

The Mutual Respect Among 'Ulamā'

**Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Salīm
Dhorāt Sāhib**

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FOREWORD

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

For the preservation of His Dīn and for its propagation and proliferation, Allāh *ta'ālā* selects certain blessed individuals and personalities in every era whose blessings are not enjoyed by the people of that era alone but by the following generations as well. They all benefit from their sciences and knowledge, and begin to tread the straight path. Hadrat Mufti Muḥammad Shafī' Sāhib *rahimahullāh* said that for the guidance of mankind, Allāh *ta'ālā* sent the Book of Allāh together with the men of Allāh. Even after the Prophets '*alayhimus salām*, this system continued via their heirs and deputies, and continues most excellently to this day.

A very esteemed personality of our time, my affectionate teacher and beloved mentor, and the beloved of the 'ulamā' and mashā'ikh – Shaykh al-Hadīth Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Salīm Dhorāt Sāhib *dāmat barakātuhum* – is also a link in this golden chain. His blessed presence is not only a great bounty for the masses but for 'ulamā' and students as well. No matter how much gratitude we express for this bounty it will not be enough. The various departments of Dīn which Allāh *ta'ālā* is enabling Hadrat Maulānā to serve is clearer than the light of day.

He has been fulfilling the duties of teaching and educating, principal-ship and administration, writing and compiling, advising and counselling, rectification and self-purification, and propagation and proliferation of Dīn for more than 25 years. He is playing a major role in preserving the beliefs of the youth, in their moral training and in setting right their actions. He resorted to both – the spoken word and the written – to this end. He

is rendering services for the last 25 years through an annual conference, a monthly training programme, Qur'ān and Hadīth lessons in English, the printing and distribution of pamphlets and booklets, and the monthly publication of *Riyāḍ al-Jannah*. This is a revivalist achievement in Europe.

By virtue of these services, he is enjoying extraordinary popularity and adoration among his seniors, the *mashā'ikh*, the masses and the elite. Based on this extraordinary popularity and adoration he is regularly invited through the length and breadth of the country for lecture programmes, Qur'ān and Bukhārī completions, youth seminars and other similar programmes.

For the last few years he has been attending the annual youth programme of the Batley Jāmi' Musjid which is organized by the board members of the Musjid and by its well-known elder, Hadrat Maulānā 'Abd ar-Ra'ūf Sāhib Lājpurī *dāmat barakātuhum* (a *khalīfah* of Hadrat Maulānā Masīhullāh Khān Sāhib *rahimahullāh*). Hadrat Maulānā addresses the youth who assemble in large numbers. The youth benefit from his impressive address in the English language.

In the programme which was scheduled for December 2012, Hadrat Maulānā 'Abd ar-Ra'ūf Sāhib and other 'ulamā' of Batley requested that a separate programme for 'ulamā' be conducted as well. Hadrat Maulānā – due to his humbleness and modesty – tries his utmost to avoid addressing an assembly of 'ulamā'. On this occasion too he tried his best to defer the programme but the hosts were persistent and an assembly was eventually scheduled.

I clearly remember Hadrat Maulānā being ill on that day. In the course of our journey he repeatedly said: "First of all I am ill, and the programme of addressing

the ‘ulamā’ is a burden in itself. *Bukhārī Sharīf* contains a statement of Imām Rabī‘atur Ra’y *rahimahullāh*. Allāh willing, I intend presenting the statements of the ‘ulamā’ in this regard. I trust that Allāh *ta‘ālā* will enable me and the audience to benefit from it.”

When the talk commenced then, as always, Allāh’s grace was directed on him. Hadrat related introductory points about Imām Rabī‘atur Ra’y *rahimahullāh* and his subject of discussion took another turn and he began speaking about the mutual respect which existed among the ‘ulamā’. He related several stories one after the other in this regard. A considerable number of ‘ulamā’ and Sufis were assembled. There were ‘ulamā’ who had graduated from various madāris and the hall was almost filled to capacity. The talk had a good effect on those present and Hadrat Maulānā ‘Abd ar-Ra’ūf Sāhib was encompassed by a unique condition. When the talk ended, he stood up immediately, turned towards Hadrat in a love-filled manner, and said: “This was a divinely inspired talk. I request Hadrat to have it penned, printed as quickly as possible, and made available to the public.”

Acting on the request of Hadrat Maulānā ‘Abd ar-Ra’ūf Sāhib, the talk under review – *The Mutual Respect Among ‘Ulamā’* – was very quickly transcribed from the CD but could not be edited by Hadrat Maulānā because of his many engagements. It remained in a cupboard for quite some time and was completely forgotten.

Towards the end of July 2015, Hadrat Maulānā received a letter from Hadrat Maulānā ‘Abbās ibn Ādam Sirīgat Sāhib *dāmat barakātuhum* who is a Hadīth lecturer at Dār al-‘Ulūm Zakarīyyā, South Africa. The letter is quoted below:

Respected and honourable Hadrat Maulānā
Muḥammad Salīm Dhorāt Sāhib, Shaykh al-

Hadīth Jāmi'ah Riyāḍ al-'Ulum. May Allāh *ta'ālā* give you long life, and make your life beneficial to Islam and Muslims throughout the world.

As-salāmu 'alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh

I hope that Hadrat Wālā is well. A few days ago, acting on the sincere request of Mufti Maḥmūd Dānā, I had the opportunity of travelling to Barbados. In the course of my two-day stay there, I had the wonderful opportunity of reading Hadrat's various lectures and talks (which are published in the form of booklets). All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*, I read all the booklets with full concentration from beginning to end. These lectures are certainly a manifestation of the saying: Whatever emanates from the heart has an effect on the heart.

Among those booklets, a fresh publication titled *The Sacrifices of 'Ulamā'*, holds the rank of the chief of them all. The manner in which Hadrat assessed and evaluated the situation of that place is truly Hadrat's reserve alone. It is my humble view that by expressing your thoughts, you fulfilled an obligation on behalf of all other 'ulamā'. Furthermore, you presented yourself as a practical example of "the one who does not fear the criticism of critics in fulfilling Allāh's cause" when you expressed the truth. It is solely Allāh's favour that even during these turbulent times there are those who do not bother about the paltry possessions of this

world when proclaiming the truth. May Allāh *ta'ālā* enable more people to do this.

In addition to reading the booklets which I made reference to, I heard one of your CD's titled *The Mutual Respect Among 'Ulamā'*. This address must also be published in book-form as quickly as possible. It is the call of our time, the need of the ummat, a medication for the hearts of the 'ulamā', an alchemy for removing mutual rivalry, and a spiritual treatment for bonding the hearts. It ought to be heard with the heart, impressed upon the heart and made into an amulet for life. O Allāh! Inspire us.

Finally, I make an ardent prayer to Allāh *ta'ālā* to bless you with a long life with wellness, enable your blessings to spread completely and totally, and inspire the masses and elite to benefit from you.

'Abbās ibn Ādam Sirīgat
Dār al-'Ulūm Zakariyyā

The above letter redirected Hadrat Maulānā to turn his attention to the printing and publishing of this lecture. He reviewed it despite his ailments and many occupations. Some of our associates referenced the booklet and – all praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā* and solely through His grace – this lecture is now ready in the form of a booklet. It is hoped that the 'ulamā' will view it with appreciation.

