

Title: Etiquettes for Teachers

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Introduction

In spite of all the well-intentioned efforts at the many Madaaris, the superior results which are expected of institutions of Deeni ta'leem are not forthcoming. Furthermore, we hear of such occurrences taking place at the Deeni Madaaris which are, regrettably, very far from the high standards set by our pious predecessors. Regularly we hear of the accursed strikes which take place at the Deeni Madaaris.

The very fabric of Islam, every facet of its belief and practice, the propagation and dissemination of its beautiful teachings, depends on the acquisition of *Ilm e Deen* (Knowledge of Deen). Fortunately, Allah ﷻ has not left us groping in the dark. We have a rich legacy left for us by our pious predecessors, a legacy based on sincerity, self-sacrifice, dedication and remaining true to the ways of the *Ulama-e-salaf* which can be traced to the glorious era of the first three generations after Rasulullah ﷺ.

Tragically, our students choose to ape the ways of the universities and colleges. That special connection with Allah ﷻ that is supposed to be present in the lives of the students and *ustaadhs* is non-existent. In the view of the students, the *ustaadhs* are ordinary employees and not worthy of the profound respect that is associated with the disseminators of the knowledge of the Qur'aan and Hadith. Noble Islamic character, willingness to work, and the unwavering pursuance of true *ilm* is being ignored and the results are tragically lamentable.

It is for these reasons that the moment the students have to face the world-at-large on completion of studies, they find themselves out of depth, and therefore, cannot serve the noble Deen or the Muslim community with any degree of efficiency or dedication.

Those who regard the attainment of *Deeni ta'leem* as just another occupation, do not regard this loss with much concern. But there are those who regard Deeni *ta'leem* as an important duty to Allah ﷻ, who regard it as

a form of worship, a source of ever blossoming good fortune, a stepping stone to (irfaan) an ultimate and profound recognition of and relationship with Allah Ta'ala. *Deeni Ta'leem* is an indispensable possible means of attaining success in this world and the success of the hereafter. Negligence to this most important duty is indeed evil and will certainly prove to be a source of deep regret. However if there is any concern for Islaam and Muslims then this need to rectify the situation will become evident.

The question then arises that what are the reasons for our failure in the present system to attain any degree of proficiency and success in the pursuit of true knowledge. This is what *Ahle Ilm*, the Ulama, and others who are concerned want to determine.

The reality is that any endeavour cannot come to perfect fruition if the correct procedure is not followed and just as important if the drawbacks and obstacles are not determined and eliminated. This, in essence, is the *rooh*, the soul of the effort.

In the present system which has been adopted, this *rooh* is absent. This rooh is not found in either *ta'leem* or *ta'allum* that is neither in teaching nor in learning. The luminaries of the recent past who are our senior ulama, Hadhrat Moulana Qaasim Nanotwi, Hadhrat Moulana Rasheed Ahmad Gangohi and Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (rahi-ma-humullah) and their noble followers had reached the pinnacle in this effort because, evidently, this *rooh*, which has been mentioned, was conspicuously present in their system. That is why their efforts are a reminder of the uloom of Samarqand, Bukhaara and Baghdaad of former times. There is no reason why, if in the present times, the same spiritually enriched system is adopted then examples of such luminaries and Ulama cannot be produced. This booklet "**Aadaabul Mu'allimeen**" or "**Etiquettes for Teachers**" is presented with the same concern. It explains ten etiquettes in a simple readable form and will prove to be extremely beneficial.

Hadhrat Moulana Qaari Siddeeq Ahmad Sahib Baandwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ whose personality, *ilmi* achievements, insight, foresight, sincerity and dedication needs no introduction.

Hadhrat's entire existence and endeavours has been consumed in this effort of teaching, learning, *islaah* and *tableegh*. It is quite clear that he has dedicated his life to this effort.

The esteemed writer, after spending a lifetime in the effort and gaining every first-hand experience in the pros and cons of teaching has written this booklet. The *asaatidha* would do well to model their lives on these golden advices. After learning the advices, it will become evident that such guidance emanates from piety and inspiration from Allah ﷻ and is derived from the Qur'aan and Sunnah. These are the same principles from which the previous ulama, the tabi'een and Sahaabah benefitted.

It is hoped that the *muallimeen* (teachers) will take benefit from this kitaab and thereby also benefit from the *faidh* and *barakaat* of the venerable author who has discussed in this book ten simple, easy etiquettes which, if followed, will certainly help attain a high degree of acceptance by Allah ﷻ. Hadhrat Qaari Sahib had a close relationship with the *Ahlullah* and the Ulama of the immediate past. His *ilm*, *taqwa* and sincerity were well known and his life was made *waqf* to learning and teaching Deen.

After reading this book, I have seen that all the *aadaab* have been extracted from the Qur'aan and Hadith which the Sahaaba, Tabi'een and the Ulama of the ummah had practiced upon. I hope that all the *asaatiza* obtain a copy of this book and benefit from it.

We make dua to Allah ﷻ to shower His everlasting favours upon Hadhrat Moulana (RA) and allow his *barakah* to continue till the day of Qiyaamah. *Aameen*.

Abdul Qayyum Mazaahiri.

First etiquette

Compassion for students

A teacher must have compassion for his students in the same way a father would have for his own children. Rasulullah ﷺ said:

أَنَا لَكُمْ مِثْلُ الْوَالِدِ لَوْلَدِهِ

“I am to you like a father is to his child”

Abu Haroon Abdi and Shahr ibn Haushab رحمه الله عليهما relate that when we visited Abu Saeed Khudri رضي الله عنه as students, he would say to us: “Welcome! O bequest of Rasulullah ﷺ. Listen! Nabi ﷺ has said: “Soon the world will become subdued to you and young people will come to you who will be thirsty for knowledge. They will desire to attain a deep understanding of Deen, (*Tafaqquh*). When they do come, teach them and treat them with kindness. Be tolerant with them and teach them the *Ahaadith*.” [*Jamiu Bayaanil Ilm*].

Do not punish children whilst you are angry. An angry doctor cannot cure a patient. Similarly, an angry teacher who has no self control will not be able to discipline his students thus causing more harm than good.

The counsellor, who advises with scorn, serves only to add venom to venom.

Experience has proven that kind words are more effective than harsh ones. Only an ignorant person, wishing to place something in a utensil, will first make a hole in it. With excessive beating and harshness, the heart of a child becomes like a sieve. It will be impossible to fill it with goodness.

Instilling fear into the child might be effective temporarily but has proven to be largely unsuccessful. In this day and age it develops into a major *fitnah*, which would prove to be a nightmare for the officials of the Madrasah, and have a negative impact on the reputation and administration of the madrasah.

That *ustaadh* who is incapable of rectifying the students' evil habits by himself displaying good character is not worthy of being an *ustaadh*. Generally, teachers do not pay attention to rectifying the wrongs within themselves thinking themselves to be perfect. Thus, we can well imagine the *fitnah* that can stem from one who is deficient yet thinks himself to be perfect.

To fill the heart of a child with fear has a similar effect as that of an icy wind on a delicate bud or a hot wind on gentle flowers.

Imam Ghazaali رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ has stated that a teacher has to be extremely tolerant. Hadhrat Abdul Qadir Jilaani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ has stated that as long as anger overcomes you, do not count yourself among the people of knowledge.

A pious person once mentioned that a teacher has to be an embodiment of love and kindness. Nobody is prepared to listen to harsh words just as a sick person is not prepared to take bitter medicine.

Allah ﷻ mentions in the Qur'aan:

وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ

“Had you been harsh and hard hearted, they would have dispersed from around you.”

It is recorded in *Ta'leemul Muta'allim* that the son of a kind *ustaadh* will one day also become an *Aalim*. The reason for this is that the *ustaadh* encourages the students to become Ulama. Through the

barakah of this encouragement and due to his kindness, his son too will become an *Aalim*.

Burhaanul A'imah رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ used to teach his two sons at mid-day after having taught the rest of his students in the morning. His sons mentioned to him that it was difficult to concentrate at that particular time. The father replied that it was necessary to teach those students who have come from distant places first. The sons readily agreed to the suggestion of the father. Through the *barakah* of their tolerance, they both became great *Aalims* of their time and gained much superiority over their peers.

Presently, because they are inclined to favour their own children, the children of many *ustaadhs* remain totally ignorant or they opt for a completely different occupation. This sadly results in the knowledge of Deen being totally lost in that particular household. One should never give preference to one's own children over other students.

It is the opinion of Imaam Abu Yusuf رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ that an *ustaadh* should treat his students with such love and kindness that an observer would think that these are the *ustaadh*'s own children. He has also mentioned that especially in gatherings of *ilm* one should avoid displaying anger.

It has been recorded in the biography of Imaam-e-Rabbani رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ that a student was once sitting on a thin carpet reciting the Qur'aan-e-Majeed. The Imaam reflected for a moment and felt that the carpet on which he was sitting was thicker and more luxurious than the student's. Immediately he took the better carpet and placed it beneath the student.

It was the practice of Hadhrat Moulana Mamlook Ali رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ, that whenever a student fell ill, he would go to his room and visit him. He would cheer him up as much as possible. In those days there were no boarding facilities and students used to stay in local Masaajid or board at people's homes.

I heard my *ustaadh*, Moulana Ameenud Deen Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ saying, that in the era of Hadhrat Moulana Zuhoorul Islam رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ, the founder of Madrasah Islamia in Fatehpour, a Bangali student fell extremely ill. It seemed that he was now in the final stages of his life. Hadhrat Moulana رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ went to visit him. On seeing Moulana, the student's eyes filled with tears. Moulana consoled him and said to him, "Fear not, *Insha Allah*, you will soon recover." Thereafter Moulana remained in sajdah for a long time making dua to Allah ﷻ: "Oh Allah! If a life is has to be taken, then Zuhoorul Islam's child, Atiyatullah, is present. This student is a foreigner. He lives here and is entrusted to me. Oh Allah! Spare him and Grant him good health." Within a short period, a message was sent to Moulana that he should proceed to his home immediately because Atiyatullah, his son, has fallen ill. By the time Moulana reached home, his son had already passed away. This was Moulana's only child. May Allah ﷻ fill both, father's and son's Qabar with Noor. *Aameen*.

