

THE PHENOMENAL ACHIEVEMENTS *of the* ULAMA *of* DEOBAND

An English Translation of The Urdu Booklet
KAMAALAT ULAMA-E-DEOBAND

By
Mufti Muhammad Farooq Meerthi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ
FOUNDER & FORMER SHAIKH-UL HADITH,
Jaami'ah Mahmoodiyah, Meerut, India

KHALIFAH OF
Mufti Mahmood Hasan Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

Translated by:
Mufti Munir Adam

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knowledge - wisdom - purification

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An inspiring lecture on the life events and anecdotes drawn from the illuminating & exemplary lives of our pious predecessors.

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Foreword

Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Kazi Saheb
Principal & Founder of Madina Academy, Dewsbury, England

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allāh, The Most Beneficent, The Most Merciful.

The Grand Mufti of Darul Uloom Deoband (the famous Indian seminary of learning - Deoband), *Faqeehul Ummah, Hadhrat Mufti* Mahmood Hasan Saheb Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ has mentioned regarding the Maslak (standpoint) of the Ulama of Deoband, that it comprises of five distinct traits and attributes:

1. Intense heartfelt love for Allah Ta'ala
2. Strong Monotheistic Belief (Tauheed - oneness of Allah Ta'ala) in stark contrast to any belief denoting Shirk - ascribing partners with Allah
3. The overpowering love of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ surpassing the love of any creation

4. Every aspect of life be enamoured by the light of the blessed Sunnah
5. (and) an enthusiastic desire to propagate Deen.

The Scholarly luminaries of Deoband were all imbibed with these qualities; their lives were exemplary role-models of the Qur'an and Sunnah; they were ardent followers of the Sahabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ (illustrious companions; and we find the likes of them far and few in history.

These are our forefathers,
therefore bring forth a match to me,
If we ever gather,
Oh Jareer in gatherings.

This book before you is a compilation of the life events and anecdotes of these great personalities, which were expounded upon in a lecture by the erudite scholar, *Shaheed-e- Hajj* (martyr of Hajj) Mufti Muhammad Farooq Meerthi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ in a special address to scholars and students.

This lecture was delivered on the 22nd Jumaadal Ula 1433 Hijri AH corresponding to 14 April 2012 in Madrasah Ta'leemud-Deen, Isipingo Beach, South Africa.

Recently, a dream was seen by a Scholar of Deen, whilst on the journey of Umrah, during his stay in Madinah Munawwarah in which he asked Shaikh Mawlana Yusuf Motala رَحِمَهُ اللهُ about the whereabouts of Mufti Muhammad Farooq Meerthi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ. The esteemed Shaikh replied that he was in the company of The Leader of the Pious, Haji Imdaadullaah Makki رَحِمَهُ اللهُ.

May Allah Ta'ala forgive all our pious predecessors, elevate their ranks and grant the Ummah the ability to benefit from their grace and blessings until the last day.

O Radha, with thirsty lips, drinking from this Pond of Kawthar
Now from his heart the sweetness of Deoband can never die.

فَاطِرَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِ أَنتَ وَلِيِّۦ فِي ٱلدُّنۡيَا وَٱلۡأٓخِرَةِۖ تَوَفَّنِي مُسۡلِمٗا وَأَلۡحِقۡنِي بِٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ١٠١

Translation: 'O Creator of the heavens and the earth, You are my guardian in this world and the Hereafter. Make me die as a Muslim and make me join the righteous.' (Surah Yusuf: 101)

Khalil Ahmad Kazi
Servant of Madina Academy, Dewsbury, England
13 Ramadhaan-ul-Mubaarak 1444 /4 April 2023
(Prepared between Asr and Maghrib)

Supplicatory Expressions

Mufti Musa Badat Saheb رَحِمَهُ اللهُ
Shaikh-ul Hadith, Jaami'ah Ta'lim ul Islaam, Dewsbury, England
Khalifah of Mufti Mahmood Hasan Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ
حامداً ومصلياً ومسلماً

In the Name of Allāh, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful

The personality of Mufti Muhammad Farooq Meerthi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ requires no introduction. He was an embodiment of academic accomplishment and distinction. May Allāh Ta'ala accept his services rendered to Deen and elevate his status. Aameen

One of his talks titled, 'The accomplishments and distinctions of the Ulama of Deoband' was transcripted by Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Kazi. I briefly ran through it. He has certainly provided an ample representation and accurate

description of the distinctions of the Ulama of Deoband. By virtue of it my inclination and love for him only increased.

أُحِبُّ الصالِحِينَ وَلَستُ مِنهُم
لَعلَ اللهَ يَرزُقُني صَلاحاً

I love the righteous but I am not from amongst them
There is hope that Allah Ta'ala will grant me piety (due to my love for them)

May Allāh Ta'ala grant the Ummah the divine ability to derive benefit from the talk and may He accept the efforts of Mawlana Khalil. May Allah Ta'ala also make it a means of our salvation in the hereafter and a means of Sadaqa Jaariya (continuous and perpetual charity) for Mufti Muhammad Farooq رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ.

Musa Ahmad Badat
13 Shawwaal 1444 A.H

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Inaugural Sermon

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ، اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ نَحْمَدُهٗ ،وَنَسْتَعِيْنُهٗ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهٗ، وَنَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنْ شُرُوْرِ اَنْفُسِنَا وَ مِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ اَعْمَالِنَا ، مَنْ يَّهْدِهِ اللّٰهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهٗ، وَمَنْ يُّضْلِلْ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهٗ ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهُ شَرِيْكَ لَهٗ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهٗ وَرَسُوْلُهٗ، اَمَّا بَعْد !

فَأَعُوذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيْمِ

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

وقال النبيﷺ : إنَّ اللَّهَ يبعَثُ لِهذِه الأمَّةِ على رأسِ كلِّ مائةِ سَنةٍ من يجدِّدُ لَها دينَها (صحيح أبي داود) ٤٢٩١

Verily, all praise is for Allah. We praise Him, we seek His assistance and we ask for His forgiveness. And we seek refuge in Him from the evils of our selves. Whoever Allah guides, none can misguide. Whoever He misguides, none can guide. And I bear witness that there is no deity other than Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and messenger.

I seek refuge in Allāh Ta'ala from the accursed Shaytaan,

In the name of Allāh, The Most Beneficent, The Most Merciful.

We, Ourselves, have sent down the Dhikr (the Qur'an), and We are there to protect it.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "Verily, Allāh Ta'ala will create such personalities for the benefit of the Ummah at the turn of every century who will continue to revive its religion for it." (Abu Dawood: 4291)

Allah Ta'ala Has Undertaken the Responsibility for Safeguarding the Entire Deen

Honourable listeners and noble students of Deen! Allāh Ta'ala has taken responsibility to protect the Noble Qur'an. In this instance, by Qur'an is meant the various sciences and branches of the Qur'an. The pristine pure Hadith and other sciences are all included herein. In summary, Allah Ta'ala has undertaken the responsibility of safeguarding the Pure Qur'an and all its related sciences and faculties.

The Promise of a Reviver every hundred years

This Ummah has been granted this distinct promise that Allah Ta'ala will create special personalities every hundred years, who will obliterate the innovations and customs entered by others into the Deen.

The History of the Revivalists of Deen

Allah Ta'ala has undertaken His promise of protecting the Qur'an and its various sciences and branches by ensuring that from the very inception of its revelation until now, hundreds of thousands, in fact, millions have memorised the Qur'an. Similarly, there has always been a group learning and teaching the various sciences and branches of the Qur'an and propagating its practical teachings and injunctions. Whenever a group arose to cause confusion in Deen, Allāh Ta'ala created one or more personalities at the turn of every century to dispel and uproot these innovations. It is in this manner that Allah Ta'ala has safeguarded the Deen.

The very first Revivalist - Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ

If we were to take a closer look at history, then from the very first century until now, in fact, immediately after the passing of Nabi صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, we will indeed find such distinguished revivalists. After the passing of Nabi صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, a group of those with weak faith chose to leave the fold of Islam, whilst some agreed to accept all injunctions apart from the observance of Zakaah.

This was the tenure of Abu Bakr's رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ *Khilaafat* and an extremely delicate period for that matter, since Nabi صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had just bid farewell to the world and no sooner had this mischief and trial reared its ugly head. This was indeed a period where a calmer approach may have seemed appropriate, yet Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ chose to wage *jihaad* (Holy war) against those who opted for laxity in the matter of Deen by intending to discard one pillar of Islam, or even just a part of it. His companions tried to reason with him and dissuade him citing the fact that it was not an ideal time for *Jihaad* (Holy war) with statements such as, 'how can you fight those who recite the Kalimah? At present, we have other deviant forces that are no less in evil than the group you intend on waging war against'.

Abu Bakr's رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ Enthusiastic and Zealous Cry

But from the beloved tongue of Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ the following words emanate, "أينقص الدين وأنا حيّ؟" -Can any deficiency possibly enter the Deen whilst I am alive?

Abu Bakr is alive and deficiency should be permitted to enter the Deen? Not possible! Either Abu Bakr no longer remains alive or he obliterates the deficiency therein. Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ thus waged war against them.

The strife continues working from eternity till today; from the lantern of Mustafa صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ to the sparks of Abu Lahab

Then in every era there has always been a group that make the declaration, "أينقص الدين وأنا حيّ؟" Can any deficiency possibly enter the Deen whilst I am alive?"

This is simply not possible. Either I do not remain alive or simply, no weakness be permitted to penetrate the Deen. In every era, Allāh Ta'ala creates such personalities who fulfil their mission and mandate. If one carefully studies Islamic History from its initial era up to this day, this has certainly remained the case. The occasion does not permit me to delve into detail from every century. If I were to, then my entire time would be spent detailing.

The 'Deen-e-ilaahi' of King Akbar

In the Eleventh century, King Akbar appeared in India. Despite the fact that in his presence and at his service there were intelligent Ulama and distinguished personalities, these Ulama could only be classified as deviant and evil Ulama. For instance, there was Feyzi and Abul-Fadhl, etc, who wrote a commentary of the Qur'an without any dots, thereby making apparent their remarkable abilities. In spite of that, they incited Akbar to invent his own Deen (religion) by initially placing the thought in his mind that one Deen cannot last for

more than a 1000 years. They added that the Deen of Muhammad ﷺ has exceeded a thousand years, thus, its period has elapsed; we now (Allah forbid) require a new Deen. They further equipped the king by averring that the previous Deen appeared through the intermediary of Muhammad ﷺ who was unlettered and you too are unlettered, hence, at your hands the inception of a new Deen will occur.

A Brief Summary and Overview of the Akbari Deen

Nonetheless, they incited Akbar to go ahead, whereas he was a simple illiterate person and in fact, he was previously a firm adherent of Nabi ﷺ. Nevertheless, look, due to the insinuations of the evil Ulama he invented a new Deen. Should the truth be told, in this new Deen, with the exception of Islam, there was everything else. He ceased the congregational performance of Salaah with the masses in his court. He put a stop to the practices of circumcision and Qurbani. He permitted open adultery and fornication to take place, and he even allowed for the liberal practices of all other religions. In fact, he took all this further by making such practices a part of his so-called 'Deen'.

In his very fort, he ensured that there remained ignited a fire throughout the day and night; a similar practice to that of the fire worshippers. In accordance to the religion of the Hindus, he permitted the application of the Hindu 'mark on the forehead' and he even ensured that the practice of reciting the prescribed daily quota of the litany of the sun, a thousand times remained. He made it incumbent for people to prostrate before him. It is in this manner that he obliterated the Deen of Islam and invented a strange new whole Deen before the world that had nothing left of the actual Deen whatsoever.

This was indeed a very severe and painful time. This was such a prominent king who was looked up to by both, the Hindus and Muslims. He adopted many Hindu customs and he even had many Hindu women in his marriage. When the owner of such a vast kingdom initiates a practice then to obliterate

it is no easy task. Bear in mind that this was such a time, had this practice continued, there would be no sign of true Deen left today.

The Efforts of Mujaddid Alf-e-Thani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and its Fruits

In response, Allāh Ta'ala created the personality of Mujaddid Alf-e-Thani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ to oppose this mischief and trial. He carefully studied the prevailing state of affairs. The demand of the then prevailing conditions was to face off directly against the enemy forces and he in fact, did think along those lines. But to face off to such a prominent king was no easy task. He therefore opted for the path of wisdom.

He turned his focus to the henchmen and courtiers of the kingdom, carefully studying each one i.e. who from amongst them possessed true concern for Deen and its protection. After assessing, he subtly wrote letters to each of them. By writing, he revived the worry and he apprised each one of the prevailing conditions; that if the current state of affairs would remain then what would become of Deen? Furthermore, what is the duty of each one of you at present?

He encouraged the henchmen and courtiers and accordingly, proposed ways to create concern within the king. They in-turn presented before the king the various aspects of concern. As a result, it may not have led to major reformation on the part of Akbar, but it did at least lead to him repenting to Allāh Ta'ala at the end.