May Allāh *ta'ālā* bless my affectionate teacher and beloved mentor with complete health and total wellness, and give him more progress in the service of Dīn, knowledge, practice, sincerity and devotion to Allāh *ta'ālā*. May Allāh *ta'ālā* enable his blessing to spread far

and wide, and cause large numbers of people to benefit from him. May He inspire all to practise on the objective behind which this lecture was delivered so that the 'ulamā' may become one solid wall to steer the ummat correctly in these turbulent times. Āmīn.

Ahmad Patel

Islamic Da'wah Academy, Leicester, UK.

22 Jumādā al-Ukhrā 1437 A.H.

31 March 2016.

RECOMMENDATION (1)

Hadrat Maulānā ‘Abdullāh Kāpaudrī

**Head of Dār al-‘Ulūm Falāh-e-Dārayn, Tadkeshwar,
Gujarat, India**

بِسْمِهِ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى

Respected Maulānā Muḥammad Salīm Dhorāt, founder and Shaykh al-Hadīth of Madrasah Riyād al-‘Ulūm, Leicester.

As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa raḥmatullāhi wa barakātuh

I hope that you are well. I was very happy and grateful to receive your valuable lecture. May Allāh *ta‘ālā* reward you with the best of rewards.

The points towards which you directed the assembly of ‘ulamā’ are most essential and important. If only the ‘ulamā’ of our time follow in the footsteps of their forebears, respect each other, encourage their juniors, acknowledge the merits of their contemporaries and accord due respect to them so that the effects of these will filter down to the masses as well, and an environment of love and harmony may pervade all. May Allāh *ta‘ālā* embellish all Muslims with these lofty characteristics. Āmīn.

‘Allāmah Iqbāl rightly said:

Firm conviction, united action and love are the conquerors of the world. These are the swords of men in the jihād of life.

Like your other booklets, if this one is also published, it will – Allāh willing – be well-received in academic circles. May Allāh *ta‘ālā* crown your services with acceptance and reward you with the best of rewards. Āmīn.

I am praying for your good health and wellness. May Allāh *ta'ālā* accept. I request for your prayers for my good health. I am taking my medications, but cure is in Allāh's hands.

وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ

Convey my salām to your respected mother, wife and other associates, and request them to pray for me.

Was salām

'Abdullāh, *may Allāh pardon him.*

25 Jumādā al-Ukhrā 1437 A.H.

14 April 2016

RECOMMENDATION (2)

Hadrat Maulānā ‘Abd ar-Ra’ūf Sāhib Lājpurī

**Khalifah of Hadrat Maulānā Masīhullāh Khān Sāhib
Jalālābādī rahimahullāh**

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

Allāh *ta’ālā* blessed Hadrat Aqdas Shaykh al-Hadīth Maulānā Muḥammad Salīm Dhorāt Sāhib with the rank of adoration; he is adored by the ‘ulamā’, the mashā’ikh and Muslims in general. The effect of this adoration is that ‘ulamā’ and the general public of various cities and regions wait anxiously for Hadrat Maulānā to come and address them. Similarly, Muslim youth wait for the youth conference which conducts a programme of rectification, so that they could benefit from it.

In the name of the same youth conference, a programme of rectification was conducted in the Jāmi‘ Musjid of our city, Batley. Hadrat Maulānā arrived and a special assembly for ‘ulamā’ was conducted. In this assembly, Allāh *ta’ālā* enabled Hadrat Maulānā to speak on unique matters which he had not even imagined and prepared for. It is more appropriate to refer to them as divinely inspired points. There was a need to bring this talk onto the public domain. Subsequently, Allāh *ta’ālā* – the Almighty – provided the arrangements and – Allāh willing - it will be published soon.

We pray to Allāh *ta’ālā* to inspire us to practise on these divinely inspired points, to bless Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth Maulānā Muḥammad Salīm Sāhib with long life and good health, and to enable us to derive benefit from his blessings. Āmīn.

Was salām

Abd ar-Ra'ūf Lājpurī
Batley, U.K.

INTRODUCTION

Hadrat Maulānā ‘Abd ar-Ra’ūf Sāhib Lājpurī

**Khalifah of Hadrat Maulānā Masīhullāh Khān Sāhib
Jalālabādī rahimahullāh**

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ
حَمْدُهُ وَنُصَيِّیْ عَلٰی رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِیْمِ

We are most fortunate to have Shaykh al-Hadīth Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Salīm Sāhib dāmat barakātuḥum in our midst. It is a great favour and bounty of Allāh *ta’ālā* that Hadrat freed some of his valuable time and came here.

Hadrat mentioned a few things when we went to him in Leicester. At the time, we went to make arrangements for a programme for the youth. This assembly for ‘ulamā’ was decided upon only later. Nonetheless, it is our honour that we are able to sit before Hadrat Maulānā as students. Hadrat Maulānā is our senior. Allāh willing, considerable matters will be presented before our ‘ulamā’. There is one sentence which I heard there [when we went to Leicester] and Hadrat Maulānā said the same thing just now before the ‘ishā *ṣalāh*. He said: “Make *du‘ā*’ that Allāh *ta’ālā* protects this programme and this *jalsah* from the effects of my bad luck.” Just look at his humility! We want Hadrat to come here again and again but he is saying that his bad luck must not cause as many ill-effects as they ought to. This type of humility has always been the hallmark of our elders – this is how they considered themselves to be.

When we went to him in Leicester, he said something which will be most useful to ‘ulamā’. He said with

reference to our honourable teacher, Hadrat Mufti Mahmud al-Hasan Sāhib Gangohī *rahimahullāh* that certain situations arose in Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband on account of which Mufti Sāhib went to some other place. Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth Maulānā Muhammad Zakarīyyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was alive at the time. [When he heard about it] he said: “Muftīji! Work can be done anywhere.” Mufti Sāhib said: “Hadrat! The situation there [in Deoband] is like this and like that.” Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth *rahimahullāh* said: “You may come here to Sahāranpūr.”

Hadrat Mufti Mahmud al-Hasan Sāhib Gangohī *rahimahullāh* used to say: “The situation in Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband is because of me, so I do not want to remain there any longer.” Look at the humility of our elders!. Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth Maulānā Muhammad Zakarīyyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh* conferred khilāfat to Hadrat Mufti Mahmud al-Hasan Gangohī *rahimahullāh* after about 40 years. How much he must have made him to strivel? Now look at his humility when he says that these conditions in Dār al-'Ulūm are because of me. There is a great admonition for us in the statements of our seniors.

Just before the salāh I recalled that Hadrat Maulānā Qārī Siddīq Sāhib Bāndwī *rahimahullāh* had come to this masjid. Mufti Ahmad Khānpūrī Sāhib who is our teacher was scheduled to address the public while Hadrat Maulānā Qārī Siddīq Sāhib Bāndwī *rahimahullāh* was to address the 'ulamā'. A similar programme has been arranged today. Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Salīm Dhorāt Sāhib *dāmat barakātuhum* will address us here, while Hadrat's khalīfah, Maulānā Iyād Sāhib will address the public.