Persian poem

May Allah ﷻ shower His mercy on such pure souls who established the foundations of good with their blood and perspiration

The compassion displayed by our senior Ulama are examples of the high standards set by our pious predecessors. Presently, for trivial issues, students are beaten up so severely that one thinks that perhaps the *ustaadh* has got hold of his enemy and is now taking his lifelong revenge. Hadhrat Hakeemul Ummat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ had forbidden the *ustaadhs* from hitting the students even if they did not know their lessons. In the Madrasah attached to the Khanqah, Hadhrat رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ was very firm that *ustaadhs* should never hit their students. The complaint should rather be forwarded to those in charge, who would thereafter mete out appropriate punishment to the offenders.

If the child harbours the slightest form of hatred in his heart for his *ustaadh*, the child will never be able to derive any benefit from him. On occasions it happens that by the *ustaadh* hitting the child, the latter forgets all that he has learnt. Some teachers do not even refrain from hitting the children on their faces whereas in this regard there is strong prohibition in the *Ahaadith*. These *ustaadhs* must ponder over what will be achieved from this. Could we have tolerated such treatment when we were students, that daily we should be beaten with a cane? If this is not so, then why is such nasty treatment meted out to students. Rasulullah ﷺ has mentioned in a Hadith:

لا يُؤمن احدكم حَتَّىٰ يَحِبَّ لِاخِيهِ مَا يَحِبُّ لِنَفْسِهِ

“No person can be a true believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.”

If a student does something wrong, then in a kind and polite way, make him understand. If this does not work, then reprimand the student. If this fails, inform the Madrasah authorities. If after repeated explanation and reprimanding, the student still fails to understand, then inform the students' parents or guardians that it is not feasible for the student to remain in this particular institution. It would be in the best interest of all concerned that the student enrolls elsewhere. Perhaps he may learn studiously there. It is not intelligent of a person that, in order to rectify someone else, he destroys himself.

Once Hadhrat Moulana Gangohi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ was teaching in the courtyard of the masjid. Suddenly it began to rain. All the students hurriedly took their books and rushed to the Masjid. Hadhrat Moulana رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ picked up all the shoes of his students and kept it in a safe place, out of the rain. This was indeed a display of real concern for the students, and of course, Hadhrat's own *tawaadhu* (humility).

On one occasion, Sufyaan bin Uyaynah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ became angry with his students and in that state he uttered:

لقد هممت ان لا احدثكم شهرا

“I have made a firm resolution not to teach you all for a month.”

On hearing this one of his students remarked:

يا ابا محمد الن جانبك وحسن قولك وتاس بصالحى سلفك واجمل
 مجالسة جلساءك فقد اصبحت بقية الناس وامينا لله ورسوله على العلم
“O Abu Muhammad رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ Show kindness, speak good words, take the path of your predecessors and do good to those whom you are sitting with because you are a relic of the pious predecessors and you are responsible for the knowledge of Allah ﷻ and His Rasul.”

When Ibn Uyanah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ heard this, his anger subsided and he cried profusely. He then recited the following poem.

خلت الديار فسدت غير مسود
 ومن البلاء تفردي بالسود

“The town has become barren and is left without a king. I have had to assume leadership, which to me is quite distressing. Being the king is a great test for me.”

Thereafter he recommenced his lessons and all the students benefited tremendously till the conclusion of their studies.

Had our elders not been so lenient and tolerant, how would the knowledge of Deen ever reached us? The truth of the matter is that they had the true yearning to spread the Deen of Allah ﷻ, whereas

we are lacking tremendously in this regard. It is for this reason that they would tolerate difficulties.

It is recorded in *Bustaanul Muhadditheen* that Imaam Ahmad bin Abdullah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ was extremely sympathetic towards his students. He would teach them from the morning to Zohar continuously. On completion of the lessons, he used to go home. The students would accompany him home and on the way, they used to recite one para of the Holy Qur`aan to him.

I once heard from my *ustaadh*, Hadhrat Mufti Mahmood Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ that a certain person had been sent by his *ustaadh* to Khandlah to teach. Before his departure, he was advised to teach solely for the pleasure of Allah ﷻ and not to ask for any of his needs from the local people. He was further advised that whatever was decreed for him would most definitely reach him. Accordingly, he began teaching in the local Musjid.

After a few days, the Musallies began harassing him. They informed him that he would no longer be able to teach in the Musjid. He replied: 'Brothers! Please understand I do not wish to be the Imaam in this Musjid. I do not want your food nor am I asking for a salary. If you remove me from this Musjid, I will sit under a tree and teach the children. In no way am I prepared to leave this village. Those responsible for my coming here have emphasized that I should never leave this place.'

Once one of his students ran away from the Madrasah. He personally went out in search of that student. After much investigation, the *ustaadh* learnt that the student had gone to Multaan. He travelled all the way to Multaan and brought him back. Eventually the village people understood their mistake. They came to the *ustaadh* and asked his forgiveness. They also asked him to resume teaching in the Musjid. He accepted their offer, commenting that on the insistence of the people he had left, and on their request he would return.

Hadhrat Mufti Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ also mentioned that this particular *ustaadh* benefited the people of that locality tremendously. One of the many illustrious students of this great scholar was Hadhrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyas رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ, whose favour and beneficence has reached every corner of the world.

Second etiquette

Sincerity of intention

In every facet of our lives, we should strive in following our beloved Nabi ﷺ. The faculty of teaching is no exception. Whilst teaching, we should never be desirous of obtaining the dunya. One should only teach for the pleasure of Allah ﷻ and for earning the *aakhirah*. Whatever salary a person receives, he should be content with it. A sign of sincerity is that one does not leave his place of teaching for another institute, merely for some worldly gain or to earn some luxuries and a handsome salary. If a person does so, he has made his *Ilm (knowledge)* a means of attaining this world. Nabi ﷺ has strongly prohibited this. It is mentioned in a Hadith:

من تعلم علما مما يبتغي به وجه الله لا يتعلمه الا ليطلب عرضا من الدنيا
لم يجد عرف الجنة يعني ريجها

“The one who acquires knowledge of Deen through which he could earn the pleasure of Allah ﷻ, but instead he does so only so that he can gain the pleasures of the world, then such a person will not even smell the fragrance of Jannah. (Abu Dawood, Ibnu Majah)

Yahya bin M'aaz رَحِمَهُ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ has mentioned that when a person seeks knowledge and wisdom for worldly reasons, the *Noor* and splendour of the effort is lost.

Hadhrat Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ has stated that if you see an *Aalim* who has love for this world, then treat him suspiciously in matters regarding Deen. The reason for this is that whatever a person is inclined to, his attention will be directed towards that. An *Aalim* should never allow greed to enter his heart. Many a time a person suffers disgrace

because of this. The enjoyment of some temporary worldly comforts whilst suffering disgrace therein is certainly not a sign of any intelligence!

بئس المطاعم حين الذل تكسبها

القدر منتصب والقدر مخفوض

“How evil is that food obtained through disgrace. The pot is left to cook on the fireplace and one’s honour is buried in the ashes”

نا نم افزو دو آبرو یم کاست

بینوائی بہ از مزلت درخواست

Begging has increased my sustenance and decreased my honour. The honour in poverty is far greater than the disgrace of begging

اے طائر لاہوتی! اس رزق سے موت اچھی

جس رزق سے آتی ہو پرواز میں کوتاہی

Oh heavenly destined soul! Death is preferable to such rizq which diverts your efforts in attaining your heavenly destination

If possible, one should serve the Deen of Allah ﷻ without any remuneration. If this is not possible then the *ustaadh* must at least be content with whatever he earns with patience and gratitude. He should continue with his work, having total confidence in Allah ﷻ, and the conviction that The Being for whom I am striving is aware of my condition and He will sustain me through unseen means. Amongst our pious predecessors, there were many who adopted a similar approach.

The point the respected author is making, is that, the person who is engaged in the effort of Rasulullah ﷺ, should adopt a lifestyle which

is closest to the lifestyle of Rasulullah ﷺ, so that this effort will gain Allah's ﷻ acceptance, and His assistance.

Khateeb رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ has recorded in his famous book 'Al Kifaayah' concerning the famous Hafiz-e-Hadith, Hammaad bin Salimah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ, that this great scholar had a student who travelled to the Far East for purposes of trade, and it was here that he had earned himself a fortune.

Out of love for his *ustaadh*, he presented some gifts to him. On seeing the gifts, Hammaad رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ said: “You will have to decide, either I accept your gifts, and stop teaching you Hadith, or, I do not accept your gifts, and continue teaching you”. [Kifaaya Pg153]

Abu Abdur Rahmaan Sulami رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ once presented a few camels to Umar bin Huwais رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ. He refused the gift saying that he had taught his child to recite the Qur'aan Shareef and for the teaching of the Qur'aan, he could not take any remuneration. (*Tabqaat ibn Saad*)

Isa ibn Yunus رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ held a very high position in the narration of Hadith. For three generations, *Huffaz-e-Hadith* were born in his family. Once, Ja'far Barmaki رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ, the Wazeer of Haroon ar Rasheed رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ, gave him a hundred thousands dirhams. He refused it saying: “I do not wish to attach a value to the Hadith of Rasulullah ﷺ.”

Once Mamoon-ar-Rasheed after listening to some *Ahaadith* from Isa ibn Yunus رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ presented a huge sum of money to him but the latter refused saying:

لا شربة ماء

“No! Not even a sip of water.”¹

¹ Meaning that, I will not accept an amount, even to the value of a sip of water, in remuneration for narrating Ahadith. (translator)

Allamah Zahabi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ once commented about Zakariyyah ibn Adi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ, who was a renowned narrator of authentic *Ahaadith*. He writes that once the eyes of Ibn Adi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ began to pain. Someone presented some surmah to him. Ibn Adi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ asked this person whether he had studied *Ahaadith* under him. After receiving a positive reply, Ibn Adi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ remarked that if he were to accept the surma, this would be tantamount to having accepted remuneration for teaching *Ahaadith*.

Ibrahim Al-Harbi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ had lived a life of abstinence and piety. On many occasions, the khaleefah of the time, Mu'ttazid Billah, sent large amounts of wealth to him which he never accepted. Disheartened, he sent a message to the king saying: "Stop putting us through so much of perplexity. Either you stop sending money or we will have to move to some other place."

Abu Ya'la رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ was a great Muhaddith of the Arab peninsula. Renowned scholars like ibn Hibbaan, Abu Haatim and Abu Bakr Ismaeel رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِم were among his students. His acceptance among the people was such that when he passed away all the bazaars of Mosul closed. He always kept his intention pure when writing and compiling kitaabs. He kept himself occupied in teaching Hadith only for the sake of Allah ﷻ.

