Madrasah Life
A student’s day at Nadwat al-‘Ulama’

by
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Foreword

James Piscatori

The madrasah has attracted considerable attention, even notoriety, since the startling events of September 11th. It is widely believed, particularly among Western policymakers, that these schools and colleges are the training ground for radical activities and directly sustain terrorist networks such as al-Qa'ida. No-one a decade ago would have anticipated that a traditional educational institution would occupy a central place in discussions between the presidents of the United States and Pakistan. But several months after the attacks on New York and Washington, in February 2002, George W. Bush and Pervez Musharraf agreed, in Bush’s words, that ‘the modern world requires an education system that trains children in basic sciences and reading and math and the history of Pakistan’. Musharraf conceded that, although madrasahs provide an important social welfare function, lodging and training the poor in particular, their ‘weakness’ lies in exclusive ‘religious’ training. He assured the president that fundamental reforms to the curriculum, emphasizing science, mathematics, and English, would allow the 600,000 to 800,000 madrasah students in Pakistan ‘to be brought into the mainstream of life.’ Similar arguments have been made of madrasahs in the Middle East, Africa and Southeast Asia, and governments, under pressure from Western donors and facing organised internal opposition, have pledged to reform them.

There is no doubt that the madrasah suffers today from a serious public relations problem. Little understood, it has become emblematic of extremism; caricatured in this way, it has further complicated our understandings of Muslim beliefs and practices. Part of the difficulty lies in the variable usage of the term. Most commentators use the word ‘madrasah’ to refer to primary and secondary education, whereas in some societies such as India, which this book covers, it applies to tertiary and post-graduate education as well. This work details a typical day in the life of a faḍīlah, or Master’s level, student who embarks on a two-year programme after the four-year undergraduate, or ‘ālimiyyah, programme.

Despite the important difference between schooling and university-level education, ‘madrasah’, as a synonym for religious education, is commonly juxtaposed with ‘modern’ education; religious subjects are contrasted with the ‘mainstream’. Having evolved over the centuries and shaped by general principles and local needs, however, this institution – or, more precisely, related institutions – are both less and more than their image suggests; the madrasah is less rigid and less directly political than many fear, and it is more capable of combining religious studies with an inquiring approach than is often assumed. It is the singular achievement of Mohammad Akram Nadwi that he provides the first full exposition of the daily life of a madrasah. In so doing, he provides the raw material that allows us to see the institution as rounded and responsive – a complex, intellectually challenging and spiritually charged learning environment that binds teachers and students together in an enterprise that sustains and renews Muslim society.

Prior to Madrasah Life, we have relied on the descriptions of Muslim historians, the glimpses of travellers, the account of orientalists such as Snouck Hurgronje and a small number of anthropological studies to examine the madrasah’s place in Muslim


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life. Fifteenth century historians like Taqī al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Fāsī and Najm al-Dīn ʿUmar ibn Fahd tell us that there were 23 madrasahs in Makkah prior to Ottoman times, for example, and Quṭb al-Dīn’s history of Makkah documents the flourishing of madrasah education in the holy city under the patronage of Mamlūk and early Ottoman rulers. ⁴ Hurgronje gives us a greater sense of what occurred within the Makkān educational complex, but distinguishes the higher studies at the Grand Mosque (al-Masjid al-Ḥarām) from earlier training. He made a sad note of the fact that the ‘madrasah’ had, by the late nineteenth century, declined to the point where once-grand buildings were treated as abandoned, and the word itself had come to denote simply a house near the mosque. Yet there is the hint in Hurgronje’s writing that perhaps all is not lost: ‘Only a few of the poorer rooms are still occupied by poor teachers and students, and here and there the rich occupier of the best rooms will arrange for a lecture, out of respect for the founder, to be given weekly in the hall (dīḥtīz) or a room of the building.’⁵ One suspects that more was going on than even this perceptive observer discerned.

Indeed, the self-consciousness of ‘tradition’ and commitment that unfolds in this volume hints at something more enduring and fundamental than buildings or curricula. Dr Nadwi’s account is, in this sense, the best of participant observation: it reports on the structure of higher madrasah education, but also imparts the ‘ambiance’ – the intellectual excitement, the spiritual enthusiasm. Teachers unforgettable appear in fond pen portraits, sartorially challenged at times or impatient, but indisputably learned and generous with their knowledge. It is also reassuring to find that, however motivated they are, students remain students – reluctant to get up in the morning, argumentative, bored with grammar, teasing one another over sporting rivalries, concerned that standards are slipping yet skimming assigned readings. The milieu is more cultured, though, than the typical Western school or college, with

poetry and literary criticism a common diversion. More importantly, the calls to prayer punctuate the daily life of the madrasah students, as has been done for centuries and across diverse societies. They begin a long day with the dawn prayer, attend classes from 8.00 a.m., perform the mid-day prayer, rest in the afternoon after lunch, pray the ‘asr prayer in the late afternoon and then engage in a combination of entertainment and study, attend a seminar after sunset and the maghrib prayer, say the evening prayer, and retire perhaps by 1.00 a.m., only to rise again several hours later for the dawn prayer. In describing this ritually marked routine, Dr Nadwi reminds us that the transmission and acquisition of knowledge form a continuum with worship and the search for piety.

While the madrasah that emerges here is thus connected to the centuries-old Islamic educational experience, it has a cultural and intellectual specificity as well. Dār al-‘Ulūm Nadwat al-‘Ulāmā’, based in Lucknow, is the product of a particular revivalist strand that dates back to the late nineteenth century and, in its self-presentation, was broadly inspired by the eighteenth century Indian thinker, Shāh Waliullāh (1703-1762 CE). Its proponents, including the modernist Muḥammad ‘Ali Mungerī (1849-1944) and the pan-Islamist Shibli Nu‘mānī (1857-1914), espoused keeping pace with modern conditions while adhering to the basic canonical sources of Islam and promoting the tolerance associated with the principles of the spiritual path. While prescribing its own curriculum, it moved beyond the Dars-i Niẓāmī syllabus common in India from the early eighteenth century and introduced diverse legal views and modern sciences and languages. As this suggests, it represents a mélange of perspectives and defies easy categorisation. Some would thus refer to the madrasah as traditional, others as modernist, still others as Sufi-inspired. In Nadwah’s worldview, its vitality derives from the blending of these perspectives into a seamless whole. In the words of its twentieth century patron, cited in the preface to this volume, Mawlānā Abū al-Hasan ‘Alī Nadwī (1914-1999), the madrasah, rightly conceived, takes its place as ‘the powerhouse of the Islamic world’.

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It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that the most concrete impression that emerges from this diary is the level of intellectual curiosity and disputation that characterises the daily life of a madrasah student. This cuts to the core of one of the principal criticisms of the institution. While many object to the nature of the curriculum, objection is also made, at times vociferously, to the pedagogy. It is often assumed that rote and tightly-defined education leads to an inflexibility of mind that reinforces authoritarianism or enhances the ability of radical groups to recruit adherents. In the Southeast Asian experience, focus is often placed on kitab kuning, the ‘yellow books’ that purportedly contain, and limit, knowledge. To many observers, they imply a closed and classical educational system, which is to be learned but not questioned. While this volume deals with a more advanced madrasah education than is normally covered by this criticism, it nevertheless shows, by way of contrast, that students who are being trained in the religious sciences – Qur’an, Prophetic sayings (hadith), jurisprudence (fiqh), the spiritual path (tasawwuf), and Arabic – display well-honed skills of critical judgement. The parameters are different from those of a paradigmatic ‘liberal education’ but, leaving aside what this means in practice, it is clear that working within a structured framework allows for focused rules of intellectual engagement. As Dr Nadwi shows, students – at least post-graduate ones – are perfectly capable of questioning the competence of scholars in one field while admiring their contributions in another, or suggesting that their train of thought leads to a variant conclusion without disputing the validity of the basic inquiry.

With its curriculum conventionally focused yet liberally taught, the madrasah is naturally open to diverse influences. Some teachers are versed in Western educational methods and are expert in journalism or modern Arabic literature, for instance, and a number of the students comfortably invoke Freud or Sartre in support of an interpretative point. Some students are influenced by the Tablighi

Jamā'at, and others received training at Imām Muḥammad ibn Saʻūd University in Riyadh. But none necessarily derives greater authority from such associations. One student is pointedly told that citing Ṭablīghī practice is not sufficient proof of an argument, nor is Ibn Taymiyyah, a Saudi favourite, automatically correct in his views. Each advanced student must embark upon a detailed research project and write a dissertation, thereby developing the skills of argumentation and lucid writing. But, in the end, success depends, as it has for centuries throughout the Muslim world, on a detailed knowledge of the classical sources of Islam.

Mohammad Akram Nadwi offers an acutely observed and charming portrait of the student intent on acquiring this knowledge. From an insider's vantage point, he takes us into a world most of us do not normally enter and helps us to appreciate the rich intellectual traditions and the lively debates within Islamic educational institutions. The contribution of Madrasah Life is both unassuming and conclusive; it disturbs the complacent thought that madrasahs are inevitably anti-modern and marginal.
All praise and thanks are due to God, the Lord of all creatures and domains. May peace and blessings be on the best of His creation, the Prophet Muhammad, and upon his family and his Companions.
Introduction

WHAT IS A MADRASAH? What part does it play in the life and development of individuals and society? How are days and nights spent at a madrasah? These and similar questions are often raised both by those familiar with the institution and those ignorant of it. Most writers on the subject betray a superficial, second-hand knowledge of madrasahs, their curricula and their methods of teaching; they make reckless, sweeping statements with little regard for basic norms of honesty and fairness, and without the labour of independent inquiry into what is a system of education that has endured, and evolved, over many centuries.

آشاک رصف حسن لق تقرر ای کند
خواب نادیده را آید تبیر ی کند

Those offering to report your beauty
Are only interpreting a dream they never had

When a community has lost its grip on power, and its former prestige and glory slip away from it, the memory of its contribution to culture and civilisation weakens until that contribution is questioned, then doubted, then denied; even those of its virtues that still survive are presented in a negative light, made the object of suspicion or ridicule. Distrust of madrasahs first came to the fore when the British Empire, having entrenched itself in the subcontinent, introduced its own educational system. But even at that time, there were some objective, fair-minded individuals who had enjoyed firsthand access to the madrasah system, and who therefore recognised its strengths and efficacy. Major-General Sir W. H. Sleeman, after visiting
madrasahs in India in the early nineteenth century, recorded these impressions about madrasah graduates:

“Perhaps there are few communities in the world among whom education is more generally diffused than among Muhammedans in India. He who holds an office worth twenty rupees a month commonly gives his son an education equal to that of a prime minister. They learn, through the medium of the Arabic and Persian languages, what young men in our colleges learn through those of the Greek and Latin – that is, grammar, rhetoric, and logic. After his seven years of study, the young Muhammedan binds his turban upon a head almost as well filled with the things which appertain to these branches of knowledge as the young man raw from Oxford; he will talk as fluently about Socrates, and Aristotle, Plato, and Hippocrates, Galen and Avicenna and, what is much to his advantage in India, the languages in which he has learnt what he knows are those which he most requires through life.” 8

That praise is for madrasah education insofar as it is like “Oxford”, but that relates to only half the syllabus; the major components are Arabic language and literature, Qur’anic Studies, Hadith 9, Fiqh 10 and Tasawwuf. 11 This holds as true today as in the early 19th century. The standard for these subjects is of the same level as for logical and philosophical disciplines, if not higher. A leading Islamic thinker, Mawlana Sayyid Abū al-Hasan Ālî Nadwī, 12 who had spent his whole life at a madrasah and critically examined both the Western and Oriental educational systems, explained the scope and function of the madrasah in this way:

9 Sayings of the Prophet, peace be upon him.
10 Understanding and development of Islamic law, jurisprudence.
11 Islamic mysticism.
12 Mawlana Sayyid Abū al-Hasan Ālî Nadwī (1914-1999), one of the most prolific and original thinkers of our time, author of over fifty books available in several languages, and a scholar of rare distinction. Among his widely read works are: Islam and the World, Saviours of Islamic Spirit, and Islamic Concept of Prophethood. He made many journeys to Western countries in order to assess the situation there and addressed many speeches to both lay and academic audiences. Some of these speeches have been published in such works as Speaking Plainly to the West, and Western Civilization: Islam and Muslims.
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"It is the institution for man's upbringing and for channelling his talents. It is a place where those who call to Islam and defend the faith are prepared. A madrasah may be likened, in a manner of speaking, to the powerhouse of the Islamic world, which provides energy not only to Muslims but also to all of mankind. It is a centre where the heart and soul are purified, and the mind and intellect nourished. A madrasah is a place wherein a world-view is cultivated, and humanity is thereby sustained. It leads, and is not led. A madrasah is not specific to any particular nation, civilisation, culture, era, language or literature. It thus transcends decadence and decline. For it is nourished and sustained directly by the Prophet Muhammad's message, which is universal and timeless. It is inextricably linked with the life force of humanity and with life in its vibrancy and variety. It is independent of the debate about 'classical' and 'modern'. For it is characterised by the eternal and life-giving message of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him."

The present work is a modest attempt to bring into relief the ethos of one particular madrasah and the range of its activities. It does

14 This being Dār al-'Ulūm Nadwat al-'Ulamā' in Lucknow, India. Nadwat al-'Ulamā' was established in 1893 (1311 AH) as a revivalist movement by some sincere, far-sighted scholars of Islam, who were firm in their belief in the doctrines of Islam and who enjoyed a revered social standing on account of their piety and learning. They came out of the school of Shaykh al-Islām Shāh Waliullāh Dihlawi and his disciples. The guides and leaders of this earnest group of men were Mawlānā Muhammad 'Alī Mungerī, Mawlānā Shiblī Nū'mānī and Mawlānā 'Abd al-Hayy Ḥasanī. Nadwat al-'Ulamā' aimed: (a) to introduce appropriate changes into the syllabuses of Islamic training in order to bring them into line with the changed conditions of the modern age, and to integrate religious education, as far as possible, with the cultural progress of the community; (b) to examine the principles and injunctions of the Shari'ah in order to sustain their conformity with the fundamental guidance of the Qur'an and Sunnah while addressing an ever-growing number of modern questions and problems; (c) to establish a library in northern India to serve as a centre for study and research in Islamic sciences; (d) to propagate the Islamic faith and ideals through suitable literature and to make arrangements for its publication; (e) to train and educate teachers who have a sufficiently deep knowledge of the Qur'an and Sunnah to affect the moral environment and improve the prevailing social conditions.

Nadwat al-'Ulamā' held its annual sessions in different cities. But it was soon felt that unless some practical steps were taken to translate these ideas into action, the movement would not be understood and appreciated. Accordingly, the first step
not seek to enumerate the disciplines taught there. Nor does it try to describe all the academic, literary, educational, self-developmental, writing and da'wah activities pursued there, though its students and faculty are continuously engaged in these. In recounting a day at my alma mater in the Indian subcontinent my aim has been to recreate the ethos of a madrasah that enriched life for numerous students like myself, and imbued us with commitment to faith, love for the Divine Book and admiration for the Prophet's words. It enabled us to develop a love of knowledge, and a depth and breadth of thought and literary taste. In sum, it taught us how to live well, by providing us with the means and tools to acquire beneficial knowledge, to exercise conscience and reason, to articulate and practise moral precepts.

In early March 1983, I was a student in the second year of my fadilah course (the equivalent of an MA), with Hadith as my specialisation. The rector of Nadwah at that time was Mawlânâ Muhtibullah Lârî, a former student at Nadwah and a graduate of Aligarh Muslim University. He was a strict disciplinarian and did not allow any interference in his administrative work. He was averse to irregularities of any kind and refused undue pressure from or on behalf of anyone. He had a special love of prayer, his own prayers being characterised by the utmost devotion, spirituality and calmness. As he would go on his rounds after fajr (dawn) prayer, everyone would come to a sort of moral attention.

I was allotted room no. 6 on the third storey of the Athar hostel, where the warden was the late Mawlânâ Shahbâz Isgâî. This was taken in 1898 (1316 AH) with the establishment at Lucknow of a Dâr al-'Ulûm (literally, 'the house of the sciences'). This institution quietly earned itself a proud reputation, in India and abroad, as a modern seat of learning the Arabic language and Islamic sciences.

Dâr al-'Ulûm concentrates particularly on the Qur'an, traditions of the Prophet, Islamic law, and Arabic as a classical and living language. The importance and effectiveness of the endeavours of the Nadwat al-'Ulama' have been acknowledged throughout India and in the entire world.

In brief, Dâr al-'Ulûm has tried to produce intellectually broad-minded scholars able to connect with the wider world, and therefore to represent and extend Islam, to expound the eternal nature of the Divine Message and the distinguishing features of the Sharî'ah and its way in such language as might appeal to the modern mind, and so help to bring about a confluence between the traditional and the modern.
man was an excellent, versatile scholar – his company benefitted everyone. It is hard to measure and record our debt to him. He was adept in both traditional and rational disciplines, with the greatest expertise in *tafsīr* and Qur’ānic sciences. He was blessed also with the traits of a true Sufi who practises self-abnegation and self-effacement.

All of our teachers were fully committed to their duty and exceptionally competent, with extraordinary command over their respective fields of specialisation. Organised, formal teaching was naturally of great importance at Nadwah. However, it was the interaction between teacher and student, and the scholarly circles and literary gatherings that provided so much of one’s spiritual and intellectual nourishment. Those who have a superficial, materialistic outlook on life cannot appreciate the benefits of such gatherings. However, those who spent some time at Nadwah understood well the value of this ambience. The two following incidents may help readers grasp the ethos prevailing at Nadwah.

The Rector, Mawlānā Muḥibbullāh Lārī, once expressed the desire to be allowed to stay at Nadwah for the rest of his life after his superannuation. I asked him why he preferred to stay there, rather than with his family and children. He said that he would not find the academic, religious and spiritual atmosphere that he found in Nadwah anywhere else, nor could he join so large a congregation for prayer. The case of our Arabic teacher, Mawlānā Muḥammad Wādīḥ Rashīd Nadwī, is similar. He had been at the Arabic Department of All India Radio. When some faculty members of Nadwah were on a long leave, he was invited to teach on a temporary basis. After joining Nadwah he felt so much at home there that he was not willing to go back to All India Radio and Delhi. He used to receive a much higher salary in Delhi yet had become deeply attached to Nadwah. As his departure approached, he felt more anxious. According to his own account, when alone, he used to cry and pray fervently for his stay at Nadwah to continue. God granted his supplication and before his departure, Nadwah administration invited him to take up a permanent position.

Mawlānā Muḥammad Wādīḥ Rashīd Nadwī is a competent
schor, dear to everyone, and the very model of a classical ‘ālim. His insight into Arabic prose and his writing skills are exceptional, and he is always willing to pass them on to his students. Everyone acclaims his nobility and sincerity, and no one ever had a complaint against him. Nor is he ever known to lose his temper. Only once did we have occasion to become aware of a slight displeasure on his part. Some junior faculty members and I were arguing at the top of our voices outside the office of al-Rā’id while he was inside. As our discussion carried on, he expressed his unhappiness at our wasting time in that way. Yet even in this rebuke, we sensed his love and concern for us:

أَكَذَّبَ النَّفَاتُ أَنْ لا يُرْبِنَا
أَكَذَّبَ النَّفَاتُ أَنْ لَمْ يُرْبِنَا

In that turning away there was a strand of attentiveness.
In that wonder-working eye a pure heart’s simplicity.

The subject matter of this work – life at a madrasah – is one very close to my heart. In it I have recounted my association with friends whom I love to this day.

أَفْيَمَ لَفَّانَ صَمِّمَ
أَفْيَمَ لَفَّانَ صَمِّمَ

O you who breathed in our company
You departed, but not from our heart

No doubt, nostalgia in part prompted me to record my memories so that, by occasionally reading this account, I might revive and refresh them. For the days I spent at Nadwah remain for me a precious asset.

جِمَالُكُ فِي عَيْنِي وَحِبَّكُ فِي قَلْبِي
وذِكْرُكُ فِي فَمِي فَأَنَّمَا تَعْيُبُ

Your beauty in my eye, your love in my heart
Your mention on my lips – where then could you disappear?

15 The fortnightly newspaper published in Arabic from Nadwat al-‘Ulamā’, of which Mawlānā Wādiḥ Rashid Nadwī is the editor.
Introduction

Now I live far removed from my alma mater, yet it has never been far from my thoughts. When I left Nadwah, it was with a heavy heart:

آتاں کہ تو آگے بڑی بھر سے گر
کہ جلد ہو جانے ہے کسے دل سے آگے گئے

True, we got up and left the shade of your embrace,
Yet this heart knows a little with what heart we came away.

To conclude, let me clarify that this work holds up a mirror to the life that I knew at Nadwah. The account can only be as accurate as any personal memory of a past time ever is, but it contains no fictive element, nor does it seek to idealise. It does not try to do what the poet Faiz explained in this way: "It was not thus; rather I desired it to be thus." 16

Mohammad Akram Nadwi
Oxford, 16th Muḥarram 1425 AH

16 Faiz Ahmad Faiz (1884-1936), a poet in the high tradition of Urdu poets like Ghālib and Iqbal.
Madrasah Life

IN THE NAME OF GOD, THE MOST MERCIFUL, THE MOST COMPASSIONATE

I awoke at 5 a.m. and recited the supplication, "Praise be to God Who revived us after having caused our death, and to Him is the return". Āftāb ʿĀlam Aʿzamī, my class fellow and room mate in No.6 on the third floor of the Āthar hostel, was already awake. He is a very practical person. Although he may not have been conversant with the philosophy of Sufism, he is no less than a Sufi in practice. He is characterised by piety, virtue, honesty, truth, purity and discipline. Whatever task he takes on he does thoroughly. He keeps himself to himself and stays away from joking and frivolity. Since he prefers to be alone, he is usually to be found lost in his thoughts. To this day he maintains those characteristics of his student days; he has not changed at all. He is adept at public speaking and has a thorough grounding in and command of Urdu poetry, while his recitation of the Qur’ān is marked by pathos and melody. When he leads a prayer, those following him desire for him to prolong his recitation. His supplications are long and deeply touched by his devotion and earnestness before God.