Hadrat's blessings are known to all. I am of the view that (although I should not be saying it in his presence)

that Allāh *ta'ālā* is taking work from him not only in Britain but throughout the Islamic world. Through the grace and kindness of Allāh *ta'ālā* his services in the field of self-purification, education and tabligh are widely accepted. We are most fortunate for having him here especially bearing in mind his many occupations which include teaching *Bukhārī Sharīf*, the constant coming and going of people, advising them, and so on.

When we went to him, he set aside some time for us, but when we met him [and concluded the discussion], my companions said: “Hadrat spent three hours with us.” This, despite the fact that he has very little time. Just look at Hadrat’s kindness towards Allāh’s servants and the followers of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*. No matter what the state of his health, he wants Allāh *ta'ālā* to enable him to say some words of worth. Allāh *ta'ālā* is the doer, but He appoints some of His servants as the means. All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*, a large number of ‘ulamā’ are present. I am saying these few words under the instruction of Hadrat. It is an honour for me. No matter what Hadrat says to us today, it will – Allāh willing – be a guiding light for us in the future. I myself am in need of them. May Allāh *ta'ālā* bless Hadrat in his life. Āmīn.

Let me add one more point. Hājī Fārūq Sāhib *Sukkhurwī rahimahullāh* was our elder and he loved Hadrat a lot. I heard the following directly from Hadrat Maulānā Salīm Dhorāt Sāhib: When we were in the process of purchasing a building for the Academy, then Hājī Sāhib rahimahullāh was requested to make du‘ā’ for it. He replied: “I stood under the *Mizāb-e-Rahmat* and made du‘ā’ for you. You will get that place.” Now just look at the place which was obtained! Right in the centre of a residential area, with Muslims living all around. Allāh *ta'ālā* blessed us with such an excellent place

where we have a dār al-'ulūm, a masjid and a madrasah. All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā* 'ulamā' are graduating from it. Even now the Maulānā who is going to address the masses is a graduate of that place. Many other 'ulamā' from there [Leicester] are here today.

It is most disrespectful to say anything in Hadrat Maulānā's presence, and he too does not like to be praised. However, I am saying this because if we look at Hadrat, he appears young. Despite his young age, Allāh *ta'ālā* has taken a lot of work from him. It is therefore an honour for us to have him here. We will listen attentively to Hadrat's talk. The assembly of the public is also waiting; Hadrat will address them as well. May Allāh *ta'ālā* inspire us all to practise. Āmīn.

THE MUTUAL RESPECT AMONG 'ULAMĀ'

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي وَنُسَلِّمُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ، أَمَا بَعْدُ

No matter how much I thank Allāh *ta'ālā* it will not be enough because He blessed me with the companionship of such a large number of 'ulamā' solely out of His grace and kindness, and without my deserving it in the least. O Allāh! All praise and thanks are due to You. The company of Hadrat Maulānā and his words specifically contain many benefits. I am saying this with absolute honesty and sincerity – and without any flattery – that merely visiting Hadrat is enough for us. May Allāh *ta'ālā* inspire us all to appreciate him correctly and to prolong his shadow over us. Āmīn.

The fact of the matter is that it is most audacious for a student like myself to address people of knowledge and virtue. However, I have love for Hadrat in my heart and confidence in him. Hadrat too shows love and respect to me. Thus, when these factors come in-between, it becomes very difficult for me to refuse. Then another thought came to my mind, viz. juniors normally read their lessons before their seniors. When a person speaks to his seniors, it does not mean that he has become a senior, and that the seniors are now juniors. In a class situation, it is essential for the juniors to read their lesson before their teacher. As for those who are my contemporaries here, I thought to myself that I will be revising and repeating the lessons which I learnt. Furthermore, I can take this opportunity of taking stock of my self. I will try to speak on matters which I am in need of so that my own rectification will be realized.

I Advise And Admonish My Self

An incident occurred when I accompanied Hājī Fārūq Sāhib rahimahullāh to Barbados. Hadrat addressed me and asked: “Since when are you under this misunderstanding that I deliver lectures to others? Whenever I go to any place and sit down to say something, I advise and admonish my self. At the same time, others listen to it.”

I too thought to myself that I will make my seniors listen to my lesson, I will be revising before my associates and brothers, and I will address my self so that I benefit.

I Speak On A Theme When I Find Myself Lacking In That Regard

Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānwī rahimahullāh was such a great personality! He relates: “When I see any shortcoming in myself and lack of courage in doing a certain deed, I make it the theme of my lecture, and speak about it in a public gathering.”¹

Although these personalities had reached the highest levels of perfection, they used to take stock of themselves all the time. They would constantly check to see if there was any defect in their lives, if there was anything which needed to be rectified. Obviously, any defect or matter which needed rectification was not with regard to compulsory, obligatory or forbidden actions. Despite this, they focussed on their own rectification and would speak about it.

Imām Rabī'atur Ra'y

The thought came to my heart that I should present a statement of a senior jurist as quoted by Hadrat Imām

¹ *Dawā'-e-Dīl, Ifādāt Hakīmul Ummat Hadrat Thānwī*, p. 52.

Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* in *Sahīh al-Bukhārī*, and to relate the beneficial points which the ‘ulamā’ explained from this statement. The name of this jurist is Rabi‘ah ibn Farrūkh, and is popularly known as Rabi‘atur Ra’y. He was a muftī of Madīnah Munawwarah and an esteemed scholar of his time.

The Meaning Of Aṣ-ḥāb ar-Ra’y

Ḥadrat Imām Abū Ḥanīfah *rahimahullāh* and his companions are referred to as Aṣ-ḥāb ar-Ra’y. Books generally say: The Muḥaddithūn have this to say, while the Aṣ-ḥāb ar-Ra’y have this to say. The latter term normally refers to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah *rahimahullāh* and his companions. It is because of this title that those who are critical of the Ḥanafis claim that these people do not practise on the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth. Instead, they practise on their personal opinion (ra’y). This is why they are known as Aṣ-ḥāb ar-Ra’y and Ahl ar-Ra’y (people who follow their opinions). However, this is a formal term similar to how experts in the field of Ḥadīth are referred to as Ahl al-Ḥadīth.

People are often deceived through the outward meaning of words. For example, all the narrations of *Sahīh al-Bukhārī* are authentic. From this, people are erroneously made to think that Aḥādīth in all other Ḥadīth collections are not authentic. A wrong meaning is then taken from the word “unauthentic”. The literary meaning is explained to the masses and they are deceived in this way.

Similarly, the literary meaning of *da’if Ḥadīth* (weak Ḥadīth) is explained to people, and they are made to think that such a Ḥadīth is of no use whatsoever. In the same way, the meaning which is given for the word Aṣ-ḥāb ar-Ra’y is that these people practise on their own views; they do not practise on the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth.

But this is not true. In this context, the word “ra’y” is in the meaning of fiqh and tafaqquh (jurisprudence and deep understanding), and As-hāb ar-Ra’y refers to people of deep understanding, people of intelligence and acumen. They are the ones whom Allāh *ta’ālā* blesses with special juridical acumen, intelligence, aptitude and deep insight through which they extract rulings from the depths of the Qur’ān and Hadīth and present them to the Muslim ummat.

