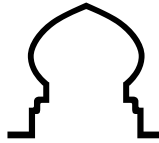


ILM

Islamic Knowledge & Secular Education



*An eye-opening and insightful analysis on
education and educational institutes imparting
Islaamic, Worldly and Secular Education.*

From the advices of:
Maulana Abdul Hamid Ishaq {daamat barakaatuhu}

Title: Ilm - Islamic Knowledge & Secular Education

From the advices of: Maulana Abdul Hamid Ishaq {daamat
barakaatuhu}

Transcribed by: Maulana Imraan Kajee

First Edition: Dhul Hijjah 1440 / August 2019

For suggestions, enquiries, copies, etc.

E-mail: imrnkajee@gmail.com

CONTENTS

Foreword	5
Introduction	7
Our first objective - To recognize Allah ﷻ	8
Our second objective - To prepare for the Akhirah	13
The three types of education prevalent in the contemporary world	15
1) Ilm of Deen or Islamic Education	16
Where is this ilm contained? The Qur'aan and the Hadith	21
The Value of Ilm can be understood by those who know its value	24
An important distinction - Incorrect or Flawed Ilm	25
2) Worldly Education	29
A Comparison between Deeni knowledge and Dunyawī (worldly) knowledge	36
Worldly knowledge is a dharoorah-necessity	37
3) Secular Education	50
The fine distinction between worldly education and secular education	50
The consequences of abandoning Islamic education and engrossing ourselves in secular education	62
A discussion pertaining to the various types of educational institutes for imparting worldly knowledge at primary, secondary and tertiary level prevalent in the contemporary world	64
1) Secular schools	64
2) Religious schools	91
3) Islamic schools	93
4) Home schooling	104
Syllabus	105

CONTENTS

A discussion pertaining to the various types of educational institutes for imparting Islamic knowledge in the contemporary world	108
1) Makaatib	109
History of the Makaatib in our Ummah	109
The Makaatib, a protection for our Islamic identity	117
The lap of the mother, the first maktab for a child	118
Maktab education - The next stage	119
Qur'aanic education - miscellaneous aspects	121
5 ways every person can serve Qur'aanic education	122
2) Islamic schools	126
3) Darul Ulooms	126
4) Islamic faculties and studies at universities	141
My studies	144
Some comparisons between the systems of Darul-Ulooms and that of the Islamic faculties at universities	148
The love for name and status	156
The love of wealth and monetary gain	157
The wish to master spoken Arabic	174
Inferiority complex	174
Appendix One - The virtues of acquiring 'ilm' – Islamic knowledge	184
Appendix Two - Secular and Worldly Sciences within the Darul-Ulooms	199
Appendix Three - Ilm only refers to Deeni knowledge	204
Appendix Four - Turkey, Egypt and the secularists	212
Appendix Five - The Shar'i ruling of secularism	221
Appendix Six - Should Muslim females attend university?	223
Appendix Seven - What is really taught at school?	228



FOREWARD

The following book is a compilation of Malfoozaat¹ of our beloved and respected Shaykh, Hadhrat Maulana Abdul Hamid Ishaq {daamat barakaatuhu} on the subject of education. These advices were collected from over 30 different majaaalis and lectures delivered by Moulana {daamat barakaatuhu} on various occasions, and specifically from a series of advices delivered to the students of Darul-Uloom Azaadville over a period of two years, namely 1435-1436.

This useless compiler has, in an attempt to make this work reader-friendly, liberally adapted and edited the wording of the original advices to facilitate easier reading, for which I beg forgiveness. I have also added sub-headings, a few explanatory footnotes and some appendixes at the end. Alhamdulillah, this book had subsequently been checked and edited twice by Hadhrat Moulana Abdul Hamid {daamat barakaatuhu} before its first publication.

May Allah ﷻ accept it and make it a means of guidance and reformation for the entire Muslim Ummah. Aameen

Imraan Kajee
14 Zul-Hijjah 1440

¹ Precious statements and advices

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

Allah ﷻ states in the Qur'aan:

“(O Nabi), say (to the people), “Can those who possess knowledge and those who do not possess knowledge ever be equal?” Only those who possess (true) intelligence will take lesson.”

(Surah Zumar v.9)

INTRODUCTION

The objective of our life in this world

It is necessary to first understand what our purpose is in this world, for what has Allah ﷻ put us here, and why are we here in this world. This question has, unfortunately, not cropped up in the mind of most people. If one begins a new job, be it in a shop, warehouse, or wherever else, one must know his job description and purpose of being there. A young man, who is brought by his father into the business, but is not told why he is there, will remain wandering around aimlessly, not knowing or understanding his purpose. Whatever he sees others doing, he will follow suit. If he sees a group of people watching a show on a television which is being sold within that shop (which is impermissible, but is just being used here for illustration), he will join them. Our example is the same. Allah ﷻ has informed us why we are in this world, but we have not taken the trouble to find out, due to which we are wandering around aimlessly, behaving like everyone else.

Being Muslims, we have a shade of Islam in us, which leads us to do what other Muslims are doing. But the questions each one of us have to ask ourselves are: Am I really doing what Allah ﷻ, my Boss, wants me to do? Why has He put me in this world, and what is my purpose here? Why have I got this comfortable bedroom and bed, my kitchen, my wife, my children, my job and my income? Why has all of this been given to me? Is there a purpose behind my life, or am I just like an animal that eats, drinks, sleeps, mates and has children? It is very important that every person gives thought to the above questions every day of his life. We are not going to live in this

world forever. We have got some purpose in life, and are not like ghosts or zombies who just move around aimlessly. Death will come to every person, which is a clear indication that we are only here in this world for a while, to prepare for a life which is permanent and eternal.

To inform man why he is in this world, what his purpose is, what he should be doing and what his job description covers - which he should be carrying out, Allah ﷻ had sent approximately 124000 Ambiyaa ﷺ (Messengers) to this world. Along with that, Allah ﷻ sent many guiding books with the Ambiyaa ﷺ, the most famous from amongst them being the Taurah, the Zaboor, the Injeel, and finally the Qur'aan. In the Qur'aan, Allah ﷻ has informed us of the answers to the above questions in great detail. Added to that, our Nabi ﷺ has left no stone unturned in explaining to us our purpose in this world.

Why are we in this world?

Our first objective - To recognize Allah ﷻ

If somebody leaves a basket of first-grade top quality fruit at your door daily, which you take, eat and feed to your children, fully enjoying it, but never even reflect over who it might be who gave you that fruit, then you do not even deserve to be called a human being. If even a dog receives a piece of bread by any door, it will remain loyal to that door. It will recognize its master and boss who is providing it with the bread and will remain loyal to that person, living with him for the rest of its life. We get everything from Allah ﷻ, beginning from: our existence, our senses, our brain, blood, heart, liver, kidneys,

upto major necessities like; oxygen, water, light, as well as the mountains, the seas, the land, the skies; and billions of other favours. But we are not loyal to Him and hardly ever take a few moments to ponder over 'Who gave this to me'. Such a person is outwardly a human being, but is inferior to even an animal.

We need to recognize Allah ﷻ. He is the Being Who granted us our existence. We were not just born by ourselves, nor were we born because of the meeting of our mother and father, resulting in our birth. How many couples, despite meeting, have no children born to them, or receive a still-born child! All of this is only in the Hands of Allah ﷻ.

Do parents create or make their own children?

If some parent imagines that he or she has made their children, then the question we would first need to ask ourselves is; who of us even knows how to make one eye? Had we been the ones making the children, we would have known how to make eyes, brains, hearts, etc. But the reality is that we know nothing of the above. This meeting of the parents is merely an outward excuse or pretext created by Allah ﷻ for the birth of a child, but which, in reality, is only the work of Allah ﷻ Himself. It is not the father or mother who makes the baby. If it was the father who made the baby, he would have made every child of his the greatest genius or the richest man in the world. If it was the mother who made the baby, she would have ensured that her baby is the most beautiful child in the world, with the most beautiful eyes, the fairest complexion and the loveliest of hair. Had it been in our control, everyone would have created their

child as perfect, but the reality is that it is not in their control. Allah ﷻ alone is the maker.

Allah ﷻ, the Creator and Maker of the Human Being

Allah explains in the Quran:

يَخْلُقُكُمْ فِي بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ خَلْقًا مِنْ بَعْدِ خَلْقٍ فِي ظُلُمَاتٍ ثَلَاثٍ ذَلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ لَهُ
الْمُلْكُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَأَنَّى تُصْرَفُونَ

“Allah is the one who over and over again creates babies within the wombs of their mothers, stage after stage, in three layers of darkness. That is your Rabb (Creator, Sustainer, Nourisher, Provider and Nurturer), to whom belongs all kingdom. There is none worthy of worship besides Him. So how are you being turned away and averted?”

(Surah Zumar v.6)

According to World Health Organizations, about 250 000 babies are born daily in the world presently. What this really means is that Allah ﷻ has, in His control, 250 000 baby-making factories, wherein babies are being produced. These factories are not plants meant for merely assembling, to which parts are imported to, from all over the world, but all the parts (of the baby) are also made within this small little factory.

We are unable to work in a place which is dark. Allah ﷻ produces these small little babies in darkness upon darkness, actually within three layers of darkness. When we have no electricity, our factories require generators whereby the workers are able to see. Allah ﷻ's factory runs all the time, with no lights, not even sunlight. The baby is deep inside the

body of the mother, surrounded by the womb, and within the embryotic sac. In all of this darkness, Allah ﷻ produces such a product (the human), which itself is the producer of so many other products, from amongst which are the computer, cell-phones, motor cars, trains, ships, busses etc. How great is not Allah ﷻ!!

Appreciate every limb of our bodies

Allah ﷻ has created us all, so we are duty-bound to recognize Him and appreciate His favours upon us. If someone had to bring back for us a topee² from Makkah Mukarramah or Madinah Munawwarah worth 5, 10, 15 or 20 riyaaals, we will all definitely thank him, realizing that he had thought of us there and was so kind to bring this gift back for us. Did we ever thank Allah ﷻ for giving us our head, on which we can wear that topee? Had we not had a head, we would never have been able to wear the topee.

He is the One who created every part of our body. Ponder over the functioning of the heart, the brain, the kidneys, the liver, the ears, the eyes, the tongue, the nose, the nervous system, the digestive system, the respiratory system and all other functions of the body. The valves of the heart open and close with perfect precision within split seconds, in complete synchronization with the other valves. If there has to be the slightest delay in this, a person will have a lethal problem. These valves open, pass the blood to the next set of valves which receive it and later pass it on to the lungs, which then purify the blood by filtering the blood from carbon dioxide and

² hat

filling it with fresh oxygen. Oxygen is inhaled from the nose, through the medium of the air we breathe. The nose contains filters which purify the air, so that pure oxygen can be sent to the lungs. It also has an air-con, which regulates the temperature, so that the incoming oxygen is neither too cold nor too hot. Blood gets life through oxygen. A single drop of blood travels 100 000km daily through the body. If this drop has to clot anywhere or even just stop moving for a moment, it can cause heart failure or a stroke in the brain, either of which can cause sudden death.

Man sometimes makes shukr to (appreciates and thanks) Allah ﷻ for the food He has granted us, but have we yet made shukr for the mouth and tongue with which we are able to eat the food and enjoy it, and differentiate between the tastes of cold water, cold juice, hot coffee and hot tea, and the stomach into which we can deposit our food? If we contemplate over the stomach, we will come to realize what a (phenomenal) computer Allah ﷻ has installed within us! If a person has got a headache, and is told by a doctor or his wife to take a Panado, will he put it onto his head or into his mouth? He will put it into his mouth, from where it will proceed to the stomach, although the pain he is experiencing is in his head. The computer in the stomach will transport the Panado's effect directly to the head, due to which the pain will disappear. If one feels pain in his toe, and is given medicine to take by the doctor, will he be asked to rub it on his toe or will he be required to take it orally three times daily? He will have to take it orally, although his mouth feels no pain.

An amusing anecdote

A person visited the doctor and said that he had eaten ten loaves of raw bread due to which his stomach was sore. The doctor, while treating him, applied eye ointment in the patient's eyes. He said, "Doctor, my eyes are not sore, my stomach is. I just ate ten loaves of raw bread." The doctor replied, "Your eyes need to be treated first, because you couldn't even see that it was raw bread."

In summary, Allah ﷻ has put us into this world firstly and primarily to recognize Him, be obedient to Him and make shukr³ to Him.

Why are we in this world?

Our second objective - To prepare for the Akhirah

We are here in this world to build and prepare for our Akhirah. Our lives in the Akhirah⁴ will either be a life of enjoyment or punishment, dependant on our preparation and actions. We are not here - in this world - for the sake of this world, to build a beautiful house, to have a wonderful car or for any other trivial pursuit. The world is just our temporary abode and a transit lounge. If a person takes a flight by plane and arrives at some transit airport, where he will have to wait for a few hours, he will have to be a really foolish and stupid person to spend his time replacing the chairs or couches of the transit lounge, which are very old and are breaking apart, with new ones, or trying to fit in a new carpet, as the one on the floor has worn out, or in putting up some new frames. Such a

³ be appreciative

⁴ hereafter

person will be reminded that he is only there for a period of a few hours, and will never perhaps return again to that airport. Actually, nobody can be so foolish. Why would someone spend all his money there, whereas the airport doesn't even belong to him, but belongs to somebody else? In a similar manner, if only we could understand that this world is a transit lounge, which doesn't even belong to us. We are stationed in transit temporarily, and from here we are soon going to pass on in just a few years.

Palace or Hotel - An incident

A person went to the palace of a king and asked if he could check in for the night. The king replied, "This is not a hotel. This is the palace of the king." He enquired, "Before you, who lived here?" "My father," replied the king. "Before him?" the man asked. "His father," replied the king. The man commented, "Is this not then a hotel, where people stay for a few days and then move on? This is a hotel, not a palace. You seem to be fooling yourself."

Our temporary address and permanent address

Many a time, we are asked for our permanent address. A certain friend of ours from Lusaka once went out for Tabligh⁵. When he reached Bombay airport, he was asked to fill in his permanent address, so he wrote 'Lusaka Graveyard'. In reality, he did pass away there and was laid to rest in Lusaka

⁵Tabligh refers to the great responsibility of propagating and conveying the message of Islam and its teachings. In the above context, it refers to a journey which one undertakes under the guidance of the movement famously known as 'the Tablighi Jama'at' to reform oneself and, at the same time, spread and establish Islam in the lives of fellow Muslims and mankind at large.

Graveyard. The graveyard and thereafter Jannah is our permanent address, and where we live presently is in actual fact our temporary address.

In conclusion, our second main purpose is to prepare for the Aakhirah.

If we keep the above two objectives in mind, then only will we be able to understand our subject matter of discussion in its correct perspective. We can now proceed to the subject under discussion:

THE THREE TYPES OF EDUCATION PREVALENT IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD:

- 1) Ilm of Deen or Islamic Education**
- 2) Worldly Education**
- 3) Secular Education**



1) ILM OF DEEN OR ISLAMIC EDUCATION

The three sources of knowledge

There are 3 basic sources of acquiring knowledge and attaining information:

- 1) The five senses - seeing, hearing, touching, smelling and tasting. A great amount of basic knowledge is gained by these. Animals are also able to acquire almost all of their knowledge through these senses. A simple example of acquiring knowledge through the senses is of a child who sees a fan and then listens to an informant telling him that it is a fan, by which he gains the knowledge that this is a fan. The main sources of information and knowledge are the eyes and ears. However, both are very limited. A person who puts his palm right in front of his eyes on a bright, sunny day at 12 o' clock will not even be able to see the back of his hand. One's ears can only hear within a limited range. Then too, how many foreign languages are not even comprehensible to us, even though we listen to them. The knowledge formed on the basis of such limited, and sometimes even unreliable or doubtful resources, must necessarily be limited.
- 2) The intellect and the faculty of reasoning. A lot of knowledge is acquired by these as well. Man has achieved inconceivable feats with this bounty which Allah ﷻ has bestowed upon us. The brain analyses, processes and calculates the facts which it learnt from the five senses, by which it arrives at new knowledge and conclusions. A man driving his car sees with his eyes a board which says 'Stop

after 200m'. Without one realizing, a great system is set into function. The eyes deliver the message to the brain, at which point the brain requires from the eyes all relevant information, including the speed the car is travelling at and the precise distance from that point. Within split seconds, the brain does fantastic mathematical calculations, arriving at the conclusion that based on the current speed, one will have to put this amount of pressure on the brakes to be able to stop within 200 meters. The brain then instantly delivers this message to the legs. If the eyes unexpectedly see a ball shooting across the road, it immediately sends a message to the brain, informing it of this new happening. The brain reasons that, behind this ball, there was probably a young boy who might suddenly run across to fetch the ball. The brain recalculates, and immediately notifies the legs that it needs to put additional pressure on the brake, and notifies the arms on which direction to sway the steering if one wishes to avoid the boy.

These five senses and intellectual reasoning of the brain can bring to man knowledge of the existence of a Creator, His Oneness as well as His inseparable qualities. Therefore, according to Imam Abu Hanifah (رحمه الله), if a man never met a Nabi or came across his teachings, he will be judged on the Day of Qiyaamah by the criterion of his belief in the existence and oneness of one Creator – Allah ﷻ. This belief is a natural instinct in man. However, the knowledge of the Unseen and the knowledge of the Hereafter can never be fathomed by our senses or intellect. The knowledge of those actions which

please Allah ﷻ and those which displease Him cannot be determined by these faculties.

- 3) The third source of knowledge is wahy (revelation). The knowledge obtained hereby can never be obtained by the five senses or intellect, since it contains those aspects which are beyond the reach of the mind!

Wahy - The greatest form of knowledge

Wahy refers to the knowledge of Allah ﷻ - who has absolute knowledge, as He is the creator and controller of everything - which He has revealed to mankind. To recognize Allah ﷻ and acquaint oneself with Him in detail, one has no option other than to acquire this through wahy. Wahy informs us of the knowledge of the unseen, of Allah ﷻ, His sifaat⁶, the life of the qabr⁷, aakhirah, the angels, the unseen system of Allah ﷻ which over-rides the apparent outward system of this world, what Allah ﷻ requires from man and how Allah ﷻ wants man to live, etc. All of the above realities which cannot be acquired through man's senses and intellect have been revealed to us through wahy. Those who do not believe in or deny this source of knowledge are deprived of the knowledge and realities of these absolute necessary and fundamental facts, without which man's life becomes a duplicate of the life of an animal. Imam Bukhari (رحمه الله) had began his Sahih with the chapter (باب كيف) 'The manner of the commencement of wahy (being revealed) upon Rasulullah ﷺ'. His object of beginning his book with this chapter (which is a

⁶ qualities and attributes

⁷ the grave

unique feature in his book, as it was not the norm of the Ulama of Hadith to begin their books in this manner) was to explain and emphasize the important position of 'wahy'.

The Origin of Wahy - the Knowledge of Allah

Allah ﷻ is that being who has absolute knowledge, as He is the creator and controller of everything. Allah ﷻ says,

وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِنْ وَرَقَةٍ إِلَّا
يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا حَبَّةٍ فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْأَرْضِ وَلَا رَطْبٍ وَلَا يَابِسٍ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ

“With Him are the keys to (the knowledge of) the unseen, about which none knows besides Him. He knows what is on the land and within the oceans. No leaf falls from a tree except that He knows of it. Every seed (planted) in the darkness of the earth and every moist and dry thing is (recorded) in the clear Book (the Lawh Mahfuz-the Preserved Tablet).”

(Surah An'aam v.59)

Consider the number of trees in the world and the number of branches on each of them from the beginning of creation till today and then try to imagine the number of leaves on those trees. Allah ﷻ knows all of those leaves, as well as how many leaves will still grow till the day of Qiyaamah, without the need to check on any computer system. Allah ﷻ knows the leaf which fell after turning green, the one which fell due to dryness, and the leaf which was half-dry and half-green, the number of veins which run through those leaves and the properties and benefits of every type of leaf. The knowledge of Allah ﷻ is unlimited and unimaginable.

Allah ﷻ knows the condition of every drop of water, whether it be in a cup, a dam, a river or in the seas. He knows the precise amount and details of the water; which has evaporated, which has been drank, and which had been used for some other specific purpose. Allah ﷻ possesses knowledge of the past and future. Allah ﷻ is in no need of clicking some buttons (of a computer) in order to bring up a file, or to open a filing cabinet to refer to something which happened 50 000 years ago, or that is planned for 50 000 years ahead, in the future. His knowledge is precise and clear. The knowledge of Allah ﷻ is absolute, and never wavers. From such knowledge, Allah ﷻ has granted His creation a small fraction. That knowledge of Allah ﷻ, which Allah ﷻ had granted man, directly comprises of Deeni knowledge which is the most superior knowledge, as well as some worldly information which had also originated from Allah ﷻ (as will be discussed further on). Knowledge of Deen which has come down to us through wahy is absolute and can never change, and is referred to as ilm. The basics of worldly knowledge originated from Allah ﷻ, but later developed and evolved through the experience of man. Most worldly knowledge is therefore based on the experience of man, which changes and can be flawed or inconsistent.

What is ‘The Straight Path’?

The Qur’aan, which is the basis of all wahy, instructs man in the very beginning - in Surah Faatihah - to request:

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

“Guide us to the straight path.”

(Surah Faatihah v.6)

The straight path is that path by which we can recognize Allah ﷻ, by which we will have to face no problems after death, no problems in the grave, no interrogation on the day of Qiyaamah and by which we will get direct entry into Jannah.

Allah ﷻ responds by stating that if you want that way of life (which is named 'The Straight Path'), it will be described in the Quran. Allah ﷻ says shortly thereafter:

الم (1) ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ (2)

“This is that Book in which there is no doubt, which is a guide (to ‘The Straight Path’) for those who seek Taqwa (piety).

(Surah Baqarah)

This is the basis of the knowledge of Deen, which is absolute and unchangeable, and which is the most valuable knowledge in the world. There is no knowledge which can ever be equal to this knowledge. This is what is termed as '*ilm*'.

Where is this ilm contained? The Qur’aan and the Hadith

Ilm is a very great blessing of Allah ﷻ. It is so important and great that Allah ﷻ has declared in the Qur’aan:

قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ

(Surah Zumar- 39)

In this verse, Allah ﷻ refers to the fact that those who possess ilm can never be equal to those who do not. Ilm here refers to the knowledge of Deen, which culminates in recognizing Allah ﷻ, which is the final and absolute stage of knowledge. This

comprises of the knowledge of the Qur'aan (wahy matluw), Hadith (which is actually the explanation of the Quran - wahy ghair matluw) and the knowledge derived from these sources, from which the laws of Shari'ah (which the Fuqaha have deduced and presented to the Ummah in the form of Fiqh) and the methodology of Islaahun-Nafs and Tazkiyah (which the Sufiyaa have extracted in the form of Tasawwuf) emerged and materialized. This complete knowledge of Deen has been preserved and transmitted to us from the time of Nabi ﷺ till today by the Ulama of every era through an unbroken chain.

The knowledge of Qur'aan and Hadith - Signs leading to Allah ﷻ and the Akhirah

The Quran has more than six thousand aayaat. The word Aayah is commonly translated as 'a verse'. Moulana Muhammad Umar Palanpuri (رحمه الله) used to explain that it actually means 'a sign' or 'a signboard'. These Aayaat are signs from Allah ﷻ - which offer us direction to reach the Zaat⁸ of Allah ﷻ...The study of the Qur'aan leads us to the beautiful destination of Allah ﷻ's Ma'rifat⁹, 'Ishq¹⁰ and Pleasure.

An example: We are currently in Azaadville. If we want to travel to Johannesburg, which is towards the east of Azaadville, we will have to follow the respective signboards or road-signs to reach Johannesburg. If a person wants to reach any other city, he will have to follow the appropriate signboards or road-signs to reach that city... Similarly, every Aayah of the Qur'aan is a signboard or road-sign through which one is guided to

⁸ Being

⁹ recognition

¹⁰ love

recognize and reach Allah ﷻ, which is the very purpose of the creation of mankind.

Over 6000 signs leading man to Allah ﷻ

Like a comprehensive map, the Qur'aan outlines and details the route to Allah ﷻ; to Najaat¹¹ and to Jannah. Allah ﷻ has given us 6000+ signs so that we do not get lost. In many places in the Qur'aan, Allah ﷻ uses the plural, 'Aayaat', explaining that within a single aayah are many signs of Allah ﷻ.

Whilst we have the Qur'aan with its beautiful signs from Allah ﷻ so that we may traverse and travel this journey towards Allah ﷻ and reach Him, this journey becomes easier when we have a guide. Allah ﷻ gave us Rasulullah ﷺ to explain His great signs and to practically demonstrate to us how to follow these great signs. So the study of the Quran and Hadith is actually to recognize, reach and find Allah ﷻ, which is the very purpose of the creation of mankind. By following these great signboards of Allah ﷻ and the practical guidance of Rasulullah ﷺ, we will easily reach our destination. We will have to face no problems after death, no problems in the grave, no interrogation on the day of Qiyaamah and we will get direct entry into Jannah.

Many feel that worldly knowledge is very important, worldly education is needed and that this knowledge (of Deen) will not benefit them (in this world). Yet, if we keep in mind the two objectives of man mentioned in the introduction, then only will

¹¹ salvation

we be able to understand the value of these signboards which are termed as 'ilm' or 'Deeni knowledge'.

(See Appendix 1 at the end of this book for further details concerning the virtues of ilm and the Ulama)

The Value of Ilm can be understood by those who know its value

An Aalim once said to his student that, since the knowledge of Deen is the most valuable thing in the world, a single mas'ala¹² learnt is more valuable than all the wealth of the world. The student was very happy with this information. One day, his sandal broke. He decided to get it repaired. He visited the shoe-maker and requested him to repair the sandal. The shoe-maker asked what he would be ready to pay. He happily responded by offering to teach the shoe-maker one mas'ala. The shoe-maker threw the sandal back at the student, and demanded a specific amount of money. To him, this one mas'ala held no value. The student was confused. He expressed his sentiments to his teacher, saying, "You told me that one mas'ala is worth more than all the wealth of the world, whereas the shoe-maker is not even prepared to repair my sandals in exchange for it?!!" The teacher understood his dilemma.

He took a valuable diamond and gave it to him, and sent him with a responsible person back to the shoe-maker. He instructed the student, "When he asks you the price which you are willing to pay him, say to him that you will pay him with this 'stone'." Again, the shoe-maker threw this 'stone' back at the student, and demanded cash. On returning, the teacher

¹² law of Deen

now sent him to the jeweller to find out the value of this diamond. As soon as the jeweller saw it, he recognized its value, and said, "Nobody can pay for this diamond other than the king." When the student now came back to his teacher, the teacher explained to him, "It isn't such that the mas'ala does not have value. The problem is that people do not know the value."

A certain nawaab¹³ once invited Moulana Maseehullah Khan (رحمه الله) to his house for a day-visit and meals. When he arrived to fetch Moulana, he posed a question, "Why is it that people don't respect the Ulama and Huffaaz?" Moulana did not reply and remained silent. When they arrived at his residence, a certain new worker spoke very rudely and abruptly to his boss. Moulana questioned this worker's behaviour, to which the host responded, "He is a new worker. He does not yet know who I am. He does not yet know that I am his boss, who is paying his wages." Moulana Maseehullah (رحمه الله) indicated that the host's question was answered by that very statement. He was an intelligent man, so he understood easily. (In simple terms, the people do not know the value of the Ulama and Huffaaz, which is why they do not appreciate them.)

An important distinction - Incorrect or Flawed Ilm

Researching over the net or studying a translation of the Quran or books of Hadith, from which we deduce our personal interpretations and meanings, is flawed and incorrect knowledge. This ilm requires a chain of reliable pious personalities from which the reality of Deen can be

¹³ prince

understood, stemming from those who were present in the time of Rasulullah ﷺ. This chain is what we refer to as our Sanad. Muhammad Ibn Seereen (رحمه الله) said, *"Verily, this (true) ilm is Deen (since it incorporates amal within it). So see well who you take your Deen from."* (Muqaddamah Sahih Muslim)

A fathers request for water

Take the following broad example: A father who is lying down at night on his bed asks his son to fetch him water. The son will bring water in a glass, since he understands from the situation, that his father wants a glass of water to drink. On a Sunday morning, if the same father asks his son to fetch him water, while in the yard with his sleeves folded up, the son will bring water in a bucket, as he now understands from the situation, that his father requires water to wash the car. The father would have used the same wording, but the context is understood by the son who can see the situation. A person who reads the words years later without understanding the situation or context will almost always interpret it incorrectly. Only the person who was present can inform us of the correct context. They were the Sahaaba ﷺ, who had explained it to the Taabi'een, who in turn explained to the Tab'ut Taabi'een, who passed down this knowledge till it reached us.

A father's last advices to his dear son

An amusing example

A father was in his last stages and was about to leave the world. He had a son studying at university, for whom he wrote the following three advices:

"1. You must always go to work in the shade and return in the shade. 2. You must always eat the best food. 3. You should perform a new Nikah every month."

After studying the bequest of the father, the son complied by building a shade of fiberglass or something similar from his home to his workplace. The son would leave to work at 11:00 AM and return at approximately 03.00 PM. He assumed that he had fulfilled his father's bequest by going to work in the shade and returning in the shade. He also commanded his wife to cook the best food, as this was the father's request. As for his father's third bequest, it left him totally perplexed. How was he ever going to get married every month?

He therefore decided to consult with his father's secretary, who had worked for his entire life with his father and understood his father's temperament. The secretary said to him, "You have not understood even a single advice of your father. Your father's advice to go to work in the shade means that you should leave for work before sunrise and return after sunset. You should work tirelessly. Eating the best of foods means that you should eat only when you are hungry. When hungry, any food will be eaten with great relish and enjoyment, and will seem like the best of foods. Getting married every month means that you should have relations with your wife once a month. It will seem like a new marriage, and she will seem to you like a new bride."

The son that did not live with his father was unable to understand his father's advices, yet the secretary who always accompanied the father understood perfectly. Similarly, to

understand Deen, we will have to refer to those who have acquired the understanding of Deen through the companionship of those above them, who had acquired this understanding from the company of those senior to them, which continues so forth in a continuous chain which finally, through the Sahaabah ﷺ, links with Rasulullah ﷺ.

The evil of Tafsir bir-Rai

One guilty of these sorts of interpretations which are based on self-study, researching over the net and personal opinion, which is referred to as 'Tafsir bir-Rai', is warned:

عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنهما قال : قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم من قال في القرآن بغير علم فليتبوأ مقعده من النار قال أبو عيسى هذا حديث حسن صحيح

عن ابن عباس : عن النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم قال اتقوا الحديث عني إلا ما علمتم فمن كذب علي متعمدا فليتبوأ مقعده من النار ومن قال في القرآن برأيه فليتبوأ مقعده من النار قال أبو عيسى هذا حديث حسن(رواهما الترمذي والنسائي في سننه الكبرى)

عن جندب بن عبد الله قال : قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم : من قال في القرآن برأيه فأصاب فقد أخطأ (رواه ابو داؤد والترمذي والنسائي في سننه الكبرى) قال ابن حجر أي أخطأ طريق الإستقامة بخوضه في كتاب الله بالتخمين والجلس لتعديده بهذا الخوض مع عدم اجتماعه لشروطه فكان آثما به مطلقا ولم يعتد بموافقه للصواب لأنها ليست عن قصد ولا تحر بخلاف من كملت فيه آلات التفسير

Rasulullah ﷺ said **“Whoever comments on the (meaning of) Qur'aan according to his own opinion, he should prepare his abode in Jahannam.”** In another narration the words are **“Whoever comments on the Quraan without (sufficient) knowledge, he should prepare his abode in Jahannam.”** Another Hadith explains, **“Whoever comments on the (meaning of) Quraan according to his own opinion and his opinion conforms to the truth, he is still wrong and incorrect” i.e. he has erred and committed a sin by doing so.**

2) WORLDLY EDUCATION

The origin of worldly knowledge

When Allah ﷻ created our forefather Adam (عليه السلام), he resided in Jannah, from whence he came and which is our final permanent address and abode. He lived there as a V.I.P., since everything was ready found for him, without the need to work at all, not even to the extent of picking up a spoon. When he was later sent to this world, he had to now do everything for himself, as the world is a place of hard work and toil. For Adam (عليه السلام) to make a single hand-made roti (piece of bread), he needed 360 items and ingredients.¹⁴

¹⁴ وأخرج الزوار وابن أبي حاتم والطبراني عن أبي موسى الأشعري عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال " إن الله لما أخرج آدم من الجنة زوده من ثمار الجنة وعلمه صنعة كل شيء فمما ركن من ثمار الجنة غير أن هذه تنغير وتلك لا تنغير ... " وأخرج ابن عساکر عن ابن عباس قال : كان آدم عليه السلام حراثا وكان إدريس خياطاً وكان نوح نجاراً وكان هود تاجراً وكان إبراهيم راعياً وكان داود زراداً وكان سليمان خواصاً وكان موسى أجيراً وكان عيسى سياحاً وكان محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم شجاعاً جعل رزقه تحت رمحہ وأخرج الحاكم عن ابن عباس أنه قال لرجل عنده : إني مني أحدثك عن الأنبياء المذكورين في كتاب الله أحدثك عن آدم كان حراثاً وعن نوح كان نجاراً وعن إدريس كان خياطاً وعن داود كان زراداً وعن موسى كان راعياً وعن إبراهيم كان زراعاً عظيم الضيافة وعن شعيب كان راعياً وعن لوط كان زراعاً وعن صالح كان تاجراً وعن سليمان كان ولي الملك ويصوم من الشهر ستة أيام في أوله وثلاثة في وسطه وثلاثة في آخره وكان له تسعمائة سرية وثلاثمائة مهيبة وأحدثك عن ابن العذراء البتول عيسى أنه كان لا يخشى شيئاً لقد ويقول : الذي غداي سوف بعشيتي والذي عشائي سوف يعديني ويعبد الله ليلته كلها وهو بالنهار يسبح ويصوم الدهر ويقوم الليل كله (الدر المنثور) أول صناعة عملت على وجه الأرض صناعة الحرب وأول من حرت آدم (نزهة المجالس ومنتخب النفائس) عن ابن عباس، قال: علم الله تعالى آدم الأسماء كلها، وهي الأسماء التي يتعارف بها الناس: إنسان، وداية، وأرض، وسهل، وبحر، وجبل، وحمار، وأشياء ذلك من الأمم وغيرها.... عن ابن عباس، في قوله: " وعلم آدم الأسماء كلها " ، قال: علمه اسم كل شيء، حتى الفسوة والفلسية... عن ابن عباس في قول الله عز وجل: " وعلم آدم الأسماء كلها " قال: علمه اسم كل شيء حتى الهنة والهنية، والفسوة والضرطة... عن سعيد بن جبير، قال: علمه اسم كل شيء، حتى البعير والبقرة والشاة.... عن قتادة في قوله عز وجل: " وعلم آدم الأسماء كلها " ، قال: علمه اسم كل شيء: هذا جبل، وهذا بحر، وهذا كذا، وهذا كذا، لكل شيء، ثم عرضهم على الملائكة، فقال: " أتنبئوني بأسماء هؤلاء إن كنتم صادقين... عن الحسن وقفاة، قالاً: علمه اسم كل شيء، هذا الخيل، وهذه البغال، والإبل، والجن، والوحش، وجعل يسمى كل شيء برسمه... عن ابن عباس، قال: ... فلما رأى الله تعالى عري آدم حواء أمره أن يذبح كبشاً من الضأن من الثمانية الأزواج التي أنزل من الجنة، فأخذ كبشاً فذبحه، ثم أخذ صوفه فغزلته حواء، ونسجه هو وحواء، فسج آدم جبة لنفسه، وجعل لحواء درعاً وخماراً، فلبس ذلك الخ... وقيل: كان مما أخرج آدم معه من الجنة صرة من حنطة، وقيل: إن الحنطة إنما جاء بها جبرئيل عليه السلام بعد أن جاع آدم، واستطعم ربه، فبعث الله إليه مع جبرئيل عليه السلام بسبع حبات من حنطة، فوضعها في يد آدم عليه السلام، فقال آدم لجبرئيل: ما هذا؟ فقال له جبرئيل: هذا الذي أخرجك من الجنة، وكان وزن الحبة منها مائة ألف درهم وثمانمائة درهم، فقال آدم ما أصنع بهذا؟ قال: انثره في الأرض ففعل، فأنبت الله عز وجل من ساعته، فجرت سنة في ولده البذر في الأرض، ثم أمره فحصده، ثم أمره فجمعه وفركه بيده، ثم أمره أن يذريه، ثم أتاه بحجرين فوضع أحدهما على الآخر فطحنه، ثم أمره أن يعجنه، ثم أمره أن يخزجه ملةً، وجمع له جبرئيل عليه السلام الحجر والحديد فقدمه، فخرجت منه النار، فهو أول من خبز الملة. قال الطبري وهذا القول الذي حكيناه عن قائل هذا القول، خلاف ما جاءت به الروايات عن سلف أمة نبينا صلى الله عليه وسلم وذلك أن المثنى بن إبراهيم حدثني أن إسحاق حدثه، قال: حدثنا عبد الرزاق، قال: أخبرنا سفيان بن عيينة وابن المبارك، عن الحسن بن عمارة، عن المنهال بن عمرو، وعن سعيد ابن جبير، عن ابن عباس، قال: كانت الشجرة التي نهى الله عنها

The mind-boggling process and various means needed for one slice of bread

We seldom think deeply over it, and think that all it takes is to use flour to make dough which then becomes bread. Today, with all our new inventions and gadgets, we probably need 360 million things to make one slice of bread. If one ponders a little deeply, one will realize that for the flour, a farm was needed where wheat grows. For the farm, ground and land was needed, which Allah ﷻ provided us with. No matter how much expertise one has in farming, he will never be able to farm without land and ground. The only time he can show off his prowess is if he has land. To plough that land, oxen were used in the days before.

Today, tractors are used. If we then had to ponder over the formation and the working of one tractor, we will find oil,

آدم وزوجته السنبلة، فلما أكل منها بدت لهما سوءتهما، وكان الذي وارى عنهما من سوءتهما أضفارهما، وطفقا يخصفان عليهما من ورق الجنة، ورق النين بلصقان بعضهما إلى بعض، فانطلق آدم مولياً في الجنة، فأخذت برأسه شجرة من الجنة فناده: يا آدم، أمني تفر؟ قال: لا، ولكني استحييتك يا رب، أما كان لك فيما منحتك من الجنة وأبحتك منها مندوحة عما حرمت عليك! قال: بلى يا رب، ولكن وعزتك ما حسبت أن أحداً يحلف بك كاذباً، قال - وهو قول الله تبارك وتعالى: " وقاسمهما إني لكما لمن الناصحين " - قال: فيعزتي لأهبطك إلى الأرض، فلا تنال العيش إلا كدأ. قال: فاهبط من الجنة، وكنا يأكلان فيها رغداً، فاهبط إلى غير رغد من طعام وشراب، فعلم صناعة الحديد، وأمر بالحرث فحرث وزرع ثم سقى حتى إذا بلغ حصده، ثم داسه، ثم ذراه، ثم طحنه، ثم عجنه، ثم خبزه، ثم أكله، فلم يبلغه حتى بلغ منه ما شاء الله أن يبلغ. فهذا الذي قاله هؤلاء هو أولى بالصواب، وأشبه بما دل عليه كتاب ربنا عز وجل، وذلك أن الله عز ذكره لما تقدم إلى آدم وزوجته حواء بالنهي عن طاعة عدوهما، قال لآدم: " يا آدم إن هذا عدو لك ولزوجك فلا يخرجنكما من الجنة فتشقى، إن لك ألا تجوع فيها ولا تعرى، وأنت لا تظما فيها ولا تضحي " ، فكان معلوماً أن الشقاء الذي أعلمه أنه يكون إن أطاع عدوه إبليس، هو مشقة الوصول إلى ما يزيل الجوع والعري عنه، وذلك هي الأسباب التي بها يصل أولاده إلى الغذاء، من حرثة وبذر وعلاج وسقي، وغير ذلك من الأسباب الشاقة المشقة. ولو كان جبرئيل أتاه بالغذاء الذي يصل إليه بذره دون سائر المؤمنين غيره، لم يكن هناك من الشقاء الذي توعد به ربه على طاعة الشيطان ومعصية الرحمن كبير خطب، ولكن الأمر كان - والله أعلم - على ما روينا عن ابن عباس وغيره (تاريخ الرسل والملوك للطبري) 14169- علم الله آدم ألف حرفاً من الحرف وقال له قل لولدك وذريتك إن لم تصيروا فاطلبوا الدنيا بهذه الحرف ولا تطلبوها بالدين فإن الدين لى وحدي خالصا ويل لمن طلب الدنيا بالدين ويل له (الحاكم في تاريخه عن عطية بن بسر المازني كذا في جميع الجوامع) قال الغزالي إن عابداً قُرب إلى بعض إخوانه زُغفاناً فجعل يلقبها ليختار أجودها فقال له العابد ممة أي شيء تصنع أما علمت أن في الزغيف الذي زغبت عنه كذا وكذا جفنة وعمل فيه كذا وكذا صانع حتى أتى ، استنداز من الشخاب الذي يخلو الماء ، والماء الذي يسقي الأرض ، والرياح وبني آدم والنهائم حتى إليك ثم بعد ذلك ثقلته ولا ترضى به قال الغزالي وفي الخبر { لا يستدبر الزغيف ويوضع بين يديك حتى يعمل فيه فلألمائة وسئوّن صانعا أولهم ميكائيل يكيل الماء من خزائن الرحمة ثم الملائكة التي تزجر الشخاب ، والششمس والقمر والأفلاك وملائكة الهواء وذواب الأرض وآخر ذلك الخباز - وإن تعدوا نعمة الله لا تحصوها } (بريقة محمودية في شرح طريقة محمديّة وشريعة نبوية)

diesel, water, iron, plastic, rubber, tyres with its different components, the engine, the gearbox, etc. which are all made in different places all over the world. There are entire factories running to produce each item and part, even a small part like a spark-plug, for which innumerable machines and workers are needed. For every machine, a worker has to be present to man the machine. If one worker is absent, the whole line of production is upset and the work cannot carry on. Every worker cannot come to work unless he himself is physically fit, and his wife and family are also physically fit. If a worker's wife is sick, he will have to call the boss to say that he can't come to work that day, since he is taking his wife to the doctor or to hospital. Even if his children are healthy and fit, but the principal of the school requests a meeting with the parent regarding his children, he will be compelled to phone the boss to say that he will not be able to come to work that day. So many things have to be in order for any process to run smoothly; it is mind-boggling. This is all regarding one tractor.

It is important to remember that there is not only one tractor in the world, there are countless tractors. To assemble that tractor, all the parts which were made all over the world had to be brought together and assembled at one place; in a certain country, like Germany for instance. After its assembly, to transport it to South Africa, a ship industry was needed whereby the ships could be made, and for which the sea and water in the sea is indispensable for those ships to sail upon. Then consider the extent of paper work required, and the computers needed to print all forms, invoices and documentation. Depletion of paper, a faulty printer or even a

paper-jam is such a big problem. All this concerns only the flour, which is one component of the bread.

