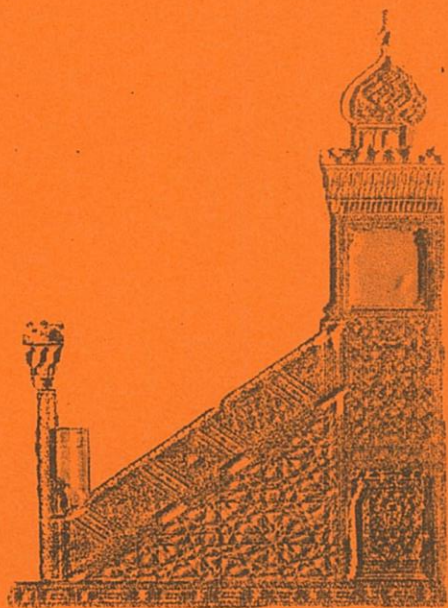


تعليم البيان



HAZRAT MOULANA ASHRAF ALI THANWI رحمه الله عليه

TEACHING THE ART OF SPEAKING

PUBLISHED BY JAMIAH MASIHIYYAH ASHRAFIYYAH
DE DEUR

Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رحمه الله عليه said:

“In our days, students never bore the identity or impression of anyone besides their asaati-zah. Students possessed extraordinary love and faith in their asaati-zah, whilst asaati-zah showed great compassion to them”

-Majaalise Hakeemul Ummat

found and nor were the majaaalis (gatherings) in this format but Rasoolullah ﷺ made arrangements already then, that:

“Whoever learns the techniques of speech to hold sway over the hearts of people Allah Ta’ala will not accept on the Day of Qiyaamah any nafl or farz of his.”

This Hadeeth is sufficient caution for corrupt motives and with it the reason for preceeding علم القرآن over علم البيان is more clearly underlined which was mentioned earlier on.

Hypocritical Bayaan

I wish to arouse those students who adopt modern style in their speech. The reason for this by and large is (desire for) jaah (fame), honour and general acceptance. For this reason efforts are made to have bombastic words and compact rhymes. But this serves no purpose. The worth of talks and bayaans of this kind is like a famous story of an artificial jewellery-seller carrying a bag of bangles. A villager beat his stick on the bag and enquired: “What is inside?” The seller replied: “Strike it again and it will be nothing.” Unlike the olden bayaans. Even if you strike it fifty times it remains in its same state. Its power is not weakened in the least. Infact from the Hadeeth we learn that to talk very audaciously and freely is reprehensible. Accordingly, it appears in the Hadeeth:

الحياء والعى شعبتان من الايمان والبداء والعى شعبتان من النفاق

Translation: Modesty and cautious speech are branches of Iemaan, whilst audacity and free speech are branches of nifaaq (hypocrisy).

In this Hadeeth Rasoolullah ﷺ has mentioned hayaa (modesty) in contrast to bathaa (audacity) and ayy (caution) in contrast to bayaan (free speech). Bathaa and bayaan have been declared to be branches of nifaaq. The context indicates that the ayy intended is that which is on account of hayaa. Hayaa itself has a broad meaning. It could be hayaa of khalq (creation) or hayaa of the Khaaliq (Creator). However, hayaa of Allah is intended here, that is, one should contemplate upon every word so

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Practice Of Teaching Quraan And Hadeeth

So the major effort should be to make the kitaab as easy as ABC, not to display one's greatness. This is the style for Ali-yaat. As far as the Magaasid, that is, the sciences of Islam are concerned, there should be two style of practicing it. This is due to the fact that they are spoken about sometimes in front of laymen and sometimes in the presence of scholars. There are two ways to this. Either half of the time in each jalsah (gathering) be allocated for the scholarly-style and half for the laymen-style or on one occasion the talk should be in the scholarly-style and on another occasion the talk should be in a style suitable for the public.

New-fangled Names Should Be Discarded

Now, Alhamdulillah, all important points in this regard have been mentioned. The only thing that remains is the title of this jalsah. In my opinion the name 'Taleemul Bayaan' is best. Nowadays the craze is on the increase among people that when they start some work they prescribe some new and unique name for it. By virtue of this same craze, Nadwa (an Islamic institution in Lucknow, India) have made a big blunder in search of a new name. The name for the Majlis of Ulaamaa has been prescribed 'Nadwa', which was the name Abu Jahl—the head of the ignoramuses—the enemy of Allah—gave to the majlis which was established with the sole purpose of taking up ways to harm Rasoolullah ﷺ and impeding the path of his propagation of the Deen. Perhaps it is not surprising that the effect of this name is that today this pure noor (light—deen of Islam) is venting its anger in Nadwa.

