of its rules, aims arid objects being discharged. An

institution with a high degree of discipline always enjoys a distinguished rank among institutions of its kind.

The attainment of total success and the fullest achievement of the aims and objects are not the responsibility of only the head. This success is dependent upon a band of devoted subordinates who will fully co-operate with the head and faithfully execute their duties which have been entrusted to them. Such execution of duty will have to be on the basis of the principles and adhering to the rules governing the operation of the institution. Without the full co-operation of the subordinates, the position of the head remains that of the principles and laws written in books and not in practice. An institution which enjoys a staff (head as well as subordinates) of sincerity, devotion and integrity is indeed most fortunate. The likes of such perfect institutions existed in the early golden ages of Islam.

OBEDIENCE

THE SHAR'I EMPHASIS ON OBEDIENCE TO THE AMEER

The Shariah commands obedience to the Ameer in all circumstances providing that his orders do not conflict with the Shariah. This obedience has to be offered to the Ameer irrespective of the likes and dislikes of the subordinates. The degree of stress on obedience to the Ameer is such that the Shariah orders that the Ameer be obeyed and followed in Salaat which he leads in even *makrooh* time. Even if the Ameer on account of his involvement in affairs of immorality is not qualified to lead Salaat, the Shariah commands obedience to him. The wisdom beneath this emphasis to obey even such wayward Ameers is the prevention of *fitnah* overtaking the Ummah. Disobedience to the Ameer will plunge the Ummah into anarchy strife and mischief. Hence for the sake of peace, in the Ummah the Shariah commands toleration of the few deficiencies in administration. Toleration of the deficiencies is of far lesser harm than *fitnah* and *fasaad* which will erupt in the wake of confrontation and rebellion against the Ameer. Hence, our

honourable Deeni students should ponder and act responsibly when they are propositioned by the elements of anarchy to participate in unlawful acts of rebellion. They should, in the greater interests of their aim of Deeni knowledge, tolerate and bear with patience any deficiency they discern in the systems of the Madrassah. Success and safety, peace and tranquillity lie in this approach. The harms of a strike far outweigh any 'reforms' extracted from the Madrassah authorities by the application of unlawful pressure. Furthermore, the anarchy perpetrated by the students presents the grave danger of jeopardizing the very existence of the Madrassah.

THE STUDENTS' PLEDGE ON ADMISSION

On being admitted to a Madrassah, students in the bigger Madaaris, give a written pledge, and in the smaller Madaaris, a verbal pledge, promising to adhere and abide by all the laws of the Madrassah. In terms of the Shariah this pledge becomes binding on the students. Thus, their confrontation, defiance, and mischief in the form of a strike are flagrant violations of their pledge which comes within the scope of the Divine Command in the Quraan Shareef:

"And, fulfil your pledges."

Such violation of sacred pledges as committed by the striking students is never permissible for any Muslim, moreso, when the violaters are those who are pursuing the knowledge of the Deen. Violation of sacred pledges by students of Deeni knowledge is a crime of the most despicable nature.

ALL HUMAN SYSTEMS CONTAIN DEFICIENCIES

Every man-made system or management has its share of imperfection. There are various reasons for defects in human systems. Man is not infallible and he does not possess the knowledge of what is hidden from him. Principles are formulated and rules are made in the light of the experience, knowledge and insight of man. The possibility for the entry of error is thus not remote. Facts and information at the disposal of

the formulators of the principles and makers of the laws may have been insufficient, faulty or incorrect. Investigation in a matter may not have been complete and the factor of human judgment has to be dealt with. Error is therefore, bound to creep in. Errors are possible in a variety of ways giving rise to deficiencies in systems. But this is only natural. Anarchy and vandalism are not natural to culture.

In spite of the existence of faults, remedy is possible. The deficiencies can be eliminated given time and by the introduction of reforms in a responsible way. Anarchy, strife and mischief are not the solutions or ways for securing correct change and rectification of defects. These evils are the ingredients for ruin, destruction and calamity--both mundane and spiritual. The matter demands patience, foresight and responsibility. In fact, students who have embarked on the journey of seeking *Ilm* of the Deen and have made some Madrassah their medium and aid in the realization of their lofty goal, have no right whatever of agitating for change and "reform". Their presence in the Madrassah is not for this purpose, but for the purpose of seeking knowledge. They have therefore to compulsorily engage themselves in the aim of their occupation and not fall by the wayside, detracted and diverted by the evil machinations and manipulations of elements hostile to spiritual and *Ilmi* progress. Students did not secure admission to the Madaaris for the purpose of battering change and reform to the system. This is not within the scope of their *Ilmi* activity. The affairs of Madrassah administration is not within the jurisdiction of the students. Their sole purpose is the pursuit of Islamic knowledge. Should they not be able to accustom and adapt themselves, to the rules and method of the system of administration operative in the Madaaris, they should depart honourably and not embroil themselves in haraam devellish conspiracies of intrigue, corruption and anarchy--*fitnah and fasaad*. Deeni knowledge does not unfold itself for such students who are diverted from the aim and object of *Ilm*.

"What! Do you not see those who (baselessly) dispute in the Aayaat of Allah.

Whither are they drifting?"

CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND CONTROL

Sometimes there do occur untoward incidents of which the management is aware. However, due to adverse circumstances beyond the control of the Madrassah authorities, immediate measures to rectify the position cannot be instituted. At times the image, reputation and interests of the institution will suffer irreparable harm if such incidents are given publicity. In the interests of the institution--which in fact are the interests of the students and the knowledge they are pursuing--the management abstains from acting and awaits an opportune occasion for rectifying the wrong. *[Such delayed or post-paned action has a firm Shari basis. When Ameerul Mu'mineen Hadhrat Uthmaan-radiallahu anhu- was murdered, Hadhrat Ali-radiallahu anhu--the newly-proclaimed Ameerul Mu'mineen, refused to accede to demands for the immediate apprehension of the murderers, saying that the prevailing delicate situation and circumstances precluded any such action. The consequence of immediate action would have been anarchy and mischief, far greater than what had occurred.--Translator]*

The reasons and the circumstances which dictate this attitude are known to only the Madrassah authorities while those unconnected with the affairs of the administration remain in the dark. On account of the circumstances prevailing, the facts cannot be revealed. Moreover, irresponsible persons lack the understanding to discern these happenings and their under-currents which compel the authorities to postpone the institution of disciplinary or remedial measures. The authorities are then subjected to suspicion, criticism, slander and vilification. In this callous and unlawful way students embroil themselves in activities which bring about their spiritual and *Ilmi* ruin.

