

Responsibilities of Religious Scholars (Ulama)

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**Translated by: Orwatul Wuthqa Seminary
(Lahore- Pakistan)**



Published by: Matab Publications, Pakistan

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PREFACE

This booklet is translation of a lecture by Hujjatul Islam Ustad Syed Jawad Naqvi (h.a) delivered to a group up scholars at the annual Imam-e-Jumah conference held at Orwatul Wuthqa Seminary, Lahore. This book is a comprehensive guidelines for Scholars and an abridged manifesto for the Islamic scholars to make them realize the responsibilities, duties and to come out from the inferiority complex which has haunted most of our scholars. The respected scholar in a brief discourse has presented a masterpiece which if pondered with a sincere heart can revolutionize a scholar. This booklet is a must to be read and pondered multiple times by the scholar and all those who have taken the divine responsibility of preaching Islam in society. Apart from making the scholars recognize their duties and responsibilities, there is a lot of emphasis on identify the true dignified stature which scholars possess in a Muslim society which equates them to become inheritors of Prophets. This book also presents the methodology and brief highlights about the skill and talents required to achieve the Prophetic mission. The perception which this book is presenting about the scholars has a paradigm shift from the conventional outlook we have about scholars present in our mosques and on pulpits. At the end the book presents the course and direction in which the scholars should steer the community and specifically the youths. We emphasize that this small booklet should be printed, spread out and handed over to all Scholars, preachers and intellectuals who have an Islamic orientation or carry the pain for this divine religion.

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Scholars – the heirs of Prophets

Allah instituted the prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.s) for the guidance of this Ummah that was drowned in open misguidance, and Allah assigned this responsibility to the prophet that by reciting the verses of Allah in front of them, correct and cleanse them and to teach them the book of wisdom. To guide the Ummah and those who are lost, this is the constitutional way of God

It is related from Imam Hussain (as) that “Al Ulama Wursatul Ambiya” – The scholars are the inheritors of Prophets.

So the scholars should have the will to do what prophets did, and do the same this for their country and nation, so that they can take out their societies from open Gumrahi and ridicule. The task that Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.s) undertook was very difficult, about the society that Quran is saying in Surah Juma as;

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ
وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي
ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ {2}

He it is Who raised among the inhabitants of Mecca an Messenger from among themselves, who recites to them His communications and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and the Wisdom, although they were before certainly in clear error,

The same society that was full of moral filth and degradation, after the hard work of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.s) the Quran is saying about the same society in Surah Ale Imran as;

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ
الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ ۗ وَلَوْ آمَنَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ ۗ مِنْهُمْ
الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾

*You are the best of the nations raised up for (the benefit of) men;
you enjoin what is right and forbid the wrong and believe in Allah;
and if the followers of the Book had believed it would have been
better for them; of them (some) are believers and most of them are
transgressors*

You are the best of nations among those that Allah has created thus far. That's why the work of religious scholars is like that of prophets. The religious teacher is in fact doing the same thing that Allah had assigned to prophets. So except those special conditions that are only specific to the prophets that they get revelation, they bring the sharia, and that they are infallibles, the other qualities that Allah has fixed for them are also fixed for the scholars. Henceforth Allah has transferred his prophet's responsibilities to their heirs, and religious scholars are included in the list of these heirs. Thus scholars are also protectors and preachers of the religion and for the sake of religion they sacrifice on occasions as prophets did.

Being lazy in preaching

The scholars should know the exact situation of the societies they live in. Those scholars who live in Pakistan very well know the problems of Pakistan society that what is current situation in Pakistan? Right now there are people who belong to different sects and different schools of thoughts. There are the ones that Allah has bestowed upon them this blessing that they belong to school of Ahlulbayt (a.s) i.e. they are Shia. Other than them there is vast majority of people that belong

to other sects and it is possible that there are people who are far from religion and they do not belong to any Islamic sect, we have to deal with them also. If we look at the followers of Shia school of thought, we see that they have the spirit of belief (Iman) in them but there are a lot of difficulties with them too. One major difficulty they face is the lack of awareness, and the reason for that is that our system of preaching is very sluggish and weak, instead if we say that it is almost non-existent then it won't be an over statement.

If the Shiite school of thought is compared to other sects in this area, then their preaching element is very strong and sound. Those sects are standing based solely on their strong preaching system even though they don't have the element of "Azadari" with them at all like Shias have. In the days of mourning (Azadari) people participate in Majalis with full religious fervour and spirit and they setup the events with full commitment, but it's obvious that these majalis are only left with the fervour, and the passionate emotions and nothing else. Every year on the 8th of Rabi-ul-Awal all Shias announce the end of mourning period and then become still until the Muharram of next year. Whereas the opposite sect, their preaching elements remain active all year long. The lack of Shia Scholars is that during the days of mourning when the whole Shia nation is attentive towards their faith and religion, the least amount of thing that you see in Majalis is the Preaching (Tableegh).

