



MADANI
ACADEMY



A Journey Into The Golden Past

ATTENDING MY FIRST MAQRA' AH

RAHEEM ALAM KHAN

***A Journey Into The Golden Past:
Attending my First Maqra'ah***

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Dedicated to my esteemed teacher, mentor, and the one who instilled the love of the
Quran in me,
Qari Mujibur Rahman

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PREFACE

Recently, I was given the opportunity to travel to Illinois along with my respected teacher Qari Mujibur Rahman حفظه الله and many other students of knowledge for a *maqra’ah* of *Sahīh al Bukhārī*. A Maqra’ah is the proficient recital of a classical Islamic text in Arabic to compare variable manuscripts and preserve the aural transmission of works that have been passed on from generation to generation over many centuries until the present day. This is usually conducted under the guidance of at least one Muhaddith who has received Ijazah (license to transmit) from their Shuyookh (teachers) in these texts and who upon completion, passes their transmission of the texts with Ijazah and chains of narration on to those who have listened to the reading so that the aural tradition in these works continue to be carried forward and remain extant.¹

¹ What is a Maqra’ah by Sheikh al-Musnid Mohammed Daniel al-Muhajir al-Damishqi حفظه الله

The program was organized by 3 institutions namely, “Madani Academy”, “Cordoba Academy”, and the “Islamic Institute of Education”. We were to stay at The Islamic Institute of Education for the next 8 days in the company of about 40 ‘*Ulama* and *tullāb al ‘ilm* traveling from all over the United States, Canada, and even Australia!

We were scheduled to read the entire *Sahīh al Bukhārī* in the span of 8 days, starting from August 12th and ending on August 20th under the supervision of two esteemed *muhaddithīn*; Sheikh al- Qāri al- Muqri’ al Murabbī Maulana Muhammad Abdullah Saleem al Qāsimī and Sheikh al-Musnid al-Rahhāl Mohammed Daniel Muhajir al Dimishqī حفظهما الله. Maulana Abdullah Saleem Sahab حفظه الله studied at the world renowned Darul Uloom Deoband. He studied *Hadīth* under Sheikh al Islam Sayyid Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani رحمه الله, the grand student of Sheikh al Hind Mahmud al Hasan رحمه الله and Qirā’āt under Qari Hifdhur Rahman Partabghari رحمه الله, a student of Qari Abdul Rahman al Makki رحمه الله!

Sheikh Mohammed Daniel حفظه الله is another great personality. He’s traveled to hundreds of countries to study *Hadīth* and acquired numerous *ijāzāt* from a ton of *mashāyikh*.

Sheikh Abdullah Saleem حفظه الله would listen to us in person, while Sheikh Daniel حفظه الله would listen to us online. Sheikh Daniel حفظه الله was planning on coming to the states for the *maqra’ah* ,but was unable to do so due to unforeseen circumstances. Detailed biographies of the above-mentioned Sheikhs can be referred to in the index Insha’Allah.

Some Brief Information on the Institutions

Madani Academy, run by my teacher, Mufti Mujib and his father, Maulana Muhibbur Rahman was established in 1989 with the purpose of reviving Islamic thought by familiarizing the Muslim world with its legacy of traditional scholarship, especially in the United States. In an effort to educate and prepare a new generation of God-conscious, concerned, and involved Muslims, the academy has developed several educational programs which cater not only to the current needs of society, but to those of individual students at different stages of their spiritual journeys. Madani Academy was inspired by the legacy of Shaykhul Islam Sayyid Husain Ahmad Madani (*rahimahullah*). One of Shaykh Madani's dreams and visions was to establish Islamic centers of knowledge throughout the world, which would engage not just the religious, but the general public as well. Of his many feats, he encouraged and took part in the establishment of *makatib* and *madaris*. His son, Amirul Hind Shaykh Asad Madani (*rahimahullah*), continued this legacy. The founder of Madani Academy, one of the elders and pioneers of the effort of deen in North America, Hazrat Professor Maulana Muhibbur Rahman (*damat barakatuhum*) decided to bring this dream to the United States when there were barely any ulama, madaris, or systemized makatib. Under Shaykh As'ad Madani's guidance and advice, he established many communities and laid the foundations of many of the masajid, madaris, and makatib that exist today.

Cordoba Academy, founded by Shaykh Mohammed Daniel Muhajir al-Dimishqi, is the preeminent seat for reviving the tradition of *Isnad and ijazah* worldwide in the sacred Islamic sciences, merging traditional methods of inheriting knowledge through *Isnaad* and imparting knowledge using modern technology and techniques in instruction. Thousands from all over the world have benefitted from many of the courses they offer mashaAllah.

The Islamic Institute of Education (IIE) was founded by Shaykh al Hadith Mawlana Qari Muhammad Abdullah Saleem and his late wife under the patronage of Hadrat Mawlana Muhammad Naim Sahab (RA), Shaykh al-Hadith of Darul Uloom Deoband Waqf. Established in 1989 in Elgin, IL, IIE is

an independent, non-profit, full-time educational institution aimed at providing its students with an education in the sacred and intellectual foundations of Islamic heritage.