Intelligence and gratitude require that our honourable students accept that any procrastination by the authorities in effecting reform is motivated by wisdom and sincerity and some expediencies which remain hidden from them. The minds of

those upon whom there is no responsibility do not attain the depths of understanding of those on whose shoulders rests responsibility. It is therefore essential to keep the mind clear and not entertain suspicion about the seniors of the Madrassah upon whom devolves the responsibility of administrating the institution. Students must refrain from haste and emotion and not fall victim to instigation by the elements of *fitnah* and *fasaad*.

USING STUDENTS AS A SMOKESCREEN

Sometimes, certain people make use of the students in the furtherance of their own disputes and aims which may be personal or organizational. They may have some axe to grind with the Madrassah authorities and are bent on extracting revenge. In pursuit of their evil motives and aims they utilize the students as a front. In this despicable way they achieve their aim at the expense of the ruin of our honourable students who have to pay the price of perpetual loss of spiritual and *Ilmi* conditions and ranks. Students should, therefore, not fall into such traps prepared by men with sinister motives and thereby destroy their own precious future. In achieving their sinister designs, these evil elements divert the students from their direction and purpose.

STRIKE LEADERS

THE CONDITION OF THE STRIKE—LEADERS.

A tactic employed by the leaders of a strike is to furnish erroneous and false information to the media. This is designed to disgrace the Madrassah and the authorities. The fair image of the Madrassah is thus tarnished. During the strike anarchy, the aid of *fussaaq* and *fujjaar* is enlisted as well. These elements of immorality always lay in expectation of mischief. The student-strike provides, the opportunity for these evil elements to infiltrate and perpetrate their villainy and vandalism. They add more fuel to the fire.

In a similar style as the *fussaaq* and *fujjaar* the student-strike leaders confront the honourable Ustaadh rudely. In the perpetration of dishonour on the Ustaadh, these strike-leaders are in the fore-front. Whatever abuse, vilification and vituperation alights on their tongues, they gorge out against the honourable Ustaadh. They publicize in speeches, pamphlets and newspapers unsubstantiated and grossly false and inaccurate reports, information, slander and accusation directed against the honourable Ustaadh and Madrassah authorities.

Our honourable students of the Dean should understand that elements who confront their Ustaadh with abuse and insult and who have no regard for the exhortations, limitations and prohibitions of the Shariah are wholly unfit to be made leaders. Students should not blindly follow such leaders of strife and mischief. Their aim is to utilize anarchy as a vehicle for achieving personal glory and aggrandizement. Ultimately these pernicious leaders strand the students in a quagmire of disgrace and disaster. Following such leaders is to invite self-destruction and disgrace in both this world and the hereafter. Both *dunya* and *deen* are destroyed.

It is vital that students understand well the facts of this discussion. They should understand the true nature of the situation and the flimsiness and shallowness of the arguments advanced by the leaders of the strike so that they are not ensnared by these elements of anarchy whose aim is to enlist the aid of the students so as to achieve their own pernicious objectives.

THE ARGUMENTS OF THE STRIKE-LEADERS AND THEIR ANSWERS

(1) The strike-leaders contend that public contributions to the Madrassah are meant primarily for the students.

They thus argue that in view of the public contributions being primarily for the students, the students alone are entitled to such revenue. The other employees of the Madrassah, viz., the

Ustaadhs, workers, etc., are subservient in this aspect in that they derive their remuneration as a result of the students who are the primary beneficiaries of the revenue while others have no primary right in the contributions. On the basis of this argument they conclude that the administration should accede to the wishes of the students and failure by the authorities to accept such wishes will justify the students to strike in order to achieve what they consider to be their *huqooq* (rights).

THE ANSWER

There is a basic error in this argument. Since the error is somewhat common to the other arguments of the students as well, a detailed explanation will be presented.

(a) It is an evident fact that contributions from the public are received for the purposes of the Madrassah in general. The overwhelming majority of contributors do not specify the avenue or department in which their contributions have to be expended. Where any such specification is made, the contribution is held and utilized accordingly. Similarly, whatever forms of *waajib sadaqaat* are received, e.g. Zakaat, Fitrah, Fidyah, etc., are expended in accordance with the prescribed rules of the Shariah. In the final analysis all contributions are utilized for the benefit of the students.

(b) Since contributions are made in general for the Madrassah and not specified for any particular department of the Madrassah, it should be understood what actually is a Madrassah. In our time a Madrassah is an institution of various departments operating collectively. The combined activities of the various departments constitute the Madrassah and not any particular department. Hence, all departments are entitled to a share of the revenue allocated to the Madrassah.

(c) Reflection will make evident that the Madrassah buildings with the various departments are not the actual aim and object sought after. The true and actual object of attainment is the perpetuation of Deeni Uloom. For this purpose--the perpetuation of Deeni Knowledge--in our day the existing

Madrassah set-up with its department of tuition and other departments of management and administration are essential. The existence of the Madaaris is imperative. With the maintenance of the Madaaris for the perpetuation of Deeni knowledge being essential, it becomes incumbent upon the Muslim community in general to provide the revenue for the expenditure of the Madaaris.

