

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ كَمَا هُوَ اَهْلُهُ وَالصَّلٰوةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلٰى سَيِّدِ وُلْدِ اَدَمَ كَمَا يُحِبُّ وَيَرْضٰى بِاَنْ يُصَلِّىَ عَلَيْهِ

Allah Almighty, in Whose Name we begin, The Most Compassionate,

The Most Merciful

All Praise is due to Allah Almighty, Countless Peace and Blessings be upon

His Beloved Messenger – *may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him* – his family & his companions – *may Allah be pleased with them all*

The True 'Ulama are a Few

It is mentioned that Khalifah Sulayman bin Abdul Malik from the Umayyad Dynasty was considered as an extremely temperamental and stern person. When he once reached Mecca Shareef, he met the famous scholar from Madina Shareef, namely Hadrat Sayyiduna Saalim bin Abdullah - *may Allah be pleased with him*. He was struck by the Nur which appeared on the blessed face of this scholar. When the Khalifah saw his face, he became completely overwhelmed and asked him whether he could give the eminent scholar any gift. Hadrat Sayyiduna Saalim - *may Allah be pleased with him* - replied, "I am in the House of Allah Almighty I will never ask anyone besides Him for anything." When the Khalifah heard these words, he was even more surprised and kept looking at the face of this eminent scholar without saying a word. (Ruhul bayan. 6/66)

To beg someone for help can also become a source of great calamity and disrespect. At the same time, when one is actually in the House of Allah Almighty, how can one even think of asking someone else.

A'la Hadrat - *may Allah be pleased with him* - and the ruler of Rampur!

It is reported that the ruler or leader of Rampur, Nawab Haamid Ali Khan, always wanted to the opportunity of meeting Sayyidi A'la Hadrat, Imam Ahmed Raza - *may Allah be pleased with him* - especially when he had come to know of the immense knowledge and acumen of this great scholar. He had tried many times in the past to meet the great scholar but was always refused entrance. The reason that he was refused entrance is that this person had a leaning towards Shi'aism.

It is mentioned that once this same Nawab was travelling to Ninitaal on his special train and he was also in the company of Hadrat Peer Zada, Syed Shah Mehdi Mia from Mahrarah Shareef. He said that since Hadrat Mehdi Mia was from the blessed family of the spiritual masters of Sayyidi A'la Hadrat - *may Allah be pleased with him* - it would be a great idea if he intervened in this regard.

Hadrat Syed Mehdi Mia - *may Allah be pleased with him* - then sent a gift through someone to the great Mujaddid. When A'la Hadrat - *may Allah be pleased with him* - met this person who had the gift, he stood at the entrance of his house and did not even allow this person to enter. He then said to him, "Please convey my humble Salaams to Hadrat Sayyidi Mehdi Mia and please ask him what is the purpose of this gift. As a matter of fact, I am the one who should be sending a gift to him and not him sending a gift to me. Please return this gift to him. At the the same, the residence of this Faqeer is not in such a state where I can invite the head of a state and at the same time, neither am I learned in the rules of how to present myself in front of a Head of State." (Hayaat-e-A'la Hadrat, 192)

The sons of the Khalifah and their great urge to learn Ahadith.

It is mentioned that when Sultan Harun Rashid entered Kufah on his way to perform the Hajj, he called Hadrat Imam Abu Yusuf - *may Allah be pleased with him* - to gather the great Muhadditheen of this area.

All of them arrived in the court of the Sultan except Hadrat Sayyiduna Abdullah bin Idris - *may Allah be pleased with him* - and Hadrat Sayyiduna Esa bin Yunus - *may*

Allah be pleased with him. In spite of this, the Khalifah sent his two sons, Ameen and Ma'mun, to go and visit these two eminent scholars and also learn Hadith from them.

They then arrived in the court of Hadrat Sayyiduna Abdullah bin Idris - *may Allah be pleased with him* - and the great scholar then narrated one hundred Ahadith in front of these two young men. When he had completed, Mamun then asked, "Our dear uncle! If you give us permission, we will also be able to narrate these one hundred Ahadith in front you as well."

The great scholar then gave them permission to do so. The great scholar was shocked at the memory of this young man.

They then visited Hadrat Sayyiduna Esa bin Yunus - *may Allah be pleased with him* - and also asked him to recite a hundred Ahadith in front of them and they were so impressed by the great scholar that they handed him one thousand Dirhams. However, the eminent scholar replied, "As repayment for reciting these Ahadith, I will never even accept a glass of water from you." (Tadkiratul Huffaaz, 1/259)

From this incident, we also come to realise that besides the 'Ulama of that era, even the members of the royal household displayed immense respect and reverence for knowledge. At the same time, the rulers and influential people of that era also considered it an honour to bestow gifts and financial aid to the 'Ulama.

