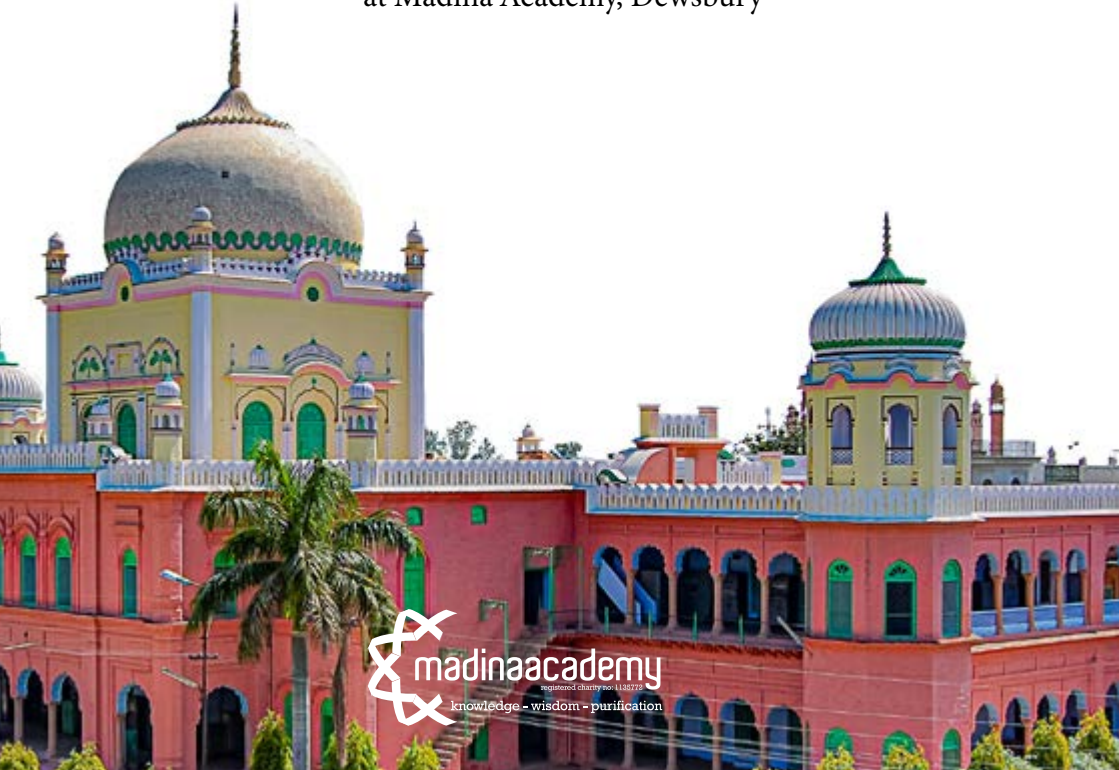


The *Farewell Advice* of
Shaykh al-Hind *Mawlānā*
Maḥmūd Ḥasan

Deobandi ﷺ

Transcript of speech by
Dr Mufti Yusuf Shabbir
at Madina Academy, Dewsbury



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First Edition 2022 / 1444AH

The Farewell Advice of Shaykh al-Hind Mawlānā Maḥmūd Ḥasan Deobandī ﷺ

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Published by: Madina Academy
Swindon Road, Dewsbury
West Yorkshire, WF13 2PA
England

Website: www.madinaacademy.org.uk
E-mail: publications@madinaacademy.org.uk

Design ﷻ
Typesetting: Enhance Design Solutions

TRANSLITERATION NOTE

The transliteration of Arabic names and terms into English follows the well-established scheme shown below.

ا..... aa or ā	ز..... z	ق..... q
ب..... b	س..... s	ك..... k
ت..... t	ش..... sh	ل..... l
ث..... th	ص..... ṣ	م..... m
ج..... j	ض..... dh	ن..... n
ح..... ḥ	ط..... ṭ	ه..... h
خ..... kh	ظ..... ḏ	و..... oo or ū, w (consonant)
د..... d	ع..... ʿ	ي..... ee or ī, y (consonant)
ذ..... th	غ..... gh	ء..... ʾ
	ف..... f	

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



Foreword

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

All Praise be to Allah and peace and blessings
be upon His chosen servants

On 17 July 2021, Madina Academy, Dewsbury hosted its 4th Hifz completion programme for 3 students who had memorised the Holy Quran. For this programme and the final Dua, I had invited my respected teacher Shaykh al-Ḥadīth Mufti Shabbir Ahmad دامت برکاتہم. Prior to the main speech I requested my friend Dr Mufti Yusuf Shabbir to address the participants in English. Dr Mufti Yusuf delivered a thought-provoking and timely speech on the importance of the Qur'ān and the need for unity.