Hadhrat Moulana Qaasim Nanotwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ was once offered a salary of five hundred rupees, which in present times is equivalent to thousands of rupees. He replied that he was being called for his perceived perfections whereas he did not find any notable accomplishments in himself. Thereafter, he refused the offer and, for the sake of Allah ﷻ, continued to engage himself in the service of Deen.

Hadhrat Sheikhul Hadith Moulana Muhammad Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ had received many letters from Dhaka and Hyderabad. People were insisting that he come over. They stipulated a monthly salary of

approximately three thousand rupees. Hadhrat rejected the offer saying: “I do not want to live being obligated to the favours of others.”

Thereafter he continued his work of teaching and writing books at Mazaahirul Uloom without any remuneration. (May Allah ﷻ fill his *qabar* with *noor*.) See Aap Beti for details.

My *ustaadh* Qaari Abdul Hameed رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ the grandson of Qaari Abdur Rahman Pani Patti رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ taught without any remuneration. His younger brother Qaari Abdul Haleem Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ did the same. Hadhrat Moulana Fazl-e-Haq Sahib Pani Patti رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ also taught without any remuneration. I had the opportunity to learn *Qudoori* and *Hidaayatun Nahwu* from him.

In the present times, such people are engaged in the learning and teaching of Deen, who have no means of earning a livelihood. If they follow this route, they will never be able to serve Deen with any degree of efficiency. For this reason, there can be no objection in taking a salary. However, earning a salary must not be the purpose of *ta'leem* (learning and teaching,) as has been mentioned above.

Once Hadhrat Murtadha Hasan رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ said to Hakeemul Ummat Hadhrat Thaanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ, “Hadhrat, I feel uneasy earning a salary. It seems that by taking a salary one is selling Deen.” Hadhrat Thaanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ replied: “This should not be construed as selling one’s Deen. In present times one must draw a salary. By doing this, one will find that the work will be done with greater responsibility. By accepting remuneration, the work remains an *Amaanah*, a duty to be fulfilled. Without taking a salary, one’s commitment remains questionable.”

Moulana Murtadha Hasan رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ mentioned: “By taking a salary we become aware of the benefits but what is the cure for the doubt that prevails.” In reply, Hadhrat Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ said: “Consider the situation where a person is serving Deen. He earns a

salary at a certain place which is sufficient for the fulfilment of his needs. Thereafter, he gets an offer to teach at another place for a higher salary but he will not necessarily render a greater service to Deen in the second place as compared to the first. Thus if the reason for transfer to the second place is based on monetary consideration, then this would amount to selling one's Deen."

With great anguish and remorse, I have to state that in this time and age our goal for serving Deen is nothing but attaining the dunya. Consequently in the present times, we will find only a handful of individuals who are serving Deen solely for the sake of Deen itself. For this reason we find that a person after spending much time in one place, and no sooner does he receive an offer from another place for a higher salary, he moves to the second place, even though there is a loss to the place that he has left and no extra Deeni work or benefit is rendered to the place that he is going to.

Hadhrat Moulana Abdur Rahmaan Pani Pati رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ used to teach continuously from Fajr to Asr and at times right up to Maghrib. Occasionally he used to get a chance to rest in the afternoon. He was an expert in every field of *Ilm*. Offers with higher salaries had come to him from various quarters but he never left 'Madrasah Arabia Gumdaan' in Pani Patt. He passed his life selflessly earning only twenty five rupees a month.

My uncle and my *ustaadh*, Hadhrat Moulana Sayyid Ameenud Deen رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ, by whom I completed a few Paras' of the Qur'aan Shareef and studied Faarsi and the initial books of Arabic, was always engaged in teaching. His salary was only ten rupees a month and that too, not every month. Allah ﷻ put so much *barakah* in this small sum of money that not only could he cover his expenses, but he would help others as well. He would also entertain guests regularly at his house.

Third etiquette

Welfare of students

An *ustaadh* should always keep the welfare of his students at heart. In this regard the following should be kept in mind:

- (a) If an *ustaadh* is unable to see to the needs of the students such as boarding and lodging, then alternate arrangement should be made to fulfil their needs.

It has been mentioned that Hadhrat Imaam Abu Hanifa رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ learnt that his student Imaam Abu Yusuf رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ was very poor and that his mother required him to earn a living to fulfil their basic needs such as food, etc. Imaam Abu Hanifa رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ stipulated an amount of money for him, which was sufficient to meet his and his mother's needs.

From this incident, we learn that if a student is in such a condition and he has a lot of zeal for knowledge then arrangements should be made for his needs and if necessary the needs of his family as well. Through this student, thousands of lives can change, *Insha Allah*.

Our pious predecessors had gone to the extent that even after a student qualified and the *ustaadh* became aware of the student's poverty, the *ustaadh* would discreetly make some arrangements for the student so that the latter could serve Deen efficiently.

Muhammad bin Isa رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ says that whenever Abdullah Ibn Mubaarak رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ travelled to Syria and Tartoos, he stayed at a lodging in *Raqqah*. Here he met a youngster who studied under him. Once whilst staying at the same lodging, he did not see the student. On enquiry, he discovered that the student had been in debt for approximately ten thousand dirhams and had been imprisoned by his creditors. Abdullah bin Mubaarak رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ secretly paid all the creditors and arranged for the release of the student. He thereafter

took an oath from the creditors that they would not reveal his secret. After having done this, Ibn Mubaarak رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ left immediately so that the student would not know of his involvement. When the student was freed, he returned to the inn. Learning of Abdullah bin Mubarak's رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ arrival and departure he became grieved and immediately set out for Tartooos. After travelling some distance, he met Ibnul Mubarak رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ and explained to him the entire incident of his imprisonment. Abdullah bin Mubaarak رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ questioned him about his release. The student replied, "Some servant of Allah ﷻ stayed at the lodging. He paid the debt and had me freed. I don't know who he is." Ibn Mubaarak رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ replied that he should thank Allah ﷻ for freeing him from such a calamity. After the demise of Hadhrat Abdullah ibnul Mubaarak رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ, the creditors revealed the reality of the incident.

Once, the allowance of As'ad ibn ul Furaat رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ became exhausted. He did not mention it to anyone. When Imaam Muhammad رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ heard of it, he sent him eighty dinars (gold coins). He also financially assisted Imaam Shaafi'ee رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ on many occasions. Once, on giving him fifty dinars, he assured him that there was no need to feel indebted to him.

Whilst Imaam Shafi'ee رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ was staying in Iraq, his creditors placed him under house arrest. When Imaam Muhammad رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ heard of this he immediately paid off the debts and had him freed.

Such incidents are replete in the life of Hadhrat Mufti Mahmood Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ. Whenever he learnt of a student undergoing any financial difficulty, he assisted him in accordance to his means. Every year, there were always many students who received their allowance from Hadhrat رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ.

Sheikh Abdul Haqq Muhaddis Dehlawi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ has mentioned regarding Sheikh Ally Muttaqi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ, the author of Kanzul Ummaal, that he would write kitaabs with his own hands and present

these to the students. He would make the ink himself to write these kitaabs. He would also provide pens and ink to the students. This was also the practice of Mullah Ahmad bin Taahir Patni رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ the author of *Majma'ul Bihaar*.

(b) (Never miss lessons!) Students should be regular and punctual at lessons.

If a student missed a lesson due to a valid reason it should be taught later. If a student is absent from class due to illness, then arrangements should be made to assist the student to the class. If this is not possible, the *ustaadh* should go to the student to teach him the lesson. This was the practice of the *Ulama-e-Salaf* which should be emulated.

Let us look at a few examples.

Rabi' bin Sulaymaan رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ says that his *ustaadh* Imaam Shafiee رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ would say to him, “If I could dissolve *Ilm* (knowledge) into liquid and feed it to you I would do so.”

Sufyaan Thauri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ would say on oath: “By Allah ﷻ, if the students cannot come to me then I will definitely go to them.” Once someone informed him that some students were studying without any specific intention. He replied: “Striving for knowledge itself is sufficient as an intention (*Niyat*).”

When this humble servant asked Hadhrat Moulana Haafiz Qaari Abdul Haleem Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ the grandson of Qaari Abdur Rahman Pani Patti رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ, to teach the Saba' Qiraat (7 different dialects of the Qur'aan), Qaari Sahib explained that he did not have the time, but that he would try to find time for me. When the other students heard about this, they also asked to join the class thus forming a large group. After the Zohar Salaah he taught Hidaayah. The students used to perform their salaah in their respective Masaajid and then arrive for their lessons. Qaari Sahib announced that those students who

wished to learn the “*saba' qiraat*” should read their Zohar salaah in his masjid as lessons would commence immediately after salaah. With great difficulty he managed to make some time for the lessons, which would continue until the students studying Hidaayah would gather for their lessons. After a few days Qaari Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ announced that since very little sabaq had been completed, lessons would have to continue after Esha as well.

A few days later, Qaari Sahib said that it was not possible to complete the entire Qur'aan Shareef in a year in that manner, thus the students must sleep over at his house and at the time of Tahajjud continue with sabaq. Qaari Sahib had separate guest quarters at his house. The students used to spend the night in this section. He would set the alarm and with great punctuality, offer his Tahajjud, and then teach until Fajar. All this effort was made solely out of affection for his students. Qaari Sahib never drew a salary from the Madrasah. It is not possible to find asaatiza with such piety and dedication anymore. May Allah ﷻ fill his Qabar with Noor. *Aameen*.

(c) New lessons should not be taught until previous lessons are learnt and understood.

In order to assist in the comprehension of lessons, a few questions should be drafted and the following day the students should be questioned orally. At least once a week, some questions should be asked so that their general knowledge increases. Hadhrat Mu'aaz bin Jabal ؓ narrates that once he was seated on a conveyance behind Nabi ﷺ. Nabi ﷺ asked, “Oh Mu'aaz do you know what right Allah ﷻ has over the people?”

I replied that Allah ﷻ and His Rasul ﷺ knew best. Rasulallah ﷺ then said:

“Allah’s ﷻ right over the people is that they worship Him and do not join partners with Him.”