Imām Abū Hanīfah’s Juridical Acumen

Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* was sitting in the presence of one of his Hadīth teachers, Imām A’mash *rahimahullāh*. An issue was presented to the teacher and he thought about it deeply. He was a Muḥaddith, he knew many Aḥādīth but could not come to a ruling. He then turned his attention towards Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* and said: “Do you know anything in this regard?” Bearing in mind that Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* was a man of ra’y, a man of juridical acumen, and a many of intelligence and understanding, he explained the ruling.

Imām A’mash *rahimahullāh* asked him: “Where did you extract this ruling from?” Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* replied: “From the same Hadīth which you related to us.” He asked: “Which Hadīth?” He replied: “From such and such Hadīth.” When his Muḥaddith teacher Imām A’mash *rahimahullāh* realized that his mind had not even gone towards where his juridical student went, he said:

أَنْتُمْ الْأَطِبَّاءُ وَنَحْنُ الصَّيَادِلَةُ¹

¹ مناقب الإمام أبي حنيفة وصاحبيه، ص ٣٤-٣٥.

You people are the specialist physicians while we are mere pharmacists.

We are merely pharmacists, we only know how to run a pharmacy. We do not know how to mix which medication with which one, that is known to you physicians.

Anyway, this is another topic on its own. What I was saying is that an impression is created that the As-hāb ar-Ra'ý know nothing about the science of Hadīth. This is totally incorrect. In fact, 'Allāmah 'Abd al-'Azīz ibn Abi Salamah *rahimahullāh* said:

يا أهل العراق، تقولون: ربیعة الرأي، والله ما رأیت أحدا أحفظ لسنة منه

O people of Iraq! You refer to him as Rabī'atur Ra'y! By Allāh, I have not come across anyone better than him in preserving the Sunnah.

This is why 'Allāmah Dhahabī *rahimahullāh* said that all the 'ulamā' furnish the Ahādīth of Rabī'atur Ra'y *rahimahullāh* as proofs and evidences.²

The Views Of 'Ulamā' With Reference To Rabī'atur Ra'y

Rabī'atur Ra'y was a distinguished scholar of his time. He was a Muḥaddith and a jurist. His assembly in Musjid-e-Nabawī enjoyed an eminent position. Many senior 'ulamā' used to study under him. Hadrat Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* made the following statement after the demise of Rabī'atur Ra'y *rahimahullāh*:

دَهَبَتْ حَلَاوَةُ الْفِقْهِ مُنْذُ مَاتَ رَبِيعَةُ بْنُ أَبِي عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ

¹ سير أعلام النبلاء، ج ٢، ص ٢٥١.

² ميزان الاعتدال، ج ٣، ص ٦٨.

The sweetness of jurisprudence has ended ever since Rabi'ah ibn Abi 'Abd ar-Rahmān passed away.

Layth ibn Sa'd *rahimahullāh* was a great Muhaddith and an eminent jurist. He quotes another senior scholar, 'Ubaydullāh ibn 'Umar *rahimahullāh*, who said:

ربيعة صاحب معضلاتنا، وعالمنا، وأفضلنا

Rabi'ah is the one who solves our difficult and complex issues. He is the scholar among us, and the most superior of us.

When we are faced with complex rulings and we fail to solve them, Rabi'ah is the one to remove us from those difficulties. This is because he is the most learned among us and the most superior in rank.

A Very Important Point

I would like to present another very important point. Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* and Rabi'atur Ra'y *rahimahullāh* were contemporaries. Rabi'atur Ra'y *rahimahullāh* was elder than Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh*. Both were distinguished scholars. Despite this, look at the praises which Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* is showering on a scholar who is his contemporary! How many 'ulamā' are there in our times who spoke highly of a contemporary 'ālim? There is a need for us to think about this. We immediately notice the mistakes of our fellow 'ulamā' and members of our academic fraternity. In fact, we even see wrongs in them which are not even found in them. We will see a single wrong in him, multiply it by a hundred and popularize it everywhere. Yet, we do not have the courage to speak about just one

¹تهذيب الكمال، ج ٢، ص ٤٧١.

²تهذيب الكمال، ج ٢، ص ٤٧٠.

good quality of a fellow ‘ālim. We ought to study the actions of our pious predecessors starting with the era of the Sahābah *raḍiyallāhu ‘anhum*, the Tābi‘ūn, the Taba‘ Tābi‘ūn, the past and latter day imāms, and then our elders. We will see this quality glaring in all their lives: When they saw a good quality in anyone, they had the courage and bravery to acknowledge it publicly. It takes a lot of courage to do this. A person has to have a heart to do this. Many examples of this nature can be found in the books.

‘Amr ibn Dīnār’s Opinion Of Ibn Shihāb az-Zuhri

‘Amr ibn Dīnār *raḥimahullāh* was an eminent scholar. Someone made mention of Ibn Shihāb az-Zuhri *raḥimahullāh* in his assembly so ‘Amr ibn Dīnār *raḥimahullāh* said:

وَأَيُّ شَيْءٍ عِنْدَهُ؟

What does he have? He has nothing!

This critical comment was made for the preservation of knowledge. In other words, such and such person is of such and such level when it comes to accepting Hadīth from him. When it comes to juridical issues, so and so person holds such and such rank. You have to be cautious about accepting knowledge from such and such person. And so on.

Based on the information which ‘Amr ibn Dīnār *raḥimahullāh* received about Ibn Shihāb az-Zuhri *raḥimahullāh*, he said that Ibn Shihāb *raḥimahullāh* does not enjoy any academic rank, whereas Ibn Shihāb was a high-ranking scholar.

The Rank Of Ibn Shihāb az-Zuhrī

Ibn Shihāb az-Zuhrī *rahimahullāh* was a compiler of Hadīth. He was an expert in the science of Hadīth. He also occupied a lofty rank in spirituality and righteousness. Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh* said that Ibn Shihāb *rahimahullāh* has no equal in this world.¹ His biographers state that when he was about to depart from this world he made a bequest which stated: “Do not bury me in the graveyard of Muslims; bury me on the side of any road.”² It seemed that he thought that he has nothing for himself for the Hereafter. Hopefully, a servant of Allāh *ta’ālā* who is passing by his grave will pray for him and he will be pardoned through the blessings of the person’s prayer.

The more senior a person is, the more he humbles himself. Hadrat [Maulānā ‘Abd ar-Ra’ūf Lājpurī] is very much senior to me, this is why he lowered himself and praised me. He did not do this superficially because this is how a senior thinks of himself. May Allāh *ta’ālā* accept the words which emanated from his blessed mouth in my favour in such a large gathering of ‘ulamā’, and may He make it a means for our salvation. Āmīn.

The Truthfulness Of ‘Amr ibn Dīnār

Ibn Shihāb az-Zuhrī *rahimahullāh* was really a great man. He came to Makkah Mukarramah on one occasion. When ‘Amr ibn Dīnār *rahimahullāh* heard of it, he wanted to attend his assembly. Despite his physical disability, he insisted on his students to take him to Ibn Shihāb az-Zuhrī *rahimahullāh*. Allāhu Akbar! He wants to go to a person regarding whom he had said that he

¹ سير أعلام النبلاء، ج ٥٥، ص ٣٣٦.

² الطبقات الكبرى لابن سعد، ج ٥، ص ٣٥٦.

was nothing. He went and sat for quite some time in Ibn Shihāb's assembly.