Then, to make that one slice of bread, an oven is needed. It might be a gas-oven or an electric oven, for which gas or electricity is needed. The oven is made up of iron, plastic, wiring, etc. If one thing is not right, the oven will not work. Finally, the wife's mood must also be good. If everything is in place, but she goes on strike, saying, "I will not bake today", you will be left helpless, without that bread. In every single thing, Allah ﷻ's favours are innumerable and unimaginable.

Allah ﷻ taught mankind worldly knowledge

Anyway, worldly knowledge consisted of such things; how to plough the land, how to harvest wheat, how to make stoves, how to build houses (as we humans do not live in treetops, under trees or in caves etc.); all such knowledge was given at that time to Adam ﷺ. Even this worldly knowledge which we have with us today is not man-made, but was taught directly by Allah ﷻ to the first man - Adam ﷺ. Most of the revelation which was revealed to Adam ﷺ consisted of knowledge on 'how to build a house', 'how to cover the body', 'how to grow food', and other major necessities of life. His Shari'ah was mainly Tawhid (belief in the oneness of Allah ﷻ). Allah ﷻ Himself states:

وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ (2-31) قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ (2-32)

قَالَ يَا آدَمُ أَنْبِئْهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ فَلَمَّا أَنْبَأَهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكُمْ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ
السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ (2-33)

"Allah taught Adam all the names (meanings, qualities, properties and knowledge of everything)."

(Surah Baqarah v.31-33)

Idrees عليه السلام's contribution to Worldly knowledge¹⁵

¹⁵ أخرج عبد بن حميد والحكيم الترمذي في نوادر الأصول وابن حبان في صحيحه والحاكم وابن عساكر عن أبي ذر قال : قلت : يا رسول الله كم الأنبياء ؟ قال : " مائة ألف نبي وأربعة وعشرون ألفا قلت : يا رسول الله كم الرسل منهم ؟ قال : ثلثمائة وثلاثة عشر جم غفير قال : يا أبا ذر أربعة سريانيون : آدم وشيث ونوح وخوشن وهو إدريس وهو أول من خط بقلم وأربعة من العرب : هود وصالح وشعيب ونيك وأول نبي من أنبياء بني إسرائيل موسى وآخرهم عيسى وأول النبيين آدم وآخرهم نبيك أخرجه ابن حبان في صحيحه وابن الجوزي في الموضوعات وهما في طرفي نقيض والصواب أنه ضعيف لا صحيح ولا موضوع كما بينته في مختصر الموضوعات "... وأخرج ابن أبي حاتم عن ابن عباس في قوله : ورفعناه مكانا عليا قال : كان إدريس خياطاً وكان لا يعز إلا قال : سبحان الله (الدر المنثور) إدريس النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم. قد ذكر أهل التواريخ والقصص وأهل التفسير من أخباره ما أنا في غنى من إعادته وأنا ذاكر ما قاله الحكماء خاصة اختلف الحكماء في مولده ومنشئه وعمن أخذ العلم قبل النبوة ... وقال آخرون اسمه باليونانية طرميس وهو عند العبرانيين اسمه خنوخ وعرب أخنوخ وسماه الله عز وجل في كتابه العربي المبين أدريس وقال هؤلاء اما معلمه اسمه الغوثاذيون وقيل اغثاذيون المصري ولم يذكروا من كان هذا الرجل إلا أنهم قالوا أنه كان أحد الأنبياء اليونانيين اوالمصريين وسموه أيضاً أورين الثاني وإدريس عندهم أورين الثالث وتفسير غوثاذيوموس السعيد الجد وقالوا خرج هرمس من مصر وجاب الأرض كلها ثم عاد إليها ورفعاه الله إليهما وذلك بعد اثنين وثمانين سنة من عمره وقالت فرقة أخرى أن إدريس ولد ببابل ونشأ وأنه أخذ في أول عمره بعلم شيث بن آدم وهو جد جد أبيه لإدريس بن يارد بن مهلاييل بن قينان بن أنوش قال الشهرستاني أن اغثاذيوم هو شيث ولما كبر إدريس أتاه الله النبوة ... وتكلم الناس في أيامه باثنين وسبعين لساناً وعلمه الله عز وجل منطقهم ليعلم كل فرقة منهم بلسانهم ورسم لهُ تمدين المدن وجمع لهُ طالي العلم بكل مدينة فعرّفهم السياسة المدنية وفرع لهم قواعدهم فبنت كل فرقة من الأمم مدناً في أرضها وكانت عدة المدن التي أنشأت في زمانه مائة مدينة وثمان وثمانين مدينة أسفرها الرها وعلمهم العلوم... وهو أول من استخرج الحكمة وعلم النجوم فإن الله عز وجل أفهمهم سر الفلك وتركيبه ونقطة اجتماع الكواكب فيه وأفهمهم عدد السنين والحساب ولولا ذلك لَمْ تصل الخواطر لاستقرانها إلى ذلك وأقام للأمم سنناً في كل إقليم تليق كل سنة بأهلها وقسم الأرض أربعة أرباع وجعل على كل ربع ملكاً يسوس أمر المعمور من ذلك الربع وتقدم إلى كل ملك ما يلزم أهل كل ربع بشريعة... وهو أول من تحكم في الأشياء العلوية من الحركات الجوية وهو أول من بنى الهياكل ومجد الله فيها وهو أول من نظر في الطب وتكلم فيه وألف لأهل زمانه قصائد موزونة وأشعاراً معلومة في الأشياء الأرضية والعلوية وهو أول من أنذر بالطوفان وذلك أنه رأى أفقاً سماوية تلحق الأرض من الماء والنار وكان مسكنه صعيد مصر تخير ذلك فبنى هياكل الأهرام ومدائن البرابي وخاف ذهاب العلم بالطوفان فبنى البرابي وصور فيها جميع الصناعات وصانعيها نقشاً وصور جميع آلات الصناعات وأشار إلى صفات العلوم برسوم لمن بعده خشية أن يذهب رسم تلك العلوم وثبت في الأثر المبروي عن السلف أن إدريس أول من درس الكتب ونظر في العلوم وأنزل الله عليه ثلاثين صحيفة وهو أول من خاط الثياب ولبسها ورفعاه الله إليهما مكاناً علياً (أخبار العلماء بأخبار الحكماء لجلال الدين القفطي)

ذكر إدريس عليه السلام... وقد قال طائفة من الناس : إنه المشار إليه في حديث معاوية بن الحكم السلمي لما سأل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عن الخط بالرمل فقال : [إنه كان نبي يخط به فمن وافق خطه فذاك] يزعم كثير من علماء التفسير والأحكام أنه أول من تكلم في ذلك (البداية والنهاية)

Idrees عليه السلام, a Nabi who came to the world shortly after Adam and Nuh عليه السلام, was granted the knowledge of numerals - which we today refer to as arithmetic. Numbers were not man-made or thought out by man, it was directly taught by Allah ﷻ. Just imagine a life without numerals, how difficult wouldn't everything become! An accountant's whole job revolves around numerals. Many aspects of Deen are also dependent upon arithmetic, including the laws of inheritance and the menstrual periods of a woman.

Idrees عليه السلام was the first person who wore sewn clothes since he was a tailor by trade. He was also the first tailor of mankind. Before his coming, people would wear animal skins (to cover their bodies). Allah ﷻ also taught Idrees عليه السلام and granted him the knowledge of the wheel. He did not invent it on his own, nor did any scientist invent it, but he was directly taught by Allah ﷻ. The wheel is a great ni'mah (bounty) of Allah ﷻ, although we hardly ponder over it. Up until very recent times, all clocks and watches worked on a system of wheels, which could be seen on the inside. Today, our cars, trains, aeroplanes, engines, and thousands of other gadgets and machines all work on wheels. Without wheels, the whole world's system and activities will come to a grinding halt. It was Allah ﷻ who gave us this knowledge, and He gave it to us directly.

Modern forms of transport are mentioned in The Qur'aan

When the train or locomotive was introduced in India and the first locomotive was to arrive at Deoband station, where the famous Darul-Uloom is situated; our great Ulama also went to see it, as it was something completely new. They had never

used any similar mode of transport, as they were accustomed to travelling on ox-wagon or horseback. Now, since the train had made its appearance, a much more comfortable mode of transport was made available to them, in which long journeys were covered in short spaces of time. They decided to have a look at this train-engine. When they observed it and its unique system, one of the Ulama recited the verse of the Quran:

وَالْخَيْلَ وَالْبِغَالَ وَالْحَمِيرَ لِتَرْكَبُوهَا وَزِينَةً وَيَخْلُقُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

“and He will always create new modes of transport, of which you have no knowledge about.”

(Surah Nahl v.8)

Allah ﷻ had at that time made the train, by instilling within man's mind the idea of making it, as well as the procedure. The word 'وَيَخْلُقُ' is a *fi'l mudhaari'* (uncertain verb), which indicates to *tajaddud* (repetition in new forms). As a result, today we have different types of aeroplanes, jets, submarines, different models and designs of cars and other modes of transport. In those days, the people had not even seen a car, nor did they have any concept of it. Cars came into vogue much later compared to the trains. Allah ﷻ is the one who made all these forms of transport.

What is the position of Deeni knowledge in relation to worldly knowledge?

A Comparison between Deeni knowledge and Dunyawī (Worldly) knowledge

Which of these knowledges are more important and which of the two deserve more attention?

By the time of Ibrahim عليه السلام, most basic aspects of worldly knowledge had been imparted to mankind and had neared completion. From that time onwards, Allah ﷻ began revealing the detailed aspects of Deeni knowledge. The basics of Deeni knowledge had been revealed to the Ambiyāa before, but in brief, and partly. In the Shari'ah of Ibrahim عليه السلام, the details of Tawhid were discussed. Musa عليه السلام's Shari'ah dealt more with Ahkaam on Ibaadaat (laws concerning different matters of worship). In the time of Isa عليه السلام, more focus was given to akhlaaq (character and morals). In the Shari'ah of Nabi Muhammad ﷺ, along with detailed knowledge of Tawhid, Ibaadaat and Akhlaaq, the life of the hereafter (Ma'aad) was emphasized and described in detail. Through Rasulullah ﷺ, Allah ﷻ perfected Deen, completed His favour upon mankind and chose for them Islam as their way of life.

Knowledge of Deen is the true knowledge, and acquiring this is true progress. Immersing ourselves in worldly knowledge is retrogression (going backwards), since it was completed in the distant past; while occupying ourselves in Deeni education is progress (going forward), since that is what had been brought and perfected by the final Nabi.

Worldly knowledge is a dharoorah - necessity

From the above, we understand that worldly knowledge is also one form of knowledge. However, it should be remembered that worldly knowledge is a *dharoorah*-necessity, not a *maqsad* - an objective in itself. Acquisition of Islamic knowledge is an objective, while acquiring worldly knowledge is a necessity. What is Dharoorah-necessity? A requirement which will harm one (cause one dharar) if not fulfilled. To understand this quite easily, anyone who feels the urge or necessity to go to the toilet will have to stop all his work, excuse himself, and proceed immediately. If one does not fulfil this necessity, he will mess himself, cause trouble to all, and even leave a khaki trail behind himself when leaving. He will, in time, also damage his health. This is what is called dharoorah - a necessity. To fulfil this necessity, one will have to go to the toilet, which is a place of necessity and is not a 'rest-room'.

Visiting the toilet is also a dharoorah - necessity

In some countries, toilets are given the title 'rest-rooms', which should not be taken literally and regarded as a lounge or bedroom in which one rests. Subsequently, some people even keep magazines and joke-books in their toilets. Mufti Mahmood Hasan Gangohi (رحمه الله), a very great scholar and pious man, had beautifully stated, "The toilet is a jail, for which there is no bail." You might be able to get out of jail by paying bail, but no matter how busy you may be, you cannot pay bail to free yourself from the toilet, nor can you send any representative or locum on your behalf. The period of your jail sentence and imprisonment, for which the toilet will detain you, is unfixed, and regarding which you have absolutely no

choice. The toilet is a necessity, and man ought to stay in the toilet as long as it is necessary and not waste time there or keep others waiting outside, whether this be at home, in a masjid and especially at public toilets.

Toilets for worldly education

Worldly knowledge is likewise a necessity, not an object. On one occasion, in Darul-Uloom Deoband, this common objection which is brought up in almost all our madaaris was posed, averring that secular education should be introduced into the madrassah along with Deeni¹⁶ education. The principal of that time, a man of Allah ﷺ, replied, "There are enough toilets for worldly education in the world. There is no need for us to build more toilets for worldly education." What he meant by this, is that, it is certainly a necessity, but there is no shortage of effort in this direction. A substantial portion of the government's budget is spent on education, let alone all private colleges and institutions, as well as the schools built by the NGO's. What need is there for us to do likewise?

There is no shortage of worldly knowledge, but there is certainly a scarcity of Deeni knowledge

Many people nowadays suggest that we should hold computer courses in our madaaris. Is there any shortage of computer courses in the world, due to which there is need for Ulama to promote it? One will see magazines and newspapers full of people advertising such courses. However, when it comes to Quraan courses, then only a few Ulama are seen conducting such courses, and no one else. Why should the Ulama carry out

¹⁶ religious

the work of the worldly-orientated people, by incorporating their education in our institutes? Worldly-orientated people will never incorporate Deeni work into their organizations. If there is any shortage, it is only of Deeni education.

(See Appendix 2 for a discussion on the reasons our Ulama never included worldly subjects into the syllabus of the Darul-Uloms)

An amicable settlement with worldly institutions

In Mozambique, the president once called up a meeting with a few prominent Muslims and Ulama to discuss certain pertinent issues. In that meeting, one of the points raised was that every maktab and madrassah must incorporate within it secular education also. The Muslims pointed out, "The three main provinces in the north of the country were all Islamic emirates operating under the Muslim king of Zanzibar, the subjects of which are, till today, almost one hundred percent Muslims. In every country of the world, the preservation of the culture of the people is given great consideration when drafting out the constitution. Since the culture of all of these people is Islam, you should introduce Islamic education in all your schools. When you will do so, we will incorporate secular education within our madaaris." They were left speechless.

So worldly-orientated people are not prepared to introduce Islamic education in their institutions, nor will they ever think of doing so, but we wish to be so open-hearted as to serve their cause and promote their education. The Ulama are obligated to spread our cause, the cause of Islam. It is therefore not at all befitting for an Aalim to impart worldly knowledge in schools and other institutions of learning, that Aalim who has the great responsibility of passing on this great

knowledge to mankind at large. Today, all are reluctant to impart Deeni education. Those who are doing so are forced to make great sacrifices and take meagre salaries, but since they are doing so for Allah ﷻ's sake, Allah ﷻ will use them and grant them great reward in this world and in the hereafter.

An important principle regarding dharoorah-necessities Confine it to the extent it is a necessary

الضرورة تقدر بقدرها

‘A necessity should be fulfilled to the extent it is necessary.’

(Although this is a Fiqhi principle which is used in a specific sense in the books of Fiqh, it is also, in its general sense, certainly a unique principle which should be applied to every aspect of a believers life, if he has made Akhirah his objective.)

A necessity should be fulfilled to the extent it is necessary. A person who relieves himself in the toilet in a period of two minutes has no need to remain there any longer. If you are forced to sit for twenty minutes to fulfil your necessity, you will have to do so. To the extent of one's necessity will a person remain in the toilet. In a similar manner, worldly education is also a necessity, which should be limited to the extent of the necessity.

Consider, for example, a boy who wishes to become an Aalim¹⁷. He will need worldly education like maths and

¹⁷ Scholar of Deen

language, so that he can write and calculate. However, it is not a necessity for him to know the intricate details of science, chemistry, biology, physiology, maths and astronomy. A girl, who is meant to stay at home, will need to possess so much worldly knowledge by which she can fulfil her necessities, like basic mathematics, language by which she can read fluently, knowledge of cooking, baking and sewing, etc. If a doctor is needed in the Muslim community, he will need to have detailed knowledge of maths, science, biology and chemistry.

Over-indulgence in a necessity is also harmful

Every person's extent of necessity differs. Eating is also a necessity of life. Some eat more, while others eat less. What a person has to remember is that he should eat to the extent of his own personal necessity. Over-eating beyond one's capacity will certainly cause harm. Likewise, worldly education is a necessity, but the extent of the necessity differs for every person. Over-indulgence in this will also cause harm.

In Spain, Muslims had excelled in worldly sciences and knowledge. Most of modern progress is based upon the education which the people of Europe had acquired from the Muslims in Spain. I had the opportunity to visit the Masjid of Qurtuba (Cordova) and the Red Fort, which are masterpieces of architecture. In a museum there, it was recorded that the first people in the world to make paper were the Spanish Muslims. The West have stolen and plagiarised the achievements of these great Muslim scientists, without even acknowledging the sources.

A shocking example of achievements of Muslims which were stolen and plagiarised by the West

All have heard of Newton and his famous theories. He is idolized by the world as a great scientist. On one occasion, Allamah Anwar Shah Kashmiri (رحمه الله) was in Lahore, Pakistan. The famous poet, Doctor Iqbal attended his majlis. He was at that time the secretary of the Ahmadiyya group, which was founded to spread the teachings of Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani, a post from which he later resigned due to the influence of Allamah Anwar Shah Kashmiri. He was very impressed with Allamah Kashmiri. He decided to ask about certain abstract ideas, from amongst which was the reality of time and space, for which he quoted certain ideas of Newton. Allamah Kashmiri immediately responded, "Whatever Newton has written on this topic, he had copied from Allamah Iraaqi. This is plagiarism, since he did not cite Allamah Iraaqi as the source of these ideas, but passed them off as his own."¹⁸

¹⁸Allamah Anwar Shah Kashmiri said, "I had given the hand-written transcribed copy of a booklet in Persian written by Allamah Iraaqi named 'Ghaayat-ul-Bayaan fee Tahqeeqiz Zamaan wal Makaan' to Doctor Iqbal (the famous Poet of the East). Iraaqi had therein compiled a brilliant research. Newton had taken his theories verbatim from Allamah Iraaqi, and did not research it himself. (This is what is called plagiarism and academic dishonesty) Doctor Iqbal was shocked. He later got this fact published in European newspapers, and in 1928 mentioned this in his opening speech. This was the very Allamah Iraaqi who is the famous Muhaddith." (Malfoothaat Muhaddith Kashmiri pg. 327 & 358)

The consequences of over-indulgence in worldly feats

Anyways, the Muslims of Spain had reached the heights and pinnacles of worldly knowledge. Yet, at the same time, a truth and reality is that the greatest fall of the Muslims and their greatest disgrace was in Spain. Once, I discussed something related to this subject during the course of a lecture in Lusaka (Zambia). After the talk, a Muslim professor came up to me and asked me if I had heard of the nursery rhyme regarding Humpty Dumpty. I replied in the affirmative. He asked me to explain the meaning of it to him. I had understood it literally, which I explained. He said, "The reality and explanation of it is much deeper. Humpty Dumpty refers to Islam and the Muslims. After sitting high (ruling many lands) and reaching great heights, Humpty Dumpty (Islam and the Muslims) had a great fall. This fall referred to their exile from Spain and their defeat. The (Muslim) king's men and horses (armies) can never put Humpty Dumpty together again, and they will never rise. Their hope is that Islam will never rise again, which is a fallacy, since Islam will rise to that extent that it will spread across the whole world, and such a time will come when every person on earth will be a Muslim.

The idea I wish to convey and drive across is that worldly knowledge takes man to a lofty level and pedestal, but drops man just as hard. Therefore, worldly knowledge is not a thing which is to be admired and envied, and for which people ought to vie with one another.

Islam prohibits admiring others for any knowledge other than Islamic knowledge

عن عبد الله بن مسعود - رضي الله عنه - أنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ -صلى الله عليه وسلم- قال : « لا حَسَدَ إلا في اثْنَتَيْنِ : رَجُلٌ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْحِكْمَةَ ، فهو يَقْضِي بها وَيُعَلِّمُهَا ، ورجلٌ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ مالا فَسَلَّطَهُ على هَلَكَةِ في الْحَقِّ ». أخرجه البخاري ومسلم

عن عبد الله بن عمر -رضي الله عنهما- قال : سمعتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ -صلى الله عليه وسلم- يقول : « لا حَسَدَ إلا على اثْنَتَيْنِ : رجلٌ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْقُرْآنَ فقام به آتاء اللَّيْلِ وَآتَاءَ النَّهَارِ ، ورجلٌ أَعْطَاهُ اللَّهُ مالا ، فَهُوَ يُنْفِقُهُ آتَاءَ اللَّيْلِ وَآتَاءَ النَّهَارِ ». أخرجه البخاري ومسلم والترمذي.

عن أبي هريرة - رضي الله عنه - أنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ -صلى الله عليه وسلم- قال : « لا حَسَدَ إلا في اثْنَتَيْنِ : رجلٌ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْقُرْآنَ فهو يَتْلُوهُ آتَاءَ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ فَسَمِعَهُ جَارٌ له ، فقال: لَيْتَنِي أُوتِيتُ مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ فَلَانٌ فَعَمِلْتُ مِثْلَ مَا يَعْمَلُ ، ورجلٌ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ مالا فهو يُنْفِقُهُ في حَقِّهِ ، فقال رجل : لَيْتَنِي أُوتِيتُ مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ فَلَانٌ ، فَعَمِلْتُ مِثْلَ مَا يَعْمَلُ ». أخرجه البخاري

The Hadith categorically prohibits admiring, envying and vying with one another for any knowledge other than Islamic knowledge: Rasulullah ﷺ said, "Envy (admiration) is not permissible except for two types of persons: A man whom Allah had granted hikmah (Islamic knowledge) upon which he based his decisions and which he teaches to others..." A similar narration of another Sahaabi phrases it in these words, "A man whom Allah has granted (the knowledge of) the Qur'aan, which he recites at night and practises upon during the day."

Every person does not require every type of knowledge

Worldly knowledge must be acquired as a necessity, to the extent that it is necessary. One will have to be extremely vigilant, keep one's eyes wide open and ears very sharp to

make sure that one does not overstep the limits in such matters.

Someone becoming a doctor is not required to possess the knowledge which is necessary for a plumber to know. Every person does not necessarily require every type of knowledge. Deficiency in another field in which one has not specialized can never be objectionable.

A person once visited the doctor, who diagnosed him, prescribed for him medicine and instructed him on what to do. A friend of the patient, who was waiting for him outside, asked him when he emerged, if the doctor had prescribed for him medicine. He replied in the affirmative. The friend then remarked, "But your shoe is broken! Didn't he give you advice on how to fix your shoe? What kind of a doctor is he?!" Now, it is obvious that this is not the work of a doctor. For such matters, one will consult with a shoemaker.

A single person cannot have all the knowledge in the world, even if it has to be only worldly knowledge. A doctor will master his field, and so will an accountant, an engineer and a lawyer. A doctor will then need a plumber to fix his leaking tap and an electrician to fix his electrical problems, and so forth. This is easily understandable to all. Then why is it conceived that an Aalim must learn everything, and that the Madaaris must impart all types of education. How can this ever be possible?!! The Ulama will have to specialize in their field. When the need arises for an electrician, they will call for an electrician. Why do they also have to become electricians, plumbers and carpenters? When they need the respective

specialists, they will call upon their services. But they should be left to specialize in their field.¹⁹

Financial independence of the Ulama and its reality

Many people feel that the Ulama should be made independent, so that they can earn their own living and not live off the community, for which they suggest that the Ulama should pursue some worldly studies.

The Ulama are engaged in the service of the people. A president of any country earns his wages from the donations of the people, which we refer to as taxes. They are also living off the people's money, which is actually forced out of the people, and collecting huge wages and salaries. So what is the problem if an Aalim is earning from the donations of the people, while engaged in their service? Isn't it only right that his necessities be seen to? The Aalim's necessities are being seen to from donations which are given voluntarily and willingly. Actually, his service is of a far greater type, since he is serving their Aakhirah by teaching them and their children Deen. (If there remain no Ulama to continue giving their full

¹⁹ Moulana Abdus Shakur Tirmizi has written: "Some unrealistic individuals taunt by saying, "They (the Ulama) are only good for the Madaaris and Masaajid." This statement is similar to a comment that can be made regarding a lawyer or advocate, "He is only good in law; he doesn't even know medicine and engineering." Obviously such a statement is the result of a lack of understanding. An intelligent person will understand that medicine, engineering and law are all separate fields. A person will only gain perfection in the field in which he has specialized. He will not be able to gain mastery of another field, nor is it something to scorn at. Every person cannot be an expert at all fields. It is for this reason that the government has built separate colleges and faculties for each science. (Maqaalaat-Tirmizi)

time to serve and teach Deen devotedly, full-time, without distraction, it will result in a gradual weakening and deterioration in the system of Islamic education and will finally result in the Ilm of Deen becoming extinct in numerous communities, as the Ulama will become too preoccupied in earning a living, finding little or no time at all for educating their communities.)

Summary of the above

In summary, we have understood from the above that there are two types of education:

1) Our Deeni education, which is the most important and superior, which will lead us to recognize our Allah ﷻ, teach us how to please Him, serve Him, be loyal to Him and make Him happy, as a result of which Allah ﷻ will make us happy, since He is not in need of the things of this world to make us happy and to grant us comfort. This will also be a means of preparing for our Aakhirah, which is the everlasting home towards which we are all heading, wherein we will have to reside forever. This knowledge is directly from Allah ﷻ himself.²⁰

²⁰Moulana Salmaan (the son-in-law of Shaykhul Hadith Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya (رحمه الله)) has narrated the following incident: "About eighty to hundred years ago, at a time when it was a rare occurrence and a very complicated task to travel overseas for acquiring a degree for the people of India, and few people in the country were able to achieve this 'prestige' who would then consider themselves to have reached the heights of honour, a very rich man in Delhi bore the heavy costs and sent his son to London to study medicine. After completing his studies and becoming a doctor, he returned. His father was delighted and overjoyed. The father decided to take his son to Moulana Muhammad Ilyas (رحمه الله), the founder of the movement known as the effort of 'Da'wat and Tabligh', who he considered to be one of the senior Mashaayikh and seniors of Delhi, to

share this happiness with him and to inform him, “My son has just returned from London with a top degree in medicine.” After meeting Moulana and boasting over his son’s achievement, Moulana understood that the father was so over-impressed with the value of worldly knowledge that he assumed that none is more learned than his son, due to which he has brought his son to me. Moulana lovingly asked them to take a seat, congratulated them (as the acquisition of the knowledge of medicine is in no way impermissible, rather it is a means of benefit for mankind) and spoke to them in a heartening manner. However, as the pious distribute the treasure of Deen to all their visitors and make sure that none of their visitors should remain deprived of this, Moulana felt that this son was so impressed by his Western college education and his degree that he attached far more value to it compared to the Islamic Uloom (knowledge) which a student studies in a Madrassah. He said to the doctor in the presence of his father and other friends, “My dear Doctor! You have made great effort and sacrifice to acquire this knowledge, for which you must have also spent a great amount of money. I want you to understand this one aspect. The Quraan has explained to us that our father Adam ﷺ was created from sand and clay. As soon as he was created, Allah inspired him with knowledge.

وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ (31-2)
قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ (32-2)

قَالَ يَا آدَمُ أَنْبِئْهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ فَلَمَّا أَنْبَأَهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكُمْ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ غَيْبِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ (33-2)

“Allah taught Adam all the names (of everything).”

On receiving this knowledge, the angels who were created from nur (divine light) were commanded to prostrate before Adam ﷺ who was a product of sand and clay. A form made of sand and clay is in no way worthy of being prostrated to. Sand and clay are by nature low and insignificant, which always inclines downwards and is tramped upon by people’s feet. Its products cannot be honourable and distinguished. In spite of that, the beings created from nur (divine light) were commanded to prostrate before this sand and clay. From this, we learn that the knowledge which is attributed to Allah, which descends directly from Allah, which in this case was the knowledge of Asmaa’-the names of the items of this world which is far inferior to the knowledge of Wahy, Shariah, Halaal and Haraam and other aspects which were brought by Rasulullah ﷺ, on receiving this knowledge, Adam ﷺ became worthy of the sajdah of the angels. By

2) Worldly education which is a temporary necessity and will have to be acquired according to the necessity. Allah ﷻ too has taught this knowledge, but has laid no emphasis upon it. Here too, every one cannot do everything, but every person will specialize in his department.

Which form of knowledge will earn one reward?

All virtues and rewards of knowledge which have been mentioned in the Quran or Hadith apply to Deeni knowledge, and not to worldly knowledge. No special rewards are promised for carrying out one's necessities, like relieving oneself in the toilet; since these are necessities, not virtues. Yet, Allah ﷻ has made our Deen so perfect and balanced that He grants reward upon fulfilling our necessities on condition that it was carried out with the correct intention and in accordance to the Sunnah. But it can never be conceived as a special form of ibaadah, and should rather be understood as only a liberty which Allah ﷻ has allowed according to the necessity.

commanding the angels to prostrate before Adam ﷺ, Allah has indicated to us that if anything is worthy of respect and honour, to the extent that even sajdah be allowed before it, it is only that knowledge which is attributed and linked to Allah and descends directly from Him. All other knowledges do not deserve such a level of respect and honour, although they are necessities which are permissible to acquire. The fact of the matter is that the knowledge which Allah had granted our master Rasulullah ﷺ in the form of the Quraan and Ahaadeeth is of a far higher and superior rank than the knowledge of 'names' granted to Adam ﷺ, as this knowledge links man and joins him to Allah Himself, and engenders within man the love, recognition and connection to Allah. Therefore, if any knowledge is worthy of respect, honour, conviction over its truthfulness and the firm belief that it will render its seeker successful in this world and the hereafter, according to the teachings of Allah and His Rasul, it is only that knowledge which has come directly from Allah and descended from the skies, which is today being taught in the madaaris."

(Ulama are requested to refer to Appendix 3 at the end of the book for the proofs which establish the fact that the virtues of knowledge apply to Deeni knowledge and not worldly knowledge.)

3) SECULAR EDUCATION

The fine distinction between worldly education and secular education

A very important matter which needs to be clarified, especially in today's times, is that there is a world of difference between worldly education and secular education. Worldly education is a necessity, since every person will invariably need a builder, a tailor, etc. It should be understood that worldly education is permissible in Islam. This is not objectionable. It is a fact that Muslims have been pioneers and forerunners in the field of science, medicine, mathematics, etc. They were great inventors. Their contribution to the progress and advancement of mankind is distinct.

Secular Education

The knowledge that we as Muslims reject is that knowledge which deliberately aims at cutting man off from religion and from his Creator; whose very purpose is to eradicate religion. And this is the knowledge which has been given the name, 'secular' by its architects.

Many are not even aware of the aims of secular education, but they endorse and support it. Yet, secular education is 'that worldly education which does not feature Allah ﷻ'. It is knowledge minus the belief in Allah ﷻ. It is entirely atheistic in essence. Behind the secular education system, are hard-core atheists. Their aim is to divest us of our religion. It is due to the

above secular education that the majority of the West have become atheists, while those who developed this education have made it the 'God' of modern times.

What is secularism?

If a person had to do a little research, then just the definition of secularism exposes the aim of secularists.

Secularism is a system which removes and even rejects all forms of religious faith and worship. Secularism demands that religion - if it be believed in – should be a private affair and not a public one – and that religion should play no part in education or politics.²¹

The roots of secularism

Secular education is embedded with anti-religion sentiments. Actually, its very roots and foundation is the hatred and enmity

²¹The term "secularism" was first used by the British writer George Holyoake in 1851. George Holyoake's 1896 publication 'English Secularism' defines secularism as: Secularism is a code of duty pertaining to this life, founded on considerations purely human, and intended mainly for those who find theology indefinite or inadequate, unreliable or unbelievable. Its essential principles are three: (1) The improvement of this life by material means. (2) That science is the available Providence (God) of man. (3) That it is good to do good. Whether there be other good or not (Aakhirah), the good of the present life is good, and it is good to seek that good. (Wikipedia)

Secularism is defined in the Webster dictionary as: "A system of doctrines and practices that rejects any form of religious faith and worship" or "The belief that religion and ecclesiastical affairs should not enter into the function of the state especially into public education."

for Allah ﷻ, Deen and Aakhirah. These are its very roots, upon which its foundation is built. Even a 'neutral' subject like geography or mathematics has its roots in rejection of Allah ﷻ, Deen and Aakhirah! Therefore, one will never find mention of Allah ﷻ, Deen, etc, even by mistake in it. The world is made every person's absolute god and, very sadly, Muslims have proven no exception to it!

Secularism and Religious Institutes

So it follows that their efforts will be to eradicate religious institutions. This is being done by engrossing man in the pursuit of materialism, entertainment and anything that diverts his attention away from religion or wanting to be religious. Man thus becomes far removed from the religious institutions until he sees no need for religion and no need for such institutions. One article explained: "They (Secularists) think that religious schools are divisive (disruptive/incompatible), and damage the prospects of a harmonious and diverse society."

Worldly education was formerly almost always imparted from a religious platform, unlike secular education

Up until about three hundred years ago, the Muslims would generally impart even worldly education from the Masaajid, and infrequently from the Islaamic universities. Even the Christians, the Jews and the Hindus would impart worldly knowledge to their followers under the religious banner in their respective places of worship.²² Worldly education was

²²Take for example the condition of the Christians. Dr Robinson, in his 'History of Western Europe' has written: The priests and fathers had power (in Christian

imparted on the side-line, while religious education was given top priority. Most of the great scientists and inventors like Ibn Sina (Avicenna) - the father of modern medicine, Ibn Haitham - the inventor of the laser and camera and others also passed through the Masjid education and were products of it, after which they excelled in their respective fields. Medical colleges and universities hardly existed independently. Mankind, by and large, believed in Allah ﷻ, the Supreme Being, although many associated partners to Him or held incorrect beliefs regarding Him. The son of Dr. Ismail Memon of Canada had mentioned this in a lecture of his.

The Renaissance and the founding of secular education

At the time of the Renaissance, a few hundred years ago, a group of people within Europe who were totally materialistic and slaves of the world, whose purpose of life was only to satisfy their lust, passions and desires, had been instrumental in creating what they today call secularism and secular education, which is distinct from worldly education. To achieve their goal to its fullest, they denied the existence of the Almighty, the hereafter and religion in totality, for which they developed modern secular education. Secular education is worldly education, minus any concept of Allah or God. It

Europe); since only this class was educated. In the West after the decline of the Roman Empire, there were very few people except the priests who were acquainted with reading and writing in these 6-7 centuries. In the 13th century, any accused priest who wanted the Church court to begin hearing his case used to read one line as proof that he is a priest since the judges allegedly believed that those who are not related to church are illiterate (p. 217, as quoted in 'The Silken Letters Movement')

teaches that Allah ﷻ has no part to play in the running of worldly affairs, but that it is under the control of man. It would not be correct to term worldly knowledge as secular, as worldly knowledge was also taught in the gatherings of religion, whereas secular refers to the antithesis of religion. In simple terms, worldly knowledge has today been hijacked and presented to the world in the form of secular education. We have become so unmindful of this fact and this fine distinction that we have also begun to refer to worldly knowledge as secular knowledge.

The institutes of learning - past and present

In the past, everything including worldly education was imparted from the Masaajid or religious institutes. Today, unfortunately, even religious education is imparted from the universities, and we are strangely helping them to promote this, due to being overpowered by their way of life. The Jews adopted a stringent attitude in this regard, and still impart their religious education from religious centres. However, the Christians were washed away in this tide completely. Today, across the world, to become a Christian priest, a person will have to generally undertake studies in a university, and not in a religious setup or through the church. This has now crept into the Muslim world also. In almost all Muslim countries, Deen and Islam is taught at universities. Today, religion is taught through a university, whereas worldly knowledge ought to have been taught in the masaajid. The tables have turned.

Secularism and secular governments

Secularism is akin to atheism. A secular government is actually a government in which there is no relationship to God. Almost all governments of the world today are secular. About thirty countries in the world call themselves Muslim countries, but are unfortunately Muslim only by name. Only one Hindu government exists in the entire world, which is Nepal. Italy is a secular country, but it contains within it 'the Vatican' which is ruled according to Christian law, although it is not an independent country of its own. Thus, nearly all countries of the world are secular and God-less in their approach and their thinking.²³

²³Secularism is based on separating religion from all the affairs of this life and hence, it rules by law and regulations other than Allah's laws. Hence, secularism rejects Allah's rules with no exception and prefers regulations other than Allah's and His Rasul ﷺ's. In fact, many secularists claim that Allah's laws might have been suitable for the time they were revealed but are now outdated. As a result, most of the laws governing the daily affairs of life in the countries ruled by secular systems contradict Islam. Allah says:

أَفَحُكْمَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَبْغُونَ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حُكْمًا لِقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ
وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ (44) ... وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ (45) ...
وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ (47)

وقوله: { أَفَحُكْمَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَبْغُونَ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حُكْمًا لِقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ } ينكر تعالى على من خرج عن حكم الله المُحكَّم المشتمل على كل خير، الناهي عن كل شر وعُدل إلى ما سواه من الآراء والأهواء والاصطلاحات، التي وضعها الرجال بلا مستند من شريعة الله، كما كان أهل الجاهلية يحكمون به من الضلالات والجهالات، مما يضعونها بآرائهم وأهوائهم، وكما يحكم به التار من السياسات الملكية المأخوذة عن ملكهم جنكرخان، الذي وضع لهم التيساق وهو عبارة عن كتاب مجموع من أحكام قد اقتبسها عن شرائع شتى، من اليهودية والنصرانية والمللة الإسلامية، وفيها كثير من الأحكام أخذها من مجرد نظره وهواه، فصارت في بنيه شرعاً متبغاً، يقدمونها على الحكم بكتاب الله وسنة رسوله صلى الله عليه وسلم. ومن فعل ذلك منهم فهو كافر يجب قتاله، حتى يرجع إلى حكم الله ورسوله (صلى الله عليه وسلم) فلا يحكم سواه في قليل ولا كثير، قال الله تعالى: { أَفَحُكْمَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَبْغُونَ } أي: يبتغون ويريدون، وعن حكم الله يعدلون. { وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حُكْمًا لِقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ } أي: ومن أعدل من الله في حكمه لمن عقل عن الله شرعه، وآمن به وأيقن وعلم أنه تعالى أحكم الحاكمين، وأرحم بخلقه من الوالدة بولدها، فإنه تعالى هو العالم بكل شيء، القادر على كل شيء، العادل في كل شيء... قال الحسن: من حكم بغير حكم الله، فحكم الجاهلية هو (تفسير ابن كثير)

Secularists in secular governments deem themselves as demi-gods

In a small town of Turkey, about thirty years ago, a dam had been built. At that time, the government was totally secular. Alhamdulillah, the condition there has now changed tremendously. For the opening of the dam, the mayor, who was a religious man, delivered a speech, in which he only said, "by the kindness of..." He had not even yet taken Allah's name, before he was stopped dead in his tracks, and immediately reprimanded, "How dare you say 'by the kindness of Allah'. We accomplished this." He apologized and begged the forgiveness of his superiors, which they rejected. He was subsequently removed from his post, fired and banned from ever becoming a government employee in the future. This is the reality of secularism.

(See Appendix 4 for details of how secularism aimed to destroy Islam in Turkey and brought about the downfall of the Khilaafah)

"Do they seek a law of ignorance? Whose judgement can ever be better than that of Allah's, for those who have conviction (in the truthfulness of Islam)?" (Surah Maaidah v.50)

Ibn Katheer has stated in the Tafsir of this verse that Allah is here denouncing those who reject His rulings and accept any other rulings that are not based on the Shari'ah of Allah. Whoever does so is indeed a non-believer. Indeed, belief in Allah can never go with the acceptance of other than His rulings in one's heart. Allah says: "If they do not judge by what Allah has revealed, they are non-believers." (Surah Maaidah v.44)

An incident from the Hadith to illustrate secularism

Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrates that he heard Nabi ﷺ saying, "Allah decided to test three people from the Banu Isra'il: a leper, a bald-headed man and a blind man. So He sent an angel to them. The angel first came to the leper and asked, "What would you like most?" The leper replied, "I would like to have a pleasant complexion and attractive skin and I would prefer that this ailment, because of which people dislike me, be removed from me." The angel touched him and his illness was cured. He was given a pleasant complexion and attractive skin.

The angel then asked him, "What type of wealth do you like best?" He replied, "Camels or cows." So he was given a pregnant she-camel and the angel said to him, "May Allah grant you blessings herein!"

The angel then went to the bald-headed man and asked, "What would you like most?" The bald-headed man answered, "I would like beautiful hair and I would prefer that this baldness, because of which people dislike me, be removed from me." The angel touched him and his baldness was removed. He was granted beautiful hair. The angel then asked him, "What type of wealth do you like best?" He replied, "Cows." The angel gave him a pregnant cow and said, "May Allah grant you blessings herein!"

The angel then went to the blind man and asked, "What would you like best?" The blind man replied, "I would like that Allah restore my eyesight so that I may see people." The angel

touched him and Allah restored his eyesight. The angel then asked him, "What type of wealth do you like best?" He replied, "Sheep." So, he was given a pregnant sheep (an ewe).

After some time, all the three pregnant animals gave birth to young ones, and they in turn gave birth to others. Soon, each of the three men had a valley full of camels, cows and sheep respectively.

Now the angel, disguised as a human, in the guise of a leper, went to the man who had been a leper and asked, "I am a poor man and have lost my means of livelihood during the course of my journey. None can assist me except Allah and then you. I ask you in the Name of that Being Who has given you such a beautiful complexion, skin and wealth to give me a camel so that I may reach my destination." The man replied, "I have many obligations (due to which I cannot give you any of my camels)." The angel said, "I think I know you. Were you not a leper whom people disliked? Were you not a poor man and Allah granted you wealth?" He replied, "I inherited this wealth from my forefathers." The angel said, "If you are telling a lie, may Allah return you to your former condition!"

Then the angel, in the guise of a bald man, went to the man who was bald and made the same request. He too, answered in the same manner as the leper before him. The angel said, "If you are telling a lie, may Allah return you to your former condition!"

Then the angel, disguised as a blind man, went to the man who was blind and said, "I am a poor man and a traveller whose means of livelihood has been lost during my journey. Nobody

can help me, except Allah and then you. I ask you in the Name of that Being Who has given you back your eyesight, to give me a sheep, so that I may complete my journey." The man replied, "Most certainly, I was blind and Allah restored my eyesight. Take anything you wish from my wealth. By Allah, I will not stop you from taking any of it, for the pleasure of Allah." The angel replied, "Keep your wealth! You three were tested. Allah is pleased with you and angry with your two companions.""(Bukhari and Muslim)

The first two people discussed above are perfect examples of secularists, who believe that everything is achieved by man himself, and forget that Allah ﷻ has given everything to man. The secular education which is today being imparted is this very type of mindset.

Summary

From what we have mentioned above, we can understand that there are three types of educational systems:

- 1) Deeni education, which is taught in the makaatib and madaaris.
- 2) Worldly education which is a necessity.
- 3) Secular education, which is totally impermissible, atheism and kufr.

(See Appendix 5 concerning the Shar'i ruling of secularism)

Giving preference to Dunya over Deen

Sadly, materialism has become our pursuit. There are some of us, who even have a connection with Deen, yet look towards our children's Dunya (worldly interests) first. Dunya takes priority. Deen takes a back seat or is left out. May Allah ﷻ guide us.

