

Muslim Degeneration & Its only Remedy

مسلمانوں کی پستی کا واحد علاج

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Excerpt from Fazail-e-Aa'maal

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Author's Preface

For the high devotion, keenness and perseverance of *Maulana* Mohammad Ilyas (RA) and also due to the profound zeal shown by many other learned and pious personages among Muslims, a cohesive work is currently in progress for the propagation of *Islam* and the Islamic way of life. This is known to most of the wellinformed Muslims of our time. Although an unworthy being for the high mission; I have been commanded by the distinguished gentlemen referred to above to write an account of this work, so as to bring out clearly the special features of propagation (*Tabligh*) and also to highlight the burning need for this Supreme Islamic activity particularly at this critical juncture, so that as many Muslims as possible are able to understand and benefit from what is going on.

In obedience to their command, I have ventured to gather in this booklet a few thoughts and ideas, which are mere drops from the ocean of knowledge and enlightenment possessed by the above mentioned personalities. The collection really amounts to a handful of petals from the vast garden of the teachings of *Islam*, which I have hurriedly picked up for presentation to the readers. There may be mistakes and omissions in the presentation, for which I beg my readers to make allowance, and request them to be so kind as to amend or correct those mistakes if necessary, thereby earning my gratitude.

It is my earnest prayer that may *Allah* (SWT) by His special favours and kindnesses and for the sake of the noble personages connected with this work; forgive me for my sins and not uncover my misdeeds, but He may graciously enable us all to lead a pious and virtuous life. May He bestow upon us the wealth of His own love and grant us the approval to follow His own chosen faith of *Islam*. May He also give us the power to propagate *Islam* in strict obedience and loyalty to His dearest and the most distinguished Prophet, i.e *Sayyidina Rasul-ullah* (*Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam*).

Mohammad Ehtesham-ul-Hassan (Delhi)

18th of *Rabbiuth-Thani* 1358 (AH)

Past History

About thirteen and a half centuries ago¹ when the world was sunk in the darkness of ignorance, sin and unholy life, a light of true knowledge and guidance arose from the horizon of the rugged hills of *Bathaa*² near *Makkah*. Its rays spread to the East, West, North and South and they reached every corner of the earth and within the short period of 23 years, the way was paved through that light for mankind to move to such heights of glory as had never been attained before. It enlightened the Muslims and created in them the urge for taking the right direction, which would ultimately bring them their salvation. By following the right path and the guidance coming from that light, the Muslims moved from success to success and attained the highest peak of glory in the history of mankind. For centuries they ruled on this earth with such grandeur and strength that no existing power had the courage to challenge them and, if someone dared to do so, he did that at the risk of being destroyed. This is a historical truth which cannot be erased. But, alas! This fact of history has only become a fiction, an ancient tale, to narrate which may sound meaningless and ridiculous, particularly in the context of the present day life of Muslims, which is obviously a blot on the brilliant performance and achievements of the their ancestors, the early followers of *Islam*.

The Disease

History, even up to the end of the thirteenth century Hijri, will reveal that the Muslims were the sole possessors of honour, dignity, power and greatness, but when one turns one's eyes away from the pages of the history books and looks at the Muslims of today, one sees the picture of a people sunk in misery and disgrace, a people who possess no real strength or power, honour or dignity, brotherhood or mutual love and reflect no virtues or moral character worth the name. One cannot find any sign in them of those noble deeds, which at one time used to be the symbol of each and every Muslim. Nowadays, there can hardly be a living person who can be said to have purity or sincerity of conscience. On the contrary, Muslims are sunk in vice and sin. They have wandered away so far from the path of virtue, which at one time used to be their hallmark, that the enemies of *Islam* talk and discuss their affairs with delight, disrespect and laughter. Unfortunately, the matter does not end here. The Muslim youth of the new generation, which have been affected and influenced by the so-called modern trends or the Western way of life, take pleasure in laughing at the very ideals of *Islam* and openly criticize the sacred code of *Shariah*³ as being out of date and impracticable. One wonders at such behaviour and finds that a people who once gave strength, happiness, honour and peace to the entire mankind, have now become completely demoralized, cold, shallow and helpless. Those who had once taught the world the golden lessons of manners and culture are today found wanting in these very adornments.

Earlier Attempts towards Improvement

For some time, distinguished thinkers and preachers of *Islam* have been seriously thinking over this unfortunate condition of their people and have been striving hard to reform the Muslim society, but alas!

مرض بڑھتا گیا جوں جوں دوا کی

The treatment only aggravated the disease

¹ This text was written around 1939.

² Valley near Makkah

³ Sacred Law of Islam

The situation is fast deteriorating and the future looks darker still. Inaction and carelessness on our part in these circumstances will be an unforgivable sin and crime. But, before deciding what is to be done, it will be necessary to look closely at the root cause of this sad state of affairs.

People have assigned several causes to this degeneration and have adopted numerous measures for arresting the decline, but unfortunately all efforts so far have only brought further failures. Instead of improvement, hopelessness and confusion have resulted, particularly so in the ranks of learned preachers and *Ulama*⁴. The basic reason for all this is that the root cause of the real disease has not been diagnosed and until it is done, no proper treatment can be prescribed or given hence no cure or improvement can be expected. Any step lacking proper examination and correct treatment would amount to making an incurable situation more incurable and further increase confusion and despair.

The Approach

We claim that the *Shariah* is a complete Divine Code, which guarantees material and spiritual success until the day of *Qiyamah*⁵. It lays down a complete way of life outlining every possible measure for advancing and progressing on the path of true success and righteousness. So there is no reason for us not to try to diagnose our illness ourselves and then try to treat it. Rather, we must look closely into the *Quran* (which is the original source of *Shariah*. and of all knowledge and guidance for the whole of mankind). In fact, it is the only source of wisdom for mankind. We need to seek its help in finding out what our troubles are and how they are to be removed and if we really desire to attain full recovery, we must stick to the solution and seriously resolve to adopt it. Certainly, the wisdom and guidance from the *Quran* will never fail us particularly at the serious crisis and in the difficult times through which we are passing these days. Let us look and search for the right solution in the *Quran* and the *Sunnah*⁶.

The Diagnosis

The Creator of the universe, *Allah* (SWT) remains clearly committed that kingdom and His *Khilafah*⁷ on earth are only meant for the true Muslims, (*Mumineen* i.e. those of perfect Imaan). This is clear from the following *Ayah*:

Allah (SWT) has promised to those from amongst you who believe and do righteous deeds that He would surely make them His Caliph on earth [Surah Al-Noor:55].

He (SWT) has also given assurances that the true believers will always dominate over non-believers and that non-believers will be left without any friend or ally, as is clear from the following *Ayah*:

And if these non-believers had given you a battle, they were sure to turn on their heels, and they would have found no protector and no helper [Surah Al-Fath:22].

