

# The Orchards of Love

**Ihyaad-Deen**

*An Effort to Revive Deen in Totality*

## **Ikhlaas and Adhering to the Sunnah**

Every tree bears fruit according to its capacity and potential. The capacity and potential of the tree to bear fruit is dependent on the tree receiving adequate water, sunlight, air, etc.

In the same way, Allah Ta'ala blessed each believer with a capacity and potential to carry out good deeds through which he may be able to derive benefit from the deen of Islam as well as pass on this benefit to others.

Nabi (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) said, "People are like mines (in their various capacities). Some are like silver mines while others are like gold mines." (*Saheeh Muslim #2638*)

However, in order for one to develop the capacity and potential to carry out good deeds and become like a gold or silver mine in benefitting people, among other aspects, two important aspects which one requires are (1) Ikhlaas (2) Adhering to the sunnah in all branches of one's life.

Ikhlaas (carrying out actions with sincerity solely for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala) can be resembled to a seed that has the capacity and potential to germinate thousands of fruit bearing trees through the abundant fruit it produces.

Adhering to the sunnah in all facets of one's life has the potential of engendering love in the hearts of the servants of Allah Ta'ala and illuminating their lives with the light and beauty of the sunnah.

Both these aspects are vitally important in the life of a believer in order to make him successful and allow him to become a source of mercy for the creation. When these two aspects come together, they have the ability to change a person's entire outlook to life, reform his character and bring about an entire revolution in his relationship with Allah Ta'ala and people.

When we examine the lives of our pious predecessors, we find that they personified these two qualities in a unique manner in all facets of their lives.

Below is an incident which will shed light on the need for believers to beautify their lives with these two qualities.

### **Incident of Nizaam-ul-Mulk (rahimahullah)**

Among the great luminaries of the distant past was an Aalim by the name of Hasan bin Ali, famously known as Nizaam-ul-Mulk Toosi (rahimahullah). He was endowed with deep knowledge of the Qur'aan and Sunnah, and had great love for deen and the Ulama of deen.

He was an advisor of the Seljuk king towards the end of the fifth century of Islam. The king had great confidence in him on account of his honesty, and hence entrusted the affairs of the kingdom to him, giving him full permission to rule as he deemed appropriate.

During the period of his rule, he established many maktabas and madrasahs throughout the length and breadth of the country and spent thousands of Ashrafis (gold coins) on the madrasahs, the Ulama and the students of deen.

On one occasion, he became concerned that the madrasahs which he had established should produce Ulama who are concerned about the Akhirah, and their primary aim and goal should be to serve deen for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala.

He understood that if the madrasahs produce Ulama whose sole concern is to please Allah Ta'ala and to serve deen through upholding and propagating the sunnah, then wherever they go, they will remain firm upon deen and they will be a means of the goodness of deen spreading to the ummah.

On the contrary, if the Ulama qualifying are worldly orientated and materially motivated, then the outcome of their learning will not be the upliftment of deen, but rather they will use deen for worldly motives.

With this concern in his heart, he concealed his identity and came to Madrasah Nizaamiyyah - which was the main madrasah which he founded in Baghdad - to secretly find out the intentions of the students studying in the madrasah.

On coming to the madrasah, he approached one of the students and asked him, "Why are you studying here?" The student replied, "I am studying here as my father is a Qadhi. I am studying so that I can also get the post of a Qadhi and acquire wealth."

He then approached another student and asked him the same question. This student replied, "My father is a Mufti. I am studying so that I can also get the post of a Mufti and acquire wealth."

The ruler spoke to other students as well, and on asking them why they were studying in the madrasah, they all gave similar answers, mentioning that they were learning to acquire some post through which they may be able to gain wealth and prominence.

When he heard the responses of the various students studying, he understood that their intention behind studying was for the sake of acquiring the dunya and not for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. This made him feel extremely sad and disappointed - as he felt that the thousands of Ashrafis (gold coins) that were being spent were not spent on students who were studying deen for the right reasons. Hence, he immediately decided to close the madrasah.

However, at that time, from all the students, he noticed one student who was seated on his own in the corner, deeply engrossed in studying his kitaabs. The student appeared to be poor, and this student was none other than Imaam Ghazaali (rahimahullah). At that time, he was still a student, and was not yet famous and renowned among the people.

On catching sight of him, Nizaam-ul-Mulk (rahimahullah) approached him and asked, "Tell me - why are you acquiring the knowledge of deen? What is your purpose and intention for studying?" Imaam Ghazaali (rahimahullah) replied, "I have realized that I have a Creator who is the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and who has created me. Hence, when He is my Creator, then I should please Him at all times and refrain from displeasing him. Therefore, I have come to study deen (and learn the shari'ah and sunnah of Rasulullah [sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam]) so that I will be able to know how to please Allah Ta'ala and refrain from displeasing Him."

On hearing this reply, Nizaam-ul-Mulk's (rahimahullah) heart was filled with joy, and he resolved that he would not close the madrasah. He then revealed his identity to Imaam Ghazaali (rahimahullah) and said to him, "When I saw that the students in this madrasah were acquiring the knowledge of deen for the sake of the dunya, I had decided to close this madrasah. However, for your sake and on account of your sincerity, I will not close it and will allow it to continue." (*Jawaahir Paare 2/76-78*)



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