We fail to understand the serious repercussions when secular education is favoured over Deeni education. When Dunya is given preference, Deen and Aakhirah can easily be lost.

Secular education is a deception. We are deceived into believing that it is a need and a must, and without it, there is no worldly success. Yet, Allah ﷻ promises success in both Dunya and Aakhirah if we give precedence to Deen.

Sometimes, our thinking and our priorities are very wrong. We hear people say that their daughters have to study, they have to get their degrees and they have to earn a living. They consider this a must and their reasons are: *What if she gets divorced? Or: In today's time, you need two incomes per family...* Inna Lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'oon. Where is our Imaan? Up until Matric, did Allah ﷻ not make all the arrangements for their food, shelter, clothing, etc. without them going out to earn? Do we doubt His ability to provide? Why do we have to adopt such negativity regarding our daughters' futures that we assume divorce is likely and that they will have to go out and fend for themselves?

This mind-set makes evident our weak and diluted trust in Allah ﷻ and it is chalking out a Taqdeer of adversity and perhaps even a failed marriage - Allah ﷻ forbid. Rasulullah ﷺ said: *"Allah Ta'ala said: 'I am as My servant thinks (expects) I am.'" [Sahih-Bukhari]* Hafiz Ibn Hajar (رحمه الله) had said that this means: *"I am able to do whatever he expects I will do."* [Fathul-Baari] If our expectation in Allah ﷻ is good, we invite good circumstances. If our expectation is bad, we invite bad circumstances. Our lives are in the full control of Allah ﷻ. This kind of negative thinking indicates a very poor opinion of Allah ﷻ... that Allah ﷻ will not create favourable conditions and situations. (Na'uzu Billah).

With two incomes today, people still complain that it is not enough. And the truth is that even two incomes are not sufficient in the face of materialism and greed. Our Rizq²⁴ is Muqaddar. It has been pre-destined. It will reach us – nothing less and nothing more.

The deception of Dunya (worldly attractions)

Women have written, stating that in trying to juggle a career, marriage and responsibilities of children, etc. they have completely exhausted themselves and have lost their bearings spiritually. The second income and all the material luxuries did not buy them happiness and peace; it just brought in its wake, a lot of stress, tension, depression and sickness.

Brothers have written that, in spite of all their efforts and exertion and sacrifices to acquire the luxuries of the world,

²⁴ sustenance

there is still a vacuum. There is something missing. **This is because Dunya cannot satisfy the Rooh (soul). The soul only finds its peace and contentment in Deen.**

Let us not foolishly remain trapped in the rat race of Dunya – weighed down and shackled by worldly worries and expenses – and Allah ﷻ forbid, at the time of death, exiting the world spiritually bankrupt. Not one single thing of all the material comforts of Dunya accumulated will be accompanying us to the Hereafter. So take the provision that is essential – the provision of Imaan and good deeds. Work hard for this, to reap the best of the Hereafter. The worldly life is fleeting. The Hereafter is forever. Be intelligent. Invest where there are never-ending returns. **Remember, the world has been created for you and you have been created for the Hereafter.**

The consequences of abandoning Islamic education and engrossing ourselves in secular education

The consequences are far reaching and extremely grave. The Hereafter is our destination and there are only two places of residence: Jannah or Jahannum. The opportunity of this worldly life is not given to us to secure the worldly life - but it is to secure the Pleasure of Allah ﷻ and salvation in the Hereafter.

Reflect for a while: What accompanies us when we depart from this world? With the exception of a shroud, none of our material possessions, no matter how beloved, will be taken with us. What will be taken are our deeds. When the reality of

death manifests itself and the door to the Hereafter is opened, then our worldly qualifications and degrees won't matter, but our faith will be all that matters.

We need to prioritize here and now, and without any delay, if we want the best of the next life – for ourselves and for our children.

Rasulullah ﷺ said, "Whoever loves this world does harm to his Aakhirah. Whoever loves the Aakhirah does harm to his world. So give preference to that which is everlasting over that which is soon to end." (Haakim, Abu Ya'la)

May Allah ﷻ grant us the understanding, the concern and the effort towards learning Deen and achieving Allah ﷻ's Pleasure and Jannah. May Allah ﷻ grant us the concern regarding our Deeni education and that of our children.

May Allah ﷻ grant us all tawfiq.



A discussion pertaining to the various types of educational institutes for imparting worldly knowledge at primary, secondary and tertiary level prevalent in the contemporary world:

- 1) Secular schools and universities**
 - 2) Religious schools and universities**
 - 3) Islamic schools**
 - 4) Private Home schools**
-

1) SECULAR SCHOOLS

Harm 1: Immorality which finally leads to fornication

Presently, we find that many learned and pious people, Ulama and even Mashaa'ikh, condone and even encourage secular education or tertiary education. They stipulate conditions such as; not getting involved in sins or any immoral behaviour; maintaining one's identity as a Muslim, performing Salaah, etc.

However, dealing with so many cases, we find that even good Muslim children, with a good Islamic upbringing, from good homes and Deeni (religious) families, become victims to the environment and get caught up in illicit relationships, fornication, abortions, marriage to non-Muslims, atheism, homosexuality, Shia'ism, Qadianism, drugs, alcohol, etc. Our

young girls and boys studying at universities indulge in inconceivable shamelessness. At home, they don Islamic dress, which fools the parents into believing that their children are good and innocent. Only the person who sees them at university, or has the chance to have a heart to heart talk with them will know what poison has seeped through their minds and hearts.

These are the incidents that are brought to us – **after the damage is done.**

Sending our children into the rain

My Ustaadh, Haafiz Muhammad Salloo (رحمه الله) had related that a father requested dua for his young daughter, who he was sending to the UK, to study medicine. The father requested him to make dua that Allah ﷻ protects her from all evils and harm, since she would be alone in a foreign country where there would be absolute freedom. Hadhrat Hafiz Sahib (رحمه الله) said to the father: ***“You are telling me that you want to send your daughter out in the pouring rain and I must make Dua that she must not get wet. If she goes out in the rain, she must get wet.”*** ...And being alone in a foreign country, or even in another part of the country, leaves her without the “umbrella” of a Mahram, to offer her protection.

Recently, a girl, from a very Deeni family, was sent to a foreign country to study. When she was returning home for a holiday, she asked her parents if she could bring her friend along. They gave permission, not realizing that her friend was a male, whom she was involved with and also living with. On seeing him and being informed of the relationship, the parents

refused to accommodate any Haraam in their home. Despite the Deeni upbringing that had been given, this young girl refused to understand, saying that there was no way she would give up the Haraam relationship. She chose to leave her family and to live in sin. The parents were naturally devastated.

Nudity in universities

In Barcelona, Spain, the masjid in the surroundings of which we were making effort of Deen, was one street away from a local university. It was summer, due to which Isha salaah would be performed around mid-night, for which we had to stay awake. We could not even walk in the streets. Never in my life did I see such nudity. This is that university environment.

Paying for a ticket to Hell

A doctor from Welkom mentioned to me that after his son completed high school, he took him to one of the universities to register him for his tertiary education. However, on seeing how degenerative and immoral the environment at the university was, he decided against enrolling his son. He said to me: *"If I send my son to university, I will be paying thousands of Rands to send him to Jahannum. I will be signing a cheque to dispatch my son to Jahannum! I don't need that in my life. I thought that I seem to have left South Africa and landed in Europe, due to the evil environment and nudity which I witnessed there."*

This was the observation and realisation of a medical doctor and he had the good understanding that this tertiary secular education is not worth anything if it meant that his son lost his

connection with Deen and lost his Akhirah. **Parents are sometimes not doing their children a favour by providing them with tertiary education, but are oppressing them and are throwing them headlong into Hell in this very world.**

Women's dressing

Hadhrat Mufti Mahmood Hasan (رحمه الله) used to say, "Some women dress so scantily that they imply by their dressing, "If you are a man, come to me." By their dressing, they invite attention to themselves. This type of dressing is encouraged by our society and by the modern secular governments of the world. When unsavoury incidents occur, they then pass laws against that very attention that women attract and label it as 'sexual harassment'.

The primary cause of immorality - intermingling of sexes

A contributing factor to the immorality which can be witnessed in front of us is the intermingling of men and women, which starts from the schooling years and is encouraged by that environment, and, unfortunately, sometimes even the environment at home. Many people who have become conscious have resolved to not send their children to such a school wherein boys and girls freely intermingle. In a co-ed environment, immoral activities are bound to happen. Our other pious elders have stated that if butter is placed next to fire, the butter is inevitably going to melt. Butter cannot be called butter if it doesn't melt before fire, and the fire which does not melt butter cannot be fire. Allah ﷻ has created a natural attraction between boys and girls, men and women. If a

person works with his young female secretary and claims that he feels no attraction to her, then either he is not a man or she is not a woman. Attraction is the inevitable result. It is for this reason that Allah ﷻ has promulgated the law of separation between males and females. One pious man condensed the system very aptly, "Their system is to light the fire and then encourage all to not get burnt. The Islamic system is to not light the fire, so that no question remains of getting burnt."

The steps implemented by the Shari'ah to ensure a moral society

The whole education method has been designed to arouse attraction towards the opposite gender, due to which they have implemented a system whereby boys and girls are deliberately placed together. The Shari'ah has stipulated that when children reach the age of ten years, their parents should separate the beds of brothers and sisters, who should be now made to sleep separately. Allah ﷻ's general system is that nobody has lustful inclinations towards his or her sibling, irrespective of how handsome or beautiful they might be. We are not discussing those who have become worse than animals and commit incest. Generally, no person harbours lustful desire for his sister, yet Islam instructs the parents to separate them. The Qur'aan explicitly states in Surah Nur that even children who have reached the age of understanding must take permission before entering their parents' room. These precautions have been put into place to maintain decency in society. As the child grows older, greater precaution needs to be taken, even though they have hardly reached the age of maturity. When a girl reaches the age at which she is referred

to as a 'muraahiqah' or 'siyaani'²⁵, we are advised to implement the rules of Hijaab. She should be separated from all non-Mahram males. In this regard our pious elders have gone to great extremes in maintaining caution. Today, we hear of the child-rape which happens across the world, and, very sadly, in some Muslim homes. Allah ﷻ has cautioned us regarding these matters.

The imaginary need for female professionals and its reply

A common objection posed by those females who become doctors etc. after intense study in universities is that the Ulama and pious prefer female professionals and doctors to serve their womenfolk. They aver that they are in actual fact serving the Ulama and pious through their studies and practice. (They use this as a justification for their lenient and careless attitude towards gender segregation and Hijaab - concealment of the body from strange men - which they openly flout in these institutes.)

A believer can tolerate that his womenfolk be occasionally treated or served by a non-muslim female. But he can never tolerate Allah ﷻ's constant and open disobedience, in the situation that a muslim woman passes several years of her life intermingling with haraam males and loses her hayaa²⁶ in the interim. It is clear that there is no shortage of non-muslim female professionals. Remember that it is even permissible for a female to visit a male doctor, according to the laws of the

²⁵ a pre-pubescent girl upon whom the signs of puberty are beginning to become apparent

²⁶ shame

Shari'ah, in the unlikely absence of non-muslim female doctors. The husband or mahram (close male family member) must remain with the woman, who should also only expose that much of her body which is truly necessary.

In order to serve others, for a woman to sacrifice her Deen, chastity and modesty and become guilty of the disobedience of Allah ﷻ, thereby sacrificing her Jannah, is no intelligence whatsoever. To give away your Deen for the worldly benefits of another is totally illogical. (However, as long as such muslim women are found, who have already used incorrect means and flouted the commands of Allah ﷻ to acquire this worldly knowledge, the Ulama and pious will continue employing their services. This does not signify permission and concession for the evil which has already taken place; it is just making the best out of an already spoiled situation.)

(See Appendix 6 regarding the question 'Should females attend university?')

The price of Muslim boys and girls attending universities of vice

Attending these western secular institutions and pursuing higher secular education have given rise to frightening incidents of immorality. There is an escalation and surge of cases brought to us, of Muslim girls and Muslim boys caught up in Zina²⁷ or homosexuality, giving up Islam, etc.

²⁷ fornication

An incident of this nature was of a student who would boldly announce to Muslim students, at one of the South African universities, that he had been a Muslim, gave up Islam, is an atheist and also a homosexual.

This is what the university/college life and secular education took from him and what it then gave him... and many, many more like him. It took away the gems and jewels of Imaan and Deen, of chastity, morality and modesty.

Into the lion's den

If there is a young and beautiful, tender and healthy buck in front of a hungry lion, then even if you were to give a lecture to the lion that it must not eat the buck, the advice will not mean anything to the lion. The lion only sees a delicious meal before him, which he will devour.

When we send our children into the high-schools, universities and colleges – this is akin to sending them into the lion's den – except that these institutes are shaytaan's dens. And we have seen so many devoured by the environment – **not only losing their Hayaa and chastity, but their Imaan as well.**

Harm 2: Subservience to the West

We should exercise great caution with regards to the education we give our children. Consider the history which our children are taught. Why are they taught European history, whereas we are living in South Africa? What connection do we have with European history? If a person wishes to become a

great politician, he can easily study history at a later stage in his life. When the child's mind is still in its early development stages, he or she is made to study European history in the schools. We had also undergone this ordeal, May Allah ﷻ forgive us, that we would study history until two o' clock in the morning for our exams. What were we studying? When was Napoleon Born-Apart (Bonaparte)? What benefit did it bring to us? What does that have to do with us as Muslims or even South African citizens? But all those things were made to seem important.

The education system has been calculated carefully and planned. Amongst many other objectives, one major objective of theirs is to ensure that we remain subservient to the west through this education. That is the mentality created within the learners, regardless of the subject that is being taught. Eventually, we become brainwashed to think that the west are our masters and leaders, and we are their submissive followers. This is their plan, but we are unfortunately so gullible that we don't even realize what they are doing to us.

Intellectual slavery

Judge Akbar Ilaahabadi (رحمہ اللہ) had so aptly said:

افسوس کہ فرعون کو کالج کی نہ سوجی

وہ قتل سے اولاد کے بدنام نہیں ہوتا

"It was the ill-fortune of Fir'oun to have not thought about opening schools. Had he done so, he would have saved himself from the shame and ignominy of killing children (while having

achieved the same objective for which he killed all those children - to control the masses)."

School education, if considered objectively, amongst other things, makes slaves of the state out of its citizens; which is one reason why governments spend so much of their budget on education. This is a bitter and difficult pill to swallow or even to understand, but it is the stark truth and reality. Such education is, many a time, merely a tool to enslave and control the minds and bodies of the citizens. Attending school is not just about schooling. There is much more attached to it. That is where they kidnap the minds of our children. The body remains in the possession of the parents, while the mind, and later, the soul of the child have been hijacked and kidnapped! The parents must look after, feed and clothe the bodies of their children, while, in essence, they belong to the state and western society! Schools are built in factory block style and the periods are governed by sirens, which is all a training for the students to work, earn, make the commercial god bigger and bigger by spending one's hard earned money on commercial goods, pay increased taxes and make the government and investors in the government richer.

Freedom of thought, a human right

We are all aware of the fact that the indigenous people (i.e. the non-white people) of South Africa fought to free the country from White Apartheid rule. Many people might wonder why they had fought against their rule, as the white government's administration was proficient and services such as lights, water, roads, etc. were provided. It was a matter of dignity. The mindset behind it was; "We are free people, so why must we

be treated like prisoners and slaves? We should enjoy our freedom.” In the new South Africa and in all the countries of the world, people are subtly brainwashed and intellectually enslaved to the west and their system through the education system. Pakistan and India are free countries, yet their legal system is according to British law. Pakistan is pre-dominantly a Muslim country, but why is Islamic law not exercised therein? The whole system is still a western system, but it is disguised so well that many people fail to understand.²⁸

The signs of the fall of any nation

A person who suffers from insomnia and takes very long to fall off to sleep will keep checking the watch to see how much time has passed. However, he will never know the exact minute in which he falls off to sleep. He will notice the time when he awakens, but will always be unaware of the time when he fell asleep. Remember that the moment of the fall of an individual

²⁸Lord Thomas B. Macaulay explained the vision which the enemies of Islam envisaged from their schools in February 1835 in his ‘Minute on Indian Education’: “We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population.” (Minute on Indian Education)

Sir Abdullah Haroon, in his presidential address at the Educational Conference of the Muslim students of Sind, held in February 1941, said, “The present system of education enforced by Lord Macaulay has ruined all those things that were dear to us.” (Fataawa Rahimiyyah v.3 pg.125)

and the fall of a nation can never be pinpointed. However, there are indicators for that fall:

1) Change in dress: Our daughters have begun to wear tight jeans which takes them upto fifteen minutes to pull up their legs, and which restricts their movements to the extent that they are forced to jump like frogs when they need to board a bus. Our boys and girls wear tight clothes which restricts blood flow, cause health hazards and is said to be a major cause of cancer. The height of stupidity is to buy torn patched jeans for a higher price than to buy new whole jeans. Women wear high-heeled shoes and pointed shoes which are so uncomfortable and unhealthy, just in the foolish love of fashion. She wears these shoes when going shopping or for a function, but kicks them off as soon as she returns home. By this, she herself bears witness to the fact that she was torturing herself, just for the sake of fashion.

2) Change in language: Language has a great effect on our culture. We should keep alive our home-languages and learn Islamic languages, to keep our Islamic orientation intact. If we begin to imitate others in language, we will slowly lose our culture. We have been enslaved in language. A Hindu from Illahabaad named Raajiv who was a scientist and later became a political activist said, "A people can never progress until they are prepared to speak their own language. As long as you chose to borrow the language of another nation, you are in reality (mentally) enslaved by that nation. You will never be able to excel them. They will always be ahead of you in worldly progress." The West has enslaved us in language. A person who knows his home-language, whether it be Japanese, Gujrati or Zulu, is not illiterate. He is a person who knows his own

language. Across the globe, it has been instilled in the minds of all, that a person who cannot speak English is illiterate and ignorant. Qari Muhammad Tayyib (رحمه الله) visited South Africa in 1962-1963, where he delivered lectures all over. When he was about to leave the country after a three month long stay, he was asked to express his observations. He said, "Your sins have gone too far over the limit, and you have abandoned your languages (and adopted foreign languages due to a feeling of inferiority)."

3) Change in our food and eating habits: Allah ﷻ has addressed the Rasuls in the Quran and commanded them to eat halaal, healthy, wholesome food, as a result of which they will do good actions. (Surah Mu'minoon-v.51) Junk foods which have no nutritional value are given to our children, which have been made to look appetizing in the Western world. Such food causes our children to become disobedient, rude, vulgar, behave badly and it stuns their academic performance.

These three indicators are all signs of one nation being intellectually enslaved to another.

Harm 3: Hindrance to Islamic education, especially of the Maktab.

We see in our own society, how the secular institutions –i.e. the non-Muslim institutions of learning - keep our children occupied fully in everything other than religion. They have extracurricular and extramural activities. They have various events and functions which consume time. Our Muslim children are thus greatly hindered from attending the Maktab

and Madrasah on a regular basis. In this manner, our children are kept away from connecting with Deen and improving in their Deen.

Harm 4: The creation of secular modern minds through such institutes.

We may not see this change today or tomorrow. Secularists have a long-term strategy. Over the twelve years of schooling and thereafter the years of tertiary education, they groom, they tutor and they prepare students in such a way that when they complete their education or when they graduate, they leave the institution with a secular mind, with material aspirations and ambitions, and generally, with an aversion to religion – because religion is played out as a system that restricts, and secular education promotes freedom on every level.

They train them to fit into a western secular society, into a system where they are just pawns – used to support and strengthen the system, where religion is not allowed to feature.

Without Deeni education, the western secular system asserts and establishes an “Anti-God”, “Anti-Religion” frame of mind. And we should understand that without Deen and without Imaan, Jannah is lost.

(See Appendix 7 for an analysis on the curriculum and subject matter taught at schools and its detrimental effects to one’s Imaan.)

When I realized

When I was lecturing at the Rand Afrikaans University, a professor, who was head of the department, mentioned to me during a conversation:

"The day the Primary Level Religious Institutions (Makaatib) do not exist, the Muslim community will exist as a professional community and as a business community – but they will not exist as a Muslim community anymore."

It was at that point that I realized the agenda and planning of the enemies of Islam. They were systematically trying to break down the structure of Deen, which had been established in South Africa. Their foremost effort was, and is, drawing the Muslims to their secular institutions – primary, secondary and tertiary - where they would further break down the individual's Deen – until the mind-set, the lifestyle and the beliefs become secular! Then we would be Muslim in name, but not in identity and not in our outlook – perhaps not even in belief. May Allah ﷻ protect us all.

And this is what we see today: The modern secular-educated Muslim lives a life which is not aligned to the Qur'aan and Sunnah in the true sense. There is a wide chasm created between the individual and true Islam. This is the effort of secularists in their quest to alienate all of mankind from religion.

For many, a modern and "moderate" Islam is accommodated, where the trends and whims of the non-Muslim society are also adopted. Many customs, which have no affiliation with Islam and which may even be prohibited, are legitimized.

Intermingling of sexes, adopting the dress and the ways of the disbelievers, etc. are proof of the outcome of secular education. The Ulama are considered outdated and orthodox and are criticized for holding onto what has passed on from generation to generation of the pure and pristine Deen of Islam.

On listening to the professor, I understood that the university – and other such western secular institutions of learning – had a specific and detailed strategy to harm the Muslim community. I thus resigned from the post of lecturing.²⁹

The objective behind secular education - from the horse's mouth

Every subject at school is not taught as a mere subject, but is taught as a philosophy and a religion. This moreso applies to language. In the early nineties, before the transition of the governments in South Africa, there was a seminar held on education at government level in the country. The object of it was to inspect and improve education. In the course of this seminar, a question was raised, 'Why do we still teach

²⁹The British Imperialist Sir William Hunter wrote in his famous book 'Our Indian Muslims' that there is no Hindu or Muslim man, who had been educated in our English schools, who may not have learnt to misunderstand and repudiate the religion of his forefathers. (Fataawa Rahimyyah v.3 pg.125)

A Christian missionary said, "We should encourage the institutions (in Muslim countries) to lean towards Western education, because the text books of Western education make the beliefs expounded in the Eastern Holy Book (the Qur'aan) extremely difficult to accept. Thus have the beliefs of many Muslims been plundered." (Muslim Youth and Western Educational Systems by Shaykh Muhammad Al-Mashaat-published by Madrasah Arabia Islamia Azaadville)

Shakespeare, whereas his books are written in old Victorian English, which is not spoken by anyone today? Even textbooks of law, medicine and engineering are all in Modern English. Why then do we still insist on teaching old Victorian English?" They answered in clear terms, without mincing their words, and made no bones about it, "Our idea of issuing a matric certificate to any student is to express our satisfaction that this student has now developed a modern, western, Christian mind. No other work in English can produce such satisfactory results compared to Shakespeare." That was their objective at that time. Today, their objective is only secularism and atheism.

English is divided into three sections; literature, essays and grammar. Most marks are achieved through literature, whereas good English is actually dependent upon correct grammar and sentence structure. From the works of literature, intensive study is carried out on Shakespeare's works. One who fails Shakespeare generally fails English, and failing English means failing matric. Even if one receives distinctions in the other five subjects, he will still fail the entire year. The objective is to inculcate that ideology. Remember that every syllabus has an ideology behind it, which it aims to achieve. This is the objective behind their syllabus. The student will only focus on improving his English and language, but the originator of the syllabus seeks to instill an entire ideology, philosophy and mind-set within the student.

The poison of secular education

Once I was with Maulana Mueenud-Deen (رحمه الله), the former Shaikhul-Hadith at Darul-Uloom Zakariyya on a Tablighi trip in Port Elizabeth, where we had attended an Ijtima'. We had become quite close to one other. On one occasion, whilst referring to me, he said, "The poison of schooling spreads through the entire body, unless one removes the poison." Thereafter, he indicated towards me and said, "This person has removed all the poison." So, if the poison has come into the system, then we need to remove it. One should try to do so by going in Jama'at or going to a Khanqah or by studying Ilm by the Ulama. If the poison is not removed, then one may become a scholar, yet the poison is still within him. Therefore, the same old thoughts will still continue to plague him. This is very dangerous. One may think that he is very pious and is even serving Deen, but poison remains in him.

The uncompromising stance of the Ulama regarding secular education and its reasoning

Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (رحمه الله) had said, "Nowadays, people censure and slate the Ulama regarding their stance of prohibiting and not allowing secular education. I say on oath, that had the consequences of modern secular education not been those which are generally resulting from it, the Ulama would not have prohibited from it." However, the Ulama are looking at the consequences of the modern secular curriculum and have therefore adopted this position. **They are against that education which leads to rejection of religion and which leads to atheism.**

Moulana (رحمه الله) stated further, "Were we to take note of what is actually happening, we would observe that generally, the modern secular-educated people, with a few exceptions, are unconcerned about Salaah, about fasting, (about maintaining an Islamic identity), and they do not heed the other commands of the Shari'ah. Yes, they take steps against the Shari'ah in every aspect (verbally and in practice) and even proclaim that Islam's progress lies in their concept of Islam."³⁰ Na'uzu Billah. (We seek the protection of Allah ﷻ)

Those Ulama were blessed with foresight and understood the purpose of the introduction of western secular education.

Moulana (رحمه الله) has also stated, "It is a billion times better to remain idle in an orthodox Islamic Madrasah than to be occupied in studying Western education. Even though he may acquire no ability and perfection (in terms of worldly progress), his religious beliefs at least will not be corrupted and he will at least love the men of religious knowledge. Although one may get the job of a Masjid-sweeper, it is better than attaining proficiency in Western education and becoming a lawyer, barrister, etc., whereby one's beliefs may become corrupted, faith may become shaky and one may begin to criticize Allah ﷻ, Rasulullah ﷺ, the Sahaabah ؓ and other religious elders, which is not only very common; but rather an indispensable consequence of secular education. The above-mentioned preference is quite clear to a lover of religion; yes, one who is not grieved over losing his religion can say whatever he likes."³¹

³⁰ Fadhul-Ilm wal Amal, quoted from Fataawa Rahimiyyah v.3 pg 124

³¹ Huququl-Ilm, quoted from Fataawa Rahimiyyah v.3 pg 124

A person said to Moulana, "In Kashmir, the Muslims work as toilet-cleaners, which is not a good thing. Now, efforts have begun to educate them (after which they will be able to give up this inferior work). Moulana questioned as to the type of education, to which he replied, "Schools for imparting Western education have been opened." Moulana remarked, "That Western education is worse for them than toilet-cleaning. So far, they were dealing with external impurities, while now they will also be polluted by internal (spiritual) impurities. It has been experienced over and over that (Islamic) beliefs are corrupted by such education."³²

Shaykhul-Hind Moulana Mahmudul-Hasan Deobandi (رحمه الله) stated in his address at the inaugural ceremony of the Aligarh Muslim University in 1920: "If the consequences of Western education is what we are witnessing, viz. emulation of Christian (or Western) culture, irreligious atheistic mockery of Deen and the people of Deen, and the worship of the contemporary kuffaar rulers, then it is nobler for a Muslim to remain unschooled and ignorant instead of acquiring such education."³³

Mufti Abdul Hayy Kafletawi (رحمه الله) had written almost one hundred years ago: "This education has surely left at least this effect on most Muslims who pursued it, that the praiseworthy natural instinct within them to obey the laws of the Shari'ah slipped out of their hands, due to which neither did the fervour of Imaan remain within their hearts, nor did the sign of Islam remain on their faces (viz. the beard). They advise the rest of

³² Malfoozaat, quoted from Fataawa Rahimiyyah v.3 pg.125

³³ Fataawa Rahimiyyah v.3 pg.124

the Muslims towards unity, but (themselves break the unity in the following manner that they) oppose the Muslims in their outward appearance and clothing.”³⁴

At the time when a certain Deeni institute which combined Islamic and secular studies was established in India, someone approached Moulana Ya’qub Nanotwi (رحمه الله), requesting him to also incorporate secular subjects into the Darul-Uloom syllabus. He replied, “Na-paaki (filth/impurity) can never mix with paaki (purity).”³⁵

Harm 5: Atheism and Darwinism

Very recently, I met a young Muslim brother who is studying at a tertiary institution. In conversation, I enquired of him what subjects he studied – and he mentioned history. So I asked regarding the history of mankind. He replied: *“Darwin’s theory of evolution. We come from an ape...”* He honestly believed that his ancestors were apes or monkeys. When I asked him about the creation of the universe, he responded: *“The big bang theory...”* Inna Lillahi wa inna ilayhi ra’jioon. These beliefs are in total conflict with Imaan and Islam. In fact, it is Kufr (disbelief) – because Allah ﷻ has already explained the creation of man in the Qur’aan Sharief. Darwin’s theory is a rejection of the Qur’aan. Sadly, the brother did not see anything wrong with what he explained.

This is one of too many cases that we have dealt with. Many are Muslims from good Muslim homes but this secular education has indoctrinated their minds into the false belief

³⁴ Naseemus-Sabaa, quoted from Fataawa Rahimiyyah v.3 pg.132

³⁵ Majaalis Mufti A’zam pg.331

that they have evolved from a monkey or ape. Recently, the report reached us regarding a certain foreign country in which droves of Huffaaz (people who had memorized the entire Qur'an) had left Islam and become atheists due to the influence of education imparted to them at schools and university.

Today, Darwinism, evolution and the big bang theory are taught in pre-schools and Montessori's, in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. These ideologies are impressed in the minds of our children and as a result, many Muslims are very confused in their beliefs.

Darwin's theory of evolution teaches that man evolved from a monkey and was not created by Allah ﷻ. It is a theory which is totally Kufr³⁶ and against the teachings of the Qur'aan. These concepts of kufr are being taught at 'our enlightened' schools.

Atheism taught to our young children

In the past, this would only be taught at university level. Presently, this is even being taught in pre-school and Montessori. We send our children to pre-school and Montessori, but are unaware that they are infusing kufr into the child and are erasing the concept of Allah ﷻ completely from the child's mind.

Atheism taught by even Muslim teachers

Surprising as it may sound, in one of our Islamic schools a few years ago, the grade nines were being taught Darwin's theory

³⁶ disbelief

of evolution. When a concerned parent approached the teacher and demanded to know why he taught this, he said, "It is part of my syllabus." Consider the gravity of a Muslim teacher, teaching this to Muslim children (without even bothering to refute it)! All schools, including many of our so-called Islamic schools who might have an outward Islamic appearance and garb, currently promote secularism - which is in simple terms atheism.

Atheism in the Holy Lands of Islam

In the early days of the Madrasah, many years ago, some students from Makkah Mukarramah came to study in the Darul-Uloom. They were young boys, who came accompanied by their parents. Haji Abdul-Haq Motara would generally look after the visitors, make them feel comfortable and sometimes even take them to visit certain attractions. He decided to take them to the Sterkfontein caves. On a plaque which they noticed there, Darwin's theory of evolution was explained in detail. Haji Sahib explained to those guests the fallacy and absurdity of this belief. They were amazed, and exclaimed, "What are you telling us? This is taught in the schools of Makkah to our children."

What led people to entertain such foolish theories

All religions had taught that God is the creator and maker of mankind. When the secularists removed God from the equation and turned atheist, they were caught up in a dilemma; who created mankind and all living beings? Due to this, they came up with a few foolish stupid theories, which remain as theories till today (despite the fact that more than

150 years having passed since it was propounded). A theory is an idea which becomes 'a fact' after being proven. Till today, these ideas are still called theories, since they can never be proven.

Simple logical answers to the Big-Bang theory

The Darwinists believe that the earth came into existence by a big bang (which is also assumed by them to be the cause of the first living cell coming into existence on its own). Anyone can easily understand that when a bang takes place, things break, shatter or explode. It is amazing that a bang of such power and energy, instead of causing destruction and chaos, brought everything together with such precision and perfection that boggles the mind.

Our Shaykh Hadhrat Moulana Shah Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar (رحمه الله) said, "If someone tells you of an old broken typewriter, with stiff keys, lying in the jungle, upon which a few monkeys jumped and produced prose and poetry better than that of Shakespeare or Milton, you will be convinced that he suffers some sort of mental illness, or that his 'screws are loose'.

In a like manner, if someone tells you that he was standing somewhere, and saw bricks, stone, river sand and cement dropping down from thin air which mixed by itself, steel falling into place, foundations blown open and a building suddenly came up, you will refer him to the nearest mad hospital. Is this drunkenness, idiocy or madness? It is none of the above. Rather, it is atheism! SubhaanAllah (Allah ﷻ is pure from and beyond that which the kuffaar ascribe to Him)! Logic demands

that there has to be a maker, creator and controller, and He is Allah ﷻ! But these concepts of kufr are being taught at 'our enlightened' schools.

How could everything of this whole universe just fall into place with one big-bang? The system of just the planets and stars is mind-boggling, wherein no accident ever takes place. The proponents of this big-bang theory probably suffered from a big-bang on their heads, which led them to such weird conclusions. They need another big-bang to put it straight again. The PHD's which they have acquired refers to the 'Permanent Head Damage' which they are suffering from.

A simple logical answer to Darwin's theory of evolution

The simple logical answer to Darwin's theory has been beautifully proffered by our Shaykh Hadhrat Moulana Shah Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar (رحمه الله): "In the Kruger National Park, there are millions of monkeys (apes). In the history of monkeys, if one of them could finally evolve into a human being, why hasn't another monkey become a human being?" Many a parent has a few children, from amongst whom one becomes a haafiz or aalim, and the others follow suit and also become hufaz or Ulama. Why then has only one lone monkey evolved into a human being? This is only their monkey business, and they are making monkeys out of us. The unfortunate part is that we are falling for it.

A Nation who prides themselves as the progeny of Monkeys

Somebody once requested Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (رحمه الله) to write a detailed thesis to refute Darwin's theory of evolution. He queried, "What is the need for that?" They replied, "Many people are being led astray." He commented, "Everyone has the right to claim and establish his lineage. If someone claims to be from the progeny of monkeys, what is the need to reply? We will happily concede that you belong to the monkey race. Actually, if you had to even claim that you are the progeny of swines or dogs, we would be the first to agree. Yes, we, at the same time, will also state our lineage. We are, by the kindness of Allah ﷻ, the children of a Nabi, who have been addressed by our Creator and Owner as 'the children of Adam'. Why should we, who belong to honorable ancestries, have a problem and with those who themselves claim to be from the progeny of monkeys." These people are not only claiming, but are adamant in their claim and have gone to great lengths to prove that their forefathers were monkeys. Honorable people generally try to cover up in the case of their fathers or grandfathers being a crook or an alcoholic (May Allah ﷻ protect us all). They will not talk about it in front of everyone. However, these educationalists and scientists insist that their forefather was a monkey and they go to any length to prove that he was a monkey, even though he wasn't such. If their monkey business has reached such proportions, then what more can be said about such people? How ironic and sad that we have taken to following such people and have made them our leaders.

Parents lured into the trap of promoting secularism

Parents look to give their children the best secular education; they may consider the prestige and status of attending such institutions, but sadly, they do not look at the repercussions to the Deen and Imaan of their children. And there is no doubt that this kind of education is at the great cost of our children's Deen – if only we would take understanding. We are dealing with different cases and we are seeing the results. **Huge amounts of money are being paid for the destruction of our children's Imaan.**³⁷

³⁷ Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (رحمه الله) has narrated the following incident: A man who was a resident of the town of Gawaaliya, India, engaged his son from childhood in the acquisition of Western and English (secular) education. He expended a considerable sum of money in his son's worldly education. (After reaching the pinnacles of Western (secular) education which the institutions of India could offer,) The father despatched his son to London to obtain the highest qualifications, which he passed. Upon returning to India, he fell seriously ill. His condition deteriorated to the extent that he was on the verge of death. The father, (stricken with grief), sat at the head-side of his dying son and wailed, "O my son, I have spent twenty five thousand rupees for your education, but I have not got a chance to see the fruits of my efforts." The son suddenly opened his eyes and exclaimed, "O my beloved father! Why are you wailing and crying now? When you observe me in the Akhirah burning in the fire of Jahannam, then you will really cry. By spending those twenty five thousand Rupees, you have made sure arrangements to have me despatched to Jahannam. You have purchased Jahannam for me with this amount. The reason I say this is that you deprived me of Deeni education in the process. Right now, I realize that all that I had studied and learnt is futile and of no benefit. The angels of death are arriving. By spending such a large sum, you have not shown friendship to me, but you have actually displayed your open enmity for me and proved that you are my enemy." (Wa'z-Al-Huda wal Maghfirah, as quoted in Fataawa Rahimiyyah v.3 pg.131)

2) RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS

Teaching Christianity to our children

A few years ago, I travelled to Malawi, where I was informed that a pious good Shaykh and Aalim one day saw his child, who was attending primary school, closing his eyes just before beginning to eat for a minute or half a minute, as if he was meditating. The father asked him what he had just done. He replied, "I am thanking lord Jesus for the meal he has given me." This is an example of the kufr which they educate our children with. Today, sadly, how many of our Muslim children attend these Christian Missionary schools, especially from amongst the upper-class elite families! The parents present the excuse that the discipline within these schools is very good, but fail to realize that the imaan of their children is destroyed in the process, who are sometimes completely robbed of their imaan.³⁸

The Christians do not wish good for anyone by converting him to Christianity, in the hope that one will attain salvation or receive the intercession of Jesus in the Hereafter, but rather use this as a political tool to control the world. This is their

³⁸ Ibnul Haajj Abdari Maaliki (passed away in 728 A.H.) has listed in Al-Madkhal' (v.2 pg.304-308) more than sixteen harms of allowing our Muslim children to be tutored by non-muslim teachers in worldly sciences, irrespective of whether it be in secular schools or religious schools, and criticized the parents who finally remove their children from the maktab to allow them to pay more attention to such studies (which is common today, especially for those who reach high school). All readers are requested to refer to it. It has been left out here for the sake of brevity.

reason for missionary work in other countries and nations of the world.³⁹

³⁹A French missionary said, "To confront Islam with force will only cause it to spread more. To annihilate it totally, a very effective method is to give Muslim children education in missionary institutes. From infancy, the seeds of doubt will be planted in their minds, thus corrupting their beliefs in such a manner that they do not even realize it."

Samuel Zwemer, one of the most prominent, influential and well-travelled Christian missionaries of the nineteenth century, states, "The actual aim is to remove Islam from the Muslims and make them follow and become subservient to our religion. We are completely successful in this plan of ours because the person who studies in our institutes is in reality removed from Islam even though he may be a Muslim by name. Whether he realizes it or not, he becomes our helper and assistant and we are completely satisfied with him. We do not have any fear concerning him. We have achieved immaculate success in this regard."

While addressing his fellow Christian missionaries, he stated in his lecture which was delivered at Mount Olives in Jerusalem, "O brave brothers and companions who have the good fortune of propagating Christianity in Muslim countries and overpowering them. God has endowed you with his special attention. You have fulfilled this task assigned to you with great merit. I feel that some of you, even though you have accomplished this task well, do not understand our basic aim. I agree with you that those Muslims who have embraced Christianity were not true Muslims, but were, as pointed out by you, one of three categories:

- 1) They were either so wretched and mean that there was no person in their family to explain the reality of Islam to them;
- 2) or they were those who mock religion and upon whom poverty had become severe and the earnings of a livelihood had become a worry,
- 3) or they were those who were aiming for personal motives.

The aims of those Christian countries that have sent you to Muslim countries is not to make Muslims embrace Christianity because this is a means of guidance for them, but their aim is to remove the Muslims from Islam so that they can become such a nation who has no relationship with God and their contact with Islamic ideology becomes nullified. It is this very ideology we fear and upon which nations base their trust. In this manner, you will be the forerunners of every imperial victory in Muslim countries. You have thus far achieved this task in a most praiseworthy manner.

3) ISLAMIC SCHOOLS

A Principle regarding the mixture of Deen and Dunya

Remember the following truthful principle; wherever Deen and Dunya come together, man's nature is to give precedence to Dunya.⁴⁰

This is such an accomplishment that I congratulate you, and so do the Christians of the world. You have expertly prepared such a generation in Muslim homes that neither knows God, nor wants to know Him. You have removed Islam from the Muslims, without actually getting them to forsake Islam. Thus the new Muslim generation has been prepared according to the wishes of the Christian imperialists. The Muslims, unlike their forefathers, have no interest in progress, nor any vigilance. They are seekers of luxury and are extremely lax. Their aim in this world is merely to fulfil their desires and to follow their whims and fancies. If they study, they do it to complete their carnal desires. If they accumulate wealth, it is for their self-motivated ends and if they achieve any lofty status, they sacrifice everything for the dictates of their base self (nafs). Your task has been accomplished in a most excellent manner and you have achieved superb results. Christianity is applauding you and imperialism is satisfied with you. Accordingly, you should continue dedicatedly with your task. You have become the centre of blessings of the Lord due to your noble effort.” (Muslim Youth and Western Educational Systems by Shaykh Muhammad Al-Mashaat-published by Madrasah Arabia Islamia Azaadville)

⁴⁰Moulana Ya'qub Nanotwi (رحمه الله) had said, “Experience has proven that whenever cash and credit come together, every person prefers the cash and will not be happy with credit. Understand that the knowledge of Deen and the sciences of the Akhirah are like credit (the benefits of which will be seen in the next world), whereas worldly sciences can be likened to cash. When these two come together, people will always incline more towards cash, while the knowledge of Deen and Akhirah will take second place, rather it will no more remain the primary objective.” Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (رحمه الله) commented on this, “SunhaanAllah, what a solid and far-sighted answer. This conclusion can only be the effect of the nur (celestial splendor and illumination) of imaan which Allah has blessed their hearts with, by the virtue of the company of the pious.” (Tuhfatul Ulama pg.116)

Great Ulama and Sufiyaa lived in Spain, and Deeni knowledge also thrived there. At the same time, the Muslims of Spain had reached the heights and pinnacles of worldly knowledge. But when Dunyawī (worldly) knowledge was brought on the same platform as Deen, it brought along its baggage. When these two came together, the world and its attractions was given preference and got the upper hand. This later led to the downfall of the Muslims in Spain. Perhaps the greatest fall of the Muslims and their greatest disgrace was in Spain.

Contemporary Examples to illustrate this principle

- a) Moulana Abdul-Haq Omarjee (رحمه الله) of Durban was originally from the village of Kathor in India. On one occasion, he mentioned to us the condition of a high-school within Kathor which was once a fully fledged Darul-Uloom. After introducing a few worldly subjects into the curriculum, the focus changed so drastically that it soon became a high-school which had no connection with Deen and Islam. At the time of narrating this to us, Moulana had made concerted effort therein and had re-introduced Islamic studies upto the study of Hidaayah. For the occasion of the annual Jalsah, he had invited Moulana As'ad Madani (رحمه الله), to whom he explained the history of this school. Moulana As'ad Madani remarked, "You are informing me of this one school which was a Darul-Uloom and later became a high-school. I know of more than one hundred institutes in Gujarat alone which were fully-fledged Darul-Ulooms and later became schools." Ahmadabad was a centre of great Ulama and Islamic

education, whereas there is no Darul-Uloom of renown there till today, due to this mixing.