Moreover, it is *Allah* (SWT)'s own obligation to grant help to the true Muslims (*Mumineen* i.e. those of perfect Imaan) and it is also His promise that such people will always remain superior and honoured. This is borne out by the following *Ayaat*⁸:

And it is our bounden duty to render to the true believers [Surah Ar-Rum:47].

⁴ Scholars of Islam

⁵ Day of Judgement

⁶ Sayings, actions and approvals of *Sayyidina Rasul-ullah* (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)

⁷ Rule and sovereignty of *Allah* (SWT)

⁸ Plural of *Ayah*

And do not give way to despair, and do not grieve and you only shall dominate, if you are true believers [Surah Ale-Imran:139].

And honour is only for Allah, His Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and those who believe [Surah Al-Munafiqoon:08].

The above Divine declarations clearly show that the way to regain honour, greatness, superiority, fame and virtue for Muslims lies only in their having a strong faith. If their relationship with *Allah (SWT)* and with *Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)* is strong and firm, they are bound to be masters of each and every thing on this earth. But if, on the other hand, it becomes weak or it gets broken, disaster and decline are bound to follow. The latter part is clear from the following *Ayah*:

And let Time be witness: verily man is in a great loss except, of course, those who believe and do righteous deeds and who enjoin truth and enjoin patience [Surah Al-As'r:1-3].

As already brought out, history proves that the early Muslims had been able to reach the highest peak of honour and glory, whereas the present day Muslims seem to have moved in the opposite direction. It is obvious from the above *Ayah* of the *Quran* that the first Muslims had attained their high position in life because of the purity and strength of their faith and the excellence of their character. As against this, the miserable condition of the present day Muslims is the result of weakness in their faith and character, the opposite of what their forefathers possessed. Therefore, it will be right to say that today we are Muslims in name only! In this connection, the true Messenger of *Allah (SWT)* *Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)*, had prophesied.

An era will come in the near future when Islam will exist merely in name and the Quran will exist merely in writing [Mishkat].

This is clearly applicable to the Muslims of today. In these circumstances, the points which need urgent investigation are:

1. As the right type of faith, which can have the approval of *Allah (SWT)* and His Messenger *Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)* (and which will bring us spiritual and material advancement) is not to be seen anywhere, what will be the means of acquiring that true faith? and;
2. What are the factors that have caused the destruction of that faith and with it the true life of *Islam*, from our midst?

A study of the *Quran* clearly reveals that the capacity to maintain the required level of the true faith of *Islam*, and the ultimate rise to honour and fame through it, are dependent on the fulfillment of a special task which has been so graciously assigned by *Allah (SWT)* to the Muslims. It is for this that they have been given in the *Quran* the distinguished position of *Khair al-umam* (the best of all the nations). According to the faith of *Islam*, the main purpose behind the creation of this world was to establish and prove the Holiness, the Oneness and the most supreme existence of *Allah (SWT)* and to reflect His unlimited powers and boundless attributes through man, who was to be guided by the light of true knowledge. It was impossible for man to understand and utilize that knowledge without his first being purified of godlessness and impurity and only after the purification, is he to be decorated with fine virtues, excellence of conduct and the eventual capacity to act righteously. It was for this purpose of

bringing about this purity and power in the ranks of mankind that thousands of *Ambiya*⁹ and *Rusul*¹⁰ had been deputed by Allah (SWT), Then, last in the series came the *Sayyid ul Anbiyaa wal Mursaleen* (the greatest of all the *Ambiya & Rusul*), *Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)*. It was through him that man reached the high state of development of mind and body leading to the final stage of purity. It was then that mankind received the glad tidings in the following *Ayah*:

And today We have perfected your religion for you and completed Our bounty upon you [Surah Al-Mai'da:3].

The supreme purpose of man's creation had been fulfilled good and evil had been clearly defined, a complete system of practical life had been revealed, the line of *Nubuwwah*¹¹ had been terminated and lastly the duties that were formerly discharged exclusively by the *Ambiya* and *Rusul* had been given as a collective mission to *Al-Ummat Al-Mohammadeeyah* (The Muslim people). This last fact has been clearly brought out in the following *Ayaat* of the *Quran*:

O you (followers of Mohammed (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)) you are the noblest of all Ummah, in that you have been brought out for (the benefit of) mankind. You enjoin the good and forbid the evil and you believe in Allah [Surah Ale-Imran:110].

And there has to be a group of people among you who call towards the good and bid the fair and forbid the unfair and it is these who are successful [Surah Ale-Imran:104].

In the first *Ayah*, Allah (SWT) has stated the reason why the Muslims are called *Khair ul Umam* (noblest of all nations) it is because of spreading good and preventing evil. In the second *Ayah*, He has further clarified that only those people shall be supreme in life will fulfil this commandment. The command does not end here, it is stated in another place that the failure to accomplish this vital task will bring disaster and punishment on its assignees. This reference is taken from the following *Ayah*:

On those who disbelieve from among the children of Israel was a curse pronounced by Dawood and Essa the son of Maryam all this because they disobeyed and used to cross the limits, they did not forbid each other from an evil they committed, indeed evil is what they have been doing [Surah Al-Mai'da:78-79].

A further explanation and clarification of the above *Ayah* of the *Quran* can be seen from the following *Ahadith*¹² of *Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)*:

It has been narrated by Sayyidina Abdullah bin Masood (RA) that Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said, "In the previous Ummam"¹³ (Nations), when somebody committed a sin, the others would reprimand him and would say "Fear Allah", but on the following day he would befriend him and mix with him as if he had never seen him committing the sin and when Allah (SWT) saw the behaving thus, He confounded the hearts of some with those of some and cursed them through the tongues of Sayyidina Dawood (AS) and Sayyidina Essa (son of Maryam) [AS] and this was because they rebelled against Allah (SWT) and transgressed His limits. I, Mohammed (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) swear by Him, Who has control over my soul you must enjoin the good and forbid the evil and force

⁹ Plural of Nabi meaning Prophet

¹⁰ Plural of Rasool meaning Messenger

¹¹ The rank and stature associated with the office of Prophethood

¹² Plural of *Hadith* meaning a saying of *Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)*

¹³ Plural of Ummah meaning Nation

the ignorant wrong doer into the path of righteousness, else Allah (SWT) will confound your hearts and you will be cursed, as were those peoples gone by.” [Sharḥ Mushkil al-Āthār, Al-Mu’jam Al-Kabīr]

Sayyidina Jareer (RA) narrates that Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) said, “When an individual of a community sins, and the community in spite of its authority over him does not prevent him from sinning, Allah (SWT)’s punishment descends on them even before death i.e. He (SWT) subjects them to various punishments in this world” [Abi Daud]