What follows is a personal account of my trip to Illinois, which includes visits to *madāris*, the blessed company of great *mashāyikh* and fellow *tullāb al ‘ilm*, gems of knowledge and wisdom, and much more! I purposely left out explaining certain nomenclature as this work is primarily intended for fellow students of sacred knowledge who would naturally be acquainted with these terms.

This trip served as a revival for my drive for knowledge and opened my eyes to many blessings which will forever be embedded in my heart. The words in this mini memoir will not do justice to the many memories I’ve made throughout this blessed trip, as well as the many inspirational people I’ve met. I am truly indebted to my dear teacher and mentor, Qari Mujibur Rahman for organizing this trip and allowing me to be a part of it. It has been a dream of mine to travel with this personality since the 1st year of my *‘Ālimiyyah*. This dream of mine was inspired by a few travelogs/memoirs written by Mufti Muhammad Ibn Adam Al Kawthari wherein he’d give a recollection of his trips with his teacher, Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani حفظه الله.

May Allah accept all of my teacher’s efforts and aspirations and allow him to continue being an inspiration and source of *khair* for us all. *Āmīn*. I ask Allah, Most High to shower His blessings on all those behind the scenes who helped in organizing this trip and making it as smooth as possible. I’d like to extend my gratitude to Qari Aeizaz for booking all of our tickets and taking care of the online functioning. May Allah accept this small work from me and all those who contributed to it in any shape or form. Finally, we ask Him to make it a means of benefit for all the readers, in particular students of sacred knowledge. *Āmīn*.

Raheem Alam Khan

Elgin, Illinois

8 Safar 1446/14 August 2024

Day 1 - August 11

The Beginning of a Sacred Journey

I woke up at around 5 AM after a short night of 3 hours of sleep. It was our *madrasah's* annual *jalsah* the evening before, so going to bed early was tough with the waves of emotions hovering around me. Immediately after *Fajr* Salah, we were told to get ready with our bags and head outside and get in the car to the airport. We stuffed ourselves into the Sienna, one after another until it was 10 of us in. Once we got to the airport, we checked in our bags and passed through TSA quite smoothly alhamdulillah.

It was 6 AM and our flight was not until 8:30 AM, so we all took our seats near the boarding gate. Meanwhile one of the brothers traveling with us (Maulana Saahil) was kind enough to buy us all Dunkin Donuts mashaAllah! May Allah reward him.

While waiting for our boarding, I had a fruitful conversation with Mir Sadid Bhai, a dear friend of mine and a *dawrah* student of Darul Uloom New York. Our conversation spanned many topics such as comparative religion, books, and ideas we had in common. Although I was on a few hours of sleep, this genuine brother kept my spirits up. We soon boarded the plane alhamdulillah.

The flight was only about 2 ½ hours, but once we landed we were held back due to our plane's gate being occupied. I took this opportunity to give my beloved mother a call and we talked for a long time alhamdulillah. After a good 2 hours we were finally out of the plane and into the airport.

While we waited for our ride to come pick us up, we were joined by other brothers traveling from abroad for this *maqra'ah*. It was here where we met Sheikh Abdullah Chaabou, a Lebanese scholar from Australia. Sheikh had traveled to many countries such as Egypt and Syria in search of sacred knowledge and graduated specializing in *Hanafi* Fiqh from *Jām'iah al Islāh*, also known as the University of Tripoli. Along with him was his mate brother

Ishaq, (I refer to him as Ishaq Al Rahhāl as he's been traveling for *asānīd* for the past 10 years!) Ishaq Al Rahhāl is a revert who resides in South Carolina. He had the opportunity to study in many parts of the world too such as Morocco, Uzbekistan, and Egypt. They were both returning from another *maqra'ah* of *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* also organized by Cordoba Academy which took place in Luxor, Egypt.

From the start, these two *Shuyūkh* reminded me of the travels the past *Muhaddithīn* would make for acquiring *ahādīth*. As we exited the airport, Ishaq al Rahhāl told me how it was the practice of the *Muhaddithīn* to travel to various places for the acquiring of *Hadīth*, whereas the *Fuqahā* would accompany a Sheikh for a long period of time.

Arriving at the Institute of Islamic Education

We arrived at the institute around 1:30 PM and were warmly received by Hafiz Rageh Farah, an alumni and Hifdh teacher of the institution. Thereafter, we freshened up and prayed our *Dhuhr Salah*. Our first impression of the *madrasah* was that it was very clean and beautiful, Alhamdulillah. The beautiful greenery the campus had to offer was what I fell in love with most. I've always been nature-orientated and living in a place like this was a dream come true! The masjid of the *madrasah* had a spectacular dome and beautiful Arabic calligraphy all around it. I truly felt special to call this angelic environment my home for the next week. After we prayed, we were called to the basement for some much needed lunch, alhamdulillah.



Interior View of the masjid's dome

A Lovely Walk

After lunch, a few of us decided to go for a walk to check out the campus. Walking around the campus brought back memories from my previous *madrasah* back in Sacramento called *Darul Uloom al Islamiah*. The greenery and openness of this place highly resembled the scenery there. After returning from our lovely walk, many of us decided to take a nap until *Asr*. The institute made great effort in hosting us; they had mattresses with new bed sheets prepared for all of us, mashaAllah!

