

Advice to Abna Qadeem

Title: Advice to Abna Qadeem

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Published on the occasion of the Abna-e-Qadeem Jalsah, Muharram
1441, September 2019

Publication No: A - 333

Date: Muharram 1441, September 2019

Published by:

Madrasah Arabia Islamia

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Introduction

The following are some of the advice given by our Asaatizah, senior Ulama and Ulama involved in different aspects of Deen. This booklet is merely a *muzaakarah*. Every person needs a constant reminder. By doing so, one will be able to rectify oneself and progress. May Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى grant us the ability to hold firm onto these guidelines! May Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى grant us the Taufeeq and Hidaayat to practice on the above and pass it on to others as well! May Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى keep us with Imaan, take us with Imaan and raise us on the day of Qiyamah with Imaan. And may Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى grant us Ikhlāas, Istikhlaas and Istiqāamat. Aameen.

General Guidelines

1.) Intention: Our object of life and the khidmat we do should be to please Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and to prepare for our life of Aakhirat.

- We need to keep on checking our intentions. Remember the Hadith where amongst the first to be thrown into Jahannum will be the Aalim who utilized the knowledge of Deen to gain honour, fame, and name amongst people.
- Work like a bedbug, not like a mosquito. The mosquito makes a noise when it works – then it is killed. The bed bug does its work silently and then retreats. Its work gets accomplished.

2.) Suhbat of the Mashaaikh: We need to adopt the Suhbat of the Mashaaikh and undertake our Islah and Tazkiya in a very dedicated manner -- not in a casual manner. The importance of this aspect, as well as the fact that the acceptance (maqbooliat) of the efforts of our Akaabir was due

purely to the qualities of Ikhlaas, Lillaahiyat, Taqwa and Khashiyat which they possessed has to be engraved within ourselves. Similarly, the need to acquire the Zauq of the Akaabir cannot be overemphasized.

Reading the biographies of our Akaabireen will be a great help in this regard.

3.) Contact with our Asaatiza: Keep good contact with one's Asaatiza-e-Kiraam. Continue making mashwarah with them before undertaking any work. A beautiful example has been given in this regard. A kite will fly high and remain controlled as long as it is connected to the string, which is in some-one's hands. The day the kite breaks its connection, it might fly much higher for a few minutes only to come crashing down.

4.) Always keep in mind your status as an Aalim:

- Salaah with Jama'at in the masjid is compulsory for every Muslim. The Aalim should ensure that he is an example in this regard. In fact, his Sunan and Nawaafil should be more than the general people.
- Nowadays numerous aspects which are totally against the shaan and waqaar of an Aalim have become a common place among many Ulama. Some of these aspects are:
- Using cell phones and video cameras etc. to take pictures and videos of animate objects to showcase the Deeni work that you are doing. No matter what argument is presented, the safest course of action and the demand of taqwa is that a person avoids photographs, live broadcasts, and video recordings.
- Smoking in public (A student was once asked to stop smoking. He very casually remarked that the Imaam at his Masjid back home smokes, so what is wrong if he also smokes?!!!)

- Appearing in public in attire which is totally unbecoming of an Aalim. Nowadays two-tone and other fancy 'branded' kurtas are worn. Some of the kurtas are tight-fitting, exposing the shape of the body.
- Attending functions with mixed gatherings and attending sports events
- Talking openly to non-mahrams
- Discussing "last night's match on T.V."
- Visiting immoral places like beaches, etc. more-so during holiday periods. * Eating out at restaurants etc. Halaal is an issue as well as the detriment to our Roohaaniyat and health due to the lack of hygiene etc.
- Lack of purdah with sisters-in-laws and other non-mahrams
- Using crude language, etc.
- Some Ulama are constantly seeking ways and means to "supplement" their income in order to have a more affluent lifestyle. This is leading to many problems. Some make the salary and other perks the primary focus when applying for a job. The simple lifestyle of the Akaabir and the need for us to adopt simplicity has to be realised.
- Many wealthy people often openly talk of the requests for financial and other assistance which Ulama have made to them. Some attempt to 'buy' the silence or favours of Ulama with their gifts, etc. We should be very careful in this regard.
- An increasing number of Ulama are taking up business as the main occupation. Unfortunately often the awaam are discussing the unethical and even un-Islamic way in which some Ulama are conducting their business. This is leaving a very poor impression and the trust upon Ulama in general is undermined. Business disputes are also bound to occur at some time or the other. How Ulama resolve their business disputes is

also a major factor. There have been some incidents where the Ulama also descended to the awaam level and lost their respect in the process.

5.) Efforts of Deen – The Ulama should try to fulfil these efforts of Deen:

a.) Teaching in Makaatib and Madaaris

b.) Imaamat

c.) Tablighi effort

d.) Establishing of independent Masjid and Madrassah projects where the Ulama themselves are in charge and responsible

e.) Working in poor areas and with poor people, establishing Masaajid and Makaatib

f.) Social welfare work. Ulama should ensure that they take part punctually in the Masjid Ta'leem.

6.) Taqwa: People look to the Ulama for guidance. Great caution needs to be exercised with women and amrads. Shaytaan normally attacks the pious by these two means. Never trust the nafs. Be watchful over one's speech when forced to speak to the opposite gender. Adopting charming and friendly conduct is unacceptable. Never be in solitude with any ghair-mahram woman. If one is not cautious and careful and does not adopt measures for his protection, then the fire of temptation that is surrounding him will damage his Imaan and Deen. As said, "Where the ground is slippery, even an elephant can slip."

Always choose the more precautious view. In this is safety for one's Deen. Unfortunately, today many Hanafi Ulama are taking to other mazaahib when confronted with a little bit of a situation, especially during safar (travels) and Hajj.

People look at the Ulama's wives and use them to justify their wrongs. Targheeb should be given to one's family members to be particular in their dressing and lifestyle. The most important factor is haya (shame) and simplicity. If the Ulama's families wear tight-fitting clothing, Jeans, short

tops, and pants, etc. it sets a bad example. Similarly, the Ulama's children should be adorned with Islamic dress from birth.

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

The person who encourages us to fear Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى is not our enemy. He is a friend. He is in fact following the Sunnah of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and Rasullullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Of course, if the nafs is puffed up, it will be difficult to digest with humility and appreciation. Sufyan Thawri رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said, "We met a people who loved being told "Fear Allaah." Today we find that people become annoyed when they are advised to fear Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

Guidelines Regarding the Makaatib

(Note: Most of the following guidelines are related to those engaged in teaching whether in the Makaatib, Darul-Ulooms, Masaajid, Hifz classes, etc.)

1.) Importance of the Makaatib

When considering the factors responsible for the level of Islamic awareness and awakening in our society, inter-alia other factors, a very important and vital factor is the sound and organized system of the present network of the primary Islamic educational institutes - "Madrasah and Maktabas" as they are more popularly known. Despite the general attitude of insignificance and unimportance that has been displayed towards these Madrasahs by many, it is these very humble institutions that are responsible to a very

great extent in the inculcation of Islamic values and morals in the life of the Muslim child, lasting impressions that exert their influence throughout his future life as a Muslim. At the least, these Makaatib have equipped the young Muslim to fulfill the basic requirements of Islam in as far as his Aqaaid (Beliefs), Tahaarah, Salaah, correct recital of the Quraan, basic Islamic History, Islamic Etiquette, Duas etc. are concerned.

The first institute of Madrasa education was at the home of Zaid bin Arqam رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ near a hill called Safa, where our beloved Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was the teacher and the students were the beloved Sahabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ. After Hijrah (migration), the Madrasa of "Suffa" was established in Madinah Munawwarah on the east side of the Masjid an-Nabawi. Ubadah ibn Saamit رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was appointed by Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ as a teacher.

The importance of the Makaatib was emphasised by our Akaabir a long time ago. Sheikhul Hind رَحِمَهُ اللهُ was imprisoned in Malta for several years by the British. Upon his release he gathered the Ulama in order to convey a very important message to them. Due to his status and position and considering that this was his first address after having been released from prison, a great number of Ulama eagerly gathered to hear his message. His simple message on this historic occasion was that Makaatib should be established all over India and the Ta'leem of the Qur'an-al-Kareem should take place everywhere.

It is also mentioned about Moulana Husain Ahmad Madani Saheb رَحِمَهُ اللهُ that during the last part of his life his health had deteriorated. The doctors had also forbidden him from travelling. However, if any person invited Moulana رَحِمَهُ اللهُ to officially start a Maktab which they had established, he would immediately accept the invitation and even travel out to start the Maktab. Thus our Akaabir laid the foundation of the Makaatib. It was their foresight and insight into what will be a means of saving the Deen of the Muslims. The efforts of our Akaabir in this regard can only truly be appreciated in

those countries where Makaatib are almost non-existent. Entire generations have been lost – they did not have the opportunity of even learning the basics of Aqaa'id, Tahaarah or Salaah.

The challenges facing the Ummah are increasing all the time and are becoming more intense. The role of the Maktab has therefore become all the more important. Unlike the situation fifteen or twenty years ago when most parents took a personal interest in the child's Deeni Ra'leem, nowadays perhaps the majority of parents are hardly concerned about what the child learns at Madrasah. In most cases the time spent in the *Maktab* is the only time that the child will spend learning Deen. No time is spent at home for this purpose. In this light if every effort is not made on the child in the *Maktab*, there is very little hope that he will learn anything elsewhere.

Remember each child is an 'amanah' (trust). Bear in mind that the Maktab may be their sole exposure to Deen. Each day is an opportunity to create and leave a positive impression in the hearts of these children. Each day is an opportunity to create memories. We must ensure that they are positive ones. This is going to affect the way they feel about Islam. Often children do not remember all the information that was taught to them, but they remember the feelings associated with the classes. They remember the fun or sadness, the times they got in trouble, the words of praise, the enthusiasm, the times they achieved something. If we can contribute towards developing a bond with Deen, the children will carry this with them for the rest of their lives, and this will be the greatest Sadaqa Jaariya.

The aim of the Makaatib is to develop a profound love and connection with Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and Islam, to ignite an intrinsic interest and need to pursue knowledge and to revive the practice of Deen in the community

2.) **Establishment of Makaatib** - While many areas have long established Makaatib, there is an urgent need to venture especially in the underprivileged areas and establish Makaatib where none exist. In many

such areas the Makaatib have become a means of turning the tide of Bid'ah and has even saved many peoples Imaan.

In establishing Makaatib, the advice of Moulana Ebrahim Dewla Saheb (daamat barakaathu) of Nizamuddin to a group of brothers who were engaged in this effort is indeed very important and concise. The following five points were mentioned by him:

1. Spend on Ta'leem, not on Ta'meer (buildings).
2. Teach with a proper syllabus
3. Have complete supervision
4. Assist partly, not entirely
5. Work together with other established institutions in the area.