The Loss due to Lack of Preaching

Right now at some places the process of preaching is non-existent, and if at some places there is some preaching it is also very less. First of all, the preacher doesn't come to the pulpit and even if someone wants to come he is not allowed to come and is stopped. So only Zakir and orators come to the pulpit who do not preach but show their own entertaining talents and hence gain popularity among the masses, not to mention that people in general do like to be preached during the days of Azadari also. Another thing that lacks in Shiite these days is that there are very few preachers in Shiite, so even if some people feel the need to bring in a preacher they can't seem to find him. There are some places where people's habits have changed and they actually want to listen to a preacher, and they have the desire that some preacher should come to their area and preach but they find it hard to find a preacher. They even start looking around the country for a preacher who comes to them during the days of Azadari to read Majalis but those preachers are not readily available.

Everyday we are watching that our problems are increasing in this country, and other people are dominating us and they are spreading. One big reason of this is that they have instilled preaching in them and they have a huge belief in preaching. Only because of this preaching they are slowly but surely winning in all fields. Their masses are more and their institutions are strong, obviously the nation that is present in the field all year long as compared to those who are only in the field for ten days or few days, the difference should be there. Those who are present all year and those who are

present for few days in the field, the difference between them is very obvious.

A lot of our own elders do not consider preaching (*Tableegh*) to be important at all, meaning they do not even believe in it, in their opinion anyone who is highly educated should not come into preaching. Due to this belief, anyone who achieves higher religious education does not want to become a prayer leader or preacher, now because they give preference to the teaching and learning aspect only i.e. they sit in religious institutions and read grand books and want to become researchers (Mujtahid) or grand religious scholars (Marja-e-Taqleed). Now it's obvious that just by sitting in a *madrassa* and learning leaves no room for interaction with the public; the learning and teaching aspect is only limited to the students inside hence the general public does not get any share of this learning, and not to mention the result of this religious research rarely reaches the public also. At the end the book gets published but the public doesn't read. So the only way to guide the public is through preaching but unfortunately this preaching doesn't have a lot of charm in it e.g. if you ask any learned elder that do you want to become a head of Madrassa or do you want to go to a mosque and be a preacher, they will prefer to become a principle of an institution, because in their eyes becoming a preacher in a mosque is not that much of a respectable profession.

Scholars – The soldiers of Islam and on position of Imam

Imam Khomeini (ra) says that a mosque is a bunker of Islam, and whoever looks after this bunker is a soldier. The soldier is

sitting in an Islamic bunker hence the bunker should be strong too since it is the front line of Islam, and there are many armies in front of this bunker. One army is of the ignorant, one army is of the deviants, one army is of the opponents, one army is of the foolish, and one army is of the enemy. It means that one religious scholar who is sitting in a mosque he has to face many armies. So of them are those ignorant who are among us, so it's possible that they are present around him or those who pray behind him but are ignorant, may be they tease him daily or ask him stupid and nonsense questions, those who get into weird debates with him or put pressure on him. So there is always an army that stands by him and then there are armies who stand against him. One army consists of those people that only want that this scholar should never talk about pure religion but only talk about according to their desires, then his opponents come and then his enemies and so the army after army keeps coming in front of him, hence this soldier is always surrounded with difficulties.

Now this scholar soldier on one hand has to face these armies and on the other hand he also has to worry about his daily needs e.g. his household needs food, so he is worried about that too that how to feed his family, where to keep his kids i.e. he is also facing these kind of issues too in parallel to the above mentioned battles.

One day one religious scholar came to us, and said that I live in the mosque too, they have given me one room in the mosque, outside is the kitchen in the open sun without any shade, and the common bathroom that is meant for the general public is the same bathroom that he and his family uses. This is a very important point that even in these

conditions this soldier has kept that mosque and imambargah alive. Those people don't even have this empathy that he has his sanctity too, his wife and kids too and they are using the same public bathroom. Give and take; this is the kind of low level of life some of these soldiers are enduring every day, and then there are some who don't even have this much to spend a year in prosperity but they still remain standing in their bunkers and stay steadfast in their missions of preaching. If you look at it from this angle then this is big honor for them too that in these kind of conditions they are working, but still it's obvious that one soldier needs immense strength to look after his bunker in the battlefield.

One more important point is that the Friday prayer leaders and the scholars should realize what their own position is? The title that the religion of Islam has given to those who hold the bunkers is of an Imam i.e. the leaders of the mosque. The system of religion is the system of Imam. The whole religion is granted to Imam, the nation as a whole is also granted to Imam, and its smaller units are also given under the wings of Imam. To run every unit Allah has made this Imam and the same title of Imam is reserved for those who are the prayer leaders of the local mosque, they are the junior imams i.e. he is the imam of this particular community. Hence they should also keep this in mind that this is not a job but a kind of an Imam even though there are shortcomings and difficulties and weaknesses.