The Intention

It now seems best to relate a Hadeeth regarding the purpose of bayaan. Rasoolullah ﷺ said:

من تعلم صريفاً أو كلاً لم يسئ به فليزى الله به يوم القيمة صريفاً أو كلاً لم يبق له من تعلم صريفاً أو كلاً لم يسئ به فليزى الله به يوم القيمة صريفاً أو كلاً لم يبق له من تعلم صريفاً أو كلاً لم يسئ به فليزى الله به يوم القيمة صريفاً أو كلاً لم يبق له

Look! At that time this type of anjuman (assembly) was not to be

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When they heard this they all started gaping at me and not one could repeat it. Then I said: “Listen! In spite of you having listened to my lecture, you could not explain. I explained it to you not withstanding the fact that my Ustaad did not lecture it to me. What is the reason for this? It appears that the need is for isti’daad (building up potential) which is through the kitaab. These lectures serve no purpose. Therefore stick to the kitaab!” They then came to understand and were satisfied with mere solving the kitaab.

To summarize, the style of public-speaking for a mudarris is exceptionally harmful. I saw one student teaching a mubtadi (beginner) Meezan (an elementary text book on Arabic etymology/morphology). In the khutbah of the kitaab he was elucidating the types of Alif Laam ta’reef. I told him: “Molvi Saheb! Why are you waylaying this poor boy? He will think all these contents to be part of Meezan and thinking it to be difficult he will leave Meezan and abandon his studies.”

Hazrat Thanwi’s Teaching

I have always maintained mere unraveling of the kitaab as the style of my teaching. I never spoke on anything superfluous. My unraveling was also such that extremely difficult passages were found easy by the students. In Sadra (a kitaab’s name) the discussion of ‘Muthannaat Bit Takreer’ is a famous discussion. In Kanpoor one Molvi Fazle Haq—a student—was studying by me Sadra. The day this particular passage came, I explained the lesson without extra care, in the usual manner. When he understood it properly, I told him that this is the part which is known as ‘Muthannaat Bit Takreer.’ He was very surprised and exclaimed: “This is not difficult at all!” In the final examination, the examiner gave the same portion in the question sheet. The explanation written by Molvi Fazle Haq Saheb Marhoom of that part (which is upto today preserved in the archives of Madrasa Jamiul Uloom) was admired by the examiners. Some said that they had not come across such an explanation of the discussion ever.

Foreward

Takraar or the student assembly of repeating and revising lessons is an integral part of success in studies. The other incumbent duties of the student for success are mutaala’ah (pre-sabaq self-study) and paying full attention to the Ustaad’s explanation without absenteeism. It is for this reason that Hakeemul Ummat, Mujaddidul Millat Moulana Ashraf ’Ali Thanwi رحمه الله عليه said :

“A student who makes incumbent upon himself three things, I can guarantee him that he will acquire ilm (knowledge) and such ilm that distinguished lawyers and barristers graduating from Oxford and Cambridge Universities will not be able to stand up to him.”

The three things referred to by Hazrat Moulana Ashraf ’Ali Thanwi رحمه الله عليه are the three mentioned above, viz. mutaala’ah, paying full attention to the lesson with punctuality and takraar.

This book is a translation of a lecture of Hazrat Moulana Ashraf ’Ali Thanwi رحمه الله عليه on the need, importance and method of making takraar. It is of tremendous benefit to all those associated with Islamic Academic Institutions.

Jamiah Maseehiyyah Ashrafiyyah.

Translation of the Ayyat: Rahmaan taught the Qur'aan. He created man. He taught him the art of speaking.

الحمد لله الذي هدانا لهذا
 ما كنا لنهتدي لولا أن هدانا الله
 والحمد لله رب العالمين

this which is that they will learn to teach.