This speech has now been transcribed by Usman Seedat, a student at Jamiatul Ilm wal Huda, Blackburn, UK. Some minor amendments have been made for clarity and readability and some references have been added in the footnotes.



May Allah accept this work and make it beneficial and a source of guidance.

“This is not at all difficult for Allah” (14:20).

—Mawlānā Khalil Ahmed Kazi
Madina Academy
Dewsbury, England
12th September 2022

The Farewell Advice of
Shaykh al-Hind Mawlana
Maḥmūd Ḥasan Deobandi رحمة الله

Introduction

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

نحمده ونصلي على رسوله الكريم، أما بعد: فأعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم، بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم، ألم ذلك الكتاب لا ريب فيه، هدى للمتقين. وقال النبي صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وصحبه وسلم: خيركم من تعلم القرآن وعلّمه. إن الله وملائكته يصلون على النبي، يا أيها الذين آمنوا صلوا عليه وسلموا تسليماً. اللهم صل على محمد وعلى آل محمد كما صليت على إبراهيم وعلى آل إبراهيم إنك حميد مجيد. اللهم بارك على محمد وعلى آل محمد كما باركت على إبراهيم وعلى آل إبراهيم إنك حميد مجيد:

My dear respected friends, colleagues, brothers, mothers and sisters listening at home,

Assalāmu ‘alaykum wa Raḥmatullāhi wa Barakātuh,

SHAYKH AL-HIND MAWLĀNĀ MAḤMŪD ḤASAN DEOBANDI

Over a hundred years ago, there was a very senior, a very learned scholar in India by the name of Mawlānā Maḥmūd Ḥasan Deobandi رحمة الله,



who later in his life was given the title of Shaykh al-Hind. At that time, it was undivided India, there was no Pakistan or Bangladesh, it was all one. He was given this title of 'Shaykh of the subcontinent'. In fact, Ḥakīm al-Ummah Mawlānā Ashraf 'Ālī Thānawī رحمته الله suggests in his *malfūzāt* (discourses) that actually it should be Shaykh al-'Arab wa al-'Ajam (Shaykh of the Arabs and non-Arabs), or Shaykh al-'Ālam (Shaykh of the world) due to his contribution, his sacrifice and his service to Muslims and others, not just in India and Pakistan, but throughout the world.

Shaykh al-Hind Mawlānā Maḥmūd Ḥasan Deobandī رحمته الله was very learned; he has written some books, some *ḥawāshī* (marginalia) on some books which are available, and he was the teacher of ḥadīth at Darul Uloom Deoband, the largest seminary in India. But along with this, he was from amongst those individuals who did not stop there. Rather, his concern, and perhaps what he is recognised for today the most by Muslims and non-Muslims, is his contribution and his service against the colonial masters; the British.

SHAYKH AL-HIND'S SUPPORT OF THE KHILĀFAH

He is also renown for his support of the Ottoman Empire and the various initiatives that he took to support the Islamic Khilāfah; the united Muslim rule that existed for centuries. This was because he foresaw that if this is not supported despite the weaknesses that came towards the end of the Ottoman Empire, this is the only thing that we have and if this crumbles, then the Ummah will be in a much more difficult state.

If one just looks at the past century, one can very quickly and easily conclude, whether we talk about Palestine, whether we talk about Syria, whether we talk about Yemen, whether we talk about these

cartoons that Brother Sulayman Kazi just alluded to a short while ago, at that time even if someone wanted to do this, people would think twice because there was a force, a united force, it had unity, it had strength, it had power, people would think twice even if they wanted to. It is not the case that the enmity towards Islam has just begun now. Enmity to Islam was there during the time of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and has always existed. However, people would think twice before doing such things because they would hurt the feelings of Muslims and Muslims would stand up and there was a united force; the Muslims were united.