Thereafter Nabi ﷺ enquired “O Mu’aaz ؓ! Do you know what right the people have over Allah ﷻ?” I replied that Allah ﷻ and His Rasul ﷺ know best. Nabi ﷺ replied: “The people’s right over Allah ﷻ is that if they act accordingly, He ﷻ will not punish them.” I then asked Rasulullah ﷺ “Should I inform the people of these glad tidings.” He replied: “No! Let them continue making *a’mal*.” (Mishkaat)

It has been narrated from Abdullah ibn Umar ؓ that once Rasulullah ﷺ said to the Sahaabah ؓ “There is a tree which does not shed its leaves. Its example is that of a believer. Which tree is this?” The Sahaabah began thinking of trees in the jungle but the thought occurred to Hadhrat Abdullah bin Umar ؓ that it referred to the date tree. However, due to shyness he did not speak. Eventually, the Sahaabah ؓ asked: “O Prophet of Allah ﷻ! Do tell us which tree it is.” He replied: “The date tree.” Later he narrated this incident to his father Umar ibn Khataab ؓ. Umar ؓ remarked: “If only you spoke out that which was in your heart!”

It is narrated from Nu'maan ibn Murrah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ that even before the *Ahkaam* (laws) of the Qur'aan were revealed, Nabi ﷺ asked: “What do you have to say about an alcoholic, a thief and an adulterer?” The Sahaabah ؓ replied: “Allah ﷻ and His Rasul ﷺ know best.” Nabi ﷺ then said: “All these actions are indecent and worthy of punishment but the worst type of stealing is to steal in salaah.” Sahaabah ؓ asked: “Can a person steal in salaah.” Nabi ﷺ replied: “The one who does not execute his ruku and sajdah correctly is guilty of stealing in salaah.”

Sa'eed ibnul Musayyab رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ once asked his students: “In which salaah does a person sit after every rakaat? The students failed to reply. Sa'eed رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ replied: “It is the Maghrib Salaah in which the first rakaat was missed and you joined in the second rakaat thus after every rakaat you will sit.”

- (d) **If an ustadh realises that he has erred in a lesson, then he should rectify the mistake immediately. If a student shows the correct explanation of any *ibaarat* (sentence), then accept his opinion. This displays the virtue and integrity of the *ustaadh*, not his deficiency. The students' confidence in the *ustaadhs'* piety, truthfulness and reliability increases.**

Muhammad bin Kaab Al-Qurazi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ narrates that once a person posed a question to Hadhrat Ali ؑ which he answered. Another person said: "O! Ameerul Mu'mineen, the mas'alah is not as you have explained, but this is the correct explanation." Hadhrat Ali ؑ replied: "Without doubt, what you are saying is correct. I have erred."

Once Ameerul Mu'mineen Hadhrat Umar ؑ announced that no person was allowed to stipulate a *mahar* (dowry) of more than 40 *Awqiya*¹ of gold, even though she may be the daughter of wealthy person. If anyone did stipulate an amount greater, he threatened to confiscate the excess and deposit it into the *Baytul Maal*. Amongst the women, a very tall woman with a flat nose stood up and objected: "O Ameerul Mu'mineen you have no right to do this." Ameerul Mu'mineen asked why not. The woman replied: "The *aaayat* of the Qur'aan

و ان اتيتم احدهن قنطارا فلا تاخذوا منه شيئا

If you have given to any of your wives abundant wealth then do not take the least bit of it back.

When Ameerul Mu'mineen heard this, he spoke in a loud voice saying: "The woman has spoken correctly and the man has erred."

¹ A type of weight / measure

Moulana Gilaani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ has said that when Sayed Ismail Balgirami رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ went to study under Moulana Abdul Hakeem Siyalkoti رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ he placed him in one of the groups in the Madrasah. Moulana was too busy and it was impossible to teach Sayed Sahib individually. Sayed Ismail رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ did not ask any questions and would quietly listen to all the lessons. One day Mullah Abdul Hakim رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ asked him: “Some time has passed already and you have not asked a single question. How will you benefit in this way?” Sayed Ismail رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ replied: “If you have any free time I will come to you. I feel it is not appropriate for me to ask questions as I will be encroaching on the rights of other students.” Mullah Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ told him to come after Asar. They began discussing a certain mas’alah which continued till Maghrib. After Maghrib the discussion continued till Esha. Mullah Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ decided that tomorrow we will stop all the lessons and explain this mas’alah. For three days continuously this discussion continued. Eventually Mullah Abdul Hakim رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ asked the student regarding his opinion on this mas’alah. Sayed Ismail رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ, without mentioning his name presented a *tahqeeq* (research) and told the *ustaadh* that a *tahqeeq* in this regard has been prepared. Mullah Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ saw this research and was very pleased.

- (e) **Intelligent pupils should not be grouped together with weak pupils. They should be taught in accordance with their capability and intelligence so that their time does not get wasted.**

It is mentioned about Imaam Muhammad رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ that he would teach during the day and continue through the night. However, these lessons were not for the general public. The lessons were for those students who travelled from distant places and would come with great enthusiasm but had less time available. Therefore, this time was reserved exclusively for them.

I have personally found my teachers to be very compassionate to their students, making substantial effort on students even out of

Madrasah time, stating that their own teachers had done the same for them.

In the years I studied in Mazahirul Uloom my *ustaadh* Moulana Ameer Ahmad رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ and many other *asaatidha* dealt with us in a similar manner. I had studied many additional kitaabs under him out of Madrasah time. May Allah ﷻ shower His infinite mercies upon him.

Hadhrat Moulana Ajub Noor Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ lived in a place called *Kohaath Banu*. He mentioned that he had completed the entire *Aalim* course in three years. His ability was such that there was no subject in which he did not attain excellence. Once he related that before qualifying he had read *Qaadhi Mubaarak* (name of a book) twenty two times.

I had personally seen him teaching difficult books including *Qaazi Hamdullah*, *Shams Bazgah*, *Meer Zaahid*, *Umoor Aamah*, *Tasreeh* and *Sharah Chaghmeeni* from memory. Wherever authors or commentators made mistakes he would mark the error and provide the proper explanation so that no one may be misled or misguided by the error.

He taught the second part of *Hidaaya*, *Taudeeh*, *Talweeh*, etc. in a unique manner. Once a fellow student Moulana Sultaan Ahmad Baluchistaani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ mentioned several times during a lesson that this is a very unique book. Hadhrat رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ retorted: “Moulwi Sultaan, I have heard this statement from you many times. If the author of *Meer Zahid* had written this book at that time, then there is no perfection, as he enjoyed a life of complete comfort. On many occasions he was given gold equal to his own weight. He wrote the book in much comfort. What perfection is there in this? If this type of comfort were found today, then there are such servants of Allah ﷻ who can write many similar books. However, conditions are such

that the month has not yet ended and there is not enough money to purchase firewood to cook food.

Perfection is that under such impoverished conditions, the teachers arrive at Madrasah to teach. Where can one attain that type of tranquillity to write a book like *Meer Zahid* under such difficult conditions?

My *ustaadh* Sheikhul Hadith Moulana Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ had completed all his Deeni Kitaabs in a short period of time. Allah ﷻ had granted him perfection in all fields, especially in the field of Hadith. His works bear testimony to this.

Once I attended the majlis of Sayyid A'lawi who was one of the most senior Ulama in Makkah Mukarramah. In his majlis he mentioned that Hadhrat Sheikh Moulana Zakariyya's رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ book, *Aujaz ul Masaalik*, which is the commentary of *Mu'atta Imaam Maalik* is of such a stature that its equal did not exist even in the era of the *Mutaqaddimeen* (the pious predecessors).

My friend, Moulana Aashiq Illahi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ, who has written many kitaabs, studied *Hidaayatun Nahwu* (third year of the Aalim class) in a short period of 6 months.

From this it is apparent that, had these Ulama been bound by the syllabus and the system, then much time would have been wasted.

There are some students who had come to this humble servant, and within one year reached *Sharah Jami*. {4th year}.

- (f) **If a student fails to understand a lesson, then additional effort should be made out of Madrasah time to address this. Should a student refer to another *ustaadh* in order to understand a certain mas'alah, then the *ustaadh* should not feel offended. Rather, state “That was the extent of my understanding.” If he still does not understand, then request him to obtain an explanation from someone else, or ask someone and then re-explain it to him.**

If an *ustaadh* does not understand a particular aspect then he should clearly state: “I do not understand this and will explain it to you later.” Never regard this admission as below one’s dignity. Who is there in the world that knows everything?

Hadhrat Abdullah ibn Masood رضي الله عنه has mentioned: “O! People; say only that which you know. If you do not know anything then say:

الله اعلم (Allah سبحانه knows best) because a distinctive feature of *Ilm* (knowledge) is that if a person does not know something, he should admit his unfamiliarity with the subject and offer to teach it later or have it taught by another *ustaadh*.

Hadhrat Sha’bi رضي الله عنه was once asked a question to which he replied that he did not know the answer. After hearing this reply one of the students stated, “We feel ashamed that you have expressed your inability to answer the question.” Hadhrat Sha’bi رضي الله عنه replied: “The angels did not feel ashamed to express their inability when they said,

لا علم لنا الا ما علمتنا انك انت العليم الحكيم

“We have no knowledge except that which You {Allah سبحانه} has bestowed unto us ...”

Once Abdullah bin Umar رضي الله عنه was asked a question. He replied that he did not know the answer. The questioner remarked, “Abdullah bin

Umar رضي الله عنه has chosen an excellent path.” A person who does not know something should confess that he does not know it.

Hadhrat Mujaahid رحمته الله عليه was once asked a question on inheritance. He replied that he did not know the answer. Someone asked why he did not answer the question to which he replied that whenever Abdullah bin Umar رضي الله عنه did not know something he would, in clear terms, reply, “I do not know.”

Sa'eed bin Jubair رضي الله عنه was asked a question. He replied: “I don't know and destruction is for that person who claims that he has knowledge when he doesn't.”

There is a mention in *Musannaf Abdur Razzaaq* where Imaam Maalik رحمته الله عليه quotes the saying of Abdullah bin Abbaas رضي الله عنه that when the *Aalim* forgets to say ‘I do not know’ he will continue to land himself in difficulty and predicament.

Aqeeqah bin Muslim رحمته الله عليه says that I stayed with Abdullah bin Umar رضي الله عنه for 34 months. The majority of the time he would say; "لا ادري" "I don't know" when he was asked a question.