Changing the mentality of people

Even though the mentality that Pakistani people have towards the religious scholars is a very wrong mentality, so there is a

need to change this mental approach. The scholars and are the inheritors of the prophets (as) so the society would have to change their outlook towards them, but obviously this cannot happen just by saying it. If a scholar tells the momineen to change their outlook towards the religious scholars, they won't change it just because he said so, the public didn't even change their outlook when they were told by prophets so what effect would it have if a scholar says it. So to change this mentality the religion has shown an effective way and that is to change the viewpoint of people, do it with your character. There is one tradition that says; Become the preachers for people but not with your tongue but through character. This means change the viewpoints of people with your character. When people see a wise, graceful, nice, elegant and dignified human being they automatically change their mentalities and admit that they were wrong about the person. Whenever the public meets a nice personality and see that he is very humble and honorable they immediately bring a change in themselves and change their thoughts. Ameer ul Momineen Ali (as) said that the one who has designated himself to lead people, whether it's the leadership in education or in the affairs of worship or the leadership in any other field. He should educate himself first before he instructs other people. If he starts from his own, then success is guaranteed.

Meaning of Bethat (Arousing)

In Quran Allah states that;

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ
وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي
ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ {2}

*He it is Who raised among the inhabitants of Mecca an Messenger
from among themselves, who recites to them His communications
and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and the Wisdom,
although they were before certainly in clear error,*

Another place in Surah Ale Imran it is also stated:

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا
نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا
أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقُولُوا اشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا
مُسْلِمُونَ {64}

*Say: O followers of the Book! come to an equitable proposition
between us and you that we shall not serve any but Allah and (that)
we shall not associate aught with Him, and (that) some of us shall
not take others for lords besides Allah; but if they turn back, then
say: Bear witness that we are Muslims.*

We have aroused (*Mab'oos*) the Holy prophet (s.a.w.s). *Mab'oos* doesn't mean to send someone, but it means to arouse, to ignite and to prepare someone. That is to create enough courage and determination in someone that he doesn't stop at any obstacles and blockades. When an aroused, ignited and a prepared person comes into the field then all these obstacles, hurdles have no meaning in front of him. That person easily gets dismayed the one who is not ready, who is not prepared; unprepared person even gets scared of the heat and cold. If a couple of people confront him

he gets scared, if he is weak in front of his own people he gets scared, at the end the unprepared one eventually stops at some hurdle but the one who is prepared he jumps each hurdle successfully.

Thus Allah has said this great revolution that Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.s) brought upon, the reason of this great rising is because I had aroused him as the prophet. Allah had convinced, prepared and kindled Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.s) and that is why he did not stop at any hurdle and those who were clearly lost he made them the best of the nation. Hence those concepts that are present in the *Bethat* of the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.s), the same concepts should be present in his inheritor also; that is the religious scholars. It means that the religious scholar should also prepare himself to face any problems and a religious scholar can only establish, arouse himself by being “aware and awake”. Awareness awakens and it influences for self-cleansing and training. Then this fully prepared and armed Scholar trains other people. There are two other tasks too that Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.s) said that Allah had prepared me for.

Allah has made me *Māadab*, has ‘cleansed and purified’ me, and then I have cleansed and purified the Ummah, and similarly Allah says that we sent a revelation on Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.s), and we opened the doors of treasures of knowledge upon him and Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.s) became aware to this extent. This means that this particular and highest place and title is only specific for Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.s); and no other can attain this place but to their own extents every scholar and student should assign himself these two prophetic tasks. One they should have awareness present in them so

they can establish themselves and second they should work on their self-purification and self-development.

Pain (Dard) and Lectures (Dars)

There are many Scholars that only get a few kilogram of wheat per year, and all year around they serve the religion of Allah in that community or area, they do not care about their own condition. Whereas there are people who live in big cities with all luxuries of life provided to them even if they are given Rs. 20,000 per month, still they are never ready to serve Islam. So there is a difference of assignment in between these two types, the one who serves against a few kilos of wheat has passion, determination and pain inside him, this pain makes the Human to rise up to the occasion. Bodily pain is the same, some people sleep but some stay awake even at the time of sleeping, they are awake due to some pain in the body e.g. headache doesn't let you sleep. The one who has pain inside him he doesn't sit in peace, but the one whose stomach is full, he feels sleepy and he can't get up.

The ones who are only worried about their own stomachs and their outlooks never get up. Even if their nation is dying still it doesn't makes a difference to them. If you tell them that people are ignorant, they say let them be ignorant, similarly if you tell them that there is no one to perform the funeral prayers, it doesn't make a difference to them, at some place people even have to call Scholars from other sects to recite the funeral service. And they when they are called they say first become Muslim then we will read your funeral.

A short time ago some people were telling that in one town there is a huge population of Shia believers. A little girl died there, they called some scholar from the other sect to perform funeral, he said first take off your standard flag (*Alam*), then seek repentance, then recite the six Kalimas, and then I will read the funeral of this little girl. This means in order to have the funeral performed of this little girl the whole Shia community has to distance themselves from true Islam first. In a town like that where a shia institution and mosque is present but the religious scholar cannot make himself available for a funeral, then he is the stomach worshipper, and he is in deep sleep, and he does not have the pain for the religion, the pain for the institution, pain for humanity and the pain for shia.

Lectures (Dars) are important to gain awareness and cognizance (Maarifat). If a person doesn't attend the lectures cognizance (Maarifat) cannot be achieved, but even after listening to the lecture and gaining knowledge the person can still sleep. There are many who gained knowledge and went to sleep and they do not care. Hence the thing that forces a person to get up and brings him in the field are not the sermons and lectures but the inner pain. The sermons make you cognizant (gives Maarifat) but the pain brings you in the ground. Hence a person that feels the pain along with the gaining of knowledge he becomes the chosen one and the one that can get aroused (Mab'oos).