أو ليس من إحدى العجائب أنني
فأرقت عينه وحييت بعد فراقه

Is it not a wonder of the world that I parted from him and, having parted, still live?
The early morning atmosphere, when most people are lost in sleep, is marked by tranquillity. Some devout slaves of God, notwithstanding their natural inclination to rest and sleep, are engaged in the remembrance of God, recitation of the Qur'an, prayer and supplication. Many Nadwah teachers and some students are particular about getting up early. Some commence their worship in the small hours of the night. Students, however, generally find it hard to get up in the early morning.

After doing wudū', I marvelled at the early morning scene. It appeared as if angels were descending from the heavens and blessing the believers with celestial touches and infusing God-consciousness, fear of God and a strong urge to purify and purge themselves into their hearts and minds. The day began on this beautiful note, in this angelic ambience and with the promise of blessings to the believers, and a glimpse of divine mercy.
Dawn rising from the east is enlivening.
It puts an end to the enveloping silence of the night.
Life manifests itself in every object at dawn.
Birds chirrup, heralding the message of life.
Flowers too, start a new life.
Muslims! Arise and awake from your slumber.
Shine like the sun and seek inspiration from the symbols of life around you.
Obliterate evil.
Your being full of light should put an end to darkness.
Reveal yourself like a flashing light,
unravelling the secrets of the universe.

The message of life was written large upon everything. Gradually the quiet was replaced with activities of all sorts. Plant life, in particular, reflects the special qualities of morning. All the activity on the natural plane provides a special message to the Muslim youth, prompting him to awaken and arise. He is urged to conquer the forces of nature in order to replace the darkness in the world with light. Through his self-awakening he should bring about changes that would improve the lot of humankind.

Fajr prayer is offered at an early hour at Nadwah. The congregation was at 5.45 am; the call to prayer was sounded half an hour before that. It reminded me of the following passage from Iqbal:17

It is couched in this parable: One night, the morning star asked the stars whether man is ever awake. To this, each star responded in its own way. At that moment the *adhān* was sounded, which adequately answered the question. For the call to prayer is a message and invitation that overthrows all falsehood.

The *muṣādhadhān*, Khālid Kānpūrī, is a remarkably gifted person. He is a classmate and close friend. He stands out from others because of his smiling face, attractive appearance, excellent social standards and clear, loud-voice. Even if he does not use a loudspeaker, his *adhān* can be heard at some distance. The *adhān* pronounced by him put an end to silence and quiet. Everyone was reminded of the truth that only God is God. The affirmation of His glory shakes the believers’ hearts. Once man recognises His supremacy, he himself masters everything in the world. Nonetheless, there is a world of difference between the verbal utterance of His supremacy and confessing this truth in one’s heart and mind. As our right-acting ancestors had imbibed this truth well, they ruled the world. In spite of our utterance of the same words now, however, we Muslims are subservient to everyone. The *adhān* gave us the glad tidings of a new dawn.
The dawn that is tomorrow, then today,
I don’t know from where it rises.
The dawn, which shakes the dark abode of being,
is born of the call (adhan) of a believer

Some sleeping students were woken by the adhan and rushed to do wudu. Yet many were still unmoved, lost in sleep. Hostel monitors woke them. Our warden, Mawlana Shahbaz, rises very early. After making supplications and glorifying God, he came to our room, greeting us. ‘Umar Laddakh was busy doing wudu while Waliullah was still asleep. Upon hearing the Mawlana’s greeting he too got up. ‘Umar hails from Ladakh and is a class fellow as well as roommate. He is closely associated with the Tablighi Jamat movement. Waliullah, my other roommate, is junior to me in class. He is the maternal grandson of a leading Muslim scholar, Mawlana ‘Abd al-Shakur Lakhnawi.

After wudu I recited Sura al-Zumar. Its recitation in the early morning fills my heart with joy. Words fail me in describing the delight I have. I am aware of the tremendous impact of the Qur’an on the world, how it marks a new dawn in history. It is a pity that some of its custodians are ignorant of its abiding value and power. Tears welled in my eyes on reading the following verse:

"Say: O My slaves who have transgressed against their own souls!
Do not despair of God’s mercy. Surely God forgives all sins. Surely
He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." al-Zumar 39:53

That verse makes me think deeply and draws me closer to God. On reciting it, I experience such joy that I keep reciting it over and over again. Ever since I heard Mawlana Wadih Rashid Nadwi elucidate its multiple meanings, and also point out its literary features, this verse has called me to reflection upon reflection. For it reminds me of the numerous bounties of the Lord of the worlds. On reciting God’s promise, one is no longer imprisoned by one’s sins. One comes out of the darkness emanating from one’s sins and gains nearness to the mercy of God. For, out of His overflowing mercy and kindness, God has promised to forgive sins. The Lord of the universe is so close to His slaves, so merciful and compassionate
to them, and forgives their sins so easily, that there is no need for any intermediary with Him. Nor is there any need to seek anyone's intercession of the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, who it is promised will intercede for the wrongdoers of his community. But it is Allah Who forgives. God is the only refuge for His slaves. He alone can redeem a wrongdoer, out of His compassion. I recalled the following couplet:

این چنان بر آنان لیست نیست
و درک کرده که آنان لیست نیست

I found no refuge, nor peace, nor security anywhere in the world. The only refuge I found for my self-destructive sins was in Your forgiveness, Your bestowing favours upon Your slaves.

It would be fitting here to reflect on the following incident related of Sufyān al-Thawrī, a distinguished jurist and Islamic scholar of exceptional piety. He was nearing death and felt anxious. Someone asked if it was because he had committed many sins. Sufyān picked up a piece of straw and said that he attached no more importance to his sins than to the piece of straw. What terrified him most was the fear of losing his faith while in the throes of death. In that state of anxiety he asked his disciple, 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn Mahdī, to summon Ḥammād ibn Salamah. When the latter arrived, Sufyān had fallen unconscious. When he recovered, Ḥammād said to him: "If on the day of judgement God gives me the choice between Him or my mother taking my account, I will opt for God. For His mercy exceeds even a mother's love."

Every morning after reciting the Qur'an I read the poetical works of Ḥāfiz,18 Ṛūmī,19 or Iqbal. This morning I read the following ghazal of Ḥāfiz:

18 Khwājah Shamsal-Dīn Muḥammad Ḥāfiz Shīrāzī (1319-1389), the most famous figure in Persian love poetry, composed some 500 ghazals, 42 rubā'īs, and a few qasidahs. He composed only when he was inspired, and therefore he averaged only about ten ghazals every year.

19 Jalāl al-Dīn Muhammad Ṛūmī (d. 1270) is well known for his Mathnawi which consists of about 27,000 couplets - the largest poem about the spiritual path ever produced.
O fragrant breeze of morning, Beloved's place for resting is where?
That Moon that takes lovers' lives, that Sorcerer's dwelling is where?
The night is dark and in front is Wadi Aiman, the Valley of Safety:
Where is fire of Sinai, and the promised...
place for seeing, is where?
Whoever comes into this world is bearing
the mark of a ruinous end:
You should go and ask in Wine house:
“One, not drinking, is where?
Every tip of each hair of mine has been
tied to You for a reason;
But where are we, and the critic who is
beyond reasoning is where?
The lover burned from pain of grief of
being separated from You;
But You don’t ask Yourself: “Lover whose
grief is suffering, is where?”
Reason has given way to madness: where is
that musky long hair?
Heart left us for the corner: Your eyebrow,
heart-owning: is where?
They are all ready: the cup and the Minstrel
and rose, all are ready.
Bliss without Beloved is impossible: Beloved
Who’s willing, is where?
My heart is sick and tired of the cell and the
mosque of the Shaikh:
Where’s the young Christian; house of
Master, wine-making, is where?
Hafiz, don’t grieve about Autumn wind
blowing through the world:
If you think about it, the rose without
thorn’s wounding, is where?20

Hafiz’s couplets struck a chord in my heart, inspiring love
for God in me. His couplets cast such a spell on me, that I felt
compelled to continue enjoying this Divine taste. Since there
was still some time spare, I continued reading Hafiz’s poetry:

20 Divan of Hafiz, English version by Paul Smith; edited by Ann Smith, First
Not every beauty whose face is bright, ways
of a heart stealer knows;
Not everyone who makes a mirror, insight
of an Alexander knows.
Not everyone who wears his cup slanted
and sits up proudly straight,
Can do the work of the crown, or the
worth of a true Ruler knows.
There are a thousand points here that are
finer than the finest hair:
Not every person with a shaven head,
subtlety of a Kalandar knows.
It would be good if you learned faithfulness
and kept the promise:
You’ll see that the one not doing this, the
role of dictator knows.
Clearly, the objective of my vision is
centred upon Your dark mole;
For the value of the incomparable black
pearl, the jeweller knows.
I’m drowned in the water flowing from my
eyes but what can I do?
Not everyone who is in the ocean, the way
of a swimmer knows.
I am the slave of whatever that daring
Adventurer may want to do,
Who, the means of turning into an
alchemist a poor beggar, knows.
I staked my heart that was insane, but I did
not really understand
That this being, birthed by Adam, truly an
angel’s character knows.
Each One who reigned by form and face
over all of the lovely ones,
Would conquer the world, if each the law
of a justice-giver knows.
Verse of Hafiz that fascinates the heart will
be known by one who
Has natural grace, and the passwords of the
‘Doorway’ keeper knows.\textsuperscript{21}

Ten minutes before the time for the congregation I left for the
mosque. Other students were also heading towards the mosque.
Everyone was engaged in the remembrance of God, full of devotion
for Him. When going for the \textit{fajr} prayer one does not feel like

\textsuperscript{21} Divan of Hafiz, English version by Paul Smith; edited by Ann Smith, First
talking. Passing by each other you can hear the words ‘al-salām
‘alaykum’ (peace be upon you). It calls to mind the scene of the
verse: “They shall not hear therein vain or sinful discourse, saying
only [the word] peace, peace.” On reaching the mosque I saw
students of ḥifz 22 busy in their task of memorising the Qur‘ān. It
is an impressive and delightful sight to see so many young people
reciting the Qur‘ān inside Nadwah mosque. I first offered two
rak‘ahs of sunnah prayer and waited for the congregation. I cannot
forget this amazing scene; we were waiting for prayer to start, and
a spiritual light covered us and tranquillity and peace blessed our
hearts. After a little while Mawlānā Sa‘īd al-Rahmān arrived. At
5.45 exactly we all rose to pray. The Mawlānā is an eloquent speaker
and writer, gifted with a brilliant style, combined with sincerity of
purpose. His punctuality is remarkable. He is the editor of al-Ba‘th
al-Islāmī, 24 a scholar of Arabic literature and imām of Nadwah
mosque. His mode of Qur‘ān recitation is majestic and full of
pathos, his modulating voice adding much beauty.

The mosque is filled with devotees, lined in rows. The rows
are straight like the lines of text in a book, spreading out. Row
upon row, pointing to the sameness and equality of men, like an
ear full of grain; all equal, not one less or more important, not
one higher or lower. There is no distinction on the basis of status.
Khālid said the iqāmah; the Mawlānā’s takbīr followed, marking
the commencement of prayer. The imām’s voice echoed in the
mosque and radiated like light, illuminating everything. After
reciting Sūrat al-Fātiḥah, he recited Sūrat al-Mulk. The latter opens
with the glorification of God Who is the King and has power over
everything, “Blessed is He in Whose hand is the kingdom, and
He has power over all things. Who created death and life that He
may try you – which of you is best in deeds; and He is the Mighty,
the Forgiving. Who created the seven heavens one above another;
you see no incongruity in the creation of the Beneficent God; then
look again, can you see any disorder? Then turn back the eye again

23 Memorisation of the Qur‘ān.
24 The monthly Arabic magazine issued from Nadwat al-‘Ulama‘.
and again; your gaze will come back to you dazzled and fatigued." His recitation brought to mind the melody of birds, singing in ecstasy. There was a marked note, too, of pathos in his delivery. It emanated from the heart, as if overcome with joy after a long spell of sorrow. The rise and fall of his voice had a direct effect on my heart and mind. We felt as if the Qur'ān was being revealed to us directly. His recitation seemed an inseparable part of the order of the universe. Our hearts were irresistibly drawn towards the Qur'ānic message. It was akin to the absorption of rainwater by plants, which brings about their flourishing. Every object appeared to be in submission, in communion with the Divine. The dawn itself seemed to pause, to halt and seek the Lord's leave, to ask for illumination from that Divine Light before proceeding. We were immersed in the Qur'ān recitation as if nothing else existed, as if all the vanity of the outer world had vanished, and only devout souls inhabited the earth. This spiritual experience helped us transcend our material constraints.

As the verses of Sūrat al-Mulk were being recited, our attention was drawn to the immense signs of Almighty God. He causes life and death. Out of His wisdom He has not created anything in vain. Wherever one casts one's gaze, one is bound to notice His creative power. The coordination of the various components of the universe is amazing. His signs are perfect. One cannot find fault with His signs, no matter how hard one tries. His signs give a clear idea of His presence and help one gain conviction in His being and attributes. It enables one to enjoy nearness with Him. Can an idol worshipper obtain any portion of such a blessing? It is sheer superstition to conceive of God in terms of idols and statues. The verses of Sūrat al-Mulk portray a picture of creation that even the best artist could not paint.

At the time of the fajr prayer, Nadwah mosque is filled with such illuminated tranquillity that pure and profound thoughts envelop the mind. In that state I was almost transported to a different world. The mosque is not a mere structure of mortar and cement. The mosque orients the individual to the proper direction. All around us in the world there are numerous forms of deviation, rebellion, guile and evil. The mosque is the refuge against these and the
purification from all kinds of impurity and dirt. At the conclusion of the prayer we greeted the angels. On becoming mindful of the angels’ attention towards us, we felt elated.

I stayed inside the mosque for a while after the prayer. Many were still engaged in the remembrance and glorification of God. Some were reciting the Qur’ān while students of hifz were revising their lessons. The Qur’ān recitation was a fascinating spectacle, and it enchanted us. I did not feel like leaving the mosque. For nothing could be more attractive than the light of the remembrance of God permeating the mosque. Now I can understand why our righteous ancestors did not like to talk to anyone after the dawn prayer until after sunrise. How much the world is in need of such a spiritual environment. Even angels are likely to envy someone whose heart is illuminated with such a spiritual light.

While I was preoccupied with these thoughts, Ibrāhīm finished his glorification of God, and led me out of the mosque. He is my senior by a few years, and is a teacher of Arabic literature and grammar. He is frank and open with me. His knowledge is sound and deep and he has remarkable clarity of mind. Whatever he says has a profound message. He is highly sociable and informal, and there is hardly any difference between his private and public self. Since my first meeting with him, I have seen him in the habit of chewing betel leaves and wearing the same sherwâni.25 His friends ask him to place his sherwâni in a museum, but Ibrāhīm holds fast to the sunnah of wearing the cloth until it is worn out.

As I moved out along with Ibrāhīm I looked for the spiritual light that was visible on the faces of the devotees. Some students had returned to their hostel to recite the Qur’ān. Some had gone back to bed, as they had studied until late at night. Some went for a walk beside the Gomti River while some were having tea at the canteen inside. Others went jogging or exercising in small groups on the football field. Life was in full swing, though it was still early morning.

As we came out of the mosque, we found Bābar and Ḥashmatullāh waiting for us. Bābar is quite senior yet he is very friendly towards

25 Indian coat.
us. His conversation is charming and his manners most agreeable. You can tell from his deportment that he is the descendant of a noble family. Ḥashmatullāh is my classmate and is second to none in intelligence and in his understanding of Arabic. He has a special flair for writing in Arabic. His eloquence and his command over Arabic grammar are enviable.

Usually, the four of us go for a morning walk together. Early March mornings are quite pleasant, because it is neither too hot nor too cold. One is reminded of the observation of the poet Josh Malīḥābādi Ḥa that on witnessing the spectacle of morning one is persuaded to believe in God. As a matter of fact, each one of His creations is unique. The spectacle of dawn is undoubtedly marvellous. It is a pity that many fail to witness this remarkable scene. Who can dispute the deprivation of one in whose life morning has never risen?

Ibrāhīm has a special interest in grammar. If he is around, discussion on some grammatical issue tend to be imminent. In contrast, Bàbar has no interest in it. The latter enjoys our company but cannot abide Ibrāhīm's obsession with grammar. This morning he decided to recount his life in Madinah. It was a preemptive move to forestall Ibrāhīm starting up on grammarians such as Sībawayh, or Ibn Jinnī, or Ibn Hīshām, or the grammar schools of Kufah, Basrah and Baghdad. Bàbar informed us in detail about the teachers and teaching method at the International Islamic University of Madinah. According to him, Mawlānā Saʿīd Ahmad Khān's presence was a source of strength for Indian students in Madinah. His circles at Masjid al-Nūr provided much food for thought. He had drawn many learned people to the cause of daʿwah. He made an intensive study of the Sirah there, spending, for example, a few days at the mountain of Uhud in order to grasp better the details of the battle of Uhud. He was an authority on the local history of Madinah. His commitment to the sunnah was deep. He would recite the supplications recommended by the Prophet, peace be upon him, and recorded in hadith collections, with conviction. On his

26 Josh Malīḥābādi (1898 –1982), a noted poet of India, famed for his mastery command of the Urdu language and his strictness in respecting grammar and the rules of language.
return to Madinah after doing ‘umrah, he had to camp in the wild; in accordance with a reported hadith, he drew a line in the ground around himself and his fellow travellers, then recited a supplication, seeking God’s protection against all evil. The next morning they found snakes and scorpions crawling near their camp, just outside the line he had drawn. Thanks to God’s answer to the supplication, the snakes and scorpions had not harmed them. The freshness of the morning and this account strengthened our faith. The mercy of God was evident in the shaykh’s story.

Bābār cited several examples of Mawlānā Saʾīd Aḥmad Khān’s scholarship and scientific research. I then recalled how, when we were sitting with him in the Tablīghī Centre of Hazrat Nizam al-Din in Delhi, he had asked us what is the translation of the last verse of Sūrat al-Fātīḥah: غير المغوص عليه ولا الضائلن. A student repeated the popular translation: “Not the path of those who earn anger, nor of those who go astray”. The Mawlānā said: “This translation is incorrect.” One of the students of Nadwah, realising what he meant, said: “This verse غير المغوص عليه is adjectival, qualifying the last phrase of the previous verse الذين أنعمت عليهم “those whom You have blessed”. The correct translation is: ‘Not those with whom You are angered, nor those who go astray.” The Mawlānā was pleased with this explanation, and then fully elucidated the verse.

This recollection, however, provided Ibrāhīm with the perfect moment to affirm the importance of grammar. He asserted that knowledge of grammar is the key to understanding the secrets of the Qurʾān and the complexities of hadith. In his writings on grammar Ibn Hishām illustrates his points with instances from the Qurʾān and hadith. It helps readers resolve many problems and grasp difficult passages. He cited a verse from Sūrat al-Shuʿarāʾ, وسماهم الذين ظلموا أي مقلب يتبكون and asked Bābār to explain why أي متقلب is in the accusative case. The latter replied: “Is it difficult to explain this? Even first and second year students know that أي is an object of سماهم.” Ibrāhīm exclaimed triumphantly that when scholars can commit such gross mistakes, it constitutes a weighty proof of the importance and relevance of grammar, and it strengthens his belief in the usefulness of grammar. The word أي here is maf al mutlaq
of يُنظَر. In constructions like this يُظهر does not act. That is why grammarians like Ibn Hishām and others refer to it as ta'liq, i.e. suspended.

Hashmatullāh commented to Ibrāhīm: “The ears are tired of hearing from you the names of Ibn Hishām, Sharḥ Qāṭr al-nadā and Sharḥ shudhīr al-dhahab all the time. No doubt there is no one equal to Ibn Hishām among later grammarians. Ibn Khaldūn, the leading figure on the philosophy of history, has rightly said: ‘الذناب والذناب بالمغرب نسمع أنه يظهر بصائر عالم باللغة يظل له ابن هشام. أحباه من سيبوبيه.’ We have heard, while we were in the West, that there has appeared in Egypt a scholar of Arabic called Ibn Hishām, who is a greater expert of grammar than Sibawayh.’ Nadwah authorities had introduced a new dimension in the syllabus of madrasahs by prescribing Ibn Hishām’s works. Prior to this, the study was confined to al-Kāfiyāh of Ibn Ḥājib and its commentary by Mulla Jāmi. Shiblī’s comment ‘فيه كل شيء إلا النحو’ In it there is everything except grammar’ is very meaningful. But by paying excessive attention to Ibn Hishām we are committing the same mistake, which has been made until now with Ibn Ḥājib and Mulla Jāmi.”

Hashmat’s comments were somewhat hard, I thought, and said aloud that it was impractical to include the works of all the grammarians in the syllabus. At Nadwah, Sharḥ qāṭr al-nadā and Sharḥ shudhīr al-dhahab are already part of the syllabus. At the advanced level, Ibn Mālik’s Alfiyyāh, Ibn ‘Aqīl’s gloss on the Alfiyyāh, and Muṣāṣal are also taught. It is unrealistic to go beyond these works, for the entire syllabus cannot be focussed on grammar. Bābar, who has a distaste for the whole topic of grammar, quipped that at the first available opportunity grammar should be dropped from the syllabus altogether.