Sayyidina Anas (RA) narrates that Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) said, “Laa Ilaaha illal-laahu always benefits the individuals who proclaim it, and keeps away from them woes and troubles, unless its rights are ignored. The Sahabah (RA) inquired, “What does the ignoring of its rights mean?” Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) replied, “It means that when sins are being committed openly, they do not prevent or stop them”. [At-Targheeb Wat-Tarheeb]

Sayyidituna Aishah (RA) has reported “Nabi (Sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) came to me and I could read from his noble countenance that something extraordinary has happened, He did not utter a single word but having performed Wudu¹⁴ went straight to the Masjid. I too stood by the wall of the Masjid to hear what he had to say, The Nabi of Allah (Sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) ascended the mimbar and after the usual exordium said, “O people!, Allah (SWT) has ordained you to enjoin the good and forbid the evil, lest a time should come when you call and He may not respond, you ask for a favor and He may not grant it, and you call for help and He may refuse, He then came down from the mimbar. [At-Targheeb Wat-Tarheeb]

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah (RA) narrates that Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) said, “When my Ummah (Nation) begin to attach more importance to the world and regard it as a source of glory, the awe and importance of Islam will vanish from their hearts and when they give up the practice of enjoining good and forbidding evil, they will be deprived of the blessings of Revelation and when they begin to indulge in mutual recrimination they will fall low in the eyes of Allah (SWT). [Nawādir al-ūṣūl of al-Ḥakīm at-Tirmīdhī]

The Root-Cause

From the above *Hadith* it is clear that giving up the act of enjoining the good and forbidding the evil has usually been the root cause of Allah (SWT)’s anger and displeasure and His eventual punishment. And if this *Ummah* becomes guilty of that neglect and omission, the punishment to be given to them will be more severe than to the earlier *Ummah* because they would have failed to recognize their exclusive obligation and neglected to fulfil the sole mission in their life. For this reason, Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) has enjoined the act of enjoining the good and forbidding the evil as “the essence and special feature of the faith of Islam” and declared giving up this act as the cause of decay and decline of the faith.

In the *Hadith* of Sayyidina Abu Saeed Al-Khudri (RA) narrated from Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) it is stated:

“When anyone of you witnesses the commission of evil, he should use his hands to prevent it; and if he has not the power to do this, he should use his tongue; and if he has not the power to do even this, he should use the power of his heart; and this last represents the weakest degree of faith.” [Muslim]

¹⁴ Ablution which is performed before praying or reading of the Quran

Even clearer is the *Hadith* of Sayyidina Abdullah bin Masood (RA) narrated from Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam):

“Never a Prophet had been sent before me by Allah (SWT) towards his nation who had not among his people; his disciples and companions who followed his ways and obeyed his command. Then there came after them their successors who said whatever they did not practise, and practised whatever they were not commanded to do. He who strove against them with his hand was a believer: he who strove against them with his tongue was a believer, and he who strove against them with his heart was a believer and beyond that there is no faith even to the extent of a mustard seed.” [Muslim]

The vital importance of *Tabligh* (the task of propagation of *Islam*) has been further emphasized by *Imam Ghazali (RA)* in the following manner:

“There can be no doubt that the act of enjoining the good and forbidding the evil is that solid pillar of Islam on which each and every article of faith rests. It is for this very mission that Allah (SWT) deputed all the Ambiya. If, unfortunately, it is ignored or forgotten and its methods and practices are given up, one has to say that the very purpose of Nubuwwah is totally defeated and rendered meaningless. Thereafter, conscience, which is the capital wealth of man, will decline and worsen, inactivates and dullness of mind will prevail. The highway to sin and highhandedness will be opened up and inhumanity will spread in the whole world. All achievements of man will become dangerous and even harmful. Human relationships will break down. Civilizations will be ruined. Mankind will be reduced to utter moral poverty. But, the clear realization of all this will come only on the day of Qiyamah, when all of mankind will be on trial before Allah (SWT) and be called upon to account for each and every action.”

Alas! Alas! The fear has come true, that which was feared is before our very eyes.

وكان أمر الله قدرا مقدورا ، فإننا لله وإنا إليه راجعون

The tower of knowledge and enlightenment has been destroyed and its benefits and effects have been completely wiped out. Consequently, mutual disrespect and disgrace are common. Nothing of the grand relationship between man and his Creator is left in human hearts; on the contrary man like an animal has become the slave of his desires. Indeed, not only is there scarcity of true Muslims in this world now, but it is practically impossible to meet anyone who is prepared to bear hardship for the sake of propagating *Islam*.

Any Muslim who dares to take steps to remove the present state of breakdown and destruction, endeavors to revive the *Sunnah* of *Tabligh* and comes forward to shoulder that heavy responsibility will surely rank as the noblest and the most distinguished being among all of mankind.

He (RA) said this nearly eight hundred years ago, but his statement is very accurately applicable to us today. We must consider and calmly think out what is to be done in these circumstances. There are some well known causes which seem to be responsible for the indifference that prevails today. These are discussed below:

Causes

First Cause

We generally perceive that the act of *Tabligh* is the sole and special responsibility of the *Ulama*, even when the related orders of the *Quran* are clear and fully applicable to each and every living Muslim. The actions and the hard work of the *Sahabah*¹⁵ of the Nabi (*Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) and all those distinguished Muslims who immediately followed them, bear definite testimony to the view that each and every Muslim is responsible for *Tabligh*.

To give the responsibility of *Tabligh* (enjoining the good and forbidding the evil) solely to the ranks of *Ulama* and not to ourselves is a sign of great ignorance on our part. The duty of the *Ulama* is to state the truth and to point out the right path. To enforce righteousness among the people and to keep the people moving on the right path is the responsibility of all other Muslims. The following *Hadith* of Sayyidina Ibn Umar (RA) narrated from Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (*Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) is a clear warning for this:

“Beware! Every one of you is a shepherd and every one is answerable with regard to his flock. The Caliph is a shepherd over the people and shall be questioned about his subjects (as to how he conducted their affairs). A man is a guardian over the members of his family and shall be questioned about them (as to how he looked after their physical and moral well-being). A woman is a guardian over the household of her husband and his children and shall be questioned about them (as to how she managed the household and brought up the children). A slave is a guardian over the property of his master and shall be questioned about it (as to how he safeguarded his trust). Beware, every one of you is a guardian and every one of you shall be questioned with regard to his trust.” [Muslim]

In another place, a yet clearer account is given:

Sayyidina Abu Ruqayya Tameem ibn Aus ad-Daaree (RA) narrates that Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (*Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said:

“The Deen (religion) is Naseehah (advice with sincerity). We said, “To whom?” He (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said, “To Allah and His Book, and His Messenger, and to the leaders of the Muslims and their common folk.”” [Muslim]

Even if we suppose as an extreme case that this task has to be carried out by the *Ulama* only, the present emergency and the critical situation demand that every one of us should put his shoulder to the wheel and strive hard for establishing Allah's supremacy on the earth and for protecting the Muslim way of life.