3.) **Our Responsibility**

- a.) to establish Makaatib
- b.) to teach in the Makaatib
- c.) to encourage parents to send their youth and to explain to them as well as the youth the importance of attending the Makaatib

4.) to appreciate the efforts of those who are engaged in the efforts of the Makaatib and to assist them physically, monetarily and with Duaas. May Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى cause these institutions to grow from strength to strength! May Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى reward all those that struggled and strove for the establishment and consolidation of this system of Madaaris wherever they settled down in this country. Also unforgettable, though poorly appreciated are the gallant and noble services of the honorable Ulema, who despite dire financial circumstances and bleak financial prospects, have nonetheless strove consistently in order to fulfill this tremendous responsibility of educating their flock - in the footsteps of their glorious predecessors. May Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى bless and reward them. Another group deserving special commendation are those generous donors, who despite many trying economic circumstances have always rallied to the maintenance, support, and upkeep of these Madaaris, very sincerely and open-heartedly.

4.) Teaching Guidelines

Teaching, like every other profession and trade is a job requiring skill and expertise. Unless the proper methodology is employed, it can be an extremely difficult task. With proper methodology and principles, it becomes an enjoyable and a highly satisfying career.

What is Islam's guidance and directions with regard to the principles and methodology of teaching? Alhamdulillah, we have not been left in the dark in this regard too. All it requires is a careful study of the Seerah of our noble and Honourable Master Rasulullah ﷺ and observe and appreciate his most effective and successful methodology of teaching. Such is his example in this field, that it can be stated without hesitation that he is the greatest teacher and educator of mankind!

This section is divided into ten sections:

a.) Importance of Teaching

The importance of education in Islam can be gauged from the numerous Verses of the Quraan and the Ahadith on this topic.

In this regard, we suffice by quoting one Verse of the Quraan: “And the believers should not all go out to fight. Of every group of them, (only) a party should go out that they (who are left behind) may gain sound understanding in (the knowledge of) Deen, and that they may warn their people when they return to them, so that they may beware.” (Tawbah verse 122) From this verse the importance of teaching and imparting the knowledge of Deen is quite evidently emphasized, that even in the event of Jihaad - an important injunction of the Shariah - one group of people are commanded to remain behind and away from Jihaad for the express purpose of acquiring and imparting the knowledge of Deen. If even at the turbulent and abnormal circumstances of fighting a war, this duty of teaching and education cannot be ignored, then in normal and peaceful times how much more will be the emphasis on education and teaching? The

reason for this is quite simple to comprehend, and that is no matter how great and lofty an action a person undertakes, it is only acceptable and rewardable if carried out in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Shariah, and this is directly dependent upon the acquisition and imparting of the knowledge of the Shariah. Thus, the importance of education is evident from the Quraan.

As far as the Ahaadith are concerned, in one Hadith we find that Rasulullaah ﷺ stated, "I have been sent but as a teacher (unto mankind)." (Ibn Majah no. 229) A few very important and vital lessons are to be learnt from this Hadith:

1. This Hadith alone is sufficient to expound the importance of education and teaching in Islam.
2. Whatever Rasulullaah ﷺ did was perfect and complete in every sense, as the Quraan explains, "Verily, you have in the Rasul of Allâh, a beautiful example (to follow)" (Ahzaab verse 21). Thus, in the field of teaching and education, which he has declared to be the mission of his life, how much of expertise and mastery he must have possessed? It could thus be most confidently asserted that he was the greatest educationist and teacher that mankind ever witnessed. He was a perfect teacher and hence his teaching methods and principles of education are unsurpassed by anyone. They are the best methods of education.
3. We are his followers. We need to follow him in every aspect of his life, more so in the mission and purpose of his life i.e., education, teaching, and propagating Islam. Thus, the importance of education can be clearly gauged from this Hadith, "The seeking of knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim." (Ibn Majah no. 224)

b.) Virtues of Teaching:

It is possible that the teacher of Deen underestimates the importance and greatness of the responsibility he is fulfilling because of the attitude of those around him, those who do not attach any importance to his work. The reality of the matter is that no amount of sufficient emphasis can be laid upon the greatness of his work - because he is responsible for the foundation laying of an entire generation of people, a generation of upright, pious, respectable, and responsible Muslims if he fulfills his responsibility correctly and satisfactorily.

The teacher's responsibility is to plant and nurture the seed of Iman and Islam in the mind and heart of the Muslim child, a very fertile and receptive field for planting. If he has been successful in his mission, every fruit, leaf, and twig that this tree produces, he will have his full share in it. Till the time the child continues to practice and follow the teachings of the teacher, he will continually earn a full share of rewards and thawab therefrom. The act of teaching is 'Thawaab-e-Jaariyah' (perpetual charity), the reward of which will continuously accrue to the person that taught and conveyed the knowledge of Deen. The teacher of Deen (who fulfills the right of teaching) has been given a title directly by Rasulullaah ﷺ, the title of 'Muallimun-naas-al-khair' - 'The teacher of good to people'. For such a person, Rasulullaah ﷺ has announced many glad tidings, one of them being the following, "Verily Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, His angels and the occupants of the heavens and earth, even the ants in their holes and even the fish, all send blessings and prayers (Duaas) of mercy upon the teacher of virtue to people." (Tirmidhi no. 2685) What is so significant about the duty of imparting Deeni knowledge upon people that even the ants, the fish, the inhabitants of the jungle and the aquatic realm feel obliged and indebted to such a teacher, that they actually pray on his behalf? The answer to this is: As long as people heed and adhere to these teachings, Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will cause good and wholesome conditions to prevail upon

earth, the benefit of which will be universal to all, including even the animals and other creations of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. On the other hand, when these teachings are not preached and taught, people's actions will become corrupt, resulting in calamities, hardships, and anarchy to reign over the earth. The resultant harm will affect not only the perpetrators of these vile actions, but even the innocent creatures and animals. Thus, their peaceful existence and survival is dependent upon the good and virtuous actions of people, which in turn is dependent upon the proper and correct dissemination of Deeni knowledge. Thus, they are indirectly dependent upon these teachers for their peaceful survival on earth, for which they feel obliged and indebted to them, thus manifesting their appreciation to them in the form of their Duaas and blessings. This also goes to indicate the high degree of responsibility resting upon the shoulders of the teacher, that not only is the student going to benefit and reap from his teachings, but the entire creation of Allaah look unto him for their survival. The teacher should never take his responsibility lightly. He is fulfilling a monumental service and duty unto the entire creation of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

c.) Challenge of the Times

As rewarding as teaching is, it is also a great challenge, particularly in these times. There are numerous distractions for the child, keeping him away from the knowledge of Deen.

1.) The vast resources at the disposal of the state education department have allowed them to use every means of enticing the student towards secular education - by means of sporting facilities and activities, speech and drama, art and fine arts and a host of other extramural activities that are beyond the means and scope of the Madrasah.

2.) The emphasis and attraction towards secular education are so great, that very few are genuinely concerned about Islamic education, a reality which is clearly manifest in their attitudes towards the Madaaris.

3.) The time allocation between the two is very unfair. For every three hours of secular education, there is only one hour of Islamic education or even less.

4.) The prime time of the child's day - the morning - when he is fresh, receptive, and energetic is dedicated to secular studies, while the afternoon time, when the child is tired, bored, and inclined towards play falls to the lot of the Islamic education.

5.) The secular institutions, at numerous occasions infringe upon the Madrasah time and get away with it, to the great detriment of Islamic Education.

6.) Parents are generally only concerned about the secular aspect of the child's progress, rarely showing the same degree of zest, zeal, and interest in his Islamic education. This even creates a sense of light-heartedness in the child towards Islamic education.

7.) There are many social problems. Many children are from broken homes, others from mixed marriages and yet some from foreign backgrounds who do not even understand our language. Some are hungry as there is no food at home.

8.) We are faced with the challenge of technology. Children are addicted to the X-Box, smart phone, T.V. games, and the list goes on. Their attention span is so low that it lasts for a maximum of five minutes for the day. At times, whilst taking a child's Sabaq, you may find him suddenly taking his Kitaab, using it as a steering wheel and speeding off as if he is the driver of a formula 1 taking part in a Kyalami race.

9.) The major intake of junk food by children today further stunts their progress and understanding.

In the face of these overwhelming odds, the teacher will have to apply himself to the best of his ability to convey as much Islamic knowledge and education to the child he possibly can, at the same time building and inculcating in him an underlying love and respect for Islam and Islamic values. It is no easy task! It is no light responsibility! Just as the rewards are tremendous, neglect of the responsibility carries an even higher punishment.

If due to his sloppy approach and careless attitude, the teacher of Deen wastes away these precious moments, hundreds of people will be destroyed due to ignorance of Deen, the blame of which will rest upon the teachers' shoulders. He then will be abetting the cause of the enemies of Islam by further driving away the children from Islamic education, right into the clutches of secularism and materialism. May Allaah forbid! May Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى guide all to fulfill this responsibility in a befitting manner! Aameen.

d.) The Purpose of Education

Education is not an end in itself. It is a means to a goal. The idea is to become something or to achieve something. People generally have various motives for acquiring education.

The purpose of education in Islam is to create and nurture such students who will become obedient and righteous servants of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. The goal of Islamic Education is to mould the student in such a way that he always thinks, plans, and acts according to the teachings of Islam at the appropriate times and moments of life.