So, although Shaykh al-Hind Mawlānā Maḥmūd Ḥasan Deobandī رحمته الله was in India and at that time towards the end of the Ottoman Empire, India was not under Ottoman rule, in fact in his era it was under British rule, and it was occupied by the British. Despite this, there were various initiatives that he undertook to support the Ottoman Empire, to fundraise for them and so on. And even today in Darul Uloom Deoband, you can see the letter and the gift that I think was sent by Sultan ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd, one of the Ottoman sultans in recognition of the contribution of Darul Uloom Deoband and the likes of Shaykh al-Hind.

IMPRISONMENT IN MALTA

Shaykh al-Hind Mawlānā Maḥmūd Ḥasan Deobandī رحمته الله is the teacher of Shaykh al-Islam Mawlānā Ḥusayn Aḥmad Madanī رحمته الله, who after the demise of Shaykh al-Hind was instrumental in the liberation of India and campaigning against partition. Shaykh al-Islam Mawlānā Ḥusayn Aḥmad Madani رحمته الله is the student of Shaykh al-Hind Mawlānā Maḥmūd Ḥasan Deobandī رحمته الله. So, the mentor, the teacher, the guide is Shaykh al-Hind Mawlānā Maḥmūd Ḥasan رحمته الله. I am mentioning



this background because Shaykh al-Hind Mawlānā Maḥmūd Ḥasan Deobandi رحمته الله was imprisoned in Malta. He was arrested in Saudi Arabia as the Ottoman Empire crumbled and as Makkah al-Mukarramah was lost. At that time, Shaykh al-Hind رحمته الله was in Makkah. Madīnah al-Munwwarah was still under Ottoman rule, but Makkah al-Mukarramah was lost. Traitors colluded [with the British] and Shaykh al-Hind رحمته الله and his team were arrested. Part of his team was also Mawlānā Ḥusayn Aḥmad Madani رحمته الله who was very young at the time. They were arrested and taken to Jeddah, then from there they were taken to Egypt, and then from there they were taken to Malta which is an island in the Mediterranean. In Malta, they were jailed for approximately three years or so. This was approximately between 1917 and 1920, 100 years ago. Shaykh al-Hind رحمته الله was very elderly at the time and he was imprisoned, along with few of his people, in Malta which was then under British rule.

One of their colleagues actually passed away in Malta and his grave is in the Ottoman Cemetery over there. We visited Malta and visited the graveyard, but we could not find his grave. Later, some friends from Bolton went and they sent me a picture of his grave as well.¹ Shaykh al-Hind رحمته الله lead his Janāzah Ṣalāh.

Shaykh al-Hind رحمته الله is freed from imprisonment and returns to India via boat. He arrives Bombay, he is welcomed and eventually he reaches Deoband.

I am mentioning all this background just to illustrate to you how great this person is and how his contribution and his service is widely acknowledged by Muslims and non-Muslims. Fair-minded

¹ The picture has been added online to the Malta travelogue available on www.islamicportal.co.uk.

non-Muslims even today in India acknowledge Shaykh al-Hind رحمته الله's contribution and his service.

THE CAUSES BEHIND THE DECLINE OF THE UMMAH

What a great 'Ālim he was. A lifelong experience, a lifelong service, being in jail for several years. It was towards the end of his life when he arrives in Deoband that he invites the 'Ulamā' and there is a special majlis (gathering). I think Mufti Muḥammad Shafī' Usmani رحمته الله was also present and there is mention of this in his writings.

Shaykh al-Hind رحمته الله invited everybody and said: "I have thought and pondered upon the decline of the Ummah." Today the issues of the Ummah concern all of us; he said: "I have thought about this very hard and deep, and I have come to the conclusion that the cause of the decline of the Ummah can be summarised in two things and if the Ummah was to regain its glory then it needs to address these two things."

THE FIRST CAUSE: DETACHMENT FROM THE QUR'ĀN

The first thing that Shaykh al-Hind رحمته الله mentions is the connection with the Qur'ān, and this is why I am mentioning this today, that we have become detached from the Qur'ān, and we have not given the Qur'ān the importance it deserves. We have become detached from the message of the Qur'ān, the meaning of the Qur'ān, the reverence to the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān is the kalām of Allah ﷻ, the speech of Allah ﷻ. It is not human speech; it is the speech of Allah ﷻ who is our Creator, our Nourisher, our Nurturer, the One who created us from nothing. Yet, we have become detached from the Qur'ān.