- b) Once, the Egyptian minister of education visited Pakistan and paid a visit to Darul-Uloom Korangi, where he addressed the teachers and students. In his talk, he explained the following, "As you people have makaatib for the teaching of Quran and basic Islamic education and Darul-Ulooms for higher education, we had exactly the same system two hundred years ago in Egypt. The NGO's and other organizations offered to pay us if we introduce maths into our curriculum. We all thought that there could be no harm in introducing maths, since it is a necessity which we need even to calculate inheritance. (The principal was probably happy, understanding that he would no longer have to make such extensive effort for collection from the public, while the teachers would have been pleased with the fact that their salaries would increase.) Within six months, science was also introduced. After a period of about five years, a Madrassah which was once a purely Islamic Madrassah now declared the learning of Qur'aan as optional and a matter of personal choice. It had by now turned into a school. Eventually, no sign of Islam remained there."⁴¹

⁴¹The same is the case with many seminaries across the Arab world. Here we suffice by studying the sad demise of one of the greatest seats of Deeni education in Halab (Aleppo): Madrassah Khusruwiyyah had for decades produced well-versed proficient Ulama. Shaykh Abdul-Fattah Abu Ghuddah was also one of its graduates. The senior and prominent Ulama of Halab, the likes of Shaykh Ahmad Kurdi, Shaykh Muhammad Naashid, Shaykh Ibrahim Salqeeni and his son Shaykh Muhammad Salqeeni, Shaykh Muhammad Raaghib Tabbaakh, Shaykh Mustafaa Zarqaa and Shaykh Salahuddeen Za'eem, used to teach there. A very strict and

difficult oral exam used to be held therein, for which the principal and the teachers of the Madrasah would all sit together and pose questions to the student. Around the year 1944, the syllabus underwent a change and worldly subjects were introduced. Shaykh Abdullah Siraajud-Deen (the famous Haafiz of Hadith and teacher of Shaykh Muhammad Awwamah) was entering into his final year when this change took place, because of which he left without completing his course there. He narrates, "Most of the senior Ulama of Halab were opposed to this new syllabus. They maintained that the students' Ilmi salaahiyyah (academic proficiency) will be weakened and that these new secular or worldly subjects will become a hindrance in them achieving the knowledge that they are supposed to be specializing in (Islamic studies)... My father, Shaykh Muhammad Najeeb, was one of those opposed to this change and he made no secret of it. He would openly declare his opposition, due to which one of the influential protagonists was instructed to pay a special visit to my father at home to convince him of (the necessity of) this new syllabus. My father, however, did not budge an inch, but rather remained firm. He silenced the person by saying, "These students have given their lives to acquire Deeni knowledge, which is why they need to specialize and dedicate themselves to it. To occupy them with worldly-oriented subjects which do not concern them is totally absurd and futile. Moreover, Deeni knowledge itself has so many branches, each of which requires Ulama to specialize in." Senior Ulama were soon removed from Khusruwiyyah.

Behind this catastrophe were so-called Ulama who were overawed and infatuated with western civilization and other 'ulama' who had studied in France. The dreadful shocking results of this change soon began to surface. Worldly subjects were given preference to Deeni Uloom (Islamic subjects). The extent of the ill-effects can be understood from the following: Shaykh Muhammad Raaghib Tabbakah (the Muhaddith and Mu'arrikh of Halab) was one of those in favour of this change. On seeing the shocking outcome and ill-effects of this 'combined syllabus', he regretted ever assisting and supporting such a change, to such an extent that this regret and remorse led to his death."

60 years later, the beautiful attractive Ottoman-style Masjid, courtyard and buildings stand as they were. But this fort of ilm is today nothing more than a secondary school with a few Islamic subjects being taught as well, and that too, from the books prescribed by the ministry of education, and not from the classical works of the past Ulama. The library stands unused, since most of the books are far beyond the level of the students. Although Khusruwiyyah is dead, the enemies of Islam are still not pleased, even with its present lamentable situation. The principal, an elderly man who was adorned in Sunnah from head to toe and upon whom the effects of piety and Taqwa were visible (which would obviously then rub off onto the students) was a few years ago removed from his post on the

- c) Delhi Arabic College was founded with the intention of imparting both religious and worldly knowledge to the Muslims of Delhi. It began like a Madrassah, and followed the syllabus presently taught in our Darul-Ulooms. Some of the earliest teachers at this institute were from amongst the teachers of Moulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (رحمه الله) and Moulana Qasim Nanotwi (رحمه الله) (although these Ulama never enrolled in this college and would study from these teachers at their homes after hours). Due to the gradual introduction of more worldly sciences and subjects, Islamic education finally came to a stand-still and was no more imparted here. However, it retained the name 'Delhi Arabic College'. The Indian government have recently had the word 'Arabic' removed, leaving it as 'Delhi College'.

It should be remembered that we are here discussing worldly knowledge, which is permissible and is a necessity. Secular knowledge is a totally different matter, since it is impermissible and akin to kufr, as has been discussed already.

pretext that he is too old, and replaced by some 'young educated man' whose outer appearance alone is far from the Sunnah. This is only one shocking eye-opener. The Muslim lands are replete with such lessons for us. There is however one difference (which was lamented by Shaykh Muhammad Awwamah): In most cases, especially in the Arab world, the incorporation of worldly subjects into Islamic institutions was forced upon the Ulama by the enemies of Islam who sought to destroy the knowledge of Deen, whether in the form of authorities, governments or departments of education. In certain instances, Alhamdulillah, there is no force, coercion or threat, yet the Muslims in many parts of the world are naively happily experimenting this out of their own will and choice. Remember, history always repeats itself. (Condensed from 'Our Akaabireen's stance on the incorporating of secular studies into Islamic institutes' by Moulana Muhammad Ameen Qasim)

Harm 1- Secularism and Materialism

Aligarh Muslim University was founded by Sir Sayyid. His object and intentions were noble; to create Muslim engineers, doctors and other professionals. Due to the influence of secularism, it failed, to the extent that even atheists were produced from it.

Matters reached such proportions that, on one occasion, Qari Muhammad Tayyib (رحمه الله), who was an academic personality whose mastery was recognized at all levels and in all angles, was invited to deliver a lecture to the students. As he just sat down to begin, booing, hissing, whistling, clapping of hands and stamping of feet ensued, due to which Qari Tayyib (رحمه الله) was unable to even begin his khutbah. He was forced to get up and leave. This had become the condition of Aligarh Muslim University.

Playing tricks on a simple Mewati Jama'at

A simple Mewati Jama'at visited the university in those days. In those times, the Mewati people were unaware of the existence of electric appliances like fans etc. It was winter, and the cold was quite severe, as is the case of Delhi. A mischievous group of students gave the Jama'at a room in which they had switched on the fan, whereas it was freezing cold. The Jama'at soon realized that the fan was the cause of the cold wind within the room. They threw their scarves towards the fan to stop it, not knowing that their little scarves could never cause a fan powered by 220v to stop. The students stood outside, laughing at them over their plight and suffering. The poison of

secularism totally demolishes and ruins the akhlaaq⁴² of the students. However, its harm to akhlaaq is nothing compared to the harm it causes to one's Aqaaid - beliefs.

The Tablighi Jama'at turns the tables on the secularists

It was mainly by the efforts and blessings of the Tabligh Jama'at that the tables were turned, due to their efforts and infiltration into the university. When Qari Muhammad Tayyib (رحمه الله) visited again many years later and delivered a lecture, he commented, "I remember that time when I could not even utter a single word. Today, it seems as if Aligarh Muslim University has become Darul-Uloom Deoband." This is the poison of secularism, which did not allow for such a great scholar to speak even a word within the university.

The inception of Islamic Schools and their prospects - my own experience

Islamic schools generally follow a similar pattern. When they start and come up, the prospects seem very bright, but as time passes, a different picture comes to light. I myself was one of the founder members of a certain Islamic school, but realized within a few months that it is taking on a direction which we had not expected or envisaged. I had to then resign, after coming to the realization that the running of the school is not in our control. It carries the name 'Islamic', but there is nothing Islamic about it.

⁴² character

Islamic Schools start with Ulama at the helm of its affairs. Very soon, those who are conservative in their ideas themselves feel that they cannot stay and be part of the evil. Otherwise, they are voted out, rooted out and forced out in a short while. The Ulama who prefer to stay on have to change, adjust and adapt themselves. Ulama who were ultra-conservative and ardent devotees of our pious elders have changed drastically, which is required of those who wish to stay on at such schools. Looking forward, what will happen after they pass away, which is inevitable? The people who take their place will not possess the vision which they have. The result will be the same as that of Aligarh University and Delhi Arabic College.

Islamic schools try and endeavour to impart worldly knowledge to their students. The general trend is that this knowledge soon turns secular. Even if they achieve their objective in imparting worldly knowledge without secular effects, worldly knowledge and Islamic knowledge seldom remain together without one overtaking or overwhelming the other. In almost all cases, worldly knowledge overtakes Islamic knowledge. By nature, man inclines towards materialism, which he then gives preference to.

If a very strong man is at the helm and is controlling the affairs by maintaining a proper Islamic system, remember that one man alone cannot do everything and that he will not last forever. The others who support him or replace him will almost inevitably be from amongst those who themselves give preference to the world and its knowledge. The founder's ideologies join him to his grave. The new heads begin to run the system in a totally materialistic manner.

Harm 2 - Adulteration

The same subjects which are being taught in a Maktab may be initially taught in an Islamic school, but it is adulterated. Some examples of this adulteration are as follows:

- 1) We may refer to the Muslim schools as 'Islamic schools', but we know very well that secular subjects enjoy preference over Islamic subjects.
- 2) The teachers of secular subjects are preferred over the teachers of Islamic subjects in both position and remuneration (salaries).
- 3) The mindset created is that Islamic education is subordinate to secular education. The children also grow up with the mentality that Islam is secondary and the Dunya (worldly life) is primary.
- 4) There may be an Aalim at the Islamic school, but the environment is not an Islamic environment. A pure Islamic environment is generally not found, since the Ulama therein are forced to compromise with a secular environment, bend their principles and concede to many secular norms which are totally against the grain of Islam and the Sunnah. The children studying therein are therefore not exposed to a purely Islamic environment, and begin to believe that this watered-down mild version of Islam is Islam in its true and pristine form.
- 5) Such teachers are appointed to teach Islamic studies who are themselves either unqualified, non-practicing or influenced

and impressed with a materialistic secular way of life, whereas the Qur'aan Sharif and other Islamic subjects should be taught under the tutelage of such an Aalim or Aalimah that has sacrificed seven to ten years to study the knowledge of Deen in its pristine form and has adopted practical Deen in his or her life as well.⁴³

The sources where these things are taught unadulterated are the Makaatib.

Harm 3 - Haraam in the name of Islam

Matric functions and balls today even take place in those schools which are known as 'Islamic schools'. The girls are transported to the party venue in limousines, where a red carpet is laid out for them. How lewdly don't they dress for that occasion? The sad part is that this is all done in the name of Islam. At one stage, I was also in favour of Islamic schools. I once disputed with an Aalim on this matter and commented that sins also take place in other schools. He replied, "In other schools, sins do not take place in the name of Islam. In Islamic schools, sins take place under the banner of Islam." Sins are generally committed in all schools, but it is much worse if it is happening in the name of Islam.

Harm 4 - Encouraging women to pursue careers

An Aalim who was running an Islamic school, who also happens to be a very personal close and informal friend of

⁴³Each one of the above points are concisely mentioned here, although each requires lengthy commentary in the light of present-day happenings in the Islamic schools.

mine, would always debate the issue of Islamic-schools with me, a matter in which we could not agree. One day, after quite a while, he visited me in the Darul-Uloom, where I was sitting at my desk and doing some work. He informally said to me, "Moulana, get up!" I stood up, at which he embraced me for a long time. He said, "Now I understand what you had told me." He was a mureed (disciple) of Haji Farouq Sahib (رحمه الله) of Sukkar. Haji Farouq Sahib (رحمه الله) had explained to him, "By allowing (or even encouraging) these girls (who are studying in your school) to matriculate and giving them a matric certificate in their hands, you are giving them the license to attend universities, colleges and to assume jobs in offices. Don't fool yourselves, as they then get involved in every type of sin and go through a life of hell, for which you are to blame. All that sin will fall in your lot and your share, since you provided them with the license to do so."

Today, sexual favours are a major thing in the commercial world. Whoever you might be, it is easy to fall prey to these incentives. If you want progress and wish to climb the ladder of promotion in the commercial sector, you have to pay the price, even at the cost of your shame. These women have to go through all such challenges. At end-of-the year office parties, how many homely-type girls are brought home drunk or drugged at one or two o'clock in the morning?!!

Every woman must acquire a BSC

Because our girls have not attained their BSC degree- Baking, Sewing and Cooking - and have not learnt how to run a home, due to their intense studies and busy careers, many Muslim homes are breaking down and ending in divorce. Let us not

fool ourselves. The reason is that these girls were never trained to run a home and cook, since they were too engaged in school and university and had no time to concentrate on their actual roles in society. My sister once told me that a girl who was soon to get married knew absolutely nothing of house-keeping and cooking. They sent her to her aunty to learn the basics of cooking. The aunty, taking it for granted that the girl would have some basic know-how, asked her to boil an egg. She put a pot on the stove, filled it with water and cracked an egg into the water. A hungry man is an angry man. A woman who does not know how to cook, from day-one in her new house, will face problems. How many good women, who have spent so many years studying medicine and other subjects, finally end up as house wives in the kitchen?!! What a waste of valuable time! Let us get our priorities in order.

4) HOME SCHOOLING

The best solution

The best solution to cater for and fulfil the worldly educational needs of our children are small private home-schools. Here, our main purpose - preparation for Akhirah - can also be taken care of at the same time. Our children, especially our daughters, in a relatively much safer environment, can here be taught the necessities of their worldly life, which we do not wish to deprive them of. This is a method which heralds the least harm.

We need to promote this system of home-schooling amongst others as well. This is the safest route and most beneficial for those of us who live in a Western society. Even academically, children have progressed so much through this system that, in

other countries, children who were fourteen and fifteen had already completed their Masters degree, while at the same time learning life-skills like gardening, cooking and housework which are needed for our practical lives.

Blessed are those parents whom Allah ﷻ has granted the understanding to send their children to such safe-havens and fortunate are those children who are saved from the pits of hell which we refer to as 'secular schools'.

The following guidelines need to be kept in mind for those running home schools:

Syllabus

Many people are not sending their children to school. They are opting to educate their children at home, which is very good, as there are many merits of homeschooling. However, we should check what text books are being used, as that is also very important. Not only is it necessary to ensure that the textbook does not contain animate pictures, but it is even more necessary to ensure that the subject matter conforms to Islam and is not subtly conveying messages of kufr or evil.

Extent of education

Teach according to the requirements of the students. There is sometimes no need to go into high levels of worldly education, depending on the type of students enrolled therein. The children should be taught what is necessary for their futures. The extent will vary, depending on the students, and their syllabus can be custom-made to suit their needs. Girls could be taught cooking, sewing and baking in their school time.

Summary

With regards to secular schools, from the perspective of the Shari'ah, it is deplorable, denounced and condemned to attend or send our children to such institutions, considering the following harms: The immorality and intermingling of the opposite genders which is generally unavoidable, the brainwashing and intellectual slavery which the students are subjected to, the hindrance it causes to Islamic education as can be witnessed by one and all, the secularism and even atheism which is imparted liberally therein, etc.

As for religiously based educational institutes run by members of other faiths, sending our children there amounts to compromising our Deen or, rather, selling it and is actually an indirect means of encouraging towards the kufr taught in such institutes.

As for Islamic schools, inspite of the efforts and progress made by some of them in remedying some of the harms and evils which are currently found in the secular schools, they are still not the ideal alternative for many reasons i.e; these schools have generally not been able to rid themselves fully of the germs of materialism and secularism, an adulteration between dunya and Deen is inevitable, whereby dunya is generally given preference and Deen compromised, the haraam committed therein is done so in the name of Deen, especially aspects related to intermingling, laxity with regards to the laws of hijaab, and encouragement for women to complete their studies and pursue careers etc. The strides taken by such institutes in totally eradicating many of the evils of the secular schools have been largely unsuccessful, and the few who have

progressed still encounter some of the evils mentioned above. With regards to the progress already made by such schools, the future looks bleak, considering the retrogression we are already witnessing in such schools from their previously strict implementation of an Islamic system. Added to that is the fact that experience has already proven over the last few centuries that whenever Deen and dunya were brought together on one platform, dunya was finally given preference and precedence.

The best solution for the Muslims seems to be the traditional system of home-schooling small groups of children, in an Islamic environment. This system seems to herald the least harm with regards to our Deen, inspite of the alleged assumption of some harm and loss coming to one's worldly studies, which in any case is tolerable compared to any loss with regards to Deen.

May Allah ﷻ grant us all understanding.



A discussion pertaining to the various types of educational institutes for imparting Islamic knowledge in the contemporary world:

- 1) Makaatib**
 - 2) Islamic Schools**
 - 3) Darul-Ulooms**
 - 4) Islamic Faculties and studies at universities**
-

1) MAKAAATIB ⁴⁴

⁴⁴History of the Makaatib in our Ummah

عَنْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ التَّيْمِيِّ ، قَالَ : كَانُوا يَسْتَجِيبُونَ أَنْ يُلْقُوا الصَّبِيَّ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُعْرِبُ أَوَّلَ مَا يَتَكَلَّمُ يَقُولُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ سَبْعَ مَرَّاتٍ فَيَكُونُ ذَلِكَ أَوَّلَ شَيْءٍ يَتَكَلَّمُ بِهِ. (مصنف ابن أبي شيبة)

إذا أفصح أولادكم فعلموهم لا إله إلا الله ثم لا تبالوا متى ماتوا وإذا أنغروا فمروهم بالصلاة (رواه ابن السني عن ابن عمرو مرفوعا)

افتحوا على صبيانكم أول كلمة بلا إله إلا الله ولقنوه عند الموت لا إله إلا الله فإنه من كان أول كلامه لا إله إلا الله وآخر كلامه لا إله إلا الله ثم عاش ألف سنة ما سئل عن ذنب واحد (رواه الحاكم في تاريخه ، والبيهقي في شعب الإيمان عن ابن عباس مرفوعا، وقال البيهقي : غريب واورده الحافظ ابن حجر في اماليه ولم يقدح فيه بشئ الا انه قال : ابراهيم (بن مهاجر) فيه لين. وقد اخرج له مسلم في المتابعات كذا في اللألي)

عن عبد الله بن عمرو بن العاص - رضي الله عنهما - : قال : قال رسول الله - صلى الله عليه وسلم - : «مُرُوا أولادكم بالصلاة وهم أبناء سبع ، واضربوهم عليها وهم أبناء عشر ، وفرقوا بينهم في المضاجع». (أخرجه أبو داود واحمد)

عن زياد بن لبيد الأنصار رضي الله عنه قال : أتيت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم وهو يحدث أصحابه وهو يقول قد ذهب أوان العلم قلت : أبني و أمي وكيف يذهب أوان العلم ونحن نقرأ القرآن ونعلمه أبائنا ويعلمه أبائنا أبناءنا إلى أن تقوم الساعة ؟ فقال : نكلتك أمك يا ابن الوليد إن كنت لأراك من أफقه أهل المدينة أو ليس اليهود والنصارى يقرؤون التوراة والإنجيل ولا يتفنعون منهما بشيء (رواه الحاكم في المستدرک وقال هذا حديث صحيح على شرط الشيخين ولم يخرجاه)

قال أبو داود: سَمِعْتُ النَّبِيَّ يَقُولُ: "يَنْبَغِي لِلرَّجُلِ أَنْ يَكْرِهَ وَلَدَهُ عَلَى طَلَبِ الْحَدِيثِ، يَقُولُ: فَإِنَّهُ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْهُ"

قال ابن عُمرَ لِرَجُلٍ: "أَدَّبَ ابْنُكَ، فَإِنَّكَ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ وَلَدِكَ، مَاذَا أَدَّبْتَهُ ؟ وَمَاذَا عَلَّمْتَهُ، وَإِنَّهُ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ بَرِّكَ وَطَوَاعِيَّتِهِ لَكَ"(شعب الإيمان)

عَنِ الْوُضِيِّ بْنِ عَطَاءٍ ، قَالَ : كَانَ بِالْمَدِينَةِ ثَلَاثَةُ مُعَلِّمِينَ يُعَلِّمُونَ الصَّبِيَّانَ ، فَكَانَ عُمرُ بْنُ الْخَطَّابِ يَرْزُقُ كُلَّ وَاحِدٍ مِنْهُمُ خَمْسَةَ عَشَرَ كُلَّ شَهْرٍ (مصنف ابن أبي شيبة)

الثاني: أول من جمع الأولاد في المكتب عمر بن الخطاب وأمر عامر بن عبد الله الخزاعي أن يلازمهم للتعليم وجعل رزقه من بيت المال وكان منهم البليد والفهم فأمره أن يكتب للبليد في اللوح ويلقن الفهم من غير كتب، وكان عمر رضي الله عنه يشهدهم على الأمور التي يخاف عليها الانقطاع بطول الزمان كالنسب والجنس والولاء.

فسأله الأولاد أن يشرع لهم التخفيف فأمر المعلم بالجلوس بعد صلاة الصبح إلى الضحى العالي، ومن صلاة الظهر إلى صلاة العصر، ويستريحون بقية النهار، إلى أن خرج إلى الشام عام فتحها فمكث شهرا، ثم إنه رجع إلى المدينة وقد استوحش الناس منه فخرجوا للقاءه فثلقاه الصغار على مسيرة يوم وكان ذلك يوم الخميس فباتوا معه ورجع بهم يوم الجمعة فنعوا فيخرجوهم ورجوعهم فشرع لهم الاستراحة في اليومين المذكورين، فصار ذلك سنة إلى يوم القيامة، ودعا بالخير لمن أحيا

هذه السنة ودعا بضيق الرزق لمن أمتاتها. (الفو اكه الدواني على رسالة ابن أبي زيد القيرواني لأحمد بن غنيم بن سالم النفراوي ه (المتوفى : 1126))

باب في المكاتب لقراءة الصبيان : في كتاب الديات من صحيح البخاري أن أم سلمة بعثت الى معلم الكتاب أن ابعت الي غلمانا وترجم البخاري في الادب المفرد باب السلام على الصبيان فأسند الى ابن عمر أنه كان يسلم على الصبيان في المكتب وسئل الأستاذ الكبير الشيخ المختار الكنتي عن الاصل في ترك المعلم للصبي قراءة الخميس والاربعاء والجمعة فأجاب بان الصحابة كانوا قبل ولاية عمر انما يقرئ الرجل ابنته واخاه الصغير وياخذ الكبير عن الكبير مفاهمة لسيلان اذهانهم فلما كثرت الفتوحات وأسلمت الاعاجم واهل البوادي وكثر الولدان أمر عمر ببناء بيوت المكاتب ونصب الرجال لتعليم الصبيان وتاديبهم وكانوا يسردون القراءة في الاسبوع كله فلما فتح عمر الشام ورجع قافلا للمدينة تلقاه اهلها ومعهم الصبيان وكان اليوم الذي لاقوه فيه يوم الارباء فظلوا معه عشية الارباء ويوم الخميس وصدر يوم الجمعة فجعل ذلك لصبيان المكاتب وأوجب لهم سنة للاستراحة ودعا على من عطل هذه السنة ثم اقتدى به السلف في الاستراحات المشروعة الى يومنا هذا... (التراتب الادارية)

إن عمر رضى الله عنه لما شجع الكتائب لتحفيظ القرآن ومدارسته بإنشاء أول كُتَّاب بجوار الحرم النبوى كلف عامر بن عبد الله الخزاعي بتعليم الأولاد، على أن يكون ذلك بدرس بعد صلاة الصبح إلى الضحى ، ، ودرس بعد صلاة الظهر إلى العصر، ولما خرج إلى الشام وغاب شهرا خرج المسلمون على مسيرة يوم للقاءه ومعهم الصبيان ، فكان يوم الخميس ، فتأخر عنهم إلى الغروب ، ثم تعبوا يوم الجمعة ولم يحضروا إلى الكُتَّاب فلما علم عمر بذلك أجازهم هذين اليومين من كل أسبوع (ص 2 من كتاب : نظام التعليم العربى ، لآدم الألورى)

Islam has placed great emphasis on the education, nurturing and moral upbringing of children. Rasulullah ﷺ has said: “Teach your children the kalimah (Laa ilaaha illallah) as soon as they are able to speak clearly, and make talqeen of it (remind the dying person) at the time of death.” It was also the common practice of the Sahaabah and the Tabi’een to make a child repeat the kalimah seven times as soon as he is able to speak. They also used to focus so much attention on teaching the child Qur’an and du’as between the ages of seven and ten that the child was able to actually perform Salaah at this age. Rasulullah ﷺ said: “Command your children to perform Salaah at the age of seven and hit them for not performing by the age of ten.” During the era of Rasulullah ﷺ there was no separate Maktab where children used to learn Deen. The Sahaabah used to teach Qur’an and other basics of Deen to the little boys and girls at their homes. This is proven from a question which Ziyaad ibn Labeed رضي الله عنه once posed to Rasulullah ﷺ: “How will the knowledge of Deen be lifted when we ourselves read and study Qur’an, we teach our children, who in turn teach their children, and this chain will continue till the day of

Qiyaamah?” Furthermore children from the different Arab tribes and delegations used to accompany the adults when they used to come to Madinah. Many of them showed greater keenness than adults to learn Qur’an and Deeni knowledge from Rasulullah ﷺ.

Establishment of the maktab system during the Era of Umar ؓ and the Appointment of Teachers

Umar ؓ was the first person who established primary Madrasahs for children and appointed teachers for this purpose. During his Khilafah, Umar ؓ noticed the expansion of the Islamic territories, and the large numbers of non-Arabs and Bedouins who had entered into the fold of Islam. He realized and apprehended the great need to establish a formal maktab system under the supervision of the government. He began erecting buildings specifically for the purpose of serving as a Maktab, and would then appoint capable teachers who would teach the children and inculcate within them Islamic ethos. Therefore, Umar ؓ was the first to gather children at a Maktab to learn Qur’an. There were three teachers in Madinah who used to teach the children and Umar ؓ stipulated for each of them fifteen dirhams monthly which was given to them as a stipend. (Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah) The three teachers in Madinah were most probably the following three persons: Nabaatah Waalibi (who was originally from Kufah in Iraq), Aamir ibn Abdillah Khuza’i and Abu Sufyan (who was other than the Sahabi who had the honour of being the father-in-law of Rasulullah ﷺ). It is recorded in the book ‘Al-Fawaakihud Dawaani’ that Umar ؓ was the first person to establish the Maktab system and he ordered Aamir ibn Abdillah Khuza’i to teach the children. Umar ؓ also stipulated a stipend (and not a salary) for him from the public treasury. Umar ؓ also instructed him that he should write on a slate for the weaker learners and the brighter learners should be taught verbally. According to his instruction, Aamir ibn Abdillah Khuza’i used to teach in the Maktab from morning to evening. The children then spoke to Umar ؓ to shorten their time. He then instructed him to teach from after Fajr Salaah till mid-morning (approximately 10–11am) and from Zuhr to Asr. The children could take a break and rest after class in the morning till Zuhr and after Asr in the evening.

Umar ؓ established Makaatib in all the regions under his rule and ordered his governors to make arrangements for the writing of Qur'an. He arranged for the writing of many copies of the Qur'an and widely distributed it. Ibn Hazm (رحمه الله) writes that after the demise of Abu Bakr ؓ, when Umar ؓ became the Khalifah, many countries including Persia, Shaam, Egypt etc. were conquered. Masaajid were then established in every city and town of those conquered countries. Copies of the Qur'an were written for those regions. From East to West, the Imams recited Qur'an for the people in the masaajid and taught the children Qur'an in the makaatib. This continued for the ten year period of his rule. After that came the era of Uthman ؓ, when even more countries came under Muslim rule. Uthman ؓ also showed the same importance to the teaching of the Qur'an in the Makaatib and towards the appointment of teachers. He continued stipulating a stipend from the public treasury for the teachers, as well as for the Imams and Muazzins.

Weekly Holiday for the Makaatib

During the era of Umar ؓ, the learners of the Maktab would be off from their studies on a Thursday and Friday. It is narrated that when Umar ؓ returned to Madinah from Shaam, after spending quite a few months there, the people of Madinah who had sorely missed him went out of the town to welcome him back, taking along with them their children. This was on a Thursday. All the people spent the night with Umar ؓ outside Madinah and entered Madinah on Friday. As the people and the children were tired, the children did not attend maktab on that day. On that occasion, Umar ؓ decided to allow the children to take rest for the two days (Thursday and Friday) on a weekly basis, which he thereafter implemented across the Muslim world. From that time onwards, this came into vogue. (Thus, Friday being the holiday came into vogue from the time of the Sahaabah and Tabi'een) Ayyub ibn Hasan Raafi'i says: We used to go out every Friday with the Maktab children of Madinah. We then used to stand at a particular place and watch the children of Mus'ab ibn Zubair who used to come out from a place near Mount Uhud and leap onto their horses. Ibn Mujaahid Muqri, who would teach children Qur'an in the maktab, once saw a hefty heavily built man. He commented, "He would be

heavier on a scale than even Saturday on the children.” He referred here to the fact that the children would regard Saturday as heavy and burdensome, as they had to return back to classes on a Saturday.

It is undoubtedly the need of the time that we, as a global Ummah, once again focus on this very important branch of Deen to see how we can empower our children with the knowledge of Qur'an and Deen. Therein lays their success, progress and safety. If we fail in our duty, Allah forbid, we can lose generations. These innocent children are like booty. Either we be quick in gathering and looking after the booty, otherwise it can be snatched away from us. Hence, it is the duty of every Muslim to see what part he can play in establishing, strengthening or supporting a Maktab wherever possible. In particular, Muslims living in those countries where there is no proper structured Maktab system or where there is shortage of Makaatib should seriously take on this responsibility to initiate Makaatib in their regions. May Allah assist us and keep our children steadfast on Deen. Aamin

Adapted from: Ulama-e-Deoband ki Yaadgaar Tahrir vl.1 p.219-223 (which was translated and condensed in An-Nasiha vl.126), Al-Fawaakihud Dawaani, At-Taraateebul Idaariyyah

Importance of the Makaatib

وفي الاجوبة المهمة عن الحافظ السيوطي " تعليم الصبيان القرآن اصل من اصول الاسلام فينشأون على الفطرة ويسبق الى قلوبهم انوار الحكمة قبل تمكن الاهواء منها وسواها باكدار المعصية والضلال"... وقال الولي ابن خلدون في مقدمة العبر في فصل تعليم الولدان اعلم أن تعليم الولدان القرآن شعار من شعار الدين أخذ به اهل الملة ودرجوا عليه في جميع امصارهم بما يسبق فيه الى القلوب من رسوخ الايمان وعقائده من آيات القرآن وصار القرآن اصل التعليم الذي يبنى عليه ما يحصل بعد من الملكات ثم قال اختصت العوائد الاسلامية بتقدم دراسة القرآن ايثارا للشبر وخشية ما يعرض للولد في جنون الصبا من الآفات والقواطع عن العلم فيفوته القرآن هو على ذلك جرى حال اهل ملة الاسلام في كل عصر وزمان حتى قال الائمة إن تعليم القرآن وتعلمه فرض وكذا معرفة معانيه لانها المقصود الاهم والمطلوب الاعظم وفي المجاجي نقلا عن الغريبي أنه سئل عن اهل قرية امتنع بعضهم من بناء مسجد للصلاة واخذ المؤدب لقراءة اولادهم هل يجبرون على ذلكفقال جبرهم على بناء المسجد واجب وكذا جبرهم على تعليم اولادهم ونحوه للعقباني ايضا (الترتيب الادارية)

وَقَدْ قَالَ الشَّيْخُ أَبُو مُحَمَّدٍ بْنُ أَبِي زَيْدٍ رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى فِي كِتَابِ الرِّسَالَةِ لَهُ : وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ خَيْرَ الْقُلُوبِ أَوْعَاها لِلْخَيْرِ وَأَرْجَى الْقُلُوبِ لِلْخَيْرِ مَا لَمْ يُسَبِّقِ الشَّرُّ إِلَيْهِ وَأَوَّلَى مَا غَنِيَ بِهِ النَّاصِحُونَ وَرَغَّبَ فِي أَجْرِه الرَّاغِبُونَ يُصَالُ الْخَيْرُ إِلَى قُلُوبِ أَوْلَادِ

الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لِيَرْسُخَ فِيهَا وَتَنْبِيَهُهُمْ عَلَى مَعَالِمِ الدِّينِ وَحُدُودِ الشَّرِيعَةِ لِيَرِاضُوا عَلَيْهَا وَمَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَنْ تَعْتَقِدَهُ مِنَ الدِّينِ فَلَوْ بُهِمْ
وَتَعْمَلَ بِهِ جَوَارِحُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُ زُويَ أَنَّ تَعْلِيمَ الصِّغَارِ لِكِتَابِ اللَّهِ يُطْفِئُ غَضَبَ اللَّهِ وَأَنَّ تَعْلِيمَ الشَّيْءِ فِي الصِّغَرِ كَالْتَّقِشِ فِي الْحَجَرِ
انْتَهَى . (المدخل لابن الحاج العبدري)

Allamah Suyuti (رحمه الله) wrote: “Teaching children the Qur’an is a fundamental duty from the fundamentals of Islam. As a result, they will grow up with fitrah (a pure nature which is not influenced by unnatural factors). Added to that, the anwaar (spiritual light) of wisdom will reach their hearts before desires overcome it and it becomes tainted with the stains of sin and deviation.” Ibn Khaldun (رحمه الله) wrote: Understand very well that to teach children the Qur’an is a special trait and hallmark of Deen. The Muslims held firmly onto this. They structured its teaching in all Muslim cities in such a manner that Imaan and Islamic beliefs would be entrenched in the children’s hearts through the medium of the verses of the Qur’an. The Qur’an became the foundation of their education, upon which the skills and talents which they later acquired were based... It is common practice amongst the Muslims to first learn the Qur’an, for the sake of blessings and in the fear that he may lose out on learning the Qur’an when he is faced with difficulties and distractions from acquiring knowledge during his teenage years. This was the condition and situation of all Muslims in every era.” The Ulama have even stated: “The learning and teaching of the Qur’an is fardh (compulsory). Similarly, understanding its subject matter (its commands, prohibitions, laws and instructions) is also fardh, because that is the main purpose and the greatest objective.” Some Ulama have stated that if any locality refuses to build a Masjid and to hire a teacher to teach the Qur’an to their children, it is waajib (obligatory) upon the Muslim state to force them to do so. (At-Taraateebul-Idaariyyah)

Ibn Abi Zayd writes in his ‘Risaalah’: “Understand well that the best hearts are those that have the greatest capacity to store and contain goodness. The most likely hearts which can store goodness are those hearts to which evil has never yet reached. Therefore, the best task towards which the well-wishers of the Ummah turned their attention to and those who aspire to earn good desire its great rewards is; to convey good knowledge to the hearts of Mu’min children so that it may be entrenched in their hearts, to inform them of the symbols of Deen and the limits of the Shari’ah so that they may be satisfied regarding it, and to inform them of those beliefs of Islam which their hearts must believe in and those actions which they must carry out with their limbs. Teaching children the Book of Allah extinguishes the anger of Allah. Teaching anything to child in his early years is like embedding an inscription on a rock. (Al-Madkhal)

The backbone of the Muslim Ummah

Maktab (singular) / Makaatib (plural) - The Primary level religious institutions which dedicatedly serves the Muslim community by imparting Islamic knowledge to Muslim children.

The Maktab is the backbone of the Ummah and establishes a strong faith in Allah ﷻ within the heart of every Muslim child. Tauheed (belief in the Oneness of Allah ﷻ and His unique Qualities) Risaalat (belief in the Messenger-ship of all the Messengers, especially Nabi Muhammad ﷺ) and Aakhirah (belief in the Hereafter, Resurrection, Jannah and Jahannam), which are the principles of Deen, are well-grounded in our children through these institutes. This is what assists in making them firm Believers in Allah ﷻ. Wherever in the world there is no establishment of the Maktab system, the people there easily lose their direction in Deen.

The public is in dire need of the Makaatib

Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (رحمه الله), while addressing the audience at a Jalsah in Meerut stated, "You people regard the Ulama to be dependent on your donations. Why don't you stop supporting them? Hold a meeting and make a resolution to stop supporting them. Alhamdulillah, it will not bother us in the least. Some will open rice shops, others will open grocery shops and others will open all sorts of other shops. However, in such a situation, you will have to shoulder the worry of your own children. After a period of just fifty years, you will see for

yourselves the condition of your children. Some will become Jews, others will become Christians, while yet others will turn Hindu etc. May Allah forbid! It is Islamic education which is preventing all of these calamities. In the above situation, Ulama will not be available for imparting Islamic education.”⁴⁵

An incident illustrating the great value of the maktab

مر عيسى ابن مريم عليه السلام على قبر فرأى ملائكة العذاب يعذبون ميتا فلما انصرف من حاجته مر على القبر فرأى ملائكة الرحمة معهم أطباق من نور فتعجب من ذلك فصلى ودعا الله تعالى فأوحى الله تعالى إليه يا عيسى كان هذا العبد عاصيا ومذ مات كان محبوسا في عذابي وكان قد ترك امرأة حبلى فولدت ولدا وربته حتى كبر فسلمته إلى الكتاب فلقنه المعلم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم فاستحييت من عبدي أن أعذبه بناري في بطن الأرض وولده يذكر اسمي على وجه الأرض (مفاتيح الغيب)

Imam Fakhruddin Raazi (رحمه الله) has quoted the following instance in his famous At-Tafseerul-Kabeer: A very great sinner, who spent his life committing sin and evil, passed away. His wife was at that time expecting a child from him. He was entered into his grave, wherein he began receiving punishment from Allah. His child was soon thereafter born. At the age of four or five, when the child was old enough to attend the nearby maktab, he was enrolled in the class of a teacher. The teacher taught the child ‘Bismillahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem’ (In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful). As soon as the child repeated these words, Allah ﷻ immediately lifted the punishment from the father and declared,

⁴⁵ Kalimatul-Haqq pg.37, as quoted in Tuhfatul-Ulama

استحييت من عبدي أن أعذبه بناري في بطن الأرض وولده يذكر اسمي على وجه الأرض

"I am ashamed to punish this slave of Mine with My fire under the earth, while his son is taking My name (Allah, Ar-Rahmaan and Ar-Raheem) above the Earth."

The Makaatib, a protection for our Islamic identity

When I was lecturing at the Rand Afrikaans University, a professor, who was head of the department, mentioned to me, during a conversation:

"The day the Primary Level Religious Institutions (Makaatib) do not exist, the Muslim community will exist as a professional community and as a business community – but they will not exist as a Muslim community anymore."

The Makaatib, a cause of failure for the missionaries

In the nineties, the Christian NGO's who were carrying out missionary activities in Africa spent huge amounts of money in order to propagate their beliefs. In a particular place, they had purchased a farm in order to accommodate their missionaries. These missionaries would set out from their residence even before dawn to begin their activities. They targeted the under-privileged and provided the learners of such families with school books, food, blankets, and other amenities. These missionaries decided to hold a seminar to discuss their progress thus far. In their discussion, they acknowledged that they were unable to make inroads into the Muslim communities due to the Maktab system that was in place.

The mind of a child, innocent and receptive

In that seminar, another matter was also discussed. The Roman Catholics asserted that if a newly born child is handed over to them only until the age of five, then such a child will always remain a Roman Catholic. There is a famous Arabic saying which goes as follows, 'Whatever ideas are inscribed in the mind of a child during childhood remains embedded there like an inscription that has been inscribed on a rock.' In simple words, it will never be erased.

The lap of the mother, the first maktab for a child

People generally suppose that a child should be left to play in its first few years, so the child is left to do as he pleases. This is the type of foundation that we have laid for the child. Of course, this does not mean that the child should be formally taught, but a Muslim home should be a Maktab. There cannot possibly be a better teacher for the child than the mother herself. A helper, maid, nanny or baby-sitter does not have the interests of the child at heart. Their interest is their wages which they expect at the end of the month. The love that a mother gives to a child cannot be given by anyone else.

The fundamental education of a Muslim - The Quran

It is ironic that those who play nursery rhymes, music, videos and television channels to their children in their homes later complain about their children. They have no right to complain. Their example is of a person who chops his own legs with a

chopper and then complains of the consequences. Our rise and fall is within us. It is extremely important that we teach the Qur'aan Sharif to our children at home.

Maktab education - The next stage

Moulana Ahmad Saadiq Desai of Majlisul-Ulama maintains that the Jihaad of the century is to establish Makaatib everywhere. I am, one hundred percent, in conformity with Moulana's suggestion. This is one of the greatest needs of the time. If run correctly, the Maktab is the place which forms the very foundation of the Ummah. This is the place which practically every Muslim child ought to attend. According to Hadhrat Ali , the time for a child to play is until the age of seven. A child's formal education and training should start from this time, for which we require the Maktab education.

The importance of the maktab subjects and the ideal environment

In the past, the moment a girl had learnt to recite the Quraan Sharif fluently (which we generally term as 'naazara'), her Islamic education would be considered as complete. This was the trend in the past. Only the Quraan Sharif was taught to the girls, who were then required to remain at home. Nowadays, the children are taught Quraan, in addition to other subjects including Hadith, Fiqh, History, Aqaaid, etc. When a person is properly educated in Islam, his Aqaaid will also be correct. Through Islamic education, people acquire the knowledge of the injunctions of the Quraan Sharif. Actually, the Maktab is the place wherein the children are trained and indoctrinated with

the correct Aqaaid (beliefs), Akhlaaq (character) and A'maal (actions).

Education is one's power and strength, without which one can be deviated and influenced very easily. The effort of Da'wat and Tabligh has accomplished much, but if it is not coupled with the Maktab system, there is great fear of deviates like the Shias and Salafis ruining all the effort that was made. It is for this reason that many of our Tablighi elders stress that the Maktab system should also be in place.

The sources where these subjects are taught unadulterated are the Makaatib (in contrast to Islamic schools, as discussed above). The Maktab is the place where the Qur'aan Sharif and other Islamic subjects should be taught under the tutelage of such an Aalim or Aalimah that has sacrificed seven to ten years to study the knowledge of Deen in its pristine form and has adopted practical Deen in his or her life as well.

QUR'AANIC EDUCATION

(MISCELLANEOUS ASPECTS)

Rasulullah ﷺ had explained the great virtues of learning and teaching the Qur'aan. One of his teachings was, "The best and most virtuous amongst you are those who learn the Qur'aan and teach it." We learn from this Hadith that the occupation of (learning and teaching) the Qur'aan is a very great form of worship and that those who are engaged in learning and teaching it are the best amongst all.

The wisdom behind completing a recital of Qur'aan in the Maktab

When a child completes a recital of the Qur'aan, then an Islamic temperament and outlook is ingrained within the child. The Mizaaj (temperament and outlook) of a true Muslim is created by the Qur'aan Sharif. The Qur'aan (spiritually) grows and builds the heart and mind of a person.

Learning the Qur'aan for children and adults

We should ensure that every Muslim child receives Islamic education and knows how to recite the Qur'aan fluently. No child in our community should be deprived of Islamic education. Every adult should also know how to recite Qur'aan Sharif. Once or twice a week, there should be an adult class for about 15 minutes before Isha Salaah. Those that are not fluent in recitation can easily brush up on their recitation, or on their tajwid (pronunciation).