27 Mawlānā Shiblī Nu‘mānī (1857-1914) received his education from the most learned people of this time. He travelled to the Hijāz before joining Aligarh Muslim University as Professor of Arabic and Persian in 1882. In order to do research for his books he travelled to Egypt, Rome and Syria and on his return published a travelogue. He then accepted the position in the Department of Education in Hyderabad. He joined the movement of Nadwat al-‘Ulmā’ as an active and leading member, later establishing Dār al-Musanafin in Azamgarh. His important books are al-Ma‘mūn, al-Fārūq, Sharī al-Nabi, ‘Ilm al-kalām, Shīr al-‘ajām, Muwāznah: i anis wa dabīr.
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While engaged in our discussion we had walked as far as Begum Hazrat Mahal Park. It was time to turn back, since we had to take breakfast, revise our lessons and reach our classroom on time. Classes start at 8.00 am and it was already 6.15 am. On the way back Hashmat, as usual, ignored Bābar’s interruptions and resumed his conversation saying: “I did not mean to criticise the syllabus. It upsets me to see İbrahim and other teachers of grammar placing such a high premium on Ibn Hishām’s works on grammar. Why not supplement our knowledge by going beyond the textbooks? Since we follow this practice in the study of other disciplines, why not do the same with regard to grammar? To gain mastery over Arabic idiom and expertise in grammar, why are these classics not being studied – Sībawayh’s al-Kitāb, al-Mubarrid’s al-Kāmil, Ibn Qutaybah’s Adab al-katib, Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih’s al-‘Iqd al-farīd and Jāḥiz’s al-Bayān wa al-tabyīn? Notwithstanding our admiration for Ibn Hishām, let us not forget that Ibn Hishām has, in the footsteps of other later grammarians, constricted grammatical rules with the definitions and categorisations of logic. This has partly dislodged its spirit. As for elementary and abridged works, these give only an outline of a discipline; they do not help master any area of study.

I agreed with Hashmat, adding that the same error of perspective mars our study of the principles of jurisprudence. Generally, students rest content with Usūl al-shāshi and al-Husāmi, complacent that they have attained sufficient knowledge of the principles of fiqh. Yet these two works are only introductory works, familiarising students only with basic principles. After studying these, they must study Usūl al-sarakhsi, Usūl al-bazdawi, al-Shāfi ’ī’s al-Risālah, al-Āmidi’s al-Ihkām, al-Shāṭibi’s al-Muwāfaqāt and the writings of Ibn Ḥazm carefully and in depth.

Engaged in our discussion, we returned to Nadwah campus. As part of our routine we passed by the buildings of the Dār al-‘Ulūm, the Shiblî Library and al-Rā‘id office. Hashmat carried his point further, asserting that the study of introductory and abridged works had dealt a severe blow to scholarship. Take another discipline, logic,

28 İmām Muḥammad ibn İdrīs al-Shāfi ’ī (d. 204 AH), one of the most eminent jurists and founder of one of the four schools of Sunnī jurisprudence.
as illustration, he suggested. Students read, at most, al-Mirqāt and al-Sullam. Few among them can boast of having studied Ibn ʿSinā’s al-Shifa’ and Imām Ibn Taymiyyah’s al-Radd ʿalā al-mantiqiyyīn. There is a general trend of decline in the standard of learning. Study of grammar is, in particular, neglected. It is widely perceived as a dry, difficult subject. Students must, at least, read the works of Jāḥiz and Ibn Ḥammād.

As we passed by al-Rāʾid office, we met ‘Uthmān, manager of al-Rāʾid magazine. He is Ibrāhīm’s class fellow and our mutual friend. He is from Unnão and a person of gentle manners. He lives in a flat near his office. While we were busy talking with him, Ridwān spotted us. He is a colleague of Ibrāhīm and we know him through his younger brother, Iḥsān. Ridwān also lives in a flat above al-Rāʾid office. On seeing us he said that he had been looking for us to invite us to breakfast, and told us that he had cooked some very nice nahārī. We readily accepted his invitation. Whenever there is breakfast at the home of Ridwān, Khālid must be there. Ridwān sent one of his students to call Khālid to breakfast. As we sat in his house, Bābar told him that we had spoiled the morning walk. “At such a pleasant time they continued their discussion on grammar. They neither had a feeling for the occasion, nor did they look at the beautiful morning scenery. What is the point of going on a walk on the bank of the Gomti, if one overlooks natural beauty altogether? I was reminded of a humorous piece in Urdu by Sajjād Ḥaydar Yaldarīm entitled ‘Save me from my friends’, which provides an interesting account of the distress the author has to undergo at the hands of his uncaring friends. I could echo his sentiments and say: ‘Save me from those friends who are obsessed with grammar.’”

‘Uthmān tried to cheer him up, saying: “Why are you so upset with Ibrāhīm, Hashmatullāh and Akram? At least these are a few of the people who make life so interesting at Nadwah, and they contribute in their own ways to the life on the campus. They have a right to say:

ياد رکشا فنا نین تم لگ

ياد رگا زناد بیی تم لگ

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We people are the souvenir of the time; And remember we are the stories that will be told

Bābar agreed with 'Uthmān, but still insisted that grammar should be dropped from Nadwah syllabus. Ridwān supported Bābar with the contention that it is assumed that competence in grammar helps one gain spoken and written skills. However, it is an outdated notion. One can do well without grammar and one can master Arabic language in other ways. Mawlānā Muḥammad al-Ḥasanī stands out as living proof of that. The hallmarks of his style are missing from those writers who learnt Arabic through grammar. His al-Islām al-muntahan, apart from being a perceptive analysis of Islamic thought, is a literary masterpiece. Taking his cue from this example, Bābar quoted Mawlānā Wādīh’s observation that no authority on Arabic grammar has distinguished himself as a literary master. Grammarians no doubt demonstrate their familiarity with idiom, archaic expressions, lexical issues and may be masters of the dictionaries of the Hijāz, yet they cannot articulate their ideas attractively. I pointed out to Bābar that, according to Mawlānā Wādīh, al-Zamakhsharī is an exception to this rule. He was both an expert on Arabic language and a stylist. His writings are reflective of his literacy craftsmanship and high linguistic taste.

Yet Bābar kept on expressing his distaste for grammar and grammarians. For him, “they are akin to scientists who conduct a thorough study of nature, analyse even the smallest object in order to ascertain truth, yet are not enchanted by the beauty and grandeur of nature. Even while studying a rose they only focus microscopically on its constituent parts. If they see a beautiful and attractive face they are unmoved by its beauty. Rather, their interest lies in its skeleton. On the contrary, when a poet looks at the same rose and the same beauty, he admires its charms and communicates the same in figurative language. A poet, a literary person and an artist possess a strong sense of aesthetic beauty. A grammarian is hardly concerned with the literary merits of a work and focuses only on finding fault. One comes across few illustrations of remarkable literary worth in their works. Mu’allaqāt and other poetical works
of Arab masters abound in examples of poetic excellence. Yet they point only to couplets which have some grammatical problems, like the following:

 ولو أن ما أسبع لأدنى معيشة
کفاني وليم أطلب قليل من المال

If my striving had been for only a minimal livelihood,
A little wealth would have sufficed me, and I would not have sought more.

All grammarians feel obliged to cite the above couplets in order to illustrate that this is not the example of tanāzuʿ fiʿlayn – two verbs contesting a link with the same noun. Accordingly, they have little interest in the literary excellence of the Qurʾān and the miraculous impact of it. What catches their attention, however, is the variant recitation of some verse. Instead of the reading: َِّٓإِن هذان لساحران “These are two magicians...” they are more concerned with the reading: َِّٓإِن هذان because it presents unusual grammatical issues. Grammarians, likewise, have no taste for the Prophetic language. They repeated the following phrase: لِيِس مِنَ أَمِر أَعْمَامَ فِي أَسْمَعْ “it is not a part of being devout to fast while travelling” so many times that it became the standard one. 29 Alas! This is bad taste, and shame on those who call it knowledge.” While Bābar continued his attack, Khālid joined us. As he entered, he said: “And alas for those who catch the fragrance of such delicious food and yet neither appreciate it, nor stretch out their hands.”

This marked the beginning of our breakfast. The nahārī was indeed delicious, underscoring Rīdwan’s skill in cooking. We thought this break would save us from Bābar’s persistent attack on the study of grammar. However, he continued his trenchant criticism. We turned to Khālid for intervention. Khālid asked Bābar not to exert himself too much on this issue. “Advocates of both stances, for and against grammar-centred study, have been at Nadwah since its inception. Were not Mawlānā Sayyid Sulaymān

29 The point being that this hadith is in a Yemeni dialect because of the man to whom the Messenger spoke, peace be upon him, in which dialect the definite article, which is ordinarily al, became am.
Madrasah Life

Nawī and Mawlānā Abū al-‘Irfa‘ Nawī committed heart and soul to the study of grammar, while others opposed this approach. And yet both groups flourished. This in itself demonstrates the success of the idea of Nadwah. Both of these camps are represented at this very breakfast table. We should not insist on a kind of dull, colourless sameness. Why do we insist that a garden be full of the same flowers? Variety constitutes the real beauty of the garden. Not only in the study of grammar, but in other disciplines such as fiqh and tafsīr and hadith studies, a multiplicity of approaches and schools of thought are admissible at Nadwah.”

Khālid’s fair and balanced intervention delighted us, for it enabled us to focus on the delicious breakfast and tea and to indulge in some refreshing, light conversation. Moreover, there was little time left. We had to return to our hostel by 7.30 am. Rīdwan, however broached another serious topic. He had taken specialist courses on tafsīr and Qur’ānic studies at Madinah University. He earned his degree this year and had been appointed as a teacher of tafsīr at Nadwah. For days he had been asking me to have a discussion with him on Mawlānā Hamid al-Din Farāhī’s concept of Nizām al-qur’ān. As Bābar stopped, Rīdwan availed himself of the opportunity to raise the issue of this nizām – the order, coherence and contextual harmony in the Qur’ān. Although I drew his attention to the very little time at our disposal, and that we could not pursue very much discussion, he persisted. I suggested that we consult Mawlānā Shahbāz, who is an authority on Farāhī’s approach to the Qur’ān. Mawlānā Farāhī was a devout, insightful scholar who had given his whole life to study of the Qur’ān. The fruits of his life-long study of the Qur’ān are found in his works Asālib al-Qur’ān, Dalā’il al-nizām, Muqaddimah tafsīr nizām al-Qur’ān and Mufradāt al-Qur’ān. His Jamharat al-balāghah is a unique book on its topic, as it illustrates the rules of rhetoric in an original manner. Shibli has offered a good introduction to this work in his articles. Farāhī’s other writings also stand out for their originality and freshness of approach, namely al-Ra’y al-sāhiḥ fī man huwa al-dhabīḥ, and al-Imān fī aqsām al-Qur’ān. Reading these one gains a clear picture of Farāhī’s mind.
Contributing to the discussion on Farāhī, I pointed out that classical writers, predating Farāhī, had also had a clear understanding of coherence in the Qur’ān. Almost every tafsīr seeks to bring out the connections and contextual relations between Qur’ānic verses. Farāhī was alive to the significance of this feature and carried out a sustained study. As a result, he developed his thesis in a very convincing way. Farāhī’s thesis is that every Qur’ānic chapter is thematically related to the chapters immediately preceding and following it. The same holds true, according to him, for the verses, which are interrelated with one another. The fact that the compilation of sūrahs (chapters) in the Qur’ān, under the guidance of the Prophet, peace be upon him, was different from the order in which they were revealed to him is testimony to this very coherence. Farāhī’s exposition is undoubtedly persuasive. Yet he is not equally successful in identifying the connection between each and every verse, but then he never claims to be bale to do that, nor could that realistically be expected. In any case, one can and may differ with his stance.

While I continued my argument, Ibrāhīm asked me to cite a good example to illustrate my point. I presented the following one, on Mawlānā Shahbāz’s authority. Farāhī’s claim is that his theory of coherence helps one to avoid some of the mistakes in interpretation, which have crept into tafsīr literature. The instance in point is verse 40 of Sūrat al-Ahzāb, proclaiming: “Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of God, and the seal of the Prophets.” Misconstruing this verse, the Qādyānīs maintain that the Prophet Muḥammad, peace be upon him, had a seal of prophethood. Any prophet who followed him would be endorsed by his seal. Thus no permanent or independent prophet will appear. This Qādyānī notion betrays their ignorance of the proper context of the above verse. In the light of the theory of coherence, this Qur’ānic verse may be explained satisfactorily thus: in accord with Arab customs, an adopted son was regarded as a real son. In the Qur’ān God abolished this custom. He therefore commanded that people should be identified as their father’s sons. Zayd, who was the Prophet’s adopted son, had
been called Zayd, the son of Muḥammad. After the revelation of the above surah, however, he was no longer described as such, but was called Zayd ibn Ḥārithah, ascribing him to his father. At the Prophet's behest Zayd had married Zaynab. However, it was not a successful marriage and Zayd divorced her, which hurt her all the more. The Prophet, peace be upon him, was commanded by God to marry Zaynab. However, people reproached him for marrying his 'daughter-in-law'. Since in the Qurʾān God intended to end the above practice regarding adopted children, He clarified that the Prophet, peace be upon him, is not the father of any man. This being the case, there was nothing wrong in his marrying Zaynab. This could, however, have given rise to the question of why he had to marry her. To answer this, the Qurʾān affirmed that he is the Messenger of God. In this capacity, he is to put an end to the ignoble traditions of the jāhiliyyah period. One could also ask why such a great Messenger had to do this. Other prophets coming after him could have accomplished this. In reply the Qurʾān declares that no prophet will ever follow him, for he, peace be upon him, is the seal of the Prophets. It was therefore his duty to end this custom. Everyone appreciated this example.

It was 7:30 am when we finished our breakfast and discussion. Taking our leave of Riḍwān, we returned. Students were on their way to Dār al-ʿUlūm. As we passed by the canteen we saw that it was overcrowded, since everyone had to finish their breakfast and reach their class by 8 am. The main items served for breakfast were pūrī, vegetable curry, biryāni, butter, toast, omelette, bread and tea. The canteen staff were busy serving the students. Khalid, Hashmatullah and I stayed in the Athar hostel and we rushed to our rooms.

In the mornings I had been studying Ibn Ḥāzm's Muhallā. Although I was late, I did not like to miss it. So as usual, I read a part of it. Ibn Ḥāzm's arguments are not so weighty in my opinion. What impresses me more is the degree of intellectual freedom enjoyed by scholars when Islam was in its heyday. Their independent thinking and reasoning led to the creation of a healthy society. There was neither strife nor ill will between scholars, though their opinions varied. This brought to mind Yūnus al-Ṣadaqī's observation: "I have
not seen anyone wiser than Imām al-Shāfi‘ī. I had a disagreement with the Imām about a matter. After intense debate we parted company. A few days later, the Imām met me and, holding my hand, emphasised that despite our divergence of opinion on the matter, we should live as brothers.” To me, Nadwah curriculum conveys the same message and seeks to restore this past glory. Notwithstanding our adherence to principles, we should have enough breadth of mind to accommodate differences of opinion. We should not let peripheral differences in interpretation drag us into sectarianism and parochialism.

While I was studying, Āftāb, ʿUmar and Waliullāh invited me to breakfast, as we usually had it together. I said to them: “Say bismillāh and begin, as I have just had my breakfast.”

At 7.45 am the bell rang, alerting us that we must be inside our classrooms within 15 minutes. Āftāb, ʿUmar and myself hurried to Dār al-ʿUlūm. Other students were also on their way, moving quickly. Our class fellow and hostel mate, Raḍī al-Islām, joined us. He is a promising, ambitious student with a flair for writing and a thorough grounding in various disciplines. He has a clear mind and his argumentation is clear. As a result, his reasoning is not marked by any gaps or contradictions. He writes well and has a moving style. He told us about his master’s dissertation, especially his research and academic accomplishments. His topic of study is the prophet Ibrāhīm’s mission. He has collected an abundance of research material, pointing to the preeminence of the prophet Ibrāhīm in all the major world faiths. Even Hinduism reflects his impact, in that Brahma is said by some to have been an extremely distorted version of his towering personality.

We entered the Dār al-ʿUlūm building, greeting and talking to teachers and students. When we had passed by the same building on our morning walk, it had been empty. By now all the offices were open and the classrooms full of students. Nadwah now displayed its glory in full. Our classroom was on the first floor while on

30 An important feature of Nadwah curriculum is to foster in students a critical faculty for debate and research and to train them to write cogent, effectively argued pieces on scholarly topics. As part of this training, every student of ʿulūmiyyah and faṣilah writes a dissertation in his final year. Without this, he cannot receive his degree.
the ground floor there are mostly offices. The office of *al-Ba’th al-Islāmī* is also situated there. As my classmates headed towards the classroom, I went to the office of *al-Ba’th al-Islāmī* to submit another instalment of my translation of *Bustān al-Muḥaddithīn*.

‘Abd al-Hayy received me warmly in the office and informed me that he had a special *koffe* dish prepared for lunch and that I should join him along with our other friends. He had been my classmate in the ‘ālimiyah course and is now manager of *al-Ba’th*. A sincere friend of generous nature and excellent manners, he is a very good conversationalist and thus dominates any gathering. Wit is his forte— he is always cracking jokes, one after another. One is not bored in his company. His wit indicates his intelligence. His devotion to his friends, too, is remarkable, and he looks for opportunities to do them favours—a gentleman through and through. I recalled Mīr’s couplet with reference to the good nature of ‘Abd al-Hayy:

Wherever can we find people of such a temperament?

Alas! You never kept company with Mīr

I then reached my classroom. Mawlānā Burhān al-Dīn Sambhali taught the first period. He teaches us *Hujiyatullāh al-bālighah* of Shāh Waliullāh Dihlawī. One of the senior faculty members of Dār al-‘Ulūm, he is committed heart and soul to his academic career and giving scholarly discourse. His other outstanding features are his gentle manners and the favours he does for everyone. He

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31. This valuable work, introducing the major hadith collections was written in Persian by Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Muḥaddith Dihlawī. At the suggestion of my esteemed teacher, Mawlānā Sayyīd Slamān Husaynī, I was translating it into Arabic, my efforts being serialised in the periodical *al-Ba’th al-Islāmī*. The translation into English by Aisha Bewley is also published by Turath Publishing.

32. Shāh Waliullāh Ahmad ibn ‘Abd al-Rahīm al-Umarī al-Dihlawī (d. 1176 AH), a great reviver of Islam and hadith specialist of the Indian subcontinent. He is the major hadith link in the subcontinent. He authored more than fifty books, and left a large number of students and disciples who continued his mission after his death. All the major Indian madrasahs stand indebted to him.
is punctual in his class and teaches spiritedly. Everyone takes his lectures seriously – no nonsense and no jokes. His class reminds one of what one has heard of the seriousness of Imām Mālik’s sessions. His lecture today is on the classification of knowledge, which rested with the Prophet, peace be upon him. This discussion covers a whole page in Ḥujjatullāh. Mawlānā Sambhali stated that Shāh Waliullāh’s account is marked by its eloquence, clarity, coherence and concision.

According to Shāh Waliullāh, there are two main types of ḥadīth. To one category belong those related to the teachings of the Prophet’s mission. These deal with the Hereafter, wonders of the creation, modes of worship, transactions between people, social relations and statecraft. Hadith on the Hereafter and the wonders of the unseen creation are based wholly on divine revelation. As to the ḥadīth on legislation, these represent both the revelation and ijtiḥād. The second category of ḥadīth, for example, those on medicine are not linked to the Prophetic mission. These are rooted in experience, and are not derived from revelation. Many of the scholars have said that the Prophet, peace be upon him, did certain acts as a matter of custom or by chance and not deliberately in his role as Prophet, as the teacher of his community. These have nothing to do with worship. In some hadith he recounts the stories of his community, for instance, the ḥadīth of Umm Zar‘, which relates how eleven women gathered and decided to discuss their husbands, without concealing anything. Each one of them did so, the last being Umm Zar‘. Her account of her husband excited everyone’s envy. Upon hearing this, the Prophet, peace be upon him, told his wife ʿĀʾishah: “I am to you as Abū Zar‘ is to Umm Zar‘.”

At the end, I raised the question that in the ḥadīth collections of both al-Bukhārī and Muslim,33 the entire ḥadīth is mawqūf except for the last sentence, and it is narrated by ʿĀʾishah, whereas Shāh Waliullāh has classified it in the category of ḥadīth representing the Prophet’s knowledge. To this the Mawlānā replied that the above hadith is no doubt attributed to ʿĀʾishah in these two collections.

33 Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj al-Qushayrī (261 AH) author of the Ṣahīḥ, which is considered next to the Ṣahīḥ of Imām al-Bukhārī in authenticity.
However, al-Nasa‘ī’s report, as narrated by ‘Abbād ibn Manṣūr, leaves no doubt about this being a ḥadīth which is marfū‘, meaning that it is ascribed to the Prophet, peace be upon him. In al-Nasa‘ī’s words: “‘Ā’isha states that the Prophet, peace be upon him, told her: ‘I am to you as Abū Zar’ was to Umm Zar‘. She asked: ‘May my parents be sacrificed for you. Who was Abū Zar?’ It was then that he related the whole account.” Some others have also classified this ḥadīth as marfū‘. Therefore Shāh Waliullāh was correct to mention this ḥadīth as an illustration of the general point.