Nature is Life

If you know me truly, you should be familiar with the fact that I love walks. I decided to go for a solo stroll around the campus post *Asr*. It felt peaceful taking everything in, Alhamdulillah. As I walked through the scenic campus, I pondered over the importance of surrounding oneself with nature. The institute I currently study at is situated in a densely populated area, where the hustle and bustle of New York City is experienced daily. I feel like my mental health would be better off away from the busy city and in a more natural environment. I quite often mention that one of the best ways to connect with Allah is through exploring nature. Allah Himself tells us about the signs He's placed for those of intellect in the heavens and Earth to ponder on (2:64 Quran). As I returned to the masjid, I met with Qari Mujib who had just arrived. We had a mini *mashwara* (meeting) before *maghrib* and decided to have a proper one after *Salah*.

The principal of the madrasah, Maulana Ubaidullah Saleem led the *Maghrib* prayer. Immediately after the prayer, I rushed to meet Maulana. As I introduced myself to him by mentioning his visit to Los Angeles in 2019, he surprisingly recalled who I was. I had the honor of leading Maulana a few nights in *Tarāwīh* prayers in 2019.

We all settled in the basement for our official *mashwara*. A number of things were discussed such as attendance, the importance of such a gathering, and duties. This *mashwara* also allowed us to get to know one another alhamdulillah. Shortly after the *mashwarah*, we ate dinner and waited for Isha.

Meeting the Legend: Qari Abdullah Saleem Sahab

After *Isha*, a few classmates and I (Tajuddin and Nahyan) went to the first row to meet the legend, Maulana Abdullah Saleem. He was seated on a chair, wearing a white kurta and salwar, along with the classical boat shaped Topi common to the *'Ulamā* of Darul Uloom Deoband. We talked to him in an informal manner, while maintaining respect for the Sheikh. He was quite pleased for us to be here and made us feel at home with his warm welcome. On his way out of the masjid, Tajuddin offered to assist him with his shoes, to which he refused. There's something special about these friends of Allah who dislike taking help from others Masha'Allah. One of the reasons for this is to

avoid causing a burden to anyone. May Allah make us from among them.
Amin.



A rear view of the Institute of Islamic Education

Day 2 - August 12

The Maqra'ah

The day we've all been waiting for has come. Today was the first day of the *maqra'ah* and I wasn't so sure of what to expect. The session started with a recitation of *Qur'an* by Qari Moaz who was traveling from Florida. His recitation was soothing to our souls and ears both mashaAllah! I remember seeing him every now and then when he was a student at Darul Uloom New York. Despite being a *dawrah* student at the time, he was so humble and approachable.

After the recitation, Qari Mujib had requested Maulana Abdullah Saleem Sahab حفظه الله if his *sanad* of *hadith* could be read. Qari Yasseen Fariad was called up to read the Sanad in the Sheikh's presence. Thereafter both Maulana Abdullah Saleem Sahab حفظه الله and Sheikh Daniel حفظه الله gave the '*Ulamā ijāzah* for the *Al Hadith al Musalsal bi al Awwaliyyah* alhamdulillah.

Before starting the recital of the *Sahīh*, Maulana Abdullah Saleem حفظه الله gave us a little background about its author and the contents within. Imam al Bukhari spent 16 years compiling a work we intended to read in 8 days! After a short introduction, he himself initiated the recital of the *Sahih*.

I was very humbled to be in the presence of such great personalities in the dars of *Hadīth*. I simply felt that I was in *dawrah al hadīth*. Allah is indeed the ultimate bestower of all blessings we receive in life. Despite being an unworthy and sinful person, He accepted me to come participate in this blessed opportunity. "And proclaim the blessings of your Lord." (Quran 93:11)

After a few *ahādīth*, Sheikh Abdullah Chaabou took over. His reading was very fluent and quick, making it apparent that he had a lot of experience in these *maqāri'*. For the next 8 days, he would be one of our main reciters along with Qari Moaz whose turn came next an hour in. Qari Moaz's recitation of the blessed *ahādīth* was undoubtedly my favorite. As he applied his expertise of various tunes and melodies, I was hooked and wished he never stopped reciting, SubhānAllāh. Our first session was quite smooth and ended at *Dhuhr* time. Something I noticed throughout all of our *maqra'ah* sessions was that Maulana Abdullah Saleem Sahab would at all times be focused on the recital

of the *ahādīth* looking down at the book. The dedication was extraordinary SubhānAllāh! May Allāh be pleased with him. *Amin*.

As we waited for lunch post *Dhuhr*, I decided to take advantage of my stay with Sheikh Abdullah Chaabou and Ishaq *al* Rāhhāl by benefitting from them. We spoke about a range of topics such as the importance of working with Arabic manuscripts, best editions of books, ‘Ulama, and much more. We had lunch together and our conversation continued alhamdulillah. There was something about Sheikh Abdullah; his demeanor and charismatic nature brought a smile to all of our faces. After lunch, I took a nap till ‘*Asr*.