Five ways in which every person can serve Qur'aanic education

1) Involve ourselves in the service of the local maktab

Everyone should devote himself to the teaching of the Qur'aan Sharif. We should take a personal interest in the Makaatib that are established in our areas. A person who is interested in the future of his community should get involved in the Maktab system. We should ensure that we have a proper smooth-functioning Maktab system with the best of teachers.

2) Turn our homes and businesses into maktab

Every Muslim home should be a Maktab. There are those people who have allocated time for Ta'leem (imparting Islamic education) in their business places. In fact, some have initiated madrasahs that are operating at their businesses. A very good friend of mine, who is an Aalim, has a great passion for the Qur'aan Sharif. He visits the offices and businesses of people and teaches them Qur'aan, specifically accommodating those that have forgotten how to recite the Qur'aan Sharif. Others are under the impression that he is visiting for some work with the boss, while he is actually teaching him the Qur'aan Sharif. He is able to get people in the mode of reciting Qur'aan quite easily, as he has an art of teaching. We should therefore make our businesses a Madrasah as well.

3) Teach Qur'aan wherever we get the opportunity

We should all try and engage in the teaching of the Qur'aan. A person that knows how to recite Surah Fatiha should teach Surah Fatiha to another. One who has memorized a few Surahs should teach those few Surahs. A new-Muslim should be taught that much by which he can perform his Salaah, even if it means that he repeats the Surah in all the rak'ats. If the maid at home had accepted Islam, we should teach her and not just push over the responsibility to the Imaam or local Aalim.

4) Sponsor a maktab student, a Haafiz or an Aalim

If one feels that he is unable to impart the knowledge of Deen, then at least sponsor a Hafiz, so that you may have a Hafiz to your credit on the day of Qiyaamah. What great rewards have been stored for a person who makes his son a Hafiz-ul-Quraan?! If one is unable to do so, then at least sponsor a student.

5) Sponsor an entire maktab, local or abroad

Currently there is a demand for South Africans to run Makaatib in other countries. There are brothers that are overseeing institutes in Mozambique, Malawi and other countries. Involve a few businessmen and incorporate an Aalim as well in these projects. Once these projects have taken off, make regular visits to ensure the smooth functioning of these institutes. South Africans have a share in many parts of the world. We should therefore try to work locally or abroad, or both if it is within our means.

Benefit of attaching ourselves to the Qur'aan - Drawing the Mercy of Allah ﷻ

This learning and teaching of the Qur'aan will draw the mercy of Allah ﷻ, through which the problems in our towns and families will be easily solved. The only way of solving our problems is to draw the Rahmah (mercy) of Allah ﷻ. We can only draw the mercy of Allah ﷻ with A'maal (good actions).

Methods of obstructing the Mercy of Allah ﷻ

On the contrary, one who switches on his television in his house, or plays a video, or blares music, or displays pictures, etc. obstructs the mercy of Allah ﷻ. If our homes are free of pictures, music, televisions, videos, DVDs, newspapers, magazines, etc., our homes are open to the angels. If we cannot do without our newspapers and magazines, then at least keep them in the garage. Having these things in our houses stop the angels from entering.

In Germiston, a female revert was suffering the throes of death on one Sunday morning. A particular person who was actively involved in community affairs was also present, and he noticed that the soul was reluctant to leave the body. He wondered as to what the reason for this might be. Later, he found a puppy under her bed. The moment the puppy was removed, her soul departed. It is due to such things that the angels of mercy do not enter the house.

Congratulations to those who teach in the Makaatib

Those who are serving in the makaatib are worthy of congratulations, since they are carrying out the most fundamental work of Nubuwwah. The institution of the makaatib is referred to by Allah ﷻ, who has declared one of the most fundamental duties of Rasulullah ﷺ to be to teach the words of the Book of Allah ﷻ to mankind.

A word of caution for those who teach in the Makaatib

Remember that Islamic education is not only restricted to formal education, but that the actual objective and purpose is to practice upon it. Whatever knowledge is acquired should be practiced upon. Knowledge plays the position of an Imaam, and Amal (practicing upon that knowledge) is like the Muqtadi (the follower of the Imaam in Salaah). If we only have an Imaam, but not any Muqtadis, Salaah with Jama'ah can never take place.

In the Makaatib, many a teacher only imparts knowledge, but shows no concern over whether the child is performing Salaah or not, or whether the child is dressed correctly in Islamic attire or not. This indicates that the Ustaadh (teacher) is failing in his duty. This is part of his responsibility as well. It is the responsibility of the teacher to inculcate in the child Islamic Ethos and good character as well.

2) ISLAMIC SCHOOLS

Detailed discussion on this subject has already passed in section (3) regarding educational institutes for imparting worldly knowledge.

3) DARUL-ULOOMS

Darul-Uloom - a religious seminary which aims at providing higher Islamic education to students who wish to acquire an in-depth understanding of Islam within an Islamic environment, free from secular, western and materialistic values and ideologies.

The Darul-Ulooms are the bastions, the strongholds of Deen. They are the forts of Islam. It is in the Darul-Uloom that we find Deen being taught, comprehensively, meticulously and fully. The Ulama are the shields of Islam; they are a great means of protection for the Ummah, preserving Islam in its pristine purity.

The Deeni Madaaris are the only solution for the survival of Islam

Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (رحمه الله) had stated, "There is not the slightest amount of doubt that the existence of the Madaaris which impart Islamic education in this day and age is such a great favour (of Allah) upon the Muslims that no favour greater than it can be envisaged. If any hope remains for the continued existence and survival of Islam in the world, it is these very Madaaris. The reason for this is that Islam actually refers to 'a specific set of beliefs and actions', included in which

are (the laws related to) worship, business dealings and monetary matters, social dealings and conduct, and good character and ethics. It is quite clear that practice upon Islam is dependent upon knowledge of its rulings. The survival of the knowledge of Deen is, due to prevailing circumstances of this day and age, definitely dependant on these Madaaris, although it was not strictly dependant on these Madaaris in essence (in the beginning days of Islam).⁴⁶

The importance of learning and teaching Deen

وَمَا كَانَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لِيَنْفِرُوا كَافَّةً فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِنْ كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِنْهُمْ طَائِفَةٌ لِيَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي الدِّينِ
وَلِيُنذِرُوا قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ (122) سورة التوبة

It is not appropriate for the believers to march forth (in Jihaad) all together (simultaneously, when Jihaad is not fardh upon all).

Why does a band from every large group from amongst the believers not march forth, so that the remaining ones could (avail themselves of the opportunity and) acquire a deep understanding of Deen (from Rasulullah ﷺ during his era and from his inheritors-the Ulama- who reside in that area after him), and so that they may (on the basis of the knowledge which they had acquired) warn their people (who had been engaged in Jihaad) when they return to them, so that they may beware (of sin)?

(Surah Tawbah v.122)

Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (رحمه الله) stated, "From this verse, we learn that acquiring knowledge of the laws of Islam and

⁴⁶Huqooqul-Ilm pg.84, Tajdeed Ta'leem wa Tabligh pg.66, as quoted in Tuhfatul-Ulama

teaching the laws of Islam is such an important obligation that it remains compulsory even at the critical juncture when the Muslims are engaged in actual Jihaad (physical combat with the kuffaar). This verse commands that a group of people, instead of marching forth in Jihaad, should occupy themselves in fulfilling this great obligation. If this is its importance at such a critical occasion, why would it not be compulsory to attach greater importance to it on other occasions?

The reason for this is quite clear; any act of worship, no matter how great or important it might be, can only be credible and acceptable when it is according to the laws of the Shari'ah (Islam). For one to carry it out according to those laws, one will have to possess knowledge of it.

There are two methods which can be employed (to achieve this learning and teaching which a fundamental Islamic obligation is):

- 1) The specific (formal) method, through the medium of Dars and Tadrees - conducting and attending lessons.
- 2) The general (informal) method, through the medium of Ta'leem and Tabligh - teaching the public and propagating the message of Deen to them (in the form of lectures, discussions etc.)."⁴⁷

"Remember, the institution of (Islamic) education is the foundation of all (Islamic) efforts. If the institution of education

⁴⁷ Tajdeed Ta'leem wa Tabligh pg.161, as quoted in Tuhfatul-Ulama

ceases to function, how will (Deeni-religious) workers be produced in the future.”⁴⁸

The source of the Darul-Ulooms in the light of The Qur’aan

These Darul-Ulooms then are the only places where the whole of Deen is taught and transmitted from one generation to the other. These are the only places where amal (practical application) is made in totality on this verse of the Qur’aan,

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ

“O Rasul, convey all of that which was revealed to you from your Rabb.”

(Surah Maa’idah v.67)

The institution of the Daarul-Ulooms is also referred to by Allah ﷻ, who has declared one of the most fundamental duties of Rasulullah ﷺ to be, ‘to teach the detailed explanation of the Qur’aan and to teach Hikmah (the Sunnah lifestyle and Ahaadith)’, which is precisely what is taught in the Darul-Ulooms.

The origin of the Darul-Ulooms in the light of Seerah

Moulana Manzur Ahmad Nu’mani has written that Rasulullah ﷺ established six madaaris in Makkah, the most famous of which was the house of Arqam ؓ. In Madinah, he ﷺ established nine madaaris, the most famous of which was As-Suffah, which is

⁴⁸At-Tabligh v.16 pg.84, as quoted in Tuhfatul-Ulama

part of Masjidun-Nabawi. As-Suffah was a Darul-Uloom and Khanqah (centre for spiritual reformation) combined, which also provided boarding for the students. Most of the students were poor students, who relied on sadaqah to live and fill their stomachs.⁴⁹

The method of preserving true Deen in the Ummah

Remember that true Deen can only remain alive in our homes, societies and the entire Ummah as long as the entire Qur'aan and Hadith is studied under reliable Ulama, who studied under reliable Ulama, and whose chain links up to Rasulullah ﷺ. Success in this dunya (worldly life) and salvation in Akhirah is totally dependent on this original Deen, and not on any modern model. Not only is ta'lim⁵⁰ required, but also the correct mizaa⁵¹ and tarbiat⁵², for which the personal touch of a reliable and competent teacher is absolutely essential. This cannot be acquired from the internet, etc. This is the system found in our Darul-Ulooms.

⁴⁹Moulana Maseehullah Khan (رحمه الله) stated, "The Ashaabus-Suffah set the precedent for providing boarding facilities at a Madrasah for the students. The Madrasah is established for the teaching of Deen. It should thus accommodate those who have come to learn, by providing food as well as shelter. Even students from the neighbourhood should stay at the Madrasah's boarding and not in their own homes. The discipline (and benefits) of staying collectively with others - ijtimaaiyyat - in the boarding, as well as the punctuality for lessons, consistency in studies ease in revision, time saved in travel (as well as engrossment, dedication and commitment to one's studies without any distractions -compiler), are all features not to be attained by students staying in their own homes." (For Friends Book 2)

⁵⁰ education

⁵¹ mindset and temperament

⁵² nurturing

The syllabus of the Darul-Ulooms

In these Darul-Ulooms, Tafsir of the Quran, Jaami' books of Hadith (which, in the terminology of the Muhadditheen refers to those in which the whole of Deen is collected and discussed) and the detailed laws of the Shari'ah discussed in Fiqh are taught. The whole of Deen which incorporates Imaan, Tahaarah, Salaat, all other forms of ibaadaat, Mu'aamalaat, Aakhirah, Akhlaaq, Aadab, Mu'aasharaat, Islamic governance and politics, Da'wah and Tabligh etc. is taught and transmitted from one generation to the other. Here, the Ustaadhs⁵³ teach the whole of Deen, and here, the students study the whole of Deen.

The study of Hadith and its methodology

Alhamdulillah, our Darul-Ulooms are the institutes wherein the six Sihaah (authentic compilations of Hadith) are taught in full. At least, Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Daud and Tirmizi are taught from cover to cover. Selected chapters from Nasa'ee, Ibn Maajah and Tahaawee are also taught. When we were studying, these books were also taught in their entirety. In all universities, specifically in the Arab world, only a few selected chapters are taught of even Sahih Bukhari. In our madaaris, the knowledge of Hadith is given great prominence and is a subject deserving of deep study, which was carried out by our Ulama and is still being carried out. They had, at the same time, established that the Hanafi mazhab is also in accordance to the Ahaadith quoted in these six books, inspite of the fact that the authors of these books were not Hanafis (since the

⁵³ teachers

Hanafis are usually criticized of being the followers of that mazhab which does not conform to authentic Ahaadith, which is baseless since all the Imams based their views upon the Qur'aan and authentic Ahaadith). The details of the mazaahib of all Imams are discussed during the lesson, along with their proofs as well. Brief commentary is provided for every Hadith. From the many benefits of this system of study, in which all the Ahaadith of so many kitaabs are taught in a single year with concise commentary, is the spirituality and blessings of the Ahaadith of these books which filter through a student. It is for this reason that the students are encouraged to be present for the recital of every Hadith, and preferably in the state of wudhu as well. Through this, one will gain spiritual benefit from these Ahaadith, which will flow into the students.

In this syllabus, we are taught to always follow in the footsteps of the Fuqaha, whom we are acquainted with through the syllabus. The graduates from such a syllabus are not left to freely engage in ijtihaad to re-formulate fiqh. Rather, the importance of the Fuqaha, Mufasssireen and Muhadditheen is emphasized greatly. The entire Dars-Nizaami (syllabus) is a complete answer for all the onslaughts of education upon Deen.

Three unique Kitaabs

Any person who studies the following three kitaabs, the text, facts and moreso the context and reasoning behind their subject matter, there will be no fitna or evil in the world which one will be unable to crush and crumble, and no deviant argument which one will be unable to counter. They are: The

Sahih of Imam Bukhari, Al-Hidaayah and Nurul-Anwaar (or any detailed book on Usoolul-Fiqh by the earlier Ulama).

The purpose of the syllabus - creating academic ability

The purpose of the Dars-Nizami (syllabus) is to create within the student isti'daad (academic ability) for deep study in any subject of Islamic sciences. If one builds isti'daad, one will be able to refer back to the original books and will be able to research matters in a most effective manner with just a bit of extra effort. But our problem is that we refuse to study and research. This isti'daad is the key to all Islamic subjects, and not only a selected few.⁵⁴

The system in the Darul-Uloom is not to study a lot about a little (a few concepts), but to study the basics about everything. After graduation, one will now be able to access any subject. Now, the onus remains upon the student to open books, study and research. Through this syllabus, every student has been given the key to enter into any department from the treasure-houses of Uloom (knowledge). Now, whichever facet or subject of the knowledge of Islam one chooses to study further, his ability and isti'daad which he had developed will enable him to master it. The basics of every subject will always remain at the back of one's mind.

⁵⁴ Shaykh Abdul Qadir of Halb (Aleppo) Syria (former head of the Deeni institutions in Halb) said in 1345 AH in Saharanpur: The academic potential and abilities (isti'daad) that the Ulama here possess are not found in the Ulama graduating from our Madaaris. Therefore, I have come to observe the system of education implemented here. (*Maqaalaat-e-Tirmizi*)

Moulana Husain Ahmad Madani used to say to the graduating students in Deoband, "Those who think themselves as Ulama will always remain jaahil (ignorant). Those who will go ahead in knowledge by studying the books and teaching after completion in the Darul-Uloom will, Insha-Allah, become Ulama one day in the future."

Importance of keeping up study of kitaabs after graduation

Unfortunately, a great drawback in our fraternity is that, after completion, the graduates feel that they have now become Ulama, due to which they neglect their kitaabs. There are many who never touch their kitaabs after completion. There is no exaggeration in this.

A close friend of mine who had studied together with me in Deoband wished to donate his kitaabs which he had bought when we were studying in Deoband to the Darul-Uloom in Azaadville when it had just started. He brought these books in three trunks, the keys of which he had even lost. Since returning from India, he had never even opened those trunks.

Mufti Mahmood Hasan Gangohi (رحمه الله) once visited a student of his, and noticed a bookcase in the front room of his house. It is today common with students to display their voluminous kitaabs, upon the binding of which the title is inscribed beautifully from the first volume to the last. His kitaabs were well placed in beautiful order. Mufti Mahmood (رحمه الله) ran his hands over the kitaabs and commented, "Maashaa Allah, nobody ever touches these kitaabs." It has now become a showcase, and no more serves the purpose of study. These

books are meant to be studied and used. The pages and covers will have to get worn out. You will not have the time to continuously place them neatly, like a house wife whose work is to arrange her ornaments all the time, making sure it looks neat.

The Ulama have to become accustomed to using and handling their kitaabs. Mufti Mahmood Hasan Gangohi (رحمه الله) had become blind towards the end of his life. When he visited Darul Uloom Newcastle, he asked for Sunan Tirmizi. As they placed it in his hands, he spontaneously stated, "This is not Tirmizi." He was blind, but could make out which book it was by just feeling it.

Method and Matter of Islamic Institutes

The methodology of the Ulama who founded these Darul-Ulooms was very simple; little effort was required, while the results were very great. This is in accordance with the mizaaj⁵⁵ of Deen and Sunnah. For acquiring the things of this world, people work so hard, slogging from day to night, but are still unable to make ends meet. How many of those who made excessive effort and even saw the fruits of it in the form of money lost everything after something went wrong. After so much of effort, even the richest man will leave this world taking nothing with him.

As for Deen, a single 'Subhaanallah' recited earns man such reward which will fill a man's pan of good deeds on the day of Qiyaamah, while the reward of 'Subhaanallah and Alhamdulillah' will fill the space between the heavens and the

⁵⁵ Temprement

earth. Hardly much effort is required, yet it yields such great rewards. This will accompany man wherever he may be. These actions will be deposited in the bank of Akhirah which will remain in one's possession forever. Just as Deen is easy, so too is the effort of Deen, so easy and simple. It does not require huge budgets, tall buildings, computers and modern technology. It requires simple effort. The teaching methods in the Darul-Uloom were simple, yet the results were so great. (This simplicity of our recent Ulama of Deoband extended from education to even their dressing style and other mundane matters, which was clearly discernable in them.) Today, Darul-Uloom Deoband and its branches have overshadowed the entire world through their simple style and method.

Effect of an Islamic Environment within the Darul-Uloom

During the days when we were studying, many parents would keep their children within the madrassah, even though the children were unable to cope, so that the wind and environment of the madrassah could fall upon them and influence them. I have seen with my own eyes that that environment later brought full Deen within the lives of many of those students who were weak and found learning difficult. In turn, they were so inspired that they encouraged all their children to become Ulama.

Madaaris by name are also valuable and necessary

A person once commented, "Nowadays, these Madrassahs exist only in name. (There is only an outer facade in the Madaaris and no reality) There is absolutely no benefit in

them.” Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (رحمه الله) replied, “Never, my friend. I am totally opposed to such opinions. The existence of these Madaaris is a means of receiving great goodness and abundant blessings.

With regards to this, I like the following anecdote which Shaykh Sa’di (رحمه الله) has narrated: A certain prince lost a jewel from his crown while out hunting in a jungle. Night had already set in, and they were unable to locate it after an intense search. He ordered the servants to gather all the stones and pebbles in that field and return with them, so that they could search for it later in peace. They later managed to find the jewel amongst the stones. Similarly, from these Madaaris, such people (jewels) emerge who see to all the affairs of the entire Deen.”⁵⁶

Be grateful for the Darul-Ulooms and support them

We should be very, very thankful to these Darul-Ulooms, for they are preserving the Deen of Allah ﷻ and His Rasul ﷺ. Our greatest support to these Darul-Ulooms is to send our youngsters to study here. Also support these Darul-Ulooms financially, with duas and good advices. These Darul-Ulooms which are teaching the entire Deen in their simple way are today the targets of the enemies of Islam.

⁵⁶ Mazedul-Majeed pg.49

The virtues of supporting the Darul-Ulooms; from the advices of Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (رحمه الله)

The virtues of supporting (sponsoring) the students of Deen

Providing food for or supporting (sponsoring) a student of Deen is such an action which earns one great reward. Although apparently, it does not appear to be an act of ibaadah (worship), but if one looks a bit deeper into the matter, he will realize what great reward lies in this action. Take the following example: A person provides food for a student of Deen. This food nourishes him, and creates within him the strength to study and learn his lessons. Using this strength which he acquires from that food, he learns his lessons daily. He continues learning in a similar manner for the next seven or eight years. Finally, he completes his studies and begins serving Deen. The rewards for all his service to Deen will be received by all of those people who contributed in sponsoring his studies. The general public do not understand this. Therefore, whenever they manage to save some money and the thought of spending it in the path of Allah comes to their minds, they spend it in building Masjids (which is also a good cause, but whose benefits are less than that of spending on students of Deeni knowledge).⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Da'waat-e-Abdiyyat v.9 pg.53, as quoted in Tuhfatul-Ulama

Supporting the Madaaris and those running the Madaaris is a means of Sadaqah-Jaariyah

A person should not hesitate to give, whether it be a little or a lot, as this will be a Sadaqah-Jaariyah (a charity which will earn one perpetual rewards). We should give as much as possible and regard our participation (in this good work) as an ideal opportunity. Sadaqah-Jaariyah is that charity which will help a person when he passes away and is in desperate need of even the smallest rewards, when he wishes that somebody would recite 'SubhaanAllah' even once and pass on the rewards to him. At such a time, even the great friends of Allah desire to communicate their need (to mankind).

These rewards will help a person on the day of Qiyaamah when his actions will be presented before him and he notices that he does not have sufficient good deeds to his account. At that time, as the pages of his register of deeds are being turned, he will see somewhere the rewards of studying and teaching Sahih Bukhari, and at another place the rewards of reciting the Qur'aan, and so forth. If Qiyaamah has to occur after another one thousand years, his soul will continuously receive the rewards of all the completions of Sahih Bukhari and lessons of Sahih Muslim from now until then (because of his small contribution). On the day of Qiyaamah, which will be a time of great distress, he will Inshaa-Allah be told, "In lieu of your sponsoring the boarding (and other facilities) for the students, today you will be recompensed with a huge treasure of rewards." At that time, you will realize the great profits and benefits which your one or two coins had earned for you. We

should thank Allah who is granting us these great treasures (and facilities) free of charge.⁵⁸

Support the Madaaris in any way possible, and be counted from amongst the Ulama

Learn yourself and teach others. Support this cause and you will be counted from amongst the Ulama. The one who guides towards a good deed is just like the one who did it (i.e. he will be rewarded equally and he will be considered as belonging to the same category). 'To guide' is a small form of support (for that good action). When this is the status of just this small form of support, then the status of that person who gave his full support (to the one carrying out the action) is quite apparent. Support this cause with our wealth. Many projects cannot be accomplished without finance, so become partners in these causes with your wealth. If someone cannot give financial support and cannot give physical support, then at least support this cause with your duas; 'O Allah, help all those who are involved in this effort'. Nobody is unable to do this much... In short, support this cause in any way possible. However, keep in mind that we should never be disunited. All should work together with sincerity. These are all forms of serving the Qur'aan.⁵⁹

⁵⁸Tijaarat-e-Aakhirat pg.71, as quoted in Tuhfatul-Ulama

⁵⁹Da'waat-e-Abdiyyat v.3 pg.70, as quoted in Tuhfatul-Ulama

It is necessary for the general public to support those who are running the Madaaris

Support them. It is your obligatory duty to serve them, as they are engaged in fulfilling your responsibility. It is the Fardh duty of all Muslims to safeguard and preserve Deen, and it is their responsibility. Those people who are engaged in learning and teaching Deen are fulfilling this Fardh responsibility, which is termed as 'Fardh Kifaayah', on behalf of all the Muslims. If these people abandon their learning and teaching, these actions would become a Fardh duty upon every individual. And if every person shirks this responsibility, all will be sinners. The general public should be grateful to the principals of such Madaaris, who have relieved all other Muslims from this Fardh-Kifaayah.⁶⁰

4) ISLAMIC FACULTIES AND STUDIES AT UNIVERSITIES

As explained before, worldly knowledge in the past was always imparted under the banner and auspices of religious knowledge, in the places of religious learning. Then came a time when worldly knowledge became detached from religious knowledge at the time of the Renaissance due to secular influences. Today, across the world, to become a Christian priest, a person will have to generally undertake studies in a university, and not in a religious setup. This was also the case of the Jews in the very beginning, who later realized the harms and negative impact, due to which they separated from the universities and brought back their religious education into

⁶⁰At-Tabligh v. 21 pg.238,as quoted in Tuhfatul-Ulama

their religious centres. In almost all Muslim countries, Deen and Islam is taught at universities. In the Arab world, instead of 'Shuyukh' being produced, the graduates today complete their doctorate - PHD and qualify for the title 'Duktoor'. In Pakistan, MA Islaamiyyaat and PHD Islaamiyyaat are the courses offered, after which one graduates as Molwi Faadhil and Munshi Faadhil. When worldly and secular institutes will contain and control Islamic knowledge, the results and consequences can be well imagined. The governments of the world, worldly people and the enemies of Islam who control these universities have used education therein as a political tool. They have introduced into their Islamic Studies that Islam which they want to flourish - a watered-down, mild version of Islam which will have no adverse effect in their political agendas, but which will rather enforce their agendas. Their object of their graduates is merely the study of their particular subject, and not really the revival and re-establishment of true Islam.

Our Elders' disregard towards University Degrees from Islamic Faculties

Moulana Muhammad Yusuf Ludhianwi Shaheed (رحمه الله), the former editor of Al-Bayyyinaat and a great scholar of Pakistan who was blessed with martyrdom said, "I am only narrating the following incident for you to understand, and not to praise myself. During my student days, after graduating from Daurah Hadith, I was studying a few extra kitaabs. My friends had applied at the University for the Molvi Faazil Degree. Their intention was to study for the examination, achieve a degree and thereby secure some government job. They would always force me to apply as well. My reply would be, "I am a poor

person who cannot afford the admission fee.” Finally, one day, one of them said to me, “I am prepared to pay your admission fee; you merely need to agree to enrol.” I asked him, “Do you really mean it?” He replied, “Definitely.”

I then said to him, “Thus far, I was merely evading the issue. Now let me tell you the real answer. If the university has to write a letter to me, stating: ‘We agree to grant you admission without any fee. You will only be required to come to our examination hall, sit there without answering any questions or writing even a single line, and there will be no restrictions placed upon you, despite which we promise to award you with first position. You will merely have to take the difficulty of entering the exam hall’, even if a letter of this nature comes to me, I will still consider it a disgrace to even place my foot in the exam hall of the university. By the favour of Allah, passing the university exams and acquiring these degrees and positions mean nothing to me. Despite my inabilities, I am content that I have studied the words of Allah and His Rasul ﷺ. Hence, I don’t require any other degree.”⁶¹⁶²

⁶¹Tuhfatul Madaaris v.1 pg.301, Tuhfatul Ulama

⁶²Allamah Anwar Shah Kashmiri advised some students who had just graduated from the Darul-Uloom and had requested some parting advices, “My brothers, never take up Maulwi Faadhil or Munshi Faadhil (courses at a university, now that you have graduated from here).” (Yaadgaar Tahreerey v.1 pg.245)

MY STUDIES

(The studies of Maulana Abdul-Hamid Ishaq daamat barakaatuhu)

I began my studies in Mias Farm and had the great fortune of studying under personalities like Mufti Ebrahim Sanjalwi (رحمه الله), who taught me in the system that was in vogue before our type of Darul-Ulooms were established – an Aalim would have students at his home whom he would teach, while they would stay in his company and serve him. There was no regulated course, specific amount of years and no formal exams. We would repeat certain kitaabs a number of times, while we would study other kitaabs partially, and would be promoted to the next kitaab when he noticed we had come to grips with understanding that kitaab. We enjoyed a personal relationship with our teachers. This was the old system by which our Deen was taught through the generations. Allah ﷻ then granted me the fortune of completing the Aalim Course and graduating at Darul-Uloom Deoband.

**The hidden sinister agendas of the
non-muslims behind these Islamic faculties**

**My Experience at University
teaching Islamic studies**

When I returned from India after completing my studies, I had a great fervour and interest to translate the kitaabs and great works of our Akaabir⁶³ from the Urdu language into English for the benefit of the masses. This was an immense

⁶³ Pious elders

task at that time. Forty or fifty years ago, there existed hardly any Islamic literature in English, and basic books like Fadhaa'ilul A'maal and Behishti Zewar had not even been translated. For this, I thought that I should pursue a course in journalism so that I may have a better command of the English language and be able to present the translations more effectively, etc. On application for the course, I was informed that a Bachelor's degree had to be done first, which was at that time a requirement before studying journalism, which was then a post-graduate course. I thus did my B.A. with Unisa, through correspondence. I chose Arabic as my subject, since my actual objective was journalism and I had no intention of really studying, which I thought would later help me when translating from Arabic. Their subjects were so simple and insignificant that I hardly gave much effort or time for it. With me were some school-friends who were teachers, who themselves were engaged in teaching those subjects in schools. Many of them failed their exams, while I passed with high marks and very good results. In 1396 A.H (1976), I completed B.A. with distinctions, majoring in Arabic and Linguistics. Later, that requirement was also waived, but by which time my heart was put off. I began teaching maktab classes and hifz classes in Germiston.

I then spent one year in Jamaat, in Pakistan, India and Sri Lanka. After completion of the one year in Jamaat, the Rand Afrikaans University (RAU), a government university, approached Mia's Farm as they required a lecturer in Islamic studies. They wanted someone who would be willing to educate them on true Islam. Before that, they had employed

other modernists for this purpose, but themselves later admitted, "We understood and realized that those people did not have true Islam, but practiced on a modern interpretation of Islam. We want someone to teach us the true Islam." Mia's Farm referred them to me.

Concerning this, I consulted with the Ulama of Mia's Farm, including Moulana Ibrahim Mia etc., as well as with Marhoom Hajee Bhai Padia Sahib (رحمه الله). It was eventually decided that I should accept the offer, to show them true Islam with the hope that they may perhaps accept it. Thus, I became a lecturer at RAU for two or three years. My students were not ordinary university students, but were actually lecturers and professors of RAU, Unisa, Pretoria University, Potchefstroom University, University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) and other Universities.

During this period, RAU offered me the option of doing my BA (Bachelors) Honors, which I did. I lectured at RAU in 1977 and 1978. The University, being pleased with my results, enrolled me for my M.A. (Masters) and PHD, for which only two theses, each of about eight pages, had to be written. All I had to do was prepare these assignments, which was a walk in the park for me, as there was hardly any work in it. The education there was empty and hollow. Had I wanted, I could have completed those two essays, attained my PHD and become a 'duktoer' in Islamic sciences.

After having accepted the post, and whilst studying, I realized that the university was not interested in Islam at all. They had only requested for me to come in as a lecturer to

further their agenda to harm Islam. They wished to find the weak points of Islam, which of course does not exist, so that they could attack Islam. When they were previously presented with modern Islam, they realized that their target is wrong. That is why they then requested true Islam, so that they could be able to target and harm traditional Islam itself, which is what the masses all abide by. It was then that I resigned. Since then, I have publicly repented for studying for these degrees and lecturing at the university, and I repent now again, and hope that this will be an eye-opener for others.

The search for agents to carry out their dirty work

Mufti Sulayman Pandor was together with me in the front room of my house in Germiston when a professor came there for some work. He clearly stated to Mufti Sulayman Pandor, "We can make this man famous and give him a high position, but he doesn't want it." They want us to become their agents, who propagate their dirty ideologies from within. They know that a Muslim will never accept such ideas from a non-muslim, but might doubt when hearing it from a Muslim, and will accept easily if they hear it from an Aalim. That was their objective.

SOME COMPARISONS BETWEEN THE SYSTEM OF THE DARUL-ULOOMS AND THAT OF THE ISLAMIC FACULTIES AT UNIVERSITIES

1) The important requirement of an Islamic environment and Suhbah

It should be understood that the Islamic Universities or Faculties can never pass on Islamic education in its true sense. In universities, lectures are delivered. The Deen of Islam is a practical way of life, which can only be conveyed in a Deeni environment, and never in a secular atmosphere. An outward form, picture or words of Deen may be gleaned from there, but not its reality. One may find books and writings there, but not practical Deen. The object of their graduates is merely the study of their particular subjects. For true Deen to be passed on, there is a need for Suhbah - a deep affiliation, connection and bond (based on religious sentiments and values) between teacher and student, as is found in our Darul-Ulooms and Madaaris.

Today, this relationship and bond between teachers and students is diminishing greatly even in our Darul-Ulooms, which is a serious cause for concern. All teachers need to realize that just delivering a lecture is in no way sufficient. A student once mentioned to me that the Asaatizah in Indonesia, till today stay in the Madrassah complex, which is a means of creating a bond between themselves and the students. Those students who today build up a relationship and connection with a Shaykh of Tasawwuf, generally only then find the opportunity of benefitting from this bond. Even in Tasawwuf,

just listening to majaalis and bayaans is not enough without the important ingredient of company and bonding. It is through this bonding that Deen has passed on from heart to heart, person to person. This was the original way of passing on Deen to others. Rasulullah ﷺ lived with the Sahaabah ﷺ, travelled with them and passed Deen on to the Sahaabah ﷺ with a personal contact and a personal touch.

2) The need to teach pure unadulterated Islam without mixing it with worldly knowledge

The revised syllabus of Dars-Nizaami which is today taught in Darul-Uloom Deoband and its branches was born at around the same time when worldly knowledge was detached from religious knowledge at the time of the Renaissance, due to secular influences. This system and syllabus aimed at preserving Deeni knowledge and education in totality in its pristine purity, which is in essence preserving Islam. This is why only Quran, Hadith and the sciences that aid one to understand these two basic sources of Islamic knowledge are included in the syllabus. Darul-Uloom Deoband was established by Moulana Qasim Nanotwi after being commanded to do so in a dream by none other than Rasulullah ﷺ, at such a time when the Muslims had suffered set-backs in every way. It was established for this very purpose - to preserve Deen. The ideal today too is that worldly knowledge should be disseminated under the banner of Deen. However, our pious Elders had realized, as a result of the deep foresight and insight which they had been blessed with, that when Deen was mixed with Dunya in these materialistic times, Dunya went ahead and took control. Aligarh Muslim University

was a perfect example of this. We do wish that there exist Muslim expert professionals in every profession who are produced under a Deeni banner, but this cannot be achieved by religious institutes today, as the two do not mix (due to the materialistic outlook of all). Very soon, worldly education goes ahead, and the entire institute ends up as a worldly institute.⁶⁴ (There is therefore a need for independent institutes to be set up by religious-minded people for the purpose of higher worldly education which are compliant with the Shari'ah and run according to the guidance of the Ulama, and not that Darul-Ulooms or Islamic seminaries be used for the dual

⁶⁴ Allamah Sayyid Muhammad Yusuf Banuri (رحمه الله) said, "A Jalsah of Ulama was convened in Dhaka (Bangladesh), in which the subject under discussion was the issue of incorporating modern sciences into our current syllabus (of the Darul-Ulooms). At that time, the thought came to my mind as well that there seems to be no harm in incorporating modern sciences into our syllabus. That night, I saw myself in my dream standing in a Masjid. In front of me was a straw mat which was spread out, on which was inscribed the following words "النجاة في علوم المصطفى" - Salvation lies only in the knowledge of Mustafa (Nabi Muhammad ﷺ). I then saw myself putting my fingers in my ears and calling out azaan of the following words at the top of my voice, "النجاة في علوم المصطفى سيد السادات" - "Salvation lies only in the knowledge of Mustafa, the leader of leaders." I added the last two words by myself. After awakening in the morning, the thought left my heart and I became convinced that success in this era too is possibly achievable only through the ilm of Nubuwwah, and that joining it to modern sciences will be useless and futile." (Ulama Deoband ki Ilmi aur Mutaala'ati Zindagi pg.297) In Jumaadal-Ulaa 1384 A.H., a meeting of 'Wifaaqul-Madaaris' was held in Multan. The entire Shuraa and the working committee all came to the conclusion that, in the past century, all such attempts (of merging worldly knowledge with Islamic studies) have failed miserably, although it was experimented in some of the high-ranking famous seats of learning. No really proficient well-versed research scholar (jaami' faadhil muhaqqiq) was produced from those combined syllabus. Allamah Banuri concluded the report of this meeting by stating, "To re-experiment the already experimented is a great error." (Al-Bayyinaat Jumaadal-Ukhra 1384)

purpose of imparting Islamic and worldly education, nor that Islam be taught from a secular institute, whereby it would not be able to retain its pristine purity.)

3) The extent of study-the importance of creating a broad scope and vision

Nowadays, the educational system of the entire world is to study more about less. The subject-matter is little, but people study intensely for it. The height of their knowledge is to write some essays or theses on a certain subject.

Alhamdulillah, our Darul-Ulooms are the institutes wherein the six Sihaah (authentic compilations of Hadith) are taught in full. At least, Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Daud and Tirmizi are taught from cover to cover. Selected chapters from Nasa'ee, Ibn Maajah and Tahaawee are also taught. In all universities, specifically in the Arab world, only a few selected chapters are taught of even Sahih Bukhari. Many students who had studied in the Darul-Ulooms suffer from an unwarranted inferiority complex after hearing a graduate from some institute deliberating on a certain subject, are amazed at his method of putting forth his points and feel that they are deprived of knowledge of this sort, but forget that this is all that the lecturer knows. However, one who already possesses isti'daad⁶⁵ will be able to refer back to the original books and will be able to present his discourse far more effectively with just a bit of extra effort. The system in the Darul-Ulooms is not to study a lot about a little, but to study the basics about everything. After graduation, one is now able to access any

⁶⁵ Academic ability

subject. Now, the onus remains upon the student to open books, study and research. Through this syllabus, every student has been given the key to enter into any department from the treasure-houses of Uloom⁶⁶. Now, whichever facet or subject of the knowledge of Islam one chooses to study further, his ability and isti'daad which he had developed will enable him to master it. The basics of every subject will always remain at the back of one's mind. In the universities, the students are taught only a few certain subjects in depth, which is all they will exhibit. People will be astonished at the depth they possess in their knowledge, but one who scratches the surface just a little will realize that they are not knowledgeable regarding any other aspect of Islamic knowledge.

4) Traditional or Modern version of Islam - a look at the syllabi

Mufti Muhammad Taqi 'Uthmaani has written regarding his journey to Baghdad, wherein he wrote, "Baghdad is that city which for centuries had been at the centre of the Islamic world. The mere sight of this city reminds one of the glorious days of the Abbaasid khilaafat. Upon reaching Baghdad, I enquired whether there were any madaaris present in which Islamic knowledge is imparted in accordance with the ways of the pious predecessors. I was informed that all such madaaris had now been converted into schools and universities. Now, the knowledge of deen can only be attained from university faculties, such places wherein Islam is taught as mere theory, similar to ancient philosophy (falsafah). Islam cannot be seen in the lives of the students, nor in the teachers. Forget being

⁶⁶ Knowledge

religious scholars, on seeing their appearance, one wonders if they are even Muslim. This is just like how orientalists study Islam today, in the universities of America, Canada and Europe. If you read their books and articles, you will come across the names of such books which many of our Ulama have never even heard about. It seems as if deep research (tahqeeq) is being made. But alas! In spite of swimming in the ocean of Islamic knowledge from morning to evening, they return dry as a bone. No effect of what they so rigorously study can be seen in their lives. The soul of this knowledge has been destroyed.

Mufti Taqi thereafter asked if they could at least direct him to an aalim of the old school of thought, so that he could present himself at his service. He was directed to a masjid close to the tomb of Shaykh Abdul Qadir Jilani (رحمه الله), in which was a maktab. Here he met an old pious-looking man, surrounded by kitaabs. His name was Shaykh Muhammad Abdul-Karim Al-Mudarris. His face which was like a rose was adorned with a permanent smile. His innocent and informal nature could be discerned through his speech, and he was free from any form of formality, pretence and ostentation. He writes: 'Instead of choosing to acquire a degree in Islamic studies at a modern university, he preferred to study Deeni knowledge under the tutelage of expert Asaatizah and Shuyukh in the old traditional system of study in accordance with the ways of the pious predecessors. Few people in this modern age of 'doctorates' and 'masters' recognize the value of such Ulama. However, the truth of the matter is that the fragrance of true knowledge and the aroma of the Sunnah and Shari'ah can be sensed in the presence of these people who have chosen to sit on simple mats. These treasures are generally not found in the tall

impressive buildings of the universities and in their lavish luxurious environments.'

Mufti Sahib described his meeting with him in the following words: On seeing him, I felt that I was in the presence of a pious Allah-fearing aalim. He was one of those people who had studied Ilm by sitting on simple mats, dressing in coarse clothing and eating course food. By the grace of Allah, the light of the knowledge of shari'ah could be discerned on his forehead. While sitting for a short while in his presence, I felt as if I was in a garden of Jannah.

After making salaam, he enquired regarding my name and the place from which I had come. He also asked about the condition of the madaaris of our country, its syllabus and the manner in which the kitabs (books) are taught. Tears flowed from his eyes as I mentioned the names of the kitabs found in the Dars-Nizami (syllabus). He asked, "Are these kitabs still being taught!?" I replied in the affirmative. He said, "Never ever leave and abandon such a syllabus. It is such books which create high levels of capabilities within the students. In our country, these books are no longer taught. We have seen the harmful and evil effects of leaving such a syllabus with our very own eyes..." He then explained, "Today, we have been deprived of even hearing the names of these kitabs. Today, just by hearing the names of these kitabs, I feel like crying. These kitabs create Ahlullah (Allah-conscious men), they create true Muslims. In our country, these books are no longer taught. I beg you to convey this message and advice of mine to the Ulama and the masses of your country that, for the sake of Allah Jalla Jalaaluhu, they should bear everything but should

never allow the destruction of such madaaris!!!” The enemies of Islam are fully conscious of the fact that as long as these simple Maulana’s, sitting on simple mats are present in society, they cannot remove imaan from the hearts of the Muslims. Therefore, the enemies of Islam are making all out efforts to remove these madaaris.⁶⁷

5) Teachers and environment

Students who have studied in our Madaaris and Darul-Ulooms have (generally) studied Tafsir, Hadith and Fiqh etc. under such Ulama who are Ahlullah - friends of Allah ﷺ, staunch followers of Sunnah, people who have dedicated their lives to (practical) Deen and the knowledge of Deen and, in many cases, mashaayikh of Tasawwuf. Those who travel the world will see scholars dressed formally in suit and tie (having left aside Sunnah dress), while others are dressed in ‘casual wear’ eg. tee-shirts, jeans etc. In many Islamic universities, the teachers and students study books of Hadith while sitting on tables and upon chairs, without even having removed their shoes, and sometimes even smoking a cigarette. If after studying under such luminaries and in such an Islamic environment, a person chooses to study Islamic studies at a university wherein the professor may be a Jew or Christian (Orientalist), his action is unjust, absurd, and can never be acceptable. This is the height of disrespect and an insult and slur to true knowledge. Do not make this mistake. Appreciate what Allah ﷻ has given us.