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ
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ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ {2}

He it is Who raised among the inhabitants of Mecca an Messenger from among themselves, who recites to them His communications and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and the Wisdom, although they were before certainly in clear error,

We aroused Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.s) i.e. we filled his heart with all the pain of the world. So when this Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.s) sees someone deviated, he cringes that why is he diverted? The last few verses of Surah Tauba states that when this Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.s) sees the people that have deviated from the true path, he gets concerned, and gets anxious to this extent that Allah told Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.s) that O Prophet (s.a.w.s)

لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ
حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ {128}

Certainly a Messenger has come to you from among yourselves; grievous to him is your falling into distress, excessively solicitous respecting you; to the believers (he is) compassionate,

Why are you putting yourself in agony and misery for these people? Who is the person that puts himself in misery? The one who has pain inside him; one who leaves his wife and kids. Everyone lives with their own families, but the true teacher and the inheritor of the prophets is the one that leaves his own kids and family in his life but goes on the journey for the guidance of the kids of the nation. This pain of religion, this grief for Islam, the pain for the nation and the pain for humanity is a gift from Allah that he gives only to the chosen ones. Hence to be the chosen one for the assignment you have to have the cognizance (Maarifat) and pain (Dard) at the same time.

Cleansing and Purification

Quran states that the third thing that is needed for arousing (*Mab'ooos*) of a human is the self-cleansing and purification. Clean and purified state meaning the religious scholar should be clean of those things that take a person to the valley of things that are not up to his stature. Greed, gluttony, voracity, and beggar ship are those things that do not suit the status of a religious scholar. Hence distancing from these things brings in cleanliness of soul. The cleanliness of a religious scholar should be like this. The religious scholar should be self-respectable and dignified. Quran is saying that there are some people that rich people think of them as prosperous and generous due to their dignity, even though they may not have eaten for many times, their kids are hungry but they don't let anyone around them sense their condition. They do all this because they have faith in Allah, these are the soldiers that sit in the bunkers of Islam whereas there are many who make the mosque as their personal shops.

If a trader is placed in a bunker and given arms and ammunition and is told that the enemy is in front of you and you have to defend this village or town; then there also he will even bring things there to sell; he will put the gun on the side and focus on flourishing his shop first. Similarly, God forbid that mosque becomes a business too where a businessman goes and gets settled. But when an empty stomached soldier goes there and when the people around him tell him that you don't have anything in the house, go work somewhere to feed yourself and your family, his reply is that my priority is to save the religion of God, if I go work somewhere I can earn as much

as any other person and give my family a lavish life but the religion of Allah will be left alone if I did that.

Were there not any scholars present at the time of Karbala? When Imam Hussain (as) stood up, Medina was full of scholars, Mecca was full of scholars, Grand Holy personalities were present, they were so holy that they would never get up from their prayers mats, twenty-four hours they were on their prayer mats, they would even sleep on these mats, their ablutions will never get broken, and even if they broke they would refresh it right away, meaning they were so conscious of their cleanliness but when Imam (as) called upon them to rise, they did not come! Those grand holy personalities, those scholars, those historians, those narrators of Hadees did not come, that time no one stood up, only Syed-u-Shohada (as) took the stand. It wasn't because these people did not feel the pain inside, it's because they had become degraded and disgraceful in reality. Hence those traits that degrade and demean a person, it's very important to stay away from them. When a soldier becomes capable for a bunker then he is called the Imam, Islam calls him Imam but if he doesn't have self-respect in him then people around him hire him as servant not an Imam. E.g. if you send someone in the role of Imam but he is offered a job then he quits the title of Imam and goes for the job and doesn't like to stay in the mosque as an Imam but as a servant. Imam never sells the title of Imam in return for bread and never accepts the occupation.

Scholars should maintain the sanctity of Imam

Allah gave Imamate to Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s). Aa'zar was in Hazrat Ibrahim's (a.s) house, and he was also his guardian. He said O Ibrahim look after my business, I make idols and then sell them, I am the Imam of idol house and also a pastor, you should also join me in my business as it will be beneficial to you and me. I have become old now, there should be someone to run my business after me so come work with me. Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s) said that Allah has made me the Imam of people; I cannot leave this great post given by Allah to me and become your servant especially I will never work with these idols. Meaning he said that Allah hasn't given me an occupation in idols and idol temple, factory instead he has given me the Imamate for the whole humanity; so I chose Imamate on everything. In the path of Imamate there are tremendous difficulties so Allah has given the scholars two kinds of positions. One is that these scholars are Imams and second is that they are teachers. Imamate and coaching both are the roles of prophets. Even though in these times the scholars don't care about either one of those and they don't give any importance to both of these roles.

Now a day's our public also give more importance to ignorant, sinners, criminals and political leaders. As an example if anywhere there is a religious scholar standing and with him is standing an ignorant and corrupt politician the people don't even bother to shake hands with the scholar but will greet the politician with their heads bowed.