Thus, in Islamic Education, the curriculum and syllabi should cover all the aspects of Islam that are relevant to a general Muslim's day-to-day activities. In this way education must promote and instill the basic

principles, outlook, and culture of Islam in the students' life. The Quraan states in this regard, "We indeed sent our messengers with clear proofs, and sent down with them the book and the balance, that mankind may stand forth in justice." (Hadeed verse 25) Thus the mission of Rasulullaah ﷺ and all the Ambiyaa عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ was to educate the people in such a manner that a just, healthy, happy, and righteous society came into existence. By virtue of this education, the students will be totally prepared for an adult life with all its responsibilities.

e.) Sincerity of Intention

The teacher should follow in the footsteps of Rasulullaah ﷺ and all the other Ambiya عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ as far as the sincerity of his intention is concerned. Never should his desire or intention be to acquire any worldly rewards, monetary or other. None of the Ambiya عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ ever desired any remuneration for their services: "My reward lies only with Allaah." The intention should be solely to please Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and gain His Pleasure. The sign of sincerity is contentment with whatever remunerations are received. If the teacher leaves one institution for another merely on the motivation of extra salaries, it is a clear sign of his insincerity and that he has made the dunya (world) his motive of teaching. He is thus faltering in his intentions. Rasulullaah ﷺ has sounded a very grave warning for those who utilize the knowledge of Deen to earn their dunya, "He who learns the knowledge whereby the Pleasure of Allaah is acquired (i.e. the knowledge of Deen), in order that he earns of the dunya therefrom, will not even get the smell of Jannah (let alone enter therein)." (Abu Dawood no. 3664, Ibn Majah no. 252)

If possible, the teacher should teach gratis without taking any monetary remuneration. However, if this is not possible due to circumstances, then he should continue to render his responsibilities with shukr and sabr for whatever he is receiving, being mindful of the fact that Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, the

Being for whom he is working is fully aware of his condition, his wants, and needs. He will provide for him from His unseen Treasures. A vast number of our Aslaaf (pious predecessors) spent their lives serving the Deen in this manner. In these times when Asatiza and Mudarriseen have no means of subsistence, it is completely permissible to accept a salary. However, this should never be the motivation or purpose of teaching. The Fuqaha (Jurists) of the latter age (متأخرين) have permitted the acceptance of salary for Deeni work on the basis of necessity (ضرورة). Once Moulana Murtaza Hasan Chandpuri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، expressed misgivings about teaching Deen for a salary before Moulana Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ. His objection was that it apparently resembled selling the Deen. Moulana Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ replied, "Never! In these times it is better to accept a salary. The work of Deen is done more effectively, and a sense of responsibility hangs over the teacher, which is rare in the case of one who is not accepting a salary. This then is the benefit of accepting a salary. As far as the misgiving of 'selling Deen for a salary' is concerned, it is quite easy to differentiate whether a person has sincerity or not, and that is by seeing if he would leave his present employment if offered a higher salary."

f.) Punctuality *(The key attribute of a successful teacher)*

Attendance and punctuality are the key features in any successful teacher, more so a teacher of the Qur'aan and Hadith. In order to produce excellent results in the classroom, a teacher has to imbibe the attribute of punctuality in his/her life. In fact, punctuality is the steppingstone towards success in any field. Coming late to class regularly is a sign of irresponsibility and deprives one of the Noor (light) of Ilm.

Remember that every child in the class is an amaanah and every minute of which you spend in the classroom is also an amaanah. Every teacher will be questioned about these two aspects by Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. When a parent has sent his child to your class, he has certain expectations from you as a

teacher. Most definitely, no parent wants to see that his child's educator is late for classes regularly. What kind of an example are we setting for our learners?

Furthermore, we, as teachers, are paid by our committees for the time we spend teaching. Remember that no amount of wealth can repay a teacher for his knowledge. In reality we are being paid for our time. How important then is it for a teacher to fulfil the proper time requirement? If a teacher is regularly late for classes, then what is he being paid for? Will that wealth which we are accepting at the end of the month be lawful for us or not? The Fuqaaha (Jurists) have mentioned in their books that if you have a bucket of pure clean water and a few drops of urine fall into that bucket, the little urine will contaminate the entire water. Similarly, the few minutes that we come late to class will contaminate our entire salary.

Our Akaabir (elders) were very particular in this regard. They would ensure that they would record the number of minutes they were late during the month and return that amount of salary to the Madrasah, thus securing the Barkat (Blessings) in their earnings.

g.) Setting a Practical Example

It is imperative that the teacher implements in his own life what he propagates to his students. If he contradicts this principle, then he cannot be a source of guidance for his students, nor can he be a practical example for them to emulate. It is this hypocritical attitude that the Quraan has stated in very strong words, "The parable of those that carried the Taurah (by acquiring the knowledge of it) yet they did not carry it (in their practical life and actions) is like that of an ass that is laden with books." (Jumua verse 5). Just as an ass that is laden with books is completely bereft of any benefit from the treasure of knowledge he lugs around, so too the Aalim who, despite having the priceless knowledge of Deen, is deprived of its blessings and goodness by not practicing on it himself.

It is for this very reason that Rasulullaah ﷺ sought refuge from such knowledge that is not beneficial, in his Duaa:

اللهم اني أعوذ بك من علم لا ينفع

Among the first questions that will be posted on the day of Qiyaamah will be regarding practice on the knowledge acquired.

Ali رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ used to say, “O people of knowledge (Ulema)! Practice on your knowledge, for verily an Aalim is only one who practices on his knowledge. Very soon such people will appear, who will have much knowledge, but their knowledge will not descend their throats (i.e., affect their hearts), their outward condition will belie their inward, their practices will clash with their knowledge. They will sit among their groups, boasting about themselves, angered by those that leave their gatherings for that of others. These people's actions will never reach unto Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى (in acceptance).”

Abdullah bin Mubaarak رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ used to say, “The Ulema are the salt of the earth, if the salt gets spoilt, who then will purify and cleanse it?”

h.) **Kindness to Students** – Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى states, “Call towards the way of your Rabb (Lord) with wisdom.” (Nahl verse 46)

In this verse, it is clear that wisdom, love, understanding, kindness, etc. are essential when calling anyone towards the way of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. The student who has volunteered himself to come closer to the Path of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, how much more will kindness and wisdom be desired by the Shariah on his behalf?

The teacher should be extremely kind to his students and treat them like his own children. Rasulullaah ﷺ used to say, “I am unto you like a father unto his children.” Kindness is the outstanding quality of Rasulullaah ﷺ as far as education and teaching was concerned as the following verse of the Noble Quraan suggests, “And We have not sent thee but as a

mercy unto mankind." (verse 107) Rasulullaah ﷺ has been termed a 'mercy unto mankind', thus in his dealings towards the Sahabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, he was extremely kind, tolerant, and gentle. He set the norm for those wishing to emulate him in the field of Islamic guidance and education. Many people were attracted to Islam and accepted Imaan merely on the kind and humane treatment of Rasulullaah ﷺ towards them.

Abu Haroon Abdi and Shahr bin Haushab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ used to say, "When we arrived at the home of Abu Saeed Khudri رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ to acquire knowledge of Deen, he used to say, "Welcome, welcome, listen well! Rasulullaah ﷺ used to say, "Soon the lands of the world will come under your sway (government), and many youth will come to you, hungry and thirsty for knowledge. When they come to you, teach them, be kind and benevolent to them, welcome them and impart to them the knowledge of Hadith." (Ja'miu-Bayanil Ilm no. 991, shorter version in Ibn Majah no. 249)

It is the experience of seniors that kind words are more effective than harsh words. A person wishing to fill a utensil cannot do so when he has already made holes in it. Similarly, the teacher cannot do so when he has already punctured his heart with harsh words and deeds.

If the child has done wrong, criticize the behaviour, not the child. It is important to separate the two. Children can learn to change the behaviour.

Never label a child 'Naughty' 'Lazy' etc. They will then live up to their title. No child improves with insults.

Using punitive methods and harshness may serve temporarily as a means of threatening and frightening the student, but its effects are short lived, its harms are limitless. In this day and age, it is a cause of great strife, mischief and commotion and it creates untold difficulties to all parties involved, especially the administration of the Madrasah and it also tarnishes the image of the Madrasah, teachers, and knowledge of the Deen as a whole.

The teacher that cannot rectify the evil conduct of his students through good character is not worthy of being a teacher. In reality, very few teachers are even aware of their faults and evil conduct and character. They consider themselves to be perfect and accomplished, thus regarding no need for their own rectification (islah) and correction.

Imam Ghazali رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ states, “It is imperative for the teacher to be tolerant and accommodating.”

Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilaani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ states, “Do not consider yourself to be from amongst the 'Ahle-Ilm' (people of knowledge) so long as you are overpowered by your anger.”

Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى describes the soft nature, kindness, and benevolence of Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ in the following verses of the Quraan, “And due to the mercy from Allaah, you were kind unto them. Had you been harsh, hardhearted, they would have fled from you.” (Aal-Imran verse 159)

In ‘Ta’leemul Mutallim,’ it is written that a teacher who is kind, his son will also become an Aalim.

Imam Abu Yusuf رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ used to say, “Treat your students with such kindness that a casual observer will consider them to be your children.”

Moulana Siddiq Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ narrates that once a Bengali student became very ill and appeared to be at his last moments while studying in Madrasah Islamia, Fatehpur, India. The principal and founder of this Madrasah, Moulana Sayyid Zuhurul Islam رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ came to know of this. He rushed to the side of this student, consoling him, and soothing his fears. Thereafter, Moulana felt prostrate into Sajdah, weeping, and begging before Allaah, “O Allaah! Spare the life of this foreigner and restore his health. O Allaah! If you have decreed the taking of his life, then take Atiqullah in lieu of the life

of this student of Deen, who is in my trust and responsibility.” Hardly had a few moments elapsed after this heart-rending Duaa that news arrived of Atiqullah's sudden demise. Atiqullah was the only son of Moulana- a brilliant and talented young son. May Allaah **بَارِكْ وَتَعَالَى** be pleased with both father and son! Aameen! Such was the kindness and compassion of the teachers of before!

Moulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi **رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ** was once conducting lectures on Hadith when suddenly it began to rain. The students picked up their Kitaabs and rushed towards a place of shelter. Moulana Gangohi **رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ** in the meantime, picked up the students' shoes and carried them to a place of safety and cover. Such was the kindness and humility to his students.

If our predecessors had not adopted this attitude of kindness and benevolence towards their students, the knowledge of Deen would never have reached us today. The difference between them and the present-day teachers is that they had a concern and desire for the knowledge of Deen to spread far and wide, for which they tolerated every kind of hardship and difficulty. On the other hand, the present-day teacher is bereft of this feeling, thus he is not prepared to undergo any kind of hardship or difficulties for the imparting of knowledge.

g.) Method of Teaching

7.1 General Techniques of Teaching

The method of teaching plays a great part in making it effective and successful. It has been seen that many a time, a good and meaningful lesson has no impact on the students and is incomprehensible to them due to the incorrect approach and method. On the other hand, a dry and difficult lesson goes straight to the heart of the pupils because of the effective and systematic approach of the teacher together with his realistic method of delivery and explanation.

It is extremely important that the teacher should always consider the interests, feelings, and attitudes of the pupils at the time of teaching and should try his best to take them with him on every point and every detail of the subject he wants to instill in their hearts.

Inviting the full attention of the student

It is quite obvious that the listeners will only listen to the lesson with patience, eagerness, and concentration when their minds have been attracted and drawn towards the lesson. The teacher should thus draw maximum attention during the course of the lesson. We find excellent guidelines in this regard in the Quraan and the Hadith, which are undoubtedly the greatest source of wisdom, good admonition, methodology and psychology. Some of these are as follows:

1. Awakening the curiosity of the student:

The Quraan adopts various techniques to arouse the attention of its readers. It uses small and unusual words and phrases, e.g. 'The calamity! What is the calamity?'

2. Creating stimulating questions:

At times, the attention of the reader is drawn by creating stimulating questions and queries that cause him to think in a particular direction e.g. "What is the day of Recompense? What will let you understand what the day of recompense is?" "See they not how many generations before them were destroyed?" etc.