He encouraged his students and the ‘Ulamā’ who were present there to connect the people with the Qur’ān and in particular establish makātib for this purpose. In fact, he despatched Mawlānā Ḥusayn Aḥmad Madanī رحمته الله to the area of Bengal and Assam. At that time, there was a lot of ignorance in that area and there were hardly any makātib there. It was whilst Mawlānā Ḥusayn Aḥmad Madanī رحمته الله was on his journey that the news came of Shaykh al-Hind’ رحمته الله demise. Thus, this thing was mentioned right at the end of Shaykh al-Hind’s life. He only stayed alive for perhaps a few months or a year or so after his return to Deoband. He passed away very soon after, I think in 1921 or around that time.

So, he said that the first cause of the decline of the ummah is that we have detached ourselves from the Qur’ān, whereas the Saḥābah رضي الله عنهم were attached the Qur’ān. Throughout the night, they would recite the Qur’ān and throughout the day they would act upon the Qur’ān; they would live the Qur’ān. At night, they would recite the Qur’ān and during the day they would live the Qur’ān, they would breathe the Qur’ān.

IMPORTANCE OF MAKĀTIB

Attach yourself to the Qur’ān, establish makātib! Alḥamdulillāh thumma Alḥamdulillāh, I was in Gambia and Sierra Leone a couple of weeks ago. When you travel to some of these countries, and even some Arab countries, you find that they do not have such maktabas which we take for granted. Two or three hours of teaching every day we take for granted, because it is in our culture, but when you visit some of these countries and you meet forty year olds, fifty year olds who cannot read the Kalimah, who cannot recite the Qur’ān; then you will really appreciate and value the importance of the makātib.

Then you can appreciate the impact of what Shaykh al-Hind رحمته الله said who encouraged his students to establish makātib throughout the subcontinent; it was their children and their grandchildren who then travelled throughout the world and established makātib in the UK, the United States and elsewhere to preserve the Dīn.

Today, we have so many challenges within our schools and within our education system: LGBT, transgenderism, atheism, intellectual wars; so many challenges. We have Muslim schools who have many initiatives to try and address these challenges but the maktab is the foundation. Of course, there will be weaknesses; no maktab is perfect, no teacher is perfect, but we are not perfect either. Yes, there will always be room for improvement but the foundation of makātib, is to attach the people to the Qurʾān, to recite the Qurʾān correctly, to understand the Qurʾān, to act upon the Qurʾān, to give importance to the Qurʾān.

This was the first thing that Shaykh al-Hind Mawlānā Maḥmūd Ḥasan Deobandi رحمته الله mentioned that this is the first reason why I think that there is decline in the Ummah; people have detached themselves from the Qurʾān.

RESPECTING THE QURʾĀN AND SALARIES OF MAKTAB TEACHERS

Even those who are attached to the Qurʾān; how much do they truly respect the Qurʾān? If there was a clash between reciting the Qurʾān or watching the Euro Final, what would they do; what would they give preference to? If the Euro Final occurred at maktab time, would they give more importance to the maktab or would they give more importance to the Euro Final?



So, it is not just about learning how to recite the Qur'ān, it is about the mindset and the mentality. Yes, we all respect the Qur'ān, but do we really believe that the Qur'ān is the best? Do we really believe that the people of the Qur'ān are the best? Do we really believe that the teacher, that ḥifẓ class teacher who teaches Qur'ān in our eyes is more important and we give him more respect and more reverence than the doctor, or than the one who has a PhD? That will determine how much respect we have for the Qur'ān and for those who have the Qur'ān in their hearts.

Otherwise, my dear brother and sisters, and I address myself before I address anyone else, it is just lip service. [The Ḥadīth states:]

خيركم من تعلم القرآن وعلمه

*The best amongst you are those who learn the Qur'ān
and teach it to others.²*

Practically, however, and I do not know what the salaries are in Batley and Dewsbury, but as a community we have makātib and we pay our teachers £50, £60 or £70 [a week] and then the maktab teacher is dozing off slightly, or maybe has not delivered his target, then we complain, what else do we expect?

And that is how much importance and respect we have given to our teachers of the Qur'ān. For parenting and for childminding, we will pay £20 an hour, we will pay £25 an hour, but when it comes to the maktab fees then we struggle, or we hesitate.