Second Cause

It is commonly perceived that if a person is firm and steadfast in his own *Imaan*¹⁶ the wrong belief of others will bring him no harm because of the meaning attached to the following *Ayah* of the *Quran*:

O you who believe! Watch out for your own selves (i.e. your deeds). When you are on the right path, those who go astray cannot harm you [Surah Al-Mai'da:105]

In fact, the real meaning and sense of the above *Ayah* is not what is being apparently attached to it, because in that case, the meaning would appear to be against the Divine wisdom and spirit and against the teachings of the *Shariah* which considers the collective life, progress and salvation of the Muslim society

¹⁵ Companions of Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (*Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam*)

¹⁶ Faith

as a whole to be fundamental. The Muslim people must be considered like a single body having several limbs and when any limb receives an injury, the whole body suffers from the pain.

Mankind may progress to any limit and it may reach the highest peak of glory in any sphere of life, yet there will be some who will go wrong and become involved in godlessness. In such an event, the above *Ayah* reassures the righteous people that as long as they remain steadfast and keep moving along the right path, no harm can be brought to them by those who decide to give up the right way of life.

Another point is that full enlightenment will be received only when all the rules of *Shariah* are accepted and practiced, including all the Divine commands, which naturally cover enjoining the good and forbidding the evil. This interpretation is supported by the following words of *Sayyidina Abu Bakr (RA)*:

“O people! You quote this Ayah “O you who believe! Watch out for your own selves (i.e. your deeds). When you are on the right path, those who go astray cannot harm you [Surah Al-Mai'da:105] But I have heard Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) say that when people see something evil and do not seek to change it, Allah will send down punishment for all of them.” [Tafsir Ibn Kathir]

The *Ayah* in question has been similarly explained by all the truly learned personalities such as *Imam Nawawi (RA)* who explains in his book *Sharh Muslim*:

“The agreed opinion of the learned personalities regarding the meaning of this Ayah is that When you have performed the duty enjoined on you, the carelessness of those who refuse to profit by your counsel will not harm you as Allah (SWT) says “No one shall carry another man's burden [Surah Al-Faatir:18]”. And of the several commandments addressed to all, one is that regarding enforcement of good and prevention of evil. Therefore when an individual has performed this duty and the addressee does not obey, the former shall not be penalized for it. He has performed his duty of enjoining the good and forbidding the evil and acceptance or rejection of it by the other party is not within his ability.”

Third Cause

People of distinction as well as the common man, the learned and the uneducated all alike have become indifferent or even lost hope of the improvement of society. They all seem to have accepted the fate that it is difficult, rather impossible these days for Muslims to make any progress to regain their lost glory. Whenever any scheme for improvement and correction is presented to anyone, the usual reaction is how can the Muslims progress in the circumstances when they have neither a state¹⁷ of their own nor any power to rule, neither wealth nor any financial standing nor army and equipment of war nor any influence? They lack even in physical strength, mutual agreement and unity of purpose. Even the religious people seem to have decided by themselves that, it being the fourteenth century Hijra and the people having drifted so far away from *Nabi (Sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam)*'s teachings that the downfall of *Islam* and the Muslims is inevitable. They maintain that in these circumstances it will be useless to make any effort towards the betterment of Muslims.

It is true that the effects of the light of *Nubuwwah* become less and less as we are removed farther and farther away from it, but this does not mean that no effort should be made to revive that light by enforcing *Shariah* and upholding and defending it with all our energies and power i.e. the way of life taught by *Mohammed (Sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam)*.

¹⁷ The text was written in 1938 when the Muslims of Indian subcontinent were under colonial rule.

For, had the Muslims before us thought so there would have been no trace of *Islam* left anywhere by now because there would have been no means through which the lessons and the teachings of the *Shariah* could have reached us. Therefore, it will be deadly for us not to check the present negative attitude towards *Islam*. We should adopt a forcefully positive line for our own sake and also for the sake of future generations. Time is moving swiftly and so is the pace of fall in the religion of *Islam*. The situation demands a strong, quick and determined effort by one and all for arresting the corruption and stopping further decline of Muslim society.

As a rule, existence of true *Islam* depends entirely upon the steadfastness and collective effort of its followers. Unfortunately, they seem to be inferior in these very requirements. We must appreciate that the *Quran* and *Hadith* are full of the lessons in calling Muslims to be active and to stand firm in the path of *Allah* (SWT). There is a *Hadith* about a very pious person who may be busy in *Salaah* night and day all his life, but he cannot come to the level of one who struggles and sacrifices his pleasure and comfort for the sake of guiding and helping people to move on the right path of *Islam*.

On this very point, many commands and injunctions in the *Quran* exist. It is clearly brought out that the one who strives hard in the path of *Allah* (SWT) remains superior and noble compared to all others, for example it occurs in the *Quran*:

The believers who, without a reasonable excuse, sit at home cannot equal those who perform Jihad in the path of Allah (SWT) with their lives and wealth. Allah (SWT) has raised the status of those who perform Jihad with their lives and wealth as compared to those who stay at home. To the former, He has promised a blessed abode. Allah (SWT) has exalted the Mujaahideen over those who stay at home, with glorious rewards, eminent positions, His mercy and forgiveness and Allah (SWT) is forgiving and Merciful
[Surah An-Nisa:95]

Although the above *Ayah* refer directly to Jihad against the infidels and unbelievers in order to uphold the teachings of *Islam* and to crush and suppress faithlessness and belief in more than one god and although we are unfortunate in not having the opportunity of fulfilling that great task, we ought not to throw away any chance of doing something, however small, in the direction of propagating the truth. Only then can we expect that one day our humble efforts and insignificant steadfastness may gather strength for bigger and higher performances.

We shall most certainly guide to Our ways those people who struggle for Our Deen [Surah Al-Ankaboot:69]

Undoubtedly *Allah* (SWT) has promised to provide protection for the way of life propagated by *Sayyidina Rasul-ullah* (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam). However, human effort and perseverance have been defined as the only media for its promotion and advancement. The *Sahabah* of the *Nabi* (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) strove untiringly for that purpose and assuredly, they succeeded and were given high rewards. They had the honour of receiving Divine help and assistance. We being their admirers and believers, should try and follow them and prepare ourselves for working to establish *Allah* (SWT)'s supremacy on the earth and for propagating the message of *Allah* (SWT) Thus, we will also be favoured with Divine help and assistance.