The Presence of Professor Maulana Muhibbur Rahman

For our post *asr* session, we were extremely honored to be joined by Maulana Muhibbur Rahman Sahab, the founder of Madani Academy and father of Qari Mujib *alhamdulillah*. As the *ahadith* were being recited, tears were seen rolling down the cheeks of hazrat. The high level of *iman* that the people of Allāh possess is spectacular *subhānAllāh*! Hadhrat gave the attendees his *ijazah* in *hadith* at the end *alhamdulillah*.

Gardening

As our second session came to an end, we were grateful for being given the *tauwfiq* to spend about 7 hours in the masjid reciting the *ahādīth* of our *Rasul* ﷺ. To clear our minds, Mir bhai and I decided to go for a walk outside after a long day. As we were walking in front of the masjid, we met Maulana Ubaidullah Sahab who was watering some of the institute’s flower plants. Excited to try new things, we offered to help him so that we can learn. He handed us the hose and assigned us a few bunches of plants to water. It was a wholesome and enjoyable experience alhamdulillah.

After a bit of gardening, we continued our evening walk around the campus. We came across a set of swings next to what we’d find out was Maulana Abdullah Saleem Sahab’s حفظه الله house. Both of us took a trip to our childhood park days as we spent a few moments swinging.

The Meeting of two Great Personalities

The same evening, the institute was hosting the world renowned Sayyid Maulana Arshad Madani حفظه الله, the *Sadr al Mudarris* of Darul Uloom Deoband and president of the Jamiat Ulama-e- Hind. It was about to be an occasional moment which history would record as a meeting of the two greatest personalities of this era. Maulana Abdullah Saleem حفظه الله and Maulana Arshad Madani حفظه الله shared the same teacher of *Bukhārī*, Maulana Fakhruddin al Muradabadi رحمه الله. Maulana Abdullah Sahab حفظه الله was further a student of Sheikh al Islām Sayyid Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani حفظه الله, the father of Maulana Arshad Sahab حفظه الله.

As he entered the masjid for *Maghrib*, the atmosphere of the entire masjid was filled with a blessed aura. Amongst us, was a noble individual whose lineage traced back to the Prophet ﷺ. As the *adhān* went off, it officially felt as if we were in the *haramain*.

An Eyewitness Report of Respecting Differences

During *Maghreb*, something unexpected occurred. While reciting verses from *Surah Yunus*, the imam mistakenly read أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ (“they are the people of Jannah”) in place of أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ (“they are the people of the fire”), thus resulting in a *lahn jaliyy* (major error). However, he immediately corrected this error in *Salāh* upon getting corrected. After *Salah*, Maulana Arshad Madani Sahab حفظه الله suggested that the *salah* be repeated. He directly quoted a *matn* of a *Hanafi Fiqh* work in Arabic, stating that the *Salah* wherein a *lahn jaliyy* is made must be repeated, even if it was corrected in the *salah* itself. Maulana Abdullah Saleem Sahab حفظه الله was of the opinion that the *salah* was valid and does not have to be repeated. Despite the two great *‘ālims* having this valid difference of opinion, Maulana Madani Sahab told Maulana Saleem Sahab, that the *salah* doesn’t have to be repeated if he decides. Ultimately, Maulana Abdullah Saleem Sahab agreed to have the *salah* repeated out of respect for Maulana Arshad Sahab حفظه الله. Thus *Iqāmah* was given by Maulana Arshad Sahab حفظه الله, and the *salah* was repeated. The spectacular respect maintained between the two of these great personalities despite the difference of opinion left us all speechless. It was a practical demonstration of the famous statement quoted in Sheikh Muhammad Awwāmah’s Adab al Ikhtilaf: حفظه الله

الإختلاف رحمة والخلاف شر

Having different opinions on certain things should not allow us to start vehemently opposing those we disagree with. Allah in His infinite wisdom has given each one of us different minds, so it only makes sense that we will differ. At the end of the day, we should agree to disagree and maintain respect with everyone.

Ijāzah of Maulana Arshad Madani to the ‘Ulama

After *Salah* finished, the ‘*Ulama* and students of knowledge were requested to come forward for a special gathering with Hazrat. I was fortunate enough to sit a few feet away from him alhamdulillah. Qari Moaz read the *Al Hadīth al Musalsal bi al Awwaliyah* as well as the first narration of *Bukhārī*.

Hazrat then began his talk by firstly speaking highly about Maulana Abdullah Saleem حفظه الله and thanking him. Hazrat mentioned that he considers Maulana Abdullah Sahab among his elders subhanAllah!

It is not the habit of Maulana Arshad Sahab to give his *ijāzah* of *hadīth* to **anyone**. But at the earnest request of Maulana Abdullah Saleem Sahab حفظه الله, it was during this *majlis* where he gave his *ijāzah* of *hadīth* to the ‘Ulama present. Hazrat emphasized the condition which came with the *ijāzah* and that was to abide by the methodology or *maslak* of the ‘Ulama of Deoband. He went on to mention that this methodology was not a phenomenon innovated by the ‘Ulama of Deoband, but was rather a revival of the teachings of our *salaf* undertaken by them. The *majlis* was a momentous occasion and one for the books as I’d say. Hazrat then changed his topic to fulfilling the rights of Allah and His creation intending the general audience. The talk was concluded by a short *duā* alhamdulillah.