⁶⁷ (Islaahi Khutubaat’ v.7 pg.92-94 and ‘Jahane-Dida’ pg.22-23)

Mixing milk with urine

Moulana Ayyub Kachwee, after returning to South Africa on completion of his Deeni studies in India, wished to study a certain course at university. He saw his Shaykh, Shaykhul-Islam, Moulana Husain Ahmad Madani (رحمه الله) in a dream, who asked him, "Do you want to urinate in a bucket of pure milk?" Pure Islamic knowledge is like unadulterated milk, and urine here referred to impure or adulterated education. Rasulullah ﷺ had interpreted milk in a dream to refer to knowledge (since milk represents knowledge in the Aalamul-Mithaal - the realm of similitudes).

WHY THEN WOULD AN AALIM WHO HAD GRADUATED IN DARUL-ULOOM WISH TO TAKE UP ISLAMIC STUDIES IN A SECULAR UNIVERSITY, OR TAKE UP ANY OTHER PROFESSION?

1) The love for name and status

Desire for status prompts one to do so, since possessing a university degree is a status-symbol. This is totally against Ikhlāas.⁶⁸ Any action done for status, name, fame or worldly gain has no merit or value by Allah ﷻ. The question we need to ask ourselves is; are we doing this for our world or for building our akhirah, and are we doing it to gratify our nafs and for the sake of people or to please Allah ﷻ?

⁶⁸ Sincerity

Any action devoid of sincerity is zero in the court of Allah ﷻ. Zero plus zero equals zero. Even if this zero is multiplied by ten zeros, it will still remain zero. If there is no sincerity in our actions, we will enter our graves and find that all our actions added up to the figure zero, and that everything had been left behind in the world. If we have the quality of ikhlaas, and keep one Allah ﷻ in front of us, the value of our actions will multiply, just as a zero put after a 'one' will value ten, and two zeros will boost it to equal a hundred, while three zeros will make it reach upto a thousand. The value of one's actions will just increase.

2) The love of wealth and monetary gain

Monetary gain tempts one to do so, since a person possessing a university degree is perceived as one who earns better. Remember that becoming a Hafiz or Aalim should not be with the intent to become rich. If our object of studying Deen is for money, then this is the wrong occupation for that. Allah ﷻ, out of His kindness, will see to it that your necessities will be fulfilled. Moulana Qasim Nanotwi (رحمه الله) had made dua to Allah ﷻ that no financial difficulties must afflict those who are linked to him (through the Darul-Uloom Deoband) and those who follow in their way. Alhamdulillah, the needs of the Ulama who serve Deen are (generally) fulfilled, and they are saved from such difficulties. Hajee Imdaadullah Muhaajir Makki (رحمه الله) made dua for those who are linked to him (which includes all those connected to Deoband) that Allah ﷻ should keep them comfortable in this worldly life, so that they do not suffer from want and need, and that Allah ﷻ should grant them death on imaan. However, our object should never be to earn through this, but should be to serve the Deen of Allah ﷻ.

Will that Allah ﷻ who feeds even a snake and scorpion starve and destroy those serving His Deen?!! Never!!!

Never be envious of the wealth belonging to the people of Dunya

Many an Aalim feel jealous or envious of the wealth of the people of Dunya (worldly-inclined people who earn a lot of wealth and indulge themselves in the things of this world). Remember that even your outward Deen (which is devoid of spirituality and qualities, but can be seen by others) is far better than the wealth of the world which they possess. At the same time, even the wealth of the wealthy is mostly only an outward farce, which contains no happiness or enjoyment. Due to their high standard of living, they are also always short of finances. The more they earn, the higher the standard of living rises. Most of them live on credit and borrowed money.

Financially enslaved-living off borrowed money

The people whose financial system is based on interest own less than ten percent of what they seem to own, since they have only paid a ten percent deposit, and are now paying its balance off in instalments. They remain enslaved to the bank for the rest of their lives. Interest is a modern system of enslaving mankind. A person who is financially enslaved to another becomes his slave mentally and physically as well.

Moulana Abdul-Haqq Umarjee (رحمه الله) of Durban related to us: When Moulana Maseehullah Khan Jalaalabadi (رحمه الله), his Shaykh, visited South Africa on one occasion, he commented, "Maa shaa Allah, the Muslims of South Africa are living it up and are doing well here. Look at their beautiful houses,

gardens, cars, etc.” Moulana Abdul-Haqq respectfully remarked, “Actually, all this is the bank’s money which they are living on.” They are in a false illusion, thinking that they are living it up, whereas there is absolutely no happiness in this.

Don’t be fooled with an outward picture

Mufti Zaynul-Aabideen (رحمه الله) emphatically said, “Never be impressed by the outward picture of all of this beautiful show, make-up, frills and trimmings which you see.” Alhamdulillah, I have travelled alot, and met with and mixed with many rich people who sometimes even host us. Almost everywhere, we have seen a beautiful outward picture; the food, the house, the garden, etc, but realized, as soon as they built up some confidence in me and requested a few minutes talk in privacy, that there is no happiness whatsoever in most cases. Don’t be fooled by the wealth of others.

The temporary nature of worldly attractions

Even if a person has earned this wealth through permissible means and is even enjoying it, it is, in any case, temporary. It will only last as long as he lives in this world. In the past, I would say that this dunya is temporary like a bubble on the water. I now claim that it is like a dirty bubble of snot which comes out of the nose of a person suffering from a cold. This bubble lasts even shorter compared to the bubble on the water. What is there to be impressed by in this?

Who is really richer?

If a rich man possesses fifty properties, is earning millions in income from his properties, has huge businesses and many

filling stations, every student of an Aalim is a much greater investment compared to that. A single lesson on Islam taught to a student is billions, rather trillions, of times greater and more profitable than all their investments and its returns. If this is the value of teaching a single lesson, imagine the condition of he who produced a hafiz, or an Aalim. These are true investments.

Students will always be loyal to you

Customers will never be loyal to their suppliers. But a true student will always be loyal to his teachers. Students are always ready to serve their teachers. The wealthy are served by only those that they pay. Nobody will serve them without them putting down money. However, students die to serve their teachers, for whom they are even prepared to sacrifice their lives. They all walk behind their teachers in awe and respect, and even fight to put their shoes straight.

Allah ﷻ has granted the Ulama true respect even in this world

Moulana Abrarul-Haqq (رحمه الله) of Hardoi explained that he had encouraged the residents of a certain locality to make their children Huffaz and Ulama. They retorted, "Moulana, do you want to make our children beggars?!!" Moulana changed the topic of discussion. A little later, after the discussion changed course, those same people who had passed these cynical remarks commented, "These Ulama live it up. They are always receiving invitations. There is no place left in their meal rosters and schedules to fill in, since they are always at some

da'wat.⁶⁹ Their every meal has to consist of chicken at the bare minimum. Besides that, what other delicacies are prepared for them?! (When the Ulama are invited somewhere, ten to twenty chickens give their lives for the Ulama.)" Actually, when they are invited to an area, all welcome you, meals are already prepared, a schedule is arranged for the venues of all meals and tea and sleeping arrangements are already finalized. Those who are not able to do anything else even request the Ulama to visit their houses for just a few minutes, even if it be only for the purpose of istinjaa, and even consider this as an honour. Which president is afforded this type of honour?!! In this world already, Allah ﷻ has granted respect to the Ulama. In any town, the greatest respect given is to the Aalim.

Moulana Abrarul-Haqq (رحمه الله) responded, "Just a few minutes ago, you were the same ones who said that the Ulama are beggars. Now you claim that they are living it up. Remember, all this honour which the Ulama are receiving, on condition they are sincere; is only the preliminary curtain-raisers and introduction to what Allah ﷻ is going to grant them in Jannah."

Financial independence of the Ulama and its reality

Many people feel that the Ulama should be made independent, so that they can earn their own living and not live off the community, for which they suggest that the Ulama should pursue some worldly studies.

⁶⁹ Invitation

The Ulama are engaged in the service of the people. A president of any country earns his wages from the donations of the people, which we refer to as taxes. They are also living off the people's money, which is actually forced out of the people, and collecting huge wages and salaries. So what is the problem if an Aalim is earning from the donations of the people, while engaged in their service? Isn't it only right that his necessities be seen to? The Aalim's necessities are being seen to from donations which are given voluntarily and willingly. Actually, his service is of a far greater type, since he is serving their Akhirah by teaching them and their children Deen. (If there remain no Ulama to continue giving their full time to serve and teach Deen devotedly full-time without distraction, it will result in a gradual weakening and deterioration in the system of Islamic education and will finally result in the Ilm of Deen becoming extinct in numerous communities, as the Ulama will become too preoccupied in earning a living, finding little or no time at all for educating their communities.)

For a better understanding of the above, ponder over the following explanation provided by Hakimul-Ummah Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (رحمه الله) on this very subject:

From where will the Ulama earn?

Many worldly-orientated people commonly ask, "Nowadays, if a person studies Deen (in a Madrassah), how will he live and from where will he earn?" The factual answer to this is that he should earn a living from wealth which is received from these very people who are engaged in the pursuit of wealth. The reason for this is that those who have studied Deen are

engaged and engrossed in the dissemination and preservation of Deen and in efforts for the reformation of mankind. The Qur'aan is the common asset of all Muslims, and all are held responsible for its protection and preservation. There is also a need for such individuals who can serve the people (in this facet as well). If all the people engross themselves in earning and business, the progress of Deen will not be able to continue. If no one is engaged in the effort of Deen, Deen will obviously come to a grinding halt. For this reason, it is necessary to have such a group of people who dedicate themselves to the effort of Deen, and who do nothing else.

These people are actually engaged (mahboos) in fulfilling the needs of the Muslim public. It is a rule of Fiqh⁷⁰ that the expenses of any person who is engaged in fulfilling the needs of another will be borne by the one whose needs are being seen to. It is precisely for this reason that the expenses of a wife are borne by her husband, the expenses of a judiciary will be borne by the government and the expenses of a witness (or lawyer) will be borne by the one on whose behalf he gives evidence. In a similar manner, the Ulama are engaged in fulfilling the religious responsibilities of the Muslims, in protecting and preserving their religion and in providing them with religious rulings and guidance concerning their day-to-day affairs. This is such an occupation which does not allow them to engage in any other work. It has been observed and experienced over and over that those who are engaged in any other work are not able to dedicate themselves to this effort. It therefore follows that seeing to their expenses is the waajib⁷¹

⁷⁰ Islamic jurisprudence

⁷¹ Obligatory

duty and responsibility of all the Muslims. Posing questions like, 'how will they live and from where will they earn?' merely exposes the foolishness and stupidity of the questioner.⁷²

It is the Fardh duty of all Muslims to safeguard and preserve Deen, and it is their responsibility. Those people who are engaged in learning and teaching Deen are fulfilling this Fardh responsibility, which is termed as 'Fardh Kifaayah', on behalf of all the Muslims. If these people abandon their learning and teaching, these actions would become a Fardh duty upon every individual. And if every person shirks this responsibility, all will be sinners. The general public should be grateful to the principals of such Madaaris, who have relieved all other Muslims from this Fardh-Kifaayah.

It is necessary for the general public to support those who are running the Madaaris

It has thus been conclusively proven that those people who are engaged in (serving and imparting) the knowledge of Deen are actually engaged in fulfilling your responsibilities. It has been proven on the basis of observation and experience that a person is (generally) unable to earn a living whilst engaged in Deeni knowledge. The one who tries to do so cannot do justice to his engagement in the knowledge of Deen. A single person cannot accomplish two works at the same time, both of which require his full attention and devotion.

Further, it is a rule of the Shari'ah that the expenses of any person who is engaged in fulfilling the needs of another will be

⁷²Da'waat-e-Abdiyat v.5 pg.142, v.6 pg.179, as quoted in Tuhfatul-Ulama

borne by the one whose needs he is engaged in fulfilling. Therefore, the expenses of a judge will be borne by all the Muslims, as he is engaged in fulfilling their needs. For he who receives his salary from the Baytul-Maal⁷³, it is as though he is receiving it from all the Muslims. Based on the same rule, the expenses of the Ulama is the responsibility of all the Muslims. The Muslims should themselves serve the Ulama. If we do not serve them, it will imply that we have attached no value to the learning and teaching of Deen.⁷⁴

As long as the system of the Baytul-Maal was operational, receiving a monthly allowance from the Baytul-Maal was the simple means of receiving one's monthly allowance from the general Muslims. The Fuqahaa have explicitly stated the fact that the needs of the judges, Ulama, Muftis, etc. should be seen to (i.e. their expenses should be paid) from the Baytul-Maal. Since the system of the Baytul-Maal is no longer operational, the only remaining solution is that the Muslims unite and collectively serve these Ulama by all contributing a small amount which together will be sufficient for seeing to their expenses. This could be done according to the system of the Madaaris, wherein the monthly allowances are fixed, or according to a system based on Tawakkul, in which no amount is fixed. It is obligatory on the general public to make such arrangements. If they are deficient and negligent in serving the Ulama, they will be answerable for this on the day of Qiyaamah.⁷⁵

⁷³ State treasury

⁷⁴ At-Tabligh v. 21 pg.238,as quoted in Tuhfatul-Ulama

⁷⁵ Islaah-Inqilaab-e-Ummat v.2 pg.192,as quoted in Tuhfatul-Ulama

Is it disgraceful to take an allowance from the Makaatib and Madaaris?

A king is granted a salary from the state-treasury, solely because he is engaged (mahboos) in fulfilling the needs of his subjects. A king is he who is appointed as ruler by the nation, who then grant him a salary from the state-treasury. Now consider, what is the meaning of 'the state-treasury'? Let me inform you of its reality. It is the place wherein the wealth which had been donated by the nation is kept, which consists of the donations of every Zayd, Amar and Bakar. Its reality is just wealth which has been donated, and that too, by the public. It is from here that the king receives his salary. By merely utilizing the word 'treasury' (when referring to that wealth which comprised of people's donations), its honour suddenly increases. People even attribute it to the king, and refer to it (respectfully) as 'the kings' treasury', whereas, in reality, it is just the donations of the public.

This is the very reality of the collections which take place and the donations which are given, from which the Ulama receive their allowances and are paid from. But, strangely enough, people consider is a disgrace for the Ulama to be paid from those very same donations, even though they do not consider it as a disgrace for the kings to be paid from it. Yes, there is certainly a difference between the two; the king receives a million (from these donations), because of which it is not regarded as disgraceful, while the poor Aalim receives a petty sum, which is why people look down upon them and accuse them of eating from Sadaqah. However, if one ponders over the matter carefully, he will come to realize that the reality of both (the salary received by the king and the Aalim) are the

same. Since the reality of both has been proven to be equal, the one who takes less should have to suffer less disgrace, and the one who takes more should be more disgraced.

If it is claimed that the Ulama are eating from Sadaqah, then so too are the kings (presidents), prime-ministers, and judges eating from Sadaqah. If this is a problem for the Ulama, then none (of the above mentioned government employees) should collect salaries, since all their salaries are being paid for from these donations of the public.⁷⁶

It is not allowed for active Ulama to engage themselves in earning a livelihood

لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الَّذِينَ أُحْصِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ضَرْبًا فِي الْأَرْضِ يَحْسِبُهُمُ الْجَاهِلُ

أَغْنِيَاءَ مِنَ التَّعَفُّفِ تَعْرِفُهُمْ بِسِيمَاهُمْ لَا يَسْأَلُونَ النَّاسَ إِلْحَافًا (سورة البقرة 273)

“(Charity is) For the poor who are held back in the path of Allah (they are unable to seek a living due to their service to Deen) and are unable to travel in the land (for trade or work). An ignorant person would think that they are wealthy, because they refrain (from begging). You will recognize them by their signs (of hardship)...”

(Surah Baqarah v.273)

From the above verse, we learn that this group of people (who are referred to in above the verse) should not engage themselves at all in the different forms of earning a living. The portion ***‘and are unable to travel in the land (for trade or work)’*** gives a clear indication towards this. From this, the

⁷⁶At-Tabligh v.2 pg.74-75, as quoted in Tuhfatul-Ulama

doubt (which assails the mind of many) is dispelled; the doubt that Ulama are helpless and unable to earn a living. This verse proves that the Ulama are required to be, in a sense, helpless when it comes to earning a living. The secret (wisdom) behind this is that a single person cannot accomplish two works at the same time, especially if one of them requires absolute engrossment and dedication at all times, either by means of his hands, his tongue or his heart. The service of Deen is such an occupation. Teaching Deeni knowledge is not a form of earning a living (i.e. like trade or work).⁷⁷

The statement of Allah ﷻ '***and are unable to travel in the land (for trade or work)***' means that they do not have the ability to do any other work (besides their service of Deen). This 'inability' (***unable***) refers to the 'Shar'i (technical) inability'; i.e. he is not allowed to engage himself in any other work. Let me explain this point by means of an example: In our vicinity, a person who was a government employee decided to open a printing press. Eventually, his employers came to know of it. He received a written order from them, in which he was given the choice of either quitting his job or closing down his printing press. After all, what was the reason for this order? The reason could only be the fact that, while operating a printing press, he would not be able to devotedly and wholly fulfil his responsibilities as an employee.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Huququl-Ilm pg.15, as quoted in Tuhfatul-Ulama

⁷⁸ Da'waat-e-Abdiyyat, Fadhaa'ilul Ilm pg.40, as quoted in Tuhfatul-Ulama

The harms of active Ulama fully engaging themselves in earning a livelihood

Some people object against the Ulama, stating, "Why can't these people progress in worldly sciences? Why can't they operate machines and run factories?" They should understand that it is not possible for a single person to focus his full attention in two directions at the same time. If a government employee takes on some other work, it will definitely cause a deficiency to his governmental responsibilities. For this reason, he will never be allowed to engage in any other work as long as he remains employed.

If the Ulama become engaged in earning wealth, the inevitable result will be that they will not be able to serve Deen (devotedly). A certain Aalim, who was engaged in the service of Deen, began selling wood. He used to narrate his very own incident: It was Madrassah time, and he was teaching the students. A customer came, who wished to do a business deal. This Aalim was caught in a predicament; if he attends to the customer, he will bring harm to the Madrassah, and if he does not attend to him, he will lose a customer. Helplessly, he said to him, "My brother, I will attend to you just now. Just wait a little bit." There was a tiny lie hidden in this statement as well. Therefore, his attention is now divided; he does not do justice to his teaching. Previously, he was smiling and laughing with the students, now his attention has drifted in another direction. Now, if the students ask any questions, which delays him (a bit more), he lashes out at them and becomes angered... This is

the result of Ulama engaging themselves in earning wealth; they are unable to serve Deen devotedly and properly.⁷⁹

The virtues of being engaged in imparting the knowledge of Deen

Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (رحمه الله) said, "In this day and age, the best occupation is that of imparting the knowledge of Deen. There is no occupation or service (to mankind) better than teaching Deen for the one whom Allah ﷻ has favoured with knowledge. This is the need of the time. The virtue of it is also so great that perhaps no other good deed is equivalent to it in virtue. As long as the knowledge which one had imparted continues to be passed on, rewards will continue accumulating in his account of good deeds."⁸⁰

Wealth is not a sign of being valued in the sight of Allah ﷻ

Do not be impressed and overawed by the possessions of the wealthy. Never be under this misconception and deception that the wealthy are fortunate. Regarding the non-believers, Allah ﷻ declares in the Quraan:

وَلَوْلَا أَنْ يَكُونَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً لَجَعَلْنَا لِمَنْ يَكْفُرُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ لِبُيُوتِهِمْ سُقْفًا مِنْ فِصَّةٍ وَمَعَارِجَ عَلَيْهَا يَظْهَرُونَ (33) وَلِبُيُوتِهِمْ أَبْوَابًا وَسُرُورًا عَلَيْهَا يُتَخَكَّنُونَ (34) وَزُخْرَفًا وَإِنْ كُلُّ ذَلِكَ لَمَّا مَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةُ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ (35-سورة الزخرف)

⁷⁹ At-Tabligh, Khayrul-Maal v.6 pg.2, as quoted in Tuhfatul-Ulama

⁸⁰ Husnul Aziz v.4 pg.200, as quoted in Tuhfatul-Ulama

“(Wealth has no value in the sight of Allah. Allah would have given wealth in great abundance to every disbeliever, had it not been foreseeable that everyone would become disbelievers because of their greed for wealth.) Had it not been for the fact that all would have become one united nation (of kuffaar), We would have made in the houses of those who disbelieve in Rahman roofs of silver and staircases (of silver) to climb on. And, for their houses, doors (of silver) and (silver) couches to recline upon. And (let alone silver, We would even have made all these things of) gold. (However) All of this is merely the items of this (lowly) worldly life. The (everlasting and more valuable) Akhirah in the presence of your Rabb is (exclusively reserved) for those who possess Taqwa.”

(Surah Zukhruf v.33-35)

عن معاوية قال : سمعتُ رسولَ الله - صلى الله عليه وسلم - يقول : «مَنْ يُرِدِ اللهُ بِهِ خَيْرًا يُفَقِّهْهُ فِي الدِّينِ - الحديث». أخرجه البخاري، ومسلم.

Remember that Rasulullah ﷺ said,

“Whomsoever Allah wishes to do good to, Allah grants him understanding of Deen (by making him an Aalim).”

The comparison between ilm and wealth: Knowledge Is More Virtuous Than Wealth In Seven Ways

Statement of Sayyiduna Ali ؓ

- 1) Knowledge is the inheritance of the Ambiyaa ؑ, whereas money is the inheritance of the Pharaohs.
- 2) Knowledge does not decrease by spending, as opposed to wealth.
- 3) Wealth is in need of guards, whereas knowledge guards its owner.
- 4) When a man dies, his money remains above the ground, whereas knowledge enters the ground with its owner.
- 5) Money is attained by a believer and disbeliever, whereas knowledge of Deen is only granted to a believer.
- 6) People of the whole world are in need of learned scholars for their religious matters, whilst the people of knowledge are not in need of the wealthy.
- 7) Knowledge enables one to tread on the straight path, contrary to wealth, which actually prevents man from doing so. (Another possible translation is 'Knowledge will enable man to easily cross the bridge of Siraat (on the day of Qiyaamah), whereas wealth will prevent him from crossing. – compiler)

Other similar narrations add the following benefits:

- 8) Loving the possessors of knowledge is an ibaadah of Deen which takes you closer to Allah ﷻ, while loving the wealthy and rich is no act of virtue.
- 9) Knowledge brings in its wake obedience for its possessors during their life-times and praise for them after their death.

On the other hand, all benefits of wealth are lost as soon as it leaves ones possession (whether one loses it or dies and leaves it as inheritance). Nor are the wealthy obeyed due to the wealth they once possessed, nor does their praise perpetually remain on the tongues of people after their death.

- 10) The Ulama are alive forever in the hearts of people, even though they may be deceased (as their teachings are never totally forgotten or lost, but continue influencing the lives of people). The rich and wealthy who hoard this wealth, even while alive, are really dead (spiritually and psychologically due to tension and depression etc.).
- 11) The people of knowledge will be granted higher ranks in Jannah on account of every additional aspect of knowledge they had acquired, while the wealthy and rich will be questioned regarding every additional cent they had earned; how did they earn it and how did they spend it.⁸¹

⁸¹ قال علي بن أبي طالب رضي الله عنه العلم أفضل من المال بسبعة أوجه أولها العلم ميراث الأنبياء والمال ميراث الفراعنة الثاني العلم لا ينقص بالنفقة والمال ينقص والثالث يحتاج المال إلى الحافظ والعلم يحفظ صاحبه والرابع إذا مات الرجل يبقى ماله والعلم يدخل مع صاحبه قبره والخامس المال يحصل للمؤمن والكافر والعلم لا يحصل إلا للمؤمن والسادس جميع الناس يحتاجون إلى صاحب العلم في أمر دينهم ولا يحتاجون إلى صاحب المال السابع العلم يقوي الرجل على المرور على الصراط والمال يمنعه (مفاتيح الغيب للرازي)

عن كميل بن زياد قال أخذ علي بن أبي طالب بيدي فأخرجني إلى ناحية الجبان فلما أصبحنا جلس ثم تنفس ثم قال يا كميل بن زياد ... العلم خير من المال العلم يحرسك وأنت تحرس المال العلم يزكو على العمل والمال تنقصه النفقة ومحبة العالم دين يدان بها العلم يكسب للعالم الطاعة في حياته وجميل الأحدث بعد موته وصناعة المال تزول بزواله مات خزان الأموال وهم أحياء والعلماء باقون ما بقي الدهر أعيانهم مفقودة وأمثالهم في القلوب موجودة (ابن الأنباري في المصاحف ، والمرهبي في العلم ، ونصر في الحجة ، وأبو نعيم في الحلية ، وابن عساكر كذا في الكنز)

وذكر في الخبر أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْبَصْرَةِ اخْتَلَفُوا فَقَالَ بَعْضُهُمُ: الْعِلْمُ أَفْضَلُ مِنَ الْمَالِ ، وَقَالَ بَعْضُهُمُ: الْمَالُ أَفْضَلُ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ. فَبَعَثُوا رَسُولًا إِلَى ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُمَا فَسَأَلَهُ عَنْ ذَلِكَ فَقَالَ ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُمَا الْعِلْمُ أَفْضَلُ، فَقَالَ الرَّسُولُ: إِنَّ سَأَلُونِي عَنِ الْحُجَّةِ مَاذَا أَقُولُ لَهُمْ؟ قَالَ: قُلْ لَهُمْ: إِنَّ الْعِلْمَ مِيرَاثُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ، وَالْمَالُ مِيرَاثُ الْفَرَاغَةِ، وَلَئِنْ الْعِلْمَ يَخْرُسُكَ، وَأَنْتَ تَحْرُسُ الْمَالَ، وَلَئِنْ الْعِلْمَ لَا يُعْطِيهِ اللَّهُ إِلَّا مَنْ أَحْبَبَهُ، وَالْمَالُ يُعْطِيهِ اللَّهُ لِمَنْ أَحْبَبَهُ وَلِمَنْ لَا يُحِبُّهُ، بَلْ يُعْطِي

3) The wish to master spoken Arabic - a noble intention and a simple solution

Many feel the need to enrol in Salafi universities within the Arab world, which they justify by saying that they wish to master Arabic. A simple alternative to learn Arabic is for an Aalim to spend one year in Jamaat, or join an Arab Jamaat for four months or at least forty days. After studying the details of Sarf, Nahw, Adab and Balaaghah, even the common Arabs cannot match the level of Arabic taught within our Darul-Ulooms. We are only lacking proper application and practice, which will be remedied by a short time spent with Arab Jamaats, on condition we do not converse with anyone in English or any other language during that period, except for a necessity like translation etc.

4) Inferiority complex

One suffers from an inferiority complex, which is the case of many graduate Ulama today, who feel that our ilm is not sufficient and who have no conviction and confidence on Sahihul-Bukhari, Tafsirul-Jalalain, Tafsirul-Baidhaawi and Hidaayah etc. which are all great monumental works (but are strangely impressed by the writings of present-day modernist or Salafi scholars).

لِمَنْ لَا يُحِبُّهُ أَكْثَرُ، أَلَا تَرَى إِلَى قَوْلِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: {وَلَوْلَا أَنْ يَكُونَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً لَجَعَلْنَا لِمَنْ يَكْفُرُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ لِيُوبِتَهُمْ سَفْهًا مِنْ فِتْنَةٍ وَمَعَاجِرَ عَلَيْهَا يَطْهَرُونَ} [الزحرف: 33] : الْآيَةُ، وَلِأَنَّ الْعِلْمَ لَا يَنْقُصُ بِالْبَدَلِ وَالْتَفَقَّةَ، وَالْمَالُ يَنْقُصُ بِالْبَدَلِ وَالْتَفَقَّةَ، وَلِأَنَّ صَاحِبَ الْمَالِ إِذَا مَاتَ انْقَطَعَ ذِكْرُهُ، وَالْعَالِمُ إِذَا مَاتَ فُذِّكِرَ بَاقٍ، وَلِأَنَّ صَاحِبَ الْمَالِ مَيِّتٌ، وَصَاحِبَ الْعِلْمِ لَا يَمُوتُ، وَلِأَنَّ صَاحِبَ الْمَالِ يُسْأَلُ عَنْ كُلِّ دِرْهَمٍ مِنْ أَيْنَ اكْتَسَبَهُ؟ وَأَيْنَ أَنْفَقَهُ؟ وَصَاحِبَ الْعِلْمِ لَهُ بِكُلِّ حَدِيثٍ دَرَجَةٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ).
تبيين الغافلين لابی الليث السمرقندي

The grass always seems greener on the other side

One great benefit which I received from studying Arabic at university level, in the midst of all the harm, was that I realized that our methodology of teaching Arabic is far superior to that of the universities. I can vouch for this fact that the volume of work covered in the Darul-Ulooms within the first term of just about five to six weeks (what is known as the gardaans and basic grammar) is much more than what is completed within the universities throughout an entire year. What you learn in our Darul-Ulooms during the first year cannot be attained after even completing your course of three or four years in the university. I admit that our system of study is laborious and seemingly boring. We first learn the rules, whether it be of nahw, sarf, adab and balaaghah or lughat, and then apply the rules in the 'readers'. In their system, one starts with 'readers', and the rules are applied as one goes along. The rules are not studied in detail by the students, but are learnt through the language. However, even logically, it does not make sense to first start driving, and learn the rules of driving as one goes along driving and meeting in accidents. One will first have to learn the rules, so that he may avoid accidents as he drives. This is the example of their system. This is not based on hearsay, but on my own personal experience. I lectured at RAU. I know their studies and setup thoroughly, from the inside. I also studied in our Madaaris, graduated at Darul Uloom Deoband, and today have a madrassah running under my supervision, so I know this system well too. I can guarantee this to you. I studied Arabic at the universities, and got distinctions in all my Arabic exams.

A professor of the university would come to me for help and assistance in reading the Arabic text. He would request me to place the i'raabs (vowel signs) for him in Sahih Bukhari and Rasmul-Mufti, etc. He was amazed and baffled at our skill, and said, "We have to refer to books on grammar to distinguish which words are marfoo', mansoob or majroor, while you just dictate it from your mind." This is as far as knowledge is concerned. However, in our institutes, along with knowledge, the teachers are also embodiments of Deen, which is a great added boon.

Inferiority complex from another dimension: for the graduates of Darul-Uloom Deoband or any of its branches

There is no need for any graduate of the Darul-Ulooms related to Deoband to feel any apathy or inferiority complex regarding their teachers and Elders - our Ulama of Deoband, as they are acknowledged and held in the highest regard by the Ulama of the world. (Many graduates hold them in contempt because they were Indian, while others feel that they were lacking in the field of knowledge. The first emotion is based on racism, while the second assumption is contrary to the facts.)

Darul-Uloom Deoband in the eyes of contemporary scholars

The International Mu'tamar to bring alive the legacy of Moulana Qasim Nanotwi (رحمه الله)

The International Mu'tamar (Seminar) held in Azaadvilla was to expose to the Ulama of the world the personalities of the

Ulama of Deoband, specifically Moulana Qaasim Nanotwi (رحمه الله), and their way and vision, so that it could take root in all the Ulama of the world. It was organized by a Shaykh Muhyud-Deen of Madinah Munawwarah, the son of Shaykh Muhammad Awwaamah who was a select student of Shaykh Abdul-Fattaah Abu Ghuddah (رحمه الله). I was doubtful at first of hosting it, and admit to some negative aspects within it, but upon hearing his reasoning for having such a gathering, I realized that it overruled all the negative aspects and subsequently accepted. He said, "I want to show the Arab Ulama particularly and the other Ulama of the world generally the achievements and excellences of Moulana Qasim Nanotwi (رحمه الله) and the Ulama of Deoband." The outcome of the Mu'tamar was that all the Ulama who participated from around the world felt strongly that such Ulama ought to be followed, and openly admitted that they could not dream of serving Islam to the extent they had seen the Ulama of Deoband serving it.

Shaykh Abdullah ibn Subayyil and the Ulama of Deoband

An Aalim who had graduated at Deoband was once invited by Shaikh Abdullah ibn Subayyil (رحمه الله), the old Imam of the Haram of Makkah Mukarramah, for a meal. Two Arab Ulama of Riyadh also were present, and they introduced themselves to one another. When the Aalim mentioned that he happened to be a graduate of Deoband, the other two visitors took offence and started off on a tangent, criticizing all the Ulama and Muslims of India of being mushrik⁸², grave-worshippers,

⁸² Polytheists

mubtadi'⁸³, etc. Shaikh Abdullah ibn Subayyil (رحمه الله) enquired from them whether they had ever been to India. They replied in the negative. He commented, "I have visited India. I have been with these people, and have scrutinized them inside out. They are 100% staunch Muwahhids whose belief is 100% correct. And in the matter of the love of Rasulullah ﷺ and his Sunnah, they surpass us by far." Remember that he himself was a Salafi, although not an extremist. He then said, "The Ulama of Deoband are serving about two thirds (66%) of the Ummah in Deen. Also remember that about two thirds (66%) of the Ummah are Hanafis. If people like you wish to declare the Hanafis as Mushrik and out of the fold of Islam, no Ummah will remain."

Darul-Uloom Deoband Reviving the different branches of Deen

Darul Uloom Deoband has not only produced Ulama, but has produced Darul Ulooms throughout the world, running on the same thinking and ideology, whether in South Africa, England, America, Australia, Malaysia or Thailand etc. Ulama serving Deen in their own individual capacity can be found around the entire world.

The primary makaatib established by graduates of Darul Uloom Deoband are found spread out across the world.

The Tablighi Jama'at is a product of the Darul Uloom which has brought about such a revolution in the world.

⁸³ Innovators

Pure pristine Tasaawuf which conforms to the Sunnah has been revived by the stalwarts of Darul Uloom Deoband like Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (رحمه الله).

These Ulama defended Islam from Qadianism, Shiaism, Moududism, modernism, and all other strange isms.

In politics, Moulana Husain Ahmad Madani (رحمه الله) (following in the footsteps of his teacher Shaykhul-Hind Moulana Mahmoodul-Hasan Deobandi (رحمه الله)) was in the forefront.

When it came to Jihad, they too were in the forefront. When the Palestinians began selling their land in Palestine, it was the Ulama of India, including the Ulama of Deoband, who specially travelled there and advised them not to sell. The locals thought to themselves that these Indians know nothing, so they ignored the advice and sold up. Israel was suddenly formed.

The enemies of Islam have made their target Darul-Uloom Deoband, and regard its ideology and methodology as a barrier and stumbling block in their way to subdue the masses.⁸⁴

⁸⁴After the division of Pakistan, many of the influential people of the country were gathered to discuss the way forward. At this juncture Sayed Husayn, who was at that time the chief engineer of Pakistan, narrated his personal experience. He explained, "Before the division of Pakistan I undertook a journey to America. While taking rest at a hotel lounge, two high - ranking Americans entered and sat nearby. During their light-hearted discussion that followed, I was surprised to hear them discuss the following topic:

American A: Why does religion influence the lives of the locals of Hindustan so greatly, so much so that such influence is not even found in the Islamic countries of the Middle East?

Darul-Uloom Deoband compared to other Islamic institutes of note

Aligarh Muslim University was founded by Sir Sayyid at around the same time Darul Uloom Deoband was established. His object and intentions were noble; to create Muslim engineers, doctors and other professionals who put Islam before their professions; but it failed, to the extent that even atheists were produced from it. It was mainly by the efforts of the Tabligh Jama'at that the tables were turned, and it resembled a Muslim institution once again. Recently, the government of India have compelled them to remove from their name the word 'Muslim', leaving only 'Aligarh University'. Till today, there is no second Aligarh University anywhere in the world, which runs on the same methodology and thinking.

Jami'ah Al-Azhar of Cairo, which is almost a thousand years old, has no second Azhar in the world, running upon their ideology and thinking.

American B: The reason most probably, is that the Middle East lies close to Europe and has thus, due to continuous intermingling with Europeans, taken to their ways and accepted their culture.

American A: No, that cannot be! Hindustan remained under British dominance and rule for almost a century, yet the conquering nation was still unable to separate the locals from the clutches of their religion.

American B: Perhaps it is due to the fact that Hindustan is a poor country and its poverty has prevented western civilization taking root.

American A: Rather, experience shows that attracting poor people is much easier. I have pondered over this matter for a very long time. As far as I understand, one of the main causes for religion controlling the masses of that country is due to an institute known as Deoband. Through their writings and lectures they have and continue spreading the teachings of their religion, thus ensuring that religion remains alive in those far away regions. (Ulama of Deoband)

Madinah University, which is sponsored by the Saudi government and which is the headquarters of Salafis, has no second university in the world, nor are there many makaatib running under them.

They may have branches and centres, but so ineffective that the effect of Islam cannot even be seen, in many cases, within the centre. The students cannot even be identified as Muslims, even while studying, let alone after graduation or during the holidays.

In the institutes connected to Darul Uloom Deoband, students are encouraged to even spend their holidays in the path of Allah ﷻ, in the company of the pious, or at least can be recognized as Muslim when at home. There are exceptions, but by and large, the effect of the environment can be seen and experienced.

The graduates of Darul-Uloom Deoband or any of its branches should make abundant shukr to Allah ﷻ that He has associated us and connected us with this great institution and school of thought in belief, philosophy and ideology. In reality, there are not enough words or practices within our ability to express our shukr to Allah ﷻ over this great bounty. This school of thought, which belongs to the Ahlus-Sunnah wal Jama'ah, is not restricted to any specific nation, race, geographical boundaries or time.

Back to our subject matter of discussion - The reality of these Islamic Faculties at universities

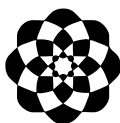
What I have explained above is not based on hear-say, but on my own personal experience. I lectured at RAU. I know their studies and setup thoroughly, from the inside. I also studied in our Madaaris, graduated at Darul Uloom Deoband, and today have a madrassah running under my supervision, so I know this system well too. I can guarantee this to you. I studied Arabic at the universities, and got distinctions in all my Arabic exams. I usually say to my friends, when a discussion starts on Islamic studies at university, "In my opinion, I am the most authoritative person on this subject, as I had not only studied at university, but even lectured there." In the universities there is just an outward show, and no reality. There is nothing other than darkness and evil there. This is my experience.

Our idea is to fight and further overpower modern-day secular education through our syllabus. Our way is not to fit into their system, by studying or teaching at their schools and universities, but is to overpower their system as was the case for thousands of years. Religion ought to overpower secularism and worldly inclinations. We today suffer from an inferiority complex, and are impressed and overawed by those who have an MA degree or doctorate in Islamiyyaat from Oxford, Cambridge or some American university. May Allah ﷻ grant us the true and correct understanding.

My observation and personal experience

I have seen both sides of the coin, and have studied in both Islamic and secular institutions. From my own personal experience, I say that there can be nothing like Islamic education. My school-friends are today doctors, lawyers, engineers and teachers, etc. When I was in standard 9 -grade 11, I decided to become an Aalim. At that time, they would laugh at me, poke fun at me and say, "You want to become a Molwi. Are you going back into the dark ages or the stone ages? This is not the era to become a Molwi. You're a stupid. You are making the wrong decision." Whenever we meet, they now admit that they had made the wrong decision and that I had made the right decision. By Allah, if I had ten other lives, I would choose no other road, other than studying Islamic knowledge again and following this path. One studying true Islamic knowledge in the traditional system should never feel inferior to others, since he is actually engaged in the most superior occupation.

May Allah ﷻ grant us the understanding, the concern and the effort towards learning Deen and achieving Allah ﷻ's Pleasure and Jannah. May Allah ﷻ grant us the concern regarding our Deeni education and that of our children.



APPENDIX ONE

The virtues of acquiring ‘ilm’ – Islamic knowledge

From the works of Moulana Shah Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar (رحمه الله)

Hadith – 1

عن أبي هريرة يقول : سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم يقول ألا الدنيا ملعونة ملعون ما فيها إلا ذكر الله وما والاه وعالم أو متعلم (رواه الترمذي وابن ماجه وقال الترمذي هذا حديث حسن غريب)

Rasulullah ﷺ said, “The world and all its contents are accursed (distanced and deprived of the mercy of Allah), except the remembrance of Allah, that which facilitates the remembrance of Allah, the Aalim and the Student (of Islamic knowledge).” (Tirmizi, Ibn-Majah)

Those material objects that assist in carrying out the Zikr of Allah ﷻ such as food, drink, clothing and other such necessities of life are contained within the purview of the term ‘that which facilitates the remembrance of Allah’. This statement may also refer to all forms of Ibaadah (acts of worship) which brings man closer to Allah ﷻ. According to either of the two interpretations, the acquisition of knowledge is included in ‘that which facilitates the remembrance of Allah’ since it is the basic requirement which facilitates the zikr of Allah ﷻ (and all other acts of Ibaadah); without which one can never recognize Allah ﷻ. It was to emphasize the necessity and importance of knowledge that Rasulullah ﷺ mentioned ‘the Aalim and the Student of Deen’ separately, so that the Ummah could realize that the knowledge of Deen is the greatest treasure. (Remember that ilm - true knowledge, is the knowledge of Deen, and all other facts are just *funun* (general information) -note by Hadhrat Hakeem Akhtar (رحمه الله))

وعن معاذ بن جبل رضي الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم تعلموا العلم فإن تعلمه لله خشية وطلبه عبادة ومذاكرته تسبيح والبحث عنه جهاد وتعليمه لمن لا يعلمه صدقة وبذله لأهله قربة لأنه معالم الحلال والحرام ومنار سبل أهل الجنة وهو الأنيس في الوحشة والصاحب في الغربة والمحدث في الخلوة والدليل على السراء والضراء والسلاح على

الأعداء والزبن عند الأخلاء يرفع الله به أقواما فيجعلهم في الخير قادة قائمة تقتص آثارهم ويقتدى بفعالهم وينتهى إلى رأيهم ترغب الملائكة في خلتهم وبأجنتحتها تمسحهم ويستغفر لهم كل رطب ويابس وحيثان البحر وهوامه وسباع البر وأنعامه لأن العلم حياة القلوب من الجهل ومصابيح الأبصار من الظلم يبلغ العبد بالعلم منازل الأخيار والدرجات العلى في الدنيا والآخرة التفكير فيه يعدل الصيام ومدارسته تعدل القيام به توصل الأرحام وبه يعرف الحلال من الحرام وهو إمام العمل والعمل تابعه يلهمه السعداء ويحرمه الأشقياء

(رواه ابن عبد البر النمري في كتاب العلم من رواية موسى بن محمد بن عطاء القرشي حدثنا عبد الرحيم بن زيد العمي عن أبيه عن الحسن عنه وقال هو حديث حسن ولكن ليس له إسناد قوي وقد رويناه من طرق شتى موقوفا كذا قال رحمه الله ورفعه غريب جدا والله أعلم كذا في الترغيب والترهيب)

It has been narrated (from Muaaz رضي الله عنه who said), "The acquisition of knowledge for the pleasure of Allah is khashyah - one aspect of the Fear of Allah, travelling for the acquisition of knowledge is Ibaadah, revising it is equal to Tasbeeh, discussing academic research of ilm is equivalent to Jihad, teaching it (to those who are ignorant) is equal to Sadaqah (charity) and imparting it to its worthy recipients is a means of acquiring Allah's closeness. This is because knowledge enables one to differentiate between lawful and unlawful, it is a signpost indicating the road leading to Jannah (Paradise), it brings joy to the lonely, it is a companion while travelling, a talkative friend to one in solitude, it is a guide in happiness and grief and a weapon for its friends against its enemies. Allah elevates the fraternity of the Ulama due to this knowledge, who then become callers towards good and leaders, in whose footsteps many follow, whose actions are emulated and whose opinions are resorted to. They are such people who the angels wish to befriend, upon whom these angels rub their wings (seeking blessings or out of love). Every object, whether of the land or the sea, seeks Allah's forgiveness on their behalf, including even the fish in the sea, the wild-beasts and all animals of the jungles and venomous creatures (like snakes etc.). All this is because knowledge illuminates the heart (from ignorance) and brings light to the eyes (from darkness). Through it, the servant of Allah becomes an exalted personality of the Ummah and acquires lofty positions in this world and the Hereafter. Studying this knowledge (pondering over it) is equal to fasting, and revising it is equal to Tahajjud Salaah. Through it, good relations and strong

bonds of family ties are promoted and Halaal is distinguished from Haraam. This knowledge is the Imaam (leader) of Amal (practice), Amal is its follower and adherent. The fortunate are inspired with it and the wretched are deprived of it.” (Fazaile-Zikr of Shaykhul-Hadith)

Hadith – 2

عن أبي أمامة الباهلي قال : ذكر لرسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم رجلان أحدهما عابد والآخر عالم فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم فضل العالم على العابد كفضلي على أدناكم ثم قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم إن الله وملائكته وأهل السموات والأرضين حتى النملة في حجرها وحتى الحوت ليصلون على معلم الناس الخير (رواه الترمذي وقال هذا حديث غريب قال سمعت أبا عمار الحسين بن حريث الخزاعي يقول سمعت الفضيل بن عياض يقول عالم عامل معلم يدعى كبيراً في ملكوت السموات)

Rasulullah ﷺ said, “The virtue of an Aalim over an Aabid (a worshipper who is a non-Aalim) is similar to my virtue over the lowest amongst you. Allah showers His mercy upon those that impart the knowledge of Deen to others, and His angels, the inhabitants of the earth and the skies, even the ants in their ant-holes and the fish in the seas, make dua of mercy for them.” (Tirmizi)

Hadith – 3

عن ابن عباس قال : قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم فقيه أشد على الشيطان من ألف عابد (رواه الترمذي وابن ماجه وقال الترمذي هذا حديث غريب)

“One Faqeeh (learned scholar who has been blessed with correct understanding of Deen) is severer upon Shaytaan than a thousand Aabids (worshippers).” (Tirmizi)

Hadith – 4

وعن أبي أمامة عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم قال : ثلاثة لا يستخف بهم إلا منافق : ذو الشبهة في الإسلام وذو العلم وإمام مقسط (رواه الطبراني في الكبير من رواية عبيد الله بن زحر عن علي بن يزيد وكلاهما ضعيف كذا في مجمع الزوائد)

“There are three types of people whom none other than a hypocrite would ridicule and consider inferior; an elderly Muslim, an Aalim and a Just Ruler.” (Jam’ul-Fawaid)

Note: This means that honouring and respecting these people is a sign of imaan (belief), and ridiculing them or considering them inferior is a sign of nifaaq (hypocrisy).