"If you (come forward to) help the religion of Allah (SWT), He shall help you and make you steadfast"
[Surah Muhammad:07]

Fourth Cause

Most of us think that, as we ourselves do not possess the essential worthiness and qualities of *Islam*, we are not competent to perform the duty of propagation of those qualities to others. This is a clear misunderstanding. Since an obligation has to be fulfilled, particularly when we have been commanded by *Allah (SWT)* for that task, there can be no question of denying obedience to it. We must set ourselves to work in obedience to the Divine command. Our efforts then shall InshaAllah (if *Allah (SWT)* wills) gather greater strength and make us more determined and bold. In this way, our continued endeavor on proper lines will one day bring us the great honour of being dear to *Allah (SWT)*. It is against the law of *Allah (SWT)* that, if one perseveres and strives for His sake (religion), He would not grant favours and kindness because the person was not competent or fit for the task! This point is fully brought out in the following *Hadith*:

Sayyidina Anas (RA) states that we asked Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam), "Should we not enjoin good until we practice it all and should we not forbid evil until we avoid it all? He (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said, "No enjoin good even if you do not practice it all yourself and forbid evil even if you yourself are not able to avoid all of it." [Tabarani]

Fifth Cause

Most of us believe that the religious schools, the *Ulama*, the presence of places (*Khanaqahs/Zawiyas*) where practitioners of *Dhikr* devote themselves to teaching *Dhikr* to those who come to them and the religious books and magazines are sufficient activities for the fulfillment of the mission of enjoining the good and forbidding the evil. These efforts (many of us think) are enough to meet the requirements of *Tabligh*. Undoubtedly, the presence of all these is absolutely essential and one must look upon them with respect and pay attention to their problems, as the remains of *Islam* that exist today owe their existence to these very institutions, but they are not enough to meet the situation even partially. The task (of reformation) is difficult considering our present weaknesses and the extent of the problem. To be content with the existence of these few methods will be a folly on our part.

Even to get full benefit from these institutions, we have to create within ourselves, a true and a deep respect for the faith of *Islam* and a burning desire to adopt it in our practical life. Even until fifty years ago, people did possess real love, urge and passion for *Islam* and there were visible signs and products of the *Islamic* way of life. In those days these institutions could perhaps meet the demand satisfactorily. But today all our sentiments and feelings for *Islam* are practically dead, because of the continuous onslaught on our faith and society by various foreign elements and forces. Alas! They have succeeded in their object, since instead of love; we seem to possess a hidden inferiority complex towards our religion and faith! Therefore, we must act quickly and take the initiative from the hands of opposing forces and launch a strong counter effort whereby we are able to revive the dead spirit of each and every Muslim and reawake in him the love and attachment for *Islam*. Only then we get full benefit from existing religious institutions which in turn, can serve the community in a right manner and unless such steps are taken strongly, the present state of false satisfaction will spread deep and wide and these institutions which are doing good in this limited way, may meet the fate of total destruction.

Sixth Cause

There is great danger that whenever someone takes up the work of commanding good and forbidding evil, he is not received well by the people. People will treat him badly, using harsh and insulting language and sometimes people will adopt a rude and insulting attitude towards religious workers. This is all true, but we are likely to forget the fact that the performance of the act of propagation means simply to follow in

the footsteps of the *Ambiya* of *Allah* (SWT), who were always the victims of the worst type of treatment. That is the usual and certain fate of those who take to the mission! Indeed, all *Ambiya* had to suffer untold miseries on account of this, as is clear from the following *Ayah*:

And we sent down Ambiya before you amongst people gone by, and no Rasul came to them but that they ridiculed him [Surah Al-Hijr:10]

Nabi (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam), *"No Rasul or Nabi has suffered more than me in the propagation of truth."*

It is clear therefore, that there is no excuse for such doubts. As we declare ourselves to be the followers of *Sayyidina Rasul-ullah* (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) who himself had suffered in the performance of this very mission. He persevered with everything patiently and with tolerance, we must also follow his noble example and show patience and calmness while performing the essential duty of *Tabligh*.

The Solution

It has been clearly brought out in the previous pages that the current disease in the body of Muslims has sprung from the weakening of the true spirit of *Islam* in our hearts. As a result, real feelings and love for *Islam* are practically dead in us and our belief in it has become weak. Obviously, when the very source becomes dry, the channels of justice, good deeds and fine character, which can flow from it, are not to be benefitted from any longer. This is exactly what is being witnessed today. It has been fully discussed and brought out earlier that the only means for the building up of this source and maintaining a flow of religious benefits from it is the act of *Tabligh* which really and truly is the life blood of *Islam*. Unless we are able to renew it, we cannot achieve anything in this life, because no nation or people can rise to fame without having in them the high human qualities and character which only the religion of *Islam* can give.

We should now clearly realize the disease from which we suffer and judge the treatment which can bring the cure. It is now up to us to set about the renewal of the compulsory task of *Tabligh*. It is only then that we can hope to restore the true faith of *Islam* in the people. By this method alone can we recognize and truly understand both *Allah* (SWT) and His *Rasul* (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and will be able to clearly understand and finally agree to follow their commands and wishes. To achieve it, we will have to adopt the exact methods and ways which were expressed and shown by *Sayyidina Rasul-ullah* (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) himself when he reformed the unbelieving Arabs. *Allah* (SWT) says in the *Quran*:

Indeed Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) *is the perfect example for you to follow [Surah Al-Ahzaab:21]*

In this regard *Imam Maalik* (RA) said:

"In other words, the people who come as the last part of the Ummah of Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) *will never be reformed until the same way is used to reform them as was used in the beginning."* [*Tanqīḥ Taḥqīq Ahādīth at-Ta'liq*]

In the beginning, when *Nabi* (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) had started to call the people to *Islam*, he did not have a single supporter behind him nor had he any political power or wealth. The non believer Arabs were proudly independent, unyielding and uncompromising. None from among them was prepared to listen to reason or truth or obey another person. They strongly disliked and were deadly opposed to the message of Truth which *Nabi* (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) had the sole mission to teach. In these

circumstances, one wonders what gave such invisible power and force to that one single man who was worldly poor and without any means that he eventually was able to draw the whole of the Arab nation towards him. After all, what was it towards which *Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)* called people and whoever responded to it would remain *Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)*'s forever? The whole world knows that it was a single lesson which was *Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)*'s goal and real purpose which he presented in front of people, as elaborated in the following Ayah:

That we worship nothing but Allah and associate none with Him as His compeer or rival and none of us considers another god except Allah [Surah Ale-Imran:64]

The propagation of very truth can bring the same results, today. *Nabi (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)* disallowed his followers from looking upon any being except *Allah (SWT)* for worship or obedience. Not only did he succeed in achieving his aim but was able to cut all ties between his followers and every foreign system and bound his people in one unchanging system of life from which they never tried to break away again. They really became the embodiment of:

Follow that which has been sent to you from the Sustainer, and do not follow other (considering them) as Protectors except Allah (SWT) [Surah Al-A'raaf:03]

This was the real lesson, which *Nabi (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)* had been commanded (by *Allah (SWT)*) to teach and spread. It is further clear from the following Ayah:

O Mohammed (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam), invite (people) to your Allah with wisdom and better counsel, and argue with them in such a way as is best; verily your Allah knows the one who wanders astray from His path and He knows those who are on the right path [Surah An-Nahl:125]