Hadhrat Abu Darda رضي الله عنه says that when a person has no knowledge of a certain thing and says “I don't know” than this is in-fact half of knowledge.

By examining the lives of the pious predecessors, we understand that whenever they did not know anything, then without any hesitation they would confess that they did not know, or they would ask someone else and then provide the answer.

On many occasions my *ustaadh* Hadhrat Moulana As'adullah Sahib رحمته الله عليه, if during lessons, he did not understand anything immediately, would say that he did not understand. Often he would consult with Shah Abdur Rahman Kamelpuri رحمته الله عليه and thereafter explain it to the students.

My *ustaadh* Hadhrat Mufti Mahmood Hasan Gangohi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ was the *Faqih* (Jurist) of the time and was an expert in every field. His spontaneous replies are something that everyone was well acquainted with. I have personally heard him on many occasions saying, “I have no knowledge regarding this mas’alah.”

Fourth etiquette

Tarbiyah- Reformation of the students

It is the duty of the *ustaadh* to prevent his students, by subtle and ingenious means, and with affection, from adopting an evil character. Such matters should not be addressed with open rebuke as this causes the awe and respect for the *ustaadh* to be broken. Thereafter the students will become bold, defiant and fail to observe the laws of the Madrasah.

Hadhrat Nabi ﷺ, who is the *ustaadh* of all the Asaatitha, has mentioned that if people are prevented from gathering dung, they will then be more inclined to gather it. They will think that there must be something in it for us to be prevented from gathering it. This is human nature. A well-known example of this is the incident of Hadhrat Aadam ﷺ and Bibi Hawwa ﷺ. In Arabic there is a famous proverb,

الانسان حريصٌ فيما مُنع

Man is desirous of those things that he is prohibited from

Hadhrat Moulana Shah Wasiullah Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ in his book *Ma'rifat Haq* under the chapter of 'The correct path' says that Hadhrat Shah Waliullah Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ in his book *Hujatul-lahil-Baaligah*, has included a special chapter on leniency. He quotes the Ayaah of the Qur'aan:

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ

"It is through the mercy from Allah ﷻ that you are gentle to them.

Had you been ill-tempered and hard hearted, they would have dispersed from around you."

From this aayah we learn that the virtuous qualities of compassion and kindness which was the appealing and beautiful *akhlaaq* or character of Nabi ﷺ were blessed to him out of the mercy of Allah ﷻ. Had he been harsh in his teaching and guidance then there would have been much difficulty and hardship for the Sahaabah ﷺ to benefit from his blessings and *barakah*. Hence Allah ﷻ created Nabi ﷺ with a noble temperament so as to make matters easy for his followers, as has been stated in the Holy Qur'aan:

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ

Allah ﷻ intends ease for you and He does not intend for you any difficulty.

Nabi ﷺ has also mentioned in a Hadith that Deen is easy. In another Hadith it is stated that;

بِعِثْتُمْ مُيسِّرِينَ وَكَمْ تُبْعَثُونَ مُعَسِّرِينَ

You have been sent to make things easy and not to make things difficult.

It is evident that Allah ﷻ has chosen ease for His servants. The deen, or the path we are required to follow, is a simple and easy path. He sent a Nabi who is *Rahmat-ul-lil-Aalamien*, a mercy unto mankind. It is then clearly perceptible that Allah ﷻ, The Beneficent and Merciful, intends to protect His creation from strife and difficulty. So, those who are occupied in teaching and propagating the deen should adopt a soft, easy and accommodating approach.

Hadhrat Sumaamah bin Usaal ؓ, who was the leader of Yamaamah, accepted Islam based on the softness portrayed by Nabi ﷺ. [For details refer to Mishkaat Shareef. The chapter on captives].

Hadhrat Shah Abdul Aziz Sahib Muhaddis Dehlawi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ was once teaching in the Musjid. A student, in spite of the need to make

ghusal, came to the Musjid out of fear that Shah Sahib will be angry with him if he was late. As soon as the student reached the door of the Musjid, Shah Sahib glanced at him and perceived his *janaabat* (impurity). He stopped the student at the door of the Musjid and announced that he felt like taking a break from the lesson.

He then announced that they will go for a stroll and the students should take their kitaabs with them. This student also joined the rest of the class. Hadhrat Shah Sahib took them to the Jamna River. When everyone reached the river Shah Sahib expressed his desire to take a bath. Subsequently all the students followed suit including the student who was in need of a bath. Thereafter Shah Sahib continued with lessons. From this incident we can imagine what effect this considerate and thoughtful act would have had on the student.

It is stated about Khwaajah Shams ul Malik رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ, who was the *ustaadh* of Khwaajah Nizaamuddeen Awliya رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ, in the book Taareekh D'awat wa Azeemat, that if any student was absent from class he would gently address them saying: "Through which fault of mine have you not attended classes?" By listening to these words, which student would not be positively affected and who would have the courage to commit such an offence in the future?

This was the affection and careful nurturing the *ustaadhs* adopted in the previous eras. Consequently, the students too were prepared to sacrifice everything for their Asaatiza.

The author of *Rahmatul lil Mut'allimeen* writes that if you wish to advise or rebuke a student for any misdeed, which if disclosed, he will feel ashamed of, then advise him individually in the quiet. Thereafter the same advice can be given generally to all the students without exposing the identity of that student. In this way he will not be ashamed and others will also benefit from the advice.

In matters of *tarbiyah* (guidance), incidents of the *Salaf-e-Saaliheen* should be related to students. This is extremely beneficial. It is a pity

that no attention is given to this in the Madaaris. Experience bears testimony that, to rectify the condition of students, this method has proven to be very effective.

I [the author] had taught in *Madrasah Islaamiyaah* in *Fatehpoor*. Once at the annual graduation jalsah, my *ustaadh*, Hadhrat Sheikhul Hadith, Moulana Zakariyya رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ, was present. In one of his sittings he advised Moulana Abdurahmaan Jaami and myself saying, “During lessons, no matter what kitaab is being taught, some aspect concerning *Islaah*, or reformation of students must be mentioned. Generally, *ustaadhs* do not pay much attention to this as a result of which the character of the students deteriorates.”

Hadhrat Moulana Nu'maani رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ has written that whilst the students are in the Madrasah, effort should be made in the line of *tarbiyah*. At the very least their attentions should be turned towards some Deeni occupation. The minimum requirement is to instill the value of Deen into the minds and hearts of the students. Many a time you will find students studying for four to six years at our Madaaris and for some reason they leave the Madrasah. Generally these students leave because not enough effort is made on them.

Hadhrat Moulana Manzoor Nu'maani رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ has mentioned that if students are instructed with proper *tarbiyah* towards proper Islamic guidance and discipline, and they happen to abandon their studies after four or even six years, then at least they will leave with some Deeni concern. There is no evidence of this care and concern under the present system of education.

Hadhrat Moulana رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ explains from his experience of some thirty years that students who left the Madrasah without qualifying, no sign of Deeni consciousness was evident in them even though they studied kitaabs under the guidance of an *ustaadh* for four to six years. This was because correct *tarbiyah* was not implemented. Nowadays, even after spending ten to fifteen years in Madrasah,

there is no sign of *Ilm* (knowledge) as would be expected. Some students, after qualifying, don't even realise their responsibilities. They have no consciousness of the effect which their wrong behaviour has on other students and on the general masses. This behaviour creates resentment in the learned people, and there is no fear of accountability to Allah ﷻ. The sorrowful, distressing result is quite evident. How can the *Islaah* (reformation) of such people be made when the door of evil and corruption that has been opened becomes very difficult to close? All this is the result of not paying attention to the *tarbiyah* of students.

Thus, it is evident how detrimental it is when Madaaris don't give due consideration to *tarbiyah*. For days on end, *ustaadhs* will have lengthy lessons on aspects of *QIRAAT KHALFAL IMAAM*¹, *AAMEEN BIL JAHAAR*², *RAFA YADAAYN*³ which are fiqhi issues, and no attention whatsoever is given to explaining the evils of sinning, the detriment it causes to ones' Deen and Dunya and the required qualities that a person of *Ilm* (knowledge) ought to display.

Nowadays, the attitude of the principal and the trustees of the Madrasah is such that if they are upset with any student, then they choose the easiest option and expel him. This is a most inappropriate solution.

No one regards a person to be intelligent who cuts off his limbs due to abscesses and boils erupting from them. The proper thing to do is to treat the boil and when it heals, to utilise the limb. If, Allah forbid, the limb has been affected with such a disease whereby the whole body will be affected and the infection is incurable then it should be severed from the body so that the whole body can be saved. In the same manner if there is any evil or offensive habit in a student then, tactfully and with wisdom, efforts should be made to correct it.

¹ Reciting the qiraat behind the Imaam

² Reciting *Aameen* aloud in salaah behind the Imaam

³ Raising the hands in salaah

Thereafter, if no reasonable method proves effective, only then as a final resort should that student be removed.

Because authorities in many institutions are not inclined towards *islaah* of students, they execute the ultimate punishment to the students at the very outset, for their own ease. The effect of this incorrect practice is that hundreds of students are deprived of *deeni taleem*, whereas with a little effort and following the guidance of Nabi ﷺ, they could have been reformed. They could have become good examples for the *ummat*. The authorities of the *Madrasah*, for their own convenience and due to their indifference, act irrationally, thereby depriving these students of this great wealth of *Ilm*.

This heavy handed attitude was never the way of Nabi ﷺ and neither the method of our pious predecessors.

The author of *Rahmat ul lil muta'allimeen* in the chapter on “etiquettes for teachers” writes that if any student does something contrary to the *ustaadh*'s temperament then he should consider that it is because of these students that he is being afforded the opportunity to serve the *Deen*. The *ustaadh* should forgive the student, and in doing so will most assuredly gain the closeness of Allah ﷻ.

Once a person called Hadhrat Moulana Ismail Shaheed رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ a *haraami* (illegitimate) in a gathering. Hadhrat Moulana explained kindly, “Brother you are mistaken. I am not a *haraami*. The witnesses to my parents' *nikah* are still alive.” (Moulana responded calmly without losing his temper). This obviously would have had a profound effect on the claimant and the people who were in attendance.

On one occasion some people called a pious person a fraud and an imposter. The *mureeds* (disciples) were incensed and wanted to assault this person for this defamation. This pious person commanded them to leave him and not to even respond to his insults. Thereafter he took them home and showed them a lot of letters

wherein lofty titles were attributed to him. He then told his *mureeds* (disciples) that they were angry with the one who called him a fake because they believed that he spoke wrongly about him. Now they should get angry with these people as well, because they too had also spoken wrongly about him by exaggerating his real position.

