

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ كَمَا هُوَ أَهْلُهُ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ أَدَمَ كَمَا يُحِبُّ وَيَرْضَى بِأَنْ يُصَلَّى 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*

We have abandoned Knowledge

It is mentioned that one day Khalifah Baghdad Mehdi called all the experts in the various faculties of learning to his court. He began to give each person ten thousand Dirhams as a gift and reward.

At first, the people who were the master Qaris were called forward. Among all of these Qaris, Abdullah bin Muslim Hazali was also present. Each one of them received ten thousand Dirhams and left the court. After them, the great orators were then called. Again, Abdullah bin Muslim Hazali also entered with this group and again each one of them was given ten thousand Dirhams.

After them the best archers were called forward and again in this group, Abdullah bin Muslim Hazali was also present. They also walked away with ten thousand Dirhams.

In fact, whichever group was called forward, Abdullah bin Muslim Hazali was also called forward with them. It was an accepted fact in that period that this person was a true expert in every field. In fact when the Khalifah saw him coming forward all the time, he clearly mentioned to everyone that he had never known someone who was an expert and master in every field as Abdullah bin Muslim Hazali.

When we look at the ‘Ulama of the past, we will find many names and examples of ‘Ulama who were masters in many fields and faculties of learning. This should certainly be a lesson to the students of this period. They should endeavour to learn every field of education so that they are able to answer any question which is presented to them.

But sadly, for the students of today we can safely say that “know sweet nothing”. Even something which is important to know, that also they seem to be completely unaware of. If you ask them that a certain person is saying something which is un-Islamic, they will present their Kufr of saying “love all and malice to none”. If that is the case, then they must certainly be great friends with Satan. If you ask them about a certain person who has made a certain comment about Islam, instead of giving you a straight answer, they beat around the bush giving the impression that they actually live in a bush.

If they were living in the blessed time of the Ashaab, we are sure they would have come in between and stopped Muslims from killing the Munafiq and Kaafirs and also declared “love all and spite no one.” The good part is that the blessed Ashaab would have also beheaded these people as well. Certainly, it would have made it much easier in this period for the Muslim because all of the heads of these people would have been removed in that period.

It is mentioned that one day, while he was in the blessed classes of Hadrat Sayyiduna Imam A’zam - *may Allah be pleased with him* - news was given to Hadrat Sayyiduna Abu Yusuf - *may Allah be pleased with him* - that one of his children had passed away. He realized that if he leaves the classes he would certainly lose the benefit of these classes, hence he left the responsibility of performing the burial rites of this child to someone else and remained in class.

In like manner, once Imam Yahya - *may Allah be pleased with him* - who was the person who had recorded the blessed *Mu’atta Shareef* was sitting in the class of Hadrat

Sayyiduna Imam Malik - *may Allah be pleased with him* - when there was loud noises outside. People began to scream that an elephant had come on the streets of Madina Shareef. All of the students ran outside to see this strange beast but Imam Yahya - *may Allah be pleased with him* - remained alone in the class. Hadrat Sayyiduna Imam Malik - *may Allah be pleased with him* - then said to him, "O Yahya! There are no elephants which are to be seen in your city of Antioch, therefore, you can also go and see this elephant."

Imam Yahya - *may Allah be pleased with him* - replied, "Hadrat! I have left Antioch to come and see you and to acquire knowledge from you, I did not leave my family to come and see elephants." (Ibn Khalakaan)

The reason for the downward spiral of nations and the reason for their high status.

One of the greatest reasons of this is the behaviour and attitude of the younger generation. It is seen that when a nation becomes an elevated and superior nation, one of the great reasons is that the younger generation busy themselves with the acquisition of knowledge instead of wasting their time and effort on sport and play. It is through this form of dedication that a nation becomes the leader of the day. The young people are prepared to face all types of hardships and struggles so that they can achieve a lofty status and with this, the nation itself also progresses.

However, when a nation begins to spiral downward, we notice that the younger generation are not serious and are more involved in sport and play and other useless activities. Finally, this nation either destroys itself or the nation is obliterated from the face of the earth.

It is mentioned that when Shaikhul Hadith, Mohammed bin Ayub Razi - *may Allah be pleased with him*, passed away, one of the eminent scholars of that period wept uncontrollably. When the people saw his immense grief, they asked him the reason for this. He replied, "You people used to restrict me from travelling and now the great scholar, Shaikhul Hadith Mohammed bin Ayub Razi - *may Allah be pleased with him*, has passed away. Who will I be able to acquire knowledge from?" In other words, in those days, people actually felt the loss of a great Islamic scholar.

His family then comforted him. They immediately prepared a trip for him and through his uncle, he arrived in a place called Nisaa. At that place, he met the Shaikh of his time, Abu Sufyan Muhaddith - *may Allah be pleased with him* - and when he started his lessons, then only was he satisfied. At that time, this young man in question, namely Imam Ismaili was only seventeen years old. (Tadkirah Al Huffaz)

Allahu Akbar! This was the spirit which was displayed by the young people of Islam in those days. No matter how arduous and difficult the journey was or how dangerous the journey, they were prepared to travel thousands of miles to acquire Islamic knowledge.

I remember that when we were in Pakistan studying, we used to sleep on a hard concrete floor with just a piece of cloth between us and the hard floor. One day, a very rich person came just after Zohar while we were sleeping due to the immense heat and he stood outside the room looking into the room through the window. He had his young son with him and he was telling his son that he wanted his son to grow up in this fashion while acquiring knowledge. Sad to say that the son only lasted about three months in Pakistan and then ran back to South Africa.

Again, it is the young people of those days that went out of their way to acquire knowledge and not only brightened their hearts with Prophetic knowledge but brightened the hearts of everyone around them with this Nur. This should indeed be a lesson to all the young Muslims of today.