Meeting Other ‘Ulama

As I walked towards the entrance of the masjid, I met Mufti Yasir Nadeem al-Wajidi, a teacher of the Institute of Islamic Education’s *Takhassus fi al ‘aqidah*. I’ve been subscribed to Mufti Sahab’s YouTube channel since 2019 and he’s been a figure I’ve been wanting to meet. During the few minutes I had with him, I commented about his famous video wherein he’s reading the *‘ibārah* of a *hadīth* text in Darul Uloom Deoband. The video was unexpectedly taken in 2001, and he did not find it until 2008 or 2009 (شكَّ الراوي). As I took leave, I had the opportunity to meet yet another amazing individual: Mufti Azeemuddin, an instructor at Darussalam Seminary alhamdulillah.

Meeting Sayyid Maulana Arshad Madani حفظه الله

As the masjid became less crowded, I spotted a few people surrounding Hazrat to meet him. It has been my great desire to meet him since last year, but that desire was yet to be fulfilled. His old age along with tons of people always surrounding him have been some of the obstacles which have prevented me from getting the chance to meet him. Among the few people seated around Hazrat was our principal of Darul Uloom New York. I took this opportunity to go to him and ask him to allow me to meet Hazrat. Noticing the perspiration on my hands, he advised me to first wipe them clean. As Hazrat spoke to a few attendees, I eagerly waited for his attention to turn towards me. When my chance came, I offered my hands to Hazrat giving salām. He turned to me with a cheerful face and replied while shaking my hands alhamdulillah. It was yet another dream fulfilled by my Allah. “So which of the favors of your Rabb will you deny?” (55:13 Qurān)

Day 3 - August 13

The Importance of the Honorific رضي الله عنه

By now, we've all gotten used to our daily routine of the *maqra'ah* sessions alhamdulillah. An interesting incident took place today in the first session. In most of the prints of *Bukhārī*, the honorific رضي الله عنه is sometimes omitted after a *sahābi*'s name. As the reciter was reading some of the *ahādīth*, he followed the book and left out the honorifics after some of the *sahābahs*' names. Noticing this, Maulana Abdullah Saleem Sahab commented by saying we should say رضي الله عنه.

The *Sahābah* رضي الله عنهم were the greatest people to walk the face of this Earth after the prophets. It is our belief as adherents of *Ahl al Sunnah wa Al Jamā'ah* that they were the most elite of the *ummah* after the Prophets. No *wali* can ever reach the spiritual status of the lowest ranking *Sahābī* as they were those who physically accompanied the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم. Another wisdom of Hazrat's comment about saying the honorific may have been to differentiate ourselves from other deviant groups who belittle certain *Sahābah* رضي الله عنهم. There is yet another incident I personally heard from Qari Mujib himself. 'Allamah Alimuddin mentions that, once 'Allamah Mushahid Bayampuri stopped teaching hadith for several days and resorted to his room while crying, and not eating nor sleeping. After 3 to 4 days, he started teaching again. His students asked the reason for this and he declined to answer. After much persistence, he said, "I made a grave error, for which Rasulullah صلى الله عليه وسلم scolded me. The error was that once I mentioned the name of Abu Huraira رضي الله عنه without mentioning the dua after his name, i.e. رضي الله عنه. Rasulullah صلى الله عليه وسلم scolded me, saying, "How is it appropriate that a muhaddith like you disrespected one of my beloved sahaba?" I grieved because of this. O beloved students, never commit such disrespect."

After *Dhuhr Salah*, we were requested to stay back for a *janāzah*. As the body of the deceased was brought into the masjid, we started to ponder

over the temporal nature of this *dunya*. Rich or poor, old or young, we must all bid farewell to this world one day. May Allah allow us to prepare for that day that's approaching as we speak.

مَنْ أَحَبَّ لِقَاءَ اللَّهِ أَحَبَّ اللَّهُ لِقَائَهُ

The son of the deceased mother requested to lead the *janāzah* prayer. Before starting the prayer, he humbly expressed his unworthiness to lead in front of many 'Ulama present. He also mentioned how his mother would always emphasize honoring and respecting the 'Ulama. May Allah be pleased with her. Aameen.

An Important Reminder

After *Maghrib*, we were gathered for an important reminder by Qari Mujiib. He reminded us of how fortunate we were to travel here for this *maqra'ah*. We did not gather here for a vacation. Reciting the blessed *ahādīth* of Nabi ﷺ in front of great *mashāyikh* was not something to be taken lightly. As with any important thing in life, its rights must be fulfilled. Our beloved teacher advised us try our best to wear white garments along with a turban during the *maqra'ah* sessions, sit in the tashahhud position, as well as behave with utmost respect, as if the Prophet ﷺ was amongst us. These concise yet impactful pieces of advice allowed us to renew our intentions and make the most out of the remainder of our journey alhamdulillah.