Shāh Waliullāh’s classification dispels doubts about some ḥadīth. In this respect, I was reminded of Dr Aḥmad Amīn’s reservations about certain authentic ḥadīth, reservations which proceed mainly from his ignorance of this classification. His objection to Umm Zar‘s report is that the gathering of eleven women and their discussion about their respective husbands is not plausible. To him, it is an example of a fabricated ḥadīth. Had Aḥmad Amīn been familiar with Shāh Waliullāh’s classification of ḥadīth, he would have realised that the reference was to a report that was popular in Arabia and that the Prophet, peace be upon him, had related it in the same sense.

The second lecture, at 8.45 am, was on Sharḥ ma‘ānī al-‘āthār of Imām al-Ṭahāwī34, taught to us by Muftī Zahūr. He is the Deputy Rector and renowned for his intelligence, breadth of scholarship, insight and command of fiqh. His thoroughness enhances his insights into fiqh. Nevertheless, at Nadwah he is more involved with administration and construction work. As a result, he finds little time for teaching, generally arriving late for class. Utilising this opportunity, we turned to Ja‘far, who has recently finished reading the Urdu poet Josh Malihabādi’s autobiography, Yādon kī bārāt. Ja‘far, a descendant of a noble family, is a promising scholar and a good-natured, decent young man. He speaks little and is not provoked by anything, never losing his balance and poise, or complaining or holding a grudge. Nobody has ever seen him lose his temper. Although he loves the company of others, he is better known for taciturnity.

34. Abū Ja‘far Ahmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Salāmah al-Ṭahāwī (d. 321 AH) a well-known ḥanafī traditionist, and author of many excellent works on ḥadīth.
We asked his opinion on the autobiography he had studied. This work was then in the news at Nadwah a great deal. Three works of this genre\(^{35}\) had gained much popularity at Nadwah: i) Mawlānā ‘Abd al-Mājid Daryābādī’s Āp biī, ii) Josh’s Yādon ki bārāt, and iii) Kalīm ‘Ājīz’\(^{36}\)’s Woh jo mēri shā’irī kā sabab huvā.

Some reviewers have over-praised Josh’s work. Josh is no doubt a towering Urdu literary figure, extolled by many, and given the status of al-Lāt and Manāt in the temple of literature. Most of my friends have not read this book so far. On being asked to give his opinion on it, Ja‘far said that it is no doubt a fascinating book; Josh is an accomplished writer. But he also exhibits the weak points of his character in it: the work betrays his boastfulness and his ambition for fame. It is a voluminous work, running to 752 pages. Josh is known for composing long poems. He has tried to maintain the same distinction in his prose. What is nonetheless most striking about this book is its flouting all religious and moral codes. Brazenly he claims that the Qur’ān, God forbid, is not divine revelation. He has hurled abuses at the Prophet’s Companions. In recounting his eighteen love affairs, he has revealed in full the dark side of his character. He claims to be a lover from birth saying: “‘जी जान खाकसार मादर जाद उष्णिया”’ In the book he also boasts of his unbridled addiction to wine.

Looking at me the nurse says: “This child is a born drinker.”

For Josh, love is synonymous with sexual promiscuity. He cannot appreciate any other dimension of love. He feels no qualms

\(^{35}\) Mawlānā Muḥammad Ja‘far’s Kālā pānī (Exile) is the first autobiography in Urdu. Mawlānā Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī Nadwī recommended its study to us. At Nadwah the following Arabic autobiographies were acclaimed: Ahmad Amin’s Ḥayātī and Tāhā Husayn’s al-Ayyām. The former was, at one point, part of the syllabus for ‘aliyyah thānīyah. Students were examined in it. Its study enabled them to familiarise themselves with everyday Arabic.

\(^{36}\) Kalīm ‘Ājīz (1920 - ), a renowned and respected Urdu poet, has left an indelible mark on Indian literature.
of conscience in having sexual relations with prostitutes. In sum, he has transgressed every limit in debauchery.

One who is shy before God is a man of religion. 
One who is shy before the world is a man of nobility. 
One who has no shame – what shall I call him? – he is mean of nature and evil of heart.

If the young person has a shameless face then he will behave in all affairs as he desires.

It would not be wrong to say that he takes Freud’s theories about the sexual urges and their gratification literally. While Ja’far was offering his observations the Mufti arrived, which meant that our discussion remained unfinished. Today’s lesson was Kitāb al-hajj, bāb: mā yalbasu al-muhrim min al-thiyāb. This began with the following hadith:

Imām al-Ṭahāwī cited a hadith on Ibn ʿAbbās’s authority that he heard the Prophet, peace be upon him, declaring on the day of ʿArafah that someone who has no izār may put on trousers, and someone who has no sandals may wear shoes. After referring to its various chains of narrations, Imām al-Ṭahāwī points out that in the light of this hadith, one group follows the above directive unqualifiedly. A second group of scholars, however, differs and maintains that the concession is only for exceptional circumstances, and anyone resorting to it should pay a penalty. The hadith, it is true, does not rule out a penalty. Additionally, the second group does not say anything contrary to the hadith. For it is not their contention
that one must not wear trousers and shoes under any circumstances. Had they contended so, it would have been in disagreement with the ḥadīth. They permit what the Prophet, peace be upon him, permitted. Their imposition of a penalty is based on several weighty arguments. For the ḥadīth may be taken to mean that in exceptional circumstances one should redesign his shoes as sandals and his trousers as an izār. This group further affirms that if this is the meaning of the ḥadīth, then they do not oppose it in any way. Rather, they affirm it and support it. They do not differ with the other group about the ḥadīth itself, rather their divergence of opinion proceeds from the interpretation of the ḥadīth. They have interpreted this ḥadīth in a sense that is conceivable from its wording.

The following observation of Imām al-Ṭahāwī is invaluable. It exposes the falsity of those who accuse leading imāms of having contradicted ḥadīth. According to al-Ṭahāwī, a difference in interpreting a ḥadīth should not be taken to mean any opposition to the ḥadīth itself. Opposition to a particular interpretation of a ḥadīth is different from opposition to the ḥadīth itself. One who differs in interpretation should not be accused of contradicting the ḥadīth. This is followed up with several examples, which vindicate the hanafi position.

Our teacher, the Muftī, emphasised the point that we must try to comprehend the sources and the arguments on which the opinions of the imāms and leading jurists are based. One should not sit in judgement on their rulings. Nor should adherents of such rulings be reproached unreasonably. “Al-bayyīʾ an bi al-khiyār” — both the buyer and seller have a choice as long as they are not separated — is a familiar ḥadīth, reported also by Imām Mālik.37 His inference from it is identical to the hanafi position on the issue. They interpret the ḥadīth in the sense that the buyer and seller have a choice as long they do not differ in their wordings. This interpretation, however, so incensed Imām Ibn Abī Dhī‘b that he declared that the Imām (Mālik) was fit for capital punishment. Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal38

37 Imām Mālik ibn Anas (d. 179 AH), a prominent jurist and traditionist and founder of one of the four schools of Sunnī jurisprudence.
38 Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (d. 241 AH), celebrated jurist and eminent expert in hadīth, and founder of one of the four schools of Sunnī jurisprudence.
reports that when Ibn Abī Dhi‘b came to know that Imām Mālik did not abide by the above ḥadith, he insisted that the Imām should be made to repent or be beheaded. Imām Aḥmad thought Ibn Abī Dhi‘b was more God-fearing and truthful than Imām Mālik. Imām al-Dhahābī, nonetheless, remarked: “If he were indeed a God-fearing person, he should not have made such a harsh observation about a distinguished scholar.” Imām Mālik did not follow the ḥadith literally as he regarded it as abrogated. Some scholars, however, maintain that Imām Mālik did follow that ḥadīth in that he ascribed the aforementioned interpretation to it. As for his ijtīhād on the issue, he will be rewarded for it; and if his viewpoint is proved to be in the right, he will receive a double reward. Only Khārjīs hold that someone who errs in his ijtīhād should be put to death. The criticism levelled by contemporaries against each other should not be overblown. Ibn Abī Dhi‘b’s criticism does not lower Imām Mālik’s exalted status; nor have scholars condemned Ibn Abī Dhi‘b for his attack. They regard both of them as great scholars of Madinah.

The third lecture, at 9.30 am, lasting an hour and a half, is on Imām al-Bukhārī’s19 al-Jāmi‘ al-ṣaḥīh. It is taken by Mawlānā Ḍiyā’ al-Ḥasan Nadwī, who is known for his profound knowledge and acuity. He is very well-mannered and tends to asceticism in his way of life. An eminent ḥadīth scholar, with particular expertise in the teaching of Imām al-Bukhārī’s Sahīh, he is unusually free of any kind of prejudice or bias and insists on great respect for all scholars. Once he starts lecturing, one envies his earnestness; he is fully engrossed in teaching and does it intently, never veering from the subject.

Before the lecture on Imām al-Bukhārī’s hadith collection, we had already had two lectures and covered complex topics. To refresh ourselves, we usually take to reciting poetic verses before the Mawlānā arrives. Our friend, ‘Abd al-Ḥasib, is a poet and knows couplets of other poets by heart. He is of a jolly nature and

39 Imām Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl al-Bukhārī (d. 256 AH), one of the most prominent scholars of hadith, and author of several books in addition to the Sahīh, which is revered as the most reliable text after the Qur’ān.
enjoys entertaining. He usually recites to us the verses of Dilawar Figar, the king of humorous poetry, which he knows by heart. If Majaz is popular because of his poem *ay gham-e dil kiyā karīn ay wahashat-e dil kiyā karīn* (O sadness of the heart what should I do, O loneliness of the heart what should I do?), and Faiz’s fame is due to *mujh se pahli si muhabbat mere mahbub na māng* (O my beloved! Do not ask me for the same love any more), then Dilawar Figar’s name is renowned for his poem *le ke rishwat phans gayā hai de ke rishwat chhūt jā* (you got trapped by taking bribes, so free yourself by giving bribes). ‘Abd al-Hasib recites Figar’s poem *‘hakle kā peyār’* in a way that those listening to him for the first time might think that he stammers. We have heard several times from ‘Abd al-Hasib Figar’s famous poem, “The exam paper of love” Each time we derive the same joy. Even to this day, I can vividly recall many couplets of this funny, light-hearted poem, performed with all of ‘Abd al-Hasib’s theatricals:
When an exam is held, the questions will be put as follows:

express some of your thoughts about Laylā and Majnūn.
If love is an art or a science, write it down with explanation;
Or, if both are parts of love, write it down with explanation.
Give the dimensions of an evening of loneliness,
how long is the night of separation, can it be estimated?
Write the name of the equipment used to see
the beloved's beauty.
Name the device that can measure the quantity of beauty.
What percentage of lovers are there in our country?
How many of them attained mastery and how many are novices?
What is the delight conveyed to the heart by the breath
immersed in love?
What is the speed of hot laments ascending to the Throne?
Write short notes on the following:
The evening of grief, the evening of separation, the pain of the heart.
Laylā's mother did not marry Laylā to Majnūn –
What would you have done, had you been Laylā's mother?
Whose recommendation is needed on the application of joining?
How many inches of rain are needed for the plant of love to grow?
Draw a map of India on your paper, then draw on it:
the boundaries of the street of the beloved.
One lover walks nineteen miles in four days –
three lovers will walk thirty-eight miles in how many days?

Today, however, ʿAbd al-Hasīb was away in Sitapur, and we
all missed him. Šābir Pūrnawī and ʿUmar Laddākhī were taking
full advantage of his absence. The former enjoys a reputation as a conscientious student, usually reciting the text of Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī in class. He raised an important question, asking why Imām al-Bukhārī had included reports by Shu‘ayb ibn Abī Ḥamzah on the authority of Abū al-Yamān. His point was that the Imām’s conditions for including a report are very stringent and his standards for pronouncing a ḥadīth to be sahīh are very high. Abū al-Yamān did not hear Shu‘ayb’s books directly from him, nor did he read them with him. At most, Abū al-Yamān had a general ijāzah (permission) from Shu‘ayb to narrate his hadith without his necessarily having heard them from him. According to Abū Zur‘ah al-Rāzī,40 Abū al-Yamān had heard only one ḥadīth directly from Shu‘ayb. Imām Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal explicitly states that Abū al-Yamān’s narrations from Ṣafwān ibn ‘Amr and Ḥarīz are all sound – the implication being that he questions his reports from Shu‘ayb.

Responding to Sābīr’s question, Āftāb pointed out that Imām Aḥmad had directly asked Abū al-Yamān the same question, who answered to the effect that he, Abū al-Yamān, had heard some books from Shu‘ayb and read some with him, and the rest he narrates on the authority of ijāzah and munāwalah. Therefore, it is incorrect to hold that Abū al-Yamān did not receive any knowledge from Shu‘ayb by directly hearing it or reading it out aloud to him. Furthermore, Abū al-Yamān is cautious in reporting; he uses the phrase ‘akhbaranā – he informed us’ for all the ḥadīth that he narrates from him, because this terms is used for hearing the Shaykh’s hadith read out to him, rather than the phrase ‘haddathanā – he narrated to us’, which is used for when the Shaykh himself narrated the hadith. ‘Umar supported Āftāb’s stance, pointing out that what Abū al-Yamān acquired by munāwalah from Shu‘ayb, he had not narrated at all. Muṣafāḍal ibn Ghassān al-Ghailābī states on the authority of Imām Yahyā ibn Ma‘īn: “I asked Abū al-Yamān regarding the hadith of Shu‘ayb ibn Abī Ḥamzah. He told me that they did not belong to the category of munāwalah. Rather, he had not narrated any of the reports he had received by munāwalah.”

40 Imām Abū Zur‘ah ‘Ubaydullāh ibn ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Rāzī (d. 264 A.H.), an eminent scholar of ḥadīth and the science of ḥadīth criticism.
It is thus clear that Abū al-Yamān had not received ḥadīth from Shuʿayb by munāwalah or ijāzah alone. Rather, he had taken most ḥadīth from Shuʿayb by hearing them directly or reading them out to him. What he had received as munāwalah he had not narrated. Therefore, Imām Bukhārī cannot be faulted for citing reports narrated by Abū al-Yamān from Shuʿayb.

Ṣābir did not appear convinced by this clarification. He elaborated his point: “Shuʿayb’s son reports that some people called on his father seeking his ijāzah for his ḥadīths, but he refused to oblige them. After some time, they asked him again; on that occasion Abū al-Yamān was also present. This time Shuʿayb did grant ijāzah. At a later date Abū al-Yamān took Shuʿayb’s books and started narrating his reports.” Aftāb clarified: “The above account does not discredit Abū al-Yamān. He learnt and heard ḥadīths from Shuʿayb at some other time. Shuʿayb’s son, however, had the misconception that Abū al-Yamān reported ḥadīths based only on the general ijāzah granted by Shuʿayb.”

I added that even if it is assumed that Abū al-Yamān had not heard those ḥadīths from Shuʿayb, it does not reflect poorly on Imām al-Bukhārī because Abū al-Yamān had an ijāzah from him, which is an approved method of receiving ḥadīth. Abū al-Yamān is a reliable narrator, and what he has narrated on the authority of Shuʿayb are undoubtedly Shuʿayb’s ḥadīths. Abū al-Yamān was among the teachers of Imām Bukhārī. The latter must have clarified this point well with the former. More importantly, no expert of ḥadīth has raised any objection to any of Abū al-Yamān’s ḥadīths that al-Bukhārī has included in his book. Only one report by Abū al-Yamān is contested. This report is ascribed to Umm Ḥabībah, who narrates from the Prophet, peace be upon him, saying:

أَرَيْتُ مَا تَلْقَى أَمْثَلِي مِنْ بَعْدِي، وَسَفَرُ بَعْضُهُمْ دَمَاءَ بَعْضٍ، وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ سَابِقًا مِنِ اللّهِ فَسَأَلَتِهِ أَنْ يُؤْلِيَيْنِي شَفَاعَةَ فِيْهِمْ فَفَعَّلَ

“I was shown what my nation will face after me, and how they will shed each other’s blood. That is destined by God. So I asked Him to grant me intercession on their behalf, and He accepted that.”
Some of Abū al-Yamān’s students have narrated this report from Shu‘ayb from Ibn Abī Ḥusayn from Anas and some from Shu‘ayb from al-Zuhri from Anas. According to Yaḥyā ibn Ma‘īn, when he asked Abū al-Yamān about it, he ascribed it to al-Zuhri, adding that those who have narrated it from him as a ḥadīth of al-Zuhri are right, while those who narrated it from him as a ḥadīth of Ibn Abī Ḥusayn are wrong: “I had this ḥadīth in my notes along with the ḥadīths of Ibn Abī Ḥusayn; by mistake, I turned the page and narrated it as a ḥadīth of Ibn Abī Ḥusayn. This is actually a ḥadīth of al-Zuhri.” Obviously, this is not a big mistake. Now consider Imām al-Bukhārī’s meticulousness; he has not included this report in his collection. He is thus fully faithful to and observant of the standards and conditions that he had laid down.

While al-Bukhārī’s approach was under discussion, Mawlānā Diya’ al-Ḥasan arrived. He greeted us with salām “peace” – he dislikes it if we students greet him with salām first. For him, the sunnah is that the visitor greets those seated. Since we were sitting in the classroom, he felt it more appropriate that he say salām to us on entering. For the last two or three days, his lecture had been on the chapter on the adhān in the section on the Friday prayer. The relevant ḥadīth is cited by the Imām on Sā‘ib ibn Yazīd’s authority: “In the days of the Prophet, peace be upon him, and the caliphs Abū Bakr and ʿUmar, the first adhān was made when the Imām took the pulpit. By the time Caliph ʿUthmān took over, the population of Madinah had increased considerably. At the place of al-Zawrā’, the third adhān for the Friday prayer was introduced.”

The Mawlānā explained the above ḥadīth in the light of the comments made by ḥadīth and fiqh scholars, which may be summarised in this way: in the days of the Prophet, peace be upon him, a single adhān was made for the Friday sermon. The Qur’ānic command to hasten to the Friday prayer was identified with this adhān. During ʿUthmān’s reign, the first adhān was introduced and since then both adhāns have been in practice. In the above ḥadīth this is called the third adhān, which implies that, prior to ʿUthmān’s day, two adhāns were made. The answer given to this question is that since the iqāmah is also a sort of adhān, one may hold that
there are three *adhāns* for the Friday Prayer. It is supported by another report contained in al-Bukhārī’s collection, where the *adhān* added in the time of ‘Uthmān is called the second *adhān*. It raises the question as to why it was known as the third *adhān*; it should have been called the first *adhān*. The answer generally given to this question is that since it was introduced at a later date, this is how it came to be known as the second *adhān*.

Some students were not satisfied with the above clarification. The discussion had been going on for days. We had come across Mawlānā Shabbāz’s interpretation, which we presented to Mawlānā Diyā’ al-Hasan. According to Mawlānā Shabbāz, two *adhāns* for Friday prayer was the practice during the Prophet’s day. The first one corresponded with the Qur’ānic command. Caliph ‘Uthmān had introduced the third one to meet a pressing need. It was not a permanent feature. The population of Madinah was increasing and hence this *adhān* was made at another locality, namely al-Zawrā’ in Madinah. The Mawlānā substantiated his stance with several arguments, whose summary is as follows:

The relevant Qur’ānic command runs thus: ‘*When the call to prayer on Friday is proclaimed, hasten to the remembrance of God, and leave business*’ (al-Jumu’ah, 62:9). The remembrance of God means both the Friday prayer and sermon. For the majority of scholars, it refers to the sermon alone. If people were to head for the mosque when the *adhān* for the sermon is called, those living on the outskirts of Madinah would have been likely to miss part of the sermon and perhaps also part of the prayer. Hence, the Qur’ānic directive should be interpreted as the *adhān* that was made a little before the time for prayer so that people may get ready for the mosque, enabling them to join the congregation for both sermon and prayer. This is only possible if the command of the Qur’ān is understood as referring to the first *adhān*. Imām Abū Ḥanīfah accordingly interprets the Qur’ānic command in the sense of the first *adhān*.

There is a distinction between the *adhān* and the *iqāmah*. The latter is done to announce the commencement of prayer when the congregation is ready. The former notifies us that it is time for prayer. It urges people to wind up their business and prepare to join
the prayer. The shari'ah has a rationale behind every ruling – how can it prescribe the *adhān* for all other prayers, to alert people that it is time for prayer, and not have an *adhān* for Friday prayer, the most important of the congregational prayers?

Given that the *adhān* alerts people about the time of the prayer, and the *iqāmah* about the commencement of the prayer, what is the reason for having an *adhān* before the Friday sermon? As the sermon is delivered straight after that *adhān*, it cannot be announcing the prayer time. Rather, it tells people to conclude their *sunnah* and *nafl* prayers and turn their attention to the sermon. The adhān just before the sermon serves the same purpose that the *iqāmah* serves for the commencement of the congregational prayer.

The *adhān* for the sermon is called in front of the imām. Its purpose is, as mentioned earlier, to alert people already inside the mosque. What is the relevance of the increase or decrease in the population of Madinah to this *adhān*? The ḥadith that mentions the *adhān* added by Caliph 'Uthmān is clear evidence that he did not introduce a new *adhān* because the *adhān* of the sermon was insufficient. Rather, he had provisionally introduced the second *adhān*, as the first *adhān* was insufficient for the growing population.

The Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī and other collections of ḥadīths name 'Uthmān's additional *adhān* “the third *adhān*,” which is an indication that two *adhāns* were already in use. Some reports name it the second one, because the Friday prayer already had an additional *adhān*, and this was a second addition.

Mawlānā Diyā' al-Ḥasan was not persuaded by this interpretation, although, looking at both sides of the argument, he conceded that it was plausible. It was now time for the next lecture. We moved out of the Dār al-ḥadīth and reached our classroom in the Dār al-‘Ulūm.