The Method Of Teaching

Our Buzurgs' method of teaching was simply to solve and unravel the Kitābs. They would not mention anything more. Yes if something was very important then they would mention it. It is furthermore important to bear in mind that, the mudarris (teacher) should state clearly what he does not know. This approach has been inherited from Moulana Mamlook Ali Saheb (رحمۃ اللہ علیہ). The advantage in this method is that the taalib-e-ilm (student of Deen) will always have confidence in the mudarris. He will understand that whatever I am told is correct. Where this way is not adopted and instead the explanation is concocted—most students realize the obstinacy of the Ustaads—then there is museebat (tribulations). The lessons are disrupted. The students too learn this bad-approach. Some people say that by admitting one's fault, students become worse. This is all nonsense. They become better as explained earlier. They then have confidence in the mudarris. In short, this is the style of teaching so in lecturing it should be kept in mind as well.

Research points and superfluous details should be omitted. These taqreees (talks in the student assemblies) are organized only to show the method of teaching not to show off one's skill. Furthermore, futile points mentioned during dars are not beneficial since no one remembers them. The harm of squandering time is something on its own. Like Moulana Sidedeq Saheb Marhoom Gangohi (رحمۃ اللہ علیہ) said: "When I went to Dehli to teach, local students were put in my care and Sullam (a text book on logic) was commenced. I enquired from them whether they wish to learn with thorough investigation or plainly. They replied: We will learn with thorough investigation." At night I studied many commentaries and marginal notes and in the morning taught the sabāq (lesson) with all the research. The following day I posed the same question. The students answered the same that they will learn from stem to stem. I said: 'If that is the case, then whatever I said yesterday, repeat it so that I may gauge whether you have the ability to learn with techque (investigation) or not?'

Very few people can derive benefit from them.

Then again, in contrast to writing there is a greater need to build perfection in speech since the benefit of writing is confined to scholars and educated people. Whereas the benefit of speech is broader (i.e. it is not confined to literate people only). Furthermore it includes the confined benefit. So, with regard to general and specific benefit there are two ways to verbal bayaan. One is dars (teaching). Its benefit is confined to students. The other is lectures, the benefit of which is for the masses. In both, benefit is dependent on acquisition of sufficient power of speech. Thus, our talabaa (students) are in need of practice and perfection of these two. In other words, when a lecture is given it should be given in such a way that laymen understand fully. Similarly, when a dars (lesson) is given, then it should be in such a way that the audience who are students understand it. Furthermore, there are two categories of academic lessons (darsiyyat). One is simply Aaliyaat (sciences which are aids in acquiring the prime subjects such as Nahw, Sarf, Mantiq, etc) and the second is Maqaasid (prime subjects such as Fiqh, Tafseer, Hadeeth, etc). A talk on Aaliyaat is absolutely limited since only students study and understand it. A talk on Maqaasid on the other hand is general as well as confined. In other words, Quraan and Hadeeth are presented before students as well as before the general public. Therefore, this should be borne in mind during mashq (practice). Students who are busy with Aaliyaat should only be made to speak in the jalsah of mashq firstly by reading the Ibaarat (text) of the Kitaabs and thereafter unraveling the contents. They should not expand beyond this.¹ Besides clarity of speech there is another benefit in

¹This is because there are several harms in giving a particular topic to such beginners expecting them to lecture on the topic. Firstly, due to incompetency they are unable to correctly speak on those topics. If they are corrected then how much? If they are not corrected then they will labour under ignorance and the listeners will also fall into error. Secondly, they discard their Madrasa lessons and concern themselves the whole time with these topics. Thirdly, if they remain deficient in their Kitaabs but well-trained in speech then they will choose lecturing as a profession and being jaahil lecturers they will ruin (the Deen and Imaan of) creation.

Just as it is harmful for such beginners to expand further in their talks, similarly in writing as well. Like nowadays, sending articles and essays to (Deeni) journals has become the norm. (Moulana Thanwi, quddisa sirruhu)

Introduction

We know that this is the inauguration of a special and an auspicious gathering. The purpose of this gathering is simply to inculcate in students the habit to deliver lectures so that they do not fall short of the goal of ilm (knowledge) and that which they have learned is not confined to themselves. They can convey it to others. For the purpose of speaking on this topic, the aayat was recited.