3. Encouraging and warning:

This is a very common manner that is replete in the Quraan and Hadith. Together with targheeb, tarheeb is also found, e.g., "Inform My servants that verily I am the Most Forgiving, Most Merciful. And that My Chastisement is indeed a most painful Chastisement." In this manner a balanced approach is achieved.

4. Constant repetition:

By constant repetition of an important message, it sinks into the depth of the hearts. A saying in Arabic goes:

"When speech is repeated to the ear, it reaches the depth of the heart." In this regard we find the Quraan repeating many important messages time and again throughout itself. A striking example of this is Surah Rahman, where the verses recounting the favours of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى are repeated almost 38 times within only three Rukus!

Thus, if the students do not understand the first time, or if the teacher feels that the students have not understood for the first time, the lesson should be repeated once or twice. In this manner they will comprehend much better. Anas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ reports that Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ would repeat any important saying thrice in order for the Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ to understand, comprehend and memorize it well.

5. Systematic teaching:

The methodology of teaching should be systematic and proper. The basics and simple issues, fundamental matters, should be dealt with thoroughly before proceeding to higher and more complex matters. Under the discussion of 'Kunu Rabaniyeen', Imam Bukhari Rahimahullaah writes in his famous 'Al Jamius Sahih' (Bukhari Shareef) that the pious and upright Ulema are those that nurture their students by commencing with the simple and basic teachings and proceeding gradually to the complex and higher teachings. This is the methodology that every teacher should adopt, and this should be the key principle in the establishment of any syllabus.

7.2 The Importance of employing wisdom and tact in teaching:

The Quraan states, "Call unto the path of your Rabb (Creator) with wisdom and good admonition." This is the golden principle that every teacher must adopt in his teaching, to teach with wisdom and good admonition. What is

the meaning of wisdom? Many meanings have been expressed regarding wisdom but amongst the best is the following:

Hikmah (wisdom) is the name of that speech that goes right into the heart of man. When a person has been endowed with wisdom, he will adopt the following methods in his approach:

1. Speaks at the most appropriate occasion.
2. Speaks the most appropriate thing for the time and situation.
3. Speaks in the most appropriate tone and manner.
4. Speaks according to the level of the addressee.

When these principles of wisdom are adopted, the speech of this man goes right into the heart of the addressee.

Wisdom implies that the teacher or preacher should use discretion in his work and should not act hastily, rashly, abruptly, etc. Wisdom demands that the circumstances as well as the capacity of the addressee be taken into full consideration and the message be conveyed accordingly.

“Excellent admonition” means to adopt such a manner as to show real and genuine concern for the welfare of the pupil. Nothing should be done or said that will create the impression that the teacher is looking down upon the student and taking pleasure in his own feelings of superiority. It also applies to speaking in a sweet manner, showing noble character and abstention from taunting, and ridiculing the student.

7.3 Explaining according to mental capacity

The teacher’s level of speech and explanation should not be beyond the reach and mental capacity of the student. Rasulullaah ﷺ has commanded us to speak to people according to their mental capacities. When a person speaks beyond the mental capacity of the audience, it can become a source of undue confusion, misunderstanding and mischief. This is also an important point for lecturers and orators to note. Many a time such statements are uttered that are completely true and correct in their

actual sense, but because the audience does not have the ability to understand, it is incorrect to utter these before them as it generally results in confusion.

Ali رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ would point towards his chest, exclaiming, "There are treasures of knowledge within me, but on condition that people of understanding take from it. I do not reveal this knowledge to many people because they do not have the ability to contain it within themselves." The teacher, especially the newly qualified and inexperienced teacher should always bear this point in mind.

h.) Manner of Reprimanding

As far as possible, the teacher should adopt a general and subtle method of reproach and reprimanding the wrongs of the student. Kindness and compassion should never be lacking on such occasions. Harshness and abruptness have adverse effects and cause stubbornness, defiance, and rebellion in the student.

The pious elders have left a sterling example in this regard. Khwaja Shamsul Mulook رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, who was the teacher of Khwaja Nizamuddin Awliya رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, used to say, "What have I done to upset you?" when any student remained absent from classes. It is quite clear what an effect such humility and compassion would have on the students! Never would they want to remain absent from classes. It is on the basis of this type of kindness that the students of former days revered and adored their teachers.

If ever a need arises for the teacher to reprimand a student for his misdeeds, it should be done in privacy, because exposing his evil before one and all will cause him great embarrassment and shame. Thereafter, without mentioning his name, the evil of such misdeeds could be explained before the rest of the pupils to prevent them from committing the same. In this

way the purpose of advice and safety from embarrassment, both can be easily achieved.

One particularly effective method of turning and moulding the students' character by narrating to them incidents from the lives of the pious predecessors. This will create an incentive to practice and emulate their ways. A very effective and useful Kitaab to this end is the 'Stories of Sahabah' by Moulana Zakariyya Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ.

Qari Siddiq Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ of Banda in India was once advised by one of his senior teachers to include words of advice and islaah in every lesson and subject. Many teachers are negligent in this regard, resulting in the decadence of the students' morals and character.

It is also observed that despite spending years in the institutions of knowledge (Makaatib and Madaaris), students do not have the slightest inclination or importance of Deen in their hearts. What is the reason for this pitiable condition? It is because no importance was accorded to the nurturing and character development of the student. Besides intellectual and theoretical discourses, no effort is expended in the upliftment of the morals of the students. The result of this gross error and negligence is before our eyes.

If expressing anger and displeasure is the only efficient manner of rectifying a faltering student, it will be permissible to resort to this method of correction and rectification. However, it should be noted that anger in one matter should not be expressed in other matters. Similarly, anger on one student should not be displayed on other students. This is wrong and a form of oppression on innocent ones.

Nowadays, the easiest manner of overcoming student-related problems is by expelling or dismissing them. This is indeed a foolish and immature

approach to this problem. When anything goes wrong with the body, amputation is the last resort. Firstly, every effort at curing and remedying the ill limb is expended. Only under dire circumstances is an amputation carried out. Similar should the approach to misbehaving students be. After every effort of correction has failed, then only should the drastic action of expulsion be resorted to, this too after much deliberation and pondering into the consequences of such a decision. Allaah alone knows how many potential students were lost due to a careless and negligent approach to this problem.

The teacher should be prepared to overlook and forgive the wrongs of the student, because the student is a cause of benefit to the teacher. Forgiveness and tolerance will cause his status to increase in Allaah's sight. Never should the teacher allow his mind and heart to be clouded or polluted against any student. It will be detrimental to both.

Mufti Mahmud Sahib رحمته الله advises, “Despite the great extent of decline and decadence in the standard of knowledge, it is still a cause of goodness and virtue and a preventative from many evils, to be engaged in the dissemination and propagation of Islamic knowledge.” Thus, teachers should not become despondent and leave their responsibilities.

i.) Taking Service from Students

Some teachers are in the habit of taking services from their students, particularly from little children. For example, to do various household chores, wash the car, run to the shops etc. It is not permissible for the teacher to take service in this manner from the children without the consent of their parents.

Even with regard to taking service from other's children, the Shariah has formulated regulations. These are as follows:

1. Parents must consent to it.

2. After the parent's consent, the work must not be beyond the capacity and strength of the child.
3. The work handed to the child must never be against the Shariah.
4. If the child is baaligh (mature), then he must be prepared to render the service happily, without any pressure or coercion whatsoever.

It is not permissible to accept any gift from immature children even though they are prepared to give voluntarily. Worse than this is the habit of actually asking and demanding of the child to bring something. This is totally against the Shariah.

Ibn Abbas رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ reports that Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ embraced him and made Duaa for him, "O Allaah! Bless him with knowledge of the Quraan." From this Hadith it can be learnt that besides imparting knowledge, it is also a duty of the teacher to make Duaa on behalf of his students.

1.) Inspiring incidents – Below is an incident that occurred in a Maktab in (KZN). It was really inspirational to hear this story and the need was felt that it must be shared with all teachers, hoping that it will inspire one and all. May Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى grant us the taufeeq to also act in the same manner. Sometimes we are quick to write off a student. We feel that he is not capable and thus ask him to leave the Madrasah. Think for a moment, how will we answer to Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى if He asks us, "A child came to your door searching for ME and you turned him away. Why?" How will we answer? May Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى forgive us.

Note: The names of the children and the Madrasah have been changed.

At the beginning of 2018, a new child enrolled at Madrasah Atfaal. He seemed to be very disturbed. What was really surprising about this boy was his violent behaviour. No child could pass him without being punched, slapped, or kicked. The other children in his class were terrified of him. By the third day, four children left the Madrasah and the Apa was now going

crazy in her class. No one could control this boy. He was extremely disturbed, and his behaviour was beyond anyone's control. By the fourth day, the Apa was ready to hand in her resignation saying, "Either he remains in the class, or I remain. The way things are going, it seems as if all the children in the class will leave. Some drastic action has to be taken immediately." The poor Apa could not be blamed for this since most others in a similar situation would have probably done the same.

The principal phoned his mother and asked her if she could come in immediately. When she arrived half an hour later, her son's behaviour at the Madrasah was spelt out to her. She burst into tears saying, "I don't know what to do with him anymore. The school principal expelled him last week. His father has a terrible temper and beats me up at home. He sees his dad behaving in this manner. What you are seeing him doing is an imitation of what he sees his father doing."

"I'm sorry, we won't be able to keep him in the Madrasah," said the principal. "He's going to chase all the students away from here." A senior Apa at the Madrasah happened to overhear this conversation. She came forward and said softly, "How can we send a child away from our Madrasah when he came here to learn the knowledge of Deen? How will we answer to Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى for this? Let me take him in my class and I will try my best to work with him."

The next day she took the little boy into her class and made Duaa to Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى to help her with this child. The first thing the Apa did was contact the mother. She said to her, "We are going to fight this battle together, and we are going to win In-sha-Allaah. But we have to do this together. Are you prepared?" The mother assured her co-operation. The Apa then gave her the following guidelines;

"Firstly," said the Apa, "I want you to wake up every night at the time of Tahajjud and make Duaa for your son. Remember, the Duaas of a mother

are readily accepted. I will also wake up at the time of Tahajjud and make Duaa for him.”

“Secondly, I’m going to give you a book. It’s written by a great Aalim, Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ. The name of the book is Fazaail-e-Aamaal. Every night sit with your son and read to him the Ahaadith contained in this book. This book contains valuable advices. Reading the Hadith of Rasulullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ in your home will bring about great peace and barkat in your home and in your life. Try to practise on whatever you read.”

“Thirdly, I’m going to give you a CD of Moulana Yunus Patel رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ. The CD contains Moulana’s zikr. Play the CD at home every night and sit with your son on the Musalla. With full concentration make the Zikr of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى in your home.”