Ibn Shihāb *rahimahullāh* was a sun of knowledge. When 'Amr ibn Dīnār *rahimahullāh* returned, his students asked: "What is your impression of Ibn Shihāb?" He replied:

وَاللَّهِ مَا رَأَيْتُ مِثْلَ هَذَا الْفُرَشِيِّ قَطُّ^١

By Allāh! I have never come across anyone like this Qurayshī.

His opinion of him changed by sitting in just one assembly and he did not feel ashamed to express his opinion. He did not think that previously I used to say that he is nothing, how can I now say something different about him to my students? He could have resorted to some ruse and said: This is only the first assembly which I attended. Let me attend a few more, and then I will voice my opinion about him. No! He immediately said: By Allāh! I have never come across a scholar like him.

The Mutual Respect Between Ibn Shihāb And Rabī'atur Ra'y

Now listen to the story of Ibn Shihāb az-Zuhri *rahimahullāh* and Rabī'atur Ra'y *rahimahullāh*. Ibn Shihāb held the hand of Rabī'atur Ra'y on one occasion and the two went into a room. This assembly of theirs continued from fajr until zuhr. They emerged for zuhr *salāh* and went back into the room. The assembly continued until 'asr. The two were engaging in academic discussions and investigations. They got an opportunity to assess each other's knowledge. When they emerged

¹ التمهيد لما في الموطأ من المعاني والمسانيد، ج ٣، ص ٤.

for the 'asr salāh, an assembly of 'ulamā' was waiting for them and they wanted to see what happens next. The moment Ibn Shihāb emerged, he said with reference to Rabī'atur Ra'y: "I do not think there is any scholar in Madīnah Munawwarah who is on his level." Ḥaḍrat Rabī'atur Ra'y said: "I do not think any person has reached the level of knowledge which Ibn Shihāb has reached."

Just look! The one is speaking in praise of the other and is referring to him as the most superior; and the second is doing the same thing with reference to the first. This, despite the fact that they were contemporaries. We know fully well the obstacles which come in-between contemporaries. Seniors acknowledge – to a certain extent – the capabilities of juniors. Juniors also do the same with respect to their seniors. However, it is very difficult for contemporaries to acknowledge the ranks of each other. But this was a group of sincere scholars – they were men of Allāh *ta'ālā* and men of the Hereafter.

Two Grammar Experts Honour Each Other

Imām Farrā' *rahimahullāh* and Imām Akhfash *rahimahullāh* are two experts of Arabic grammar. The two hold an esteemed position in the Arabic language. Imām Farrā' *rahimahullāh* went to visit Imām Akhfash *rahimahullāh*. The latter was sitting in an assembly of his students. His students obviously had the highest regard for their teacher, and this ought to be the case. We have to look at our teachers and shaykh with absolute respect. The moment Imām Akhfash *rahimahullāh* saw Imām Farrā' *rahimahullāh* entering, he said to his students: "The chief of Arabic language and literature has entered." When Imām Farrā' *rahimahullāh* heard this statement he said: "No. This cannot be for as long as Imām Akhfash is alive."

Each one is referring to the other as the chief in that field, while both are contemporaries. Glory to Allāh! Look at the respect which they had for each other. Look at how they acknowledged each other's excellences.

The fact of the matter is that their purification had been realized. They considered themselves to be insignificant, this is why each one regarded the other to be more senior.

Absolute Disunity In Our Times

An 'ālim related to me that he asked Hadrat Maulānā Abrār al-Haq Sāhib *rahimahullāh* on one occasion: "Hadrat! I do not see that level of disunity and detachment among the 'ulamā' of the past as I see it today."

This question was posed many years ago. Now the disunity has intensified even more. Previously there used to be disunity among different organizations, groups and institutions. Now every person is an organization in himself. Every person is an institution. Every person has his own view and opinion. We cannot even count the number of groups we have subdivided into.

(check poem-p. 27)

The graduates of one madrasah are aloof from the graduates of another madrasah. In the same way, the murīds of one shaykh distance themselves from the murīds of another shaykh. Obviously, we will not have the same love as we have for our alma mater, after all, we were quenched from there. But this does not mean that we totally disregard other centres of learning. We do not look up to another shaykh as we do to our shaykh [this is natural]. Hadrat Maulānā Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī *rahimahullāh* said: "If all the auliya' are

assembled in one place, our Hadrat Hājī Sāhib rahimahullāh and Shaykh Junayd Baghdādī rahimahullāh are also there, then in the presence of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib rahimahullāh, we will not pay attention to Shaykh Junayd Baghdādī rahimahullāh or anyone else. We will sit in the company of Hadrat Hājī Sāhib rahimahullāh.”¹

This is because we do not receive the same amount of spirituality from anyone else as we do from our shaykh. The concept of “unity of purpose” has certain demands. Notwithstanding all this, it can never ever mean that the other mashā’ikh are not eligible for our respect. They are also the men of Allāh *ta’ālā*. They are from among the genuine Sufis. They are our seniors. It is essential for us to have absolute and total respect for them. If we have 1 000 percent respect for our shaykh, we must have at least 100 percent respect for the genuine Sufis, those who are attached to Allāh *ta’ālā*, those who are righteous people and have obtained the confidence of seniors. If our respect for them is even one percent less than 100 percent, I consider it to be disrespect and insolence; the consequences of which can be disastrous. We must have 100 percent respect for all pious people.

The Muslim Ummat Will Be Scattered As Long As ‘Ulamā’ Are Divided

We have to put an end to those imaginary barriers. No outsider is going to come and put an end to them. We will have to make efforts ourselves, we will have to strive, we will have to purify ourselves from extremism and fanaticism, and put an end to those barriers. As long as we [‘ulamā’] remain divided, the Muslim ummat

¹ *Tārīkh Mashā’ikh Chisht*, p. 285; *Hadrat Thānwī Ke Pasandīdah Wāqī’āt*, p. 186.

will be scattered and at a loss. There are thousands of issues and rulings in Dīn, but we differ on one. Just think, we agree on the many thousands but differ on only one. Just because of this one issue, our bond and love disappear, if we meet each other it is done superficially, those who observe us also conclude that our mutual meeting is merely for certain motives [and not out of love]. We will even embrace each other, and kiss each other's forehead. Despite this, both parties perceive a barrier. I relate the following couplets to the masses:

We celebrate over whatever we eat freely
during the day. We celebrate the tea which
we drink and the cigarettes which we smoke.
We celebrate when we meet each other while
hatred and dislike is filled in our hearts.
Even on the day of 'īd we do not meet each
other with sincere hearts, yet we celebrate
this.

We meet each other in large gatherings and in funerals,
but that barrier is not removed; the heart is not clean
towards each other.

A Unique Statement Of Maulānā Abrār al-Haq

[We come back to the incident of] an 'ālim who asked Hadrat Maulānā Abrār al-Haq Sāhib *rahimahullāh* about the profuse disunity among present day 'ulamā' as opposed to those of the past. What is the reason for it? How is it that it was virtually non-existent in the past? Hadrat replied: "Maulwī Sāhib! The fact of the matter is that in the past, each one wanted to remain a junior and wanted to accord seniority to the other. One would say to the other: 'Brother! You are senior, you must lead us in salāh.' You are senior, you must accept the chairmanship.' There was no tug-of-war in those days.