The Fruits of the Efforts of Mujaddid Alf-e-Thani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and the Era of King Jahaangeer

After that, the era of Jahaangeer followed. In his tenure, the era of reformation began. In the beginning, negative and incorrect assumptions were spread about Mujaddid Alf-e-Thani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and he was thus forced to languish in jail

for a period of one year. His properties and homes were seized. He was thus forced to live a life basically under house arrest. Eventually, the truth became apparent to the extent that eventually a day even came when Jahaangeer took bay'ah (pledge of allegiance) at the hands of Mujaddid Alf-e-Thani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ . He began deriving benefit from this spiritual fountain and at a later stage Jahaangeer even began attending the Khanqah (spritual gathering) of Mujaddid Alf-e-Thani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ in Sir-Hind.

The Effects of Mujaddid Alf-e-Thani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ on Shah Jahaan and Aurangzeb

The spiritual link increased to the extent that Jahaangeer sent his successor Shah Jahaan to pledge at the hands of the sons of Mujaddid Alf-e-Thani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. Shah Jahaan complied and reformed himself, the result being that a just king, the like of Shah Jahaan became the ruler over India.

After that, Aurangzeb pledged at the hands of the successors and sons of Mujaddid Alf-e-Thaani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and underwent rigorous spiritual and reformation exercises. The result of this was that Aurangzeb ruled over India in the manner of the *Khulafaa-e-Raashideen* (the first four rightly guided Khulafaa رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ). He was to a large extent successful in his endeavours. In order to establish the injunctions of Islam, he got the Ulama to prepare an unparalleled book the likes of *Fataawa Aalamgeeri*. His goal was for India to run in accordance with the contents of this work.

He himself possessed such piety that he never once used a penny of the state coffers on himself. He would write copies of the Qur'an and sell these. He would also sew topis (Islamic headgear) and sell these thereby spending the income derived there-from on himself and family. It is quite apparent that the piety and abstinence that he became imbued with were the fruits of the efforts of Mujaddid Alf-e-Thani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. For a great king to possess such piety and pure traits was indeed meritorious.

The Era of Aalamgeer and the English Invasion of India

Later, the sons of Mujaddid Alf-e-Thani رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ were successful in their endeavours in running affairs and this cycle continued. But at the end of his tenure, Aalamgeer, taking into consideration his temperament of 'keeping with all' permitted the English to enter India for trade purposes. They established their company and in this manner, they were legally and formally permitted to trade in India.

Then in the guise of their trade, they went on establishing their barracks and companies throughout the length and breadth of India; and then in the guise of safeguarding their companies and stocks, they began mobilising their army.

Then the era of Shah Aaalam followed, who happened to be the successor of Aurangzeb Aalamgeer. The English then seized full control, the result being that the king remained king merely by name. The British Company were truly in control of the law.

The Efforts of Shah Waliyullah رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ to Save the Islamic Empire

When the English established their dominion and the downfall of the Moghul Empire began, Shah Waliyullah رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ attempted to save the Islamic Empire from collapsing, but unfortunately, he was unsuccessful. This Islamic leadership continued weakening to the extent that eventually, the English took over.

The Fatwa (Juristic Verdict) of Shah Abdul Azeez رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ for Jihad (Holy War) against the English colonialists

Looking at the state of affairs, the son and deputy of Shah Waliyullah Dehlawi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ, Shah Abdul Azeez رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ declared India to be *Daarul-Harb* (territory of war outside Muslim jurisdiction), and not only did he consider it permissible, he declared it *Fardh* (compulsory) to fight the English. He even set up a train-

ing camp for this purpose. One of his disciples, Syed Ahmad Shaheed رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and his nephew and student, Mawlana Ismail Shaheed رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ raised the banner against the English. They trumpeted their calls to *Jihaad* against the British throughout India. The cycle then began which history can never silence.

Prior to this, the Ulama of Hind passed the verdict that it was no longer *Fardh* (compulsory) to perform Hajj since the journey was no longer safe. It was a boat journey, which was no longer free from theft and highway robbery.

Syed Ahmad Shaheed رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ Travelling Throughout India and His Intent for Hajj

Syed Ahmad Shaheed رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ travelled throughout India announcing that his intention was to travel to the *Baytullah* (House of Allah) for Hajj. Furthermore, the expenses of anyone who accompanies him for Hajj would be borne by him. After arduous travel, he managed to prepare seven hundred people for the Hajj journey, whereas in truth, Syed Ahmad رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ did not possess much material means. He owned not more than a few thousand Rupees, yet he divided the entire figure between them all resulting in an entire entourage accompanying him for the journey. At every point along the journey, the miraculous help of Allah manifested itself. The entire group then returned from Hajj. In this manner, the cycle of Hajj returned to India.

The Martyrdom of Syed Ahmad Shaheed and his companions رَحِمَهُمُ اللَّهُ

The influence and control of the English was increasing by the day necessitating Syed Ahmad Shaheed رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ to travel once again throughout the length and breadth of India mobilising Muslims for Jihad. Many delegations came in to meet Syed Ahmad Shaheed رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and once again, the cycle of Jihad began. However, it was Allah's plan that the entire entourage including Syed Ahmad Shaheed رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and Mawlana Ismail Shaheed رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ were martyred.

The Intervention of the Ulama of Deoband in Their Quest Against the English Colonialists

The result of this was that the English had now complete control of India and its government had gained in strength. Then our predecessors; Haji Imdaadullah Muhajir Makki رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ, Mawlana Qasim Nanotwi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ, Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ and other devout Ulama رَحِمَهُمُ اللّٰهُ, who were in the true sense the successors of Syed Ahmed Shaheed رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ, carefully assessed and studied the situation and decided it was in their best interests to raise the banner of Jihad against the English. Hence, despite their lack of numbers and material means, they established an organisation. They duly elected Haji Imdaadullah رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ as the *Amir-ul Mu'mineen* (leader of the believers) and the rest were allocated various posts, varying from judge to other positions, according to each one's abilities. They officially established their *khilaafat* and the cycle of Jihad against the English began.

The Defeat of the Akaabir-E-Deoband and the Tumultuous Conflict

A war broke out on the plains of *Shaamli* and Allah Ta'ala granted victory to the Muslims. The result of this was that the Muslims established their Khilafat (headquarters/leadership) in Shamli. Later, another battle ensued in which Hafidh Dhamin Shaheed رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ was martyred. In this second battle, the English were victorious. Shamli and Thanabawan were both bombed and these two places were totally destroyed. Following on that, the English took control of India and warrants of arrest were issued for the aforementioned personalities. On account of this, Haji Imdaadullah رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ deemed it appropriate to migrate to Makkah and whilst residing there, guide the Ulama that remained behind. He felt he could mentor a movement from there for the protection of Deen in India.

The Fervour for Emulating the Sunnah Within Mawlana Qasim Nanotwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

An arrest warrant was issued for Mawlana Qasim Nanotwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. For three days, he remained in hiding. After three days, he came out of hiding. The people reminded him that there was an arrest warrant issued for him and the English were out hunting for him. But the fervour and enthusiasm present within these individuals for emulating the Sunnah was brimming. In response, he remarked that on the occasion of Hijrat (migration to Madinah from Makkah), Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ hid in the cave of Thaur for three days, but not more than three! It is for this reason that I too cannot remain in hiding for more than three days. It was entirely through the strength and might of Allah Ta'ala that he was not arrested despite the police and army chasing after him.

The English Police in Search of Mawlana Qasim Nanotwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

On one occasion, Mawlana Qasim رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was in Chhatta Masjid and a police deployment reached there to arrest him. Information had reached them that Mawlana Qasim رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was hiding in Chhatta Masjid. Mawlana Qasim رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ always lived a very simple and plain life, none could imagine that he was such a great scholar. Coincidentally, the first person the police happened to meet was none but Mawlana Qasim Nanotwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. They thus enquired, "We hear that there is a certain Mawlana Qasim Nanotwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ hiding in this Masjid." He moved two steps back from where he was standing and pointing to the spot remarked, 'he was here just a few moments ago'. The English did not pick up the clue and began searching for him 'here and there'. Mawlana Qasim Nanotwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ then quietly slipped away from there.

The Arrest of Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

From amongst the several warrant of arrests issued, one too was issued for

Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. He was arrested and forced to languish in prison for a period of six months. Because the English had no proof of crime against Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ he was released.

Prolonging His Stay in Jail Merely on Account of the Qur'an

When Mawlana Gangohi was due for release, a strange incident occurred. Mawlana had been teaching lessons of the Noble Qur'an whilst in prison. While teaching a specific individual, news of Mawlana's release reached him so the former began sobbing and lamenting, "What will happen with my Qur'an?" Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ replied, "Do not worry, so long as your Qur'an is not completed I will not leave." Thus, Mawlana only left the jail after completing his lessons of the entire Qur'an with the respected individual.

The Establishment of Darul Uloom Deoband and Other Deeni Madaaris

When Mawlana Qasim Nanotwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and other fellow companions realised that the Moghul Empire, which was the major patron of Islamic institutions of learning, had fallen apart, their concern was what would now happen to Deen in these unfavourable conditions? What would happen to the preservation of Deen? Allah Ta'ala then inspired these righteous souls to lay the foundation for Islamic institutions.

Thus, they came together and laid the foundation for Darul Uloom Deoband. Similarly, Mazaahir-ul-Uloom, Saharanpur and other Madaaris (higher institutions of learning) were established. It was also decided that the foundation for many such Madaaris should be established throughout. Furthermore, no aid should be taken from the government of the time or any major organisation for that matter. This initiative should take place entirely placing trust on Allah. Thus, the groundwork for these establishments materialised based on their trust and reliance on Allah.

Worldwide Propagation of Deen

On the one hand, the cycle of the *Khanqahs* began whilst on the other, the Tablighi effort began spreading. The reviver of this latter effort was Mawlana Ilyas Kandhelvi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, who was an illustrious student of Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ and the *Khalifah* of Shaykh Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri رَحِمَهُ اللهُ. This effort began without any material means. It was not in anyone's wild imagination that this effort would eventually spread throughout the four corners of the globe. But the world noticed for themselves that all these efforts, in spite of no noteworthy material means, were inspired by Allāh and flourished under His direct aid and assistance. These Islamic establishments were not only set up in India, but the students of these frontrunners spread these throughout the world. Through the efforts of these luminaries, khanqahs were established in all four corners of the globe, and the effort of da'wat and tabligh too became global. By the grace of Allah, on a daily basis, let alone hundreds of thousands, rather millions are busy serving this effort with jamaats working in every area and country. The result of these endeavours is that we see these forms of Islaam and Imaan established. Today, the forces against Islam are attempting to infiltrate these Madaaris and the Tablighi effort using a wide array of schemes to attack these. The reason for this is that they understand that these Madaaris and the Tableeghi movement are means for the preservation of Islaam. They thus remain relentless in spreading negative propaganda against these efforts. This is something you are all aware of. Nonetheless! It is in this manner that the Madaaris were established by these great luminaries.

The Catastrophic and Tragic Partitioning of India

On the one hand, the control of the British ended and a time came when the Hindus and Muslims joined hands and kicked them out. What followed later was the partitioning of India and Pakistan. This was such a turbulent time in the history of India, unlike anything seen before. For the Muslims too, never did they experience such a tragedy as this before. History bears testimony to

such a day and predicament that the ears cannot bear to hear and neither can mention be made of it.

India was divided and the Muslims left massive properties and homes and migrated. They sold off valuable properties at bargain prices and headed off to Pakistan. On the other hand, they were being slaughtered and martyred like animals; by trainloads, in rivers and lakes and at every place. They possessed dreams of settling in the Islamic land of Pakistan and thus left India. However, before the materialisation of their dreams they were being butchered to death. Muslims were murdered in droves. In several places, their entire villages were torched.

The Courageous Approach of the Ulama of India

In such tumultuous times what would happen to the Muslims that remained behind? What would happen to Islam? What would happen to these Madaaris (higher Islamic institutes of learning) of ours? Our elders and guides took such bold and righteous steps that history can never forget; and the truth is that these measures taken were pure guidance from Allah upon the Muslims. They resolved to remain behind to protect the Madaaris, Masaajid, Khanqahs and the effort of Da'wat and Tableegh, in fact, Islam as a whole, whilst standing firm to console the Muslims.

How dangerous times these were indeed! Just imagine when trainloads of Muslims were being slaughtered and in every locality, Hindus were committing atrocities against Muslims and butchering them, what would have been the level of fear amongst the Muslims?

The following took the lead in these discussions; Shaikh-ul-Islam, Mawlana Hussain Ahmad Madani رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, Mawlana Abdul Qadir Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللهُ and Shaikh-ul-Hadith Mawlana Zakariyya Kandhelwi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ. They gathered at one place and discussed what needed to be done in such unfavourable conditions.