With the above advices from the Apa, the little boy’s mother undertook the arduous journey with her son to try and rectify the situation. Every night after the Esha Salaah, they sat together reading the advices from Fazaail-e-Amaal and making Zikr of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. At the time of Tahajjud she would awake from her bed and make special Duaa for her son. Can we imagine the effect of this Duaa. The Duaa of a mother and that too, at the time of Tahajjud.

Its six months since that day and the young boy is a completely different child. He sits quietly in his class and learns his Sabaq every day. He adores his Apa and has all the time in the world for her. His mother says that when he comes home, the only thing he speaks about is “My Apa told me this and my Apa told me that.” He doesn’t speak anything about school or the sports he plays at school. The thing he really enjoys in life is his time at the Madrasah.

On the last day of the Madrasah term before the children could leave for the holidays, his Apa bought burgers for all the children in her class as a

treat for them. One child commented, “Apa you only bought us a burger. Where is the coke?” The little boy was very upset with this statement. He immediately retorted, “That’s being ungrateful. You should at least say JazakAllaah to Apa for buying us a burger.”

This is the power of a Maktab ustadh/apa. Outwardly it may seem that they have only 15 children in front of them whom he can make an effort on, but in reality, they have 15 families before them. They can make that difference in the homes of all these children. That is why our elders tell us that when we sit in the classroom, make intention for the hidaayat (guidance) of the entire mankind. Who knows that through one child Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will cause the winds of Hidaayat to blow on the entire mankind. In this instance, the Apa managed to introduce Ta’leem and Zikr in the home of that child and also got the mother to wake up for Tahajjud daily.

No child is a Write-off. We cannot chase any child away. As a teacher, YOU can make that difference in the life of that child. May Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى inspire us all to be an inspiration for our students in the classroom and guide us to be a true reflection of our beloved Rasul صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

2.) Mufti Mahmood Hasan Sahib Gangohi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ نARRATES that once a certain person was dispatched to Kandhla by his teacher to impart the knowledge of Deen in that area. He arrived there and began to fulfil his responsibility of teaching in a local Masjid there. The trustees of the Masjid evicted him from there after only a few days had passed. Even under these trying conditions, he continued to fulfil the duty and responsibility that was placed upon him, under a tree. The people after some time realised their folly and allowed him to return to the Masjid. Once, one of his students fled from the Madrasah for some reason. In his deep concern, he set out in search of this student, traveling far and wide, until he found him in Multan (a distant city). With great kindness and love, he convinced him to return to the Madrasah. Such was the devotion and dedication of the teachers of the former times.

Due to this unselfish service of Deen, Allaah ﷻ caused great benefit to accrue from him to this community of Kandhla, whereby many great Ulema and pious persons abounded here. It is from this very place that people like Moulana Yahya, Moulana Ilyas, Moulana Zakariyya, Moulana Yusuf, and Moulana In'amul-Hasan Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللهِ هَالِ hail.

3.) In a Mashwarah held by an organization which oversees the running of a number of Makaatib in the indigenous areas within South Africa, some Ulama expressed their surprise over the progress of one particular Maktab. The Ustaaz there is not a fully qualified Aalim, nor is he very eloquent in his speech. Rather, he is very soft-spoken, shy, and humble. In fact, he sometimes stammers in his speech and in his recital. Added to that, unlike the case in most areas, he is not staying in that location. He is staying in another area at a distance, where he teaches at another Madrasah in the mornings. Therefore, he is not the Imaam in that area, nor is a Musalla for 5 times Salaah established there (which is normally the cause of an even weaker environment in any area).

However, the inspector of these Makaatib explained, “When we went for Imtihaan to his Maktab, we found the kids there surpass the kids of all the other areas in progress (Hifz) of their work. Especially surprising was the fluent manner in which the students had memorized the Ahaadith. The most amazing thing is that he was, for most of the time, the only teacher. On average per day, his Maktab has 30 to 40 children (a consistency rate which is very unique in such areas, and which shows the level of enthusiasm of the students). He teaches them all by himself.”

One Imaam of another area expressed his thoughts in that meeting. He suggested that he may have the answer to explain why this Maktab happened to have this level of progress. He said, “I had an opportunity of sharing a room with him for 10 or 11 months while I was a student. He did not miss Tahajjud Salaah for even one single night. Alhamdulillah, in that year, I also taught with him in his Maktab (as a trainee). It surprised me that

he knew all the homes and the families of his students (even though he was not staying in that area). He used to spend most of his money to assist those families who were in need of food. He would also give some gifts to his students (those who did well) weekly.”

This very Ustaaz makes his yearly Qurbaani at his Maktab, and thereafter feeds and distributes to his students.

May Allaah bless us with such qualities!

Hifz Classes

All the above equally apply to those teaching Hifz classes as well. A few additional points:

1. Many Ulama are, Alhamdulillah, engaged in running Hifz classes on a full or part time basis. Unfortunately in many cases the bulk of the focus is only on completing Hifz in the shortest possible time. The aspect of Tarbiyat is given little time and consideration. Often in a short time after completing Hifz these students then do not even leave any visible sign of Islam on themselves, Allaah forbid. The Hifz class presents a perfect opportunity for Tarbiyat. The Ustaad needs to use this opportunity to make the Tarbiyat of the student and through him the Islaah of his family will, In-sha-Allaah be achieved.
2. Many Ustadhs push their students to complete. They continue forward with Sabaq while all the back paras are getting weak due to not doing Dor properly and constantly. Many people complete their Hifz in this way! Sometimes the learner is in a great hurry to reach the end of his Hifz. This is not proper. At times it is pressure from the parents, who insist that the child completes quickly or in a certain time span. This is not the correct stance from the parents. The parents who intend enrolling their child in a Hifz class must also realize what they are putting their child in for. They must be given guidelines to this effect.

Remember that after completing Hifz, it is extremely difficult to dedicate oneself fully to strengthen one's Dorr.

3. The Ustaad's passion to teach Hifz must be a main feature in his/her life. Such Asaatiza will achieve their goals and go forward in leaps and bounds. The Ustaad must also have the quality of punctuality, as this is vital. Time management is of utmost importance in a Hifz class.

Beautiful Advices for those Teaching in a Madrasah

1.) Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ said, "If there are 5 thousand students in your Madrasah, but Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى is unhappy, and it is not accepted by Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, then it is useless. On the other hand, you may have 'five' students, who may not even complete, but Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى is happy with the efforts, then one is 100% successful."

2.) All Asaatidhah at the Madrasah should have unity. 'Unity is strength'. Alhamdulillah, it is a great Bounty of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى that we are not 'clones,' and we all have different ideas and viewpoints. Instead of considering this to be a hindrance in progression, if one conducts oneself with beautiful Akhlaaq (character) then, In-sha-Allaah, this vibrant mixture of ideas may even result in a 'composite' material with the best qualities of everyone put together!

3.) Even if there are teachers in an institution who are A+ and excellent material, the real success criteria of the lessons are based on: a) sincere dedication and commitment of teachers b) the heartfelt effort of the teachers c) the Ikhlāas and sincerity inside and the deep hearted gratitude at all times of feeling especially selected for the Deen of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى...

4.) All teachers should make a concerted effort at any given opportunity to make a contribution to this beautiful sense of brotherhood within the staffing body. This could range from a simple passing compliment to something more elaborate, like giving gifts to one another, or even being there for each other during personal testing times.

5.) Do not engage in any form of backbiting of any staff, and in order to maintain a mirror clean heart, do not allow yourself to 'listen to' or even entertain any incorrect negative thoughts about anyone. In the case of this happening, make Salaam to the person, try to dissolve the negative feeling through gestures of excellent Akhlaaq (character) and most of all, raise your hands in Duaa for the person and make heartfelt Duaas for them. Then watch the burden lift from your heart, and a feeling of purity within In-sha-Allaah.

6.) NEVER look down on anyone at all! Constantly think of all the good qualities in others, regardless of which pedestal we may 'consider' ourselves to be standing on. So, what if a teacher was struggling with something that you may think was 'simple.' who said that any 'single one' of your actions are accepted? Accept the truth, think of the sins that you may have committed which no one else knows about. what If they were to be exposed? Then wholeheartedly understand that 'everyone' is better than you. And that you really have 'no' room for this 'superiority complex'.

7.) Share all your good practices and remember, we are all batting in the 'same team' so our competition is not against each other but rather, it is a collective effort, with the same goals, the same aims, wanting to achieve the same objectives in this world and in the Hereafter... and that is the 'Pleasure of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and emulation of Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ In-sha-Allaah. May Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى bless us with this, Aameen!

8.) Always remain worried and concerned about your own spiritual state of the heart and that of the students... For when the heart is right, the whole body is right, and when the hearts of those who are the heart of the Madrasah are right, then the entire Madrasah and institution will be right. May Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى purify all our hearts! Aameen!

9.) And lastly but most importantly! Make lots and lots of Duaas for yourself, for your teachers, for your students and for your fellow Asaatidhah and the Madrasah.

10.) If you work like this, then, SubhaanAllaah, this Madrasah will become a haven of peace and tranquility filled with so much 'Barakah' that the fruits of your efforts will not simply be enjoyed and felt by the people of your locality, but rather these far reaching effects will reach throughout the four corners of the world throughout the entire Ummah.. Aameen

May Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى accept us all for the khidmat (service) of His Deen with sincerity forever! Aameen!

Imaamat

Status

Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى says in the Qur'aan,

“And we made from them imams (leaders), giving guidance under our command, when they were patient and used to believe with certainty in our Aayaat.”

From the above Verse we firstly need to understand that whoever holds the position of Imaamat, has in fact been honoured and favoured by Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى to be in a very enviable position.

The position is in fact in emulation of that position that was first held by the Imaamul Ambiyaa and Imaamul Ummah, Sayyiduna Muhammad ﷺ, as well as Ambiyaa عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ before him.

Further the Imaam is not leading the community in an insignificant and trivial activity. He is primarily leading the community in the most important act of Ibadah, viz. Salaah. In other words, Imaamat is that important position whereby the community is linked via the greatest Ibaadah to the Highest Being, Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

It thus follows that the person honoured with this task is indeed charged with a most important responsibility. He links up the followers to Allaah, via congregational Salaah. If his Salaah is defective, he will have to bear the burden of defective Salaah of his followers. If he performed a good Salaah then he will be rewarded the total sum of the reward of his followers.

الإِمَامُ ضَامِنٌ فَإِنْ أَحْسَنَ فَلَهُ وَلَهُمْ، وَإِنْ أَسَاءَ فَعَلَيْهِ وَلَا عَلَيْهِمْ

The most important thing to remember about Imaamat is that the Imaam is at all times looked upon with respect by his followers and as such he must ensure that his conduct is at all times impeccable.