Our teacher used to tell us a story. These days in Iran the washrooms are built inside homes, but before there used to be general public restrooms. There used to be only one restroom for the whole community or town i.e. a large hall

would have smaller bathrooms in it. For bathing; the scholars, the rich, the poor all would go there and bathe after paying for the service. One day a big personality of the city and a grand Ayatollah went to the same public restroom at the same time on Friday; before bathing the clothes are hanged in a closet while the staff of the restroom gives you towel that you tie and go to take a shower. This Ayatollah also demanded a towel from the staff so he can go for the shower; but at the same time the VIP personality of the area was also came and he wasn't alone. A large squad of entourage was with him, so the whole staff of the restroom got busy in serving them. This King was prepared to be taken for the bath, there he was scrubbed with soap and shampoo etc. given a massage, oiled and perfumed, and groomed properly, then he was taken out and given a brand new robe to wear. All this while the religious scholar (Ayatollah) was still waiting for his towel and no one attended to him. After the washing and cleaning when this king of the town was about to leave, the town's jeweler came in and put a ring on the king's finger but kept the gem of the ring facing the palm of the hand, and asked the king how was the ring? The king looked at the ring and said the ring is beautiful and nice but there is one defect in it that the stone of the ring is inwards, if it was facing outwards it would have been better because people's rings are usually outwards. The jeweler immediately took the ring and ran outside, came back and put the same ring on the finger only this time the stone was facing outwards. Now the king was very happy and said that the jewelers of our country are brilliant that they can fix a ring in a second. They said you are right O king, people like him do live in your country. The king gave the jeweler a handsome amount of prize money for his effort. Meanwhile

the Ayatollah was watching this whole scene unfold. Now when the restroom was free and empty he said to the person to give him towel now and the restroom in charge gave him an old towel so he can go bathe himself.

The religious scholar thought to himself and talked to God in his heart, that O Allah what kind of system is this, that I am such an educated, wise, intelligent, visionary, and a pious person and my condition is this that I am waiting since morning for a towel, and this king who is so stupid that he doesn't even know how to turn the ring inwards or outwards, and hundreds of men are at his service, so what kind of a system is this? Later on when he slept he got the answer in his dream. The answer was that we have heard your grievance, and we are ready to swap you with the king, we will give all his wealth, entourage and also his 'stupidity' to you; and we will give him all your poverty, your piety, your wisdom, your knowledge. If you agree to this say yes and in the morning when you wake up all will be changed. He said I do not accept this at all. My poverty with all knowledge and wisdom is much better than his riches with all the stupidity along with it. Even if you have all the gold and silver in the world but if the person doesn't even how to turn the stone of ring from inside to outside and for this simple thing also a technician is need that to turn the stone of a ring inwards or outwards, a technician is not needed then he is a big fool.

This story is a best example for the Ulama of this age, that in our society also people tend to respect ignorant, sinful politicians and officers whereas they don't value the learned Ulama. If at one place a scholar and a police inspector are sitting together, the whole crowd will stand up for the police

officer but for an Aalim a taxi driver doesn't even stand up. The religious scholar should not feel and shouldn't think on these terms that we should start doing the same things to gain the attention of the masses; if you do then no doubt Allah will give you the wealth and money but at the same time take away the intellect, Taqwa, knowledge and his blessings from you. You have seen that Allah has given people the money, wealth, servants, prosperity, but their Taqwa, pain, feelings, and remembrance of God has vanished. There are people present like this that they offer Fajr prayers only once in a blue moon, instead they only read Fajr as Qazá with Zohr and Asr. Because they are so busy with their schedules and work routine. Thus this world does not value the knowledgeable scholars but the scholars should value themselves, they should know their place and title that I am the Imam and I have to keep the sanctity of my Imamate while living among the ignorant and I cannot let this go to waste. This feeling of responsibility should be kept alive inside you at all costs.

The real responsibilities' of Ulama's

1. Presenting the signs of Allah

In Quran Allah has mentioned three important tasks for the religious scholars that;

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ
وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي
ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ {2}

He it is Who raised among the inhabitants of Mecca an Messenger from among themselves, who recites to them His communications

*and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and the Wisdom,
although they were before certainly in clear error*

First duty is to recite the verses (in literary sense) i.e. signs of Allah. In this universe the verses of Allah are in words and also in visual form. Like in one village there are many signs of God, and the scholar's duty is to present these signs of Allah to them like fields, wheat, water, clay, fertility etc. which are all signs of Allah. Some lands are fertile and some parts are barren. We see that sometimes some parts of earth become salty i.e. the salt comes on this land no matter how much seed you put, nothing will grow. Whereas the nearby field is growing sugarcane, bananas but this part of land where there is whiteness and salt nothing grows here and this is among the signs of Allah.