Hadhrat Ali ؑ was once engaged in battle. He was about to kill an enemy when this person spat on his face. Hadhrat Ali ؑ instantly spared him. When he was asked the reason for his action, he replied: “Initially I was going to kill him for the sake of Allah ﷻ. After he spat in my face, I feared that I would give-in to my *nafs* and kill him in anger.” This is an excellent example of maintaining purity of intention in our efforts.

The *ustaadh* too should keep his heart clean and pure at all times. He should not get upset with any student as this could lead him to harbour ill feelings towards that student. With such a stance, the *ustaadhs* opinions and decisions can be negatively affected.

People like this can easily become the embodiment of the essence contained in the following lines:

It is incumbent to keep our hearts as clear as mirrors with regards to those entrusted in our care.

Don't entertain ill feelings towards any student. Malice will cause one's heart to blacken.

Always think that these students have been entrusted to me. By making an effort on them and correcting their ways, I can gain the closeness of Allah ﷻ. They will benefit me in the hereafter. Through the students, Allah ﷻ blesses the *ustaadh* immensely. Many a time Allah ﷻ inspires the heart of the *ustaadh* with truth because of the student. Hadhrat Moulana Shah Muhammad Ishaq رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ used to say about his student Qaari Abdur Rahman Sahib Muhaddith-e-Pani Patti رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ that I taught him the words of the *Ahaadith* but the *rooh*

(soul) of the *Ahaadith* I gained from him. He would experience that whilst preparing the next days' lesson, he would not be able to understand certain aspects of a lesson, but whilst teaching the lesson, he would understand and thus explain it very easily. This is due to the *barakah* (blessings) of the student.

I (the author) have heard many a time from my *asaatidha* that it is a great favour of the students upon them that they are engaged in imparting knowledge and thereby serving the Deen. Had it not been for the students they could not imagine what occupation they would have been involved in. Let alone being involved in serving Deen, it may have been difficult for them to even perform their salaah punctually.

Once, the shortcomings of certain students were being discussed with my *ustaadh* Hadhrat Mufti Mahmood Hasan Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ. I mentioned that I was beginning to lose hope. Hadhrat's رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ reply was that we will have to continue with the work in spite all of these problems. In this there is goodness for us. There is a lot of fitnah in other occupations. We should hope that from them will emerge such students whom Allah ﷻ will use for the reformation of the Ummah. This will be a means of salvation for us.

Fifth etiquette

Keeping in mind the time of the students

The curriculum taught at the madaaris should be established in accordance with the capabilities of students and the duration of available study times.

This system has been successfully adopted in the madaaris with the introduction of the imaamat course alongside the usual curriculum taught. The students who are studying the adapted course will at least be fairly well grounded in the basics of the Deen and in learning parts of the Qur'aan. It will also assist the students in learning and acquiring an Islamic ethos.

A point to note is that the students with such limitations should be taught in a language which they are most conversant with and not necessarily in Arabic. Also, the kitaabs should be purposefully chosen. They should be such that will be more adapted to these limited courses. Where this system had been adopted by our pious predecessors, it has proven to be most productive. In some instances it has been noticed that these students, on completion of the abridged course, are capable of teaching at madrassah and achieving very good results and are of substantial benefit to society.

My *ustaadh* Moulana Ameenud Deen Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ was a student of Moulana Abdus Salaam Sahib Ansaari رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ. Once, Hadhrat Moulana Abdus Salaam Sahib visited Moulana Ameenud Deen Sahibs' hometown. The people of the locality requested the services of an *ustaadh* to teach the children of the locality. They felt that Moulana Ameenud Deen Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ was most appropriate for this. Hadhrat remained in deep thought for a while. Thereafter he mentioned: 'Bhai Ameenud Deen, you have now attained enough *Ilm*. This is sufficient for you. Now it is necessary for you to impart

it and serve Deen. Allah ﷻ will bestow you with knowledge in some other way.”

Hadhrat Moulana Ameenud Deen Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ began teaching and served the people of his locality. The effect of Hadhrat Moulana Abdus Salaams' duas was that whoever studied under Hadhrat Moulana Ameenud Deen Sahib benefitted tremendously. He specialized in *Masnawi Shareef*, (an anthology in verse form on tasawwuf by Moulana Room رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) which he taught in a very unique manner. Those who listened to his lessons experienced a certain joy within them. He was an extremely soft natured person.

Hadhrat Moulana Ameenud Deen Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ never disclosed his needs to anybody. He remained content with whatever he received. Outwardly, he looked like a prosperous person but in actual fact he owned nothing besides his bare necessities. May Allah ﷻ fill his qabar with noor.

It would be very beneficial, especially to those who are involved in teaching at *Madaaris*, if his biography is compiled.

Hadhrat Hakeemul Ummat رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ has drawn up a syllabus for those who have less time at hand. Students should study this syllabus and engage themselves in the efforts of Deen.

Sixth etiquette

Avoid mentioning the faults of others in front of the students

The *ustaadh* should explain to his students the benefits of the particular branch of *Ilm* that is his own specialty and which he teaches. He should not speak ill of other *ustaadhs* nor of the subject that they are teaching, unless the subject-matter is impermissible. This sickness has become very common. Whoever has attained some degree of proficiency in a certain field, tends to speak ill of people involved in other fields of *ilm*. The result is that no respect remains in the minds of these students for any kind of *Ilm* (*knowledge*) nor for any *ustaadh*. Consequently they continue with studies only because of some external pressure. They remain in the Madrasah not purely for the attainment of *Ilm-e-Deen*, but to use these studies as a stepping stone to some other non-Deeni occupation. They then do not pursue *Ilm* with the eagerness they should. Instead, they feel as though they have wasted their time at Madrasah and they mock those who are involved in it. Many people have narrated such incidents. I myself know many such people.

Furthermore, never ever speak ill of the administration and the principal in front of the students. If there are certain matters that need rectification, then in an honest and appropriate way, counsel those concerned so that they may correct it. It may even be more appropriate to resolve the matter through more senior and responsible people.

Speaking such things to students is what incites them towards strikes and creating disorder. Experience has shown that whatever problems occur in the Madaaris through the students, often the cause is some incitement by an *ustaadh*.

Backbiting, carrying tales, exposing others' faults and causing friction between Muslims is haraam. How can this ever be permissible for Ulama and leaders of Deen? When these wrongs surface, and *ustaadhs* begin speaking ill of one another, consequently a very evil effect rubs off on the students as well as others concerned. Thereafter when the *ustaadhs* endeavour to rectify the situation, their words have no effect on the hearts of the students. Immediately their previous utterance and behaviour come to the minds of the students.

*How beautiful are the talks of the orators from the mimbars.
But when they are alone, their actions are totally opposite.*

Allaamah Sha'raani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ has written that they were made to take a pledge that if someone had to praise any of our contemporaries then we too would praise him accordingly and we would not criticize him even though there may have been some differences between us. The reason for this is that if he harbours any negative opinion of us, and we in turn praise him, he will incline to stop his dissent or opposition. In this manner, we ourselves will refrain from sinning and will save him as well. This pledge is worth being written in gold.

The *Ulama* and *Saalikeen* should ponder over their own actions. They will realise to what extent they have failed to comply or conform with the above advice.

Alas! This sickness has permeated into the *Madaaris* and *Khanqaas*. The consequences are very clear. These places which are regarded as the best of places have today become the springs of evil and fitnah. Through its tributaries and branches the stench will permeate the entire world. May Allah ﷻ protect us. *Aameen*.

Seventh etiquette

Simplify the lesson to the level of the students

When teaching a lesson, the teacher should refrain from explaining the lesson in a way that is beyond the understanding of the students. In this regard we should follow the way Rasulullah ﷺ adopted. Rasulullah ﷺ has said: “I have been commanded to regard people according to their status and speak to them in accordance with their intellect and understanding.” Nabi ﷺ has also mentioned that if someone has to say something to people who cannot understand what is being said, then this would lead to fitnah.

Hadhrat Ali ؑ pointed to his chest saying: “There is a lot of knowledge in here, provided there are people who are capable of understanding.” In other words, he would not give expression to some of his knowledge, because no one had the ability to understand it.

Nowadays in order to show off one’s capabilities, such intricate explanations are given to students in the primary classes that the students in the senior classes (in the final years) will experience difficulty in understanding. The result is that students do not understand the basic aspects of the lesson and therefore will not be able to understand the lessons that follow.

The author of *Rahmatul lil Muta'limeen* writes that every *ustaadh* should explain the crux of the book to the students. New topics should be explained and the students should be made to take notes so that it becomes easy for them to learn the new lesson.

Imaam Maalik رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ says:

لاينبغي للعالم ان يتكلم بالعلم عند من لا يطيقه

It is not appropriate for an Aalim to speak to anyone about anything that is beyond his understanding.

Shah Waliullah رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ writes in *Hujatullah hil baaligah*

ومنه ان لايبين للمبتدى من العلم ما هو حظ المنتهى بل يربى لصغار

العلم قبل كباره

Knowledge, which is meant for the advanced students, should not be explained to the beginners. Instead, before teaching the more profound or deeper aspects of Ilm, the basic aspects should be taught to the beginners and their tarbiyah should be made.

Hadhrat Moulana Manzoor Numaani رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ has written in his book, 'My experiences,' that five years of my life was wasted in this way. I was not taught in such a manner that was in accordance to my level of understanding at that time.

In another place he has written that he remembers many of his fellow students from his primary years. They studied under such *Asaatiza* who taught only to fulfil their duties. Due to their inappropriate and unbecoming manner of teaching, four to five years passed by without any benefit. Eventually the students left the Madrasah and abandoned their studies. Despite them studying for such a long time in Madrasah they learnt absolutely nothing. In the same way, there would have been hundreds, if not thousands, of students who might have spent their time in these types of Madaaris without having learnt a thing. I am certain that those students, had they been taught with understanding and wisdom, more than half of their *ta'leem* could have been completed in those years and they would have been inclined to complete their studies before leaving Madrasah.