The Imaam must necessarily be well versed with all the Fiqhi aspects of Salaah in addition to the specific aspects relating to his role and function as an Imaam.

The function of the Imaam can be Categorized as follows:

1. Imaamah:

Needless to mention that this is the most important function of the Imam which he must execute with utmost enthusiasm and punctuality. Not only must he be regular for every Salaah but must ensure that he is punctual in the Masjid reasonably well before the commencement of Jamaah Salaah. It should not be that he comes in hastily huffing and puffing just when the

clock strikes the commencement time. This causes consternation and anxiety for the Musallees. He must not give them the opportunity to turn their heads looking for him.

Many Imaams come into the Masjid a few minutes before the Salaah, hasten in performing their Sunnah Salaah (such as before Fajr and Zuhr) and then commence with the Imaamat. Many people complain of Imaams hastening with their Sunnats before and after the Fardh Salaah, yet the Fardh Salaah is kept extremely lengthy particularly the loud Salaah. In a particular Masjid, the Imaam would take approximately 13 minutes in Esha Salaah. The Imaam should always be considerate of his followers particularly when weak and elderly attend the congregational Salaah.

Imaams should keep to the Sunnah Qiraah, which the Tiwaal-e-Mufassal in the Fajr and Zuhr Salaah, Awsaat-e-Mufassal in the Asr and Esha Salaah and the Qisaar-e-Mufassal in the Maghrib Salaah.

The Imaam should perform his Sunnah and Nafil Salaah in the Masjid. Certain Imaams leave the Masjid immediately after the Fardh Salaah with the intention of performing the Sunnah and Nafil Salaah at home. This leaves a negative impact on the Musallis.

The Imaam should not leave the Masjid after completing his Sunan and Nawaafil but delay his stay a little longer so that he is accessible to Musallis that require advice and assistance.

The Imaam should make Salaam to his Musallis and find out about their well-being. This creates an excellent relationship between the Imaam and his Musallis.

If any of the Musallis are not present for Salaah for a number of days, then he should enquire in regard to them. If they are ill, he should visit them.

2. Ta'leem

An on-going process of teaching should be taking place in the Masjid. Separate times should be allocated for the Ta'leem of not only males but females as well. The issues covering adult Ta'leem should be on Fiqhi issues, correcting Tilawat of Quraan, Aqaaid, Tazkiya, and General Islamic Uloom like Seerah and other social issues. Preferably on different nights of the week. If it is not possible for the Imaam to conduct all these programmes he should enlist the assistance of other Ulama in the locality to fulfill this responsibility. However, when choosing an Alim, one should ensure that his beliefs, Manhaj, etc. are in order. There is generally no issue if he studied at one of our institutes.

A daily five-to-seven-minute Tafseer, (after Fajr preferably) a Hadith (after some other Salaah), is a very effective way of imparting Ilm to a crowd that is always rushing into the Masjid just to rush out.

With the rapid spread of Islam, special classes for imparting basic, fundamental knowledge to the reverts should also be given importance.

A special program catering for the youth and the young should be conducted once in a while at their level.

Hidaayat talks should be given to Huffaaz prior to Ramadhaan regarding Tahaarat, Istibraa, wudhu etc.

The lady's program must likewise cover the Uloom imparted at the Masjid as well as issues relevant to them.

In Ramadhaan when Muslims flock to the Masjid, no stone must be left unturned to nourish their spiritual needs.

On auspicious nights (the authentic ones) and the other 'big nights,' the opportunity must not be lost to advise and educate the congregation that has come to listen! Use these opportunities to highlight important aspects of Deen and do not make it a ritual bayaan.

In many places, the Muadhin is giving Adhan incorrectly for many years. It is the duty of the Imam to teach him with wisdom the correct method of Adhan.

3. Jumu'ah

This is the most important occasion where the general Muslim population get to listen to the advices of the Imaam. As such, a powerful, effective, and educational discourse should be delivered whereby the congregation is inspired, made to feel proud as Muslims and encouraged. Let the Musallee leave with something that makes him want to better himself.

Important Points Regarding the Bayaan

- a.) Must be well prepared
- b.) Quote Aayaat and Ahaadeeth in Arabic.
- c.) Make a simple translation of the Ayat or Hadeeth.
- d.) Do not scream, shout, and deliver a talk. Speak in a moderate and humble tone. Do not be authoritative in your speech, be diplomatic and humble.
- e.) Be concise and specific.
- f.) Correct your intentions.
- g.) Always keep the motto of our Madressah in mind (Learn; Practice, Propagate - LPP)
- h.) Avoid addressing the congregation with words like 'you' or 'you people.' Use WE!
- i.) Balance the Bayaan according to Targheeb and Tarheeb.
- j.) Current issues and contemporary matters must be kept in mind when preparing and researching the topic. In contemporary and current issues, outline the Islamic solution to the problem. The important events and days

of the Islamic Calendar and History must likewise be kept in mind which can form a good basis for a Jumu'ah discourse.

k.) Every Bayaan must have an introduction, body, conclusion, solution, and the main message must be emphasized at the end.

l.) Avoid explaining intricate masa'il and matters of no relevance to the people in the Masjid. Remember the principal:

يَسِّرُوا وَلَا تُعَسِّرُوا وَبَشِّرُوا وَلَا تُنْفِرُوا

However, this does not mean that one should not prohibit from evil. This is an important duty which needs to be fulfilled.

Rasulullaah ﷺ said, "Verily Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى will not punish all the people because of the actions of the elite until they see evil in front of themselves and inspite of having power, they do not prevent them. When they will do this, then Allaah will punish the general masses as well as the elite." (Musnad Ahmad no. 17720)

Rasulullaah ﷺ said, "O people, command good and prevent evil before a time comes when you will make Duaa to Him and He will not accept, and you will seek forgiveness, but He will not forgive you. Verily commanding good and preventing evil will not remove sustenance nor will it bring one's death closer. Verily when the Jewish rabbis and the Christian monks left commanding good and preventing evil, then Allaah cursed them on the tongues of their Ambiyaa عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ and they became caught up in a general punishment. (Al-Mu'jamul-Awsat no. 1367) In a narration of Ayesha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا this addition is found, [command right and prevent evil before] you seek His help, and He will not help you." (Al-Mu'jamul-Awsat no. 6665)

Mu'aadh bin Jabal رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates that Rasulullaah ﷺ said, "You people shall remain on the clear path of your Rabb as long as two intoxicants do not become manifest amongst you; the intoxicant of ignorance and the intoxicant of love for this world. Even though you may be enjoining what is good, forbidding what is evil and waging Jihaad in the path of Allaah, as soon as the intoxicant of love for this world manifests itself

amongst you, you will stop enjoining what is good, forbidding what is evil and waging Jihaad in the path of Allaah. Those who speak by the Qur'aan and the Sunnah during such times will be like the very first to accept Islaam from the Muhaajireen and the Ansaar." (Musnad Bazaar no.2631)

However, one should make mention of evils in such a manner that people at least understand the evil of what they are doing. Rectify wrong practices with diplomacy and correct knowledge. The method of fulfilling this noble task has to be in line with the methodology of the Ambiya عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ to truly bear fruits. Mufti Shafi Saheb رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ writes, "Calling to Allaah is in reality the work of the Ambiya عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ. The Ulama are utilized to fulfil this great duty, since they are the vicegerents of the Ambiya عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ. It is therefore binding upon them to learn the etiquettes and mannerism of this noble effort from them. That propagation which is not in line with these principles leads to enmity, arguments, and fights." (Ma'ariful-Quran vol. 5 page 422)

At another juncture, he writes, "The effort of reform and propagation in this era is not fully effective due to two reasons:

1.) Due to the evils found in our time and the abundance of Haraam, generally the hearts of people have become hard, and people are unmindful of the Hereafter. The ability to accept the truth has decreased. Some are afflicted with the punishment explained to us by Rasulullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ that in the final era, the hearts of people will be inverted which will result in one not being able to differentiate between good and evil, permissible, and impermissible.

2.) There is general neglect of commanding righteousness, prohibiting evil and the duty of calling towards the truth. Leave alone the general masses, there is a lack of realizing the necessity of this responsibility amongst the Ulama and pious. A person feels that it is sufficient to correct his deeds, even though his wife, children, brothers, friends, and relatives are drowned in sins. It is as though he is not responsible for their reformation, whereas the clear texts of the Qur'aan and Hadith state that it is a compulsory duty

for a man to make an effort to reform his family members and acquaintances, “Save yourselves and your family from the Fire.”

Then those few people who turn their attention to this duty of reformation and correction are completely unaware of the Qur’aanic teachings and the principles and etiquettes of the invitation of the Ambiya عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ. Without thinking, they blurt out whatever they want to whenever they want to. Then they sit contented, feeling that they have completed their duty. However, since this method is contrary to the Sunnah Method of the Ambiya عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ, it leads people further away from Deen and practicing on the Commands of Deen. This is more so found in the case where one criticizes another. This eventually leads to scorning, deriding, and ridiculing. Today, it is regarded to be a service of Deen when a person’s faults are brought forth in the public. May Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى grant us the ability to serve His Deen and to invite others towards it with correct understanding and in accordance with its principles!” (Ma’ariful-Qur’aan vol. 5 page 430 m.) Never use the Mimbar as a platform to attack opposing parties.

4. COMMUNITY & SOCIAL

Apart from using wisdom and diplomacy to address the ills, problem, and evils prevalent in society via the Mimbar, the Imaam should also tackle these issues with a hands-on approach, by interacting with the parties, sympathizing, guiding, counselling, advising, encouraging them (within Shar’ee parameters). His object should be *Islaah*.

Always try to unify the Community, as long as it does not lead to breaking the Commands of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

The quality of Nabi صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ “*Azeezun Alayhi Ma Anittum –it grieves him when difficulty befalls you*” should be inculcated in the heart. Various disputes relating to marital, business, family etc. issues that threaten to

disunite the community must be resolved and diffused by or through the Imaam.

Give full support to those organizations in the community who are also striving to uplift humanity, though you may not be part of them.

5. General

1. A true Imaam knows every Musallee in his Masjid. When a new face is seen by him in the Masjid, he enquires as to whether this person is a new resident, and sincerely offers him whatever assistance he might need. Likewise, the prolonged absence of the regular Musallees should not escape his attention.

2. He should be concerned as to why the Masjid is not being inhabited and earnestly share this concern with his congregation. He should likewise show a special interest in the Salaah attendance of the youngsters and the youth.

3. The birth of a baby, the illness or hospitalization of community members, crises in someone's home, death etc. should all be in his knowledge, and he should be quick to assist and support his community in these. Similarly, those proceeding for Haj and Umrah and in the Path of Allaah should be met and advised, as well as those about to get married. Many are not aware of basic rules regarding Masaail of marriage and divorce. A contact with High-school and University students should be kept.