Day 4 - August 14

Introducing Sautul Quran Foundation

After *Fajr salah* today, Qari Mujib Sahab and I had a fruitful conversation in the masjid lobby. He told me about the visions and goals he has for the organization called Sautul Quran Foundation North America. Originally founded by his teacher Qari Esmail Essack رحمه الله, Qari Mujib wished to continue this mission in the states alhamdulillah, and ultimately throughout the entire world Insha'Allah.

The objectives of this foundation are the following:

1. The Saut ul-Qur-aan Foundation aims to encourage every Ummatee to do daily Tilaawah (recitation) of the Qur-aan in a correct manner.
2. We also promote and encourage the establishment of Tajweed classes for adults on a regular basis.
3. The foundation conducts workshops for the Mu'allimeen (tutors) of Hifdh or Tajweed classes, empowering them with the preferred methods of teaching these subjects to their students. In this way, we hope to educate the Ummah proficiently regarding every aspect of the Quran (Tajweed, Hifzh, Qiraa-ah and Tafseer).
4. We strive to educate the Muslim Ummah on al-Qiraa-ah as-Sab-ah (the various authentic modes and manners of reciting the Noble Qur-aan) and create an overall awareness and attachment of the Ummah to the Noble Qur-aan, Inshaa Allaah.

One of the most beautiful things about an organization which strives to spread the Word of Allah is that there remains no room for *ikhtilāf* regarding it. The *Ahl al Sunnah wa al jamā'ah* as a whole agree to the importance of the Quranic sciences. With that being said, this is a noble cause bringing about unity in the *ummah*. May Allah accept our beloved Qari Mujib's sincere efforts for the spread of Qurān, and may He allow us to help our beloved teacher. Āmīn.

Passing on the Legacy of Tajwīd

I have a friend with whom I went over Tajweed For Beginners by Qari Esmail Essack رحمه الله last year. Since then, he's shown a lot of interest in the field, and has requested to continue studying with me. I chose to start the famous poem on *Tajwīd* called *Al Muqaddimah al Jazariyyah* by Ibn al Jazārī with him tonight alhamdulillah. This is an introductory work on *Tajwīd* and is studied and memorized throughout the world. I had the honor of studying this work last year with Qari Mujib حفظه الله and thus wanted to pass on some of the gems I acquired from him alhamdulillah. In tonight's session, we covered an introduction to the work and its author, along with the first few stanzas of the poem.

Planning for Darussalam

One of the people I intended to meet during this trip to Illinois was Maulana Husain A. Sattar, a specialized pathologist and leader of *Tasawwuf*. He is the spiritual *Sheikh* of one of my teachers, Maulana Fahad Tirmizi. Maulana Fahad was planning to take me along with some classmates to visit him during our stay, but it turned out that the Sheikh was out of town. Therefore as a plan B, we decided on a trip to Darussalam Seminary. We were scheduled to go there for *Dhuhr* the following day.

Passing on the Legacy of Hadīth

After *Isha* I got on the phone with a very dear friend of mine (Anīs). We planned to cover the *Arba'īn* of *Imam Nawawi* (676 h) over this break. For tonight's session, I read the *Al Hadīth al Musalsal bi al Awwaliyyah* to him, thereby carrying out the tradition of the *Muhaddithīn* alhamdulillah. It was the erudite *Muhaddith Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah* (198 h) رحمه الله who initiated the practice of narrating the *Hadīth al Rahmah* as the first *hadīth* to students. This scholarly tradition of over a thousand years has continued up until this day. The first teacher I had the great fortune of hearing this *hadīth* from was Mufti Lutfi Alam, an instructor at Darul Uloom New York. He narrated the *hadīth* to us before starting the *Arba'īn* as well. The session went well as we went over some details about the *Musalsal* narrations as well as *ijāzah*. It was truly a wonderful way to end off the night alhamdulillah.

We slept a bit late last night, so waking up for Fajr was a bit difficult. Nonetheless, we were able to pray Fajr successfully alhamdulillah. After Fajr, I immediately retired to bed as I was extremely tired. I woke up at around 9:30 AM for breakfast and shortly headed for our *maqra'ah* session. Throughout the session I eagerly anticipated Maulana Fahad's arrival to take us to Darussalam. Immediately after the session, we all rushed outside to get in Darussalam's white van he had brought. The ride there was a good 30 minutes.

A Visit to Darussalam Seminary

I've always heard about the luxury Darussalam offered from other teachers and students. Our first glance at the plot blew us away. As we walked into the masjid, I felt as if I was in the ancient Ottoman Empire. Surrounded by minarets and classical Ottoman architecture, I couldn't believe I was in the suburbs of Lombard. We prayed *Dhuhr* and then met Mufti Minhajuddin, the principal of the institute. We requested him for a tour of the campus, to which he agreed but suggested that we first participate in the daily *manzil* session of the students. A final year student with a melodious voice read selections of Quran *ayāt* while everyone else followed on the screen. The *manzil* was concluded by a short *duā*.