The highway marked for the progress of the *Nabi (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)* and his followers is further described in the following Ayah:

(O Mohammed (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)!) say, this is my path, and I invite you towards Allah (SWT) with full wisdom, I and my followers too: and Allah is all Pure, and I am not one of those who associate others with Allah (SWT) [Surah Yusuf:108]

And whose words can be better than those of one who invites (you) towards Allah (SWT), does good deeds and say "Verily, I am of those who submit their will to Allah [Surah Fussilaat:33]

To call mankind to *Allah (SWT)* and show the right path to all those who had gone astray was the only mission and the sole purpose of the life of *Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wassallam)*. To serve this very purpose, thousands of *Ambiya* had been deputed before him. As *Allah (SWT)* says:

And we did not send any Rasul before you, but that we revealed upon him that verily there is no Allah but Me and so worship Me [Surah Al-Anbiyya:25]

The noble life history of *Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)* and also those of other *Ambiya* show one single aim as the sole mission of their lives: i.e. to believe in One True *Allah (SWT)* and His one Divine Personality and His Divine Attributes. This belief is the essence of the faith of *Islam*. It was to practice and prove this very faith that man has been sent on this earth, in other words:

I have created the Jinn and Human beings only so that they live their lives as My slaves [Surah Az-Zaariyaat:56]

We should by now be able to understand the real purpose behind the creation of man and the way we particularly Muslims should live. We should also know the true disease from which we suffer and its treatment should consequently not be difficult. We need to find out how to apply that treatment and regain our lost strength. If we bear in mind all which has been discussed so far and as a result act sincerely, the method adopted will *Insha Allah* (by the will of *Allah (SWT)*) prove beneficial and successful. The proven successful method is described below.

Course of Action

With my very limited knowledge and understanding, I have proposed a scheme of work and action for the improvement of Muslims and their progress in *Islam*. Actually what I have to say is nothing else than a brief outline of the practical way of life which had been followed by our forefathers and early Muslims.

The first and the foremost thing to do is to change the aim of our life from material intention and collection of wealth to the work to establish the supremacy of *Allah (SWT)* on earth and *Islam* and this needs to become a defined objective for ourselves. A sincere effort needs to be made for the enforcement of the commands and orders of *Allah (SWT)*; to sincerely decide to obey all commands of *Allah (SWT)* i.e. to try to practice them in our daily lives and to turn away from the disobedience of *Allah (SWT)* in all circumstances. The fulfillment of this decision must be made the primary objective of our lives. We can plan and act on this foundation by adopting the following practical method and procedure.

- 1) To memorize and correctly recite the *Kalimah*

لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله

And to understand its exact meaning as well as what it actually suggests.

That is to believe, to say, and to act on the faith that *Allah (SWT)* is the only Power, the only Authority and the Sole Controller of all things, and it is He alone who is to be worshipped and obeyed, and it is He alone who grants success or failure in life. Success will depend on our truly adopting the way of life preached and taught by *Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)* and our accepting him as true and last Prophet of *Allah (SWT)*.

Having this as a foundation, we then begin to change our own life on the requirements of the *Kalimah*.

- 2) To become punctual and regular in offering our *Salaah* five times daily. The performance of this most obligatory duty should be strictly in accordance with the procedure laid down by *Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)*, to be performed in utmost humility and devotion. The greatness and superiority of *Allah (SWT)* must be held supreme in mind throughout the prayers, whilst maintaining the feelings of our humbleness and helplessness. In other words, *Salaah* should be performed as if one was actually being presented to *Allah (SWT)* in a manner befitting the Height of His Greatness and Glory. If the procedure of *Salaah* is not known, it should be learnt properly with each of its details committed to memory.
- 3) To develop attachment of body and soul to the *Quran* in the following manner:
 - a) To recite daily a portion of the *Quran*, however small with highest respect and reverence for the Holy Scripture along with understanding of it's meaning, if possible. If one is unable to understand the meaning, he may still recite the text with the purpose and hope that his

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salvation and progress depends upon it. Simple recitation of the original words and lines is also a great blessing. If a person is unable to read, he should spend a little time daily to learn to recite it (properly).

- b) To ensure that one's own children as well as those of the neighbours and friends are taught the *Quran* and other essential religious books as a first step in their learning.
- 4) Some time should be devoted each day to *Dhikr*¹⁸ which means concentrating on the Omnipotence, the Greatness, and the Attributes of *Allah (SWT)*, and to offer *Durood*¹⁹ [Prayers & Salutations] for *Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)*. In this connection, guidance should be sought from a *Sheikh-e-Tariqat* (a learned and saintly person) who should be carefully selected for his distinction in piety and his capacity to follow *Shariah* and *Sunnah*. He may prescribe certain *Wazaif* (litanies) to be recited during the times of *Dhikr*. In case no such person can be contacted, it is suggested that the following *Wazaif* (litanies) may be repeated a hundred times both in the morning and in the evening:

a) Third Kalimah:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ

b) *Durood* [Prayers & Salutations] for *Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)*

c) *Istighfaar* (seeking forgiveness of Allah)

- 5) Every Muslim must be considered as one's real brother and must always be given affection, sympathy and sincere attention at all times, particularly when he is in need. The fact that a person professes the faith of *Islam* automatically entitles him to brotherly respect and reverence from all Muslims, who must at all times refrain from causing him any physical or mental harm.

The above practices should be strictly enforced in one's own life and, at the same time, efforts should be made so that other people may follow them as well. The only and the best way to achieve this is to devote some time specifically for learning and inculcating in oneself these fine Islamic qualities, and also persuading others to make similar efforts. Thus a joint and collective campaign will automatically ensure for the growth and expansion of *Islam* in its true form, which is the real and urgent need of the day.

It was exactly this type of work, which every Prophet of *Allah (SWT)* had to do as his sole occupation. For the sake of this work, almost all Prophets had to bear untold miseries and perils. The worthy Companions of *Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)*, as well as many other distinguished Muslims of the early period of *Islam*, spent the whole of their lives in striving hard and struggling for the religion of *Islam* in this very manner. Most of them sacrificed their lives in the sacred path of *Allah (SWT)*. It will be our misfortune and enormous loss if we do not devote a part of our lifetime, however small a period it may be, towards propagating and perpetuating *Islam*. We must confess that it is due to our negligence in this vital task that the Muslim society has reached its present state of low morale and virtual collapse and, therefore, we must rise and make manifold efforts.