The Desire of Mawlana Abdul Qadir Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ to Relocate to Pakistan and the Amazing and Enthusiastic Response of Mawlana Hussain Ahmad Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

Mawlana Abdul Qadir Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, who otherwise was a mountain of integrity and calmness, staggered and felt helpless during this delicate and sensitive period. He stated that the majority of those linked to his senior, Mawlana Abdur-Rahim Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ were residents of Punjab, and the major portion of Punjab had now fallen under Pakistani territory. Furthermore, nearly all of those linked to him had migrated to Pakistan and they too had insisted that he join them. Fearing that they would be hardly anyone there to chant 'Allah', 'Allah' (and run the Khanqah - reformation and spiritual gathering), and none to 'put a hand over their heads' (support and guide them), they would lose courage. At this, Shaykh-ul Islam رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ went into overzealous drive and responded, "My home is Madina; my brother and nephew reside there, both of whom insist that I should come over, but I cannot leave the Indian Muslims and do that. My heart does not possibly permit me to leave the Indian Muslims and migrate. He who is able to sacrifice his Deen, Imaan, life and wealth for the Muslims should remain behind. As for he who is unable to, let him very enthusiastically leave."

The Resolve of These Three Stalwarts to Remain Behind

When Shaikh-ul-Islam رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ uttered these words, pin-drop silence overcame all those present. At this, Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ immediately remarked, "I am with you - I am with *Hadhrat*." Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ repeated these words and this resulted in a flash of happiness on the face of Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. Mawlana Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ then added, "My words were not decisive, but dependent on consultation, if it is your opinion to remain behind, then I too will stay behind."

Thus, these three stalwarts united on one view to remain behind. On the

other end, the elders of the effort of Tabligh too followed suit since they were under the guidance of the aforementioned. In summary, they all agreed that regardless of the conditions prevailing, they would remain behind.

Just reflect for a moment! It certainly was no easy task for Muslims to continue residing in this land and neither was the protection of the Madaaris, Masaajid and the Muslims a simple task. This undoubtedly was not the work of those lacking courage. In spite of this, these luminaries made the ultimate decision.

The news of their resolve spread throughout India and this served to strengthen the Muslims. Those who had fastened their belongings and resolved to leave then untied their belongings; those who had locked their doors opened their doors and sat with ease.

The Many Favours of Shaikh-ul-Islam, Mawlana Hussain Ahmad Madani رَحِمَهُ اللهُ Upon the Muslims of India

On the one hand, Mawlana Abdul Qadir Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللهُ began writing letters to his disciples; Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللهُ began doing the same with his disciples and those connected to him, whilst Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللهُ began a strenuous travel schedule from village to village and from city to city. In the morning, he would be in one place and by evening, he would be elsewhere. He would visit house to house, village to village, thereby strengthening the courage of the Muslims. He would boost their courage with words such as, "Why fear, you have to remain here; do not attack anyone but should you be attacked, then hit them so hard that they remember their breastfeeding days!" In this manner, Shaikh-ul-Islam, Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللهُ delivered talks.

The result of these efforts was that the Muslims of India developed courage once again and firmly resolved that in these conditions too, they would reside in India. Thus, the Muslims restarted their second lease of life in India.

The Shaytaani Ploy of Spreading Apostasy Among the Muslims

When the English arrived in this land and eventually established their authority, they resolved to spread Christianity throughout India. On the other hand, the Hindus too decided that they would convert every Muslim living in this land to Hinduism. The result of this was that the 'debating market' became heated. The *Pandits* (Hindu priests) stepped into 'the arena' and began holding debates in several places. They incited poor and weak Muslims to embrace Hinduism. The English left no stone unturned and spread their priests all over India in order to turn the Muslim masses away from Islam. Taking advantage of the delicate nature prevailing at the time, they felt that it would be easy to attract Muslims to leave the fold of Islam. Thus, they too took to debating.

If in some place the Christian priests were holding debates, in others the Hindus were doing the same thing. May Allah Ta'ala reward the Ulama of Deoband abundantly for just as they had resolved to take care of other matters, so too did they take up debating and produced responses that silenced the opposition. Wherever they heard that any Hindu priest or Christian priest is headed for a debate, the likes of Mawlana Qasim Nanotwi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ would promptly avail themselves there too. In these circumstances, they would debate them and emphatically silence them. The result of this was that by the Grace of Allah, the Muslims grew in courage and stood firm on Deen. The Hindu and Christian priests were thus unsuccessful in their efforts.

After this, the caravan continued and in these conditions they initiated Darul Uloom Deoband, Mazaahir-e-Uloom Saharanpur and many other Madaaris, not to mention the Tablighi Markaz. These luminaries displayed such piety, chaste and pure habits that to find such an example and match throughout the course of history after the illustrious Sahabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ would be difficult. These stalwarts underwent such sacrifices that are difficult for us to even fathom today.

Mawlana Qasim Nanotwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ Instructing His Wife to Spend All Her Jewellery in the Path of Allah

Hereby is a glimpse from the life of Mawlana Nanotwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ; he married and his wife promptly left her home and came to reside with him. She was the daughter of a very wealthy man. She came into his house with much of her own valuable belongings and jewellery. Mawlana Nanotwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ met his wife on the first night and requested her thus, "You are the daughter of a wealthy man but I am a very poor person and for the husband and wife to possess compatibility may only materialise when both are equal. For me to become rich is not possible and for you to become poor is possible; therefore I propose that you hand over the jewellery, belongings brought as *jahez* (bridal dowry given to the groom by the bride's family) and cash you were sent with." This dignified and righteous wife complied by handing over all her jewellery, her valuable belongings and handed it over to her husband.

This was during the severe decline of the Ottoman Empire. It is for this reason that collections were made all over to keep the Empire afloat. Mawlana Nanotwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ handed over a good part of the jewellery, belongings and cash towards the Ottoman's cause and some towards the foundation of Darul Uloom Deoband.

Several days after that, Mawlana Nanotwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ's wife happened to visit her parents' home. The father noticed that his daughter had no jewellery on her. He enquired, "What happened to the jewellery?" The daughter recounted the entire incident. Because the father was wealthy, he replaced what was given out. She then returned to Mawlana Nanotwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ with all the jewellery and belongings. Mawlana Nanotwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ repeated his appeal, "For our compatibility it is necessary that we are equal. And, it is not possible for me to be equal in wealth like you. However! It is easier for you to hand over all this wealth and become poor like me."

Hence, the wife repeated what she did the first time and Mawlana Nanotwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ channelled the funds as before.

The History Pertaining to the Home of Mawlana Qasim Nanotwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

Now when his father-in-law observed the life of Mawlana Nanotwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ he came to realise that his temperament was one of inclination to poverty and difficulty. 'This is an individual who follows in the footsteps of the Sahabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and he does not prefer to hold in his possession the least bit of wealth. Regardless of how much he is given, he will spend it in the various causes of Deen in emulation of Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ'.

Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ came forth with all his wealth and placed it before Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Mawlana Qasim رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ too was a living example of the same spirit; hence he would continue spending his wealth in charitable and other Deeni causes. The next time, his father-in-law did not grant his daughter jewellery and other property but built for her a house; surely he would not sell off the house and leave. This became the home of Mawlana Nanotwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and his progeny that followed, with the likes of Hafidh Muhammad Ahmad رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and later, Qari Muhammad Tayyib رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ all residing in this very home. In fact, to this day the family continues occupying the home.

Has anyone witnessed such fervour for sacrifice since the era of the Sahabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, where one was prepared to part with literally every penny of his wealth for the cause of Deen? These were those luminaries on account of whom the cycle of Madaaris continued and the Muslims were greatly strengthened.

These were those mountains of discipline that even the slightest divergence off the Sunnah was unbearable to them. It was totally intolerable for them to omit any Sunnah in their lives. These personalities were prime examples of 'walking the talk'.

The Incident Related to the bay'at of Haji Imdaadullah Muhaajir Makki رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ

Haji Imdaadullah Muhaajir Makki رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ was himself such a lofty and distinguished saint. What phenomenal rank and status he possessed indeed! Nabi صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ held the hand of Haji Imdaadullah رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ and placed it in the hands of another saint. Haji Sahib awoke and thought to himself who could this saintly one be in whose hand Nabi صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ placed my hand in, and through whom I am to acquire distinction.

A Brief Description of the Personality of Mufti Ilaahi Baksh رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ

Haji Imdaadullah Muhaajir Makki رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ studied *Mathnawi Shareef* at the hands of Mawlana Muhammad Qalandar Muhaddith Jalalabadi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ. He also studied some Hadith by him. Mawlana Muhammad Qalandar رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ was a student of Mufti Ilaahi Bakhsh رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ, and the latter was a student of Mawlana Shah Abdul Aziz Dehlawi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ. Mufti Ilaahi Baksh رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ was such a distinguished student of Shah Abdul Aziz رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ that after his studies, he was kept behind by his teacher to acquire distinction in the various branches. Shah Abdul Aziz رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ then taught him the art of delivering lessons and Iftaa (issuing juristic verdicts). His desire was for Mufti Ilaahi Bakhsh رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ to attain distinction in every discipline. Eventually, Mufti Ilaahi Bakhsh رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ would conduct lessons and issue juristic verdicts whilst in the service of Shah Abdul Aziz رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ. It is in this manner that he attained excellency in the various fields.

The Mathnawi Sharif and its Completion

Spiritually, Mufti Aashiq Ilaahi Bakhsh رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ held a lofty position. This may be understood from the fact that it is he who completed the *Mathnawi*. The Mathnawi, which is a unique book on the brimming love for Allah, has always been in the study of our elders. It is filled with the igniting fire of the divine

love and recognition of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. Whosoever recites it finds his heart enamoured with the love for Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. But Allamah Rumi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, in whose heart this book was inspired, halted at a certain spot; the inspirational words ceased so he too lifted his pen. Allamah Rumi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ then declared that after his passing, an individual will arise who will do the finishing touches. Mufti Ilaahi Bakhsh رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ commenced and duly completed the Mathnawi from precisely where Allamah Rumi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ had halted.

The Status of Mawlana Muhammad Qalandar رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, the Muhaddith of Jalalabad

The student of the author of Mathnawi was Mawlana Muhammad Qalandar رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, and his student was none other than Haji Imdaadullah Muhaajir Makki رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. Mawlana Muhammad Qalandar رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was one of those extremely fortunate saintly figures who not only dreamt of Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. but he would visit Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ in his wakeful state too. This was how great and lofty a scholar and saint Mawlana Muhammad Qalandar رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, the Muhaddith of Jalalabad was.

The Outcome of Being Harsh on the Students of Deen

Nonetheless, once he slapped a student of Deen, the result being that the cycle of seeing Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ in his wakeful state ceased temporarily. On account of this, he became extremely perturbed and uneasy. He thus continued begging Allah for forgiveness and visiting the righteous and Mashaaikh, but to no avail.

This uneasy and perturbed state led to him travelling to Madinah. He met the pious of Madinah until eventually it was suggested to him to visit a *majzubaa* (an ascetic woman) who had been granted a lofty spiritual state. He was told to make mention of the condition that had overcome him. It is possible that his objective would be fulfilled.

Accordingly, he approached the woman and expressed the cause for his uneas-

iness. She spontaneously remarked, 'look in front of you'; Nabi صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was before him. There he was, in the presence of Nabi صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and his previous spiritual ecstatic state was restored. That was the rank of Mawlana Muhammad Qalandar Jalalabad رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, the saintly one.

He was after all the teacher of Haji Imdaadullah Muhaajir Makki رَحِمَهُ اللهُ. When Haji Sahib witnessed a dream in which Nabi صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was grabbing his hands and handing it over to a saintly one, he related this dream to Mawlana Muhammad Qalandar رَحِمَهُ اللهُ. His response was, "Haji Sahib, you are moving helter-skelter and getting hit from pillar to post, at least go visit Lohari too."

Haji Imdaadullah in the Service of Miyaaji Noor Muhammad رَحِمَهُ اللهُ

Thus, he immediately left for Lohari. Miyaaji رَحِمَهُ اللهُ resided in Lohari at the time. He would teach children in a small Masjid. His name Miyaaji رَحِمَهُ اللهُ may have sounded plain, but his rank was lofty indeed. When Haji Imdaadullah رَحِمَهُ اللهُ's gaze fell on the shoes of Miyaaji رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, he at once realised that this was indeed that saintly one. In the dream, the latter had donned shoes of this type. When he entered, he immediately recognised him from his face and fell to his feet. Miyaaji picked him up and embraced him with the words, "Miyaaji رَحِمَهُ اللهُ (addressing Haji Imdaadullah رَحِمَهُ اللهُ), you have great trust on your dream." This was the first of his Karaamaat (supernatural feats) that occurred.