It will now be understood that the actual purpose of the contributions made by the public is for the perpetuation of the knowledge of the Deen. The means for this aim in our day has assumed the form of the Madaaris. It has been shown that the Madaaris consists of various branches. The revenue intended for the Madrassah will, therefore, be utilized for all departments which function to maintain the system designed for the perpetuation of Deeni knowledge. Thus, the contention of the strike-leaders that contributions are only for students is highly erroneous.

(2) Stemming from the aforementioned argument of the students is the contention that a student-strike is justified because of the Madrassah's refusal to accept suggestions and proposals put to the management by the students whose strike is directed to achieve their rights.

THE ANSWER

A proper administration is one thing and a management satisfying all the fancies and wishes of the students is another thing. Principles, as said earlier, are formulated in the interests of the general body. For a system to be proper it is not necessary that all whims and fancies are catered for. Dissatisfaction with a system does not indicate that the system is defective. In all likelihood, the system is proper while the deficiency lay in the demands made by the disgruntled elements. It is highly probable that the agitators are in error (and always they are). The error of the demands of the students always becomes apparent. An example of an erroneous demand made by the striking students is the formation and recognition of a jamiatut talabah

(association of students). However, on account of many evils inherent in such an organization, the formation of such a body is in conflict with the system of Deeni Madaaris. Among the evils attendant to students associations are:

(a) The creation of sectionalism among students, giving rise to narrowness of thinking. This interferes with the system and spirit of Islamic knowledge as imparted by the Deeni Madaaris.

(b) The diversion of students from their goal and purpose, viz., the acquisition of Deeni *Ilm* for the pure sake of the Pleasure of Allah Ta'ala.

(c) Concentration on activities unconnected with the purpose of the student's presence in the Madrassah.

In view of these evils as well as other evils inherent in student bodies, the formation of student organizations is ruled to be in conflict with the interests of *Ilm-e-Deen*.

In tendering the demand for the establishment and recognition of a jamiatut talabah, the students desire to scrutinize the system of the Madrassah to the rules which they establish on the basis of their whimsical fancies and opinions. When the authorities refuse to accede to the demands of the students, the system of the Madrassah is labelled as being defective, thus requiring reform. The system and those in charge are proclaimed to be unqualified merely because of the refusal of the authorities to succumb to the demands of the students. It is therefore, grossly unintelligent to justify the strike on the basis of the contention that the students are seeking the obtainal of their legitimate rights.

In this whole wide world it is not possible to develop a system which will conform to the wishes and fancies of each and everyone. Assuming that the task of developing a system of administration for the Madrassah is entrusted to the leaders of the strike, can they honestly claim that everyone will be satisfied with the system which they manage to hammer out? Evidently, they are not capable of formulating any such system

pleasing and satisfying to everyone, And, no one can achieve this. Why then is such an unreasonable demand directed to the Madrassah authorities?

It is necessary to understand that the system, the principles and the rules of our Deeni Madaaris have been formulated and established by great men of wisdom, immaculate piety and who occupied distinguished ranks in the various branches of Shar'i Uloom. These illustrious souls were our true benefactors and guides. The wonderful edifice of Deeni knowledge and the spiritual effulgence radiating out of true knowledge is attainable only on the foundations laid by these august personalities of Islam. If we fail to discern the wisdom underlying the system of the Madaaris, we cannot label the system as defective. Rather our understanding is defective. Even if there do exist some difficulties and deficiencies, gratitude and nobility of thinking and character dictate that along with the numerous fruits of advantage and success of the system, a few set-backs and disadvantages be tolerated with patience and dignity,

The creation of anarchy and uproarious misbehaviour overtly on the grounds of the existence of some deficiencies in the system is ingratitude in the extreme. It is uncultural, unbecoming of any human being, leave alone those who are supposed to be the Representatives of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), those who are supposed to be in the position of divine vicegerency, those who are supposed to be the inheritors of the knowledge of the Ambiyaa (alayhimus salaam) to resort to such riotious conduct and attitude of vandalism which show no regard for the sacred bonds and pledges which connect them with the Deeni Madaaris. Such ingratitude is inconceivable, coming from the searchers of *Ilm-e-Deen* especially when Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: *"He who has taught another a single Aayat of the Book of Allah, verily, he is the master of him [i.e. of the student]. It is not lawful for him to dishonour his Ustaadh or to consider himself superior to him [the Ustaadh]."*

(3) The strike-leaders contend that the strike is organized to retrieve *huqooq* [rights] of the students.

THE ANSWER

In answering this argument, discussion and explanation on *haqq-e-wajib* (compulsory right) will be presented so that the illegality of strikes for even obligatory rights may be understood.

It is an accepted fact that pressure and force to secure demands are permissible as a last resort only for the reclamation of *huqooqe-wajibah* on condition that in the course of retrieving such rights by force, there will be safety from *fitnah* (anarchy, strife and mischief). Abstention from *fitnah* is a demand greatly emphasised by the Shariah. The very nature of a strike consists of pressure, force and methods of anarchy. By the utilization of such measures of pressure and compulsion, to compel acceptance of their demands, the students serve notice that the leaders consider the rights they are demanding to be among the *huqooq-e-wajibah*.

However, even a student in the primary level of Deeni Uloom will know that pressure and force in regard to the reclamation of *huqooq* are permissible in relation to only such *wajib* rights which are specified (*huqooq-e-muayyanah*), e.g. wages, salary, money owed by a debtor, etc. As said earlier, the utilization of compulsion to secure one's rights in this specified obligatory category of *huqooq* is conditional with absence of *fitnah*. In the category of specified *huqooq*, the rights are fixed and specified, hence application of pressure under certain circumstances and conditions for retrieving these *muayyan* (specified) rights is permissible when these cannot be obtained peacefully.