In front of our eyes there are two books open, the duty of an Alim is to teach both books. He should tell a few people that our bodies are also like two fields, if we develop bitterness (salt) in us then no preaching or guidance affects us and if no truth enters inside us then no seed will ever grow in us, but anyone who doesn't have this stubbornness in him the truth will enter easily. Now if we see from these perspectives a scholar of religion if he is a true recognizer of the signs of Allah then it's very easy for him to recite these Ayats. Similarly, wheat is a sign of God. Nutrition, nourishment, taste, sweetness, and all those things that a man eats which are good tasting are all made from wheat. The wheat comes from the ground, right in front of our eyes Allah grows this plant from the clay and it has so much purity in it, similarly Allah has said that I made humans from Clay too;

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ سُلَالَةٍ مِنْ طِينٍ

And certainly We created man of an extract of clay

We created man from this clay and then we placed him at different places. These are verses of Quran so we should recite them, these signs are all books of guidance, these villages are books of guidance, these fields are books of guidance, and these streams and canals are books of guidance, if we anyone ponders.

2. Purification of Society

3. هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ^{2}

He it is Who raised among the inhabitants of Mecca an Messenger from among themselves, who recites to them His communications and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and the Wisdom, although they were before certainly in clear error

The first role of the scholar is to recite the verses of Allah, and second role is to first purify and cleanse (spiritually) himself and then do the same to others

4. Education of the Book and Wisdom

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ^{2}

He it is Who raised among the inhabitants of Mecca an Messenger from among themselves, who recites to them His communications and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and the Wisdom, although they were before certainly in clear error

The third role is to teach the book of Allah and wisdom. For education and upbringing, the younger the age of a person the better it is. Usually in the Majalis old people are sitting, and they say about older people that first of all they don't listen, and if they do listen they don't agree, and even if they agree they don't change. They say about parrots, that old parrots seldom speak, parrots do speak but the process of teaching the parrot of how to speak starts at a very early age when it is a chick.

Allah has fixed an age for learning, the age of learning is the initial age. The one who learns at an early age of childhood has better chances to change himself, the ones who learn and change even after they are grown up have special blessings of Allah on them otherwise the best age for education and proper upbringing is the early age. Hence it's fine to preach to old people but we should have less expectation of change from them, if they understand it's fine, but if they don't then there is no solution to this problem, hence we shouldn't keep any expectation of change from them at that point.

Days of Childhood are days of upbringing

Imam Jaffar Sadiq (as) says that; "*Allaika Bil Aehdaas*"

Pay attention to the children because they are empty fields, the one who sows the seed first then this field

belongs to him. If an ignorant comes first and puts the seed in this field then this field will belong to him, but if an Alim comes and sows the seed of the straight path then this field will be his. Hence according to the principles and rules of education and upbringing we must bring the younger generation under our wings. As many young children; be it boys or girls that live in an area the scholars of that area should take them under their supervision and spend as much time as possible on the education of these kids. The young scholars can do this much better since they have a lot of energy still in them, and the older scholars can also do their part of educating younger generations subject to their energies and health. They can teach each person of the village but must pay special attention to the young ones, the one who are in the 5-15 years of age group, because this is the perfect age for learning so they should work on this generation as much as they possibly can.

System needed for Education

The scholars should make a complete system of education and upbringing for the kids and should make proper arrangements for implementing it. Some believers have started the education work in different areas, like one brother started this process with the name of “Madaris e Imamia” in Karachi, which was a very good effort, when we requested him that he should spread this effort all over Pakistan since this is needed in the whole country, so with grace of Allah this great process and structure is spreading now in the whole country. The real task is of the learned people among us, the teachers the students, it’s their task

to fulfil their responsibilities. The scholars should take the responsibility of this nation's kids, the kids who go to school or those who don't, however they are, they should take them under our guidance and supervision by any which way we can. They should cultivate good personalities out of them, give them direction, give them education and in the process show them your own talents. There are some scholars who are very talented and through this talent they can do tremendous work. We have seen in some areas that there are scholars present or even the prayer leaders that have done revolutionary work in their limited areas. They have created such a divine atmosphere for men, women and children alike that is very pleasing to see.

The result of bearing the pain along with Preaching

Imam Khomeini (ra) says that if you go somewhere where you see a lot of good people, then be convinced that this is a work of some good Alim-e-Deen i.e. it is the result of hard work of some scholar that people are nice, and if you go somewhere and you see people are sinful, gamblers, drunkards, then you should know that an immoral scholar must have passed through them or lived amongst them, or someone has lived here but never educated or guided them to the right path. Today when we go to different towns and cities, at some places we are delighted to see that some scholars have worked day and night and with all shortcomings and dangers they have turned the whole village or area into an educational hub. Inside Sindh we offered Juma prayers at a mosque and that village was of Ahl-e-Sunnat too, there was a school present that was not

made of bricks, we were told that no one came here before for learning, but when a primary school teacher was transferred in that area, he convinced the local people to start sending their children to the school. So the people who were laborers and the one who were always working in the field, they persuaded their children towards school, and then this school teacher built a mosque too with his own hands and there was a lot of spirituality and meaningfulness in that small mosque.

When we realized that this person has worked so hard, first he convinced the kids to come to school, then slowly he convinced the elders to come to the mosque, his wife also lived with him who started teaching and educating the religion to the women of the village and the whole village converted to the Shia religion. All because of an effort of one school teacher. When we met that teacher we were so delighted and happy that one teacher accomplished so much that not even big and skilled religious scholars could achieve. This was the blessing and ability of Allah that Allah gave to him. We have worked so hard but have not been able to convert one person to Shi'ism, but he converted the whole village, why? Because he had pain in his heart that revolutionized the whole village, we are sure there are more examples like this at other places too.