Haji Imdaadullah رَحِمَهُ اللهُ later became the Sheikh of the Mashaaikh. He was after all the Sheikh of Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, Mawlana Muhammad Qasim Nanotwi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ and other Mashaaikh, yet to attain perfection and distinction he is being handed over to Miyaaji Noor Muhammad رَحِمَهُ اللهُ. The latter may have been a mere Miyaaji رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, but his rank and acceptance in the sight of Allah was such that he did not miss a single Takbeer-e-Ula (Salaah with Jama'ah in the Masjid with the first Takbeer) for forty years.

Haji Imdaadullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ's Attachment with Salaah

By means of Haji Imdaadullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, Salaah in congregation and strict adherence to the Sunnah became a dominant feature in all our pious elders. What was the attachment of Haji Imdaadullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ with Salaah? Reflect over the following; Haji Imdaadullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ himself says, "If Allah Ta'ala forgives me on the day of judgement, I will make the following request, 'O My Nourisher! Grant me a place sufficient for placing one *Musalla* (prayer mat) under your throne'. I would then make intention for two rakaats of Salaah and commence." Now just imagine! What deep relation he had with Salaah that despite his admittance to Jannah, he possessed the desire to be permitted to perform two rakaats of Salaah under the throne of Allah.

Supplicate to Allah That He Raises Us with Eyesight

It was the very same Haji Imdaadullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, who in a letter addressed to Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ requests the latter to supplicate to Allah to raise him with eyesight. His eyesight was intact, so what did he imply? In between the lines, he clarified, "That Allah favours me with the ability to see Him". In other words, supplicate that Allah Ta'ala permits us to witness His Countenance.

Imagine what would have been his connection with Allah Ta'ala? Imagine the link he had with the beloved of Allah, Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Later, the very same spiritual state overcame Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and other saintly ones.

The Three Prominent and Famous Khulafa (Successors) of Miyaaji رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

Haji Imdaadullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was granted Ijaazat (permission) from Miyaaji Noor Muhammad رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. Later Mawlana Muhammad Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and Hafidh Dhaamin Shaheed رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ were granted Khilaafat too. These were the three

luminaries who then established and ran *Khanqah Imdaadiyya*, which later became the khanqah of Hakim-ul-Ummah Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ His oceans of knowledge were then spread from there.

These three personalities would be present in this Khanqah at one and the same time. They were all Khulafaa (vicegerents/successors) of one Sheikh. Throughout the annuls of history, it would be difficult to find three such great elders residing in one place at the same time, yet possess such love for one another. They were known as the three *Qutubs*. They were the Qutubs of their time and their Khanqah was known as the 'shop of Ma'rifah of Allah'. In other words, the recognition of Allah was sold here.

They not only resided in one place, they even jointly hosted incoming visitors. Furthermore, the incoming visitor would pledge (take bay'at) at the hands of whomsoever he was inclined to. They interacted with one another in such a manner that to find an example the like-thereof after the illustrious Sahabah رَضِيَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُمْ would be difficult indeed. Probably the world would not have seen such.

If You Desire to Smoke Hookah Then Sit by Your Mates

So much so, that when the three would get together on Thursday and the normal cycle of visitors being hosted continued, Hafidh Dhaamin Shaheed رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ would be sitting outside. When outsiders would enter, they had at their disposal Hookah to refreshen themselves. When anyone would approach, Hafidh Dhaamin Shaheed رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ would state, "Look, if you intend on taking *bay'at* (pledging at the hands of any Sheikh) then Haji Sahib is seated there; if you wish to enquire about any *mas'ala* (juristic issue) then there is Mawlana Muhammad Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ; and if you wish to smoke Hookah then sit with your mates' (implying himself)." What humility! What servitude!

An example of the heartfelt friendship and bond between the three that was nothing short of a sample of Jannah

It is in this manner that the three resided with one another and played host to their guests. The three would sit and partake of the leftover sweets and other foodstuff from Thursday. When a small quantity would remain, then one of them would pick it up and take off with the words, "Enough brothers, I am not going to share anymore with any of you." The two would then chase after him whilst he attempted to conceal himself and partake of it.

In describing the condition of the people of Jannah, Allah Ta'ala says,

يَتَنَٰزَعُونَ فِيهَا كَأۡسٗا لَّا لَغۡوٞ فِيهَا وَلَا تَأۡثِيمٞ ٢٣

They will snatch from one another (in a friendly manner) a glass (of wine) carrying neither absurd talk, nor something leading to sin. (52:23)

But in this instance, these were examples of the living, living with such love and compassion. They were the three *Qutub*, so selfless, what humility and servitude indeed!

Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ in the Service of Haji Imdaadullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

The spiritual reformation of Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ materialised at the hands of Imdaadullah Sahib رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ came for another objective, intending to stay for a day or two, but he ended up taking bay'at at his hands. Haji Imdaadullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ ordered him to stay behind for forty days. But, Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ thought that it would not be appropriate for him to burden Haji Imdaadullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ with food arrangements. Haji Imdaadullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ got wind of the thought and immediately remarked, "Do not worry about food, you will eat with us."

When Haji Imdaadullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ himself mentioned, then what more could be said? Thus, he began partaking of meals with him.

Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and Haji Imdaadullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ on One Eating Mat

But these personalities are tested too. They sit for meals; you have Haji Imdaadullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and Mawlana Rashid Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ with two dishes; in one there is *Kofta* whilst the other is filled with plain soup. On the other side, you have Hafidh Dhaamin Shaheed رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ making his way to the eating mat. What relaxed and uncomplicated relation they had with one another! What love indeed! Hafidh Dhaamin رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ remarked, 'O yes, the Shaikh and Mureed are enjoying a meal together!' When he nears the eating mat he glances at the food and immediately says, "Miyaaji (referring the Haji Imdaadullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ), you have placed the dish of Kofta close to you and the soup dish close to Rashid Ahmad, move the Kofta dish closer, otherwise it will be difficult for the hands of Mawlana Rashid to reach it."

Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ Being Tested

Haji Imdaadullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ intended on testing Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, whereas he himself had permitted him to eat with them. Haji Sahib then made a face and cheekily said, 'I actually wanted to hand you just some roti like a beggar so that you can sit in one corner and eat your food. It is but our favour upon you that we have permitted you to partake of meals with us. Whilst saying these words, he gazed up at the face of Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, but no change appeared on his face. In an evil ego, love for fame is present, but here it was already controlled. He had already eliminated it prior to this, hence the cycle of pride and arrogance was not at all present. Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ says that I was absolutely certain that what Haji Imdaadullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ had stated was absolutely true. In such blessed company to receive even dry roti (asian

equivalent of bread) was a great blessing indeed, let alone Haji Imdaadullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ permitting me to sit in his company. It was for this reason that there was no effect on my heart. What effect could there be possibly be on my face?

Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ being honoured with Khilafat and Ijaazat - being permitted to initiate others in bay'at

Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ states that Haji Imdaadullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ only tested him this once and never again. *'That is why I did not really derive benefit after that'*, he would humbly remark. What humility! What servitude!

He resided there for a period of forty days. Upon his departure, he was bestowed with Khilafat. He was also permitted to initiate others in bay'at.

A few revolutionary personalities produced under the guidance of Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

The humility and selflessness present in Haji Imdaadullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was a trait not only present in him but in all the three Qutubs. Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ became a prime example of this. Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was an expert scholar of Hadith in his time. In order to understand his rank, this may be gauged from the calibre of the scholars he produced. On the one hand, you have Sheikh-ul Hind, Mawlana Mahmood Hasan رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ whilst on the other the likes of Allamah Anwar Shah Kashmiri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, Mawlana Shah Abdur-Rahim Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, Mawlana Syed Hussain Ahmad Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, Mawlana Ilyas Kandhelwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, Mawlana Yahya Kandhelwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, etc. were produced. These were such scholars who were revolutionaries of their time, so much so, that people today are even baffled at their achievements.

For instance, take a look at the sacrifices of Mawlana Ilyas Kandhelwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and

the resultant incredible feats. One man achieved such results not matched by major governments and powers. This was the Allah-fearing personality who was the product of Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ.

An incident related to the selflessness of Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

Reflect over the level of selflessness, humility and servitude present within Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. The lesson is in full swing; the rain begins to pour in the courtyard so the students all collect their books and make a hasty retreat but Mawlana, who was the *Qutb-ul-Aqtaab* (holder of a lofty spiritual state) and such a prominent Hadith scholar, gathers the shoes of the students and places them in his shawl and brings them in. The students were concerned about their books whilst Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ gathers their shoes and places them in his shawl and takes them in.

Today, can someone even imagine a teacher carrying the shoes of his student? Nowadays, we are not willing to carry our own shoes; we look for a student and if there is none present, then we call out to someone else to carry our shoes. What a great personality Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was! What an erudite scholar and expert of Hadith he was, yet reflect over his selflessness, servitude and humility!

Receiving certificate of authority to issue Fatwa (juristic verdicts)

On the other hand, what is the rank of Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ? And in the sight of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and His Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ what is his status? He sees in a dream that Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is putting him up on his *Mimbar* (pulpit) and Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is himself standing beside him. Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ then poses to him a total of one hundred questions to which Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ responded to, all according to the Hanafi school of thought. After doing so, Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

expresses his satisfaction and grants him a certificate of Iftaa (issuing juristic verdicts) with the words, "I now grant you permission to issue juristic verdicts."

The Unique Words of One Saintly Figure in Respect to the Deep Understanding of Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

Mawlana Shah Abdur-Raheem Saharanpuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was a saintly figure. He was unlettered, but the strength of his manifestations and deep meditation were such that he was able to ascertain the inner condition of all his disciples. In the morning, he would then get someone to write them letters saying, "O my moon (out of affection), avoid the act you are involved in." 'O my moon' was his takya (phrase habitually introduced into speech).

The level of his *kashf* (manifestation) and Karaamat (miracles) were such that an informer appears and states, "Hadhrat (title of affection), 'the pot of sorcery' is making its way" to which he replies, "some of the servants of Allah are such that even if they were to indicate with their fingers 'that come down here', that is precisely what would happen". He then indicates and true to the word it comes down. He then further states that if they were to indicate with their fingers saying, 'return from where you came, it would at once return'. No sooner does he indicate and it returns.

This is the level of a saint Mawlana was. Someone enquired from him about the fatwas (juristic verdicts) of Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, to which he replied, "You enquire from me about the fatwas of Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ? His pen moves looking at the throne of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, yet you ask me about his fatwas?"

Another Saintly Figure commenting on the deep understanding of Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

The 'shadow of trust', Shah Majzoob Pani-Patti رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was a saintly figure of

lofty status. He too was unlettered, but the incidents related to his *kashf* (manifestations) and *Karaamat* (miracles) were unique. Someone approached him and enquired about the fatwas (juristic verdicts) of Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. His reply was, "You enquire about the fatwa of Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ? I see him as being one worthy of issuing verdicts in the gathering of Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ."[1]

After 22 years my Takbeer-e-Ula was missed

Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ's attachment to the Sunnah of Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was such that on the occasion of a Jalsa in Deoband, there was a little delay in the *Musaafaha* (handshaking process) and by then, the Salaah had commenced. When he arrived for the Salaah, his Takbeer-e-Ula was missed. The Imaam had already commenced his Salah. After Salaah the people noticed great uneasiness and grief on the face of Mawlana. One of his attendants enquired, "Mawlana! What is it that has transpired that you look so aggrieved?" He replied, "Today, after 22 years I missed my Takbeer-e-Ula."

The Caravan of the Sahabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ advanced and he lagged a little behind

These personalities certainly exemplified the Noble Companions of Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ It is indeed difficult to find examples of this nature in history. Those who commented in this respect commented correctly. Mawlana Shah Ataa-ullah Bukhari رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ states in relation to the student of Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, Allamah Anwar Shah Kashmiri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, "The caravan of the Sahabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ advanced, with him lagging a little behind."

This is a true and ample description of every one of the elders of Deoband.

1 This does not imply in any way that a saint can possess greater rank or knowledge than the Sahabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ who remained in the company of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, but it merely denotes the lofty saintly status of Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. - Translator

They may not have been Sahabah but they did indeed tread the path of the Sahabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ. They did not tolerate veering off even minutely from the path of the Sahabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ. They adopted for themselves the path which epitomised the practical lifestyle of the Sahabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, and they typically exemplified it by sacrificing their entire lives in the process.

The Standpoint of Allamah Iqbal رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ on Allamah Anwar Shah Kashmiri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

Allamah Iqbal رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ once stated in respect to Allamah Anwar Shah Kashmiri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, "The last four centuries has seen the world helpless in producing an example like Allamah Anwar." To make mention of the life history of each of our elders of Deoband requires a considerate portion of time.

Some distinct achievements of Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, who was a distinguished student, disciple and successor of Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, authored *Bazl-ul-Majhood*, the commentary of Abu Dawood. This commentary was a typical sample of the commentaries of earlier times. Furthermore, he produced such illustrious personalities the likes of Shaikh-ul-Hadith Mawlana Zakariyya Kandhelvi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ.

Some distinct achievements of Mawlana Zafar Ahmad Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ once journeyed to Hajj in the company of Mawlana Zafar Ahmad Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, the author of *E'laaus-Sunan* and nephew and Khalifah of Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. He was also the Khalifah of Mawlana Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. In order to understand his lofty rank and status, mention of *Al-E'laaus-Sunan* is

sufficient, which is a phenomenal achievement on his part.