Be the first to assist on the occasion of funerals. Refrain from partaking of meals at the funeral home.

Always be ready to perform Nikahs even though it may be on a holiday or weekend when you are not on duty. If you are going to be out of town, then try finding a suitable replacement.

4. When the community as a whole is facing a crisis of whatever nature (Allaah forbid) then he should be at the helm of matters consulting, guiding, and giving leadership.

5. He should always be reflecting as to how to better the lot of the Ummah and expedite the resources within his community to make necessary facilities available.

6. In those areas where Imamah is on a rotational basis, the off duty Imaam must necessarily be in the Masjid. It should not be as though he is only seen in the Masjid when on Imamah duties.

7. An Imaam should always stay away from actions which are undesirable. If an action is permissible, but people may become confused as they do not know the details regarding it, then abstain. "Stay away from such actions which can be a cause for people to accuse you." Extra care should be taken when it comes to females. If there is a need to discuss some matter, then ensure that one's wife or other men are present. Never be in solitude. Visiting fairs, shows, and other places of entertainment which are full of Fitnah is not appropriate for an Imaam. The appearance of the Imaam should not be any different during the vacations - he should always be dressed in Shari' attire. The Imaam should adopt simplicity in all matters.

8. Do not lash out against the Madrasahs, Khanqahs, Jamaat and all other activities which are righteous. Give moral support to all these functions for they are a light to our activities in and outside the Masjid. If they err, then speak to those in charge of them, so that the matter is rectified.

9. Always find out correct procedures in every matter by finding out from senior Ulama, Muftis and other pious personalities. If this is difficult, then make Mashwarah with even junior Ulama and pious elders in the community.

10. Be careful with regards to monetary matters. Always ensure that bills are paid. Avoid taking loans. Even if people offer to help, one should not ask them for help. It is a different matter altogether if they give a gift from their own side. Do not borrow people's vehicles or use Musallis for your personal gain. Our attention and focus should be on Allaah alone.

11. Often the "job description" of contracts are looked at and anything not contained therein is not regarded as one's duty. There is a need to move away from this mindset, and instead constantly "create taqazas" in the light of the overall job description of bringing Deen alive in the community. There is a trend developing where asking for the number of holidays to be increased is a major factor when discussing employment. This is also leaving a negative impression on committees and communities.

12. Because he is in the position of Niyaabatur Rasul, his Akhlaaq also need to be in conformity to that position. He should try to be seen smiling, he should be the first to make Salaam, he should be humble, compassionate, tolerant, forgiving, magnanimous of heart, dignified, and should avoid ill temper and foul language etc. However, he should not joke too much with his congregation, as this will lead to them losing respect over time. To be humorous with them occasionally is meritorious.

12. Most of the tasks mentioned above in relation to the job description of the Imaam are unpaid: unpaid by the committees or creation. Remember a true Imaam lives by the Quranic dictum of all the Ambiyaa عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ

وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجْرِي إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

Yes, and that remuneration will come handsomely in this world and even more handsomely in the next. After all, if Allaah has honoured an Imaam to be in that position that he is a civil servant in the Royal Court of the Master of the Treasures of the Universe, then how well would he be remunerated from the Royal Treasury!

Welfare, Marriage, Divorce, Social

Virtues of assisting people - Even before Nabuwwat, Rasulullaah ﷺ engaged in assisting people in different ways. Khadeejah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا said to him, "Allah will never disgrace you. You keep good relations with your kith and kin, help the poor and the destitute, serve your guests generously and assist the deserving calamity-afflicted ones." (Bukhari no.3)

There are many Ahaadith of Rasulullaah ﷺ that extol assisting mankind through their difficulties, whether the difficulties are emotional, physical, financial, or of any other type.

Rasulullaah ﷺ said,

1. None of you can be a believer till he loves for his brother what he loves for himself. (Bukhari no. 13, Muslim no. 45)
 2. A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim. He neither wrongs him nor hands him over to the enemy. Whoever fulfils the need of a Muslim, Allaah will fulfil his need. Whoever removes a difficulty from a Muslim, Allaah will remove from him one of the difficulties of the day of Resurrection. Whoever conceals [the fault of] a Muslim, Allaah will conceal his fault on the day of Resurrection. (Bukhari no. 2442, Muslim no. 2580)
 3. Indeed Iblis places his throne on the [ocean's] water. He then dispatches his troops. The one who is closest to him is he who creates the most amount of Fitnah (dissension). One of them comes to him and reports: 'I did such and such a deed.' Iblis replies, "You haven't done anything.' Another of them then says, 'I didn't leave until I separated between him (a particular man) and his wife.' Iblis brings him close to him [and in one narration 'embraces him'] and says, 'You have done well.' (Muslim no. 2813)
- Rasulullaah ﷺ said, "Shaitaan has no hope of those who establish Salaah worshipping him in the Arabian Peninsula. However, he has the hope

of causing conflict [and enmity] among them.” (Muslim no. 2812) One can conclude from this Hadith that if Shaytaan is most pleased with a couple being divorced then Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى must surely be becoming incredibly pleased when a couple reconcile.

Common Social Problems

a. Ladies leaving the home to earn an income - Islam is a Deen of Fitrah and whenever and in whichever way a person strays from the path of Deen he will encounter difficulties. The Ummah has decided to allow its daughters to undertake secular education for the fear that if “something happens” they have something to fall back on to. Thus Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has left us to ourselves, “أَنَا عِنْدَ ظَنِّ عَبْدِي بِي.” Previously Muslims relied on Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى helped us. Today we have placed our trust in secular education and as a result we see that divorces have increased and more and more females are responsible for running the home, even when they are in Nikah.

The following problems of society can be attributed to ladies leaving the home to earn an income.

1. Neglect of the orders of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.
2. Reversal of roles in the home. Wife wanting to be more dominant in the home as compared to in past times. Since she has her own money, she feels equal to the husband and also feels that she has the right to make decisions and very often, sidestep him.
3. Neglect of children that leads to children searching for comfort in drugs and other vices.
4. Immodesty. Dressing up to go to work.

5. Promiscuity. Continuous mixing with non-Mahrams leads to Haraam relationships.
6. Spousal abuse. The husband feels threatened by the wife's financial strength and deals with it through abuse.
7. Divorce. Co-employees enter into Haraam relationships which often leads to the breakdown of one of their marriages and in many instances both marriages.
8. Wife shows dis-regard and disrespect to the husband.
9. Parents and husband cannot control and advise such ladies as they contribute to the running of the home and in many instances, they are the sole earners in their parent's home.
10. The husband feels insecure and doubts the wife. He therefore accuses her of relationships with other men.

b. Promiscuity - The Ruhaaniyyat and spirituality of the Ummah is very low and the waves and tides of immorality that we are bombarded with compounds the problem. The nature of immorality found in the Ummah leaves one astounded and dumfounded to say the least. Mufti Ahmed Khanpuri Saheb (daamat barakaatuhu) quoted a Hadith the gist of which is that when a man has a relationship outside the marriage he is deprived of the true pleasure of his wife. The harms of extra-marital relations are evident. Pornography has become the scourge of society. Children that have not yet reached Bulooah are addicted to it. Promiscuity gives rise to the following:

1. Neglect of Deen.
2. Breakdown of the family unit.

3. The in-ability of implementing Deen in the home, especially by the spouse that is involved in Haraam as no one respects him/her.
4. Physical abuse.
5. Non-fulfilment of conjugal relations.
6. Dis-unity of the community.

c. Alcohol and Substance Abuse - Our children are being introduced to intoxicants from a young age and the challenge of peer pressure does not make it any easier to resist. Over the years we are witnessing an increase in the consumption of alcohol. Intoxicants are the mother of all evil and the harms of intoxicants are evident to us. This generally gives rise to:

1. Violating the Order of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى
2. Spousal abuse.
3. Non-fulfilment of Nafaqah (responsibility of maintaining the family).
4. Crime and stealing to fund the habit.

d. Rights and responsibilities - We are living in an era where much emphasis is placed on human rights. Therefore, every member of society is concerned about claiming their rights rather than being concerned about fulfilling the rights of others. This leads to continuous arguments and fights as a result of each individual thinking that he is justified in claiming his right.

e. Financial difficulty - We are living in very challenging financial times. Prices are soaring and finding suitable employment is becoming difficult. A shortage of finances creates huge tension, in the home, in the form of continuous quarrels, more so when the environment we live in is hedonistic and materialistic. The spirit of making Sabr is dwindling and ladies at times, ask out of Nikah when the husband is experiencing challenging financial times.

f. Emotional Baggage - There are many individuals in our society that have been exposed to different types of abuse in the home, the father physically assaulting the mother, etc. This results in different types of emotional issues

that manifest in the form of anger, low self-worth, etc. This impacts on their relationships within the family as well as the broader society.

g. Neglect of the elderly - It is extremely sad that the elderly of our community has been shunned and neglected. They live lives of loneliness and depression. This is very often as a result of their children not wanting to disrupt the enjoyment and entertainment of their own lives.

Managing social problems

a. Adhering to Usul of Deen - People come to Ulama with their social problems because of the respect that they have for Ulama. If Ulama compromise the Orders of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى, people lose respect. Therefore, actions such as freely and informal discussions with ladies, visiting ladies at their homes with the excuse of counselling, especially when they are separated, etc. must be refrained from.

b. Maturity and Experience - Dealing with social matters is extremely delicate. One can easily fall into the traps of Shaytaan and the evil snares of women. Therefore, ideally one should not mediate by oneself. Preferably two people should sit together as mediators as it will minimize the opportunity of Fitnah. One should also first sit with those experienced in the field rather than deal with matters on one's own.

c. Impartiality - One must only assist people if we are certain we will be impartial and not take sides. If we fear that our impartiality will be compromised, we should refer the matter to others. We should ideally not mediate in matters where our close family members, associates, friends, donors who are known by the community as donors to our institutions, etc. are involved. Ulama are often accused of taking sides especially in these circumstances and people then lose trust.

Both parties must be given an opportunity to explain themselves. Making decisions without hearing the other party is in conflict with Shariah.

Similarly, making decisions without sufficient Shar'i proofs must be refrained from.

d. Consultation with other Ulama - By the Fadhl of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى many Ulama are engaged in assisting the community. We will at times find people approaching certain Ulama and complaining about the manner in which they have been dealt with by other Ulama. The trend in reacting to such complaints is that remarks and judgements are made without consulting and clarifying the matter with the Aalim in question. By consulting and gaining clarity from the Aalim being accused will In-sha-Allaah, lead to the unity of Ulama and strengthen the position and respect for Ulama in the community.

e. Confidentiality - People approach Ulama with their difficulties because they respect Ulama. It is often very difficult for a person to approach another person with his problems. Ulama need to be sensitive to the situation and desist from discussing people's problems with others. At times Shaytaan deceives us by taking pleasure from sins that others commit which we ourselves feel shy to commit.