Inspiration Coinciding In The Hearts Of Several Believers

I chose this aayat for my bayaan beforehand, but out of good coincidence Qaari Saheb also recited the same rukoo'. (Before the bayaan Qaari Muhammed Yaamin Saheb read some qiraat for barakat). When Qaari Saheb commenced his recital I thought to myself that this conformity in choice is, Insha Allah, a sign of this gathering being maqbool (accepted in the Eyes of Allah). It is mentioned in the Hadeeth Shareef regarding Shab-e-Qadr that since several dreams (viz. the dreams of Rasoolullah ﷺ and some Sahabah رضى الله عنهم) conform to Qadr being in the last ten days (of Ramadhaan), therefore, there is strong reason to believe that it is so. From this the Urafaa (those who have true perception of the Deen of Allah) have deduced that inspirations of the same nature, settling on the hearts of several people, is a daleel-e-zanni (presumptive proof) of the correctness of that inspiration. Though we are nothing and our inspirations are nothing yet we say that in minor matters, minor inspirations have the same effect as major inspirations in major issues. So, the inspiration in my heart and in Qari Saheb's heart to recite this aayat, is an indication that this gathering is not futile, Insha-Allah. This is due to the fact that in both our hearts there is, with Praise to Allah, Islam and our gathering is but a small gathering. In fact I have hope of it being accepted.

Ittbaa'e Sunnah and Du'aa are Essential for Acceptance

One should however not suffice and rely on this indication only. On the contrary, ways should be devised for its acceptance and that way is ittbaa'e sunnat (explicit following of the sunnat). Together with that, du'aa should also be made which will be Insha Allahu Ta'ala at the end of the bayaan. In the du'aa one should petition Allah Ta'ala to make these student assemblies fruitful and in accordance to the sunnat (way) of Nabi

Shariat.

Du'aa is a major thing in every matter. Pleasing indications are nothing but good omens which are glad-tidings. Ba-shaarat (glad-tidings) hold the lowest degree (in the Shariat). Above that is, to devise and seek a way (tadbeer) and the highest stage is, du'aa coupled with tadbeer. It is as if du'aa is the final part of a complete cause of success. Du'aa plays a major role in acquisition of benefit. This was by the way (jumlah mu tarizah). Now I will address the main issue.

Three Special Blessings

In these short verses Haq Subhaanahu wa Ta'ala has mentioned His special acts which are wholly rahmat (mercy). He has also mentioned His blessed name with the meaning of rahmat. In these verses three rahmats are mentioned. All three are major rahmats and all three commence with Ar-Rahman, Ar-Rahman is the subject (mubtada) and following it are the predicates (khabars). Thus it is as though the Quranic text is as follows:

الرحمن علم القرآن ○ الرحمن خلق القرآن ○ الرحمن علم القرآن

From this we learn that the source of all these three bounties, is Allah Ta'ala's rahmat. It is like a governor telling someone: "The Benevolent Governor gave you a post. The Benevolent Governor promoted you. The Benevolent Governor made you an officer." All people acquainted with language can understand that the fac-

Mujtahideen and the statements of Nabi ﷺ are all sciences of the Quran. In this way knowledge of the Quran means knowledge of the Shariat and abandoning the Quran means abandoning the Shariat. In adducing an even clearer proof, an incident comes to mind in which Rasoolullah ﷺ stated regarding one hearing:

أُفْضِي بَيْنَكُمْ بِكِتَابِ اللَّهِ

Translation: I will pass judgment between you two with the Kitab of Allah.

Thereafter Rasoolullah ﷺ, proceeded to give a verdict in accordance to the Hadeeth.

The summary of all this is that the bayaan which conforms to the Quran is that bayaan which is in accordance to the Shariat. Speech and writing both are included in bayaan. Hence, it is stated in one place in the Quran shareef regarding this inclusive relationship:

علم بالقلم ○ علم بالسمع ○ علم بالبين

In other words, bayaan is sometimes bil qalam (written) and sometimes bil hisaan (verbal). These are the two types of bayaan.

The Ni'mat Of Bayaan

This bayaan is a ni'mat with regard to worldly benefits too, but they will not be mentioned now. Right now Deeni benefits will be mentioned. In this regard this bayaan is a great Deeni ni'mat. The benefits are that by virtue of the ilm (knowledge) with us this day and age, we can be among the accepted servants of Allah Ta'ala. This is only by virtue of ni'mat-e-bayaan. If our illustrious pious predecessors did not expand and compile the sciences (of the Deen) then we would have been left in the dark.

The Need For Perfection in Bayaan

Similarly if we wish to acquire reward for benefit to others then we should acquire expertise in writing and speaking and thereafter deliver the uloom (sciences) of the Deen to others. We have seen Ulamaa who lack proficiency in writing and speaking.