Who is it that has entered the Haram resulting in the Haram becoming entirely radiant

Mawlana Zafar Ahmad Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was seated next to Mawlana Muhibbud-Deen رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. The latter was the senior and distinguished Khalifah of Haji Imdaadullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. He was sitting facing the direction of Safaa whilst reciting the book, *Dalaa'il ul Khayraat* with his gaze lowered. He lifted his gaze slightly and enquires, "Mawlana Zafar, who is it that has entered thereby illuminating the entire Haram?" He then at once continued with his recitation.

At the same time, Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was engrossed in the observance of Tawaaf. After completing his Tawaaf, he passed by where Mawlana Muhibbud-Deen رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and Mawlana Zafar Ahmad Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ were seated. He observed *Musaafaha* (handshake) with the two and they too got up and in turn observed *mu'aanaqa* (neck embrace) with him. Mawlana Muhibbud-Deen رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ then remarked, "I say that who is it that has entered the Haram! Who is it that has entered the Haram!" (referring to Mawlana Saharanpuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ).

Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was an embodiment of Noor (spiritual effulgence and light)

Mawlana Khalil رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ proceeds to perform the Sa'ee and Mawlana Muhibbud-Deen رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ remarks, "Mawlana Zafar! Mawlana Khalil is an embodiment of Noor (spiritual light) in its entirety; he is nothing but noor. When he then faces the Ka'aba (Baytullah) in *muraaqaba* (meditation), such noor (spiritual effulgence) showers down upon his heart that in spite of being able to observe the mid-day sun, I was unable to handle the radiance that was raining down

upon his heart. I had heard that Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was *Qutbu-ul Irshaad* (a title denoting lofty spiritual heights) and now looking at these personalities, I am absolutely certain that he was indeed *Qutbu-ul Irshaad*. Having prepared such luminaries, there is no doubting that he certainly was."

The hunger and poverty of Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

The rank of Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was indeed lofty but in his home there was poverty and need.

On one occasion, a student approached the attendant of Mawlana Khalil رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and complained that, 'today the gravy of the kitchen is rather ordinary, could you give me some of Mawlana's gravy to partake of as I am unable to eat the gravy of the kitchen today'. The attendant replied that there was no gravy in Mawlana's home that day. The student remained adamant in his request. He felt that in the home of such a great Sheikh-ul-Mashaaikh there certainly would be gravy and therefore persisted with his demand. The attendant was then forced to reveal that there was indeed poverty in the home of Mawlana. Upon hearing this, the student broke down in tears. He then requested permission to go and purchase some food from the market for Mawlana to partake of. The attendant in turn grabbed the feet of the student and exclaimed, "For Allah's sake, do not do that and do not even reveal this matter to anyone, or else Qiyamah will descend upon me as to why I disclosed the secrets of the home."

The level of precaution of Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ in respect to the wealth of Awqaaf (charitable endowments)

What was his level of caution in respect to the money and wealth of the Madrasah? The very same Mawlana Khalil رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was delivering a lesson of Hadith whilst seated on the carpet when suddenly someone from the home entered to

consult for some matter. Hadhrat (title of respect)! I require your consultation on a matter. No sooner does Mawlana Khalil رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ hear these words that he immediately gets up from the carpet and steps away. The person exclaims, "Hadhrat, I just need a minute, you may respond whilst seated on your place." Then too, Mawlana Khalil رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ left his place and sat beside it on an ordinary carpet. He then listened to the words and advised him accordingly. The person persistent, enquired again, "I just required to ask something small, why did you not respond from there?" What response did he give? What great personalities they were! He remarked that this carpet was given to me to teach Hadith and not to speak with friends on. It is for this reason that even just to advise you I got up from the carpet and went aside.

Handing over money to the institute for heating his gravy with the left over coal

Mawlana Yahya Kandhelwi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ would suffice on rather ordinary gravy. He would never take a wage from the Madrasah. At most, he would make use of the left over coal from the Madrasah kitchen to heat up his gravy. It was obviously no expense on the Madrasah. Despite that, at the end of each month he would hand over to the Madrasah a certain amount of money saying, "I made use of the coal of the institute." What great luminaries they were! What examples Allah Ta'ala sent for the world.

The unique independent nature of Sheikh-ul-Hadith Mawlana Zakariyya Kandhelvi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ

His son, Sheikh-ul-Hadith Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ would initially accept a meagre wage from the Madrasah. After some time, he began returning the sum to the institute. Eventually, a time came when he would not accept a wage from the institute at all. The unique degree of his punctuality in delivering lessons and serving the Deen is simply unimaginable today.

When massive offers were being made to him and people were inviting him to their institutes in lieu of hectic wages, he had only one response on his tongue,

'We do not know how to live on the favours of others'

I do not wish to live as a servant of another due to his favours upon me. With such poverty, these individuals remained content.

The Rank of Sheikh-ul-Hadith Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

Whoever had seen Sheikh-ul-Hadith Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, like some in our midst, would know that the place he called home in which he resided his entire life was such that the three walls next to his room did not belong to him. The one behind him, the one on the right and the third wall too, belonged to someone else. On the third wall, there were metal beams closely placed on which was a curtain. This is the room where his bed lay on which the Qutbu-ul Aqtaab (title denoting lofty spiritual status) and the Sheikh-ul Mashaikh of his time spent his entire life. It is here that the great scholars of his time would pay him visits. In these quarters, the senior members of the Tableegh effort and the scholars of Nadwat-ul Uloom and Darul Uloom Deoband seminaries would visit. That was the level of love that they possessed for one another. Whilst sitting there, he would accomplish all his works, whereas he did not even own the home he resided in. What level of disinclination to the world Allah Ta'ala granted these personalities! What level of conviction Allah Ta'ala granted these luminaries! This was precisely the condition of all these great saintly ones.

What can we say of the level of love and affection that they maintained for one another! It seems as if such affection ended with their departure from the world. The humility and servitude; the love and affection between one another, what can we say!

The honour and respect that Mawlana Hussain Ahmad Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and Mawlana Ilyas possessed for one another

Sheikh-ul-Islam, Mawlana Hussain Ahmad Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and Mawlana Muhammad Ilyas رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ shared great respect for one another. What was the level of honour they accorded one another? Coincidentally, a Tablighi Ijtima was scheduled for a certain locality and unbeknown to Mawlana Ilyas رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, a gathering for the Jami'at-ul Ulama too happened to be convened for the same locality. None of the two seniors were informed prior that the two gatherings were simultaneously decided for the same area. Sheikh-ul-Islam Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was unaware that Mawlana Ilyas رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was to hold a gathering in the area and Mawlana Ilyas رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ on the other hand was unaware that Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and the Jami'at ul Ulama were scheduled to convene. Both arrived at their respective times for their respective programs. When Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ became aware that there was a Tablighi gathering in the area, he averred 'you have erred by deciding for a Jami'at ul Ulama session here'. Hence, he postponed his seminar and instructed all members to join the Tablighi Ijtima, with him following suit.

أولَئِكَ آبَائي فَجِئْنِي بِمِثْلِهِمْ.
إذا جَمَعَتنا يا جَرِيرُ المَجَامِعُ.
-الفرزدق

These are our forefathers, therefore bring forth a match to me,
If we ever gather, O Jareer, in gatherings.
— AL FARAZDAQ (POET)

On the other hand, when Mawlana Ilyas رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ arrived for the Tablighi Ijtima he was notified that there was a meeting convened for the Jami'at ul Ulama in the same area. He remarked that, 'we have erred' and he announced that the Ijtima should be postponed and all should make their way to the speech

of Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. The result of this was that both gatherings were cancelled. But they both left behind a unique example of trust, bond and love for one another. They were examples of how those working can efficiently operate in a loving and affectionate manner.

Hakim-ul-Ummah Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ - a distinguished personality

The very same Sheikh-ul-Islam, Mawlana Hussain Ahmad Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and Hakim-ul-Ummah, Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ were both great Ulama of their time. What was the rank of the two? Truly speaking, we do not have the capacity to understand the true calibre of Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. He left behind a library full of books for the Ummah. This courageous and gallant individual sat in a plain and simple surrounding and authored more than a thousand books. Today, droves of people are busy writing explanatory notes on these. There are libraries and separate bodies dedicated to compiling his works. Imagine, this was just one individual and yet he departed the world after such lofty achievements.

The bond and love between Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

Hakim-ul-Ummah, Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and Sheikh-ul-Islam, Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ possessed differences of opinion; one supported the Muslim League Party whilst the other was a supporter of the Congress Party. The two parties were at loggerheads and having a go at each other, but what was the relation of the two with one another? There were those looking to fan the flames of hatred between the two, but whenever the opportunity arose the very same Sheikh-ul-Islam would unhesitatingly pay a visit to Thanabawan.

On one occasion, he visited but by then the doors of the Khanqah had shut. He had his bedding on his head, so seeing that the doors of the Khanqah were

closed, he proceeds to the home of Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. There too, he sees the door locked and felt it disrespectful to get Mawlana to open for him.

Imagine! This is the Sheikh-ul-Islam and such a great *Muhaddith* (scholar of Hadith); a descendant of Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ What lofty rank indeed! The Syed (descendant of Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) of his time and the Sheikh-ul-Islam lifting his bedding, proceeds to the home of Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and seeing the door locked feels it is an infringement of etiquette to knock and get the door opened. He then spreads his bedding and sleeps right there by the entrance. Before the Tahajjud Salah, Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ awakens and upon seeing Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ enquires, "Where are you?" He responds, "Where do your rules permit a poor one to reside in the Khanqa!" This was a statement of love and he then goes on to explain what transpired the night before.

Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ leading the Salah in Khanqa Imdaadiyyah

Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ grabs the hand of Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and walks him along to his Khanqa Masjid. By then, the time for Salah had entered. Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ insists that Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ should lead the Salah. Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ refuses saying that it is possible that some may feel offended. Mawlana replies, "Whoever feels offended should offer his Salah elsewhere, you will lead the Salah." It was the day of Jumu'aah so Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ leads the Salah according to the Sunnah; in the first Raka'ah he recites Surah Sajdah and in the second he recites Surah Dahr. In Surah Sajdah some got mixed up in the performance of the Sajdah, resulting in some bickering after the Salah over whether the Salah was fulfilled or not. Someone approached Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and objected to this; Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ retorted, "Who knows on account of the blessings of this one Salah all our lives Salah may be accepted." This was the respect and honour each one showed for the other.

The Incident of the bay'at of Mawlana Abdul Majid Daryabadi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ

Mawlana Abdul Majid Daryabadi Nadwi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ, who was the Arabic linguist and grammar expert of his time requests Mawlana Hussain Ahmad Madani رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ to initiate him in bay'at. Reflect over the selflessness and servitude of these personalities! Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ refers him to Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ. He insists that he intends on taking bay'at at the hands of Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ. Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ declines and says, "Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ is our senior and my senior too; let us go, I will facilitate your bay'at at his hands."

Reflect over the servitude and selflessness of such a superb scholar who travels from Nadwa and approaches Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ for the purpose of bay'at. Mawlana himself then takes responsibility to accompany him to Thanabawan and upon reaching, he requests Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ to initiate him in bay'at.

Mawlana replies, "Okay, let us implement the following; we may divide the two, either he takes bay'at at your hands and enacts an *islahi* (reformational) link with me or vice-versa, so in this manner he may maintain a link with both of us."

Finally, it was decided that he should take bay'at the hands of Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ and his *islahi* link would take place at the hands of Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ. Hence, this is precisely what occurred.

Where on earth will you find such examples of selflessness? Where will you find such servitude and humility? This is despite the fact that they possessed major differences in their political views.

The approach of Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ with those who uttered inappropriate words for Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ

In Gangoh, there was a session of the Jami'at-ul-Ulama and someone make

some unsavoury remarks regarding Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ. Later in the same seminar, Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ, as president of the Jami'at addressed the crowd and the topic he chose was related to the achievements of Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ. His entire talk surfaced around the goodness and distinguished traits of Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ and not once did he even make mention of the Jami'at!

The response of Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ to those who spoke ill of Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ

Someone complained to Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ that Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ takes part in political meetings and he sides with the Hindus. Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ replied, "You only know of him attending political meetings and joining hands with the Hindus; you do not know of him teaching *Bukhari Shareef* till mid-night."

In spite of their political differences, this was the conduct and bond between the distinguished luminaries of their time. Their differences were indeed major, but this was the level of respect they showed one another.

You love me yet you speak ill of my Akaabir (elders)!

A certain individual approached Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ to consult him on an appropriate date for his Jalsa. It is the habit of some that when they intend on deriving benefit from another, they speak ill of those in opposition to him. Thus, the person used inappropriate words for Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ, probably thinking that he would gain acceptance in that manner. Mawlana became so enraged that probably never in his life did he express such anger and he retorted, "You love me and yet you use such words for my Akaabir?" He then instructed the person to get up and leave the Khanqah and he forbade him from residing in the Khanqah.