The fourth lecture, at 11 am, on *al-Mu'allaqāt*, is to be delivered by Mawlāhā Sayyid Muḥammad Rābi‘ Ḥasanī Nadwī, an accomplished scholar of excellent conduct and a master of

41 *Mu'allaqāt*, lit. 'hung poems', refers to pre-Islamic Arabic verses or verse collections written in gold letters and hung on the walls of the Ka‘bah in Makkah during annual fairs. They consist of seven (in some versions ten) odes, by different poets of the 6th century. They are generally regarded as the finest Arabic odes and present a lively picture of Bedouin life before Islam.
his field. He seems to have a comprehensive command of Arabic language, and is well grounded in the Arabic literary tradition. His competence as a lexicographer is arguably greater than Jawhari's. His knowledge of geography gives the impression of someone who has memorised the whole of *Mu'jam al-buldân*. In addition, he is familiar with the principles of education. Though the foundation of the movement for Islamic literature was not yet laid down, his mind was occupied with it. In the annals of Islamic literature he is bound to have a prominent place. Notwithstanding his high reputation, he displays the utmost simplicity and modesty.

ما شئت قلت فيه قامت مصدر
والفضل يقضي واحسان تشهد

Say about him whatever you like, and you will be counted truthful.
The verdict of virtue and the testimony of beauty support you.

As administrative duties sometimes preoccupy him, he comes a little late to the class. On this occasion we turned, once again, to Ja'far, asking him to conclude his assessment of Josh's *Yadon kibârât*. Ja'far resumed his analysis, stating that Josh suffers from the delusion that poetry is revealed to him. It is a claim similar to Ghâlib's:

ناييكي دیین مرتی رضاگالب
شر最关键 فیاان کرو کرو فن مای

We were not content with this status, O Ghâlib.
Poetry itself desired to become our art.

Josh dismisses contemporary men of letters with contempt, not giving them any status above crows. I pointed out that arrogance and pride are common to many poets. Ghâlib\(^ {42} \) did not acknowledge the literary worth of anyone else. Even some scholars betray this

\(^{42}\) Mirzâ Asadullah Khan "Ghâlib" (1796-1869) is one of the best Urdu poets. He led a revolution in Urdu poetry. According to the critic Al Ahmad Surûr, "Ghâlib gave intellect to our poetry which was till then dominated by the people of heart." Not only Urdu poetry but prose is also indebted to Mirzâ Ghâlib. His letters laid the foundation for a fluent, popular Urdu. Before Ghâlib, letter writing in Urdu was highly ornate. He made his letters very effective vehicles for communication by using the language in the idiom of a speaker. To Urdu ghazals, along with love and beauty, Ghâlib introduced other facets of life, thus greatly extending their canvas.
failing. For example, Mawlānā ʿAbd al-Ḥaq Khayrābādī claimed that in the whole history of Islam in India there had been only two and a half scholars: one, Mullā ʿAbd al-ʿAlī Bahr al-ʿUlūm, the second, his father, and the half, himself.

Jaʿfar turned his attention to Josh’s claim about the Urdu language. From childhood he had had the mistaken conviction that the language was his private domain, and he might use it as he wished. He did not adhere to any norm in the use of words. As he was a lover by birth and a drinker by birth, in the same way he was free by birth not bound by any code in the matter of language and expression.

Āftāb added: “Notwithstanding all his errors, some of his hymns in praise of God and the Prophet, peace be upon him, are excellent.” ʿUmar said that Āftāb, being generous himself, makes allowance for everyone, and cannot fault Josh even in the face of the outrageous sins he committed. Sābir, however, defended Āftāb, saying that his positive approach should be appreciated. The following couplet is true about him:

\[
\text{در خرائبہ چھالندی نور نما ہے نہیں}
\begin{align*}
\text{ویں بھیں کہ پھر لوںے زکریا ہے نہیں}
\end{align*}
\]

In the wine house, I see the light of God and look at this wonder, which light do I see from where?

Take the example of Sartre, a leading star of existentialist philosophy, who said: “I am pushed constantly into the dark cave of blindness. However, my mind, at the end of all this effort and hardship, is focused on the imminent light which is my destiny.” Would Josh be denied that light? Sābir asked Āftāb to recite some of the devotional poems and hymns composed by Josh. Āftāb, complying, recited in

\[\text{At that time, Existentialist philosophy and Sartre were buzzwords at Nadwah. Many writers of our time have been influenced by Sartre. Renowned as a leading philosopher, literary figure and social critic, French writer Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980) was the most prominent representative of Existentialism, a philosophical approach that emphasises the ultimacy of human freedom and individual responsibility. In his later writings, however, Sartre attempted to combine the individualism of his existentialist work with a form of Marxism, which stresses collective aspects of human existence.}\]
his melodious voice a moving poem by Josh, which celebrates the praise of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him.

The poem pays a glowing tribute to the Prophet, peace be upon him, for striking a deadly blow at unbelief, for his denunciation of idolatry and for bringing about a remarkable revolution in Arabia. He abolished polytheism there and demolished the idols that had been worshipped for centuries. He civilised the Arabs and put an end to unbelief. His message tore falsehood to shreds. His truth empowered the poor and conferred dignity upon them.
While Āfṭāb was still reciting, the Mawlānā arrived. His lecture a few days ago was on a *muʿallaqaḥ* by Imruʿ al-Qays, known as ‘the misguided king’. Now he had moved on to another major Arab poet of that period, Ṭarafah ibn ʿAbd, the striking features of his poetry and his status among other poets of the *jāhiliyyah* period. His lectures are typically wide ranging, and provide sufficient depth of background to enable students to understand the subject properly. The Mawlānā began with biographical notes on the man: Ṭarafah ibn ʿAbd ibn Sufyān ibn Mālik al-Bakrī of the tribe of Bakr ibn Waʾil was born in Bahrayn in 543 CE, and Bahrayn was linked to the vast desert region of Najd in central Arabia. A large number of poets hail from this region, which contributed much to the spread of the *ghazal* form in Arabia. Najd is the birthplace of other leading poets of the *jāhiliyyah* period – Imruʿ al-Qays, al-Ḥārith ibn Hīlilzah, Aws ibn Ḥujr, Zuhayr ibn Abi Sulmā and ʿAntara ibn Shaddād. Ṭarafah was the nephew of the distinguished Arab poets al-Mutalammis and al-Muraqqash, and perhaps inherited poetic talent from them. He came from a noble family and was uninhibited in his criticism of his own people and others in his poetry. Little is on record about his biography. Nevertheless, it is certain that he was a centrally important man who took great pride in his social milieu. He maintained a distance from commoners and courted the favour of rulers, writing satires for some of them against others. With his uncle al-Mutalammis he went to the court of the king of Ḥirah, ʿAmr ibn Hind (d. 568/9), and there became companion to the king’s brother. Because he ridiculed the king in some verses, he was sent with a letter to the Persian governor of the southern shores of the Gulf. But Ṭarafah and his uncle managed to escape. Ṭarafah died in 569, not yet thirty. There is much divergence of opinion on the rank held by Ṭarafah among the composers of *Muʿallaqāt*. Some place him next only to Imruʿ al-Qays, but the rank of Imruʿ al-Qays itself is disputed. It is hard to arrive at a consensus on this point. On being asked to rank the poets, Labīd named Imruʿ al-Qays the best, then Tarfah, and then himself.

Since Ṭarafah died young, his poetic corpus is meagre. There are many striking points in his *muʿallaqaḥ*, which will be explained
in their due place. He glorifies she-camels in an unprecedented manner. He is not an expert on the praise of horses. Parables and maxims are interspersed in his poems, which enhance the quality of his work. He is good at satire but poor at panegyric. His use of figurative language, though on a limited scale, is very appealing. Some of his couplets gained wide currency.

ولولا ثلاث هن من عيشة الفتي وجدك لم أحفل مني قام عودي

Were it not for three things which are part of a young man’s life, by your luck I would not give a damn to know the hour of my death.

Among his well-known verses is:

ستبددي لكل الأيام ما كنت جاهلا
ويا نايبك بالأخبار من لم تزود

Soon time will reveal to you what you were ignorant of. Moreover, the news will come to you by one whom you paid nothing.

The Mawlānā took up the opening couplet of his mu‘allaqah:

لحولة أطلال برقة تهمد
تلويح كباقي الوضم في ظاهر اليد

Khawla has ruins in the hillocks of Thahmad, which appear like the remains of a tattoo on the back of the hand.

He explained its key words and allusions. For example: Khawla is the name of a woman belonging to the Banū Kalb tribe; āṭlāl, a plural of ṭalāl, refers to ruins; barqah means a hillock of rocks and clay and Thahmad is a place in Najd. Including Thahmad, there are about a hundred places known for having barqah; talūhu means to appear and to be seen; the same word, in the fourth form of the verb when it comes from bāb if ʿāl, means to shine; washm means a tattoo. Apart from elucidating its diction, the Mawlanā drew our attention also to its grammatical and rhetorical features.
After this linguistic and grammatical explanation, the Mawlānā translated the verse: ‘Khawlah’s ruined and abandoned camp site on the schist slopes of Thahmad mountain is like an old tattoo’s fading glow on the back of the hand.’ Sometimes the ruins of houses are also likened to lines on paper. His explanation of the couplet was extensive. A pointed reference was made to the role and importance of houses, tents and ruins in the Bedouin way of life. Ruins, in particular, evoke nostalgia.

Āftāb asked why the mu‘allaqāt of both Imrū‘ al-Qays and Ṭarafah commence with an account of ruins. Why do they have the same opening? In reply, the Mawlānā said that this was a familiar objection, not only to mu‘allaqāt, but to all the poetry of that time. A poet says

هل غادر الشعراء من سَرَّم
أم هل عرفت الدار بعد تُوهَم

Have the poets forsaken the ruins
or do you know home only after imagining it?

Zuhayr ibn Abī Sulma says:

ما أرآنا تقول إلا معارا
أو معاذا من لنظنا مكرورا

Time and again in our speaking we see only borrowing
and repetition in our words.

It is not right, however, to hold that all the poetry of the jāhili period is marked by sameness and repetition. For example, ‘Amr ibn Kulthūm’s mu‘allaqah opens on a different note, namely a description of wine. Even those poets who open with the mention of ruins and abandoned camps treat the subject from a variety of angles. Imrū‘ al-Qays delves deeply into it while Ṭarafah only alludes to it in passing. The latter focusses more on the Bedouin way of life. Poetical works of a given period have much in common, but express it through different styles. Even the poetry of progressive poets in our times has a narrow worldview. These poets differ only in their details, priorities and style.
Mawlānā Rābi‘s lecture concluded at 11:45 am. The next session of forty-five minutes is on dissertation writing.44 I now have to go to the faculty of Shari‘ah and the Shibli library, then to the office of al-Rā‘id to discuss the translation of an article into Arabic.

At the Shari‘ah faculty I met Tāriq, who is in charge of the faculty library. He is also a fiqh scholar and regularly writes the fiqh column with the title ‘suwāl-o jawāb’ (question and answer) in Ta‘mīr-i Hayāt. He is a close friend, gifted with a jovial personality. I also met there Mawlānā Salmān and discussed with him some reference work and source books for the essay competition organised by the Shari‘ah faculty on the theme “How the Companions received hadith from the Messenger of God, peace be upon him”. Mawlānā Salmān had recently graduated from Imām Muḥammad ibn Sa‘ūd Islamic University. His induction had enlivened the academic activities at the faculty; he set up an independent faculty library and organised academic contests for students, prompting them to pursue research.

As I passed by the staff room, I met Mawlānā Nā‘ir and Mawlānā ‘Arif, who were talking to each other. The former is a leading scholar, famed for his command of ḥadith and fiqh. He is uniquely insightful on the principles and norms of fiqh. His lectures inspire students to pursue their studies more deeply. He is an excellent teacher when it comes to comparing Islamic law with man-made law. He is also thoroughly conversant with Usūl al-sarakhshī, Kashīf al-bazdawī, al-Ghazālī’s Mustasfā and Shawkānī’s Irshād al-fuhūl. Mawlānā ‘Arif teaches tafsīr. His elucidation of monotheism is remarkable, while his association with Mawlānā Manzūr Nu‘mānī had alerted him fully to the dangers posed by those sects that prefer innovation in the religion over the sunnah. After greeting these teachers, I reached the library.

Inside the library I found many teachers and students either engaged in study or searching for relevant books. The librarian,

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44 As already stated, Nadwah students have to submit a dissertation in the final year of fiādah on a topic of their special study. Since many books must be consulted before writing it, a period in the daily timetable is allocated to library time. Generally, students visit the Shibli Library for this purpose. My dissertation topic was Imām al-Bukhārī and tafsīr.
Mawłānā Murtadā shared with me the good news that Saʿīd had sent to Nadwah library Ḥilyat al-awliyāʾ and al-Dībāj al-mudhahhab. This pleased me greatly, for I needed these works. On coming back from the library I met Mawłānā Hārūn Nadwī, who is in charge of the Manuscripts section. He is a very urbane, friendly and agreeable person, willing to give researchers every possible assistance.

I saw Mawłānā Sayyid ʿAbdullāh Ḥasanī at the al-Raʿīd office. He comes from an illustrious family and stands out above others for his nobility, generosity, devotion to Islam and commitment to the cause of promoting the Sunnah. He is very attached to taṣawwuf yet adheres to Shariʿah norms in this pursuit. His interest does not therefore amount to transgression. His taṣawwuf is under the command of his knowledge and his knowledge is subservient to his taṣawwuf. He follows the famous saying:

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and in a scholarly and thoughtful manner, Sayyid Quṭb Shahīd’s marvellous work, *al-Taṣwīr al-fānī fi al-Qur’ān*. Those present were listening to him in rapt attention. Ishāq is my classmate, and a descendant of an illustrious family. He is a sober person of refined taste. I had tea and listened to his comments. As it was time for the next lecture, Ishāq could not conclude his commentary. On the way to the classroom I said to Ishāq: “At the behest of Mawlānā Wāḍīh I have read Sayyid Quṭb’s *al-Taṣwīr al-fānī* and *Mashāhīd al-qiyāmah*. Mawlānā Wāḍīh is deeply impressed by Sayyid Quṭb’s treatment of his subject matter. I have listened to your review of Quṭb’s work, which deals with features of his style and his flair for depicting the Qur’ānic presentation of things. Few can match you in offering such an effective summary of Quṭb’s work, yet I doubt whether you have read Quṭb’s book in full.” To this Ishāq replied: “Is there a single reviewer who reads the whole book for his review? It is standard practice to skim and scan. I am not to be criticised for following the standard practice.” I was nonetheless amazed at how Ishāq managed to review the book so well, even though he had not read it all.

The next lecture, at 12:30 pm, is on the history of Islamic sciences by Mawlānā Abū al-‘Irfān Nadwī, a disciple of the leading Islamic historian of India, Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī. Mawlānā Abū al-‘Irfān is the Urdu translator of a significant work on history, Mawlānā Sayyid ‘Abd al-Hayy Ḥasanī’s *al-Thaqāfah al-islāmiyyah fi al-Hind*. Mawlānā Abū al-‘Irfān is a specialist in philosophy, history and metaphysics. He knows numerous Urdu, Arabic and Persian couplets by heart and uses them most aptly. He has an acute grasp of both traditional and rational disciplines and is a competent teacher and scholar, remarkable for his observation and wide range of study. When he walks one can see his izārbund (belt) hanging down. The intention is not to show off his izārbund; it is just that he is not very particular about his dress.

His lectures have so far been on the history of grammar, hadith and *fiqh* and their different phases. His lectures on *tafsīr*, logic and philosophy, especially their historical development, are due later. Since the previous week he has been lecturing on the history of
tafsir and Qur'anic studies. His discussion embraces tafsir works that are reflective of independent thinking. Today, he focused on the status of al-Zamakhshari47 in the field of tafsir. According to the Mawlana, al-Zamakhshari had a multi-faceted personality in that he was a competent lexicographer, grammarian, rhetorician and was well-grounded in literary sensibility and the itizali school of theology. All these aspects of his genius are reflected in his Qur'an commentary. Like other proponents of his school, he was not a competent scholar of hadith, though he had secured an ijazah in hadith from some leading authorities like Nasr ibn al-Ba'tir. Some latter-day scholars like Häfiz Abü Tahir al-Silaffi and Zaynab bint al-Shi'ra have cited hadith on his authority. Yet disregarding hadith is a major defect in his work. He is also guilty of citing some weak or even fabricated reports in his account of the excellence of certain Qur'anic surahs.

Itizal is another major flaw in his work. His tafsir is marred by his constant defence of the opinions of Ahl al-`adl wa al-tawhid (i.e. Mu'tazilites) and his strong attacks on the orthodox Muslim viewpoint. Imam Ibn Taymiyyah points to this flaw and cautions readers against it, and highlights this weakness in his work.

Nonetheless, the outstanding feature of al-Zamakhshari's tafsir al-Kashshaf is its account of the literary and idiomatic features of Qur'anic language. He excels others in bringing out the inimitability of the word of God and other elements of the Qur'an. That is why, notwithstanding his confession of adherence to the Mu'tazili doctrine, his work has gained currency among mainstream Muslims.

Radi al-Islam raised the question whether al-Baydawi's Tafsir does not contain the same qualities. Al-Baydawi's work has the additional merit of refuting itizal and proving the Ash'ari viewpoint. The Mawlana answered that, following the publication of al-Zamakhshari's highly popular al-Kashshaf, the 'ulama' had been planning a work to replace it. Al-Baydawi's work is such an attempt,

47 Abu-al-Qasim Jarullah Mahmud ibn `Umar al-Zamakhshari (d. 1143) was a Mu'tazilite theologian, grammarian and man of letters. He is best known for his commentary on the Qur'an.
yet it is markedly different from al-Kashshāf. The latter excels in its masterly coverage of the literary and idiomatic aspects of the Qur’ān and its affecting presentation. These qualities are lacking in al-Bayḍāwī, whose command of Arabic is not perfect. His obsession with philosophy has rendered his work less charming. He is, no doubt, a representative of Muslim orthodoxy, and has advantage over al-Zamakhshārī, but his work has never equalled al-Kashshāf in popularity.

The Mawlānā then presented a survey of the impact of al-Kashshāf at various stages of Islamic history and in different parts of the Muslim world. Ibn Taymiyyah’s criticism of al-Zamakhshārī is very strong, yet he too appears to fall under the latter’s influence in his writings on the Qur’ān. In the Indian subcontinent al-Kashshāf has enjoyed great popularity. Shaykh Nāẓīm al-Dīn Awdhī had read it, and it was prescribed for study in his seminary. Shaykh al-Islām Farīd al-Dīn Awdhī used to teach it. Among his students were Shaykh Naṣīr al-Dīn Chirāgh-i Dīhli and Mawlānā Shams al-Dīn Awdhī. On studying Qāḍī Shihāb al-Dīn Daulatābādī’s al-Baḥr al-mawwāj, ʿAllāmah Mahāʾimī’s tafsīr and Qāḍī ʿĪsāʾullāh Pānīpātī’s al-Tafsīr al-mazhari, its influence on these comes to light. The Mawlānā recited al-Zamakhshārī’s couplet in which he affirms his erudition.

ومذ أفلح الجهال أيقنت أنني
أنا الميم والآيام أفلح أعلم

Since ignorant people have gained success in this world,
I am certain that I am the mīm and people are aflah and a’lam.

In the first stanza the word aflaha means “gained success”. The Mawlānā explained that the word aflahu in the second stanza means having a fissure in the upper lip, whereas a’lam refers to having a fissure in the lower lip. Such a person is unable to pronounce mīm. These two words can also mean ‘more successful’ and ‘more knowledgeable’, though not in this context.

At 1.15 pm the lecture ended and the adhān for zuhr prayer was called. The congregation was at 1.30 pm. We hurried to our hostel,
and after doing *wudu* went to the mosque. As usual, Mawlānā Sa'īd al-Rahmān led the prayer.

We normally get bread and lentils at lunch, which we enjoy, as we are hungry. Today, ʿAbd al-Ḥayy has invited us to lunch. I arrived in the company of Āfṭāb at ʿAbd al-Ḥayy’s room, and we found other friends – Ṭāriq, Raḍī al-Īslām and ʿAbd al-Mubīn Gondawī – already there. ʿAbd al-Mubīn told us that he was Mawlānā Salmān Ḥusaynī’s classmate in *ḥifz* class. He was admitted to the *ʿalimiyyah* course last year. He has been repeating the course in order to improve himself.

There was a dish of *kofte* for lunch; ʿAbd al-Ḥayy had prepared plenty of it. They were delicious and large in size. We enjoyed both the food and the witty exchanges between ʿAbd al-Ḥayy and ʿAbd al-Mubīn. ʿAbd al-Mubīn told us that in the half-yearly examination he got sixty marks out of a hundred in the *tafsīr* paper. ʿAbd al-Ḥayy interrupted, saying: “Do not tell us the total marks of all three exams (quarterly, half yearly and yearly exams) combined.” ʿAbd al-Mubīn related that while he was studying in a madrasah in Mau, while explaining the issue of raising hands during prayer, as is recorded by al-Bukhārī, the teacher forcefully dismissed the Ḥanāfī stance on the issue, saying that seventy Companions had narrated it. At that point, the rest of the class looked at him, and he simply asked what the total number of Companions was.