When each one remained a junior, he would encourage the other to go forward. In such a situation, every person considered the other to be senior. This is why every person's heart was filled with respect for the other.”

What Hadrat said was that everyone was a junior and it was very easy for one of them to become a senior. On the other hand, in our time, everyone wants to be a senior. Now who are you going to appoint as a senior from among them? This would obviously lead to differences and disunity.

Hadrat *rahimahullāh* was making reference to the desire for position (*hubb-e-jāh*) which also causes pride and jealousy. This is why we cannot acknowledge the excellences of anyone.

What I was saying is that those who were senior used to fully respect each other and accept each other's seniority.

Imām Nāfi' Never Issued A Fatwā While Hadrat Sālim Was Alive

Hadrat Sālim *rahimahullāh* and Imām Nāfi' *rahimahullāh* were about the same age and both of them benefited tremendously from Hadrat 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu*. The two were distinguished scholars of their time. Despite this, as long as Hadrat Sālim *rahimahullāh* was alive, Imām Nāfi' *rahimahullāh* abstained from issuing fatwā and relating Hadīth.¹

Sahl Tusturī Kisses Imām Abū Dāwūd

Hadrat Sahl ibn 'Abdillāh Tusturī *rahimahullāh* was a famous Sufi master. He was a contemporary of Imām

¹ سير أعلام النبلاء، ج ٥٥، ص ٢٧٣.

Abū Dāwūd *rahimahullāh*. He went to meet Imām Abū Dāwūd *rahimahullāh* on one occasion. The latter received him with utmost respect and seated him near him. Hadrat Sahl *rahimahullāh* said to Imām Abū Dāwūd *rahimahullāh*:

لِي إِلَيْكَ حَاجَةٌ

I have come to you with a need.

Imām Abū Dāwūd *rahimahullāh* asked him to express it. Hadrat Sahl *rahimahullāh* said: “You must first promise that you will certainly fulfil it if you can.” Imām Abū Dāwūd *rahimahullāh* said: “I promise to fulfil it provided it is possible for me.” Hadrat Sahl *rahimahullāh* said:

أَخْرَجَ إِلَيَّ لِسَانَكَ الَّذِي تُحَدِّثُ بِهِ أَحَادِيثَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ حَتَّى أَقْبِلَهُ

Take out your tongue with which you relate the Aḥādīth of Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam so that I may kiss it.

Imām Abū Dāwūd *rahimahullāh* had already promised, so he took out his tongue and Hadrat Sahl *rahimahullāh* kissed it.¹

These were the mutual bonds of love and respect of these personalities. Our condition is that we find it very difficult to even meet each other. We think to ourselves: “If someone sees me going to meet him, they will think I am a junior and the one I am going to meet is a senior.” Our criteria are all wrong.

The Lofty Position Of Sa’id ibn al-Musayyib

Hadrat Sa’id ibn al-Musayyib *rahimahullāh* was a distinguished Tābi’ī who was referred to as the pigeon of

¹ سير أعلام النبلاء، ج ١٣، ص ٢١٣.

the masjid¹ because he used to spend a major portion of his time in Musjid-e-Nabawī. For a period of 40 years he used to reach the masjid before the adhān of the five daily ṣalāhs.²

After the Battle of Hurrah, the Musjid-e-Nabawī remained closed for a few days. He was the only one left inside. Allāh *ta'ālā* must have willed that there must be at least one person in Musjid-e-Nabawī to perform ṣalāh in it. He was all alone, the lamps and windows were all shut down, so he could not know the time. It was difficult to ascertain the movements of the sun to calculate the different ṣalāh times. When it was the time for the first ṣalāh, an adhān was called out from the pure grave of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and Hadrat Sa'īd raḥimahullāh performed his ṣalāh. He relates: "There was no one else in the masjid, but whenever a ṣalāh time commenced, I would hear an adhān from the blessed grave. I would go forward, say the iqāmah and perform the ṣalāh on my own."³

He was a pious man of a very high level. Some scholars state that he did not miss the takbīr-e-ūlā for 40 years while others say that he did not miss it for 50 years.⁴ Furthermore, he was a son-in-law of Hadrat Abū Hurayrah radiyallāhu 'anhu. How much he must have benefited from him!? We regularly come across his name in the transmission chains of Ahādīth. Similarly, his views on juridical matters are found quite often. He enjoyed a lofty position in both knowledge and practice.

¹ قوت القلوب، ج ۲، ص ۱۶۸.

² تهذيب التهذيب، ج ۲، ص ۴۵.

³ سير أعلام النبلاء، ج ۵، ص ۱۲۹.

⁴ تاريخ الإسلام ووفيات المشاهير والأعلام، ج ۴، ص ۱۱۰۴. قوت القلوب، ج ۲، ص ۱۶۸.

Ibn al-Musayyib's Respect For Sulaymān ibn Yasār

Despite his high rank and position, if anyone came to him with an academic question he would say to the person: "Go to Sulaymān ibn Yasār *rahimahullāh* because he is the most knowledgeable among people."¹ On the other side, Sulaymān ibn Yasār *rahimahullāh* used to refer to him as one of the few remaining scholars of distinction.²

This mutual respect is to be found among the Tābi'ūn and the Taba' Tābi'ūn as well; and then among all those whose hearts were attached to the Hereafter. The fact of the matter is that this quality has been coming down from the era of the Sahābah *radiyallāhu 'anhum*.

The Mutual Respect Among Sahābah

An incident is related in *Bukhārī Sharīf*. Someone asked Hadrat Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī *radiyallāhu 'anhu* for a ruling related to inheritance. He replied: "This person will receive this percentage, and that person will receive that percentage..." He then added: "Go to Ibn Mas'ūd *radiyallāhu 'anhu* and he too will give you the same answer."

The question which crops up is that if he was so confident about what answer Ibn Mas'ūd *radiyallāhu 'anhu* will give, what was the need to send the person to him? It is possible that Hadrat Abū Mūsā *radiyallāhu 'anhu* wanted to pave the way and make it easy for the person to benefit from Hadrat Ibn Mas'ūd *radiyallāhu 'anhu* as well. The person went to Hadrat Ibn Mas'ūd

¹سیر أعلام النبلاء، ج ٥، ص ٢٦٤.

²سیر أعلام النبلاء، ج ٥، ص ٢٦٤.

radiyallāhu ‘anhu and explained the entire situation to him by saying: “I went to Hadrat Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī *radiyallāhu ‘anhu*, posed this question to him, and this is the answer which he gave me. He also asked me to come to you and I will get the same answer from you.”

Ibn Mas‘ūd *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* said:

لَقَدْ ضَلَلْتُ إِذَا وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِينَ

If I were to give the same answer, I will fall into error and I will not be able to remain on the straight path.

What he meant was that Hadrat Abū Mūsā *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* had erred in his answer. Hadrat Ibn Mas‘ūd *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* then gave him his answer.

My dear friends! Think about this. Do we have such courage? If someone asks us a question and we know the answer to it, will we give the answer and then advise the person to revert to some other scholar or muftī? If a reputable scholar or muftī sends someone to us, and his answer is wrong, will we have courage to say that his answer is wrong? We will fear this resulting into a fight. But this was not the case with the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ‘anhum*. Hadrat Ibn Mas‘ūd *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* stated that the answer was wrong and gave the correct answer.