On the contrary, pressure to secure unspecified rights, even if *wajib*, is not lawful. For example, a poor person has a right in the Zakaat of a wealthy man, but such right is not specified for this or any other particular poor man. Hence, if the wealthy man refuses to pay his Zakaat, the poor have no right to demand payment of Zakaat from the wealthy and utilize force and

pressure against the wealthy on the basis of them (the poor) having *waajib* rights in Zakaat. It is not lawful for those who have rights in Zakaat to agitate, demonstrate, shout slogans, create an uproar and spread anarchy and mischief if the Zakaat-payers refuse to hand over their Zakaat to these poor who are entitled for the Zakaat.

From the examples cited above, it will be evident that the students do not fall in the first class, i.e. they have no specified rights in the Madrassah. They do not resemble employees demanding their specified wages for their specified services nor do they resemble creditors demanding, their rightful due. They have no *huqooq-e-muayyanah*. Their similitude is that of the poor who have rights in Zakaat of the rich.

Students in Deeni Madaaris make no payment for anything obtained from the Madrassah. The Madrassah does not levy on them any fees, hence there accrue no *waajib* rights to them nor do they render any such service for which they have to be remunerated by the Madrassah authorities. Like those entitled to accept Zakaat, students are entitled to a share of the Madrassah revenue, but in an unspecified way. Thus, striking and adopting pressure to secure such unspecified rights are not at all permissible.

STUDENTS OF THE DEEN ARE NOT STUDENTS OF WESTERN LEARNING

Our honourable students should not consider themselves to be in the category of students pursuing western education. There is no resemblance between the two sets of students. Those pursuing mundane education have no comparison with those pursuing the knowledge of the Ambiyaa (alayhimus salaam). *(Western education is a profession pursued for earning livelihood like any other profession adopted for earning wealth. But, Deeni Ilm is not the medium of earning one's livelihood. Its aim is nothing other than the Pleasure of Allah. Those who pursue Deeni Ilm with motives similar to those which motivate the pursuit of western and worldly education, are astray, their*

motives being ulterior and in diametric conflict with the demand of Ilm. Such motives are despicable for the student pursuing Deeni knowledge, but not for the one acquiring western education, for in embracing mundane learning the student is merely acquiring one of the ways of earning livelihood and wealth.--Translator)

Another fact to remember is that students of western education pay fees for tuition, boarding and lodging. They, therefore are entitled to demand what they had paid for if justice is not done to them. On the contrary, no fees are demanded from our students. There are no fees of whatever nature in Deeni Madaaris. Everything, boarding, lodging, tuition, medical expenses, etc., are free services rendered to the students. Whatever, needs and comforts can be made available to the students from the limited revenue of the Madaaris are made available to the students. But, inspite of all these benefits which they obtain gratis--as favours--we observe ingratitude. Every now and again demands are made for more comforts and to crown the ingratitude, despicable methods of pressure and confrontation with the seniors are employed. This is indeed, flagrant ingratitude and *jabar fit tabarru'*.

(4) The strike-leaders argue that although respect and honour for the Ustaadhs and guarding the reputation of the institution are accepted facts, nevertheless, this is no longer a requirement because the calibre of the Ustaadhs is not as the calibre of previous Ustaadhs. Since the Ustaadhs are of an inferior calibre they are not entitled to the respect and honour as were offered to Ustaadhs of former days.

THE ANSWER

In reply, we ask the students: Did you ever apply this same criterion to yourselves? Are students of today of the same calibre as students of former times? Were the students of former times like students of today? Are the attributes, characteristics, piety, honour, moral character, actions and superb *Ilmi* qualities of former students to be found in students of our day? Let the

students honestly examine their own characters, habits, conditions and deeds and let them be the judge. Let them then see to what degree the degeneration has set in themselves. They are indeed today scraping the very bottom of the barrel. The degree of moral and spiritual degeneration gripping them does not even concern itself with the limits of the Shariah. A strike by Deeni students bears ample testimony to the degree of moral depravity and transgression of the Shariah.

In former days there never existed elaborate and comfortable boarding and lodging facilities for students of the Deen. While undergoing severe trials of hunger, even starvation, and illness former students remained steadfast with sincerity and patience undaunted in pursuit of their mission. Nothing diverted them from their goal. They were embodiments of virtue, piety, honour and respect. This was the case with the majority of our predecessors in the field of Deeni knowledge. On the contrary, nowadays facilities at the Deeni Madaaris are of greater luxury than what exists in the homes of the majority of students. Inspire of this, the slogan of :

هل من مزيد

"What are there more?"

(Qur'aan)

[This Aayat is a reference to Jahannam]. After all those who are deserving of the fire have been assigned to Jahannum. Allah Ta'ala will ask Jahannum if she is now satisfied. Jahannum, declaring her desire for more fuel will say:

هل من مزيد

If the difference in calibre between Ustaadhs of former times and Ustaadhs of our time is a standard to be used for negating the rights of Ustaadhs—their rights of honour and respect which is waajib upon students--then pursuing the same line of logic it can be argued that in view of the extremely low and inferior calibre of today's students compared to former students, the rights of our students should similarly be negated.

Our students should seriously and honestly reflect and meditate about their own moral and spiritual conditions and they should then concentrate on their spiritual and moral reformation and upliftment. However, instead of this, they are concerned about putting forward demands for non-existing rights. In relation to their concern and clamour for non-existing rights they do not show even one-hundredth of the same concern for their spiritual lives. If they had any concern for their moral upliftment, they would have imposed upon their *nafs* and demanded from it fulfilment of the rights of morality and the rights of *Ilm* which they are ostensibly pursuing. Once one becomes a seeker of *Ilm*, the huqooq of *Ilm* becomes waajib upon the seeker. To what degree are our honourable students discharging these obligatory rights of *Ilm-e-Deen* ? Let them be just and answer honestly.

An investigation into the matter will reveal a deplorable state of affairs. Instead of executing the rights of *Ilm*, the existence of evils fatal to *Ilm*, will be found in abundance. Disrespect, misbehaviour, rudeness to Ustaadhs, confrontation with members of the management, turning away from the methods and appearances of our *Aslaaf*, and adopting the ways, styles, gait and appearance of *fussaaq*, *fujjaar* and all baneful elements. Liberalism in every sphere of their lives have set deeply into the students. But, the profession of Deeni knowledge demands total abstention from these vices.