Raḍī al-Īslām told us that he was currently engaged in refuting Mawlānā Farāhī’s interpretation of Sūrat al-Fīl. He has collected sufficient material to write on this subject. ʿAbd al-Ḥayy was surprised that, despite his erudition and piety, Mawlānā Farāhī had deviated from orthodoxy on this issue. Ṭāriq pointed out that Mawlānā Farāhī was, after all, a human being, liable to error. While trying to exonerate the Mawlānā, Āfṭāb said that it was a complex issue. His detractors had exploited it in order to discredit him. The Mawlānā was thoroughly grounded in the Arabic poetry of the *jahiliyyah* period, and Arab poets took great pride in this incident of the defeat of Abraham and his army. They held that birds had gathered to feast on the human corpses. Raḍī al-Īslām objected to this, saying that on the one hand, the Mawlānā is very cautious in his
use of ḥadīths, and yet he neglects the authentic hadīths reporting this incident. On the other hand, he feels no qualms in employing Arab poetry of the jāhilīyyah period, though its authenticity is more doubtful than that of even weak ḥadīths. There are reports that some couplets were fabricated at a later date by Ḥammād al-Rāwiyyah and Khalf al-Āḥmar. The Arabs’ sense of pride should be properly understood. The Arab poets’ assertion of inflicting defeat upon Abrahah does not necessarily signify their doing so in a war. In boasting of their victory they allude to divine help.

While this discussion was going on, ‘Abd al-Mubīn took to raising objections against Ṭāriq’s fatwā writing. During his visit to Aurangabad someone had spoken highly of Ṭāriq’s regular column in Ta’mīr-i Ḥayāt in which he gives fatwās, and suggested that these fatwās be published in a book form. He, however, pointed out that these fatwās already existed in books. ‘Abd al-Ḥayy said to Ṭāriq: “Your style and idiom in writing fatwās is not in accordance with the stance of Nadwah. Some of the terms and expressions you use would hurt Shiblī, Mawlānā Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān Sherwānī and other literary figures among the founders of Nadwah. Look at scholars of Egypt like Muftī Muḥammad ‘Abduh, Rashīd Riḍā and Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī, how they have developed a way of writing fatwās using simple language.” I too suggested that Ṭāriq would benefit from them, not only in the language of fatwā writing, but also in the methodology of the exercise. In the past, it was customary to use as few words in a fatwā as possible. But this is not the right way. Rather, arguments drawn from the Qur’ān, sunnah and common sense should be presented in order to convince those seeking a ruling, as it will increase their knowledge. Look at the Qur’ān: how many considerations it covers when answering the questions! Ḥadīth literature abounds in such instances. A curt reply is of little use. Similarly, the relevant hadīth should be quoted in full, specifying the chapter and section of the source book. If it is not in a standard collection like Muwattā or the sound books of Imāms al-Bukhārī and Muslim, then the authority on which it is cited should be stated, along with some comment on the authenticity of the hadīth.

It was around 2.30 pm when we finished our lunch. Since we
had to have our afternoon siesta, we dispersed and returned to the hostel.

I woke up at 4.30 pm, had a bath and went along with Āftāb to the mosque for the ʿasr prayer at 5 pm. I told Āftāb not to wait for me after prayer, as I had to go to the Rāʿid and Islāḥ libraries, and that I would join them afterwards for some sport. Mawlānā Saʿīd al-Raḥmān, as usual, led the prayer. After the ʿasr prayer there was a five- to ten-minute-long reading from a book, usually Mawlānā Ṣadr Yār Jang Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān Khān Sherwānī’s Ulmā-i salaf, as it infuses in the audience a quest for knowledge, commitment to scholarship, and a desire to stand in prayer at night. Occasionally Shaykh Sharaf al-Dīn Manerī’s Maktūbāt is also read out. Today, Mawlānā Ābū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī Nadwī’s Tazkīyah wa-iḥsān was being studied. Khālid read aloud the following extract from it:

“In normal circumstances, there are leaders to steer the community and military generals to conduct wars. An extraordinary personality is not needed in ordinary conditions. In a crisis, however, only those who are extremely devoted to God and have firm conviction and spiritual strength can lead. In Muslim history there were dark moments when a change for the better seemed remote. However, an illustrious personality would appear on the scene who, by dint of his fervour, transformed the situation. It was a scene of revival and resurgence. At one time the Mongols dealt a severe blow to the Muslim world. The Muslim empires of the ʿAbbāsid and Khwārizm Shāhs were swept away. As a result there was despair everywhere. The Mongols seemed invincible. A proverb gained popularity at the time: a report of a Mongol defeat should never be trusted. Yet there were some devout persons of the day who went ahead with their mission. Finally the Mongols embraced Islam and served as defenders of the Islamic faith.

“During Akbar’s reign, Muslim India was steeped in error and atheism. This is because Akbar, one of the most powerful emperors of his age with immense resources at his disposal, sought to distort Islam, stripping it of all its distinctive features. He was assisted in his wretched designs by the most intelligent people of the day. His empire showed no apparent sign of decay and decline. Nor was any
military coup expected. On the face of it, there was no prospect of any change for the better. In such difficult times an ascetic with no resources took up the mission of defending Islam. By dint of his fervour, devotion, trust in God, resolve and spiritual strength alone, he brought about an internal revolution in the whole empire so that Akbar’s successors turned all the more to pristine Islam. Eventually Muḥyī al-Dīn Awrangzeb took over as the Mughal ruler. The mind behind this transformation was that of the master, Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindī, known famously by his title, ‘the reviver of the second Islamic millennium’.

“In the nineteenth century, when the ‘European Mongols’ or ‘Crusaders’ invaded the Muslim world, only the spiritual masters emerged to take on this new challenge. Their excellent character, purified souls, adherence to the Prophet’s way, aversion to unbelief, rejection of worldliness and intense desire for martyrdom inspired Muslims to join their mission. In Algeria Amīr ʿAbd al-Qādir48 rose in revolt against the French colonialists and from 1832 to 1847 he made life difficult for the French rulers.”

After the ‘asr prayer students spend their time in games and sports. Some go to town for shopping or other needs. Many go to the canteen for a cup of tea and to entertain themselves with light, friendly conversation. Football, volleyball, cricket and badminton are popular on the campus. I usually play badminton. I am a member of the Shiblī badminton club, of which Ḥāfīẓ ʿAtūq Ahmad Bastawī is president. Among other members of this club are Dr. Muḥammad Ashraf Nadwī, Shabbīr Ahmad Nadwī, Muḥammad Ḥasan Nadwī, Niyyāz Ahmad Aʿzamī and Dr Maqbul Ahmad Nadwī Bastawī. After ‘asr prayer the ʿIslāh and al-Nādī al-ʿArabī libraries of are open for an hour. I usually spend some time at both libraries after the ‘asr prayer to browse Arabic and Urdu newspapers and magazines, before playing badminton for 30-45 minutes.

After the prayer I came out from the northern gate of the mosque and passed by Nadwah guest-house where Mawlānā Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī Nadwī stays. He hardly needs any introduction. His excellence

48 Amir ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jazā’iri (d. 1883) was an Algerian Islamic scholar, Sufi and political and military leader who led a struggle against the French invaders.
is acclaimed all over the world. After 'aṣr he holds a public session in front of the guest-house. Prominent local people and some teachers and students of Nadwah join this blessed gathering. My interest in playing badminton is so strong that I join this gathering only occasionally.

While I was on my way to al-Nādī Library, I spotted my friend Wazīr Ahmad Aʿẓamī. He is a man of letters, with a deep commitment to fine arts. He is gifted with a critical, aesthetic sense that is rare among literary critics, and is familiar with classical and modern literary masterpieces of both prose and poetry. Thanks to my association with him I have developed some aesthetic sensibility. He has introduced me to literary critics such as Mahdi Ifādī, Niyāz Fatehpūrī and Mājnūn Gorakhpuūrī. Had he focused on literary studies he would have achieved a prominent position in the field of Urdu literature and literary criticism in the subcontinent. His conversation is of immense, intoxicating appeal. One of his characteristics is to laugh unrestrainedly when awake and while sleeping, at himself and at others - in short, to laugh at everything and then continue laughing.

He gave me the good news that Mawlānā Zāhid would be reciting poems outside the canteen today. He is in this mood once or twice a month. Mawlānā Zāhid is a lively, witty conversationalist, of a most cheerful disposition, with fine taste and decent manners. His simplicity and friendliness endear him to everyone, and his mode of reciting poetry is uniquely charming. Everyone enjoys his company.

بہت گلگت ہے بہت صحت مین انا کی
ود اپنی ذات میں ایک ایش تن بی

One enjoys his company a lot; he is an institution in himself.

On getting this news I changed my plans. Among Mawlānā Zāhid’s close circle are Wazīr, Jaʿfar Masʿūd Ḥasanī, Ishaq Ḥusaynī, Suhayl Aʿẓamī, ʿAbd al-Bārī Aʿẓamī and myself. ʿAbd al-Bārī is junior to us at Nadwah. He is very intelligent and widely read, and in knowledge of grammar equal to Ibrāhīm. His other major
interest is hunting. Every Friday he, Suhayl and I go hunting. ʿAbd al-Bāri is the best shot among us. Suhayl is the son of Mustāfī and one of our close friends; he accompanies us on our outings. He is equal to Āftāb in serving his family, a person of utmost simplicity and innocence. Jaʿfar calls him ‘God’s cow’, an expression used in Urdu for someone who is very simple and of a clean heart. Suhayl would not have been out of place had he been born in the early centuries of Islam.

As we assembled, Mawlānā Zāhid remembered some business he had to do and left, saying that he would return in fifteen minutes. We waited for his return, sitting in the open outside the canteen. We noticed a growing crowd there. We were lucky to have secured seats because we had arrived early. We learned that a football match between Nadwīs and non-Nadwīs was about to begin. The latter team comprised those students who have not yet graduated from Nadwah – it is the better by far and always wins. The Nadwī team has never recorded a victory over it. We placed our seats at an angle so as to be able both to watch the match and to listen to Mawlānā Zāhid’s poetry recitation. It is a delightful evening and we are fortunate to enjoy a literary evening and a football match at the same time. It would be an injustice to ourselves if we didn’t attend literary programmes during our stay in Lucknow. There is still a strong literary atmosphere in Lucknow. The Urdu language may be heard here in all its purity and eloquence. Many poets have paid glowing tributes to the literary – among other – virtues of Lucknow.

اے حسن تیرا گیسی تے دو حضرتیں شامل
کیا ہے جہاں اپنے نام ہی کا کام
تین تو یہ سلسلہ کی اور ہے من
سے وہاں ہے جہاں یہ بے دم تاہم
اے میں اس اعلی اور قبائل کے پالنے
جان بابا تاہم ہے دکان کے
باہم ہے جہاں گرد تیری کہیں

63
Even at this decline, Lucknow has such honour and status
Its threshold is a place of prostration for people of the heart.
I should repent if I wished for *manna* and *salwā*
for the water and bread of Lucknow are better.
Today, in spite of this bloody turnaround in its fortune
Lucknow remains the hub of the market of civilisation.
O earth and sky of Lucknow, you are like the sun
That all planets and stars go round.
Lucknow has carried the laurel for human speech.
It so excels all in accomplishment. The dust of its caravans
Exceeds the wealth of other caravans. The imagination
Of its ascetics outruns the dreams of all inebriates elsewhere

Another poet went even further:

*Paradise is not less than your streets in splendour;
Same design, but not so populous*
Yet another poet says:

I heard that the place where Ridwan got his idea
Is in fact the land of Lucknow.

As already stated, Wazîr has a keen interest in current literary criticism. Under his influence his friends too have studied the writings of Urdu critics such as Niyâz Fatehpûri, Majnûn Gorakhpûri, Mahdî Ifâdî, Kalim al-Dîn Ahmad, Rashîd Ahmad Siddîqi and Al Ahmad Surîr. Wazîr has been studying Nikât-i majnûn. While waiting for Mawlânâ Zâhid’s return, Wazîr took this opportunity to bring out Majnûn’s critical acumen. To illustrate his point he quoted two couplets from Mîr Hasan’s Sihr al-bayân:

In these couplets, while portraying the beauty of the garden the poet speaks of the greenery associated with rice plants and the splendour of the yellow mustard plants.

Wazîr pointedly asked my opinion of this imagery. In reply I repeated the objection levelled against it by Mawlânâ Hâlî in his critical work Muqaddimah shi'ir wa-shâ'iri. One of the norms is that a poet should not state anything that is factually incorrect. Reading the above couplet one gets the impression that these two

49 The guardian of Paradise.
50 Mawlânâ Altâf Husayn Hâlî (1837–1914), an Urdu poet and the last pupil of Ghâlib. He was also one of the most well-regarded biographers of Ghâlib, and a commentator on his poetry.
kinds of plant, rice and mustard, could be observed together. This is incorrect, as these two blossom in two different seasons, rice in autumn and mustard in spring.

Wazīr asserted that, following in Ḥālī's footsteps, all other critics have found the same fault with that couplet. Their blind conformity is the same as one notes in the case of juristic schools. Majnūn, an intelligent critic, is the first to point out that Mīr Ḥasan has alluded to the two plants figuratively in order to bring home the effect of light and shadow in the garden. He rectifies the serious mistake committed by critics in grasping this self-evident point. Far from criticising the poet for being untrue in a literal sense, they should acclaim his dextrous use of metaphors.

We were impressed by Majnūn’s perceptive explanation of that couplet. We realised, in the light of his explanation, how critics— including Mawlānā Ḥālī—had erred.

Meanwhile, the football match had begun and Mawlānā Zahid arrived. The Mawlānā knows long narrative poems by Josh, the ghazals of Majāz,51 and Kalim ‘Ājīz’s poems by heart. Whenever ‘Ājīz visited Nadwah, the Mawlānā recited his poems in his presence. He entertains us with recitation of these poems in our literary gatherings. He has a captivating style of recitation, which adds to the impact of the poem being read. When he recites Josh’s long poems, it seems as if the words themselves are speaking.

We had tea and snacks and requested him to read out a poem. He commenced with Josh’s Pand nāmah, which is essentially Josh’s advice to Majāz to check his drunkenness, warning him against its dire consequences. Like his other poems, this poem of Josh is demonstrative of his command over diction and his forceful eloquence. Listeners are swayed by his dextrous use of language and grand style.

51 Majāz Radaulawi (d. 1955) was one of the founders of the Progressive Writers’ Movement. He believed in revolution, but was by temperament a romantic. He never projected revolution onto his poems but sang sweet songs of revolution that matched his personality. He was a poet of love and revolution.
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اسماء بی‌ANI درون
اس کی ایجا کیمیا قائم تجویز
اس پہلوار مبینا میخان منال
اس کی کاندالار شاعران میخان
فیصل کی سخالات سے سخت
اس میرے سید امید کے دل
اس میلے ایک مصیب دم و خال
اس شروع بیان دیجی خیال
اس شیائ فریب و زمرو لواز
شاعر مت و دند شاد پافر
تاؤت عشرو شلپ شب ہے تو
صح فردا کا آقابہ ہے تو
سحر کو آن بول آن کھالنتے
چھپ ہے تو خورا بھی پاہہ
خور کو فریق شراب ثاب نہ کر
وکھی اپنے کو پیلن ضرب نہ کر
شاعری کو ترکی ضرورت ہے
ودور فردا کی تو امات ہے
صرف تیری خلائی کو اے جال
بن کے آنے دو ناک دان
اک شبہ، تو ناک تو کہان
دکھی کی کہدی جمال پان ہے تو
نک ہی بھی بحس. اسنوں جوتا
ہیں اپنے ہی ناٹوان جوتا
The poem opens with a tribute to Majāz's poetic genius and his immense potential; he is gifted with a remarkable aesthetic sensibility. However, he appears to be addicted to alcohol. He should pay heed to the poet's advice, without taking offence. He should not destroy his body and soul with excessive drinking, for everyone looks forward to the blossoming of his poetic talent. Accepting this advice is in his own interest, and he should awaken to the importance of sound health and knowledge. Weakness brings reproach onto one; drunkenness is a self-destructive course.

Mawlānā Zāhid's recitation was interrupted by the noise on the football field. We learnt that the non-Nadwi team had scored a goal against the Nadwi team. ʻAbd al-Bārī, being allied with the former, celebrated it and teased us. As the noise subsided, the Mawlānā resumed his recitation of Josh's poem.
He advises Majāz to be careful in drinking or else he will suffer greatly. A drunkard leads a horrible life, which he must avoid. This is followed by an account of the improprieties committed by drunkards. Josh is to be complimented for his graphic portrayal, using both ordinary and archaic diction. We were also struck by the Mawlāna's sharp memory as he fluently read out one couplet after another. Furthermore, he modulated his tone, in keeping with the tenor of each couplet.
اید کہ ہے جہاں چھوٹی چھوٹی ہے
کیا ایک ہے کہ ہم بنائے جاتے ہیں
بیری گرد ہیں ہر ہر کے پہچان آئین
ہوئی ہے وہ باہت بتی 
علیہ کی موت ہم کی تینی
اہم لئے ہے سنی
اے گما ثوب رہے کا طوفان
ہجرت، عفریت، دیو میں، شیطان
ارت گزدہ پہیری جہیری چاکر
لہ بھی لہ بھی کاف ہیم
ہوئی اناہ، انبیا اناہ
ظفر ہم کے ہر اس کے
فمن، نشین، مسکر اپنا
شوار، بہار، بیس، بہار
ہے ہے
اے سیلہ، ہا سیلہ، ہا سیلہ
سی مسماج، شاہی، تیسی، کھبر
سرب، سلاب، سشن، سرر
ہل ہیتی ہی کہ پتھر کھیلن چھپنیار
خیت ہی پتھر کا کون چھپنیار
لہوگی، لہوگی، لہوگی
ہول تیجان، بیگ، بیگ
انہا پانی کا ہو کا کئی
ہوگی پانی کا ہو کے کہندی
یہی جیل، جیل
ہے ہے ہے
Josh effectively draws a picture of how drunkards misbehave. Their misconduct in public only brings disgrace upon them. They create public disorder and are detested by everyone. Even if Majāz drinks, he should regulate his drinking.

The recitation was once again interrupted by the din on the field. We were pleased to note that the Nadwi team had scored an equaliser - it gave us some hope of victory. The Mawlānā too, was delighted with the good performance of the Nadwi team. He resumed his recitation.
Meanwhile, the non-Nadwi team scored another goal. Now we feared that the Nadwi team would be defeated. Mr Zahir continued his recitation:

In this section of his poem Josh reiterates his assertion that ‘drinking should be only in a moderate measure’. Josh, unfortunately here, with this worldly wisdom, contradicts the teachings of Islam which by no means permit even moderate drinking. He was the product of an age in which, unhappily, poets and others drank a great deal. He continues that Majaz should act on his advice and lead a normal, healthy life and follow the precept ‘early to bed and early to rise’.

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He should go for morning walks and enjoy the beauty of nature. He addresses Majāz as his son, his brother and his confidant. The advice concludes on a sincere note, urging Majāz to engage in something useful, in serving humanity, which will bring glory to him and his country and bless him with a long, happy life.

Even after the Mawlānā had finished reciting this long poem there was no sign of boredom or exhaustion on his face. As he looked fresh, Ja’far requested him to recite some ghazals of Kāfīm Ājiz. He obliged us and recited the opening couplet.

\[ \text{ān tāzā sān aśūdān sē tē bālā bālā bālā bālā} \]
\[ \text{roz aik khawalī hām sē khalasa khalasa hām} \]

Ābd al-Bārī, however, interrupted, objecting to the poet’s choice of unusual diction. Ja’far replied that that was the poet’s speciality. So doing, Ājiz emulates the great Urdu poet, Mīr Taqi Mīr.\(^{52}\) The Mawlānā then resumed his recitation and read out the whole ghazal:

52 Mīr Taqi Mīr (1723-1810) is, perhaps, the biggest name in Urdu poetry; every poet, including Ghālib, has acknowledged Mīr’s greatness. From his time to the present Mīr’s verses have had the same effect on readers because Mīr articulated emotions that a human heart experiences in life. Many of his couplets have become part of the language that we use every day, and some of them have become idioms. The most important aspect of Mīr’s poetry is that unlike other poets (including poets of other languages) all of his writing is of a consistently high quality.
It is indeed exquisite and imbued with layers of meaning. By the time it is over, three goals had been scored against the Nadwi team. Since the match was still on, Ishāq requested Mawlānā Zāhid to recite Kalīm ‘Ājiz’s poem, which he had written spontaneously and is addressed to the then Indian Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi.

'Abd al-Bārī, once again, took strong exception to the poet’s use of unusual diction. It was defended with reference to the precedent set by Mīr. 'Abd al-Bārī was censured for his inability to appreciate poetry and was asked to keep quiet. Mawlānā said that it is of the presence of people like 'Abd al-Bārī in the poetic assemblies that Mirzā Šā‘īb complains:
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Şa‘īb, two things wreck the worth of our poetry:
the applause of the ignorant, and the silence of the connoisseur.

Ja‘far requested that some allowance be made for ‘Abd al-Bārī in
view of his young age.

وعذر من لم يبلغ العشرينا
يقبل عند الناس أجمعينا

The excuse of one who has not reached his twentieth year
is accepted by all people.

The Mawlānā is a good-hearted person; he was placated and
read out another ghazal.
It is my blood and toil that you rest upon
Then you address me like an arrogant wealthy one.
You commit one atrocity by day and another by night.
Your friendship has proved worse than the worst enemies.
We are squatters on the ground, you address us from the roof-ridge:
Come nearer to us, why talk to us from so far away?
Whatever we have got, it came from you
So how can you say we ignore you?
At times you cannot spare us even a sideways glance
Till the time you are in need, then you are so polite.

When you kill it is no murder but a miracle:
No stain upon your dagger, no tell-tale sign upon your clothes

But you know me: I am ‘Ăjīz, the mad one who says
What he says. Why waste your time talking to me?