The person went back to Hadrat Abū Mūsā *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* and related what Hadrat Ibn Mas‘ūd *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* said. Now look at what Abū Mūsā *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* had to say. He addressed all those who were present saying:

لَا تَسْأَلُونِي مَا دَامَ هَذَا الْخَبْرُ فِيكُمْ¹

¹ صحيح البخاري، كتاب الفرائض، باب ميراث ابنة الابن مع بنت، ح (٦٧٣٦).

Do not ask me for rulings as long as this erudite scholar is among you.

Ibn 'Umar Kisses His Son Sālim

Hadrat Sālim *rahimahullāh* was the son of Hadrat 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhumā*. He was from among the seven jurists of Madīnah Munawwarah, a man of knowledge and virtue. When Hadrat 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* used to meet him, he used to kiss him on his forehead. This is the Arab way of acknowledging a person's knowledge and virtue. Hadrat 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* used to kiss his son on his forehead and say:

شَيْخٌ يُقَبِّلُ شَيْخًا

One shaykh is kissing another shaykh.

Ibn 'Umar's Acknowledgement Of 'Āmir Sha'bī

On one occasion Imām 'Āmir Sha'bī *rahimahullāh* was speaking about the battles of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. He was speaking about what happened in the different battles, when they took place, the number of Sahābah *radiyallāhu 'anhum* who participated and so on. He was giving details about these battles when Hadrat 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* happened to pass by. On hearing him he remarked: "This person is relating the events as though he was personally with us. I do not recall them as well as he does. He has more knowledge of those events than me."

¹سير أعلام النبلاء، ج ٥، ص ٢٧٢.

[Just imagine]! A Saḥābī is saying this with regard to a Tābī'ī. He is saying that details of events which I myself witnessed are known better by him. In other words, he was directing the people to take benefit from Imām Sha'bī *rahimahullāh*.

Imām Aḥmad ibn Hambal Stands Up For Imām Dhuhālī

Imām Aḥmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullāh* was sitting among his students when Imām Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā Dhuhālī *rahimahullāh* arrived. Imām Aḥmad *rahimahullāh* was senior in age and rank. When Imām Dhuhālī *rahimahullāh* arrived, Imām Aḥmad *rahimahullāh* stood up out of respect for him. The entire assembly was astonished when he did this. This in itself shows that there was a difference in rank between the two. This is why the entire assembly was astonished at Imām Aḥmad *rahimahullāh* standing up. The latter then welcomed him respectfully. When Imām Dhuhālī *rahimahullāh* departed, Imām Aḥmad *rahimahullāh* addressed his son and his students: “You must go to Imām Dhuhālī and record Aḥādīth from him.”¹

Mutual respect among the past scholars is seen among the latter day scholars as well. This quality is very distinctly observed among our elders. There are many incidents in this regard. I will suffice with relating just one.

The Mutual Respect Between Ḥadrat Madanī And Muftī Shafī'

Ḥadrat Maulānā Husayn Aḥmad Madanī *rahimahullāh* and Ḥadrat Muftī Muḥammad Shafī' *rahimahullāh*

¹ تذكرة الحفاظ، ج ٢، ص ٨١.

differed on the issue of the partition of India. Despite this, there was no defect whatsoever in the mutual respect which they had for each other. Muftī Muḥammad Taqī ‘Uthmānī Sāhib relates: “Whenever my father [Muftī Muḥammad Shafī’ *rahimahullāh*] used to speak about this difference of opinion, he would most certainly speak in glowing terms about the academic and practical excellences of Ḥadrat Madanī *rahimahullāh*.” He adds: “I do not recall my father speaking about the difference of opinion as regards the partition of India without speaking about the excellences of Ḥadrat Madanī *rahimahullāh*.”¹

These two personalities also differed on a juridical issue. In addition to making *masah*² on leather socks, Ḥadrat Madanī *rahimahullāh* used to make *masah* on thick socks. Ḥadrat Muftī Muḥammad Shafī’ Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was of the view that *masah* on socks of this nature is not permissible. When Ḥadrat Madanī *rahimahullāh* learnt of this, he went to the Dār al-Iftā’, extracted texts from various books of jurisprudence in support of his view, and presented them to Ḥadrat Muftī Shafī Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. The latter was not convinced and remained firm on his view. On the other side, Ḥadrat Madanī *rahimahullāh* also remained firm on his view that *masah* on socks of this nature is also permissible, the *wuḍū’* will be correct and the *ṣalāh* will not be affected in any way.

On one occasion, both personalities happened to be at the same place. The lecturers of Dār al-‘Ulūm were also present. Ḥadrat Madanī *rahimahullāh* was the senior one. He performed *wuḍū’* for the maghrib *ṣalāh* and

¹ Special edition of *al-Balāgh: Beyād-e-Faqīh Millat Ḥadrat Muftī Muḥammad Shafī’ Sāhib, Muftī-e-A’zam Pakistan*, p. 320.

² Passing of wet hands.

performed masah on those socks. When he completed his wuḍū', he said: "According to Muftī Muḥammad Shafī' Sāhib this masah is not permissible." Muftī Sāhib replied without hesitation: "Most certainly. And I will not perform ṣalāh behind you at present." Ḥaḍrat Muftī Sāhib knew that Ḥaḍrat Madanī was the most senior, so he will be asked to lead them in ṣalāh. Ḥaḍrat Madanī *rahimahullāh* had obliterated himself completely. He said without any formality: "My ṣalāh behind you will be valid. You should therefore lead the ṣalāh and I will follow you."

Allāhu Akbar! Look at the grand status of these personalities. Ḥaḍrat Madanī *rahimahullāh* did not think to himself: "I am the senior one, people will ask me to go forward to perform the ṣalāh, I will go forward and Muftī Muḥammad Shafī' Sāhib will perform his ṣalāh separately." Instead, he asked Muftī Sāhib to be the imām.¹

My dear brothers! Both these personalities are our elders and we look up to them with respect. It is difficult for us to understand this selflessness. We will have to go to that era when these two were living, and when Ḥaḍrat Madanī *rahimahullāh* was considered to be the senior of Muftī Shafī' *rahimahullāh*. To say that the view of Muftī Muḥammad Shafī' Sāhib in this matter is different from mine's, so his ṣalāh behind me will not be valid, while my ṣalāh behind him will be valid, and this is why Muftī Sāhib must lead us in ṣalāh is a very great statement indeed. It demonstrates Ḥaḍrat Madanī's selflessness and also the mutual respect which existed between these two.

¹ *Ma'ārif-e-Muftī A'zam*, p. 243.

Respect For Everyone And Abstaining From Factionalism

One of the things we have to do is to put an end to creating barriers and factionalism. No matter which 'ālim we look at, we must feel within ourselves that he is a member of our fraternity and is our man. The situation at present is that if we differ on even a single issue with someone, we sever contact with him. How can we disregard the thousands of excellences in him just because of this one point of difference? He may well be from the Ahlullāh. We do not know what rank he holds in Allāh's sight. We cast these factors aside and look at everything in him in a negative way. We oppose him in every issue. We search for faults in everything related to him. We start backbiting each other to such an extent that no one's honour is left untarnished and the situation worsens towards accusations.