This was the level of respect and honour they had for one another. After the Sahabah, the world will have probably seen few examples of such conduct. We cannot say that the world did not see such, but such examples of selflessness, humility and servitude will have been far and few.

This was precisely the condition of all our Akaabir, whether it was Sheikh-ul-Islam Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ, Sheikh-ul-Hadith Mawlana Zakariyya Kandhelwi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ or Mawlana Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ; they conducted themselves in this manner.

Another example of the bond the Akaabir (elders) of Deoband shared with one another

Someone approaches Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ for the purpose of bay'at and he in turn refers the person to Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ or Mawlana Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ. In the same token, someone would approach Mawlana Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ for the same purpose and he would refer the person to Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ. Similarly, a person takes bay'at at the hands of Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ and he sends the person to Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ or Mawlana Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ for his completion.

Even a personality like our beloved Mufti Mahmood Hasan Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ was referred by Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ to go spend time in Raipur in the company of Mawlana Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ for the completion of his reformation. Mufti Mahmood Hasan Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ complies and spends a number of forty days in the company of Mawlana Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ. On other occasions, Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ refers him to Mawlana Muhammad Ilyas رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ, in whose service he ends up spending one complete month. At times, he is sent to serve Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ, whereas the latter was the teacher of Mufti Sahib.

Mufti Mahmood Hasan Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ being sent to serve Mawlana Hussain Ahmad Madani رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ

Occasionally, Sheikh-ul-Islam Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ would visit Sheikh-ul-Hadith, Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ and the latter would suggest to Mufti Hasan Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ, "Mufti Jee, today Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ is with us, spend the night with him." Mufti Mahmood would comply. He would serve him and in the morning when tea would be served, Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ would aver to Sheikh-ul-Hadith, Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ that today, I desire to present this left over tea of mine to Mufti Sahib.

What love! Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ immediately takes hold of the left over tea of Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ, takes a couple of sips and then hands over the cup to Mufti Mahmood. What love and affinity they possessed for one another!

The love that Sheikh-ul-Hadith Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ and Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ had for one another

Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ would often visit Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ. On occasions, he would arrive and say, "I am here to partake of food, do not inconvenience yourself." At times, Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ would be absent as he would be occupied with teaching and Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ would suddenly appear at home and advise the family members not to inconvenience Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ. "I have only come to partake of food, therefore send me some food as I have to leave without delay", he would request. The home would in turn send a message to Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ that Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ has come. Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ would hastily make his way home, upon which Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ would address Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ, "Your family members have placed you in difficulty; I had forbidden them from doing so since my objective was to only partake of a meal." Will you be able to find examples of such affinity and love?

You may not enter Jannah without me

On one occasion, Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ said to Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, "You cannot enter Jannah without me", to which Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ replied, "Definitely, definitely". Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ states that Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ kept this promise in mind.

On one occasion, there was a food invitation in Saharanpur and Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ happened to arrive before the meal, with Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ arriving a little late. He enquired from Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, "What was the rush for you to arrive before me?" Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ replied that the promise is not on us travelling everywhere together, it is only for the specifically promised destination. Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ remarked that I became extremely pleased that Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ had recalled his promise (of both of them entering Jannah together). What level of bond, familiarity and love existed between one another!

An interesting incident related to Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ's second marriage

Sheikh-ul-Hadith, Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ's wife passed away. Mawlana Ilyas رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ addresses him, "Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ! Marry again and if you wish I will find a girl from within the family." Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was after all the student and nephew of Mawlana Ilyas رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ who was his uncle and teacher. Sheikh-ul-Hadith, Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ responded thus, "If it is from your house then it is fine, otherwise I am not interested from anywhere else." Mawlana Ilyas رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ agreed and requested time to go home for a while and consult; if things turned out positive then he would write to Sheikh-ul-Hadith, Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ to make his way. In other words, if those from the home accepted, then the Nikah would take place. Information reached Mawlana Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ that Mawlana Ilyas رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ is making arrangements for the Nikah of Sheikh-ul-Hadith, Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, and upon Sheikh-

ul-Hadith Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ being notified, he would secretly leave for the Nikah without informing anyone.

The letter writer of Sheikh-ul-Hadith, Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ also had a link with Mawlana Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. Thus, Mawlana Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ requested him to inform him secretly when a letter written by Mawlana Ilyas رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ addressed to Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ arrives. Accordingly, the letter of Mawlana Ilyas رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was received advising him to arrive in Delhi in a day or two. The writer privately informed Mawlana Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, who in turn immediately proceeded to Saharanpur. Due to Mawlana Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ often coming to Saharanpur, it was of no surprise to Sheikh-ul-Hadith, Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, who assumed that he had arrived as per his normal practice. Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ enquired from Mawlana Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ of his well being. Mawlana Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ then stated that he intended on travelling to Delhi the following day. He made no mention of a Nikah or wishing to attend, or even of having been informed that he was to travel to Delhi for his Nikah tomorrow. All he said was that I intend on travelling to Delhi tomorrow.

In the morning, both Sheikh-ul-Hadith رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and Mawlana Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ proceeded - 'the groom and the groom's wedding procession'. What phenomenal emulation of the Sunnah this was! Both continued and reached the station. Coincidentally, when they arrived at the station, Mawlana Hussain Ahmad Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ happened to be there with his female family members, on their way to Deoband. When he saw the two in the station, he assumed that they were there because of him.

The practice prior to this was for Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ to inform Sheikh-ul-Hadith, Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ that he would be arriving on 'so and so' train so he could be there to meet him. On this occasion, Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ rather puzzled, thought that since I did not inform him, how then did he get to know of this? Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ exclaimed, "Did you get inspiration (kashf) of my coming?" Mawlana Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ replied, "No *'kashf, washf'*,

we are on our way for a Nikah." Mawlana Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ then pointed towards Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and said that we are going for the Nikah of Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. We are effectively the groom's procession. Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ added, "Okay, and I didn't even know of that!" Mawlana Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ too retorted, "Me too, I have forcefully joined him." Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ then added, "Request Mawlana Ilyas رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ to await me, I am currently in the company of the female members of my home; upon dropping them off in Deoband I will board another train and conduct the Nikah myself."

Hence, Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ accompanied his female family members to Deoband, dropped them off at home and caught the very next train to Delhi. What unique bond they possessed!

Another unique incident concerning the Nikah of the daughters of Sheikh-ul-Hadith Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

Mawlana Yusuf Kandhlewi and Mawlana In'aam-ul Hasan were both studying in Saharanpur. Mawlana Ilyas رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was their guardian. Mawlana Ilyas رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ opens up to Sheikh-ul-Hadith, Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, "Since both have now reached their youthful years, I desire to get them married off." Sheikh-ul-Hadith Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ replies, "Yes Hadhrat! If you decide, I will seek girls from the family for them." Mawlana Ilyas رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ remarked, "No, No! There is no need for girls from the family, I wish to marry them off to your daughters. You have two daughters, if the two of them marry your daughters that would be best." Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ had no issue with that and in fact, adds that it would be good if the Nikah took place today.

There was neither prior notice nor were those in the home informed. What qualities they possessed and how ardent followers of the Sunnah they were! What phenomenal examples they left behind for the Ummah. He is set on the Nikah taking place same day, and since Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ happened to be present, they informed him and he immediately agreed to conduct the

Nikah ceremony. Mawlana Madani رَحِمَهُ اللهُ fulfils the task and a little outcry was then created. We are never short of those with negative comments and assumptions. "Did you see, he got his daughters married off to two wealthy and handsome youths?!" 'What and what' people said!!

I was not aware that my daughters were moving around the home naked

The family members were unaware of the Nikah that took place. When Sheikh-ul-Hadith, Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللهُ notified those in the home, his wife said, "You could have at least informed me, I would have sewed some clothes for them." Upon this, Sheikh-ul-Hadith, Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللهُ retorted in a unique manner, "I was unaware that our daughters were walking around naked!"

The Rukhsati (sending off) of the two daughters

The following year, or at the end of the academic year, Mawlana Ilyas رَحِمَهُ اللهُ arrived and said to Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, "The sending off of the two daughters should take place now since the two boys are graduating at the end of the year. It would thus be better if the two were sent off." Sheikh-ul-Hadith, Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللهُ responded, "Hadhrat! That is fine, but if the two daughters are sent off and the two take along their wives to Delhi then this will disturb their ongoing studies; and if after sending them off, the wives stay there (Delhi) and they reside here (Saharanpur), then what form of sending off is that! It would be better if the sending off of the two is done in my home here in Saharanpur."

Imagine! A father stating regarding his daughters that their sending off should be done in his home.

Thus, on Thursday Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللهُ cleared two rooms; in one he put one daughter - the wife of Mawlana Yusuf رَحِمَهُ اللهُ and in the other, the other

daughter - the wife of Mawlana In'aamul Hasan رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. He told each one to stay in their designated rooms. In this manner, the sending off of the two daughters was done within the home. This arrangement would repeat every Thursday (when it would be holidays), and after the end of year examinations when the two graduated, each one took his respective wife home.

Neither did the nose of the Sheikh 'get cut' nor did mine

On the other hand in Kandhala, the family clan came to know of this, so they complained thus, "Sheikh-ul-Hadith, you have gotten our noses cut." In turn, Sheikh-ul-Hadith, Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ called one of this family members and enquired, "Just look at my nose, is it cut or not?" He replied, "No". Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ then asked the person if his nose was cut, to which he replied, "Mine too is not cut." He then instructed the person as follows, "Go to the family clan and inform them that you have come from seeing my nose, neither was mine cut nor yours; (instead) take a look at your noses, are they cut or not!"

What exemplary lifestyles these personalities left us with! In every practice, due consideration was given to the Sunnah. There was no link with the customs and rituals of the world. 'What will the family say', did not perturb them in the least. Before them the only thing that really ever mattered was the example of Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and these personalities exemplified the same.

A classic example of the pious predecessors - Mufti Mahmood Hasan Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, (Faqeeh-ul Ummah - The Jurist of the Ummah)

Those that followed these personalities treaded their path most diligently. Our Mufti Mahmood, Faqeeeh-ul Ummah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, was known to the world just as you all know him here. He would often travel to this country. You would be acquainted with exactly how many trips he made. What humility and

servitude he displayed! Understand that Mufti Mahmood رَحِمَهُ اللهُ was a living example of them. He held expertise in every field. If one wishes to gauge his academic expertise then one should get hold of his *Fataawa Mahmudiyya*. All praises belong to Allāh! He left behind 31 volumes for the world to satiate their taste-buds. Just reflect over his scholarly expertise; add to that the example of his practical life and the level of his *taqwa* (piety).

In his childhood days, he would partake of just one meal and offer the second meal to a poor student who had no food stipend stipulated by the Madrasah. This was not his practice for a 'day or two', but this remained his practice throughout his student days. He then continued with this practice after becoming a teacher.

Will one be able to find an example of granting others such preferential treatment and contentment? One suffices on a single meal and grants a poor student of Deen his second meal; and this does not remain his practice for a day or two, but rather throughout his entire study period. This is then transferred to his teaching days.

Later, when more visitors began streaming in, he would 'partake' of the second meal but that too, just to 'say he partook of a meal'.

نیم نانے گر خورد مردِ خدا
بذلِ درویشان کند نیم دیگر
ہفت اقلیمی گر بگیرد پادشاہ
ہم چنان در بندِ اقلیمی دیگر

The habit of kings is that when they have one kingdom under their belts, they desire a second and so forth, but the habit of the 'lovers of Allah' is such that when they receive a piece of bread they eat half and gift the poor the other half. They departed only after practically 'walking the talk'.

His student days and his reliance on Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى

What was the level of his reliance on Allah? His father addresses him as follows in a letter, "If you require anything then write back." Mufti Saheb was still a student those days. He possessed only two rupees, and in those days in India one could purchase a card for precisely two rupees. He purchases one card and at the back he writes, "All Praises belong to Allah! I do not require anything."

He did not own a home of his own

Then he got married and the home he received in inheritance he gave off to his wife as dowry saying, "I have no money to pay as dowry but I have this home, so take it as dowry. From today onwards, you are the sole owner of this home and if you permit me, then for one or two days a year I will come to stay here, otherwise this is your home."

He neither owned his own home nor did he possess the concern to own one. Even when people offered him, he would reject their offers. Repeatedly, the residents of Gangoh would say to him, "Hadhrat! We can build for you in the very Khanqa." When they insisted, he very vehemently turned down their offer saying, 'me and Khanqa (spiritual retreat centre)'!"

An offer for a home and the response of Mufti Mahmood Hasan Gangohi (Faqeeh-ul Ummah - The Jurist of the Ummah) رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

In our city of Meerat, there was a very wealthy individual. He purchased a very large home in Deoband which he intended on gifting Mufti Mahmood رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. Mawlana Hafidh Tayyib رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, who is the owner of the book depot, *'Maktaba Nu'maaniyya'* and the Khalifah of Mawlana Hussain Ahmad Madani رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ accompanied him in an effort to convince Mufti Mahmood رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ to accept the offer of the home. Thus, he came into the company of Mufti Mahmood رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and remarked, "Hadhrat, he wishes that you accept his offer of the home."