Once the recitation was over, Wazîr made his observation about
‘Ăjīz’s poetry, saying that he had successfully emulated Mîr in style,
mode and other features. It was time for the maghrib prayer and
the match was also over. The Nadwī team had only scored one goal
while the opponents had achieved three. We felt ashamed at the
defeat. Suhayl was upset. Mawlânâ Zâhid said, “Be comforted that
the margin of defeat was not so great; the students’ team could have
inflicted a more humiliating defeat on you. Moreover, the students
let the Nadwī team score at least one goal – otherwise they would
have faced a still more humiliating defeat.” He is a committed
Nadwī and feels strongly about the defeat. His manner resembled
what the poet of Hamâsah says:

لوكت من مازين لم تستحي إيلي
بنو الليثة من ذهل بن شبيبنا

Had I been from the tribe of Mâzîn, then the clan of Lâqitah from
Dhuhl ibn Shaybân would not have taken away my camels.

53 A play on the poet’s well-known pseudonym; ‘Ăjīz’ means ‘helpless’, here with
indignation.
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While the Mawlānā was commenting on our team, the adhān for the maghrīb prayer was called. We went to the mosque and prayed behind Mawlānā Sa‘īd al-Rahmān.

Today, after the maghrīb prayer, at the Sulaymāniyyah hall there is a seminar by Mawlānā ‘Abdullāh ‘Abbās Nadwī and Mawlānā Abū al-Irflān Nadwī on the issue of education and upbringing. Both of them are well-versed in classical and modern methods of education and theories on upbringing. It is an important topic to be tackled by two leading educationists. However, the time after maghrīb is very precious to me because I have allocated it for private study, particularly of classical texts. That is why I declined Āftāb’s offer to attend the seminar. I asked him for a review of the seminar over dinner.

On my way to the hostel I meet Šābir, who stays in the same hostel, on the ground floor. He tells me that he is still not satisfied, even after the discussion at noon about Imām al-Bukhārī’s conditions and methodology. I, however, tell him that despite the importance of this topic I cannot discuss it now. It is time for my private study and for the same reason I did not attend the seminar. I tell him we can have a thorough discussion later, especially when Āftāb and other friends will be present.

Šābir observed that the Imām’s expertise is enviable, for he has recorded many reports by Abū al-Yamān on Shu‘ayb’s authority. However, he excludes the report of Abū al-Yamān, which is slightly flawed, from his collection. I drew his attention to a more telling example of the Imām’s assiduity. He has cited reports from Nu‘aym ibn Ḥammād who is extolled by al-Dhahabī as an imām, ‘allāmah and ḥāfiz. Al-Dhahabī speaks highly of Nu‘aym’s extensive writings and his devotion to the Sunnah. Yet hadīth scholars have called his retentive power into question. Imām Muslim has not drawn upon him in his collection. Only one hadīth on his authority features in the introduction to his book.

Imām al-Bukhārī has, nonetheless, recorded several reports on his authority in the Sahīh and Ta‘līqāt. Look at Imām al-Bukhārī’s greatness: he has not included in his Sahīh any report of Nu‘aym that is flawed in any way or criticised by any expert of hadīth.
For example, Nu‘aym’s report that he narrated from Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynāh, from Abī al-Zīnād, from al-Aʿrāj, from Abū Hurayrah, which reads as follows: “You belong to an era in which, if you disregard even one-tenth of your religion, you will meet with destruction. However, there will be a time when, if my community acts on only one-tenth of religion, they will attain deliverance.” Imām al-Tirmidhī54 includes it in the last part of Kitāb al-fitan. However, it is not recorded by any of the other students of Sufyān. In fact, they contend that this report does not figure in any of his works. On noting this criticism, Nuʿaym states in his defence that during his company with Sufyān, some students committed a mistake, which was severely censured by Ibn ʿUyaynāh, who then related that particular ḥadīth. This clarifies the matter. Al-Dhahabī affirms that Nuʿaym had heard these words from Ibn ʿUyaynāh. What happened is that Ibn ʿUyaynāh mentioned a chain, and before narrating the ḥadīth, some impropriety was committed in his assembly, then Ibn ʿUyaynāh uttered the above-mentioned words. Nuʿaym misunderstood and combined those words of Sufyān with that chain.

Ṣābir acknowledged that Imām al-Bukhārī had been cautious in his selection of ḥadīth narrators. It is nonetheless surprising that if the selected ḥadīths of Nuʿaym could be given a place in the Sahih, then why had Imām al-Bukhārī overlooked the ḥadīth reports narrated by Ḥammād ibn Salamāh ibn Dīnār? The latter is held in much esteem by all the ‘ulamāʿ, and is known by the title of Imām and Shaykh al-Islām. Imām Muslim recognises him as an authority and cites him in his hadith collection in Usūl. One of the objections raised by Imām al-Daraqūṭnī55 against Imām al-Bukhārī is that the latter ignored reports by Ḥammād. I agreed with Ṣābir that it is a complicated issue. Ḥammād is undoubtedly an authority, yet his retentive power was not as strong as that of Ḥammād ibn Zayd and others. His reports from Thābit al-Bunānī are authentic and

54 Imām Abū ʿĀṣa Muḥammad ibn Ṭaḥṣil ʿImrān (d. 279 AH), author of the six sound books of ḥadīth.
55 Imām Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn ʿUmar al-Daraqūṭnī (d. 385 AH), a great traditionist and well-known authority on the methodology of ḥadīth.
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Imām Muslim only cited these. Imām al-Bukhārī has cited a single report from Hammād, which has come through Thābit, which is: “قال لنا أبو الوليد حديثا حصاد بن سلمة” i.e. “Abu’l-Walid said to us: Hammad ibn Salamah narrated to us…” His beginning the ḥadīth with “he said to us” makes it plain that he did not consider this chain a strong one.

Ṣābir conceded that Ḥammād was not a very accurate narrator, which is why Imām al-Bukhārī neglected his reports. “Then how is it that the report ‘whoever shows enmity to a friend of Mine, then I have declared war on him’ is included in the Ṣaḥīh of al-Bukhārī? Its chain of narrators is not very strong either. Imām al-Bukhārī has cited the chain comprising Ibn Karamah – Khālid ibn Makhlad – Sulaymān ibn Bilāl – Sharīk ibn Abī Namir – ‘Aṭā’ – Abū Hurayrah. Imām al-Dhahabī rightly takes exception to its inclusion. ‘هذا حديث غريب جدا، لو لاهب الجامع الصحيح عددوه في مكتارات خالد بن مخلد’ ‘This hadith is very gharib.’ If it were not for the awe felt for the Jam‘ al-Saḥīh they would definitely have counted it among the rejected ḥadīth of Khalid ibn Makhlad.’ Its wording is unusual. Sharīk’s inclusion in the chain is dubious. Moreover, he was not a ḥāfiz. This text has only this single chain. Al-Bukhārī alone has mentioned this ḥadīth. ‘Aṭā’ s identity is uncertain – he could be ‘Aṭā’ ibn Abī Rabāh or ‘Aṭā’ ibn Abī Yasār.” I, however, said that it was immaterial, because both of them are equally reliable. “Yet its inclusion in Bukhārī’s collection is intriguing, for it is not found in Ahmad’s Musnad either. This is the only ḥadīth report in the whole collection of al-Bukhārī that is not above board. Ibn Hajar does not offer any satisfactory explanation, though he has tried to do so.” I told Ṣābir that we would delve further into it at a later time.

56 Gharib or ‘unusual’ ḥadīth have a single narrator at some point in their chain of transmission.

57 Munkar or ‘rejected’ ḥadīth are those whose meanings contradict ayat of Qurʾān or other reliably established ḥadīth.

58 It is well to note that this discussion is really about the isnaḍ of the ḥadīth, since the text in the same or similar words is widely narrated by a large number of ḥadīth scholars. See ḥadīth 38 in Ibn Rajab al-Hanbalī’s Jami’ al-ulum wal-hikam (its translation published as the Compendium of Knowledge and Wisdom by Turath Publishing) for a very full examination of this issue as well as of the luminous meanings of the ḥadīth.
Lately I have been studying Ibn Sīnā’s *al-Shifā*’. This 18-volume work is a testament to Ibn Sīnā’s mastery of the rational sciences. The Greeks had made only a preliminary study of logic, but this discipline was enlarged by al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā. Abū ‘Ubaydah al-Jūzjānī had been Ibn Sīnā’s disciple for years and recorded his works. According to him, Ibn Sīnā had dictated this voluminous work from memory. Apart from *al-Shifā’, his Kitāb al-najāt and al-Ishārāt cover the same ground. All these three titles are on logic, natural sciences and metaphysics. I have read a major part of *al-Shifā’. At this time I am studying the chapter on *al-jadal* “deductive reasoning”. This chapter demonstrates that Ibn Sīnā is not a mere imitator of Aristotle. The later scholar has given it another name, which underscores Ibn Sīnā’s evolutionary approach to the topic. For him, obviously, *jadal* “deductive reasoning” is inferior to *burhān* “proof”. He is of the view that knowledge is obtained through perfect reasoning and certain analogy; and the certain analogy is *burhān*. Man should therefore seek it first. He also recognises other modes of analogy and speculation. For him, *jadal* is essential to organising society. It is thus clear that *burhānī* logic relates to natural sciences and *jadalī* logic relates to social sciences.

At 8 pm, while I was engrossed in study, Mawlānā Shāhbāz arrived. He usually arrives at the same time, and we go together to the mosque for *‘ishā’* prayer. Āftāb arrived as well and apprised me of the seminar’s proceedings. Mawlānā ‘Abdullāh ‘Abbās’s talk covered the topic in the light of his first-hand experience of the educational system in Europe and the Arab world. His presentation was followed by that of Mawlānā Abū al-‘Ir-fān who opened his talk with a couplet by Aṣghar Gondawī:

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This is a little wine, and this is a small glass,
by which the drunkards grasp the secrets of heaven.

Mawlānā Abū al-‘Ir-fān emphasised that his presentation was based wholly on his local experience. As he had not been abroad,
the apt use of this couplet added to the beauty of his talk. Mawlānā Shahbāz enjoyed it too. He loved Ḍaghar’s poetry in view of its sublimity, mystical character and noble thoughts. Mawlānā Shahbāz has a very refined literary taste. He continuously reads and studies the poetic works of Ḍaghar, deriving much pleasure from them as they renew his faith in monotheism. Mawlānā praised Ḍaghar saying: “Combined in Ḍaghar are the best features of Ḡālib’s and Mīr Dard’s poetry, in that he has borrowed pathos and grand style from them.” He was a very pious person. His poetry was characterised by philosophical thought, wisdom, brilliant ideas and an amalgam of knowledge, gnosis, and mysticism. He did not indulge in any vulgarity and hence he is most appreciated by the elite.

\[
\text{نِّي لِلَّهُ عَمَّا أَعْرَضْتُ مِنْ أَمَرَرْتُ بَيْنَ الْمُغَضَّبِينَ}
\]

Whoever wants can come and take from him the lesson of madness. I have heard that the mad Ḍaghar has been in consciousness for years.

Among latter day poets, Mawlānā Shahbāz loves Fānī Badāyūnī’s poetry in the same way that he is fond of Ḍaghar. Mawlānā said that Fānī’s poetry holds a mirror up to life. If Ḍaghar’s poetry is influenced by Ḡālib and Dard, Fānī’s poetry offers a blend of the pleasant features of Mīr Taqī Mīr and Ḡālib. We requested the Mawlānā to recite an example of Fānī’s ghazals. He obliged us.

\[
\text{اَكَ مَعَمْرُ بِهُ كَيْفَ کَيْفَ کَا}
\]

81
In this ghazal Fānī tackles a variety of issues. First, he defines life as an unfathomable riddle. He then relates his personal tragedy, which is life-in-death. The Mawlānā offered a brilliant exposition of the concluding couplet. While we were enjoying his remarks on the poetry of Asghar and Fānī it became time for dinner. Muṭṭī al-Rahmān joined us. He entered the room, reciting a couplet:

Compared to me, Plato is no more than a school child, Aristotle does not have the tongue to open his mouth in front of me, the pen asks “what should I record?” the meanings are revealed to me continuously from heaven.

Muṭṭī al-Rahmān is one of our close friends, with a special interest in fiqh, logic and Urdu and Persian poetry. He knows many poems by the Persian poet Qāānī by heart and sometimes he reads out to us that poem of Qāānī's which begins with the couplet:
The Mawlnā observed that Qānī is one of the great poets of the later period. The 13th century AH (19th century CE) was a period of decline in Persian poetry, so the presence of Qānī in that period in Iran is no less than a miracle. How good this poem of his is:

What would I do with Paradise, O my beloved? you are my Paradise
You are my garden and my spring, my orchard and flower-bed.
You can do whatever you will for it is you who are my destiny:
You are ever-present in my heart being a part of my very being
Hidden within my veins like life in the stem of the flower.

When Muṭṭī al-Raḥmān saw us eating bareheaded, he was offended and asked us why we did not follow the Sunnah in this matter. ‘Umar Laddākhī replied that, despite his close study of hadith on the norms of eating, he had yet to come across any hadith that recommends that one's head be covered while eating. He asked Muṭṭī al-Raḥmān to cite a relevant ḥadīth. He replied that he had always observed members of Tablíghī Jamā‘at doing so and they do not act against the Sunnah. The Mawlnā then reasoned with him that the practice of any individual or a group is not an argument. One should substantiate his action with the Sunnah. This reminded
me of the incident involving Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, who says: “I met Abd-al-Malik ibn al-Majishūn in Madinah and sought his ruling on a matter, which he duly issued. When I asked him to substantiate it, he referred to Imām Malik's practice. I was surprised and said to him: ‘I ask you to present evidence, and you are presenting the opinion of your teacher. You and your teacher both need to cite evidence and proof.’”

While we were eating, the adhān for the ‘isha’ prayer was called. We cleared the table and did wuḍū’, before going out for prayer along with the Mawlānā. On the way I asked his opinion about Imām Ibn Taymiyyah's work al-Radd ‘alā al-mantiqīyyīn, which is a forceful presentation. Shibīl speaks highly of his cogent arguments in his articles. This brings to my mind Ibn Sīnā's al-Shīfā', which reflects the sharpness of his mind, yet in which he failed to detect the inherent weakness in logic. The Mawlānā replied that both parties are guilty of extremism. Logicians are not justified in their claim that logic alone guides man to truth, and that da'īl burhānī is firm evidence. Nor is Ibn Taymiyyah unassailable in holding that logic is pointless. Logical evidence is persuasive. The arguments employed by an opponent may be countered in order to persuade him of his false position. Logical arguments in themselves are neither true nor false. Ibn Sīnā is largely aware of the fallacy of logic. His discussion on numbers proves the above point. When in al-Shīfā' he defines number, and says that two is the double of one, and one is half of two, it makes clear that the claim of the logicians that the comprehension of every perception needs definition is an exaggeration.

While we were listening to the Mawlānā the iqāmah was said, and so we joined the congregation for ‘isha’. Mawlānā Sa‘īd al-Rahmān led the prayer. When we came out, it was time for Shaykh Abū al-Hasan ‘Ali Nādi’s session. Mawlānā Shāhbaz was waiting. Soon we were joined by Ṭāfīb and Ḥaydar Nāpalī. Ḥaydar has a special inclination towards fiqh. He is a real gentleman. Ḥaydar lamented that some hanafis, when travelling, combine two prayers. I, however, pointed out that a rigid stance should not be taken on this matter; as some hadīths allow this practice and many ‘ulamā’

subscribe to it. He persisted in saying that ḥanāfī fiqh does not allow it in any circumstances. I disagreed with him, pointing out that the principles of even ḥanāfī fiqh sanction it. Ḥaydar recited the Qur'ānic verse that prayer is to be offered by Muslims at the appointed times. In his opinion, the verse is decisive and it categorically states that a prayer must be offered at its time. This command cannot be modified. I drew his attention to the evident flaw in his argument; pilgrims offer combined prayers at ʿArafāt and Muzdalifah. This standard practice underscores that the Qur'ānic command is not absolute. Once a Qur'ānic verse has been given a specific understanding in certain circumstances, according to ḥanāfī principles of jurisprudence, it can be specified further by a single report or analogy. Ḥanafis should modify their stance accordingly. They should allow combining prayers during a journey or sickness, as is allowed in the ḥadīths.

Ḥaydar referred to the ḥadīth cited by al-Ṭirmidhī that once the Prophet, peace be upon him, had combined prayers even without the excuse of rain, sickness or travel. However, al-Ṭirmidhī labels it one of the two ḥadīths in his book that has not been followed by anyone. I endorsed the Imām’s stance, as acting on that ḥadīth would have amounted to neglecting the Qur'ānic verse. Āftāb’s point was that the ḥadīth permitting combined prayers should be interpreted in a way that no contradiction might appear between the Qur’ān and ḥadīth. I said that the formal combination has two problems: first, that the example of combination that exists is not formal combination; rather it is real combination. The practice at ʿArafāt and Muzdalifah is clear evidence. The second problem is that the issues of travelling are based on ease; if we interpret combination as formal, then it makes the time slots more narrow, in which case the traveller will have more trouble.

While we were engaged in this discussion it became time for the Mawlānā’s assembly. We headed towards the guesthouse. Mawlānā Nadhr al-Haфиз was in front of us, and we said salām to him. His specialisation is in literature and journalism with a thorough study of Western media. Mawlānā Shams al-Haqq Nadwī was also there, and we greeted him. He is an Urdu prose stylist and editor of
Ta’mir-i hayât, and a decent person of gentle, polite manners.

We took our seats. The Mawlana recounted incidents of pious persons, especially examples of their indifference to worldliness. He first related the following incident. One scholar used to teach students in a mosque. Since he had a pain in his knees, he sat with his legs stretched out towards the door. One day a local chief called on him. However, he continued his lecture, paying no attention to him and keeping his legs out-stretched. When the lecture was over, as the chief left, he held out a bag of gold coins to him. The scholar declined, saying that someone who extends his legs does not extend his hands.

The other incident was about the famous hadith scholar, Sayyid Muhammad Mubarak Bilgrami. Once he fell unconscious while doing wudu’. His student, Mir Tufayl Muhammad Bilgrami rushed to his rescue. The former regained consciousness after an hour. On being asked persistently, he told his student that since he had not taken food for three days, he had become weak. He had not borrowed money nor had he asked anyone’s help. The student was deeply moved. He went home and brought him a large number of dishes of food. The scholar prayed for blessings for him, yet he declined the food, telling him: “If you do not mind, let me tell you that as you left me, the thought crossed my mind that you would bring food for me. In Sufi parlance it is known as ishraf al-nafs ‘eagerness of the self’. Fiqh scholars allow that food be accepted in such circumstances. The Shari‘ah even allows one to eat something unlawful, if one does not have food for three days. However, I cannot accept this food, as I was expecting it.” The latter went back with the food. A little later, he brought the same food back to his teacher. He asked him whether he had been expecting food this time. As he said that he had not, he asked him to accept it, because he had brought him the food without any eagerness on the part of his self. It greatly pleased the scholar, who complimented the student on his presence of mind. The Mawlana concluded with Iqbal’s couplet –

دیگر دو چاپ که والی

پولی دارانی کر یک پادشاهی
Madrasah Life

How long be a slave to the mean world?
Practise asceticism or kingly rule!

—and commented that a king is still a slave to this world whereas an ascetic transcends materialism.

The Mawlānā’s session was over at 10 pm. I returned to my hostel. I would generally come back to my hostel immediately after ‘ishā’ prayer for private study. A few days back I have finished studying Imām Ibn al-Qayyim’s Iľām al-muwaqqī’in, and I have now taken up Imām al-Shāṭibi’s al-Muwāfaqāt. Today I returned home late due to the Mawlānā’s session. In my room I found all my friends busy in conversation. Among them were Ibrāhīm, Wazīr, ʿAbd al-Hayy, Ḥashmatullāh and Khālid. When friends gather, we study less and talk more, because there ensues a heated discussion on almost any issue. Wazīr was, as usual, raising points about Urdu literary figures. Today, Shibli was the focus of attention. For him, Shibli ushered Urdu into a new phase. Prior to him, Urdu was confined to the limited topics of poetry and literature, but he treated a wide variety of subjects and different sciences and branches of knowledge in Urdu. Shibli’s language was very clear and simple, his narration very lively and attractive, his arguments very scholarly and his devotion to Islam genuine. According to the Urdu literary historian, Ḥāmid Ḥasan Qādirī, Shibli was the first to grasp the significance of writing style. He was gifted with a refined taste and adopted a style that was very appropriate to the subject matter. Āftāb endorsed the above observation by Wazīr and referred to Sir Syed’s testimonial, as it appears in his foreword to Shibli’s al-Ma’mūn: “Shibli writes such chaste and idiomatic Urdu as is envied by even the natives of Delhi.”

Wazīr resumed the note of his admiration, drawing attention to the varied writings of Shibli on a range of significant topics such as Shīr al-ʿajam, a perceptive survey of Persian literary history; al-Fārūq, a brilliant account of the accomplishments of the Caliph ʿUmar ibn

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60 The distinguished Orientalist E.G. Browne is the author of the Literary History of Persia. He has frequently cited it in Shibli’s work. When introducing a Persian poet he first reproduced Shibli’s assessment of that poet. He regretted very much that he was not able to meet Shibli.
al-Khaṭṭāb; al-Nuʾmān, a profile of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah and a history of the codification of fiqh; al-Maʾmūn, a life sketch of the Caliph al-Maʾmūn and, more importantly, an account of the intellectual exchange between India, Greece and Arabia; al-Ghazzālī, a tribute to the genius of al-Ghazzālī; his history of al-kalām and his magnum opus, his biography of the Prophet, Sīrat al-nabī, which drew upon the latest methodology and modern principles of biography. Were any of Shibli’s contemporaries equal to him in any of his academic, scholarly and literary distinctions? Wazīr once again cited Ḥāmid Ḥasan Qādirī’s opinion that Shibli was later than Āzād and Ḥālī in writing on literary history, criticism and biography, but excelled them in all these fields. When Shibli wrote on some topic, he did justice to it. He set standards, for the first time, on how to write biography and literary criticism. He was the first to contribute valuable books on Sīrah and literary history. On comparing his works with those of Āzād and Ḥālī, it becomes clear that he did not get any guidance from the latter. His writings do not reflect any influence from his predecessors. For Sīrat al-nabī and al-Fārūq, there was no model in Darbār-i akbari and Ḥayāt-i saʿdī. Similarly, the first three parts of Shiʿr al-cajam are not an imitation of Āb-i hayāt, whereas the fifth part is much higher than Muqaddimah shīr wa shāʾirī. According to Qādirī, Shibli stands out above his contemporaries in his style, as a biographer, critic, historian and writer on the sīrah.