If students are adamant in making acquisition of rights their occupation (instead of the acquisition of *Ilm*), we have to inform them that the Madrassah authorities have, *Maasha-Allaah*, discharged more than such rights which were incumbent. It devolves now upon students to divert their demands to their own *nafs* and demand discharge of the rights of the knowledge which they are pursuing. The obligatory huqooq of *Ilm*, and its other requirements and etiquettes are explained in detail in the Qur'aan, Hadith and other books of *Ilm*. If these rights are properly executed, Allah Ta'ala will open up the Door of His Bounties.

Assuming that there do exist certain faults in the Ustaadhs and other Madrassah officials, then too, it is incumbent upon students to honour and respect them. Confrontation, rudeness and misbehaviour are not permissible. Such elements are fatal poisons depriving the student of all *fuyoodh* and barakaat of *Ilm-e-Deen* . A good example of this situation in the Shariah is the position of parents. Imperfection, deficiency and failure to observe the rights of their children do not justify confrontation, disrespect and rudeness with them. The Shariah does not tolerate rudeness and injury to them despite their failure to carry out the rights which they owe their children. Similarly, the Shariah does not tolerate disrespect and injury to the Ustaadhs on the grounds of existence of defects in them.

The relationship between Ustaadh and *Shaagird* (student) is sacred and extremely delicate. In this field there will always be fortune, success and prosperity with respect and honour, and with disrespect and dishonour goes misfortune, failure and adversity. All efforts of those students who disrupt and disturb this sacred relationship by participating in the anarchy of a strike, go in vain, utterly wasted. They remain effectively debarred from the spiritual realms. They are forever deprived of the *fuyoodh* and barakaat of *Ilm*. Their learning will neither benefit them nor others. This is the type of futile and destructive knowledge from which Rasulullah (saliallahu alayhi wasallam) sought refuge.

(5) The strikers also contend that demands, are directed to the management and are not the concern of Ustaadhs. Ustaadhs should stand aside and not intervene in the matter. If they abstain from intervention, they will not suffer disrespect.

THE ANSWER

Firstly, this claim is false. It has been seen that on such occasions of anarchy the honourable Ustaadhs are made the targets of criticism, vilification and vituperation in public speeches of the student-leaders. Accusations, suspicions and slander are directed to them. At times when an Ustaadh visits

the striking students to reason with them or to make a necessary announcement, he is physically jostled, jeered and mocked. If he stands to address them, he is loudly jeered and ridiculed. They accord him the most despicable and uproarious treatment of disrespect which is unimaginable from students who are supposed to be plodding the Path of the knowledge of the Ambiyaa (alayhimus salaam).

Let us assume that in a particular strike the honourable Ustaadhs were not directly insulted. Even then it is highly improper and audacious to argue that the fight is with the management and not with the Ustaadhs, hence they should not intervene. This is merely the baseless opinion of students whose understanding is defective. Their shallow understanding constrains them to believe that the honourable Ustaadhs are under their obligation. The Ustaadhs are men of intelligence and insight. They are the seniors of the students. They are not obligated to submit to the fanciful opinions of immature students nor are they the subjects of the students. *(On the contrary, the Hadith describes Ustaadhs as the owners of students who are the slaves of Ustaadhs—Translator).*

They, possess no right to issue instructions to Ustaadhs. Upon reflection it will become clear that the students demand of non-intervention and silence made on Ustaadhs on such occasions, is in itself a grave insult. The Ustaadh has the full right to intervene, order and instruct the students and not vice versa. If Ustaadhs observe that students due to their immaturity and being ensnared in the traps of pernicious elements are destroying their future, they (Ustaadhs) have an incumbent duty upon them to call the students towards guidance. When students are destroying the very bridge on which they are standing, it devolves upon Ustaadhs to attempt the rescue of their students. It is within the purview of their duty and jurisdiction to endeavour to reason with students in order to save them from the calamitous path they have chosen for themselves. Along with academic instruction (*ta'leem*), spiritual training (*tarbiyat*) is also incumbent upon the Ustaadhs. Their position is like that

of a father admonishing and advising his son who has embroiled himself in a reckless and futile confrontation with another. The father calls on his son to desist from his thoughtless confrontation. The son has no right to instruct the father to stand aside and not to intervene since the confrontation is not with him. If the son should follow this strain of argument and instruct his father to remain silent, will his father remain silent and desist from admonition? The Shariah has given the father the full right to admonish and prevent his son from thoughtless acts of destruction and so has the Shariah given this right to Ustaadh. It now depends on the nobility of mind and character or depravity of mind or character of the son and the student to accept or reject the admonishment.

(6) The student-leaders contend that strikes and boycotts of classes yield results. Demands are accepted, hence use should be made of this effective weapon to procure concessions and rights.

THE ANSWER

Regarding the question of rights (huqooq) which are made the subject of demand, a detailed explanation has already been given in our reply to argument number one of the strike-leaders. It will suffice here to comment in refutation of this argument that effectiveness of a method in procuring one's desires does not confer legality on the method. A robber's methods in robbery may be effective, yielding considerable results in form of stolen and plundered property, but such effectiveness of methods does not give legality and rectitude to the robber's ways. Thus, strikes as an effective weapon to extract concessions and desires from the authorities in no way detract from their contemptibility, vandalistic nature and illegality. Their effectiveness does not confer on them the label of permissibility. They will remain unlawful in the Shariah irrespective of the yield extracted.

Furthermore, strikes do not at all times produce favourable results to the demands of the students. Sometimes the result is the direct opposite of student expectation. Strike-leaders are

expelled or the Madrassah is closed down to the great disadvantage and harm of *Ilm*. Sometimes as a matter of expediency some demands are accepted temporarily, but later repeated as opportunity arises. It is therefore baseless to claim that strikes always yield results favourable to the demands of the students.