The Skills of a Teacher

The teacher should keep himself ready. The government always arranges special teaching courses for teachers every couple of years, the teachers are given special

teaching courses in the beginning of their careers too, but this process is also repeated after 2-3 years so that their teaching skills can stay sharp and up to the mark. Without preparedness nothing gets accomplished. Sometimes we say that we have studied religion and teaching seems very easy, but when a person starts then a lot of complications come in front. This kid doesn't understand, he doesn't come on time, he doesn't pay attention etc. these are practical problems that a person faces. Here the instructor gets worried that I myself studied very well in the school and accomplished a lot, but how do I make these children understand? Because all kids are different, some are mischievous, others are dull minded, some of them are very sharp, some of them listen and some don't. Some of them are spoiled kids, spoiled by their families, and some of them are very composed. All of them come to the class to learn religion.

The teacher should have this skill about how to control them? To teach is one thing, and to tame is another. Often we start beating the mischievous kids and they become more spoiled, the teacher should have the formula to judge, usually these mischievous kids are actually more smart than the rest of the bunch. A child that doesn't do any mischief, doesn't make any noise, and seems very calm usually we like them to the ones that are silent because they are not trouble makers, but that kid is usually more intelligent than this child, the one who is naughty. This child who is intelligent but naughty, the teacher should have the skill to mold him and take the mischief out of him and turn him into a best human being.

If we work hard on this naughty child, he has more potential than the silent one; the mischievous one we grill and throw away from the class and tell him not to come from tomorrow is actually a great asset. But if the teacher doesn't have these judgmental skills he gets scared immediately. We should pay more attention to those who are naughty, and then there are kids that have some sort of difficulty with them, like inferiority complex, fear, or some reluctance, so the teacher should have psychological and analytical skills too that which child has what kind of personality and they should be taught and handled accordingly.

One more thing that is important for the teacher is that you teach something to the children, and the atmosphere at their house could be totally opposite of what you taught them. When a child comes to you, you groom his mind with positive things but at home his mother swears, father swears, and brothers and sisters swear. So to address this problem the teacher should take some time out on a weekly basis to spend some time with their families and guide them gently towards good, as a matter of fact one of the main principles of teaching is to most importantly teach the parents also along with the kids. This modern system of teaching adheres to this principle. They call the parents numerous times in a year and thus their children are able to learn properly. Because until and unless the parents are not in sync with the system of the child, the child can never learn properly. So the teacher should take some interest in the households of the children too, and guide them that correct atmosphere of the home should

be like this, so whatever the child learns at school doesn't end at home. There are children present who have actually turned around the complete way of life at their homes.

Making children the source of guidance for parents

A good practice has started in Pakistan that some people try to set up educational workshops for children during the summer vacation. The kids that come to these camps sometimes completely change their households positively. When these kids go back to their homes after being fully trained, a lot of parents have come to us saying that their children have turned around the complete household. Even little kids have eliminated filth from their homes e.g. if the mother swore or cursed, the child stopped her telling that this a sin and Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.s) will get angry. The mother got impressed by this act of the child that this young kid is stopping me from sin. Similarly, one child asked his father that you do this certain act in your business, the father said yes, so the child replied but this is bribery which is forbidden (Haraam) in Islam, and we have heard that whoever eats Haraam can never be a follower of Ahlulbayt (a.s). Just like Imam Hussain (as) had said in his sermon of Karbala, I know why you don't listen to me because you have Haraam in your stomachs. The kids are stopping the parents, so the kids should be made a source of guidance for parents also.

The Scholar is an Institution, Movement and Ummah

A religious scholar is an Ummah, and movement in itself, but usually we see that the scholars are very fond of making parties, and organizations just like public. It means that the scholar does this is not aware of his own stature, this is just like an army general starts making an organization within in the army, you can ask him that dear general you are a general, the commander of your forces, the whole force is 'in' you so why do you want to divide your own force when this entire army is yours? Similarly the whole Ummah is of the Religious scholar so the scholars should not divide the '*Ummah*'. Even if someone is against a scholar still he is part of the Ummah, he is still the follower of the Scholars, he shouldn't be distanced also in fact he should be persuaded. If someone is misunderstood, or is a victim of some propaganda then the scholars should bring him closer and correct his confusion. The scholars should realize their position because a real scholar is an institution, a movement in itself so they should respect themselves. I often tell the people that are in the same field as me, that if people don't realize our value at least we should know our own value. The people may think of us as servants but we shouldn't think of ourselves as a mere worker, hence our working mode should be religious, purpose should be Allah and the path should be that Allah has inscribed for us, and to cover this path should also be according to the guidelines by Allah.