So, this is about the mindset. How much importance do we truly give to the Qur'ān and the people of the Qur'ān? Why is it that the priest at the church is on a salary of £40,000 and we cannot employ Imams, our young imams, graduates, with that salary, to serve the

² *Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Ḥadīth No. 5027, p.1283, Dār Ibn Kathīr, 2002.

community? The Imam then would not need to worry about his income, and serve the community, do counselling and address other challenges.

We are obsessed with buildings, buildings worth millions. Look at Spain, look at other countries, our masjids are nothing, our buildings are nothing compared to their buildings what are our buildings? Millions? Theirs are worth tens of millions! Look at their architecture, look at their designs, look at their grandness! What's happened?

Mawlānā Ibrahim Noor Sāhib who is here from Coventry was just mentioning to me that he visited Spain and it makes you cry tears of blood. In Jāmi' Qurṭubah, you cannot even perform two rak'āh Ṣalāh. Their great A'imma; Imam Qurṭubī رحمته الله who wrote the tafsir, Abū al-'Abbās Qurṭubī رحمته الله who wrote the commentary of Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Ibn Ḥazm al-Dhāhiri رحمته الله, the great Imam and great Muḥad-dith. Hundreds of them, thousands of them who wrote volumes upon volumes and upon whose knowledge and books we rely on today. Those same countries, those same areas, those same places where they taught and wrote these books; today we cannot even perform 2 rak'ah Ṣalāh. So, we need to stop this obsession with buildings, and we need to invest in people. We need to create people otherwise those buildings will be of no use whatsoever.

I have digressed. The first thing that Mawlānā Maḥmūd Ḥasan Deobandi رحمته الله mentioned was attach yourselves with the Qur'ān. What he said is very brief, but all of this is encompassed within it: Give importance to the Qur'ān, teach people the Qur'ān, value the Qur'ān, try and understand the Qur'ān. Let it not be that an entire life of fifty, sixty years passes by, we recite Sūrah al-Fātiḥah thousands of times but we do not know the meaning of Sūrah al-Fātiḥah. What is it that Allah ﷻ is trying to say to us? This is the first thing.



THE SECOND CAUSE: DIVISION WITHIN THE UMMAH

My dear brothers, the second cause for the decline of the Ummah he mentioned is *iftirāq* and *ikhtilāf*; division. Not merely difference of opinion, but division. We are divided today! *Shayṭān* has divided us. In some places, based on ethnicity; you are Arab, you are Pakistani, you are Bangladeshi, you are non-Arab. Within Arabs, you are from the Gulf and you are from the non-Gulf; you are from Qatar and you are from Saudi Arabia. Within ourselves, India and Pakistan. If it is just people of India, then Bharuch and Surat. If it is just people of Surat, then this village and that village. Dividers based on ethnic grounds.

Then, in some areas we are divided based on *madhhabs*: *Mālikī*, *Ḥanbalī*, *Shāfiʿī*, *Hanafī*. If we are from the same school of thought, then we are divided based on our allegiance to a spiritual path, that we are from the group of this Shaykh and we are from the group of this Shaykh. We are going to wear this *topī* (hat), and we are going to wear that *topī*. Fighting over hats; hat-wars.

In the time of Rasūlullah ﷺ, Imam Bukhārī has narrated a ḥadīth in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* which mentions *أولكلكم ثوبان* (Does every one of you have two garments?)³ Many people ask what is the Sunnah *libās* (clothing)? Is it the kurta? Is it the *topī*? What kind of *topī*? So many *Saḥābah* only had one piece of cloth! Let alone having the luxury of having an *izār*, having a vest, having a *topī*, having a shawl and having an *ʿimāmah*!

We are busy debating, and not just debating, if it is a healthy discussion then that is very good, but we are fighting over this; we are dividing ourselves based on these things. We have lost focus. Then

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Ḥadīth No. 358, p.101, Dār Ibn Kathīr, 2002.

Shayṭān is dividing us based on fiqhī masā'il, furū' issues where there is genuine difference of opinion between scholars in terms of how to perform Ṣalāh or in terms of when to celebrate Eid. There is a difference of opinion, one may be stronger the other may be weaker. And if you believe that your position is the correct position then respect that but there is no need to divide ourselves and not talk to each other, not speak to each other based on these matters.