(7) Our honourable students claim the right to criticize the authorities of the Madrassah and in substantiation of this claim they cite certain episodes from the life of Hadhrat Umar [radiallahu anhu]. One such incident occurred once when Hadhrat Umar (radiallahu anhu) mounted the mimbar and exclaimed:

"O Community of Muslims! What will you do if I turn my attention to the world?"

A Bedouin stood up, drew his sword and said that he would sever the neck of Ameerul Mu'mineen. Hadhrat Umar (radiallahu anhu) said:

"What! Will you kill me?"

The Bedouin replied: *"Yes, I am saying that I will kill you."*

Hadhrat Umar (radiallahu anhu) repeated the same statement thrice in admonishing tones and the Bedouin responded each time in the same manner. Thereupon Hadhrat Umar (radiallahu anhu), supplicating to Allah Ta'ala said:

"Allah have mercy on me. Shukr unto Allah Who has created among my subjects such men who will reform me if I stray from the Haqq."

THE ANSWER

In reply to this argument it should be noted that there is no resemblance between this incident and the incidents of anarchy, vandalism, mischief, strife, abuse and dishonour which accompany the strikes of the students. Reformation and virtue,

and anarchy and evil are entities apart. There is no valid analogy here which could be used as a basis for the argument put forward by the strike-leaders. This episode merely indicates the sincere opinion of a Sahaabi, an opinion which he presented at the explicit request of Ameerul Mu'mineen. The circumstances and the manner in which the question was posed show that Hadhrat Umar (radiallahu anhu) himself desired to extract such an answer in the interests of the Deen. Here was no abuse, anarchy and vandalism. No *fitnah* and no *fasaad*.

Another episode also regarding Hadhrat Umar (radiallahu anhu) is cited as substantiation for the demand of the right to criticize seniors. Once in the distribution of the spoils of war, every Muslim received one piece of cloth. Hadhrat Umar (radiallahu anhu) too received one piece.

When on Friday Hadhrat Umar (radiallahu anhu) mounted the mimbar to deliver the Juma' Khuthah, he had on him two such pieces of cloth. He commenced the khutbah and when he recited the words: *'Therefore hear and obey,'*

Hadhrat Salmaan Faarsi (radiallahu anhu) stood up and pointed out to Hadhrat Umar (radiallahu anhu) that he had awarded everyone one piece of cloth, but today he had two such pieces on his body. On hearing this, Hadhrat Umar (radiallahu anhu) smiled and explained that the second cloth was on loan from his son, Abdullah who had also obtained a cloth. Hearing this explanation, Hadhrat Salmaan (radiallahu anhu) was pleased and said: *"We hear and we obey,"*

THE ANSWER

In this episode too, is none of the strike evils which characterize the acts of anarchy or the students. In citing this incident in support of their claim, the strike-leaders demonstrate their lack of having understood the purport of this episode. The motive of Hadhrat Salmaan Faarsi (radiallahu anhu) was to eliminate any suspicion from the minds of others who may see two such garments on the body of Ameerul Mu'mineen and then entertain various notions. They may conclude that Ameerul Mu'mineen

had misappropriated the extra cloth from the public treasury, it was then to eliminate any such suspicions that Hadhrat Salmaan (radiallahu anhu) publicly acted this way. He showed no contempt, disrespect and dishonour. It is grossly erroneous, therefore, to cite such incidents in justification of the disrespect, anarchy and vandalism perpetrated by the strikers.

There is no similarity between these episodes of the Sahaabah and the anarchial activities and desires for criticism of seniors of the student-strikers. On the contrary their similarity is with the traitors who besieged Hadhrat Uthmaan (radiallahu anhu) and finally murdered him. The Ulama of Haqq, unanimously assert that the rebels who besieged and killed Hadhrat Uthmaan (radiallahu anhu) were in error. The resemblance of the students who perpetrate the anarchy of the strike is thus with such rebels.

The incidents regarding Hadhrat Umar (radiallahu anhu) do not establish the right to criticize and condemn seniors whenever the rules of the system conflict with one's whim and fancy. Other episodes from the life of Hadhrat Umar (radiallahu anhu) prove the error of the claim advanced by the strike-leaders. Unbridled criticism at random is highly improper. The following episode also related to Hadhrat Umar (radiallahu anhu) will serve to show that he did not condone misdirected criticism. In Bukhari Shareef it is recorded that Hadhrat Uyainah Bin Haseen (radiallahu anhu) told his nephew, Hurr Bin Qais of his desire to meet Hadhrat Umar (radiallau anhu). Hurr Bin Qais (radiallahu anhu) obtained the necessary permission from Hadhrat Umar (radiallahu anhu). When Uyainah Bin Haseen (radiallahu anhu) came into the presence of Hadhrat Umar (radiallahu anhu), he said:

"O Umar Ibn Khattaab! By Allah! You do not award us enough nor do you decide among us with justice."

This statement infuriated Hadhrat Umar (radiallahu anhu) so much that he took hold of his whip and was about to whip Hadhrat Uyainah (radiallahu anhu), when Hurr Bin Qais

(radiallahu anhu) who was among the close associates and consultants of Hadhrat Umar (radiallahu anhu) said:

"O Ameerul Mu'mineen! Allah Ta'ala has commanded his Rasool: 'Be forgiving, command righteousness and ignore the ignorant ones.'"

On hearing this advice, Hadhrat Umar (radiallahu anhu) overlooked the error of Hadhrat Uyainah (radiallahu anhu).

Similarly, in another episode, Hadhrat Umar (radiallahu anhu) was journeying towards the land of Shaam. At one place, due to excessive mud, the passage of the camel was very difficult. Hadhrat Umar (radiallahu anhu) alighted from the camel and removed his shoes. Holding shoes in one hand and the camel's rope in the other, he walked through the mud. Observing this, Hadhrat Abu Ubaidah Ibn Jarraah (radiallahu anhu), a senior Sahaabi and one of the Asharah Mubasharah, commented:

"O Ameerul Mu'mineen! Your act in the eyes of the kuffaar is indeed despicable."