Mufti Saheb replied, "But I have no need for it, this room is sufficient for me." Hafidh Tayyib then added, "Hadhrat, it will be easier for your guests'. Mufti Sahib replied, 'My guests are generally students and they are accustomed to staying in the Masjid."

Whereas, who were the guests? At times, it would be Qari Siddiq Ahmad Bandhwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, on other occasions Mawlana Abrar-ul Haq Hardoi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, Mawlana Yunus Jonpuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and other such distinguished guests who would all reside in this Chatta Masjid. Then too, he stated that, "My visitors are generally students who are accustomed to staying in the Masjid."

He did not accept the offer of the home. Such disinclination and non-attachment with the world! He did not accept anything for himself. He spent his life worrying about building homes for others and establishing institutes, whereas his personal life epitomised his illustrious predecessors. Today, it is difficult for us to even fathom such distinguished practices.

His humble response upon being offered the post of Head Mufti of Darul Uloom Deoband

Mufti Sahib resided in Kanpur for approximately 14 years. Due to the efforts of Mufti Sahib, Jami'ul Uloom Kanpur became a Centre of learning in India. Droves of Tablighi Jamaats would come and visit Mufti Saheb who would himself take active part. He would pass fatwas (juristic verdicts) and the effort of da'wat and tabligh was also in full swing. This institute effectively became a Centre of Tabligh. Whilst this was happening on the one hand, on the other the Shura Board of Darul Uloom Deoband had decided that they required a Mufti and there was no one better than Mufti Sahib to fulfil the role. They therefore decided that he should be called and offered the post. After the Shura Board made this decision, Mufti Sahib was informed of their decision. He excused himself citing his unworthiness as the Darul Uloom was a huge institute. He therefore chose to excuse himself in this manner.

These individuals then took their request to Sheikh-ul-Hadith, Mawlana Zakariyya Kandhelwi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ citing the institute's need for a Mufti and Mufti Sahib's declining the offer. They insisted on Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ writing to Mufti Saheb to take up the post in the Darul Uloom Deoband. Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ forwarded a written request but Mufti Sahib excused himself citing the fact that the institute was too huge.

They then took Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ's written request and approached Mufti Sahib. Mufti Sahib replied that if this was the command of Sheikh-ul-Hadith, Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ then he could come since he had no choice before the command of Sheikh-ul-Hadith, otherwise, I am unworthy to go to Darul Uloom Deoband and begin issuing fatwas (juristic edicts).

They returned to Sheikh-ul-Hadith رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ and informed him that he refuses to accept the post except if you write a letter instructing him to do so. It was against the temperament of Sheikh-ul-Hadith رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ to write letters instructing someone to do something. In his letter, he clearly wrote that I am not in the habit of writing letters instructing others to do things, but since this is the requirement of the institute I write this letter, therefore proceed to Darul Uloom Deoband.

The lofty degree of Mufti Sahib's رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ humility

Mufti Sahib then made his appearance in Deoband and proceeded to meet his teachers, Qari Muhammad Tayyib رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ and Mawlana Ibrahim Balyawi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ. Allamah Balyawi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ complained, "Mufti Jee! It is quite surprising that the Darul Uloom is calling you and you turn down the offer! Mufti Sahib replied, "Yes"! "Why", Allamah Balyawi enquired? "The Darul Uloom is the mother institute and it has a right binding upon you; people crave for a place and send in applications." With tears rolling down his cheeks, Mufti Sahib responded, "When I heard that the institute is calling me I was greatly grieved." Allamah Balyawi exclaimed, "Grieved! Whereas, the Darul Uloom was inviting you?"

He replied, "Yes". "Why", Allamah enquired? With tears rolling down his cheeks, he explained, "I did not think that the institute would degrade to such an extent that it would require someone like me to fill the post. I never once ever considered myself to be worthy of taking even the post of doorman."

Occupying the Post of Head Mufti of Darul Uloom Deoband

He was appointed as Head Mufti of Darul Uloom Deoband. He was also responsible for overseeing the affairs of the Darul Ifta. Mufti Nizaam-ud Deen A'zami رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, who was a great Faqeeh (jurist), Mufti and the Khalifah of Shah Wasiyullah Ilahabadi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ - the latter being the Khalifa of the 'sage of the Ummah', Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ - had been recently appointed in the institute. Despite this, Mufti Sahib was appointed Head Mufti. Let me now make you hear of the statement that I will repeat later.

'By the second Sheikh (spiritual mentor), the love for fame was annihilated.'

Mawlana Shah Abdur-Rahim Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللهُ had initially established a link with Shah Abdur-Rahim Saharanpuri رَحِمَهُ اللهُ. He was bestowed with Khilaafat from him too. He then took bay'at at the hands of Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ. After establishing a connection with Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, someone enquired from him what difference he perceived between the two? Mawlana Shah Abdur-Rahim رَحِمَهُ اللهُ gave a unique response, "By the second Sheikh, the love for fame was annihilated."

Most differences, mischief and strained relations occur due to love for fame

The love for fame is such a trait that manifests itself in the Ulama and Mashaa-ikh to some degree or the other, in some capacity or another. The Mashaa-

ikh have written that the last of the evil attributes to depart the heart of the *Siddiqeen* (truthful ones) is the love for fame. The love for fame undoubtedly portrays its effects and colours. Today, the rifts and turmoil within the Ulama, Mashaikh, various groups and organisations are a manifestation of this very same love for fame. One may come up with positive interpretations to explain the state of affairs, but the truth be said, this very same love for fame is the lead cause of all these differences.

After the demise of Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ turning to Mawlana Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

The 'sage of the Ummah' and the 'most noble of Ulama', Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, who was a high calibre Khalifah of Haji Imdaadullah Muhaajir Makki رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, considered Mawlana Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ to be his senior after the demise of his first Sheikh and would thus consult him in his matters. After the demise of Mawlana Rasheed Ahmad Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ thought of whom to refer to and consider his senior. Reflect! He is the 'sage of his time', 'reviver of the Deen' and a great academic giant yet he does not rely on himself. He perturbs himself continuously with whom he could appoint as his senior. His gaze falls on Shah Abdur-Rahim Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, who was at the time the most senior and elderly Khalifah of Mawlana Rasheed Ahmad Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ still living. Therefore, he decided that he would make it a practice to keep visiting him.

Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ in the service of Mawlana Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

Hence, he comes and spends the night there on a bed specially designated for him. During the course of the night, Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ's eyes open, and what does he see? He notices a man holding a stick standing beside him. He thinks to himself, "Who can this be?" He stares and realises that this is Mawlana Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ himself. Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ gets up and approaches

Shah Abdur-Rahim رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and enquires, "You here, what is the matter? Why are you standing here?" What response does Mawlana Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ give? The response is noteworthy. Today, it is difficult to even imagine such. His response was, "The people here are villagers and are unmannered and thus unaware of appropriate etiquette with the righteous. I felt that they may end up walking close by your bedside and disturbing your sleep with their steps, so I decided to stand here." Upon hearing this, Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ replied, "I will halt my coming here. I came considering you to be my senior, but I am unable to recieve such treatment for myself." Mawlana then never had the courage to visit again.

Regarding that which was said previously, *'in the company of Mawlana Rasheed Gangohi the love for fame was annihilated'*; this was precisely the condition of all these personalities. One comes considering himself to be worse off, yet the other despite being senior, holds the scholar in high esteem by grabbing a stick and standing beside the Mawlana all night long to avoid the footsteps of the laymen disturb his sleep!

An incident related to the submission and humility of Faqeeh-ul Ummah, Mufti Mahmood رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

After hearing this incident of Mawlana Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, let us look at an incident related to Mufti Mahmood annihilating his love for fame. He was not prepared to accept the offer of Darul Uloom Deoband, and only after being instructed did he go forth and oblige. The Shura Body appointed him as Head Mufti. He approaches Mufti Nizaam-ud Din رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and says, "Mufti A'zam! You will be the Head Mufti and the Overseer of the Darul Ifta and I will work under you." Mufti Nizaam-ud Din objected, "How can this be?" The Shura Board of the Darul Uloom has appointed you; they have designated you as the Head Mufti, how can this then be?" He countered, "No, it will be such." Mufti Nizaam-ud Din رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ refused to budge so Mufti Mahmood رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ retorted, "If you will not accept it then I will not remain here; I will leave."

Mufti Nizaam-ud Deen رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ himself related this incident to me. No-one else knew of this.

Faqeeh-ul Ummah, Mufti Mahmood رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and punctuality with the timing of Madrasah

Hence, in their 'legal settlement', Mufti Nizaam-ud Din رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was appointed Head Mufti and the overseer of the Darul Ifta, whereas the world knew Mufti Mahmood رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ to be the Head Mufti. But between them, they agreed that Mufti Nizaam-ud Din رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was the Head Mufti and Mufti Mahmood رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ would work under him as an ordinary teacher and staff member, to the extent that if he had to travel somewhere he would send in a request and get it approved. This was all despite the fact that he would not even take a wage from the Madrasah and on the occasions that he would do so, he would return back double its sum to the institute. In spite of all this, he was extremely punctual and he would work subservient to them.

On a daily basis, he would first sit with Mufti Nizaam-ud Din رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and spend the initial first few minutes in his company discussing and consulting in relation to several Fataawa (juristic verdicts). After having completed doing so, he would then settle on his place. This remained the habit of Mufti Mahmood Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ throughout his life.

The Request for Mufti Mahmood رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ to teach Bukhari Shareef and his persistent refusal

The Sheikh-ul-Hadith of Darul Uloom Deoband, Mawlana Fakhr-ud-Deen Muraadabadi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ- whose elevated position was definitely an honour for him, was a great Muhaddith (scholar of Hadith) requests Mufti Mahmood رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ to teach the second volume of Bukhari. Mufti Saheb refuses saying, "It is too big a book (to handle) and I am unworthy." This was despite the fact that he had taught the entire collection of the *Sihaah-e-Sitta* (famous six books of Ahaadith)

and other books too, all alone for years. But here Mufti Fakhr-ud-Deen رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ is making a request and he is turning down the offer, excusing himself saying that he is unfit for it. This offer was not made merely once or twice, or even ten times, this was an ongoing request for a period of four years, with Mufti Sahib providing the same response. When Mawlana Fakhr-ud-Deen رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ realised that he is refusing to budge at all costs, he decided 'enough was enough' and thus approached Sheikh-ul-Hadith, Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ in Saharanpur and informed him of his repeated request for years and Mufti Sahib's persistent refusal to accept, and thereby requested Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ to convince Mufti Mahmood to budge. Sheikh-ul-Hadith fulfilled their request but Mufti Sahib's response remained, "Bukhari Shareef is a very big book (to handle) and I am unfit for it." Mawlana Fakhr-ud-Deen رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ then remarked, "Mufti Sahib! I have now aged, therefore come to the aid of this elderly man."

The unique words of Mawlana Fakhr-ud-Deen رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ before the students

Nonetheless, this was a request for which Mufti Mahmood رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ could not turn down. Upon hearing this, he began teaching *Bukhari Shareef*. There were certain teachers that desired teaching Bukhari for themselves and actually made efforts to acquire it, even pushing the students to help them achieve their goal. Mawlana Fakhr-ud-Deen رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ then responded to these students in the lesson, "I had wished to grant Bukhari to 'so and so' and to 'so and so' but I was not permitted, so what do I do?" He also said, "After all, having some foresight is also something credible."

Faqeeh-ul Ummah, Mufti Mahmood Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ taught Bukhari for close to ten years in Deoband, a task he fulfilled most diligently.

Upon the demise of Mawlana Fakhr-ud-Deen, Mufti Sahib refusing to teach Bukhari Shareef

Immediately upon the passing of Mawlana Fakhr-ud-Deen, Mufti Sahib approaches the principal and says, "Hadhrat! Until today I taught *Bukhari* taking into consideration the instruction of Mawlana Fakhr-ud-Deen, but I am unworthy of doing so hence, from today onwards, I excuse myself from teaching it." Is this not 'the love for fame being nipped in the bud'? Can anyone bring forth an example and match?

Despite ill health Mufti Sahib رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ's walking to meet Mawlana MaseehullahKhan Jalalabadi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

Mufti Mahmood Hasan Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was the contemporary of Mawlana Maseehullah Khan Jalalabadi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. We do not know of them having been classmates. What is certain is Mufti Mahmood رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was in a higher class. Whenever the need arose to travel to Junjana (etc), and en-route Jalalabad was crossed, then he would take it upon himself to visit Mawlana Maseehullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ.

On one occasion, he arrives there whilst severely ill. It was said to Mufti Sahib that Hadhrat! "We will disembark the station and board a taxi as this would create ease in arriving at Jalalabad, or else we will have to walk." Faqeeh-ul Ummah, Mufti Mahmood رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ replied, "No brother! It is appropriate to go into the service of the saintly ones whilst walking. The truth is, if it was possible we would walk from Deoband but since that was not possible, let us at least walk from here. It is a meritorious act to walk whilst going into the company of the pious."