The Way Forward

a. Continuous effort on encouragement in turning towards Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.
- It is evident and clear as daylight that the greatest cause on humankind's misery in the world today is as a result of his rebellion against the Orders of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى. The Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ required no rehabilitation center to help them leaving their involvement and attachment to alcohol. It was the value and importance that they attached to every Order of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى that made them leave alcohol as soon as the Command of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى came. It is only a change in the Deeni condition of the Ummat that will bring change to their difficulties and problems. If we are going to spend our

efforts and energies in subsidiary issues and neglect the Asl, problems will never be resolved.

Many people know and believe that the solution of their problems is in Deen. They should be directed towards A'maal as many people say that engaging in A'maal grants them comfort and solace, even in dire circumstances. All our efforts and energies are futile if Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى's decision of solving the problem has not been made. When people engage in A'maal, and their problems are resolved their Yaqeen becomes stronger and their Ta-alluq with Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى increases.

b. Education - There is a great degree of ignorance in the Ummah on the basic teachings of Islam. A young Aalim related that he performed three Nikahs and before every Nikah he spoke to the groom on important aspects of Nikah. In all three instances the groom was unaware that conjugal relations in Haidh is Haraam.

Ulama should therefore endeavour to hold special classes wherein relevant topics can be explained. In these lessons explaining the consistency of Shariah and Fitrah will serve to convince people of the Divine wisdom of every Order of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

c. Forming close bonds with the community – People generally do not have Ta-alluq with Ulama and when difficulties arise, at times they search for assistance in avenues that are in conflict with Deen. If Ulama visit the homes of the community and form close relations with them, they will turn to Ulama for assistance in times of need, In-sha-Allaah.

d. Promoting Nikah - There is a high rate of divorcees and widowers/widows in our community. Many such people remain outside of Nikah for a long time. Many never enter Nikah again. Some believe that it is inappropriate because of societal pressure. This leads to many harms and Haraam actions. Islam has placed great emphasis on the importance of Nikah as it leads to stable individuals and in turn, stable communities. By

promoting Nikah it will become easier to enter Nikah for those amongst this group of people that wish to do so.

Working with the Youth

One vital and important sector of the Ummah is the Youth. If this sector is taken care of, guarded, and nurtured then Deen will be protected. Otherwise the harm that they will cause to Deen will be far greater than the harms caused by the Kuffaar. The youth of today are bombarded with a lot of evils and Fitnahs. They do not know in which direction to turn. The Ulama are required to steer them in the right direction.

Some of the causes of the youth turning away from Deen are:

1. Too much of luxuries. Parents are working overtime in order to afford more luxuries for their families (e.g. Father who said my son as he sits here, his clothing is worth R2000)

2. Pursuit of Sensual Pleasures: Too much of luxuries, coupled with an easy and carefree lifestyle enhances the sensual desires of a person. The Kuffaar capitalise on this. An evangelist Samuel Zwemer once said at a conference for Christian missionaries “The task that has been assigned to you is not to convert Muslims to Christianity. That would be an honour for them. Your duty is to disassociate them from Islam and distance them from Allaah” Further he said, “You have helped raise a generation who is unaware of the values of Belief in Allaah. They will be engaged in pursuing sensual desires. They will forego everything to attain sensual pleasures.”

One imperialist writes “Wine and female singers are more effective in shattering the followers of Muhammed (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) than a thousand cannons.”

3. Too much exposure to Baatil: T.V, Films, DVD, Music, Magazines, Internet, Cell phones etc. is causing great harm to the youth and the Ummah at large.

4. Too much emphasis on school and secular education by superiors: One evangelist Anne Meligan said, “There is no way other than schooling to demolish Islam”. By the same token we can say that the Maktab education demolishes kufr and strengthens Islam.

5. Peer Pressure: Most teenagers want to be part of a group; they want to be like those around them; they want to fit in, even if that means copying those around them. Because the teen is so driven by the need to fit into a peer group, he chooses to dress like his friends and follow the fashion trends. There is also a yearning to be part of the most popular group at school: to look, to talk, and act like them; to use the kind of language they use, even if it is rude; to listen to the same music; to go to their hang outs, and so on. Feeling rejected from his peer group is such a painful thought for the youngster that he is willing to do anything to avoid it. He strongly feels that anything he does to be part of the crowd is worth the sacrifice.

Youth are of three types:

a) The rightly guided: Youth who are following the Commandments of Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى and practicing on Deen. This group are the flag bearers of Islam. For them Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has promised great rewards.

b) The corrupt: A teenager, who is stubborn, conceited, engulfed in vice and completely away from the straight path. He regards evil as virtue and virtue as evil. He is not prepared to listen or take heed to any advice. He unfortunately is a liability to society and an evil omen upon himself. It is very difficult to change or treat him. We have to make Duaa for such teenagers.

c) The confused: Youngsters who recognise the truth. They have the basic Islamic education but acquire much more secular education. The doors of evil have opened up for them from every direction. They are caught (so to say) between two cultures. Sometimes they sway to one side and at other

times to the other side. There is an abundance of these youngsters, and they need to be guided, protected, and steered in the right direction.

There are different stages and levels of youth: the early stage from 7 to 12, the middle stage from 13 to 16, the later stage from 17 to 21 and the stage that is ready for marriage or just married. In every stage and level you will find youth with diverse potentials and capabilities. These potentials and capabilities needs to be exploited and capitalised on, for the benefit and upliftment of Deen and the Ummah.

So what is our responsibility with regard to these youngsters and future flag bearers of Islam? How must we deal with them? There are many different advices, suggestions and guidelines that have been given by different Ulama, elders and scholars. We will mention a few points, which Ins ha' Allaah we hope will assist us in working with the youth:

1. Have a genuine concern for the youth.
2. Be the first to make Salaam to them and do not feel that it is your right that he makes Salaam to you. Nabi ﷺ has said: ان اولى الناس بالله من بدأهم
بالسلام
3. Smile at and enquire from him as to how he is.
4. Speak to them on their levels. Give them examples they can relate to. Speak to them on issues that directly concern them and be open with them on certain issues. Be friendly and jovial with them but do not lose your respect.
5. Befriend them to the extent that they are willing to come to you for advice. Do not brush them away if they come to you with any problem. Reassure and guarantee them confidentiality.
6. Use them for tasks they are good at. In this way they will feel important

and wanted. But in doing so we must be sincere and should not use them for personal gains for this will cause them to be disinclined towards us.

7. Use the rightly guided youngsters to guide the confused group of youngsters. A youngster tends to look up to other youngsters of his age or older than him.

8. Find means and ways to keep them coming to Madrasah until they finish high school. Adjust the Madrasah times, syllabus etc. to accommodate them. Keep in mind the fact that great emphasis is laid on secular education not so much by the youngster himself but more by his parents and guardians. Even if he comes to Madrasah and takes very little Sabaq, or comes very irregularly, he must be accommodated. The contact with the Madrasah, Ustaads and Ulama at this stage is very vital for him.

9. The best long term and most effective way of working with the youth is through the effort of Da'wat and Tabligh. Other programmes without doubt have its impact and effect on the youth, but a long-term solution is to be found in the effort of Da'wat and Tabligh.

10. Duaa: Sincerely we must make Duaa on a daily basis for the Youth and the Ummah of our beloved Nabi ﷺ.

The Effort of Da'wat and Tableegh

Alhamdulillah today we are witnessing the prediction of Nabi ﷺ, "The name of Allah will enter every home whether made of baked bricks or non-baked bricks." Alhamdulillah, Islam has reached many parts of the world through this great and noble effort.

Da'wat gives life to all branches of Deen. Not everyone will go out for 4 months and 40 days, but Deen will slowly be revived. It is noticed that where this effort is weak, then the other branches of Deen in that area also become weakened.

The statement of Moulana Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, "Ilyas has changed the despondency into hope," can be seen here in South Africa, where at one stage it was difficult for even Ulama to practice on Deen, Masaajid were only frequented by the elderly, Ulama and Huffaz were brought in from India, Egypt, and Cape Town. This continued to such an extent that modernism had started creeping into the homes of the religious. In the midst of this state of affairs, Allah revived the noble effort of Nabi ﷺ. To dress and practice an Islamic life here in Johannesburg is just as easy as practicing Islam in Makkah and Madinah. Our Masaajid are now frequented by both young and old. Our Huffaz and Ulama are in demand throughout the world. Through the effort of Deen doctors, lawyers, and professionals are making their children Haafiz and Aalim.

By the effort of our Pedal Jamaats throughout the length and breadth of South Africa and other parts of the world, Islam is being revived almost everywhere. Hazratjee (MI. In'aamul Hasan رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) mentioned that Da'wah and Tabligh is one of the objectives of this Ummah and Hijrah for the sake of Deen is desired. Unfortunately, due to the weakness that has set in the Ummah, very few are ready to strive and make Hijrah for the sake of Deen. People still have the zeal to migrate for worldly purposes and we see Muslims settling in remote areas around the globe for worldly reasons. Now

when Allah desires Hidaayah, the noble effort is revived, then we witness Jamaats moving and reaching all these remote places.

Here in South Africa in places where we in the least think of settling down, we see the foreign Muslims settling for business reasons and within a short while Deen is introduced to them, and a result Deen comes alive in the area. This is exactly the situation in South America, where Arab Muslims in the thousands have settled there, and sad to say their progenies have left the fold of Islam. Now the Jamaats come there and make an effort and slowly Deen is revived.

Alhamdulillah the present effort of Da'wat and Tabligh that is taking place has proven itself.

In this era Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى has blessed us with this effort and Fikr. Ulama are the "inheritors of the Ambiya." Together with Ilm, we must also inherit the Fikr of how the whole of Deen comes alive in the whole of mankind. MI Ilyas رَحِمَهُ اللهُ revived this effort on an Umoomi (general) scale.

Due to weakness of Imaan, Irtidaad is settling into the Ummah. Yet with a little Qurbani given for Deen, Allaah تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى gives Hidaayat.

A few important points:

- 1.) Always follow the directives of our elders in doing this work
- 2.) Try physically to take part. If this is not possible, then at least encourage others and be supportive of those taking part in the effort.
- 3.) At least sit in the Ta'leem which takes place in the Masjid.
- 4.) If any wrongs are witnessed, then do not address it from the Mimbar. Rather speak to the responsible brothers in the area or report to the Markaz.
- 5.) Make Duaa for the Jama'ats, those out in the Path of Allaah and all those involved in any other efforts of Deen.