Entrance of Darussalam

During this time, I met a good friend of mine who's a 6th year student of the *madrasah*. His name is Husain Abid. He is a big *Qirāt* fanatic *māshāAllāh*. I first met him online when we studied a portion of *Imam Shātibi's Aqīlah* together with Qari Mujibur Rahman. Raised in Los Angeles, he moved to Illinois with his family when he began his studies at the institution. I asked Husain Bhai if his teacher Qari Ahteram was present today, to which he replied in the affirmative. We set out searching for him, storming through different doors until we finally found him seated in his classroom. When I was introduced to Qari Ahteram, he stood up to greet me and asked how I was doing and where I was from. Qari Sāb is a student of Qari Ayoob Essack of Darul Uloom Zakariyyah in South Africa. As I took leave, I made the *duā*: اللهم اجعلنا من أهل القرآن to which he replied “*āmīn*”.

Husain Bhai took me to a few other classrooms including his. There he showed me his spot setup and introduced me to a few *qirāt* books. Let me tell

you, the view of the masjid's dome and its minarets from the classroom was absolutely spectacular!

From there we met up with the rest of our group and were given a tour of the entire campus starting from the masjid and ending with the library. I'd like to highlight the library in particular. It is home to thousands of books on the various Islamic sciences including *Qirāt*, *Tafsīr*, *Hadīth*, *Fiqh* etc. The library even has a barcode system for each of their books and is designed like a public library with a numbering system based on the subject. Due to the lack of time, we weren't able to spend much time there. I was however able to go sift through some of the shelves and saw a handful of familiar titles. The library was definitely my favorite part of the institute. We left at around 3 PM and rushed our way back to the Institute of Islamic Education to catch our 2nd *maqra'ah* session.

<p>000 Qur'ān 001 Maṣāḥif 002 Fahāris al-Qur'ān 003 Mufradāt al-Qur'ān 004 Translations of the Qur'ān 399 Miscellaneous</p>	<p>204 Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān 205 Tadwīn al-Qur'ān 206 Asbāb al-Nuzūl 207 al-Nāsikh wa al-Mansūkh 299 Miscellaneous</p>
<p>100 Tajwid and Qira'āt 101 Tajwid 102 Qira'āt 103 Tawjīh al-Qira'āt 104 al-Waqf wa al-Ibtidā' 105 Rasm 'Uthmānī & 'Ilm al-Ḍabṭ 106 'Ilm al-Fawāṣil 199 Miscellaneous</p>	<p>300 Tafsīr 301 al-Tafsīr bi al-Riwāyah 302 Jam' al-Aqwāl 303 al-Tafsīr bi al-Dirāyah 304 Tafsīr Ishārī 305 Tafsīr Lughawī/Balāghī 306 Murakkazat al-'Ibārah 307 Modern Tafāsīr 308 Ahkām al-Qur'ān 309 I'rāb al-Qur'ān 310 Urdu Tafsīr 311 English Tafsīr 399 Miscellaneous</p>
<p>200 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān and Uṣūl al-Tafsīr 201 General 202 Manāḥij al-Mufasssīrīn 203 I'jāz al-Qur'ān</p>	

Darussalam Library's Book Catalog



Books from the Qir'at section of the library

The car ride there was quite hectic as we were expecting to arrive a bit later than 4 o'clock. We all started panicking and became worried about not hearing the entire *Sahih* resulting in our *sanad* being incomplete (*munqati'*). Mir jokingly remarked, “we’ll be saying: إلى الإمام البخاري in place of وبالسند المنقطع.”

It was nearing 4 PM and we still had some distance left to reach our destination so we decided to try and join online. A few of us connected to the zoom link with our phones and were able to listen to a few minutes of the session in the car. We reached the institute shortly and took our seats alhamdulillah. Something worthy of mention is the fact that we had missed our lunch, so we were humbled by remembering the ascetic life of *Abu Hurairah*, a member of the *Ahl al Suffah*. He would patiently accompany *Nabi* ﷺ to learn from him, remaining hungry for long periods of time. It is through this sacrifice that he attained the honor of narrating the most *ahādīth* from *Nabi* ﷺ.

A Wholesome Walk with Qari Mujib

After *Maghrib*, I spent some time working on this memoir until about *Isha* time. After *Isha*, Qari Mujib wanted me to come walk with him around the campus. I was blessed to be in his company for the next hour or so, where he shared with me some of his great dreams and aspirations about *Sautul Quran Foundation North America*.

Day 6 - August 16

An Elegant Outfit

Maulana Abdullah Saleem Sahab's outfit left me speechless today Masha'Allah. He arrived in a white kurta topped with a baby blue vest and a matching topi with it. His appearance reminded me of the extreme honor and respect our *salaf* had for the *ahadith* of Nabi ﷺ. Let's take the example of Imam Mālik رحمه الله; he would always take a bath, wear his best clothes, and apply the best perfume before attending the *hadīth majlis*. Another point which came to mind from Hazrat's appearance was the *hadīth*: إن الله جميل يحب الجمال, "Indeed Allah is beautiful and loves beauty."