Eighth etiquette

In the best interest of students

A student may wish to transfer to another *ustaadh* or Madrasah. If the circumstances warrant such a transfer then the *ustaadh* should willingly allow him to go. The *ustaadh* should not force him to stay merely to make up numbers in his Madrasah and thereby create a false impression to the public. A student is unlikely to benefit from a place where his heart is not attached. Eventually the situation will become unsustainable and he will either run away from the Madrasah or abandon his studies altogether. Either of these situations are harmful to students.

Firstly, there will not be a compatible relationship under the circumstances between student and *ustaadh*. Thus a barrier will be created whereby the student will not be able to benefit. Consequently, the rectification of the Ummat which starts from a correct relationship between the *ustaadh* and the student will now be closed. Secondly, not only will the student be unable to teach Deen to others, he himself will be weak in his own practice.

When Sufyaan ibn Uyaynah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ came to his home town, Kufa, Imaam Abu Hanifa رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ informed his students that a Haafiz of the narrations of Amr bin Dinaar had come. The students should go to Hadhrat Sufyaan so that they may benefit. Thereafter, the students of Imaam Abu Hanifa رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ went to Hadhrat Sufyaan رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ and learnt from him. Hadhrat Sufyaan رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ says that the first person to make him a *Muhaddith* was Imaam Abu Hanifa رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ. This is an example of a sincere *ustaadh* referring his students to others so that they may benefit.

Hadhrat Abdullah Muzani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ says that an indication that an *Aalim* is serving Deen for name and fame is that, initially he will

encourage students to study under him. If perchance any student consults him regarding a transfer to another class or institution, he takes exception to this. If he is sincere, he would be pleased in all circumstances, whether the person studies under him or any other *ustaadh*. For Allah's ﷻ sake, remember that the object is to do the work with sincerity. If it is sincerely felt that it would be more beneficial for a student to remain with him, then the *ustaadh* should, out of genuine concern present his opinion to the student by way of advice. Thereafter, if the student is still persistent on going, he should not be stopped. If there really is benefit in him going elsewhere, due to the lack of means at the Madrasah or possibly due to the conditions at home he wishes to go far off, then in this instance stopping him will be regarded as *Zulm* (oppression). Discouraging him by exerting influences from within the Madrasah, or from outside, shows that the purpose of teaching was just to show off the numbers at our Madrasah when giving the year-end report. We are not concerned with the benefit to the students.

The above is nothing but ostentation, which is *haraam*. Just as it is *fardh* (incumbent) to refrain from all other *haraam* things, refraining from this too, is incumbent. This careless attitude has permeated society to such an extent that evil is not regarded as immoral and worthy of being shunned.

We cover-up this sin by enshrouding it with convenient interpretations and diplomacy. Someone correctly stated:-

You regard the goblet of wine to be haraam but you regard ostentation to be permissible.

What an amazing Shariah you follow, what an amazing Tareeqah you adopt.

Ninth etiquette

Service from students

The good fortune of a student lies in serving his teachers. However, the *ustaadhs* should exercise great caution in this regard. Without extreme necessity, they should not take personal service from their students. If out of pressing need, the *ustaadh* has some work done by the students then he should compensate them in some way. He should not take such *khidmat* from the students which will either affect their lessons or prove burdensome to them.

The diversions may distract the students from the very purpose of their efforts for which they have sacrificed hearth and home. Such distraction can lead to dislike and disinclination to the lessons and thus be a barrier to their studies.

It is recorded in the biography of Hadhrat Moulana Qaari Abdur Rahmaan Sahib Pani Patti رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ that once he wrote a card and was waiting to post it. One student offered to post it. Hadhrat remained silent. When the student insisted, Hadhrat replied: “Brother, I don’t want to take any personal service from students.” If out of necessity he had to take some service, then he refrained from taking service from young, attractive boys. He never associated with them, to the extent that he didn’t allow them to sit in front of him in lessons.

Nowadays, many types of fitnas occur as a result of associating with these youth.

The author of *Rahmatul Mutallimen* writes that a person should never be alone with young lads. Even if you are not alone with them don’t speak to them more than that which is necessary. In fact one should not even look at them intentionally, nor should one listen to their talks so that the *nafs* takes pleasure with such talks. This

sickness of being infatuated with handsome young lads is such that it becomes firmly rooted without one even being aware of it. The person only becomes aware when the roots of such sinful association are already deeply embedded. At this stage to stay away is extremely difficult.

Don't be proud over your piety that how can I ever fall into this.

Hadhrat Yusuf عليه السلام had said:

و ما ابرئ نفسي ان النفس لا مارة بالسوء

I don't regard my nafs to be safe. Verily the nafs commands towards evil.

Hadhrat Imaam Abu Hanifa رحمته الله عليه avoided looking at Imaam Muhammad رحمته الله عليه as long as his beard did not grow.

Hajee Imdaadullah رحمته الله عليه mentioned: "I don't fear anyone in the entire world except the *nafs*." Shaytaan once said: If a man like Junaid Baghdaadi رحمته الله عليه and a woman like Rabia Basriah رحمة الله عليها have to be in solitude, I will instil evil thoughts in their minds and lead them to sin." Being alone with young handsome youth is worse than this. It will eventually result in illicit relationships.

Allamah Suyuti رحمته الله عليه has written in *Lubaabul Hadith*:

1. Those who involve themselves in the despicable sin of homosexuality will be turned into pigs in their graves.
2. They will be made to wear yokes of fire.
3. This sin is equivalent to making Zina with one's mother.
4. The curse of Allah's عليه السلام angels and all other people are upon such a person.

When Imaam ibn Taahir رحمته الله عليه went to study Hadith by Imaam Hibaal he noticed that he did all his chores himself. He would carry

the goods from the bazaar. Once he saw that Imaam Hibaal bought some goods from the shop. He then carried all the goods in the bottom spread of his garment. Even after Imaam ibn Taahir رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ insisted, he refused to give it to him. His age then was seventy nine.

It is recorded about Abul Aswad, who established Nahwa (rules of Arabic grammar) that he suffered a stroke towards the end of his life, as a result of which his hands and limbs became paralyzed. In this condition he would drag his feet and go to the bazaar to complete his work whereas thousands of his students were available to assist him if required.

Imam Bukhaari رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ also did his own work. When he built the guest quarters outside Bukharaah, he personally worked with the labourers. Once one of the students mentioned to him: “What is the need for you to work when we are here?” He replied:

هَذَا الَّذِي يَنْفَعُنِي

“This work is beneficial for me.”

Hadhrat Sheikhul Hind رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ was in the habit of washing his own clothes.

My respected *ustadh* Moulana Manzoor Ahmad Khan Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ a teacher in Mazahir-e-Uloom in Saharanpoor used to purchase his requirements himself when going home from Madrasah.

When my *ustadh* Hadhrat Mufti Mahmood Hasan Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ was staying in Mazahir-e-Uloom, he never asked the students to bring his food. He would himself fetch it.

My *ustadh* Hadhrat Moulana Zareef Ahmad Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ, despite his old age, would do all his work on his own. He encouraged the students to do the same.

I myself had seen Moulana Zamaan Khan Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ purchasing his goods and taking it home himself. He never gave it to anyone, even though many insisted to do so. This was his habit even though the shop was far from his house.

The Asaatidha of our Madaaris should take a lesson from the incidents mentioned above. At least they should do their own work themselves.

The entire day is occupied in learning and teaching the lifestyle of Nabi ﷺ, who would do his work with his own hands. He milked the goats and sewed his own clothes. When his mubaarak shoes broke he mended them himself. He never burdened others with his own work. Hadhrat Anas ؓ says that he had served Nabi ﷺ for 10 years. In that time, Hadhrat Anas ؓ was unable to serve Rasulullah ﷺ to the extent that he served Hadhrat Anas ؓ.

Nowadays there is indeed a strange attitude. Everyone is conscious of his own rights and requires that service is due to him all the time from others. If someone does not fulfil these demands, he complains. Such people are not concerned with the rights of others. This is the attitude that even the *Asaatidha* have now adopted.

All the rights that the *ustaadhs* have over the students are known very well. However, no concern is shown for the rights that students have over their *Asaatidha*.

The reality is that if the *Asaatidha* show concern and affection to the students, and fulfill their rights the way they ought to, then perhaps you would not find a single student who would not regard it as his good fortune to be of service to the *ustaadh*.

Tenth etiquette

Practicing on your knowledge

Every *ustaadh* should practice on his knowledge. It should not be that he preaches something and in practice does something else. If his actions are not conforming to his knowledge then this *Ilm* cannot be a means of *hidaayat*. Nabi ﷺ sought protection from such knowledge wherein there is no benefit.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ لَا يَنْفَعُ

O! Allah I seek protection from Ilm (knowledge) that has no benefit.

إِنَّ مِنْ أَشَرِّ النَّاسِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مَنْزِلَةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَالِمٌ لَا يَنْتَفِعُ بِعِلْمِهِ

It is reported that the person with the worst position in the sight of Allah ﷻ is that Aalim who did not benefit from his Ilm:

It is mentioned in a Hadith.

أَلَا إِنَّ شَرَّ الشَّرِّ شَرَّارُ الْعُلَمَاءِ وَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الْخَيْرِ خَيْرُ الْعُلَمَاءِ

“The worst of people are the evil Ulama and the best of people are the good Ulama”.

Hadhrat Abu Darda ؓ says: “I tremble with fear when I think that I will be made to stand in front of Allah ﷻ and I will be asked: “You attained knowledge. What benefit have you taken from that knowledge?”

He once mentioned, “There is one destruction for the one who has no knowledge and seven destructions for the one who has knowledge but does not practice.”

Hadhrat Ibraheem bin Adham رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ was once asked; “Allah ﷻ says in the Qur’aan:

أَدْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ

Ask of me and I will answer your call.

Why is it that we make dua and it is not accepted?” He replied: “There are five reasons why duas are not accepted.”

1. You have recognised Allah ﷻ yet you do not fulfill His rights.
2. You read the Qur’aan yet you do not practice on it.
3. You claim to love Rasulullah ﷺ yet you do not follow his sunnah.
4. You curse Iblees yet you obey him.
5. You close your eyes to your own faults and search for faults in others.

Abdullah ibn Mas’ood ؓ said: “Everyone is in the habit of giving advice, but only he whose deeds conform to his words are commendable. To give lengthy lectures without practicing on it is a sign of pride.” Hadhrat Ali ؓ says: “O people of knowledge practice on what you have learnt because an *Aalim* is he who acts in accordance with his knowledge. Soon a time will come when the knowledge of people will not become manifest. Their baatin, (internal or intrinsic values) will differ from their zaahir, (external actions). Their actions will be in opposition to their knowledge. They will sit in gatherings boasting with one another. They will get angry when people leave their gatherings and sit in the gatherings of others. The actions of such individuals will not reach Allah ﷻ.”