Having said this he sent someone to enquire from the nearby village. Most of the village folk denied the existence of a tree at that spot. However, some elderly people of the village said that many years ago there was a tree there and it had been cut down. Twelve years have passed since then. When people believed him, only then did he proceed with his journey.

Similarly, an episode appears in Abu Dawood. A narrator relates that he heard a Hadeeth from a Bedouin. After a period of time he thought to himself let me test the memory of the Bedouin, lest he has narrated the Hadeeth to me erroneously. Thus the narrator went to him and asked about the Hadeeth. He (the Bedouin) related the Hadeeth and said:

“Are you testing me? My memory is so strong that I have performed seventy Haj every year on a new camel and I can recall on which camel I made Haj in which year.”

Imam Bukhari went to a certain place. The Ulamaa there wished to test him. They mixed up 100 Ahaadeeth and recited them before Imam Bukhari. Imam Bukhari said after each Hadeeth:

“لا اعرف” (I am not aware of it). When they were done with, Imam Bukhari related to them the 100 Ahaadeeth the way they had recited the 100 to him and thereafter he gave the correct version.

اما الحديث الاول فهو كذا واما الثاني فهو كذا

Translation: As far as the first Hadeeth is concerned, it is so and regarding the second it is so...

However when Hadeeths were compiled in books and the need for so powerful memories terminated, then, retentive skills started to wane.

Manifestation Of The Deens Perfection

In short, termination of ijtihaad was after the manifestation of the perfection of the Deen. Manifestation of that perfection through ijtihaad simply shows that their qiyaas (analogical deduction) was, similar to Hadeeth, an exposition of the Quraan and also an exposition to the Hadeeth. Thus the ijtihaadaat of the

tor contributing to these favours, is benevolence. Similarly, the factor underlying these bounties is the mercy of Allah Ta'ala.

Furthermore the mercy too, is magnanimous since Rahman is a word of mubaalaghah (a word denoting an excessive quality in something). Thus the summary of the translation is that, He has taught the Quraan Who possesses excessive mercy. This was the first bounty (ni'mat). The second ni'mat is that He created man and the third ni'mat is that He taught man the art of speech.

The Sequence Of Blessings

Of these three bounties the third sentence is appropriate to the purpose of this occasion. However, just as the first two bounties are stated first, similarly in existence they precede the third bounty. This is whether you look at it in regard to material existence or abstract existence. For this reason, those two sentences were also recited. The precedence (taqaddum) and role of one is obvious, viz. خلق الانسان. It plays a worldly role and it is a worldly condition because as long as insaan (man) is not created, ta'leem-e-bayaan is not possible. So teaching and learning is dependent on existence and existence is dependent on creating.

From this we apparently learn, that there was no need of mentioning it, since all know that, had man not been created he would not have been able to speak. By mentioning it separately, the point drawn is to make us aware of a ni'mat which is a means of another ni'mat which is, in a way, independent and intended. It should not be regarded merely as a medium. This means that some favours/bounties in view of being mediums, are commonly disregarded or overlooked. Therefore by mentioning it separately, it is as if stated that this too is a great bounty, worthy of independent mention and attention. عظمه البيان is not the only ni'mat. Thus, if this ni'mat of creation was not touched upon then in the words there would be no cautioning of its intent. In mentioning it we are cautioned that this too is a ni'mat on its own. Outwardly it is as such because creating is not merely the medium for imparting the art of speaking. In fact there are other reasons and benefits too. In

any case it is dependent on creation and this is obvious.

Why Knowledge Of The Quran Precedes The Art Of Speech

Now the precedence of the second condition is very deep

(ghaamiz). So much so that even the Ulaamaa sometimes do not reflect on it. That condition is ilmul-Quran or knowledge of the Quran. There is a Shari point of dependance on it. In other words, although it is externally (hissan) possible to find the art of speech without the Quran, but a correct finding worthy of recognition will be after ta'leeme Quran (teaching the Quran). If in a bayaan the teachings of the Quran are not upheld, then that bayaan and lecture will be baatil in the Shariah and as if non-existent. Lately, many have totally abandoned the teachings of the Quran. We frequently see the general public surpassing the limits of the Shariah in most matters. They don't even spare a thought for it. But, on the same token we find that students (of the Deen) are very far off the path of the Shariat in their statements and actions. For this very reason Ulaamaa who have comprehensive understanding of circumstances are hesitant in permitting these jalsahs (gatherings) and anjuman (assemblies) for students. They fear, lest the doings of these people transcend the limits prescribed by the Shariat.