Hadith - 5

عن سهل بن معاذ بن أنس عن أبيه: أن النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم قال من علم علما فله أجر من عمل به . لا ينقص من أجر العامل (رواه ابن ماجه)

"He who teaches another person will attain the reward of the one who practices, without the practicing one's rewards being reduced in anyway."

Hadith - 6

عن أنس بن مالك قال : قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم (طلب العلم فريضة على كل مسلم . وواضع العلم عند غير أهله كمثل الخنازير الجوهر واللؤلؤ والذهب) (رواه ابن ماجه)

في الروائد إسناده ضعيف لضعف حفص بن سليمان . وقال السيوطي سئل الشيخ محي الدين النووي رحمه الله تعالى عن هذا الحديث فقال انه ضعيف أي سندا . وإن كان صحيحا أي معنى . وقال تلميذه جمال الدين المزي هذا الحديث روى من طرق تبلغ رتبة الحسن . وهو كما قال . فإني رأيت له خمسين طريقا وقد جمعها في جزء .

"It is compulsory upon every Muslim to seek ilm (the knowledge of Deen)." (Jam'ul-Fawa'id)

Hadith - 7

وعن ابن عباس قال : قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم : إذا مررتم برياض الجنة فارتعوا قالوا : يا رسول الله ما رياض الجنة ؟ قال : " مجالس العلم " (رواه الطبراني في الكبير وفيه رجل لم يسم)

"When passing the gardens of Jannah, eat well." The Sahaba ﷺ enquired: "O Rasulullah, what are the Gardens of Jannah?" He replied: "The gatherings of ilm." (Jam'ul-Fawa'id)

Hadith - 8

عن جابر قال : قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم : لا ينبغي للعالم أن يسكت على علمه ولا ينبغي للجاهل أن يسكت على جهله قال الله جل ذكره { فاسألوا أهل الذكر إن كنتم لا تعلمون } (رواه الطبراني في الأوسط وفيه محمد بن أبي حميد وقد أجمعوا على ضعفه كذا في مجمع الروائد)

"It is not permissible for an Aalim to remain silent upon his knowledge, neither is it permissible for an ignorant person to remain silent upon his ignorance (since the ignorant should enquire from

the Aalim so that he acquires the knowledge of Deen). Allah ﷻ says: "Ask the people of zikr (knowledge) if you do not know."" (Jam'ul-Fawaid)

Hadith - 9

عن أبي هريرة قال : قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم (من تعلم علما مما يبتغي به وجه الله لا يتعلمه إلا ليصيب به عرضا من الدنيا لم يجد عرف الجنة يوم القيامة) يعني ربحها (رواه أحمد ، وأبو داود ، وابن ماجه)

"A person who acquires the knowledge of Deen for any objective other than the Pleasure of Allah (viz. worldly motives - as is the case of one who acquires knowledge solely for the purpose of earning wealth, or for the purpose of earning for oneself fame and honour) should prepare his abode in Hell-fire." (At-Targheeb)

Note; This Hadith imparts the great lesson of sincerity in intention to the students of knowledge.⁸⁵

The virtues of knowledge from Tafsir-Kabir

Imam Fakhruddin Razi (رحمه الله), under the commentary of the verse **وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا**, writes, "This verse points to the virtue of knowledge, since Allah ﷻ has illustrated His perfect wisdom of creating Adam (عليه السلام) through Adam's quality of knowledge. If there was anything more virtuous than knowledge (in man), it would have been essential to illustrate man's virtue by that."

(لكن من الواجب اظهار فضله بذلك الشئ) However, the fact that Allah ﷻ chose the bounty of knowledge to show the virtue of man is clear proof of the fact that knowledge is most honorable and most virtuous."

The five qualities of the Ulama mentioned in the Qur'aan

Allah ﷻ, in His Book, has mentioned five virtuous qualities of the Ulama (learned scholars):

- 1) Imaan – والراسخون فى العلم يقولون اٰمنا به (And those who are well-grounded in ilm say, "We believe in it" - Surah Aal-Imraan)

⁸⁵Ruh ki Bimaariya aur unka Ilaaj pg.120-123

- 2) Tauheed and Bearing Testimony - شهد الله انه لا اله الا هو والملئكة (Allah ﷻ has testified that there is none worthy of worship besides Him, as well as the angels and the Ulama - Surah Aal-Imraan)
- 3) Crying - ويخرون للاذقان يبكون ويزيدهم خشوعا (Allah ﷻ states with regards to the Ulama, "And they fall on their chins crying and this Qur'aan increases them in humility"-Surah Bani Israaeel)
- 4) Khushu' (humility) - ان الذين اوتوا العلم من قبله اذا يتلى عليهم يخرون للاذقان سجدا ("Verily those who were granted ilm before the Qur'an, when it is recited before them, they fall prostrate on their chins." - Surah Bani Israaeel)
- 5) Khashyah (fear of Allah) - إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ ("Only those servants of Allah fear Him who are Ulama" -Surah Faatir)⁸⁶

The virtues of the Ulama (those who have acquired this ilm) in the light of Qur'aan and Hadith

- 1) Allah ﷻ states:
يَرْفَعِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ
(Surah Mujaadalah v.11)

"Allah will raise the ranks of the believers amongst you (due to obedience of this command) and (Allah will raise the ranks) of those who have been granted ilm (specifically from amongst the believers) (in the hereafter)." **(Surah Mujaadalah v.11)** (Bayanul-Qur'aan)

Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (رحمه الله) writes, "There were three groups amongst those who complied and obeyed the command (mentioned in this verse):

⁸⁶Kashkol-e-Ma'rifat pg.288-289, quoting from Tafsîr Kabir vol.2 page 196

- a) Those who did not possess true belief, but for some worldly expedience showed outward faith like the hypocrites. Due to the restrictive clause (منكم – amongst you), they are excluded from this promise (of being raised in rank).
- b) The people of imaan who are not people of ilm - for them is a raise in rank.
- c) The people of imaan and ilm. Due to their ilm and ma'rifah, their obedience to Allah's command was based upon an added level of fear of Allah and sincerity (due to which the reward of any action is increased), they have been promised an additional increase in their ranks (over the general believers). This is understood from the above verse, wherein the people of ilm are distinctively mentioned separately after mention is made of the people of imaan, even though they are included within the scope of the people of imaan. This is referred to as **التخصيص بعد التعميم** (specification after generality)."

Allamah Alusi (رحمه الله) states: "The great honour of the people of ilm is proven from this verse. The people of ilm have been mentioned separately after the common believers through the means of a conjunction (عطف), as if they are another species altogether. **(كانهم جنس آخر)** The lofty position of the Ulama is clearly apparent from this verse. Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud رضي الله عنه has stated, **ما خص الله** "Allah ﷻ has not granted the Ulama such privilege in any other portion of the Qur'an as He has done in this verse."... (Ruhul Ma'ani vo.28 page29)⁸⁷

He has also written: Some commentators have proffered the following tafsir (commentary) of the previous verse:

⁸⁷ Kashkol-e-Ma'rifat pg.278-279

يرفع الله الذين اوتوا العلم من المؤمنين على الذين لم يؤتوا العلم درجات

"Allah raises the ranks of those believers who have been granted ilm over those who have not been granted ilm manifold." (Ruhul Ma'ani vol. 28 page-29)

Note: Ilm refers to Shari' (Islamic) knowledge. (Ruhul Ma'ani)⁸⁸

Hafiz Ibne Hajar Asqalani (رحمه الله) writes the explanation of the above verse:

يرفع الله المومن العالم على المؤمن غير العالم و رفعة الدرجات تدل على
الفضل و المراد بالعلم العلم الشرعى

"Allah has raised the ranks of a believer who is an Aalim over a believer who is not. This raising of ranks points to the virtue of the Aalim (over others). The meaning of ilm (in the above verse) is Shari' (Islamic) knowledge." Thereafter he mentioned the incident of Hadhrat Umar رضي الله عنه, when a slave was made governor of Makkah Mukarramah since he was an Aalim and Qari (proficient reciter) of the Qur'aan. (Fathul Bari vol 1 page 141)⁸⁹

Allamah Mahmud Nasafi (رحمه الله) writes under the commentary of the above verse:

Allah will grant the believers high rank on account of their obedience, and He will grant the men of ilm many ranks which are far above their ranks. The believers, who were not Ulama, will be merely told to enter Jannah, whereas the Ulama will be told, "Wait here, you will have to intercede on behalf of others". (يقال للعالم قف فاشفع)
The Ulema will thus be granted the right of intercession. (في الناس

Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Masud رضي الله عنه stated, "O people, understand this verse well. It is encouraging you to acquire knowledge, since Allah is stating:

⁸⁸ Kashkol-e-Ma'rifat pg.282

⁸⁹ Kashkol-e-Ma'rifat pg.286

اى يرفع المؤمن العالم فوق المؤمن الذى ليس بعالم درجات

"Allah will raise the ranks of the believers who are Ulama far above the believers who are not Ulama." (Tafsir-Khaazin v.4 pg.241)⁹⁰

Allamah Qadhi Thanauallah Panipatti (رحمه الله) writes in Tafsir Mazhari, "Allah has mentioned that He has granted greater ranks to a learned believer over one who is not learned in this verse, since the believer who has ilm combines both knowledge and practice.

فان العمل اذا صدر من اهل العلم يوتى من الاجر ما لا يوتى غيره لانه يقتدى به دون الجاهل قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم من سن فى الاسلام سنة حسنة فله اجرها و اجر من عمل بها من بعده من غير ان ينقص من اجورهم شئ (رواه مسلم)

Actions which are done by the people of ilm are rewarded with much greater rewards compared to actions carried out by others. The reason for this is that many follow them in their actions, as opposed to those who are ignorant. Nabi ﷺ has mentioned, "Whoever has laid the foundation for a good action in Islam, then for him is its reward, as well as the reward of all those who practice on it after him, without their reward decreasing at all." (Muslim)⁹¹

2) Allah ﷻ says:

قل هل يستوى الذين يعلمون والذين لا يعلمون

"(O Nabi), say, "Can those who possess knowledge and those who do not possess knowledge ever be equal?" **(Surah Zumar v.9)** (Bayanul Qur'aan)

Allamah Alusi (رحمه الله) writes in Ruhul Ma'ani that this verse denotes the virtue of knowledge.

3) Allah commands all to become Rabbani:

⁹⁰ Kashkol-e-Ma'rifat pg.296

⁹¹ Kashkol-e-Ma'rifat pg.297

وَلَكِنْ كُونُوا رَبَّانِيِّينَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تُعَلِّمُونَ الْكِتَابَ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ

“Become people who are Rabbani, by teaching ‘The Book’ and studying it.” **(Surah Aal-Imraan v.79)**

Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Abbas ؓ expounds this verse كُونُوا رَبَّانِيِّينَ as follows, كُونُوا حُكَمَاءَ عِلْمَاءَ فَقَهَاءَ “Become people of hikmah (wisdom), people of ilm (knowledge) and people of fiqh (understanding).” One who possesses these qualities is a Rabbaani (a man of Allah).

Some others have stated: الرباني هو الذى يربى الناس بصغار العلم قبل كباره “Rabbani is that person who nurtures and trains people in basic ilm before engrossing them in the deep complex matters of ilm”. (Bukhari vol.1 page 16)⁹²

4) Allah commands Rasulullah ﷺ to beg from Him an increase in ilm:

وَقُلْ رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا

And say (o Nabi), “O my Rabb, increase me in knowledge.”

(Surah Taha v.114)

Allamah Alusi (رحمه الله) states in the Tafsir of رب زدني علما, “This verse establishes the virtue of ilm. It also establishes the importance and desirability of making dua for an increase in knowledge.” Some commentators have mentioned that Nabi ﷺ was not commanded to make dua for an increase in anything besides ilm. They have presented these narrations to emphasize this point:

عن ابى هريرة قال كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول اللهم انفعنى بما علمتنى و علمنى بما

ينفعنى و زدنى علماً والحمد لله على كل حال

Nabi ﷺ would supplicate, “O Allah, benefit me through that ilm which you teach me, teach me that ilm which will benefit me, grant me an increase in ilm, and all praises are only for Allah in every condition”.

⁹² Kashkol-e-Ma’rifat pg.284

Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Masud رضي الله عنه used to supplicate in the following words,

اللهم زدني ايمانا و فقهها و يقينا و علما

“O Allah, increase me in imaan, fiqh (understanding), yaqeen (conviction) and ilm (knowledge)”.

Allamah Alusi (رحمه الله) states: وما هذا الا لزيادة فضل العلم – All of this proves the great virtue of knowledge. (Ruhul Ma’ani vol.16 page 269) ⁹³

Some Ahaadith regarding the virtue of the Ulama

- 1) عن ابي الدرداء مرغوعا – فضل العالم على العابد كفضل القمر ليلة البدر على سائر الكواكب

The virtue of an Aalim over a worshipper is like the virtue of the full moon over all the stars. (Tirmizi, Abu Daud)

- 2) عن الحسن قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم من جاءه الموت و هو يطلب العلم ليحيى به الاسلام فينبه و بين النبيين درجة

Whoever passes away whilst seeking ilm, intending to bring Islam alive by means of it, then there will be one rank between him and the Ambiyaa. (I.e. there will only be a difference of one rank between the status of the Ambiyaa عليه السلام and this person's status). (Daarmi)

- 3) و قال صلى الله عليه و سلم بين العالم والعايد مائة درجة بين كل درجتين حضر الجواد المضمهر سبعين سنة

Between the rank of an Aalim and a worshipper are 100 ranks. Between each rank (in Jannah), there is such a huge distance that it will take a fast-moving horse 70 years to traverse it. (ibid)

- 4) و قال عليه الصلوة و السلام يشفع يوم القيامة ثلاثة الانبياء ثم العلماء ثم الشهداء

⁹³ Kashkol-e-Ma’rifat pg.286

On the day of Qiyaamah, three groups of people will intercede,
1) the Ambiyaa 2) then the Ulama 3) then the martyrs. (ibid)

- 5) و عن ابن عباس: خيّر سليمان عليه السلام بين العلم والملك والمال فاختار العلم فاعطاه الله تعالى الملك والمال تبعاً له

Hadhrat Sulayman عليه السلام was granted a choice between ilm, kingdom and wealth. He chose ilm. (Due to his sincerity, Allah ﷻ granted him ilm) By virtue of this ilm, he was also granted kingdom and wealth. (ibid)

- 6) عن ابن مسعود قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يجمع الله العلماء يوم القيامة فيقول انى لم اجعل حكمتى فى قلوبكم الا و انا اريد بكم الخير اذهبوا الى الجنة فقد غفرت لكم على ما كان منكم
On the day of Qiyaamah, Allah will gather the Ulama and say, "The only reason I placed my knowledge and wisdom in your hearts was because I intended goodness for you. Enter Jannah. I have forgiven your sins, regardless of what you had done." (Musnad Abi Hanifah) (The above six Ahaadith were quoted from Ruhul Ma'ani)

- 7) Allamah Ibn Kathir Dimashqi (رحمه الله) presents the narration of Ibn Majah to expound the virtue of the Ulama (scholars). Hadhrat Umar رضي الله عنه met Nafi' ibn Abdul Harith in Usfan. Hadhrat Umar رضي الله عنه had appointed him as the governor of Makkah Mukarramah. He thus asked him, "O Nafi' who did you appoint as your representative?" Nafi' replied, "I placed one of our (freed) slaves, Ibn Abza, as my deputy." Hadhrat Umar رضي الله عنه asked in amazement, "You made one of your slaves your deputy?" He responded, "He is a Qari (proficient reciter) of the book of Allah, he is an Aalim of the laws of inheritance and he is a Qaadhi (judge)." Hadhrat Umar رضي الله عنه then remarked, "Listen well, your Nabi ﷺ has mentioned:

ان الله يرفع بهذا الكتاب اقواماً و يضع به اخرين

"Verily Allah raises nations by means of this book (due to their knowledge and practice on the Qur'an) and by means of this

same book, He degrades others (due to their ingratitude)". (Tafsir Ibn Kathir vol.4 page 326)⁹⁴

- 8) Hadhrat Hakimul Ummah Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (رحمه الله) has quoted a narration of Hadhrat Abu Dharr رضى الله عنه regarding the virtue of knowledge. Rasulullah ﷺ said,

يا أبا ذر لأن تغدو فتعلم آية من كتاب الله خير لك من أن تصلي مائة ركعة . ولأن تغدو فتعلم بابا من العلم عمل به أو لم يعمل خير من أن تصلي ألف ركعة

"O Abu Dharr, for you to learn one verse of the Qur'an is more superior than performing 100 Rak'ats of Nafil Salaah. For you to learn one chapter of knowledge is superior to reciting 1000 Rak'ats of Nafil, whether you practice on this knowledge or not". (Sunan Ibn Majah)

Note: The Hadith shows the great virtue of attaining religious knowledge. It also proves the fallacy of this statement made by some people, "What is the benefit of learning and asking when one cannot practice?" This narration clearly states, "whether you practice on this knowledge or not". In both situations, the virtue is still attained. There are three reasons for this:

- a) When one learns a matter of din, he will be saved from misguidance, which is a great boon.
- b) When the matters of Din are known, then (if Allah ﷻ wills) one will hopefully be blessed with the ability to eventually practice.
- c) If one shows someone else, then this is also a necessary duty and will be rewardable.⁹⁵ (Hayatul Muslimeen chapter 2, page 79-80)

- 9) Qays bin Kathir narrates that a person travelled from Madinah Munawwarah to Damascus in Shaam and presented himself in

⁹⁴ Kashkol-e-Ma'rifat pg.282

⁹⁵ Kashkol-e-Ma'rifat pg.287

the gathering of Hadhrat Abud Dardaa ؓ who asked him, "For what reason have you come here?" He replied, "I have come to listen directly to a Hadith which you narrate." Hadhrat Abud Dardaa ؓ asked, "Have you come for no other need or work (like business, etc)?" He answered, "No, I have come solely for the purpose of seeking that Hadith." Hadhrat Abud Dardaa ؓ mentioned, "I have heard Nabi ﷺ saying, 'Whoever travels seeking ilm, Allah makes easy for him his path to Jannah. The angels spread their wings under his feet out of happiness over what he is seeking. All the creations in the heavens and earth, including the fish in the ocean seek forgiveness for the Aalim. The virtue of an Aalim over a worshipper is like the virtue of the moon over all stars. The Ulama are the inheritors of the Ambiyaa. The Ambiyaa do not leave gold and silver coins as inheritance. They only leave behind knowledge. The one who has taken it has taken a great treasure.'" (Tirmizi, Abu Daud)

10) Hadhrat Muawiyah ؓ narrates that Rasulullah ﷺ said,

مَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ بِهِ خَيْرًا يُفَقِّهْهُ فِي الدِّينِ

"For whomsoever Allah wishes goodness, He grants him the understanding of din" (Bukhari, Muslim)⁹⁶

Anyone can become a seeker of knowledge

Allamah Ibn Aabideen Shaami (رحمه الله) writes, "Whichever person passes away whilst seeking knowledge has attained a death of martyrdom."

(وهو يطلب العلم) بأن كان له اشتغال به تأليفا أو تدريسا أو حضورا فيما يظهر ولو كل يوم درسا
وليس المراد الانهماك

⁹⁶ Kashkol-e-Ma'rifat pg.297

Translation: Seeking ilm means that one is involved with knowledge, whether by writing, teaching, or even being present in any lesson, even if it be one lesson daily. Complete pre-occupation in ilm is not meant. (Raddul-Muhtaar v.1 pg.673)⁹⁷

The virtue of the gatherings of the Ulama

The person who sits in the company of Ulama will attain seven bounties, even if he cannot remember and retain the knowledge which they impart:

- 1) The virtue of a seeker of knowledge.
- 2) As long as he remains in that gathering, he will be safe from sinning.
- 3) When he leaves his home to seek knowledge, (Allah's) mercy will descend upon him.
- 4) When he sits in the gathering of knowledge, then a portion of the mercy descending on the Ulama will also fall into to his lot.
- 5) As long as he listens to the talks of din (religion), Kiraaman Kaatibeen (the recording angels) will record acts of obedience for him (in his book of deeds).
- 6) If he does not understand any aspect of knowledge and becomes grieved, then this grief will be a means of his attaining proximity to Allah, as Allah ﷻ has mentioned in a Hadith-Qudsi **إنا عند المنكسرة قلوبهم لاجلى** "I am very close to those whose hearts broke for My pleasure."
- 7) He will witness the honor of this Aalim with his own eyes, as well as the disgraceful position and condition of the disobedient. He will thus dislike the evil-doers and become inclined to the Ulama. (Tafsir-Kabir)⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Kashkol-e-Ma'rifat pg.280-281

⁹⁸ Kashkol-e-Ma'rifat pg.293

APPENDIX TWO

Secular and Worldly Sciences within the Darul Uloom

On seeing the syllabus of Darul-Uloom Deoband, the question arises: 'Why were the modern sciences, which had already reached India at the time this syllabus was compiled, not included in it?' The reason for this non-inclusion, according to Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanotwi (رحمه الله), was that these subjects were being taught in the government schools that had been established in the country at various places and everyone could take advantage of these. On the contrary, the old (sacred) sciences were in a state of abandonment and there was not even an inferior arrangement for teaching these. Moreover, in this syllabus itself, attention had been paid to the creation of so much ability (isti'daad) in the student that he might acquire knowledge of other sciences through self-study. This question had also cropped up at the inception of the Darul-Uloom itself; at the jalsah of completion in 1290 AH. Maulana Nanotwi (رحمه الله) threw full light on this question. Another reason put forward by him therein was that the acquisition of numerous sciences at one and the same time proves detrimental to ability in respect of all the sciences, since one is unable to focus wholeheartedly in one direction. *(The details of the lecture can be seen in Tarikh Darul Uloom Deoband, Volume 2, pg.276-279)*

On another occasion, replying to the objection that modern sciences have not been included in the curriculum of Darul-Uloom, he says, "If this thought is a barrier that there is no importance attached here at all for the teaching of the worldly sciences, then the answer (to this objection) firstly is that treatment is only taken for a disease. To take medicine when one is not sick is useless. Only when there is a crack in the wall should it be filled in. What is it but foolishness to be anxious about the brick that has not fallen down? What are the government schools for? If the worldly sciences are not taught there, what else is done? If these schools for worldly education were far

less than required, there would be no problem. However all know that, by the efforts of the government, let alone the cities, schools have even been established in the towns and villages. In their presence, it is not an action of farsighted intelligence for our madaaris to attach importance to worldly sciences and exhibit negligence to Deeni knowledge. (*Tarikh Dar al-'Uloom Deoband, Volume 2 pg.276-279, 302-308*)

Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (رحمه الله), commenting on the way of our pious predecessors, explained, "It has been gleaned from the writings of prominent Europeans regarding Darul-Uloom Deoband that, if imparting of worldly education had to be included alongside the religious education in the Madrassah, its special religious aura would not remain, which is the specialty of the Madrassah. Moulana Ya'qub Nanotwi (رحمه الله) explained this aspect in a graduation jalsah, "Many people, seeing the condition of the Madrassah, wonder why there is no arrangements made here for those sciences which assist one in earning a livelihood. The answer to that is that the Madrassah was never meant for that purpose (of becoming a means of livelihood), nor have we ever claimed that all sciences will be taught here. This Madrassah is specifically for those people who have become mad in the worry of the Akhirah."

On another occasion, he stated, "Moulana Ya'qub Nanotwi (رحمه الله) used to say, "Some intellectuals and well-wishers of Islam and the Muslims propose the following to us: The present syllabus of the Madrassah includes within it no arrangements for the livelihood of the graduating students. Uptil now, these madaaris are only servicing those people who have become mad in the worry of the Akhirah and who are ready to sacrifice everything for it. If some western education or some arts and crafts had to be introduced in these madaaris, this education would be beneficial for all Muslims on a general scale. Our answer is that we have made whatever possible arrangements we could make for the seekers of Deen and Akhirah.

Now, whichever servant of Allah is granted the ability, he should try to make arrangements for these people's livelihood. Experience has proven that whenever cash and credit come together, every person prefers the cash and will not be happy with credit. Understand that the knowledge of Deen and the sciences of the Akhirah are like credit (the benefits of which will be seen in the next world), whereas worldly sciences can be likened to cash. When these two come together, people will always incline more towards cash, while the knowledge of Deen and Akhirah will take second place, rather it will no more remain the primary objective." SunhaanAllah, what a solid and far-sighted answer. This conclusion can only be the effect of the nur⁹⁹ of imaan which Allah has blessed their hearts with, by the virtue of the company of the pious." On yet another occasion, Moulana Thanwi (رحمه الله) explained, "This will never produce beneficial results, rather only harm will come out of it. By introducing modern subjects in the Madrassah, matters will become confused. Then, that work which the Madrassah is at least accomplishing now will not even be accomplished. The Madrassah will become one mixture of different ingredients. A better option is to leave the Madrassahs in their condition accomplishing what they already are involved in, while a separate institution for modern studies be established and handed over into the care and supervision of those running the Madrassahs." (*Tuhfatul Ulama* pg.116, 117)

Shaykhul-Hadith Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya (رحمه الله) said, "I have always been a great opponent to introducing English and Hindi into the Madrassa curriculum. Our elders never gave permission for introducing English into the madrassah. They always opposed it. The same is the case with Hindi. I also oppose its inclusion in the Madrassahs. When I was a member of the Darul-Uloom Deoband Shura, a certain member, influenced by the needs of the day, introduced a motion to include Hindi in the madrassa. I opposed the

⁹⁹ celestial splendor and illumination

motion strongly. There are schools and colleges in almost every village. In comparison to their thousands of students, these few madrasah students have come to study Arabic. Why should we push them too into that line? Moulana Hifzur Rahman (رحمه الله) was still alive at that time. He delivered an effective speech in my favour and said, "All of you know what a great supporter I am of learning Hindi. But as far as Hindi within the walls of the Darul-Uloom is concerned, I support Shaykhul-Hadith. Most certainly, we should try to keep the Darul-Uloom as much as possible on the lines envisaged by our predecessors." "...Similarly I have always been and am very much opposed to the introduction of industrial arts and crafts in the madrassas. In the lifetime of Hadhrat (Moulana Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri (رحمه الله)), if anyone tried to introduce it into Mazaahirul-Uloom, he himself would oppose it, due to which there was no need for us to put up a struggle. After his demise, during the era of Hadhrat Nazim Sahib (رحمه الله) (Moulana Abdul-Lateef), many generous people with good intentions tried to introduce a department of industrial arts and crafts training. Whenever anyone came to discuss it with him, he would refer them to me, and when they spoke to me, my reply was always, "Instead of introducing it into the madrassa, why don't you open an independent centre somewhere in the city. When anyone graduates from here and thinks that he will not be able to find employment as a religious teacher for his future, then I will recommend that he come to you to learn these arts and crafts. He should not become a beggar."

He then went on to explain the reasons for his strong opposition to the above. The first reason is that 'his elders felt that any activity during student days is most distracting and harmful to the acquisition of knowledge'. The second reason in his words was, "It was the practice of many of the predecessors to teach for Allah's sake and earn through arts and crafts. But I say without exaggeration that I have seen many intelligent and capable students who, out of their own desires or due being forced by their parents have started

to study English (modern western sciences), with the result that English (modern western sciences) pulled them to its side. Their intelligence and capabilities are still a cause of great anguish. Many friends had applied in our own madrassah to become assistant part-time teachers, and promised that there would be no expenditure on them upon the madrasah. They would spend their free time in business. However, within one year, business pulled them completely into its fold, with the result that they soon bade farewell to the madrassah. The magnetic attraction of worldly things and the attraction of wealth are things natural to men. Allah has also spoken of this aspect of human nature. He says in Surah Qiyamah- "Nay, but you love the world, and you forsake the Aakhirah." This is the general trend in the world. This is why I was always and am still opposed to these things. All these things are dunya (worldly attractions), and knowledge of deen is Aakhirah. The world has become our conqueror, while the aakhirah is being lost to us. However there are exceptions when Allah grants His grace... But these are exceptional cases. If we judge, we must look at the general trend." (*Aap Beeti vl.3*)

He has also written, "Nowadays, an outbreak has erupted and began spreading, in the form of the concept that Ulama should pursue a degree or engage in some trade or skill for earning their daily bread. This notion is gaining ground, and quite a few Ulama, disgruntled at the reproaches by worldly-orientated individuals, have come to regard it as a necessity. Some religious institutes have launched programmes for training the students in various technical skills. The truth is that this practice is detrimental to the cause of knowledge. Those who support this practice present (as proof) instances from the lives of some of our pious predecessors who, in order to earn a living, used to do business etc., notwithstanding their devotion to the cause of knowledge and their great services for the cause of Deen. If one is afforded such an opportunity by Allah, then it is truly the best way to serve the cause of Deen. But with weak minds and

bodies in such evil times like today, we cannot manage both things concurrently. Besides, our greed and love for the world will not allow us to devote sufficient time to the pursuit of knowledge and the cause of Deen for the pleasure of Allah, when we find we are able to increase our earnings. The result of this would be that both the pursuits will commence simultaneously but, before long, the wish to earn more money will overpower the pursuit for knowledge. *(Fazaailus Sadaqaat) (Extracted from 'Ulama of Deoband')*

APPENDIX THREE

Ilm only refers to Deeni knowledge

It is clear that all the virtues mentioned in the Quraan and Ahaadith concerning Tafaqquh fid-Deen and Hikmah refer to the acquisition of Islamic knowledge. With regards to the term 'al-ilm', when used in its technical sense, it has traditionally been regarded to refer only and solely to knowledge of Deen (al-uloomul-A'aliyah) primarily and knowledge of the tools which enable us to acquire the knowledge of Deen (al-uloomul-aaliyah) secondarily, since they are a means to the objective. It is the above knowledge which has been praised so extensively in the Quraan and Hadith, the basics of which has been declared a Fardh, and which carries such great virtues that many of the Salaf (pious predecessors) considered it the most superior of Ibaadaat (worship) after the faraaidh. Today, many modern and 'progressive' thinkers assume that this term includes and comprises of scientific knowledge, or knowledge of worldly sciences, and attempt to apply the virtues of Deeni knowledge to those who strive in seeking scientific or worldly knowledge.

The acquisition of other knowledges is permissible, or at most preferable and good if one's intention is sincere and correct. In dire circumstances, the acquisition of certain worldly knowledges and sciences would be regarded as fard-kifaayah (an act compulsory upon a few individuals of society to relieve society of the harms

which will result as a neglect of it and to suffice the rest of the people), if it be such a necessary subject and branch of worldly knowledge, in the absence of which man would be inconvenienced terribly.

Hereunder, we will present just a few proofs from the Quraan, Sunnah and the statements of the Salaf to establish the claim that the knowledge which has been praised, encouraged and promoted in Islam is the knowledge which Allah ﷻ revealed to his beloved Rasul ﷺ, which we refer to as Islamic knowledge, knowledge of the Shari'ah and Deeni knowledge.

الدلائل من كتاب الله

إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ (سورة فاطر-28)

المعنى إنما يخاف الله من عباده العلماء أي من علم قدرته وسلطانه وهم العلماء قاله ابن عباس وقال الزمخشري المراد العلماء الذين علموه بصفاته وعدله وتوحيده وما يجوز عليه وما لا يجوز فعظموه وقدروه وخشوه حق خشيته ومن ازداد به علما ازداد منه خوفاً ومن كان عالماً به كان آمناً (عمدة القاري شرح صحيح البخاري)

وَقُلْ رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا (سورة طه 114)

وقوله عز وجل رب زدني علماً والمراد بالعلم العلم الشرعي الذي يفيد معرفة ما يجب على المكلف من أمر دينه في عباداته ومعاملاته والعلم بالله وصفاته وما يجب له من القيام بأمره وتنزيهه عن النقائص ومدار ذلك على التفسير والحديث والفقه (فتح الباري) أَمْ مَنْ هُوَ قَانِتٌ آنَاءَ اللَّيْلِ سَاجِدًا وَقَانِتًا يَحْذَرُ الْآخِرَةَ وَيَرْجُو رَحْمَةً رَبِّهِ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولَؤُلَ الْأَلْبَابِ (سورة الزمر-9) قال الألوسي: ويعلم مما ذكرنا أن المراد بالذين يعلمون العاملون من علماء الديانة وصرح بإرادة ذلك بعض الأجلة على تقديري الاتصال والانقطاع (روح المعاني) أراد بالذين يعلمون العاملين من علماء الديانة كأنه جعل من لا يعمل غير عالم وفيه ازدراء عظيم بالذين يقتنون العلوم ثم يقتنون بالدنيا (عمدة القاري شرح صحيح البخاري)

وَإِذَا قِيلَ انشُرُوا فَاَنْشُرُوا الَّذِينَ يُرْفِعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ (سورة المجادلة-11)

{ والذين أُوتُوا العلم { الشرعي { درجات { أي كثيرة جليلة (روح المعاني)

الدلائل من السنة والاحاديث الشريفة

عن أبي موسى الأشعري - رضي الله عنه - قال : قال رسول الله - صلى الله عليه وسلم - : «إِنَّ مَثَلَ مَا بَعَثَنِي اللَّهُ بِهِ مِنَ الْهُدَى وَالْعِلْمِ ، كَمَثَلِ غَيْثٍ أَصَابَ أَرْضًا ، فَكَانَتْ مِنْهَا طَائِفَةٌ طَيِّبَةٌ ، قَبِلَتْ الْمَاءَ فَأَنْبَتَتِ الْكَلَأَ وَالْعُشْبَ الْكَثِيرَ ، وَكَانَ مِنْهَا أَجَادِبٌ أُمْسَكَتِ الْمَاءَ ، فَفَعَّ اللَّهُ بِهَا النَّاسَ ، فَشَرَبُوا مِنْهَا ، وَسَقَوْا وَرَعَوْا ، وَأَصَابَ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهَا أُخْرَى ، إِنَّمَا هِيَ قَيْعَانٌ لَا تُمْسِكُ مَاءً ، وَلَا تُنْبِتُ كَلَأً ، فَذَلِكَ مَثَلُ مَنْ فَقَّهَ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ ، وَنَفَعَهُ مَا بَعَثَنِي اللَّهُ بِهِ ، فَعِلِمٌ وَعِلْمٌ ، وَمَثَلُ مَنْ لَمْ يَرْفَعْ بِذَلِكَ رَأْسًا ، وَلَمْ يَقْبَلْ هُدَى اللَّهِ الَّذِي أُرْسِلْتُ بِهِ» . أخرجه البخاري ومسلم .

(Al-Ilm and Al-Hidaayah which are mentioned in this narration is later explained in this very Hadith to refer to understanding of Deen.)

عن قيس بن كثير - رحمه الله - قال : كنتُ جالساً مع أبي الدرداء في مسجد دِمَشْقَ ، فجاءه رجل ، فقال : يا أبا الدرداء ، إني جئتُكَ من مدينة الرسول -صلى الله عليه وسلم- ، لحديث بلغني أَنَّكَ تُحَدِّثُهُ عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ -صلى الله عليه وسلم- ، ما جئتُ لحاجة ، قال : إني سمعتُ رسولَ اللَّهِ -صلى الله عليه وسلم- يقول : «مَنْ سَلَكَ طَرِيقًا يَطْلُبُ فِيهِ عِلْمًا : سَلَكَ اللَّهُ بِهِ طَرِيقًا مِنْ طُرُقِ الْجَنَّةِ ، وَإِنَّ الْمَلَائِكَةَ لَتَضَعُ أَجْنِحَتَهَا رِضًى لَطَالِبِ الْعِلْمِ ، وَإِنَّ الْعَالِمَ لَيَسْتَغْفِرُ لَهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ ، وَالْحَيَّاتُ فِي جَوْفِ الْمَاءِ ، وَإِنَّ فَضْلَ الْعَالِمِ عَلَى الْعَابِدِ كَفَضْلِ الْقَمَرِ لَيْلَةَ الْبَدْرِ عَلَى سَائِرِ الْكَوَاكِبِ ، وَإِنَّ الْعُلَمَاءَ وَرَثَةُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ ، وَإِنَّ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ لَمْ يُورَثُوا دِينَارًا وَلَا دِرْهَمًا ، وَرَثُوا الْعِلْمَ ، فَمَنْ أَخَذَهُ أَخَذَ بِحِطٍّ وَافِرٍ» أخرجه أبو داود

وفي رواية الترمذي قال : قَدِمَ رَجُلٌ مِنَ الْمَدِينَةِ عَلَى أَبِي الدَّرْدَاءِ وَهُوَ بِدِمَشْقَ ، فَقَالَ : مَا أَقْدَمَكَ يَا أَخِي ؟ قَالَ : حَدِيثٌ بَلَغَنِي أَنَّكَ تُحَدِّثُهُ عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ -صلى الله عليه وسلم- ، قَالَ : أَمَا جِئْتَ لِحَاجَةٍ ؟ قَالَ : لَا ، قَالَ : أَمَا قَدِمْتَ لِتِجَارَةٍ ؟ قَالَ : لَا ، قَالَ : مَا جِئْتَ إِلَّا فِي طَلَبِ هَذَا الْحَدِيثِ ، قَالَ : إني سمعتُ رسولَ اللَّهِ -صلى الله عليه وسلم- يقول : «مَنْ سَلَكَ طَرِيقًا يَتَّبِعِي فِيهِ عِلْمًا ، سَلَكَ اللَّهُ بِهِ طَرِيقًا إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ ، وَإِنَّ الْمَلَائِكَةَ لَتَضَعُ أَجْنِحَتَهَا رِضًى لَطَالِبِ الْعِلْمِ ، وَإِنَّ الْعَالِمَ لَيَسْتَغْفِرُ لَهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ ، وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ ، حَتَّى الْحَيَّاتُ فِي الْمَاءِ ، وَفَضْلُ الْعَالِمِ عَلَى الْعَابِدِ كَفَضْلِ الْقَمَرِ عَلَى سَائِرِ الْكَوَاكِبِ ، إِنَّ الْعُلَمَاءَ وَرَثَةُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ ، إِنَّ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ لَمْ يُورَثُوا دِينَارًا وَلَا دِرْهَمًا ، إِنَّمَا وَرَثُوا الْعِلْمَ ، فَمَنْ أَخَذَ بِهِ فَقَدْ أَخَذَ بِحِطٍّ وَافِرٍ»

(This Hadith proves that Al-Ilm, for which the above virtues have been allocated, refers to the ilm which the Ambiyaa left behind for their followers as inheritance. The following incident of Abu Hurayrah illustrates that it was the knowledge of halaal and haraam which was the actual inheritance of Rasulullah ﷺ.)

وعن أبي هريرة أنه مر بسوق المدينة فوقف عليها قال : يا أهل السوق ما أعجزكم ؟ قالوا : وما ذاك يا أبا هريرة ؟ قال : ذاك ميراث رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم يقسم وأنتم ههنا ألا تذهبون فتأخذون نصيبكم منه ؟ قالوا : وأين هو ؟ قال : في المسجد فخرجوا سراعاً ووقف أبو هريرة لهم حتى رجعوا فقال لهم : ما لكم ؟ قالوا : يا أبا هريرة فقد أتينا المسجد فدخلنا فلم نر فيه شيئاً يقسم فقال لهم أبو هريرة : وما رأيتم في المسجد أحداً ؟ قالوا :

بلى رأينا قوما يصلون وقوما يقرؤون القرآن وقوما يتذكرون الحلال والحرام فقال لهم أبو هريرة : ويحكم فذاك ميراث محمد صلى الله عليه و سلم

رواه الطبراني في الأوسط وإسناده حسن (مجمع الزوائد)

عن عبد الله بن عمرو بن العاص قال: سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم يقول إن الله لا يقبض العلم انتزاعا ينتزعه من العباد ولكن يقبض العلم بقبض العلماء حتى إذا لم يبق عالما اتخذ الناس رؤوسا جهالا ففسلوا فأفتوا بغير علم فضلوا وأضلوا (رواه البخاري ومسلم)

(This Hadith proves that Al-Ilm is that ilm upon which fatwa is based. If a fatwa is issued which is void of this ilm, it will lead man astray (from the straight path). This can only refer to Deeni knowledge.)