Hasan Basri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ has said: “Judge people according to their actions and not their words. Allah ﷻ has not left any matter which is impossible to confirm or refute. We should not be deceived by the sweet utterances of people. We should rather look at their actions.”

He once mentioned that *Ilm* (knowledge) is of two types.

The first is that knowledge which emanates from the hearts of people. This is known as *Ilm-e-Nafi* and will be beneficial. The second type of knowledge will be that which merely flows from the tongue. This second type of knowledge, which denotes insincerity, will become a proof against an individual at the time of reckoning.

Qaasim bin Muhammad رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ said: “I have met such people who were never impressed with talk. They were pleased only with *a'mal* (righteous actions).”

Sufyaan Thauri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ says: *Ilm* (knowledge) demands *a'mal* (Practice). If it receives no answer it leaves.”

It is a saying of Maalik bin Dinaar رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ “There is no azaab [punishment] greater than a persons’ heart becoming hard.” He also mentioned: “The effect of the words of an *Aalim* who does not practice on what he says on the hearts of people, is like rain falling on a rocky ground.”

Abdullah bin Mubaarak رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ said the previous Ulama used to say, “Seek protection from the fitnah of an ignorant worshipper and a sinful *Aalim*, because both these groups are great fitnahs.”

Hadhrat Abu Darda رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: “It is not possible to become a *muttaqi* without *Ilm* (knowledge), and until you don’t make *a'mal* you cannot enhance that *Ilm* with beauty.”

Hadhrat Hasan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ is reported to have said: “That person who has superceded others in terms of *Ilm* (knowledge) should also excel in *a'mal*.”

Hadhrat Sayed Ahmad Rifaaie رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ said: “Beware of becoming like a sieve, which provides refined flour to others while it keeps the husk or chaff for itself.” It should not happen that we offer words of

wisdom to others and our own hearts are not attached by that wisdom. This chaff is *Ilm* without practice.”

Allamah Sha'rani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ has written that no Imaam has ever stated that his spiritual purification was attained only by means of *Ilm* (knowledge) or that his forgiveness can be attributed to his knowledge. The reason for this is that knowledge alone doesn't really affect the nafs. The *nafs* (inner self) can only be purified from *Akhlaaq-e-Razeela* (evil character) when one practices on his *Ilm* (knowledge).

Once Rasulullah ﷺ was asked: “Who is the worst person?” He replied: “A corrupt *Aalim*.”

Saalih Murri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ used to say: “Beware of sitting with an *Aalim* who seeks the world, for verily he will put you into *fitnah* by praising *Ilm* with his sweet words. Thereafter you will fall into deception thinking that it is not necessary to make *a'mal* (practice) on what you have learnt and that mere gathering of information is the object of this effort.”

A pious person once said: “An *Aalim* who does not make *a'mal* is like a vulture in the sky. It flies about in the skies but on earth it eats only carrion.” (It apparently reaches lofty heights but, in reality, it wallows in insignificant and worthless pursuits).

Abdur Rahmaan ibn Mahdi's رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ *taqwa* (fear of Allah) was such that if he had a doubt about anything being *haraam* he never used it. He would say that the thing which one avoids for the pleasure of Allah ﷻ, Allah ﷻ will definitely compensate him. He narrates about himself:

“My brother and I were partners in business and we earned a huge profit. When the money was being divided, I had a doubt in the wealth, hence I left it out completely. Through the *qudrat* (power) of

Allah ﷻ I gained possession of all those properties once again through *halaal* sources.”

Hadhrat Hakeemul Ummah رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ had forsaken the property which he inherited because of a small doubt.

Who does not know the position of Imam Shu'bah رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ in the ranks of the *Muhadditheen*? Yahya bin Maeen رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ once said regarding him, that he is the *Imaam* (leader) of the *Muttaqeen* and in spite of this, he constantly remained fearful of the *Aakhirah*. On many occasions he would proclaim: “If only I was a humble undistinguished layman and no one knew about me.”

Ibraheem bin Adham رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ says: “Once I passed by a stone. The following words were engraved on the stone: “Turn me over and you will take a lesson.” I turned it around. I found engraved on the reverse side:

أَنْتَ بِمَا تَعْلَمُ لَمْ تَعْمَلْ فَكَيْفَ تَطْلُبُ عِلْمَ مَا لَمْ تَعْلَمْ

‘You are not practicing on what you know so why are you searching for more *Ilm*.’

He used to say: “Seek knowledge so that you can practice on it.” Many people err in this regard. Their knowledge is equivalent to mountains whilst their *a'mal* (actions) is the size of an ant.

Hadhrat Zunnoon Misri رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ mentioned that they had seen this condition in the people of the past, that the more their *Ilm* (knowledge) increased, their love for this world and its contents decreased accordingly. Presently the situation is such that the more a person attains *Ilm*, the more his love increases for the world and the more he enjoys the company of the worldly people. Furthermore, he says: “I cannot understand how an *Aalim* inclined towards this world and its luxuries can ever remain firm on his *Ilm*? True knowledge protects a person from this. Had he understood his *Ilm* correctly, he

would not practice against it. It seems that he has understood things wrongly.”

Umar bin Abdul Azeez رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ says that those Ulama and Qurra who eat *haraam* are in reality dead. They are heedlessly filling their bellies with fire. Had they been alive they would have definitely felt the pain of fire.

Mansoor bin Mu'tamir رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ used to tell the Ulama of his time: “The only reason why you attain pleasure from your knowledge is that you have attained it superficially. Had you practiced on what you learnt, you would never experience pleasure. The dictates of *Ilm*, is that one should detest worldly things. How then can one find pleasure in it?

Aamir ibn Abdullah bin Qais Tabi'ee رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ used to say: On the Day of *Qiyaamah* we will regret why we acquired a lot of knowledge, for verily, this *Ilm* (knowledge) will be a proof against us for not practicing on it.

Hasan Basri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ mentioned, “Nowadays, Ulama should refrain from filling their bellies with even *halaal*.¹” What will happen if they have to consume *haraam*?” He also used to say that the *taqwa* of the Ulama is dependent on refraining from *haraam* wealth and the desires of the *nafs*. The reason for this is that those sins that are apparent to all and sundry are avoided so that they do not suffer humiliation from the public.

Abdullah Muzani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ says that the way to recognize an *Aalim* is that the thought of the love of this world cannot even be entertained in his heart. Thereafter he would say that the majority of the Ulama are indulging in doubtful and *haraam* foods to such an extent that they have completely succumbed to their carnal desires. They have made *Ilm* (knowledge) a net by means of which they are hunting the

¹ i.e. overeating and being gluttonous

Dunya. Consequently, he says that had the *Fuqaha* (Jurists) and *Ahle Hadith* (commentators of Hadith) avoided one particular wrong, they would have been the best of people. Unfortunately it can be seen that they desire to earn the dunya with their *Ilm*. Therefore, they have been degraded in the sight of the people.”

In Ta'leemul Mut'allimeen there is a poem recorded by the author of Hidaaya about a non practicing evil *Aalim* and an ignorant worshiper:

فَسَادَ كَبِيرٌ عَالَمٌ مُتَهَتِّكٌ وَأكْبَرُ مِنْهُ جَاهِلٌ مُتَمَسِّكٌ
هُمَا فِتْنَةٌ فِي الْعَالَمِينَ عَظِيمَةٌ لِمَنْ بِهِمَا فِي دِينِهِ مُتَمَسِّكٌ

An Aalim who violates the limits of Shariah is a great fitnah and worse than him is an Aabid who is ignorant.

The person who conducts his life in accordance to these two people will be afflicted with the Fitna of both the worlds.

When a friend of Abdullah bin Mubaarak رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ accepted employment in the government, Hadhrat Abdullah bin Mubaarak رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ became very grieved and wrote a letter to his friend. Therein he expressed his fear of destroying his Deen. At the end of the letter he wrote a poem which is as follows:

يَجَاعِلُ الْعِلْمَ لَهُ بَازِيًا يَصْطَادُ أَمْوَالَ السَّلَاطِينِ

O the one who has made his Deen like a falcon. You are hunting the wealth of the kings with it

أَحْسَنْتَ لِلدُّنْيَا وَلَدَّاتَهَا بِحِيلَةٍ تَذْهَبُ بِالدِّينِ

You have chosen such an evil path to attain this world that there is fear of your Deen being destroyed.

وَصِرْتَ مَجْنُونًا بِهَا بَعْدَ مَا كُنْتَ دَوَاءً لِلْمَجَانِينِ

You have become madly afflicted over this world, whereas previously you were the cure for the insane

أَيْنَ رَوَايَتِكَ وَالْقَوْلُ فِي لِرُؤْمِ أَبْوَابِ السَّلَاطِينِ

Now where are all the narrations you would quote to avoid visiting the Monarchs?

إِنْ قُلْتَ أَكْرِهْتُ فَمَاذَا كَذَا زَلَّ حِمَارُ الشَّيْخِ فِي الطِّينِ

If you say that I was forced into this, then this cannot be true. Rather the donkey of the great sheikh has slipped in the mud."

Maalik bin Dinaar رَحِمَهُ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ used to recite this poem regularly.

يَا مَعْشَرَ الْعُلَمَاءِ يَا مَلْحَ الْبَلَدِ
مَا يُصْلِحُ الْمَلْحَ إِذَا الْمَلْحُ فَسَدَ

O group of Ulama, you are like the salt of the town.

If the salt itself goes bad, then what is there that can put the salt right.

Pleasure in food is attained through the salt. If the salt turns bad, how will it ever be cured? There is no cure in rectifying spoilt salt. In the same way the *awaam* (general public) are rectified by the Ulama. If the Ulama are spoilt, how can the *awaam* then be rectified?

Imam Ghazaali رَحِمَهُ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ used to say:

تَقْوِيمُ الْغَيْرِ مُرْتَبٌ عَلَى تَقْوِيمِ نَفْسِهِ
فَلْيَبْدَأْ بِنَفْسِهِ ثُمَّ بِمَنْ يُعُولُ

Correcting others is based on correcting oneself. Therefore, begin with yourself and then with those close to you.