Discrepancies In Style Of Speech

Nowadays I see that some young students of Arabic leaving out many things of the Shariat in these gatherings. Sometimes they mention topics in conflict to what is true and authentic. Sometimes they adopt the mode of speech of those fettered to Europe. (In other words, western-ways of speech). What is worse is that their elders and Ustaads do not prohibit them from this style. In fact it is regarded as a boon and source of dynamism to their speech. The reason for this is that ilm (knowledge) has become scarce. Thus there is a need for gilding. Since they do not

When his creation was complete then Hazrat Hawwa was created from his rib. When one man and one woman came into existence then that method was discontinued. Thereafter through the husband-wife relationship all people were created. Hazrat Iesa's عليه السلام, creation was again, out of the ordinary.

Other things are also as such (That is, necessity precedes its appearance). Accordingly, I have seen a statement of one doctor in the papers. He writes that the reason for the shortage of rain is that with tree-felling few trees remain. So the way to procure more rainfall is to plant trees in abundance wherever there are few of it. Allah knows best what this doctor may have understood its reason to be, but the mystery behind it is that with the diminishing of trees the need for abundant rainfall does not remain. Where there are plenty of trees, there, the need for more rainfall remains. Farming requirements again have begun to be met through canals. Rainwater is therefore not connected much with it. In short, science accepts this fact and we accept it. The aayat:

وَاللَّهُ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

Translation: We have given you whatever you asked for.

indicates the same. Likewise, as long as the need for the illustrious Mujtahideen remained the power of ijthihaad continued to surface. When the need was realized, this power disappeared.

The Colossal Memory Of The Muhadditheen

In the same way, memory-power was bestowed perfectly until it was required. So much so that Hazrat Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه would remember a qaseedah of 100 poems after listening to it just once.

When Imam Tirmithi رحمه الله عليه became blind, once he happened to be on a journey. At a certain place during the way he bowed his head whilst seated on a camel. The camel-driver enquired from him the reason for this. He replied that there is a low-lying branch of a tree at this place. The camel-driver replied "There is no such tree here." Imam Tirmithi immediately stopped his camel and said: "If my memory has become so weak, then from this day onwards I will discontinue narrating Ahaadeeth."

Hadeeth—Part Of The Quraan

A woman came to Hazrat Abdullah Bin Mas'ood رضى الله عنه and said: "I heard you have cursed a woman who plucks¹ her hair, etc."

Abdullah Bin Mas'ood: "Why should I not curse one whom the Quraan has cursed?"

Woman: "I have read the entire Quraan. There is nothing of this in it."

Bin Mas'ood: لو قرأتیه لوجدتیه

In other words, if you read thoughtfully then you would have found it, because, Rasoolullah صلى الله عليه وسلم proscribed these acts and it is stated in the Quraan that whatever the Rasool of Allah instructs you with accept it and what he forbids you from abstain from it. In this way these injunctions are also purported by the Quraan. So look! Hazrat Ibn Mas'ood رضى الله عنه includes the statement of Rasoolullah صلى الله عليه وسلم in the Quraan. In the Quraan itself it appears

فاذا قرأناه فاتبع قرآنه ۝ ثم ان علينا بيان

Translation: When we dictate it then follow its recital. Thereafter, its exposition is Our responsibility.

So Rasoolullah صلى الله عليه وسلم clarified the ijmaal (ambiguity) of the Quraan. If some inconspicuousness remained in the Hadeeth then the Illustrious Mujtahideen made it clear until:

اكملت لكم دينكم

Translation: I have perfected for you your Deen, became manifestly apparent. Then after the manifestation of this perfection, through Divine Wisdom the power of ijtihaad (independent judgment based on the interpretation and application of the four proofs of the Shariat) terminated. Now there is no necessity for it.

Necessity Precedes Creation—Some examples

Allah Ta'ala's qudrat is amazing. When there is a need for something He creates it. When the need is fulfilled it ceases. Hence, Hazrat Aadam عليه السلام was created from clay.