My dear friends! The first point is to put an end to fanaticism and factionalism. The second point is that we must respect each other. We must respect our elders, juniors and contemporaries. If we differ with someone on a certain point, it must not result in a gulf between us. Yes, we may have a difference on a certain issue, but interacting with the person, meeting him, and so on must continue. We must maintain sentiments of concern and fellow-feeling with each other. We have to consider full respect for each other.

A Valuable Point

Those who are in the field of rectification go to the extent of saying that if you see a person committing an evil, and you happen to meet him after 30-45 minutes, you must not allow any evil thoughts about him to creep into your heart because he may have repented. This does not apply to an 'ālim alone but to everyone. Even if you see

an ordinary man committing an evil, e.g. consuming wine, and you see him at some time later, you must not think to yourself that he is a consumer of wine. This is because he may have repented and become a friend of Allāh *ta'ālā*. If this precaution is laid down for an ordinary person, how much more noble thoughts we ought to have for the 'ulamā'!?

We Are Harming Ourselves By Not Respecting Each Other

If we are not going to respect each other and do not have noble thoughts about each other, we will be causing harm to our own selves. This is because all the 'ulamā' are like a body, and every 'ālim is a part of our body. If we cut him off, we will be harming ourselves. Mutual respect will increase the respect of everyone. This is why we also have to acknowledge the excellences of each other and respect one another.

Returning To The Original Topic

We were talking about Imām Rabī'atur Ra'y *rahimahullāh* and the accolades which eminent 'ulamā' showered on him. I was going to speak about the rank of Imām Rabī'atur Ra'y *rahimahullāh* but other points came in-between. Now that very little time is left, I will quote his statement and explain it briefly. This was the actual topic of discussion for today. If Allāh *ta'ālā* avails us with another opportunity, we will – Allāh willing – try to explain whatever is left of it.

The Statement Of Imām Rabī'atur Ra'y

Imām Rabī'atur Ra'y *rahimahullāh* said:

لَا يَنْبَغِي لِأَحَدٍ عِنْدَهُ شَيْءٌ مِّنَ الْعِلْمِ أَنْ يُضَيِّعَ نَفْسَهُ^١

It is not right for a person who has any portion of knowledge to waste himself.

Even if a person has very little knowledge and no matter what level of scholar he is, he must not waste himself. The question is how can an 'ālim waste himself? What actions would cause him to become wasted? What matters must he be particular about to save himself from becoming wasted? What does Imām Rabī'atur Ra'y *rahimahullāh* want to say to the scholars? The 'ulamā' provide various explanations to this.

Do Not Make Knowledge A Means For Wealth

One meaning is that an 'ālim must not waste himself by making knowledge a means for acquiring wealth. If he does this, he will become wasted. This knowledge is for the Hereafter and only the Hereafter must be sought through it. It will be most saddening if this knowledge is used to acquire this world. Mullā 'Alī Qārī *rahimahullāh* writes in *Mirqāt* with reference to Hasan Baṣrī *rahimahullāh* who saw a man demonstrating some tricks with a piece of rope. Hasan Baṣrī *rahimahullāh* stopped and said to his students:

هَذَا أَحْسَنُ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا فَإِنَّهُ يَأْكُلُ الدُّنْيَا بِالدُّنْيَا، وَأَصْحَابُنَا يَأْكُلُونَ الدُّنْيَا بِالذِّينِ^٢

This man is better than those of our fraternity because he is earning of this world through worldly means, whereas people of our fraternity are acquiring of this world in the name of religion.

¹صحيح البخاري، كتاب العلم، باب رفع العلم وظهور الجهل.

²مرقاة المفاتيح، ج ١، ص ١٠٢.

Thus, the first point is that it does not befit an 'ālim to make his knowledge a means for acquiring of this world, and waste himself in this way.

Do Not Make Knowledge A Means Of Proximity To The Wealthy

The second meaning of this statement is that knowledge should not be made a means for gaining proximity to the wealthy and affluent people, and destroying one's self in this way. A person enjoys a certain position by virtue of his knowledge. He is an imām, a shaykh, a shaykh al-Hadīth, a judge, a principal and so on. Due to this position of his, everyone wants to establish a contact with him. The poor come to him, the rich come, ordinary people come, and so do government officials. Instead of giving equal attention to all these groups of people, he focuses his attention on the wealthy and affluent, and makes efforts to gain their proximity. An 'ālim destroys himself in this way.

Hadrat Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* said:

أَنَا لَا أُدِلُّ الْعِلْمَ وَلَا أُحْمَلُهُ إِلَىٰ أَبْوَابِ السَّلَاطِينِ

I will not disgrace knowledge and I will not take it to the doors of the rulers.

Scholars must endeavour to their utmost to look at all members of the ummat with equality, and try to satiate each one with their knowledge. When 'ulamā' are not vigilant on their selves in this regard, they err and do not give the same attention to the poor as they do to the rich. Whereas the poor come with the sole intention of learning Dīn, and on account of which the path to the Hereafter is paved for us. It will be most strange to turn

¹إرشاد الساري، ج ١، ص ٥٥.

away from such people or to disregard them. As for the wealthy and people of authority, we must also direct our attention towards them with the intention of conveying Dīn to them. However, we must not ignore the danger of love for wealth or position entering our hearts and thereby damaging our Hereafter.

Safeguarding Knowledge

Another meaning [of the statement of Imām Rabī'atur Ra'y *rahimahullāh*] is that 'ulamā' must not waste themselves by forgetting the knowledge which they acquired. The one who acquires knowledge and then forgets it has in fact destroyed himself.

How can knowledge be protected against forgetting it? By practising on it and occupying oneself in proliferating and propagating it. If an 'ālim does not practise on his knowledge and has no concern for its proliferation, his knowledge will be wasted. Wasting knowledge which was acquired through effort is synonymous to wasting one's self.

Conclusion

What we conclude from this is that it is totally inappropriate for a scholar to make his knowledge a means for acquiring wealth, gaining proximity to wealthy people, forgetting it by giving up practising on it or by not teaching and disseminating it; and destroying himself in this way. We have to focus our attention on these points and be worried about our protection. We have to be disinclined to this world, independent of the wealthy and affluent people, practise diligently on our knowledge, and be forever concerned about conveying it to others.

May Allāh *ta'ālā* make these points beneficial for me first of all, and then to all you friends. May Allāh *ta'ālā*

reward each and everyone of you abundantly for having encouraged and accommodated a person like myself who is lacking in both knowledge and practice. I am especially grateful to Hadrat [Maulānā ‘Abd ar-Ra’ūf Lājpurī Sāhib] and all those other senior ‘ulamā’ who always showed their affection towards me. I request you and those seniors to continue praying for me.

وَأَجْرُ دَعْوَانَا أَنْ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā* translation of this book was completed on 16 Muḥarram 1438 A.H./18 October 2016. We pray to Allāh *ta'ālā* to accept this humble effort and to make it a source of our salvation in this world and the Hereafter.

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ، وَثُبَّ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ

As with all human endeavours, there are bound to be errors, mistakes and slip-ups in the translation. I humbly request the reader to inform me of them so that these could be corrected in future editions. Constructive criticism and suggestions will be highly appreciated. I can be contacted via e-mail: maulanamahomedy@gmail.com

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