Hadhrat Umar (radiallahu anhu) with his hand struck a heavy blow on the chest of Hadhrat Abu Ubaidah (radiallahu anhu) and said:

"O Abu Ubaidah? Alas, Would that someone other than you had made this comment. Allah bestowed respect to you because of Islam. If you search for respect in any avenue other than Islam, Allah Ta'ala will disgrace you."

These episodes make abundantly clear that criticism of the authorities is not proper on all occasions and in any way whatever, nor is criticism always tolerable. The incidents pertaining to Hadhrat Umar (radiallahu anhu) advanced by the strikers may deceive the general public, but will not confuse those versant with the Qur'aan, Hadith, Fiqh and History, for they understand well the occasions and the ways of criticism and objection. The strike-leaders, to bolster their claims in the interests of their motives, grasped hold of these particular incidents of Hadhrat Umar (radiallahu anhu) while ignoring the

other episodes which show Hadhrat Umar's attitude and strong dislike for unwarranted criticism.

Furthermore, the degree of *ikhlaas* (sincerity) of the Sahaabah is not present in us. There are, therefore, no grounds for putting ourselves on the pedestal of the Sahaabah and comparing our acts and attitudes with those of the Sahaabah. It is therefore highly improper to cite their mutual differences and disputes as basis for our activities.

Alhamdulillah! The Shar'i prohibition of these strikes, their anarchy and the destructive consequences ensuing in their wake have been fully explained. It has been explained that such activities are the cause for loss and total deprivation of the *fuyoodh* of Deeni Knowledge. It was mentioned that such occasions require understanding, insight and recognition of future harms. Guidelines to be followed on such occasions of strife were presented and the arguments of the strike elements have been answered. Our honourable students should now reflect and ponder on what has been written here. They should totally abstain from the anarchy and vandalism described as strikes which are in conflict with the Shariah and Islamic culture. A few episodes out of the lives of our noble predecessors will now be narrated in regard to their way of searching for *Ilm*. The sincerity, honesty, respect and service for Ustaadhs, the hardships and privations of these illustrious men of Islam will portray the way and spirit in which students of Deeni knowledge have to organize their quest for *Ilm*. By reading these narrations, students should endeavour to create in them the enthusiasm to follow in the footsteps of our noble predecessors and gain the wonders of true knowledge of the Deen.

EPISODES

* Hadhrat Abdur Rahmaan (rahmatullah alayhi) said: "I remained studying for twenty years in the service of Imaam Maalik [Rahmatullah alayh]. Of these twenty years I spent eighteen years in obtaining instruction in moral and character reformation and development and only two years in academic study." This demonstrates the priority and importance of the acquisition of akhlaaq (moral character).

* Imaam Shamsul Aimmah Halwaani (rahmatullah alayhi) visited a certain town. Many of his students who were in that town upon hearing of the arrival of their Ustaadh rushed to welcome and meet him. However, Qadhi Abu bakr (Rahmatuhah alayhi), also a student of his, did not go to meet his Ustaadh. After a while when the Ustaadh and student met, the Ustaadh queried the reason for his absence. Qadhi Abu Bakr (rahmatullah alayhi) replied that he was engaged in rendering essential service to his mother hence he could not present himself to his Ustaadh on that particular occasion. Hadhrat Halwaani (rahmatullah alayh) said: "*There will be increase in your rizq, but no benefit in your knowledge.*" And so it was. Here the duty upon the student was to have presented himself to his Ustaadh notwithstanding his service to his mother. He could have visited his Ustaadh later and tendered an explanation after which he could have departed with the permission of his Ustaadh and engage himself again in the service of his mother. In this way the rights of both mother and Ustaadh would have been fulfilled.

* Hadhrat Imaam Shaafi (rahmatullah alayhi) said: "*In the presence of Imaam Maalik [rahmatullah alayhi] I even turned the pages of the kitaab in perfect silence so that the sound of the pages turning does not reach his ears.*"

* Imaam Rabee' (rahmatullah alayhi) said: "*I never had the courage to even drink water in the presence of Imaam Shaafi [rahmatullah alayhi].*"

* Qadhi Fakhruddin Irsabandi, Raeesul Aimmah who was highly honoured by even the king of the time, said: *"I obtained this lofty rank as a result of service to my Ustaadh. Besides service in general, I prepared the meals of my Ustaadh, Qadhi Abu laid Dabusi [rahmatullah alayhi] for thirty years and because of respect for him I never ate therefrom."*

* There is a very touching and awe-inspiring lessons for students in the following episode of Hadhrat Imaam Abu Yusuf (rahmatullah alayhi). His son died and while funeral preparations were underway; the time arrived for the class of his Ustaadh, Imaam Abu Hanifah (rahmatullah alayhi) to commence. Hadhrat Imaam Abu Yusuf (rahmatullah alayhi) handed over the funeral arrangements to relatives and departed to attend the class of his Ustaadh.

* All are familiar with the name of Khalifah Haroon Rashid. His kingdom stretched from the Sea of Sindh to Spain. His two sons were acquiring knowledge from the Arabic grammar master, Farraa. On one occasion when the Ustaadh arose after having imparted the lesson, both sons of the Khalifah rushed to put in position the shoes of their Ustaadh. Both reached the shoes together and a dispute developed between them--who was to have the honour of bringing the shoes to the Ustaadh? Finally, they resolved the dispute. Each carried one shoe so that both may obtain the honour of having rendered service to the Ustaadh.