¹i.e. plucking of the hair to show bigger a forehead for beauty purposes.

have with them something genuine they have to resort to gilding. An un-gilded speech may not have flowery words but it has internal beauty. On the otherhand a gilded speech may display flowery-language but thought and reflection will reveal that it has no substance. It is mere rhetoric. By reflection and contemplation both are tested. This meaning is borne out in Haafiz Sheerazi's poem :

خویش بود گر مدح تجربه آید بمیان
تا سیه رویشو هرکه درو غش باشد

It means that it is best that you put me and my rival on the touchstone of experience. In whomever there turns out to be alloy his face will be blackened. He will be disgraced. Although it may glitter but upon examination all the glitter will fade away. And what is pure will remain glittering. In fact its glitter will double. In short, those who have a wealth of ilm are not in need of any outward decorations. Those lacking in ilm however employ outward embellishment to their speeches. Then too, true beauty is not produced. Haafiz says about that beauty:

حسد چه می بری ای سست نظم برجا فظ
قبول خا طرو حسن سخن خدا داد است

Translation: O jealous one! Why are you jealous of Haafiz's poetical composition. The beauty of speech and its acceptance in hearts are God-given gifts.

د لفر بیان نبا تی همه زیور بستند
د لیر ما ست که با حسن خدا داد آمد

Translation: Feigned beloveds all wear jewellery. Our Beloved possesses natural beauty.

The Ahle Haqq

We have seen the Ahle Haqq. The beauty and enchantment in their plain words are not to be found in high metaphors. On the otherhand, the speeches of those deprived of true knowledge seem only at first glance to be polished and compact. However, the more you ponder over it, its flimsiness, weakness and mere gathering of words becomes apparent. This is because they have no wealth of knowledge. Unlike those who possess ilm.

Their plain words is as said:

Translation: The more you look at my beloved's face, the beauty of it will increase your beauty.

of it will increase your beauty.

We Are A Nation With Simplicity

From this we get the answer to an objection which is among the objections levelled against the Ulaama that they don't know the art of lecturing. In answer, we assert that we have with us the Quran and Hadeeth and the wealth of its teachings is with us. We are in no need of external glitter and embellishment. It has been well said:

Translation: The beauty of the Friend (Allah) is not in need of

some from the necessity of the text, some particular and some universal.

both languages would have remained as they were. Accordingly, we see the Bengalis and the British speaking their language and Urdu. The reason is simple. At home they speak Bengali and English respectively. Since our elders did not take this care or could not (for some reason or the other) our language is a murak-kab (mixed) language. On the topic of mixed, it comes to mind that Moulana Muhammad Ya'qoob saheb رحمۃ اللہ علیہ said that he saw a Hindi-Arabic mixed boy in Mecca Mua'zzama wailing and saying: *آنا بازار جاؤں*

Our Original Language Is Arabic

In short, the Hindi of the mother destroyed the Arabic tongue. Thus the original language was lost. If someone claims that the mother-tongue is the original language, then I will counter that by saying that when one's lineage is from the father then why will the father's tongue not be the original tongue?

Nevertheless, since our original language is Arabic and if we had to adulterate the Urdu language then we should have done it with Arabic. But, surprisingly we have made Urdu subordinate to English. The consequence of which is that Urdu is close to being no more. The pure Urdu language is like in the book 'Chaar Durweish' (The Four Dervishes) or Ghalib's Urduwi Mu'allaa. If any adulteration had to be permitted then it should be with Arabic. With a mixture of Arabic the beauty would be enhanced. Look, if in a Faarsi (Persian) text a word or two of Arabic appears then it appears as if the sky has been lit up.

To summarize, the English which has mixed into our language and created some modernity to it is worthy of discarding. Besides the previously mentioned defect in this new-style, the other major fault is that it opens the door of deception. Whereas in the old way this is not the case. From a Shar'i point of view it is imitating a faasiq nation. This imitation is in itself haraam. It appears in the Hadeeth Shareef:

مَنْ تَشَبَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ فَهُوَ مِنْهُمْ

our defective love. The face which possesses natural beauty is not in need of a face-lift.

We are not in need of learning the modern style of lecturing. We say emphatically that whoever adopts a modern way of lecturing sows a seed of dislike in our hearts. We prefer that way which is indicated in the Hadeeth Shareef:

زَحْنٌ أُمَّةٌ أَمِّيَّةٌ

Ummiyyah means simplicity. So the prime wish of Rasoolullah صلى الله عليه وسلم is that his ummat (followers) remain with much simplicity. The word nahnu (we) is used which includes the entire ummat. This is the essence of explicit following of the Nabi صلى الله عليه وسلم. There should be complete simplicity in everything.