¹⁸ Remembrance of *Allah (SWT)*

¹⁹ *Salat Alan-Nabi (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)*

Previously, the very purpose of being a Muslim was to be ready to sacrifice one's life, honour and wealth for upholding *Islam* and the *Kalimah*. In those days, whoever didn't aspire to sacrifice his life for the sake of *Islam* and the *Kalimah* was considered to be ignorant and a useless person. But alas! Today, although we feel proud to be called Muslims, we remain totally unmoved by the fact that every particle of *Islam* is being destroyed one by one before our very eyes, and not a finger is moved to check this terrible loss. If we realised it only then we could have appreciated that the propagation of *Islam* is our real mission in life, and therein is the key to our very existence as Muslims and also our success, glory and ultimate salvation. The opposite is also true that by neglecting this important task we suffer from moral degeneration and social degradation. The only remedy is that all of us must sincerely repent our lethargic and injurious past and take immediate steps to revive the act of *Tabligh* as our major occupation. It is only then that we can expect the mercy and compassion of *Allah (SWT)* to flow, to bring us triumph and happiness both in this life and the hereafter.

This does not mean that we should give up everything else, i.e. our professions, trades or employment and take entirely to this work. It actually means that as we devote our whole-hearted attention and time to other material vocations, in a similar manner we should also attend to this work. As and when someone finds himself ready to pickup this sacred task, he should try to contact his friends or such people in his neighbourhood who may already be engaged in this work and spend a few hours a week in their company. The next step will be to spend under the guidance of those people, full three days every month outside in a locality or a village other than one's own. Later, but as early as possible, to pass one full month, or better still, forty days annually in some distant area in a similar manner. Lastly, the real requirement in *Tabligh* is to spend continuously four months once in the lifetime, in a given place or area. All these periods are to be spent entirely in the pursuit of learning and propagation of the true faith of *Islam* and adopting the actual way of life under the sacred code of *Shariah*. Thus our efforts will become extensive and ultimately reach every person, rich and poor, employer and employee, Land-Lord and Peasant, learned and ignorant, to join hands in this work and become bound in the ties of true *Islam* as ordained by *Allah (SWT)* and *Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)*.

Procedure for *Tabligh*

The most important point in the task of *Tabligh* is the manner and the method of approach, which simply means to follow closely along the lines adopted by the worthy *Sahabah* of the *Nabi (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)* strictly in accordance with his teachings and practices. The method adopted by the *Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)* was as follows:

A *Jamaah* or group of at least ten men should be formed. One of them should be selected *Ameer* (leader). They should get together in a mosque, make ablutions and offer two *Rakaa'at* of *Nafil* prayers. After this, all should supplicate together and beseech for Divine mercy, help and guidance for success in their efforts and remaining steadfast and resolute in their task of *Tabligh*. For all this time, *Dhikr* should be recited by all, and every precaution should be taken not to indulge in idle talk. On reaching the place for *Tabligh*, once again the *Jamaah* should supplicate and beseech for *Allah (SWT)*'s Mercy and help in their mission. The place of *Tabligh* will be the vicinity of a mosque of the locality where the work is to be conducted. A part of the *Jamaah* should be detailed to tour the locality calmly, and quietly inviting people to the *Masjid*, where *Ta'leem*, (reading and teaching out of religious books) should be in progress and later the *Salaah* of the time should be offered. After this, one of the members of the *Jamaah* should place before the people, in an affectionate and calm manner, the importance and urgency of reviving *Islam* in each and every Muslim as ordained by *Allah (SWT)* and the *Sayyidina Rasul-ullah (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam)*,

giving out as simply as possible the cardinal points of *Tabligh* and the way to accomplish them. Finally, the people should be persuaded again in a cordial manner to join hands in this sacred task and to come out and do the work of *Tabligh* like the *Jamaah* itself.

Later, some members of the *Jamaah* may accompany the people to their homes, where the womenfolk should also be addressed and persuaded to do similar duty among women.

They should be told to be regular in their daily prayers. All this should be done without entering the private portion of any of the houses. The women should also be told to strictly follow the cardinal points of *Tabligh* in their daily life and observe (rules of) *Hijab* in accordance with the *Shariah*.

After this, all such people who may be prepared to join the work should be organized into a separate *Jamaah*, with an *Ameer* from among themselves. They should first be made to work under the guidance of the members of the original *Jamaah*. The important point to be remembered at this stage is that every person engaged on *Tabligh* must fully obey his *Ameer* and the latter in turn, should ensure that his personal services and attention are available to each and every member of his *Jamaah*. He must see to every person's welfare, comforts and morale and before taking any decision he must consult all his colleagues. The following general principles of the work of *Tabligh* should be carefully noted at all times.

General Principles

In its real form and sense, *Tabligh* is an important type of worship of *Allah (SWT)* and it is good a fortune of a high order to be engaged in it. It means to follow in the footsteps of the *Ambiya*. Truly, as the work is of a very superior stature, it must be based on equally high principles, which should be strictly followed throughout. Each participant must feel that it is he who needs to improve himself rather than think of reforming others. During the course of work and even away from it, he must try to behave as a perfect Muslim, as a faithful slave of *Allah (SWT)*, constantly obeying and following the Divine commands of *Shariah* and always seeking *Allah (SWT)*'s Mercy and Pleasure. This is the basic requirement and the soul and foundation of the work of *Tabligh*. Once it is deeply and firmly established in the hearts of workers, the other principles, rules and practices, some of which are described below, will become easy to follow:

- 1) As far as possible, all expenses including travelling food etc. must be borne by each individual himself and if he can afford it he may quietly assist those companions who may be in need.
- 2) All fellow workers and companions in this work must be given full respect, shown tolerance, cared for and encouraged at all times by one another. This will prove a great blessing for the whole area where the *Jamaah* may be working.
- 3) Conversation, talks and discussions must be conducted in soft and convincing tones, using simple and polite language. All types of displeasure with each other must be avoided. The *Ulama* must be held in such high respect and esteem as we usually display for the *Quran* and *Hadith*, because, it is through these learned persons that *Allah (SWT)* has blessed us with the true knowledge and understanding of *Islam*. Any disrespect towards them, however unimportant, may amount to disrespect for *Islam* itself, which in turn may lead to the displeasure of *Allah (SWT)* for the whole community.