The palace spies immediately notified the Khalifah of this incident. The Ustaadh was called to the royal court. Haroon Rashid asked: *"Who today on earth has the highest rank and is the most honoured?"* Farraa, the Ustaadh replied: *"Who can be more honourable than Ameerul Mu'mineen?"* Haroon Rashid replied: *"No! He is the most honourable, over whose shoes even princes dispute."*

The king, in gratitude and happiness awarded each son ten thousand silver coins for their high moral character and ten

thousand silver coins to the Ustaadh for the beauty of his instruction to the princes.

* Ibnul Mugri says: *"For the sake of Ibn Fudhaalah I travelled seventy manzils [over three thousand miles] to obtain a single manuscript. The price of the manuscript [i.e. the worth of the paper in the manuscript] was not even equal to the price of a loaf of bread"*

* Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (Rahmatullah alayh) said: *While I was studying under my Ustaadh, Hadhrat Mamluk Ali Sahib [rahmatullah alayh], a rash developed on my whole body. I would wear gloves when attending classes. During this time, I did not absent myself a single day from class. Once, seeing me suffering much because of the rash my Ustaadh exclaimed: 'Your condition is reflected in the verses, "*

* Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thaanvi [rahmatullah alayh] was so much engrossed in acquiring knowledge and so keen to learn that he learnt certain kitaabs not in the syllabus, from Ustaadhs while they were engaged in making wudhu. The Ustaadh would impart the lesson while busy with wudhu.

NASEEHAT

A heart which cannot find enjoyment in worldly associations and relationships is the sign of the heart enjoying its connection with Allah Ta'ala.

* Sleep with maut under your pillow and have not much hope in life when you rise in the morning.

*Never consider sin to be insignificant. Regard all sin to be grave. He who takes sin lightly considers Allah Ta'ala to be insignificant.

*Be ever watchful over your nafs

*Of greater importance than acts of devotion is abstention from sin.

- *Sabr of a high degree is to be contented with one's lot.
- * Acquisition of Deeni knowledge demands true courage.
- *Association with the pious is nobler than acts of piety and association with the evil is worse than acts of evil.
- *He in whom there exists even a grain of vanity and falsehood is not anchored in ma'rifat (inner recognition of Allah Ta'ala).
- * Freedom is attained by curbing the desires of the nafs.
- * Elimination of envy occasions the love of Allah Ta'ala.
- * Abstain from the companionship of a friend who causes you no benefit of the Aakhirah.
- *The friendship of worldly persons is comparable to fruit of a beautiful colour, but vile in taste.
- *The knowledge of a man who prefers conversation with people to the thikr of Allah is insignificant; his heart is blind and his life is barren
- * The lowest degree of harm which befalls a man who befriends the world is the elimination from his heart of the pleasure of Allah's thikr. This is the least harm.
- *Have no hope on man and have no greed in the heart for anything man possesses. All creation is dependent on Allah.
- * Be with creation, but keep the heart aloof. Your body should be with people, but the heart with the Creator.

THE HOLY CHISTIYYAH, MASEEHIYYAH, ASHRAFIYYAH, IMDAADIYYAH SPIRITUAL TREE.

Hadhrat Maseehul Ummat Maulana Muhammed Maseehullah Khan belongs to the auspicious chain of Auliya, which is linked to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). Every name in this holy 'tree' is a star of immaculate piety and spiritual excellence in the firmament of 'Ma'rifat' and 'Tasawwuf'. The 'Tasawwuf' of the members of this great Spiritual Order is deeply rooted in the Qur'aan and the Sunnah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam).

Hadhrat Mohammed Maseehullah Khan Khalifah of

Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thaanvi	(died 1362 A.H)
Hajee Imdaadullah Makki	(„ 1317 A.H)
Hadhrat Noor Muhammed	(„ 1259 A.H)
Hajee Abdur Raheem	(„ 1246 A.H)
Shah Abdul Baari	(„ 1226 A.H)
Shah Abdul Haadi	(„ 190 A.H)
Shah Adhdud-din	(„ 172 A.H)
Shah Muhammed	
Shah Muhib-bullah	(„ 1058 A.H)
Shah Bu Sa-eed	(„ 1040 A.H)
Shah Nizaamudin Balkhi	(„ 1005 A.H)
Shah Jalaaluddin	(„ 989 A.H)
Shah Abdul Quddus	(„ 924 A.H)
Shaikh Muhammed	(„ 989 A.H)
Shaikh Ahmed Aarif	(„ 882 A.H)
Shah Ahmed Abdul Haq	(„ 837 A.H)
Shah Jalaaluddin	(„ 765 A.H)

Ilm, Madaaris and Strikes

Shaikh Shamsuddin	(„ 716 A.H)
Shaikh Alaauddin	(„ 690 A.H)
Shaikh Fareeduddin shakar Ganj	(„ 669 A.H)
Khwaajah Qutbuddin Maqtool	(„ 633 A.H)
Shah Mu-inuddin Habeeb	(„ 632 A.H)
Khwaajah Uthmaan	(„ 597 A.H)
Shah Shareef Zindaani	(„ 584 A.H)
Khwaajah Maudood Chisti	(„ 577 A.H)
Shah Bu Yusuf	(„ 559 A.H)
Shah Abu Muhammed	
Shah Ahmed Abdaal Chisti	(„ 355 A.H)
Shaikh Abu Ishaq Shaami	(„ 329 A.H)
Khwaajah Mumtaaz Alawi	(„ 299 A.H)
Shah Abu Habeera Habeera Basri	(„ 275 A.H)
Shah Huzaifah Mur-ashi	(„ 252 A.H)
Shaikh Ibrahim Adham	(„ 266 A.H)
Shah Fuzail Ibn Iyaaz	(„ 187 A.H)
Khwaajah Abdul Waahid Bin Zaid	(„ 176 A.H)
Imaam Hassan Basri	(„ 110 A.H)
AMFERRII. MI' MINEEN SAYIDINA HADHRAT AII (Radiallaahu Anhu)	(„ 40 A.H)
MUHAMMAD RASULU LILAH (Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam)	(„ 10 A.H)