The Ummah is bleeding; the ummah out there in the UK is facing challenges intellectually; irtidād (apostasy) is on the rise. All these challenges in schools; homosexuality, LGBT, transgenderism. And globally we are bleeding, we are being killed, we are being maimed. I am not saying these [jurisprudential] issues are not important; they are. But there are levels, we cannot let these issues and these differences divide us.

Mufti Muḥammad Shafī' Usmani رحمته الله wrote a book: *شفاق أم خلاف* (*Genuine difference of opinion or discord*). These things should be avoided. Why is that today within scholarly circles and non-scholarly circles, the issue of moonsighting comes, and we do not want to talk to each other?

Other differences come; Ṣalāh time issue comes, and we do not want to speak to each other, and we do not want to see each other's faces! Sending messages left, right and centre. Yes, it's an issue, it's an important issue, there may be different views. Yes, try and convince the other person respectfully in relation to your position but then there are other more important issues. If you feel that this is very important, then that view is respected, but let us not treat a person who has a different view as an enemy or worse than an enemy.

Today, people will go into interfaith meetings and will meet with non-Muslims happily, but they will not meet with their own colleagues,



with their own Muslim brothers and sisters due to some difference of opinion.

Shayṭān is very clever; where this issue is not there, he will create some other issue. Whether it's based on fiqh, whether it's based on taṣawwuf, whether it's based on ethnic grounds or whether it's based on other issues.

So, Shaykh al-Hind Mawlānā Maḥmūd Ḥasan Deobandi رحمته الله said after a lifetime of service, after being in prison, that along with attaching yourselves with the Qur'ān, unity! We need to be united otherwise we will be destroyed. This is the reality of the matter.

Today, what has happened. A few months ago, in the month of Ramaḍān, we had the issue of Palestine. We are so divided, so divided, so divided that no single Muslim country had the guts to do something.

Alḥamdulillāh, we have some passion, we try and make some du'ā' and so on, but generally, in how many Masjids did we see that there was Qunūt for our Chinese brothers, for oppressed Muslims in other parts of the world? Yes, if something happens in India or Pakistan, then we will do more, and yes, we should do more. But the question we need to ask ourselves is that just because we are Indian, just because we are from Gujarat and that's China, it does not really concern us, that is Africa, it doesn't really concern us, or that is the Middle East, it does not really concern us; is that what we are thinking? So, part of ittiḥād (unity) is that we do not look at the colour of the skin, we do not look at background or ethnicity or anything else.

This is what is destroying the Ummah, this nationalism; the disease of nationalism that the western powers have successfully managed to instil within the whole Middle East and everywhere around the world.

This has destroyed us. This is what Shaykh al-Hind رحمته الله was trying to communicate in that message; that the second cause is iftirāq (division); we are divided.

DU‘Ā’

May Allah ﷻ unite us, may Allah ﷻ unite our hearts and minds. May Allah ﷻ attach ourselves with the Qur’ān. These students of Madina Academy who have completed the memorisation of the Qur’ān, may Allah ﷻ embed the Qur’ān within their hearts. May Allah ﷻ grant them the ‘Ulūm and the knowledge of the Qur’ān. May Allah ﷻ keep them attached to the Qur’ān till their demise and thereafter. May Allah ﷻ make it a means of Ṣadaqah Jāriyah for them, their parents, their teachers and the entire community here.

It truly, truly is a huge sacrifice, it is a huge effort to become a ḥāfīz of the Qur’ān. It is a huge effort and it deserves true recognition. May Allah ﷻ accept their efforts and accept the efforts of everybody involved.

وآخر دعوانا أن الحمد لله رب العالمين

The Farewell Advice of Shaykh al-Hind Mawlānā Maḥmūd Ḥasan Deobandi ﷺ is a transcript of a speech by Dr Mufti Yusuf Shabbir on 17 July 2021 at the 4th Hifz completion programme for 3 students who had memorised the Holy Quran at Madina Academy, Dewsbury. Prior to the main speech and Dua by Shaykh al-Ḥadīth Mufti Shabbir Ahmad دامت برکاتہم, Dr Mufti Yusuf Shabbir delivered a thought-provoking and timely speech on the importance of the Qurʾān and the need for unity.

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Madina Academy was established in 2010 to advance Islamic education and promote a greater understanding of Islam. We provide a range of courses and training for adults and children. We offer advice and guidance on issues relating to islam and Muslims, undertake projects and research work and organise regular events and programmes.