عبد الله بن عمرو بن العاص - رضي الله عنهما - : أنَّ رسولَ الله -صلى الله عليه وسلم- قال: «العلمُ ثلاثة ، وما سوى ذلك فهو فضل : آية مُحْكَمَة ، أو سُنَّة قانِمة ، أو فَرِيضَة عَادِلَة». (أخرجه أبو داود وابن ماجه والحاكم وتعقب عليه)

(This Hadith clearly states that all else besides Qur'aan, Sunnah and Qiyaas (three of the principles of Deen and the Shariah) is not Al-Ilm, but is extra additional information.)

عن مكحول عن حدثه عن معاوية بن أبي سفيان أنه قال وهو يخاطب الناس على المنبر سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم يقول : يا أيها الناس إنما العلم بالتعلم والفقه بالتفقه ومن يرد الله به خيرا يفقهه في الدين وإنما يخشى الله من عباده العلماء ولن تزال أمتي على الحق ظاهرين على الناس لا يبالون من خالفهم حتى يأتي أمر الله وهم كارهون(رواه والطبراني في مسند الشاميين وابن عساکر وأبو نعيم وذكره البخاري في صحيحه تعليقا . قال الهيثمي وفيه رجل لم يسم وعتبة بن أبي حكيم وثقه أبو حاتم وأبو زرعة وابن حبان وضعفه جماعة-مجمع الزوائد وقال الحافظ ابن حجر إسناده حسن الا أن فيه مبهما اعتضد بمحيته من وجه آخر وروى البزار نحوه من حديث ابن مسعود موقوفا (ورجاله موثقون كما قال الهيثمي)

قوله وأنما العلم بالتعلم هو حديث مرفوع أيضا أورده بن أبي عاصم والطبراني من حديث معاوية أيضا بلفظ يا أيها الناس تعلموا إنما العلم بالتعلم والفقه بالتفقه ومن يرد الله به خيرا يفقهه في الدين إسناده حسن الا أن فيه مبهما اعتضد بمحيته من وجه آخر وروى البزار نحوه من حديث بن مسعود موقوفا ورواه أبو نعيم الأصبهاني مرفوعا وفي الباب عن أبي الدرداء وغيره فلا يغتر بقول من جعله من كلام البخاري والمعنى ليس العلم المعتبر الا المأخوذ من الأنبياء وورثتهم على سبيل التعلم (فتح الباري شرح صحيح البخاري)

اي ليس العلم المعتد إلا المأخوذ عن الأنبياء عليهم الصلاة والسلام على سبيل التعلم والتعليم فيفهم منه أن العلم لا يطلق إلا على علم الشريعة ولهذا لو أوصى رجل للعلماء لا ينصرف إلا على أصحاب الحديث والتفسير والفقه (عمدة القاري شرح صحيح البخاري)

(This Hadith establishes that Ilm and Fiqh are both connected to Deen. It also indicates that Al-Ilm is that knowledge which the Ambiyaa passed on to their students, which can only be attained by acquiring it from one who is a link in this chain, which leads up to the Ambiyaa. This is only conditional for Ilm of Deen.)

عن عبد الله بن يزيد بن آدم حدثني أبو الدرداء و أبو أمانة و وائلة بن الأسقع و أنس بن مالك قالوا : سئل رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم : من الراسخون في العلم ؟ قال : هو من برت يمينه وصدق لسانه وعف بطنه وفرجه فذاك الراسخ رواه الطبراني وابن جرير وابن أبي حاتم وعبد الله بن يزيد ضعيف

(Those who are well-grounded in knowledge possess the above qualities. These qualities are a product of Deeni knowledge, and not worldly or scientific knowledge.)

عن محمد بن المنكدر قال: قال ابن عباس يرفعه: " إن أقرب الناس درجة من درجة النبوة أهل الجهاد وأهل العلم، أما أهل العلم، فقالوا ما جاءت به الانبياء، وأما أهل الجهاد، فجاهدوا على ما جاءت به الانبياء " رواه أبو نعيم في فضل العلم العفيف والدليمي واورده الذهبي في سير اعلام النبلاء بسند ضعيف

(This Hadith states that the work of the possessors of Al-Ilm is to convey and propagate by word of mouth the message which the Ambiyaa brought. It is clear that they brought the message of Deen, and moreso in the case of Rasulullah ﷺ)

الشواهد من اثار الصحابة والسلف الصالحين بعدهم

وَمَنْ كَلَامَ عَلِيِّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ : مَا الْقَصْلُ إِلَّا لِأَهْلِ الْعِلْمِ أَنَّهُمْ عَلَى الْهَدَى لِمَنْ اسْتَهْدَى أَدْلَاءُ وَوَزُنُ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ مَا كَانَ يُخْسِنُهُ وَالْجَاهِلُونَ لِأَهْلِ الْعِلْمِ أَعْدَاءُ فَفُرِّ بِعِلْمٍ وَلَا تَجْهَلْ بِهِ أَبَدًا النَّاسُ مَوْتَى وَأَهْلُ الْعِلْمِ أَحْيَاءُ وَأَلْ فِي الْعِلْمِ لِلْعَهْدِ : أَيُّ الْعِلْمِ الشَّرْعِيُّ الْمُوَصِّلُ إِلَى الْآخِرَةِ... (قَوْلُهُ : وَالْجَاهِلُونَ) أَيُّ بِالْعِلْمِ الشَّرْعِيِّ فَيَشْمَلُ أَلْعَ الْمَيِّنَ بغيرِهِ ، بَلْ هُمْ أَشَدُّ عَدَاوَةً لِلْعُلَمَاءِ الَّذِينَ مِنَ الْعَوَامِ قَالَ ط : وَسَبَبُ الْعَدَاوَةِ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِ عَدَمُ مَعْرِفَةِ الْحَقِّ إِذَا أَقْنَى عَلَيْهِ أَوْ رَأَى مِنْهُ مَا يَخَالِفُ رَأْيَهُ وَرُؤْيَاهُ إِقْبَالِ النَّاسِ عَلَيْهِ .(رد المحتار على الدر المختار)

(This Ilm of Deen is the knowledge of Hidaayah, not any other knowledge.)

عن عبد الله بن عمر، قال: العلم ثلاثة أشياء: كتاب ناطق، وسنة ماضية، ولا أدري. رواه الطبراني في الأوسط والخطيب في الفقيه والمتفقه وفي تاريخه وابن عبد البر في جامع بيان العلم وفضله

(Al-Ilm is of the Qur'aan or the Sunnah.)

وقال ابن لهيعة، عن ابن أبي عمرة، عن عكرمة، عن ابن عباس قال: العالم بالرحمن مَنْ لم يشرك به شيئا، وأحل حلاله، وحرم حرامه، وحفظ وصيته، وأيقن أنه ملاقيه ومحاسب بعمله. (تفسير ابن كثير)

(True ilm is to abstain from shirk, know halaal and haraam, obey the commands of Allah and have conviction in the Akhirah.)

وكتب عمر بن عبد العزيز إلى أبي بكر بن حزم انظر ما كان من حديث رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم فكتبه
فإني خفنت دروس العلم وذهاب العلماء (صحيح البخاري)

(The Hadith and teachings of Rasulullah ﷺ are regarded as synonymous with al-ilm, so much so that the loss of Hadith is referred to as the loss of al-ilm.)

وقال أحمد بن صالح المصري، عن ابن وهب، عن مالك قال: إن العلم ليس بكثرة الرواية، وإنما العلم نور يجعله الله في القلب.

قال أحمد بن صالح المصري : معناه: أن الخشية لا تدرك بكثرة الرواية، وأما العلم الذي فرض الله، عز وجل، أن يتبع فإنما هو الكتاب والسنة، وما جاء عن الصحابة، رضي الله عنهم، ومن بعدهم من أئمة المسلمين، فهذا لا يدرك إلا بالرواية ويكون تأويل قوله: "نور" يريد به فهم العلم، ومعرفة معانيه. (تفسير ابن كثير)

(For the correct understanding of Al-Ilm, one requires Allah to grant him nur (spiritual illumination) in his heart. This can only be the case with Deeni knowledge.)

وقال سفيان الثوري، عن أبي حيان [التميمي] ، عن رجل قال: كان يقال: العلماء ثلاثة: عالم بالله عالم بأمر الله، وعالم بالله ليس بعالم بأمر الله، وعالم بأمر الله ليس بعالم بالله. فالعالم بالله وبأمر الله: الذي يخشى الله ويعلم الحدود والفرائض. والعالم بالله ليس بعالم بأمر الله: الذي يخشى الله ولا يعلم الحدود ولا الفرائض. والعالم بأمر الله ليس بعالم بالله: الذي يعلم الحدود والفرائض، ولا يخشى الله عز وجل. (تفسير ابن كثير)

(Al-Ilm, in essence, is to recognize Allah and to know the commands of Allah.)

Modernists generally quote the following Hadith to substantiate the fact that Al-Ilm also includes scientific knowledge, or knowledge of worldly sciences:

"Seek al-ilm (knowledge), even if it be in China." (*Baihaqi in Shu'abul-Imaan, Uqaili, Ibn Adiy, and Ibn Abdil-Barr*)

Their claim is that since China was not then, and never thereafter became, a major seat of Islamic learning, it seems clear that Islamic knowledge was not being referred to. Therefore, the knowledge (ilm) which man has here been commanded to acquire is worldly knowledge, which has here been referred to as al-ilm. It seems that

Rasulullah ﷺ understood al-ilm to also apply to scientific knowledge, or knowledge of worldly sciences, and therefore used it here in that context. It was the narrow-mindedness of the Ulama to confine al-ilm and its virtues to Islamic knowledge.

Answer:

1) Many great scholars of Hadith have claimed it to be a fabrication which has no basis. Amongst them were people like Imam Ahmad, Ibn Hibbaan, Bazzaar and Ibnul-Jawzi. Others have harshly criticized a narrator by the name of Abu Aatikah, Tareef ibn Salmaan, some labelling him as Munkarul-Hadith, a criticism which generally implies that his Hadith ought not to be accepted. These scholars include Ibn Adiyy, Uqaili, and which seems to be the choice of Sakhaawi and Ibn Arraaq from the latter scholars. In that case, this Hadith cannot even be used as a proof for worldly sciences being referred to by the word 'al-ilm'.

2) A small group of scholars have adopted a more lenient stance, labelling the Hadith as Dhaeef, due to the narration being famous and due to other supporting chains, inspite of the fact that those chains also contain very doubtful narrators. From amongst them are people like Imam Baihaqi. Even if this had to be the case, and if the Hadith could be authentically established as the statement of Rasulullah ﷺ, then too, it would not refer to worldly sciences and scientific knowledge, for the following reasons:

a) We have proven above that Allah ﷻ, in the Quran, and Rasulullah ﷺ, in the Ahaadeeth, as well as the Sahaabah رضى الله عنهم and their successors have always used the terminology of al-ilm to refer only to Islamic knowledge.

b) Just as China was not at that time a centre of Islamic knowledge, it was also not known then as a centre of worldly sciences and scientific knowledge. Actually, at that time, the Persians, Indians and

even Romans (who had acquired knowledge from the Greeks) were far ahead in worldly knowledge and scientific discoveries.

c) The next sentence of this very narration states, "This is because the seeking of al-ilm is a compulsory duty upon every Muslim." It is an accepted fact that the only knowledge which is compulsory for every Muslim to attain is the basic knowledge of Islam and Deen, regarding those matters which pertain to one's everyday life. No worldly knowledge has ever been ordained as compulsory for every Muslim to seek. From this sentence, it becomes clear that this entire Hadith does refer to Islamic knowledge, and not to scientific knowledge, or knowledge of worldly sciences.

China has, from ancient times till today, always been used in common speech to refer to far-off distant lands. Therefore, the Hadith is encouraging one and all to set out in search of Islamic knowledge, no matter how far out one may have to travel and how much difficulty one may have to encounter in finding it. The wording of the Hadith is not 'Seek knowledge in China', but is rather, 'Seek knowledge, even if it be in China'. In simple words; "In the unlikely situation that knowledge of Deen can only be attained and acquired in China, it would be your duty and responsibility to leave your homes in Arabia and travel even that far in search of it, due to its value and necessity, failing in which you would be guilty of abandoning an important command of Islam." This is the correct understanding of this Hadith, if it be established as authentic. والله اعلم

APPENDIX FOUR

Turkey, Egypt and the Secularists

Egypt

To understand the imperial project in the Muslim world, one needs to revisit the British colonization of Egypt.

Everlyn Baring, better known as Lord Cromer, was the British Proconsul-General in occupied Egypt between 1877 and 1907. He wrote about his tenure in his book "Modern Egypt" (1916). Here are some conclusions from his book:

1. The West will not tolerate an Islamic government.

On page 565, he said that it would be "absurd" to assume that Europe would tolerate a "government based on purely Mohammedan principles and obsolete Oriental ideas."

2. Muslims must be forced to adopt the principles of Western civilization.

On page 538, he said that Egypt had to be "forced into imbibing the true spirit of Western civilization."

3. Westernization must be introduced under the guise of women's rights.

Lord Cromer says that the "position of women" in Muslim countries was a "fatal obstacle" in the introduction of colonial values. (page 539)

4. The West must educate a class of young secular Muslims to be the rulers.

Cromer's hope was that a Europeanized education system would cause an Egyptian to "lose his Islamism", cause him to "no longer believe that he is always in the presence of his Creator", and only

hang onto "the least worthy portions of his nominal religion" for the sake of convenience. (page 230)

5. The West must reform Islam.

Cromer says that the goal should be to create "de-moslemized Moslems", where people are Muslims-by-name, but in actuality, are "agnostic". After all, Cromer says, "Islam cannot be reformed... reformed Islam is Islam no longer." (pages 228-229)

6. The Muslim reformer would hate Muslim scholarship more than Europeans do.

The Westernized Muslim would consider the `alim to be a "social derelict", use him in matters of convenience, but otherwise disrespect him. On the other hand, a European Christian intellectual would at least look at the `alim with sympathy and respect, as a "representative of an ancient faith". (page 299-30)

7. Modernized Muslims will become Deists.

"It is conceivable that, as time goes on, the Moslems will develop a religion, possibly a pure Deism, which will not be altogether the Islamism of the past and of the present, and which will cast aside much of the teaching of Mohammed, but which will establish a moral code sufficient to hold society together by bonds other than those of unalloyed self-interest." (page 234)

We can see therefore that Islamic reform started as a colonial project. A project that has been devilishly designed by European intellectuals to undermine the clerics, introduce secular humanist institutions, and gradually and inconspicuously lead Muslims away from the central tenets of their tradition. They knew that this reformed, liberal Muslim would not be a Muslim at all, but just a Europeanized invertebrate (i.e. a spineless being) who would manoeuvre the religion to his needs.

This seven-step process is *exactly* what is happening to Muslim youth all over the world. They volunteer themselves to secular academia and pop culture, and are led away from a truly Islamic worldview and epistemology. And while they fool themselves into calling themselves "Muslim reformers", or "moderate Muslims", or "liberal Muslims", their puppet masters know that these are all contradictions in terms.

Times change, but right remains right, and wrong remains wrong.
(*scholarsofhaq.wordpress.com*)

Turkey

One of the first countries to fall into the hands of the secularists was Turkey, which at one time was the centre of political power for the Islamic world. It fell as a result of what some Christians like to call "the struggle between the Cross and the Crescent". The then head of the Christian secularization missions said: "The fruits of struggle between the cross and the crescent will not come forth in the remote, outlying countries or in our colonies in Asia and Africa. It will happen in the centres from which Islam draws its strength and spread outward from there, whether in Africa or Asia. Since the Islamic peoples who we are confronting look towards Istanbul, our efforts will be of no consequence if they do not bring us closer to demolishing the edifice of Islam in the centre of the Caliphate and the capital of the Muslim world."

The Christians worked in cooperation with the Jews to bring about the downfall of the Caliphate. It was infiltrated by people like Medhat Pasha, a very influential Jew during the final years of the Ottoman Empire. On one occasion, he even had a hand in deposing one Caliph and instating another. He had a role to play in the ratification of the country's constitution and the granting of freedoms that he had been a vocal advocate for. It became clear later on that his only concern was for the freedom of himself and his

fellow Jews and not for the entire populace. Such was the lament of Sultan Abdul-Hamid. The Jews prepared for and eagerly awaited the fall of the Ottoman Empire so they could carry out their plans against Palestine. Some of them, like the Jews of Donma, even pretended to be Muslims so they could more effectively influence the country's politics.

The West hailed Medhat Pasha as "the father of freedom" since he was so vociferous in espousing freedom and pushed for the ratification of a constitution that guaranteed minority rights, including the right of the Jews to conduct themselves as they wished under the protection of the Ottoman Empire. One of their strategies for secularization was to create heroes. A good example of this strategy was the creation of Kemal Ataturk. They involved him in the war against Greece from which he was to come forth as victorious. In this way they primed him and strengthened him for the role that they wanted him to play in bringing down the edifice of Islam and establishing secularism in Turkey. They succeeded through him in separating Turkey from the Muslim world.

Muslims around the world ceased to care about what happened in Turkey. Before that time, any threat to Istanbul worried the hearts of every Muslim on Earth since they saw it as a matter of primary concern for the Muslim world. The Muslims had a strong emotional attachment to the Turkish Caliphate, in spite of all its shortcomings. When the Turkish caliphate fell, the Muslims around the world lost interest in it. Henceforth, Turkey's affairs would no longer occupy the minds and hearts of the world's Muslims. One of the most important tasks carried out by Kemal Ataturk when he attained power was the persecution, expulsion, and slaughter of Turkey's Muslim scholars. During this time, the head scholar of Ottoman Turkey, Mustafa Sabri, died as a refugee in Egypt after fleeing from his country. Ataturk also destroyed all religious institutions. He even prohibited the call to prayer from being made in Arabic and prohibited writing in the

Arabic script, replacing that script with the Latin alphabet. He imposed Western dress upon the people. He attempted to transform the Turkish people and give them an entirely new national identity.

Another strategy was to select a group of people to represent and advance the interests of secularism in Muslim Turkey. The enemies of Islam from among the Jews and Christians were clearly and openly in league with the secularists in the Muslim world. They sponsored many select young secularists to study in Western countries and acquire Western scientific knowledge and advanced administrative skills. When they returned to their own countries, they were truly a distinctive class of people, sometimes described as **"cultured"** or **"enlightened"**. They were in an ideal position to carry out the task that they were trained for. The West had chosen them and then endowed them with valuable skills while keeping the rest of their people in ignorance. Then they could use those select people for their own purposes.

The first task set out for these people was for them to become entrenched in the Ottoman government. They would work from these positions within the government against the scholars and Islamic activists.

These people enjoyed the confidence of the government and could use their position to spread their ideas among the Muslims behind the veil of the government machinery. They could do what they wanted and spread their base ideas and values without fearing any negative response from the government. At the same time, they were successful in blackening the reputation of the Turkish government and in turning the people against it. It was their task to prepare the people for the eventual overthrow of the government. The people grew dissatisfied with the Ottoman government. The religious people hated the government because of the secularist influences that now permeated it. The rest of the population hated it

simply because it failed to ensure their welfare. This created a number of dangerous opportunities for the secularists to exploit.

At the same time, they were intent on preventing the religious scholars from capitalizing on any of these opportunities. They recognized that the society contained within it two power bases. The first was of these was the religious power base comprised of the scholars and other religious activists. The other was that of the secularists and hypocrites.

Allah describes both of these groups in the Qur'aan. He says: **"The believers, men and women, are protectors one of another: they enjoin what is right, and forbid what is evil."** [Surah Tawbah v.71] Describing the other faction, He says: **"The hypocrites, both men and women, are parts of one another. They enjoin what is evil, and they forbid what is right, and they withhold their hands (from charity)."** [Surah Tawbah v.67]

From their positions within the government, they worked to alienate the government from the scholars and weaken the scholars' political influence. In this way, the secularists hoped to prevent the scholars from bringing about any political reform while they continued their efforts at increasing corruption and instability from within the government that they were ostensibly a part of. The secularization of Turkey went through the following phases, culminating in the republic of Ataturk:

The first phase: The secularists applied their western expertise to modernizing and reforming the administration of the Ottoman Empire. In this way they showed themselves to be valuable and indispensable on account of their knowledge and experience. This was the first, most subtle phase of secularization that most people tend to overlook, since the role played by the secularists at that time was a role that generally could not be carried out by scholars and

students of Islamic knowledge. First of all, Islamic scholars were involved in other things. Moreover, Islamically oriented people were not afforded the opportunities those secularists had to acquire such expertise. This made many Muslims oblivious to what was going on at this stage of development.

The second phase: Once the secularists were firmly entrenched in government, they began applying pressure to speed up the disintegration of the state. They were not satisfied with the gradual corruption of religious values. They wanted to speed up Westernization much faster than the general public could ever be expected to accommodate. There was also a reversal of roles at this time between the secularists and the government. During the first phase, the Ottoman rulers were in charge and the secularists were riding their coat-tails. Now the secularists were in the lead and dictating to the intimidated Ottoman rulers. This state of affairs becomes more aggravated during the next phase.

The third phase: At this point, the secularists began their direct assault on very sensitive matters, including the political values of the state and the religious values of the people. They began openly targeting the religion and religious scholars. They were actively nurturing political tension and general discontent at this point. In their public addresses and published articles, they openly talked against Islamic teachings. In periodicals throughout the Muslim world, they made sure to have something published in every issue that criticized one Islamic value or another or that targeted a prominent Muslim scholar or that cast doubt on a matter of faith or religious practice. They came up with slogans like "Religion is for Allah, but the nation is for everyone". What made their efforts at this stage so dangerously effective was that they did not present themselves as a single force that could scare people away or mobilize an opposition. They were very subtle in their alliance with one another. They appeared to be just disparate individuals with

strange ideas or weakness in their religious faith. They were very successful in hiding the ties that they had to one another. Sometimes, the government would benefit from such people to bring about some form of corruption that it wanted. It would call upon them to introduce a certain vice and give them the green light to do as they liked. They might be allowed to try something out in a particular area. If the population accepted it, they could go to something larger. If, however, the people rejected what they introduced, it was quite easy to backtrack, since the government was never officially involved. The secularists at this time operated like the proverbial thief with a hooked cane who would use the hook to snatch up the possessions of others. If he was caught, he would say that he was unaware that the cane accidentally caught the object. If he went unnoticed, he would make off with his prize.

The fourth phase: In the final days of the Empire – right before, during, and right after the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid – there were serious military threats and dire political and economic problems. The secularists took advantage of these major crises to advance their aims. At this time, the secularist came out in the open with their true allegiances. They began operating openly as an opposition force in preparation for their eventual takeover. They established organizations and political movements. They produced their own publications and convened conferences. They allied themselves with foreign enemies of the Ottoman State, like the Jews and Christians, as can be clearly seen in their documentation from that time. In this way, they ultimately gained total power in Turkey.

Methods Employed to Spread Secularism in Society

There were many approaches employed by the secularists to spread their ideas and their influence throughout Turkish society. Among the most important of these were the following:

1. Stripping society of its Islamic presence, institutions, and values:

They started with substituting Islamic values and morals with their own in the media, in education, in economics, and in politics. They did not stop there, since they could be satisfied with nothing less than the total eradication of Islam from society. Therefore, they even targeted Islamic dress, tampered with the language, and changed the call to prayer. These and many other changes were imposed on the people by force in decrees issued by Kemal Ataturk.

2. Effecting social change by targeting women:

They realized that women have a definite impact on the dynamics of society. A society could be brought to its moral ruin if its women are morally corrupted, exposed, and encouraged to be licentious. The temptations of women are difficult to resist. A society conducive to promoting such temptations will find its moral fabric compromised. This is why Rasulullah ﷺ said: "Be on guard with respect to the world and with respect to women, for truly the first temptation of the Children of Israel was through its women." [Sahih Muslim] The secularists also realized that by focusing on the issue of women, they could divide society. This is because the issue of women is not only a sensitive matter to religious people, but to all people possessing a sense of honour and shame. Indeed, many non-religious people can be brought to rage when they see their wives, sisters, or daughters behaving in a compromising position with a strange man. The secularists realized that this was a way for them to tear the fabric of Ottoman society apart and divide up its citizenry into clearly distinct groups of various degrees of conservatism.

3. Exploiting ethnic and religious minorities:

The secularists used these minorities to put pressure on the Ottoman state in its implementation of Islamic Law. They argued that those minorities were part of society and that they cannot be expected to adhere to Islamic Law. So they could exploit them as a barrier

against the implementation of Islamic Law in Turkey, these secularists overlooked the centuries that these minorities lived under Islamic rule with all of their rights protected. The secularists also realized that these minorities would be more sincerely committed to secularist reforms than most of the Muslim supporters of secularism whose commitment to secularism often had its limits and who might very well forsake them in the end. (Condensed from *Islam and Secularism*)

APPENDIX FIVE

The Shar'i ruling of secularism

Hereunder is the viewpoint of a modern-day liberal Egyptian scholar of Islam Dr. Yusuf Qardhawi which he has mentioned in a book of his titled 'Al-Hulul al Mustawradah wa Kayfa Jaat `alaa Ummatina' ("How the Imported Solutions Disastrously Affected Our Ummah"), pg 113-4. He has decisively proven that secularism has no place in a Muslim society.

He writes: Secularism may be accepted in a Christian society, but it can never enjoy a general acceptance in an Islamic society. Christianity is devoid of a Shari`ah or a comprehensive system of life to which its adherents should be committed. The New Testament itself divides life into two parts: one for God, or religion, the other for Caesar, or the state: "Render unto Caesar things which belong to Caesar, and render unto God things which belong to God" (Matthew 22:21). As such, a Christian could accept secularism without any qualms of conscience. Furthermore, Westerners, especially Christians, have good reasons to prefer a secular regime to a religious one. Their experience with "religious regimes" - as they knew them - meant the rule of the clergy, the despotic authority of the Church, and the resulting decrees of excommunication and the deeds of forgiveness, i.e. letters of indulgence.

For Muslim societies, the acceptance of secularism means something totally different; i.e. as Islam is a comprehensive system of worship (ʿibadah) and legislation (Shariʿah), the acceptance of secularism means abandonment of Shariʿah, a denial of the divine guidance and a rejection of Allah's injunctions; it is indeed a false claim that Shariʿah is not proper to the requirements of the present age. The acceptance of a legislation formulated by humans means a preference of the humans' limited knowledge and experiences to the divine guidance: "Say! Do you know better than Allah?" (*Surah Baqarah v.140*)

For this reason, the call for secularism among Muslims is atheism and a rejection of Islam. Its acceptance as a basis for rule in place of Shariʿah is downright riddah (apostasy). The silence of the masses in the Muslim world about this deviation has been a major transgression and a clear-cut instance of disobedience which has produced a sense of guilt, remorse, and inward resentment, all of which have generated discontent, insecurity, and hatred among committed Muslims because such deviation lacks legality. Secularism is compatible with the Western concept of God which maintains that after God had created the world, He left it to look after itself. In this sense, God's relationship with the world is like that of a watchmaker with a watch: he makes it and then leaves it to function, without any need for him. This concept is inherited from Greek philosophy, especially that of Aristotle, who argued that God neither controls nor knows anything about this world. This is a helpless God as described by Will Durant. There is no wonder that such a God leaves people to look after their own affairs. How can He legislate for them when He is ignorant of their affairs? This concept is totally different from that of Muslims. We Muslims believe that Allah ﷻ is the sole Creator and Sustainer of the Worlds; that He is the One Who "...takes account of every single thing (72:28); that He is omnipotent and omniscient; that His mercy and bounties encompass everyone and suffice for all. In that capacity, Allah ﷻ revealed His divine guidance to humanity,

made certain things permissible and others prohibited, commanded people to observe His injunctions and to judge according to them. If they do not do so, then they commit kufr, aggression, and transgression.

APPENDIX SIX

Should Muslim females attend university?

Written by a university graduate who personally experienced campus life

With the imminent onset of the university year, there is currently a vibrant debate regarding Muslim females attending university to pursue tertiary studies.

Those who support the idea of women studying at university argue that Muslims need to be progressive in their thinking. Confining women to their homes is narrow-minded, they say. This argument implies that all those women who choose to be homemakers are backward. But this is not at all true. Homemaking was the way of the Sahabiyaat and pious women throughout the history of Islam. Women who followed this path produced the Junaid Baghdadis and Hasan Basris of this Ummah. Homemakers are the foundation of the Muslim Ummah. If this foundation crumbles, the Ummah will be left in free fall. We need to be unapologetic about this: homemaking is the most progressive career that a female can follow.

The proponents of females attending university also argue that the Muslim Ummah needs Muslim female doctors to cater for the needs of female Muslims. But the truth is that only a small percentage of Muslim females on campus study medicine. What about the large number of females who study accounting, arts, sciences, languages, law, etc? What is the pressing need for them to attend university? Also, the percentage of Muslim female medical professionals who only see female patients is minutely small. It begs the question: did

these females study medicine to serve the female community or to pursue a professional career?

Then there are those who argue that Muslim females need a qualification because families cannot survive solely on a husband's income in today's challenging financial times. They forget that there are many families who are surviving on a single income because they choose a modest standard of living. Also, why do women who choose to assist their husband's financially not pursue a home industry such as cooking, baking, sewing, etc? Is it perhaps because such a setup lacks the glitter and glamour of a career environment?

Some women also argue that a degree will be beneficial if their marriage fails and they are left single. However, it seems quite odd for women to want to study for a degree in preparation for the unfortunate scenario of a failed marriage. Should they not rather be spending their pre-marital time acquiring Islamic knowledge and skills associated with homemaking so that their marriages succeed?

A misconception also needs to be cleared up here: a certificate from a tertiary institution is not a one-way ticket to success. Many homes where women follow professional careers have problems of their own. A home where a wife earns more than her husband often proves to be problematic because the man who is the head of the household does not make decisions as he Islamically should. Also, women who rub shoulders with men in their workplaces generate tension in their homes. The amount of Muslim marriages that run into problems because of extra-marital affairs in the workplace cannot be ignored. In addition, a home where the mother is absent from 9am to 5pm is clearly harmful to her family, especially her children.

The beauty of Islam is that it has not burdened a woman to provide for her family. Earning is the husband's responsibility. She is not forced into an abyss where she has to both earn and take care of her

home. Forcing women into such a role is unjust, cruel and materialistic. Statistics have shown that in the days of the industrial revolution when women left their homes to pursue a career outdoors, they suffered an increase in psychological problems such as anxiety.

Coming back to the university question, there are many other facts that we cannot overlook if we want to deal with this issue objectively. One is that the environment at universities is extremely immoral. Campuses are breeding grounds of sin where free mixing between the genders, immoral relationships, improper behaviour, foul language and immodest dressing cannot be avoided. And peer pressure strongly encourages towards these wrongs. It is naive to assume that a Muslim female who is daily exposed to such an immoral campus environment will not be enticed towards sin. It is like placing butter next to a fire and hoping that it will not melt. The truth is that university life comprises of young people who are at the prime of their passions and desires roaming about in a free environment. This is the perfect recipe for moral mayhem.

Reality proves this point. The majority of Muslim females who attend university do not dress Islamically. Many such females find their marriage partners on campus. These are obviously love marriages where dating began while they were studying. Many parents do not know that their daughters go out on social outings with their male friends instead of attending lectures. Muslim females are also known to have entered into haraam relationships with non-Muslims males on campus. There have also been cases where male lecturers have dated and later married their female students. When the conditions in Muslim schools have become so immoral, what can we expect of a campus scenario where there is no supervision?

It is no secret that a campus environment is free and unrestricted. Lectures do not have pardah facilities. Tutorials and group projects

require interaction and discussion. Muslim females who have some degree of modesty feel it difficult to lower their gazes during such interactions for fear of being unfriendly. Males and females engage in casual conversations between lectures, when sharing notes and travelling to and from campus. Even the most conservative of females are forced into interacting with males in such circumstances. Anyone who has studied at campus can identify with this setup. It is unIslamic for many reasons.

We cannot also be blind to the fact that campuses have drugs, alcohol and a nightclub culture together with all the evils these bring with them. Campuses are also havens where dubious sects and groups thrive under the guise of free thinking. Hence, modernists and Shias find free reign here. Lecturers and students who may range from atheists to Darwinists often corrupt the minds of those who are not well-grounded in the basics of Islam.

The spiritual dangers of campus life are real and unavoidable. No matter how many precautions a Muslim female student takes, she will have to compromise her Islamic values at some time or the other. To hope that she remains Islamically safe in such a sinful environment is like jumping into a pool of water and hoping not to get wet.

We cannot also forget that the idea of Muslim females attending university suits the kuffaar agenda perfectly. In their worldview, they need Muslim females to emerge from their homes as students and professionals so that the Muslim home crumbles. The kuffaar know well that corrupting the minds of the females of the Ummah is an easier way of winning the war against Islam as compared to sending drones and armies.

To allow females to attend university is part of succumbing to the narrative of a culture that is steeped in immorality. Despite Western culture's advancements in technology, it has brought unprecedented

levels of social problems. This culture which has accentuated the levels of prostitution, pornography, abortion, divorces, wife battering, child abuse, etc. is the same culture that is enticing women to study at universities and pursue professional careers. Those Muslims who promote the teachings of this depraved culture are in a crisis of confidence. They need to be reminded of the beautiful Islamic system where women are the queens of their homes instead of slaves of the marketplace.

Muslim parents who allow their daughters to attend university should seriously introspect. Is it worth it sacrificing one's modesty (and even one's Imaan in some cases) in exchange for a university degree? Islam can never permit its women to pursue education in such an environment where maintaining their Islamic values is near impossible.

It is important to note that Islam does not discourage females from being educated. Islam encourages females to acquire an education in the basics of Islam. In fact, this is imperative because a mother who is not well-grounded in Islam cannot correctly guide and nurture her children. Hence, Muslim women should acquire knowledge of Quran, sunnah, aqidah, fiqh, etc. through the correct channels.

Regarding secular and worldly subjects, women may pursue studies if there is a genuine need to do so and it is in a setting that is free of sin. (Unfortunately, university campuses do not make the grade.) Women should remember that their primary responsibility is homemaking and bringing up children. Their core focus and training should be in this field. This is the Islamic teaching. Nabi ﷺ instructed his daughter Faatimah ؓ to take care of the household while her husband Ali ؓ was told to earn a living outdoors. This is the natural divine system ordained by Allah ﷻ and His Rasool ﷺ. It is the only system that can produce a harmonious and successful society.

(www.jamiat.org.za)

APPENDIX SEVEN

What really is taught at school?

A thought - provoking article by a Muslim sister

It is with the greatest urgency that I beseech Muslim parents everywhere: If you think drugs and dating are the biggest threats plaguing your children at school, think again. The real danger in public schools is in the very thing we encourage our kids to master – the curriculum.

The global secular system, when truly internalized, can tear down the very faith in Allah. Secularism has been a staple in public education for years; so long in fact, that we may disregard the way it influences our children's perception of themselves, their religion and the world. To explain the moral and spiritual dangers of a secular curriculum, one must first understand secularism and how it conflicts with Islam.

In simple language the word 'secularism' has two meanings:

i. Exclusion of religion from public affairs

The belief that religion and religious bodies should have no part in political or civic affairs or in running public institutions, especially schools.

ii. Rejection of religion

The rejection of religion or its exclusion from a philosophical or moral system.

A further scrutiny of the secular system would reveal that it is not simply the neutral 'exclusion' of religion, but that it is in itself a 'religion'. The way cancer can destroy our body systems, the secular system can damage our kids' Imaan.

Given below are only a few issues with regards to the secular system of education.

1. Practically all syllabi compulsorily include such heretical concepts which directly attack one's Imaan. Famous examples are the Big Bang theory, and Darwin's theory of evolution, both of which openly confront and negate the foundational teachings of Islam. Belief in any of these would take one out of the fold of Islam. These are concepts which aren't merely taught to the children; rather they are literally drilled into them. In a relatively religious family, a man narrated to his school going daughter of about seven years, the story of Adam عليه السلام, and how we all came from him, only to get the retort that, "but we came from monkeys." Thus, to send children to school is to put their Imaan into an imminent and genuine danger.
2. Immorality and shamelessness is rampant in schools, in fact, it is even taught and encouraged. Boys and girls end up interacting with each other, which may result into love affairs, and finally may end up with the actual act of zina. This can even happen in so called 'Muslim schools' where boys and girls are taught in separate classes. At the very least, the zina of the eyes is committed – casting of lustful glances at the opposite sex – an action upon which the curses of Allah rain down, according to Hadith. A school going girl of eight years once told her mother, "All the girls in my class have boyfriends." Sex education is taught without any inhibition, even to young students, and even to mixed classes, and such filthy topics as how to prevent STDs and pregnancy in pre-marital relations are taught – literally inflaming and inciting the desires and passion of the students to commit that which is haraam. In one mixed class, during the Sex Education lesson, a young, scantily dressed female teacher asked the boys what turns them on in girls, and asked the girls what turns them on in boys.

3. The majority of teachers in schools are either non Muslim, or they are Muslims whose lives aren't entirely according to Shari'ah. Both groups have a very negative effect on the innocent and unsuspecting children. Children generally look up to and revere their teachers, always seeking to mimic them in whatever they do. Whatever their teachers say is eagerly sucked in by their sponge like minds and hearts and forms an indelible imprint, literally an engraving in stone. In this way, the qualities of the teachers, their thinking, their way of dealing with issues, their lifestyle is all transferred into the child. Thus for example, if the teacher comes to school wearing a knee length skirt that leaves at least half of her legs exposed, then the girls would want to wear the same, believing naively that this is an appropriate way to dress. This can have very detrimental results, which we are witnessing with our eyes. These are the child's formative years, and it is of paramount importance that they get correct Islamic nurturing, and companionship of the pious, to mould them into the obedient Muslims which Allah desires us to be. Deprivation of this will result in the child having no solid Islamic foundation, the effect of which can remain for their entire life.
4. Importance and priority is given to the secular education, and the greater part of the child's day and energy is used in it, with little or no time left for Deen and Deeni studies, which are relegated and fitted in to the later part of the day when the child is completely exhausted. Many of us don't realize, but this system day in and day out builds the mentality of the child. As he grows up, he is made to believe that the objective and priority of life is Dunya, and Deen is merely an irrelevant aspect on the sideline that should be turned to only when free time is found from the never ending rat race of worldly and material pursuits, and this is exactly what the West wants. Deeni studies are seen as a threat to the dominance of Secular Education, which, in

sordid emulation of the West, is thought of as indispensable. At the slightest hint of any decline in attention towards secular studies, Deeni studies are cast aside without any qualms. This is, in effect, encouraged and condoned by the parents themselves. For example, if a student will end up missing his salaah because of having to write an 'important' exam at that time, then the parents will brush it off with a mere shrug and, "Oh well, what can we do." In a Madrasah where I previously used to teach, I had a certain Qur'an student, a girl of about eight years. One day she came to class and announced to me that she will no longer be coming to Madrasah. Upon my asking her the reason for this, she replied that her mother, after seeing her report, was unhappy about her progress in school, and told her she would have to put in more effort and time, thus she must use even the time that had been kept aside for Madrasah to do revision of her school work, hence she will not be able to continue with Madrasah. This girl used to come for half an hour at the most, and tajweed was a far cry for her, merely being able to recite was a struggle. However, the parents weren't in the least bothered by this state of affairs, because her secular studies were being harmed (according to them), which they could not tolerate one bit. One can imagine the dire and hair-raising consequences this can have for the child.

5. A child is exposed to the open disobedience of Allah, and he is made to participate in this breaking of the commands of Shari'ah. When a child isn't yet baaligh (mature), then the sin won't be written in the record of the child, its burden will be shouldered in its entirety by the parents. However, nonetheless the evil effects of the sin will still wreak havoc in the heart of the child, preparing him and teaching him to keep on indulging in this disobedience for the rest of his life. In this way, the child is brought up in an environment where vice is rife, and not so much of a mention is made of upholding the Deen of Allah.

Besides what has been already mentioned, the two main sins which children are made to be involved in are music and animate pictures, both of which are major sins. The punishment for listening to music, according to Hadith, is that boiling lead will be poured into the listener's ears. Today, even in so called 'Muslim schools,' music is played in the class for the children. In fact, there is a certain 'Muslim' nursery school in which music is played regularly for the toddlers, the boys are then paired up with the girls and they are made to dance. Sadly, parents turn a blind eye towards such despicable acts that their offspring are made to go through. Pictures are found in plenty in text books and story books, and are hung up and plastered in the classes in the form of charts. According to Hadith, the mercy of Allah is taken away from a place in which there are animate pictures (pictures of people or animals). Thus by sending our children to school we are actually willfully depriving them from the mercy of Allah. It is only the mercy of Allah that can save us from doom in this world and in the hereafter. When we ourselves have rejected this mercy through our actions, and are content to stay far away from it, then what will become of us and our children? They are also made to draw such pictures in class and as homework. In the Hadith, the severe warning that has been sounded for this should be enough to send shivers down our spines – the person who will be involved in any way in making pictures in any form, will be subjected to the severest and most painful punishment and torment in Jahannam. It was this very school environment that had such a detrimental effect on a certain girl in the UK, and it so deeply planted in her the seed of rebelliousness, that even after completing the Aalimah Course upon being forced into it by her parents, she ended up forfeiting her Deen and Imaan, and became a murtaddah (may Allah save us).

6. Nursery rhymes and fairy tales may appear to be harmless fiction and poetry to us, but we should not let ourselves be fooled.

Concealed in them are such poisonous messages which are transferred to the children's minds both consciously and subconsciously, and alter their thinking and views. The fairytales are designed to make the child fantasize and wish for the dream life that is portrayed in them, a sort of an ideal life the foundation of which is sin and immorality which is put across as acceptable, rosy, and beautiful. Almost all of them have one common theme – premarital love. For example, Snow White lived together with seven men before her dream lover took her away. Sleeping beauty is awoken by her lover's kiss. Cinderella runs away to a late night ball to be with her lover. Rapunzel's lover sneaks into her bedroom to secretly spend time with her. The list goes on and on, and there are many more examples. The children, by being exposed to this on a daily basis, are actually being conditioned to develop a liking and longing for all that Allah has forbidden us. In the original version of Little Red Riding Hood, she takes a bottle of wine to her grandmother. Most nursery rhymes have sinister origins that many of us are not aware of. To mention just a few examples, "Humpty Dumpty" is actually a mockery of the Muslim defeat in Spain. "Goosey Goosey Gander" talks about religious persecution connected to Catholic priests. "London Bridge is falling down" is connected to child sacrifice, a major tenet in Satanism. "Mary Mary quite contrary" refers to Queen Mary of England, and her ruthless blood shedding. "Ring around the rosy" refers to the Black Death – the plague that wiped out millions of people. Alternatively, it has also been said to refer to a religious ban on dancing. It is these stories and rhymes which our children memorize every day, polluting their innocent minds, instead of memorizing the verses of the Quran, and the Ahaadith.

7. These harms are present in varied extents in all types of schools in vogue today. This includes those schools which are referred to as integrated or Muslim schools, which are just as much

cesspools of vice as the regular ones. Many a times the only thing about these schools which is Islamic is the name. Anyone who has read this carefully will notice one thing in common in all six harms mentioned – these aren't merely short term effects that can be easily reversed. Rather, they are long term consequences of mind-boggling magnitude. In other words, to send a child to school is to willingly present him for utter destruction and devastation in this temporary worldly life, as well as the eternal life of Akhirah. Is it really worth it?

(Condensed from an article written by *Haqqseeker*, *Muslimvillage.com*)