What great personalities they were! He was himself considered the Faqeeh-ul Ummah, and yet accords such honour and respect for a contemporary! His words, 'it is a meritorious act to walk whilst going into the company of the pious'.

Mawlana Maseehullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ seeking guidance from Mufti Mahmood رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ on Masaa'il (Juristic Verdicts)

When Faqeeh-ul Ummah, Mufti Mahmood رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ arrives in the Khanqah and Mawlana Maseehullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ comes out to receive him. He takes him home and begins pouring out all the questions he had to Mufti Mahmood رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. He felt no sense of being slighted by asking questions, considering that he was such a big Sheikh. Mawlana Maseehullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ shows him his ablution block and bathing area. Mufti Sahib رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ performs ablution and washes up whilst Mawlana Maseehullah continues posing his questions and taking consolation. He then comes out and bids him farewell.

Handing over his entire room to Mawlana Maseehullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

On the occasion of the Jalsa to mark 100 years of Darul Uloom Deoband's inauguration, Mawlana Maseehullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ attends and makes his way to the room of Mufti Mahmood رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. Mufti Sahib had already made appropriate alternate arrangements for his guests, yet he hands over his entire room to Mawlana Maseehullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. The alternate room had all the facilities required, but he prefers to sacrifice his own ease and further facilitates for Mawlana Maseehullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ. His intention was for Mawlana Maseehullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and his fellow guests to be accommodated there. He therefore hands over the keys and goes elsewhere. What level of consideration they possessed for one another!

A Unique incident concerning the meeting of Sheikh-ul-Hadith Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ and Mawlana Maseehullah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ

Doctor Hansa related to me that he was in Jalalabad in the company of Mawlana Maseehullah Khan رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ when news reached them that Sheikh-ul-Hadith, Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ was expected to visit the vicinity of Jalalabad

the following day. Mawlana Maseehullah avers to Doctor, "Brother! Sheikh-ul-Hadith, Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللهُ is arriving the following day and he will experience difficulty in reaching here, how good it would be if we went to the road to welcome him. This would save him from the hassle and also, do ensure not to inform anyone."

The following day, the two of them set off and arrived early on the road. Sheikh-ul-Hadith, Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللهُ was scheduled to leave after the Fajr Salah. The two reached well before them and began pacing up and down the road. In so doing, two hours passed. On the other hand, people anticipated Mawlana Maseehullah رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, wondering where he had gone. Breakfast awaited him at home so teams went out in search of him. He was not even in the Madrasah. Some teachers felt that he may be by the road-side. Mawlana Aqeel Ahmad حَفِظَهُ اللهُ تَعَالَى and one other teacher continued searching, eventually reaching the road. In this manner, five to seven teachers gathered by the road-side.

After two hours of waiting, the first vehicle of Sheikh-ul-Hadith's convoy arrives. It informs that Sheikh is about to arrive. Few minutes later, Sheikh-ul-Hadith, Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللهُ's vehicle arrives and stops there. He opens his window and they greet one another. Mawlana Maseehullah رَحِمَهُ اللهُ offers salaam but Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, instead of responding hastens to say, "Maseehullah! How did you come here! How did you come here!!? I intended to come to you, why did you come here?" Mawlana Maseehullah رَحِمَهُ اللهُ repeated his greeting but Sheikh-ul-Hadith repeatedly scolds him for having come all the way to meet him. He rebuked him out of love since he had wished to come to Mawlana Maseehullah رَحِمَهُ اللهُ and hence, was upset that Mawlana Maseehullah رَحِمَهُ اللهُ took the difficulty of coming.

Take a look at the consideration they possessed for one another! He is lamenting and castigating the other, "Why did you bear the difficulty of coming here?" On the other hand, Mawlana Maseehullah رَحِمَهُ اللهُ wished that no diffi-

culty should overcome Mawlana Zakariyya رَحِمَهُ اللهُ and furthermore, he felt that for the latter to proceed to the institute would be a waste of his precious time. It is precisely for this reason that he made his way to the road to meet him. It is with this in mind that he waited for two hours. Can such an example be found?

Multitudes of books are insufficient to record the achievements of the Akaabir (Elders) of Deoband

Each one of the elders of Deoband was such that entire talks could be delivered on their lives, but this would obviously require much time. All that has been written is not but a sample, in fact let alone a sample, rather one may have observed when preparing biryani, one picks up a grain or two of rice to taste and gauge whether it is ready or not; similarly, understand that a 'couple of grains of rice' have been placed before you so you may have a brief idea of who our Akaabir of Deoband were and to whom we are affiliated with. We ought to feel honoured and extremely fortunate at such a relationship. Their piety, purity, chastity, love for Allah, implementation of the Sunnah and its spread were boisterous within them. We too have to revive the same spirit and ensure to hold them as prime models. An attempt to be like them and follow in their footsteps is a requirement.

Move in the ocean but ensure that our clothes are not wet in the process

The world presented itself before these individuals, and it surely did so with all its glamour and splendour, but it can be said with absolute certainty that they did not even lift their gazes towards it. Their example is like that of a duck which dives into the water, moving from corner to corner immersing itself, but when it leaps, it does so in such a manner that its wings remain all dry. No sign of wetness is noticed on its wings.

This was precisely the condition of our Akaabir; they came into the world,

travelled around and left only after setting prime examples for the propagation and spreading of the Sunnah.

One Major Achievement of the Akaabir of Deoband - Leaving Behind Successors/Vicegerents

Each one left behind a replacement for the next generation. Reflect over the grand achievement of each one; they all left behind successors for the world to continue deriving benefit from. Each one left an entire army after their departure, so that they could spread their work to the people of the world.

Mawlana Rasheed Ahmad Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ prepared a large group and left. Furthermore, the likes of Mawlana Qasim Nanotwi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, Sheikh-ul-Islam Mawlana Hussain Ahmad Madani رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, Mawlana Shah Abdul Qadir Raipuri رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, Sheikh-ul-Hadith Mawlana Zakariyya Kandhelwi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ and Maseeh-ul Ummah Mawlana Maseehullah Khan Jalalabadi رَحِمَهُ اللهُ all prepared individuals to continue spreading their mission throughout the globe for the coming generations.

We too should make a concerted attempt to follow in the footsteps of our elders. We should also beseech Allah to grant us the divine ability to achieve this and to appreciate the link and bond we possess with them.

The response of Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ upon the request that he increase his allocation from the Baytul-Maal (Islamic Treasury)

I think I have spoken enough! I will now present one more example and end my talk. A discussion ensued regarding Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ; that his allocation from the Islamic Treasury was meagre. It was felt that since the Muslims material standing had bettered by then; lands were being conquered and even the diets of the masses had improved thus, the stipulated allocation for the Amir-ul-Mu'mineen Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ too should be increased. Having said that,

none possessed the courage to approach Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Nonetheless, a group was chosen for this task, which included Ali رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. They consulted with one another and all unanimously agreed that they did not possess the courage to forward their proposal. "Yes, he accords great honour for the *Ummah-at-ul-Mu'mineen* (blessed mothers of the believers رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُنَّ), amongst whom is his own very daughter Hafsa رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا and Hadhrat A'aisha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, whom he has utmost respect for," they added. If they were to put forward a request, it is possible that he would embrace it. Accordingly, they approached Hadhrat Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and made their case heard and stated that it was the unanimous view of all that your allocation from the Islamic Treasury should be increased, but their fear was that you would not accede to the request. If you accept we will increase you thereof.

Hafsa and A'aisha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا (the former was not veiled since it was his daughter but the latter was veiled) made this request. Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ turned to his daughter and enquired as to whom it was that made these suggestions. "Name them for me", he ordered! He was told that they did not grant permission for their names to be divulged. Umar retorted back, "Had you to name them, I would have punished them in a manner that their faces would have gotten spoilt. How dare they suggest I take an increase in my allocation!"

Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ now puts Hafsa رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا on the spot and poses the following questions : "Tell me, what did your food comprise of in the home of 'the mercy unto both worlds?'" She replied that it was only one meal consisting of roti (or dry bread) made from barley, and we would pour oil/butter over it which Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ would partake of most enjoyably. This was the best food we possessed.

He then follows this up by posing another question; "What was your bedding (what did it comprise of)?" She replied, "It was made of a piece of leather skin which we would fold in two and lay down; at night we would wrap this around and sleep. Once I folded it into four, so the following morning Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ enquired from me, 'at night what did you wrap that was a cause for me getting

up late? Lay it in precisely the manner that we would'. This was the bedding and food of Nabi ﷺ."

He then boldly declared, "Before me, my two companions passed; Nabi ﷺ treaded a path and my second companion Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه treaded in his footsteps. I am now the third; if I too tread in their path then I too will meet with them. (On the contrary) If I was to veer off 'here and there' then I will not be able to meet with them whereas, I desire to follow in their footsteps and meet with them."

The lives of our Akaabir are the best example for us

If there is a noteworthy example for us, it is the example of these *Akaabir* (elders) of ours. If we truly wish to be raised with them, and it surely is the deep felt desire of each one, then we have to look aside and ignore the errant behaviour of people in our daily social life, keep before us the practical examples of these Akaabir and emulate them. If we do that, then Allah willing, we will be raised with them on the day of Judgement.

If we veer off slightly 'here and there' then reflect over this example; if a train veers off even slightly from its designated tracks it ends up moving in another direction, the result being that the people end up elsewhere instead of their intended destination. At times, the difference in route can be between the east and the west.

In the same manner, when one moves off the correct path, then it may seem slight, but if we tolerate a slight veering, then the matter becomes difficult for us. For us the correct example, in fact if we were to say the straight path is the example of these Akaabir. The path of the Ambiyaa is the straight path.

ٱهۡدِنَا ٱلصِّرَٰطَ ٱلۡمُسۡتَقِيمَ ۝٦
صِرَٰطَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَنۡعَمۡتَ عَلَيۡهِمۡ غَيۡرِ ٱلۡمَغۡضُوبِ عَلَيۡهِمۡ وَلَا ٱلضَّآلِّينَ ۝٧

The Lives of our Akaabir (pious predecessors) are in truth a living example of the life of Nabi ﷺ

The entire lifestyle of Nabi ﷺ is undoubtedly the straight path, which the Sahabah (Noble Companions) of Nabi ﷺ practically demonstrated before the world and 'walked the talk' as they say. Furthermore, that very lifestyle of the Sahabah was the very path which our Deobandi Akaabir practically demonstrated. That is surely sufficient! The example of our Akaabir is before us; that is precisely the straight path. If we use them as role models then we too will succeed and be able to meet up with them. If we veer off their lifestyle even slightly, then we will deviate and fall distant from them. When and how will be able to meet up with them then? No such guarantee exists if we slip off their path. It is for this reason that we should endeavour to emulate the Akaabir in their unshakeable link, love and recognition of Allah; in their independent natures and disinclination from the world; in their desire for the hereafter; in their adopting the Sunnah and fervent enthusiasm to spread it and finally, in the love they possessed for one another. It is these traits of theirs that we should endeavour to follow. We ask Allah Ta'ala to grant us the divine ability to follow in their footsteps. Aameen

واخر دعوانا أن ٱلۡحَمۡدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ

Translated from Urdu into English by:
Munir Adam
(Dhul Hijjah 1445/ June 2024)

The Phenomenal Achievements of the Ulama of Deoband

This booklet is a compilation of an inspiring lecture on the life events and anecdotes drawn from the illuminating and exemplary lives of our pious predecessors. The lecture was delivered by the erudite scholar Mufti Muhammad Farooq Meerthi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ in a special address to scholars and students of sacred knowledge at Madrasah Ta'leemud-Deen, Ispingo Beach, South Africa.

Mufti Muhammad Farooq Meerthi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ (1950–2015 / 1369–1436) was born in Meerut, Uttar Pradesh, India. After completing his initial education, he travelled to Madrasah Miftah al-'Uloom, Jalalabad, where he enrolled on the Alimiyyah course. There, he studied under Maulana Maseehullah Khan رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ (1911–1992 / 1329–1413) and Allamah Rafeeq Ahmed رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ (1925–1990 / 1343–1411).

After graduating, he travelled to Darul Uloom Deoband, where he pursued studies in Iftaa under the Grand Mufti of India, Mufti Mahmood Hasan Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ (1907–1996 / 1325–1417).

Mufti Muhammad Farooq Meerthi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ founded the Islamic seminary Jamia Mahmoodia in Meerut and authored over 50 books. Among his monumental works are the compilations of Fatawa Mahmoodiyyah, a 31-volume compilation of the Fatawa of Mufti Mahmood Hasan Gangohi رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, and Ar-Rafeeq ul-Faseeh, an extensive 30-volume commentary on the Hadith collection Mishkaat ul-Masabeeh.

He passed away in the stampede at Mina during the Hajj of 2015 / 1436 and is buried in the Al-Muaisim cemetery in Mina, Makkah.

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