In today's time, the complete opposite has occurred. Rich and influential people have become more miserly and stingy as time goes on. As for those who serve and honour the 'Ulama, such people in the world can be counted on one's fingers. That is how few they are. They would give thousands to poets and qawwali singers, but will refuse to help any Sunni scholar. At the same time, they have this evil within them that no money or financial aid should be given to any Sunni scholar. This has placed tremendous stress on the Ulama. If they continue to do business, then finally the common people would cease to recognize what is Halaal and what is Haraam.

If they continue to spread and propagate religion, then the common people become so oblivious of their responsibility towards the 'Ulama that in most cases the 'Ulama

become paupers. Therefore, there has to be a plan in which both communities are able to fulfil their responsibility to religion.

One of the greatest contributing factor is also the humility and the sincerity which is displayed by the 'Ulama. We will see from the following incidents that the 'Ulama of the past displayed immense humility for their elders.

It is mentioned that when Imam Fakhrul Islam was nominated as the head teacher in Madressah Nizaamiyah in Baghdad Shareef. On the first day when he sat in his position, he began to think this is that blessed place where eminent 'Ulama such as Shaikh Abu Ishaq Shirazi - *may Allah be pleased with him* - and Hujjatul Islam, Shaikh Imam Ghazzali - *may Allah be pleased with him* - used to deliver their lessons to the public. When this thought came into his heart, he began to weep with deep emotion and for a very long time, he hid his face in his turban and wept. He also read the following lines: "The country has no eminent scholars anymore and those who have no quality of becoming an eminent scholar have become eminent scholars. How unfortunate that a person like me has become a leader among scholars." This was merely his humility which was been displayed even though, he himself was one of the great Sunni scholars of his era. (Ibn Kalakan, 1/465)

Imam Daare Qutni Muhadith - *may Allah be pleased with him*, at the age of nine years old attended the classes of Imam Ambari - *may Allah be pleased with him*. While a Hadith was been recorded, Imam Ambari - *may Allah be pleased with him* - recorded the name of someone who was not the actual narrator. He did not feel it respectful to say anything himself to the learned scholar and conveyed this message through another student.

The following Jumu'ah when Daar-e-Qutni - *may Allah be pleased with him* - arrived in the same classes, such was the honesty of Imam Ambari - *may Allah be pleased with him* - that he made clear to everyone present that during the last lessons he had mentioned the wrong name as one of the narrators and he was corrected by a certain young man. (Tadkiratul Huffaaz, 3/61)

Such was the honesty of these eminent scholars that they did not consider it below their dignity to correct themselves and also did not consider it an insult that a small boy had corrected them. In other words, these people had genuine respect for knowledge.

One day, Moulana Yusuf, who was the official Qadi of Constantinople, came out of the Masjid and found that there was an official from the government who was calling him to the official residence of the senior advisor of the ruler. At that moment, he had tied a small turban and this was actually a mark of disrespect to wear such a small turban and enter any official building. However, the eminent scholar did not change his turban and entered this area with this small turban. When certain people complained to him about it, he mentioned that there should be more respect and decorum displayed in the Divine Court of Allah Almighty. He also mentioned that he had worn the same turban and performed Salaah and presented himself in the Divine Court of Allah Almighty and if this was proper in this court, surely there was nothing wrong with him appearing with the same turban in front of the government. In fact, such was the effect of his word that everyone in the government were well pleased with his honesty and straight forward answer and began to respect him even more for this. (Shaqaa'iq-e-Numaaniyah, 234)

The answer of Shah Abdul Aziz - *may Allah be pleased with him* - to the head of the Church.

It is reported that once, the head priest of a Christian Church approached Hadrat Shah Abdul Aziz Dehlwi - *may Allah be pleased with him* - and asked him a question, "You say that your Prophet is the beloved of Allah Almighty. However, when his grandson was been killed by Yazeed, why did he not ask Allah Almighty to protect his grandson?"

This was obviously a question which was meant to insult Islam and the Holy Prophet - *may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him* - and was asked in a scornful manner. Hadrat Shah Abdul Aziz - *may Allah be pleased with him* - replied, "Dear priest! Our Prophet - *may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him* - did in fact ask Allah Almighty, however, Allah Almighty Said, "O beloved, the Jews who had placed my own son on a cross and yet I could not save him, how can I save your grandson?"

When this priest heard this reply, he was stunned and merely looked at the face of Shah Abdul Aziz - *may Allah be pleased with him* - and could not say a word.

There is also another Arabic proverb which explains that in most times when a person lives in the same period, sometimes this creates disrespect. Or as they say in English, ‘familiarity breeds contempt.’

However, this was never the case with the rightly guided ‘Ulama. Even though ‘Ulama may have lived in the same time and era, yet they always displayed respect and honour for each other. (Ruhani Hikaayah)