Ummiyyah is attributed to Umm which means mother. The purport of this is that our lives should be just as the life of a child born from the stomach of the mother. No action of the child is pretended and made up. There is instinctiveness in every action of it. This is the quality of kids which induces love for them in everyone. Otherwise, there ought to be natural dislike for them since they are containers of najaasat (impurity). This 'instinctiveness' is what makes attractive looking people sacrifice their lives for elderly people in whom this quality is found. So the actual purport of ummiyyah is instinctiveness and not 'unlettered' which is the popular meaning. Unlettered is a branch of instinctiveness.

Despoiling The Urdu Language

There should be, thus, no show and extravagance in speech whatsoever. It should be wholly pure of deception and gilding. Yes, with simplicity there should be clarity. This is necessary. However, now this style is gradually being forsaken. We see the style of the prevalent language (i.e. English) creeping into the talk of the Ulamaa. Leave alone the Shari aspect, we should see that our mother tongue is Urdu. It has certain characteristics just as every language has certain characteristics. Now this modern style has been adopted and the characteristics of English have been incorporated into the Urdu language. Day by day it is on the

increase. This, inspite of the fact that English does not fit well into it at all. Because of this, the (Urdu) language is becoming horrible and despoiled.

Among people there is a large group who call themselves haami (upholders) of Urdu. They are in fact maahi (effacers) of Urdu. Every language has a material component and an outward appearance. These two combined make up a language, not the material component on its own. So when the outward appearance of Urdu ceases to remain it will not be called Urdu¹. Thus, if we are upholders of Urdu we should maintain its characteristics and our speech should be such that if a foreigner listens to it he should be under the impression that we do not know a word of English and neither are we familiar with its style.

Students Of the Deen And The Preservation Of The Arabic Language

Even greater course for surprise is that many English words have taken root in the speeches of Arabic-learning students. If words of any other language comes into their speech then it should be Arabic. Firstly, for this reason that they are studying Arabic. Secondly, Arabic is our religious language and as such our original language. Urdu has become our tongue just recently, otherwise our original and ancestral language is Arabic because our forefathers came from Arabia and settled in Hindustan. Many a times I lament the fact that our elders never preserved the Arabic language yet they have preserved their lineage. It was not even difficult upon them.

Which ever country the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam (رضي الله عنهم) conquered, in most cases the entire land embraced the Sahaabah's language and up till now that language prevails. This, inspite of the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam (رضي الله عنهم), not apparently taking much care to ensure that the locals adopt their

¹By their inclusion of English words in Urdu speech.

language. Take Egypt for example. Through the barakat of the Sahaabah the language of the whole of Egypt is Arabic, not withstanding the fact that Islam is not the religion of all the Egyptians. Okay, even if the degree of barakat (blessings) in the Sahaabah is not found in non-Sahaabah and thus nations conquered by non-Sahaabah never take their language then at least they should have upheld their own language. However, it is surprising that our elders, upon coming to Hindustan leave alone spread their language, they did not even upkeep their own language.

Why Arabic Never Spread in Hindustan

Reflection reveals that our elders mostly came to Hindustan single and unmarried. They took Hindustan as their home and married the local women who had converted to Islam. The mother's tongue had a greater influence on the offspring and from this was born a new language. This same motherly-influence is the reason behind the customs of leejah¹, etc, still being in vogue among Muslims. Because these Hindi women had in them the customs of their forefathers, so, when those days came they must have said that we do like this on these occasions. Our elders not seeing any outward harm, out of sympathy they gave permission effecting slight changes. For example, instead of ushlook (a Hindi poem) they introduced Faatiha and so forth. But, it was at that time temporary. Nowadays, however, people consider it farz-e-ain (incumbent on everyone), hence the Ulamaa have prohibited these customs and consequently are called Wahhababi and what not.

In short, because of this temporary motherly influence, Arabic never took root in Hindustan. The father used to speak Arabic and the mother Hindi, and children are more with the mother learning the mother's tongue. Therefore, some Arabic and some Hindi mixed to form this diverse language. If at home they spoke Arabic and listened from people outside their homes, then

¹The custom of making Quraan khalm on the third day of a person's death.