Hashmatullāh wondered why Wazīr had not referred to Shibli’s other works, such as Muwāzanaḥ anis wa dabīr, Sawānīḥ mawlānā rūm and al-Intiqād, even though these too, in his opinion, are masterpieces.

Wazīr stated that Mahdī Ifādī was the first to acclaim Shibli’s greatness in Urdu. Mahdī’s pieces have a charm and beauty of their own. These give a clear picture of the evolutionary stages through which the Urdu language has passed. Wazīr referred also to the glowing tribute paid to Shibli’s genius in Urdu poetry by Nadhir Ahmad:

61 Imām Abū Ḥāmid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazzālī (d. 1128), one of the outstanding figures in the field of philosophy, theology and Sufism. He was a prolific writer. His most famous work is Iḥyāʾ ʿulāmāʾ al-dīn.
Shibli's poetry is marked by force and pathos. His poem *Shahr āshob-i īslām* relates the tragedy that struck the Muslim community after the loss of the Balkans:

Stick to prose, and quit poetry, O Nadhīr Ahmad. For that, Hālī and Nu‘mānī are better equipped.
When decay has beset the government –
   How long can name or trace of us remain?
   How long the smoke rise once the candle in the
   assembly-room has been put out?
   Once the garment of the kingdom has been torn to shreds
   How long can those shreds stay afloat in the air?

Someone ought to ask you, O professors of human civilisation:
For how long, these atrocities? And for how long, these tyrannies?
   We guess that you want to test the sharpness of your sword
   For how long will our throats be subject to your trial?
   Have you not yet seen parks and gardens enough of blood
   That we must go on making show of our bloody wounds?
   We guess you want more anecdotes to cheer up your gatherings
   But how long can we go on with our sorrowful lamenting?
   We guess tales of our grief lift your spirits still higher
   But how long can we re-tell the story of pain in our hearts?
   We guess that you are indignant with heaven for withholding rain
   But how long can we keep watering your farms with our blood?

Worse yet, O Shibli: were we to migrate, where could we go?
   For how long can peace hold in Najd or Sham or Qayrawan?

His description of the defeat suffered by Muslims in the Balkans
is heart-rending. Āfīb endorsed this viewpoint, adding that
Shibli’s poem on the deplorable demolition of a mosque in Kanpur
is equally moving.
Madrasah Life

Yesterday, I saw some lifeless corpses.
When I came nearer, I saw them covered in wounds.
Some of them are young children. Though they are silent
Their being children shows they were not combatants.
We had come here to build a house of God.
We are caught in a long sleep awaiting the Day of Resurrection
When I asked, Who are you? The reply came:
We are the slain of the battle of Kanpur.

Commenting on his contribution to poetry, I contended that he figures among the notable Persian poets of his time. Mawlānā Abū al-Kalām Āzād aptly remarks that the last great Persian poet of India is Shibli, not Ghalib. This Shibli couplet bears witness to his affinity with Ḥāfiẓ's style:

و دل یکتا در راه سوخته توجه ویده که سالک را
ین خسته ز کر فرو کر دارد یاسه ایمان اکرم

(They say:) Having two hearts on this path is a severe flaw in the traveller.
So my unbelief strikes me with shame, since it has within it a stain of belief.

Nonetheless, Khalid raised an objection against Shibli's work Mawāzanah, in which he betrays partisanship. He goes out of his way to exalt Anis and belittle Dabīr. ‘Abd al-Hayy tried to defend Shibli, saying that he has been accused of hero worship. However, an objective reader is bound to endorse Shibli's conclusions, which are marked by their justice and fairness. After the publication of Mawāzanah, a number of works appeared in Dabīr's defence in an attempt to refute Shibli's thesis. However, these works have faded into oblivion while Mawāzanah still enjoys both respect and popularity. It has prescribed the criteria for evaluating a poetic
work in Urdu. Whether we follow the principle of ‘the survival of the fittest’ or ‘survival of the most beneficial’, the survival of Mawāzanah for such a long time is clear evidence of its success. ‘Abd al-Ḥayy cited one of the couplets by Dabīr, which exemplifies his inept use of Urdu idiom:

\[
\text{مَحِبُّ بُنْدل شَفَتِكَ ذَا الْعَلَامَةَ}
\]

\[
\text{ثَّانِي بُنْدل شَفَتِكَ عَلِيّ الْعَلَامَةَ}
\]

According to Dabīr, in this verse, the Prophet, peace be upon him, says: “I am beloved to God, Exalted is He. And I am the grandfather of Husayn ‘alayhi al-salām (peace be upon him)’.

What bad taste it is to use ‘alayhi al-salām for Husayn on the tongue of the Prophet. This, in turn, vindicates Shiblī’s stance that Anis is far superior to Dabīr as a poet.

Ibrāhīm raised a different point. Ḥālī is a serious, sober writer, yet Shiblī harshly criticised his book Ḥayāt-i jāved. In contrast, Ḥālī always spoke highly of Shiblī and recorded it in his poetry as well:

\[
\text{اَبْ اَوْر شَرَقَيْ تَأَرِخَ كَأَيْهِ وَرْيَانَ شَرْخَنُ}
\]

\[
\text{لَوَ قَلْتُ سَا وَوْقَهُ عَمَّ وَلَا يَكُنْ زَمَنَ وَكْبُسَ}
\]

“If you want to see the treasury of literature and Oriental history, then look at Shiblī, who is unique and incomparable among his contemporaries.”

Wazīr tried to defend Shiblī, saying that he had expressed his opinion on Ḥālī’s book in a private letter, not publicly. “Furthermore, his criticism is factually correct. Isn’t Ḥayāt-i jāved a book of manaqib and well-argued panegyric? Not only Shiblī, but other leading scholars of the day such as Nadhīr Ahmad and Nawāb Šadr Yār Jang criticised it, pointing to the very flaws that Shiblī has identified. Why should Shiblī be singled out? To this day Ḥālī’s book has been dismissed as a eulogy, though presented as a biography.”

Wazīr continued: “Shiblī’s success resides also in the influence he exerted on a host of later writers, namely, Mawlānā Āzād, Mawlānā
Zafar ‘Ali Khān, Mawlānā ‘Abd al-Mājīd Daryābādī, Mahdī Ifādī, Mawlānā Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī and Mawlānā ‘Abd al-Salam Nadwī. Even Niyyāz Fatehpūrī belongs to the Shībīl school.” Khālid laughed at this, saying: “What has happened to you, Wazīr? You never stop talking about Niyyāz. It seems as if you have something in common with him.” Wazīr, once again, tried to defend his position, pointing out that Niyyāz had been a student of Nadwah and read up to the level of Mishkāt here. Khālid said if he had completed his education, he would have become a Nadwī. Wazīr explained that Niyyāz had made some outrageous comments in a hadith class and therefore was expelled from Nadwah. (The verse comes to mind, I don’t know who wrote it:

\[
\text{گو دان کے تیلے دو نے دان کے تیلے دو نے دو ہوتے دو پر ہوے ہوے ہوے} \\
\text{کہہ سے ان بیٹوں کو تیلے نہیں بیٹے نہیں بیٹے} \\
\]

Though we are not from there, at least we are expellees from there. Are not these stone idols distant kin of the Ka’bah?

Hashmat drew our attention to the close resemblance between the lives and careers of Niyyāz and Tāhā Ḥusayn. The latter was a student at al-Azhar. Had he been tackled better there, perhaps he might not have gone so far in his transgression and rebellion. Āftāb is much impressed by Tāhā Ḥusayn’s style. He conceded that Ḥusayn’s reputation had been tarnished by his irreverence. Otherwise, he excels others in the strength and impact of his style. I agreed with Āftāb, saying that I derive much joy from reading Ḥusayn’s ‘Ālā hāmish al-sīrah. He is exceptionally articulate and provides a graphic account of the jāhiliyyah way of life and Quraysh’s gatherings. Āftāb added that he has finished reading his book on the Caliph ‘Uthmān’s life, which is, no doubt, vitiated by scepticism. Yet his style is almost enchanting. Hashmat recounted his impression about Ḥusayn’s other writings, al-Ayyām and Ḥadīth al-arbi’a’.

Amazed, Khālid asked how Tāhā Ḥusayn could have developed such acute observation when he was blind. Mawlānā Wādīḥ had
once explained the same point in a lecture. Generally, writers employ a pictorial style of language or sign language. However, Tāhā Husayn, being blind, relies on plain words alone to express himself. As a result, he is superior to others in his portrayals. Again, owing to his disability, he could not ascertain the responses of his readers. Therefore, he repeats himself, though in a variety of ways so that they do not grow weary. His blindness, in a sense, helped him grow as an effective, successful writer.

Ibrāhīm was not impressed with Tāhā Husayn’s contribution. Since the latter champions the doctrine of art for art’s sake, Ibrāhīm finds it disturbing, as he is committed to ideological, purposive art. He censured us for showering praise on Tāhā Husayn, saying that most of his writings are light and merely entertaining. On comparing him with other Egyptian writers, namely Muṣṭafā Lutfī Manfalūṭī, Amīr Shakīb Arsalān, Rashīd Rīḍā and Aḥmad Aḥmīn, one discovers that only Aḥmad Aḥmīn is capable of writing in a grand, academic style. His writings have remarkable simplicity and lucidity. He presents scholarly topics well. His triology Fajr al-islām, ʿAuḥā al-islām and ʿUhr al-islām testify to his flair for writing on academic issues in a simple, uncomplicated style.

We were disturbed by mosquitoes. Khālid complained of this nuisance. Ibrāhīm said that winter is better, when at least flies and mosquitoes do not annoy one. ʿAbd al-Ḥayy asked Khālid not to complain of such irritants and recited an apt couplet by Ashraf Māzandrānī, a Persian poet:

\[
\text{در گوش قدر که چا درد نمی‌کند}
\]
\[
\text{چوپن است روز و دنیا باشید}
\]
\[
\text{به روز رمز که شب بیم رسد و نشان}
\]
\[
\text{در روز گاه بیه گلارو میرم}
\]

How can one have trouble in the land of India?
There, biting pain and the cure for it come together:
In the night mosquitoes bite and wound
Then in the day the ointment comes: flies cover the bites.
Khalid Gondawi joined us. He is a sincere friend and charming company. As he entered, he announced dramatically that he had had a lucky escape: he told us that last night he had gone to sleep on the roof, confident that the warden would not be able to find him there if he slept late. However, the warden did look on the roof, but before he could identify him, he ran downstairs wrapped in his blanket. Abd al-Hayy recounted another incident when the Mufti was doing the rounds of the Shiblî hostel after fajr prayer. He saw a student asleep and woke him up, asking him whether he had done the prayer. He replied he had. On being asked to specify the surah recited in the first rak'ah, he confidently said that it was Surat al-Fatiha. This left the latter speechless. Khalid added that it was perhaps the only instance in which the Mufti was rendered speechless, for we know that he is invincible in argument. Once a student was having a pointless talk with him. On being cornered, he said in exasperation: 'What, have I been mowing grass at Nadwah?' The Mufti said that his turn of speech (meaning his use of so rude an expression) confirmed the same.

Wazir related that once there was a circus in Aminabad. We asked the Mufti's permission to go there; the Mufti refused to give permission. We argued that since we were going to become 'alm soon, we should be allowed to visit it in order to gain first-hand knowledge of the evil associated with a circus visit. The Mufti said that one need not taste an impure substance in order to pronounce on its unlawfulness. Khalid lavished praise on the Mufti's acute mind and his forbearance. Once in his class on fiqh he asked Khalid to spell out the beneficiaries in a particular instance of inheritance. He looked at his friend's notebook and listed them, thinking that the Mufti would not detect his cheating. After he finished his answer, the Mufti asked him to close the notebook and list them again.

While we were recounting incidents involving his acuteness, Mufti Ishtiyaq arrived with a plate full of halwâ (sweets). He is from Sahahnpur, did his iftâ course at Mazâhir al-'Ulûm, and is now studying Arabic literature at Nadwah. He too lives in the hostel and is a good friend. Whenever he returned to Nadwah from home, he would bring delicious homemade sweets prepared from pure
ghee and share them with us. Just as we started eating these, the electricity power supply cut out. There was noise in the hostels. Such power cuts have their own charm, as students make all sorts of boisterous noise in the ensuing darkness. Even the wardens seem to enjoy this show of warmth and vitality. A little later, the supply was resumed. By then the halwā had been eaten completely. Khālid quipped that though in the light everybody was so hesitant over eating, as soon as the electricity went off, they showed their skills.

Ḥashmatullāh carried the point made earlier by Ibrāhīm further about low academic standards on the Indian subcontinent. After Mūllā Maḥmūd Jaunpūrī and Shāh Waliullāh, Ḥakīm ʿAbd al-Ḥayy Ḥasanī was the only scholar to have used a suitable idiom for scholarly work. His eight-volume work Nuzhat al-khawātir captures the beauty of Arabic idiom. Aftāb admired this book for the wealth of historical information in it. On comparing it with other works on history, one realises its immense value. Mawlānā Munāẓir Aḥsan Gīlānī also praised it for its comprehensive range and assiduity. I remembered the Mawlānā's own high rank as a historian. He was also a distinguished ḥadīth scholar, who drew upon the expertise of such masters as Ḥusayn ibn Muḥsin al-Ansārī, Qārī ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Pāṇipāṭī, Nadhīr Ḥusayn Muḥaddith Dihlawī, and Mawlānā Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī. His highest chain of narration is his narration from the spiritual master and imām of the Naqshbandiyya⁶² order, Mawlānā Faḍl-i Raḥmān Ganj Murādābādī.

Ḥashmatullāh added that little effort is made to understand the position of Mawlānā Faḍl-i Raḥmān Ganj Murādābādī. He was the mentor of three of the founding members of Nadwah: Mawlānā Muḥammad ‘Alī Mungerī, Mawlānā ʿAbd al-Ḥayy Ḥasanī and Nawab Ṣadr Yār Jung Mawlānā Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān Khān Sherwānī. This was not accidental. Rather, it throws light on the genesis of Nadwah itself. If Shibli was the intellectual expression of Nadwah, then these three scholars, followers of Mawlānā Faḍl-i Raḥmān Ganj Murādābādī, reveal its sensitive heart. Combining Shibli's

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⁶² This Sufi order is related to the fourteenth century (8th century of hijrah) Bukharan Sufi Bahāʾ al-Dīn Muḥammad Naqshband.
expertise with the blessings of those spiritual masters, Nadwah can accomplish its objectives.

Meanwhile Muftī Ishtiyāq came to our room again, this time with a book in his hand. It was Mawlānā Mawdūdī’s *Khilāfat wa Mulūkıyyat*, which Wazīr had lent him. ʿUmar Laddākhī took strong exception to this, saying that Wazīr corrupts the minds of the students on the campus. It was improper of him to lend such a book to Muftī Ishtiyāq who, already an ʿālim, is at Nadwah only to study Arabic literature. In his defence, Wazīr said that some time ago in a discussion Muftī Ishtiyāq had criticised Mawdūdī’s book, although when pressed on it he admitted that he had not read it for himself; his opposition rested on some second-hand criticism of the book. Wazīr had therefore provided him with the book so that he might form his own opinion. When ʿAbd al-Ḥayy sought Muftī Ishtiyāq’s opinion, the latter told that he did not find anything wrong in it. Ibrāhīm, however, remarked that Mawlānā Mawdūdī was an intelligent person. His introductory note on the rationale and sources of the book might convince readers of his integrity. However, if he had been really sound in his approach, he would have consulted other scholars before passing judgements on this most difficult and sensitive phase of Islamic history. It would have helped him avoid certain mistakes. Āfīf maintained that consulting other scholars was all the more necessary because Mawdūdī himself had not studied ḥadīth with any recognised scholar, and often appeared painfully ignorant of the idioms of the disciplines.

Wazīr’s contention, nonetheless, was that leaving aside these finer details, it should be realised that in our own times Mawlānā Mawdūdī was the first to discuss a pure Islamic state. He has pressed home the point, through several of his writings, that Islam is a complete way of life, and one divinely ordained. For him, Islam is not only for discussion in madrasahs or in books. Rather, it should be implemented in every field of life. We affirm our servitude to God. Has God not ordained commands other than for prayer and fasting, which cannot be enforced without the establishment of an Islamic state?

Ḥashmatullāh asserted that in attacking Western thought the
Mawlānā is akin to Imām Ghazālī. The latter refuted Greek thought while employing its own arguments. “He set a new trend with his Tahāfut al-falāsifah. Mawlānā Mawdūdī, Sayyid Qutb Shahīd, Mālik ibn Nabī and Muḥammad Mubārak have followed the same way in employing Western methodology to expose and condemn Western thought. However, another Islamic response to Greek rationalism was by Mawlānā Rūmī, who refuted it with the help of spirituality. Farīd al-Dīn ‘Aṭṭār and others contributed in the same vein:

How long will you read the philosophy of the Greeks? 
Read also the wisdom of the believers.

Mawlānā Rūmī and ‘Aṭṭār were followed, in our time, by Lisān al-‘Asr Akbar Ilāhābādī and Iqbal, who employed the same methods and were highly successful. The following couplet explains their stance:

The history of ecstasy is that in every time of rationality, we form a continuous line of nooses and crosses.

Hashmatullāh went on: “Ghazālī’s approach was valid in his own time. However, there was a need for a thinker who could tackle the superstructure of Western thought using its own instruments. Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah was fully conversant with the Prophetic sciences, and so his thorough knowledge of Greek thought did not influence him in the least; rather, he was able to deal severe blows to Greek philosophy. There was an inherent weakness in Ghazālī’s approach. It is not therefore surprising that Tahāfut al-tahāfut came out in refutation of Ghazālī’s Tahāfut al-falāsifah. By contrast, no one has so far written a rejoinder to Ibn Taymiyyah’s al-Radd ʿalā al-mantiqīyyīn. Instead, one familiar with modern logic might assume that new logic has been rephrased and modified in the light of Ibn Taymiyyah’s objections. Today
the Muslim community needs another Ibn Taymiyyah. At a very late stage Shibli recognised his genius. On appreciating the Shaykh al-Islam’s greatness, he wrote in his letters that there is a need to bring out a book on his life and achievements. He ranked him higher than al-Razi and al-Ghazali. Mawlana Azad’s work, namely Tarjumân al-qur’an and Tarikh ‘azîmat wa da’wat are marked by Ibn Taymiyyah’s influence. However, his political preoccupations did not permit him to write any further work on Ibn Taymiyyah.”

We were so swayed by Hashmat’s argument that we could not disagree with him. Only Aftab appeared unmoved. When we pressed him to respond to Hashmat’s point, he finally said: “I do not endorse Hashmat’s stance that Ibn Taymiyyah’s approach is the ultimate goal. Rather, like Ghazali’s, his approach too represents a passing phase in the history of Islamic thought. Our destination lies far beyond it.” ‘Abd al-‘Hayy asked what destination can be beyond that, unless we move away from the destination while seeking it? Aftab affirmed that the refutation of atheistic thought and philosophy is of great help to those of weak faith. It helps them gain firm faith. Ghazali employed others’ weapons to this end. Then, Ibn Taymiyyah used his own weapons to refute and check dangerous trends in society. However, neither of them followed, or in his time was able to follow, the approach typical of God’s prophets and messengers. A messenger of God has genuine concern for everyone; his ‘argument’ is a call addressed to the whole of humanity. Only Shaytan is his adversary, so a messenger does not get bogged down in contradicting or refuting others. He invites people with all sincerity and concern to the straight way. His call does sometimes use argument, but it is presented gently, tactfully and in accordance with varying circumstances. Overall, a prophet’s call has a positive orientation. In our times, this approach can be glimpsed in the writings of Hasan al-Bannâ Shahid, Mawlana Ilyas Kandhalawi and Mawlana Abu al-Hasan ‘Ali Nadwi. An urge to reform both individuals and society as a whole and sympathy for the whole of humanity are at the core of their writings.
If you want a change, then ask the drinkers to change their way. The wine-house cannot be renewed by changing the cupbearer.

Khālid observed that Ḥashmat's argument appeared convincing, and Āftāb's reflections also called for further study and scrutiny. It was now one o'clock in the morning. It was to be my turn to call the adhān for fajr. We agreed that we should go to bed, as it was already very late. 'Umar recited the following supplication, which is made when people disperse after a gathering:

سبحان الله وحمده، سبحانك اللهم وحمدك، وشهد أن لا إله إلا أنت، ونتعفرك ونتوب إليك، سبحانك رب العزة وما يصفون، وسلام على المرسلين، والحمد لله رب العالمين

'Glory and praise be to God. May our Lord be glorified. We testify that there is no god besides God. We seek your forgiveness and turn to You in repentance. Glory be to You, our Lord, full of honour and glory. Peace and blessings be upon the Messengers and praise be to God the Lord of the worlds.' Then each of us, after reciting another supplication, said before going to sleep, "O Lord! In Your name I have my death and life", and went to bed.

Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds. Peace and blessings upon His Messenger, Muhammad, and upon his family and his Companions.
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