- 4) Holidays and free moments must be spent either in reading good religious books or in the company of pious and learned companions. Through these channels one will be able to learn many essential things about the faith of *Islam*, about *Allah (SWT)* and His *Rasul (Sallallahu Alaihi wassallam)*, with particular care and time given to the *Tabligh* work itself, so that nothing unimportant, useless or senseless is spoken, discussed or done.
- 5) To try to earn an honest and pure living, to be most careful and economical in expenditure and to constantly carry out every single duty, however big or small, towards one's family, relations and friends.
- 6) No disputed matters or points of secondary importance should be discussed at any time. The total time must be given to bringing out the Oneness and supremacy of *Allah (SWT)* and to restrict all talk to the main points of *Tabligh*, which are in real sense, the basic principles to be followed by each and every Muslim at all times.
- 7) Every action, work and speech must be filled with sincerity and honesty of purpose, for an act however small but done with this quality is bound to bring high rewards and plenty of well being. On the other hand, an insincere act however big, will not bear any worthwhile fruit or benefit, either in this life or in the *Akhirah*. *Sayyidina Muadh (RA)* who was appointed as Governor of *Yemen*, asked *Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi wassallam)* to give him some special parting advice when he was departing (to *Yemen*) and *Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi wassallam)* advised him to be particularly honest and sincere in all matters of religion since little done with sincerity is enough. There is yet another *Hadith* in the same connection wherein it is stated that *Allah (SWT)* accepts only such actions and deeds which are performed purely for His pleasure. In another place it is stated that *Allah (SWT)* does not look at your face or at your property, but only at your hearts and deeds. Therefore the crux of the matter is that the work of *Tabligh* must be performed with all sincerity and honesty. No acting or outward show is to be put on or staged. The degree of success and progress will depend entirely on the depth of our sincerity.

Summary

A brief outline of the work of *Tabligh*, its importance and urgent need have been discussed and it now remains to be seen as to how all this can guide us and bring us the desired relief and benefits in our times which are filled with confusion, unrest and conflicts.

For this, once again, we have to seek guidance from the *Quran* which refers to the hard work and patience for the faith of *Islam* as a highly profitable business and puts it across in the following manner:

O you who believe! Shall I point out to you a trade that will shield you from a grievous doom? Believe in Allah and His Rasul and perform Jihad in His way with your wealth and lives. This is best for you, if you understand. Your Allah will forgive your sins and you shall enter Jannah, under which ripple (beauteous) streams and stately abodes in everlasting gardens and this is great success.... And another which you covet much, i.e. succor from Allah and victory near at hand, and give glad tidings to those who believe"
[Surah As-Saff:10-13]

The above *Ayah* describes a trade, which, if accepted, promises rescue from all types of sufferings and punishments. The trade meant is to have a firm faith in *Allah* (SWT) and His *Rasul* and to struggle hard in the path of *Allah* (SWT), without avoiding using one's life and wealth. This again points to the act of *Tabligh*, which can ensure for us everlasting well being and happiness. It is this simple work that will bring us great benefits, such as the forgiveness for all our sins, deliberate mistakes and shortcomings and high rewards in the *Akhirah*. So much for the success in the next life which really is the greatest joy for a Muslim, but there is also a clear hint for benefits in this life, too. We shall get what we like most such as prosperity, divine help and success against all our adversaries.

In other words, *Allah* (SWT) has demanded two things from us, first to have firm faith in Him and His *Rasul* and secondly to struggle hard in His path, giving if need be, our lives and all that we possess. In return for this, He has also promised two things first a beautiful and peaceful house in *Jannah* with an eternal life and everlasting happiness and second honour and success in this life. The first demand on us is that of *Imaan*. This is exactly what *Tabligh* is meant to bring about in us that we should all be gifted with the wealth of true faith. The second demand is of striving in the path of *Allah* (SWT) which actually means Jihad, which may sometimes mean fighting a war against oppressors and non believers. However, it also means striving in belief of *Allah* (SWT) being One and enforcing *Allah* (SWT)'s commandments, which is also the ultimate aim of *Tabligh*.

It should be clear to us that happiness and success in the life after death is solely dependent on having firm faith in *Allah* (SWT) and His *Rasul* (*Sallallahu Alaihi wassallam*) and in striving hard in the path laid down by Him. Similarly, success and prosperity in this life, also depend entirely on that very faith and on spending all our efforts in the path of *Allah* (SWT) When we fulfil these basic requirements, firstly, of faith in *Allah* (SWT) and His *Rasul* (*Sallallahu Alaihi wassallam*), and, secondly, of struggling hard in their path, through these two qualities alone, we can decorate ourselves with high noble qualities and excellence of character and then can we be fit to receive the promised *Khilafah* of *Allah* (SWT) and His kingdom on earth, which are bound to come to us as is promised in the *Quran*:

To those of you who believe and do righteous deeds, Allah promises that He will certainly give dominance to them in this world as He gave to those before you, and the religion that has been chosen for them shall be strengthened for them, and He will thereafter certainly transform their fear into tranquility; provided they worship Me and associate none with Me [Surah An-Noor:55]

The above *Ayah* describes a direct promise of kingdom, but through *Imaan* and righteous deeds. This was actually fulfilled in the days of the *Nabi* (*Sallallahu Alaihi wassallam*) and remained in effect right through the period of the first four caliphs of *Islam* who were guided by Allah (SWT) i.e. *Sayyidina Abu Bakr (RA)*, *Sayyidina Umar (RA)*, *Sayyidina Uthman (RA)* & *Sayyidina Ali (RA)*. Practically the whole of Arabia had become an *Islamic State* in the days of the *Nabi* (*Sallallahu Alaihi wassallam*) himself and the rest of the countries (Muslim countries of today) mostly joined *Islam* during the period of the first four Caliphs or immediately after their time. Later on the promise continued to be fulfilled in favor of a number of Muslims kings and caliphs and it would still happen if someone fulfills the conditions, as is clear from another *Ayah*:

Surely Allah's followers shall dominate [Surah Al-Maida:56]

In these pages, a study of the present situation and a practical solution for improving it has been given. In fact, the solution is nothing other than the actual Islamic way of life which belonged to our forefathers and early Muslims.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that there is no way to gain honour, happiness, peace and rest in this life other than to adopt and firmly hold on to the work and system of *Tabligh*, for which everyone of us must use all our energies and wealth.

Hold fast to the rope of Allah and do not create dissension's [Surah Ale-Imran:103]

Final Appeal

This very system has actually been put into practice in the recent past, in the territory of *Mewaat* and a few other districts around Delhi (India). Although the work in that region has not yet reached the final stages the progress of the local Muslim has been noticeable. The blessings and benefits of the system of *Tabligh* are clearly visible and worth witnessing. If all Muslims collectively resolve to follow the noble example described above and adopt the correct system of life, as described in this book, there is every hope that through this effort, *Allah (SWT)* may remove all our hardships and troubles and we may be able to regain our faith, the power to do righteous deeds and the resultant honour, greatness and glory in this life and attain permanent success in the next. The Muslims can then set an example for the rest of the world to live in peace, rest and happiness, which is the natural desire of every man on earth.

An attempt has been made to explain as clearly as possible the real purpose behind the publishing of this book, which is to present the readers the sketch of a practical way of life which about sixty years ago, had been started and faithfully followed by *Maulana Mohammed Ilyas (RA)*. He had in fact devoted all his life for this sacred purpose and mission. It is up to us, the Muslims of the present time to understand our obligations towards *Islam* and fulfil them in our own interest and that of the coming generations and of mankind at large. The way is clear and well set. Let us begin the march and fix our minds on the final goal, which is to earn the pleasure and approval of *Allah (SWT)*.