Mosques are part of the Divine System

One task that the scholars should immediately undertake and this task can only be done with awareness is that right now the mosques are not running according to the divine system, the mosques that have religious scholars are usually run by trusts or organizations, and the ones who have made these trusts or associations are themselves not very well aware of the religion itself. The key holder of the mosque, the system, the president of the mosque, the secretary and the treasurer etc. are generally these type of people, whereas Allah has given the authority of the mosque to a religious scholar. The trust or the association isn't made by Allah, instead Allah has made an Imam for the mosque. So the mosque is the home of Allah but the system we have to run a mosque is not divine or religious. There are elections to run a mosque, where one candidate runs a campaign, a smear campaign against the other that his opponent is a corrupt individual and not to vote for him, and vice versa with the other candidate too. So it means that no matter in whose hands the mosque goes to, it is going in the hands of a corrupt person, as a result there are always fights and disputes in the mosques, the main reason of this is because the scholars didn't recognize their position and did not lead. If non religious and corrupt people run the mosques than these things are bound to happen. In one city of Pakistan, the caretaker of a mosque was actually a communist i.e. he did not believe in God in the first place, he had kept a 'Maulana', and had given instructions to Maulana too that you are suppose to lead the Friday prayers like this. It was very surprising that

how is this possible, but he even admitted that yes it had happened. Anyways we have to instruct those people to the ones who have built the mosques that they are not the owners of the mosque, even though Allah gave them the capacity to build the mosque but they are not the owners of the mosque so the mosque has to run according to the system of Allah.

Keep the Mosques and *Imambargah's* busy all year round

The mosques and Imambargahs should be kept busy all year round, but now a days they are only used for daily prayers during the year. The scholars should turn these into educational institutions, they should become the centers of excellence and a whole generation should benefit from this. If this happens then not only Shia kids but the children of the whole Muslim community can turn into soldiers of Ahlulbayt (a.s). This kind of work is being done by other sects, they are doing it in every street, and we are no less than anyone. Their general public does the preaching and if our religious scholars do the preaching then the difference will be very obvious. If you see there the '*Tableeghi Jamat*' is a public preaching organization, where an ordinary person can get up and start preaching, whereas by the grace of Allah we have scholars here.

Direction to destination

Education and upbringing, self-purification and the teaching of the book and wisdom are the real goals of the religious scholars, so the scholars need to develop the

skills for this. Even if the scholars demand from the office of the supreme leader that workshops should be arranged on local level so the skills of *Ulama* can be polished, then this will be very easy to do. The scholars should be in touch with each other, they should meet every couple of years and share their skills and experiences and should help each other out in every which way. If one scholar is facing difficulties then the rest of the scholars should work together to solve his problems.

After the education and self purification, another thing that is very important is the direction. because if you don't have knowledge you are ignorant and lost, if you haven't purified your inner self still you are characterless, and if you don't have direction then this is also very very harmful to you. By direction it means that you should know your course and track, how many educated people you may have seen that are completely confused, they don't even know what to do, they are completely clueless. So the direction is where an *Alim* has to go himself and lead the nation in that path too.

By the Grace of Allah and the Islamic Revolution and with the presence of Imam Khomeini (r.a), this path has now opened for the Shiites, it has opened for the whole Ummah, that you are suppose to take the people in this direction . Education, upbringing, and direction, if these three combine than only the change can come. Some people are just giving education without the purification and cleanliness of the soul, some are giving Taqwa but there is no use as there is no direction to it, they are making Muttaqee people but their example is like a driver

who is stuck in traffic, they don't even know where to go. These kind of Muttaqee drivers can never bring a person anywhere and we become happy that the driver is a very Muttaqee person. What good is that Taqwa if he cannot take us to our destination? He is pious, doesn't do any bad things like drugs etc. but he is confused and stuck, he is clueless and he doesn't even know where to go just like a driver who is stuck in traffic. Similarly there is no use of those Muttaqee people the ones who don't even know the direction of where they are going.

These Muttaqeen were also present at the time of Imam Hussain (as). Abdullah bin Omar was also among these Muttaqeen. He was a very devout Muslim, always worried about prayers, Hajj, Zikr of Allah etc. When Imam (as) was in Mecca he was in Mecca too. But this 'Muttaqee' person did not know what to do? He did not pledge allegiance to Imam Ali (as), he did not pledge allegiance to Imam Hassan (as) and did not pledge allegiance to Imam Hussain (as) also. Some historians say he pledged allegiance to Yazeed, some say he pledged allegiance to Hajjaj bin Yusuf's feet. So there are Muttaqee people like him too that don't even know who their Imam is? What good is that devotion and Taqwa? We can say he didn't do anything wrong, didn't gamble, didn't drink, but what is the benefit of all these good things if a person cannot recognize Imam Ali (as), where a person cannot even see the straight path, this Taqwa is worthless. Like Quran has said that there are certain deeds that will be confiscated and they will not give you any benefit.

Today the direction that can deliver us from all evil is the ideological way of Imam Khomeini (r.a). This we have to adopt ourselves and bring our students on this path too, and bring the Ummah on this track too. Because wherever this ideology has reached it only brought respect and honor there. This ideology reached Iran, Iran got the protection and respect and honor and dignity. This ideology reached Lebanon, the Shiites of Lebanon achieved respect and dignity, and Insha'Allah when this ideology will reach Pakistan, then Pakistan will get her dignity and respect too and will be delivered from all bad things. By the grace of Allah almighty this way of Quran and Ahlulbayt (a.s) is the same way that Imam Khomeini (r.a) elaborated.