Our class session ended at noon today as it was Jumuah. I spent some time outside before jummuah reciting *Surah Kahf* and speaking to my mum alhamdulillah.

Muhaqqaq Editions

Before Jummuah, I sat down with Ishaq al *Rahhal* and talked about the benefit of *muhaqqaq* editions of books. He mentioned that investing in a good *muhaqqaq* print of a book is worth it, especially if you're buying works of Hadīth. Some of the best *muhaqqiqīn* for *hadīth* are Sheikh Muhammad Awwamah, Sheikh Shuaib Al Arnaūt, Sheikh Nāsir Al Dīn al Albānī, Sheikh Bashār 'Awād Ma'rūf.

Jumuah Lecture by Qari Mujib

Our respected teacher Mufti Mujib حفظه الله was scheduled to deliver the jumuah speech. He spoke about the importance of following the sunnah and how it is our means to Allah and ultimate success. Imam *Abu Dāwūd* once boarded a ship and as it sailed away, he heard a man on shore say *alhamdulillah*. He wanted to reply back by saying *yarhamuk Allah* as was the *sunnah*, but he was too far from the man to allow him to hear. He therefore paid the sailor a high amount to take the ship back to shore just so he could reply to him! Such was the importance and love our *salaf* had for the *sunnah*.

Every *sunnah* has a wisdom behind it, whether we understand it or not. Our duty is to follow and obey, without being skeptical. He also related that

Maulana Abdul Hamid, the principal of Darul Uloom Azaadville mentions a *sunnah* before any lecture he delivers. The *Khutbah* and *Salah* was performed by Maulana Saad Saleem, one of the sons of Maulana Abdullah Saleem Sahab حفظه الله.

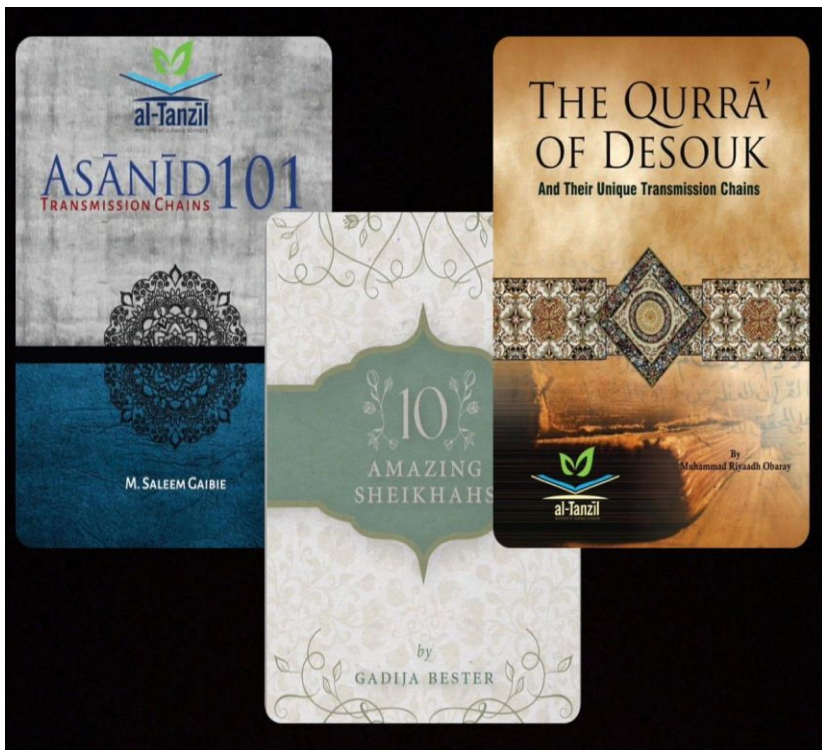
Informal Class with Sheikh Abdullah Chabou

After Jummuah, Mahdi, Mir, and I sat down with Sheikh Abdullah Chaabou and Ishaq al Rahhāl. We benefited a lot from Sheikh Abdullah during this conversation. We spoke about a range of topics such as *Hanafi Usūl*, grading *Hadīth*, *sahīh ahādīth* which aren't acted upon etc. He mentioned that Sheikh *Abdul Razzaq al Halabi* رحمه الله, the late Syrian *hanafi* scholar would constantly revise *Hāshiyah ibn Ābidīn*, *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, and *Tafsīr al Qurtubī*. *Ibn 'Ābidīn* (1198 h) رحمه الله also had a unique desk setup; he had a wheel of books in front of him for easy access to many books while researching. During the conversation, I asked the Sheikh to recommend some easy *Hanafi Usūl* works. He suggested reading the works of Sheikh Mustafa al Zarqā (1999) and Sheikh Ibrahim al Salqīnī (2011). The simple greeting of salam initiated at the beginning of this *majlis* led to an informal class with the Sheikh SubhanAllah!

Day 7 - August 17

Designing a Syllabus for Sautul Quran

There was a new reader for the *maqra'ah* session today. After *Dhuhr*, I decided to get started on some work Qari Mujib had assigned me with. I have the task of designing a syllabus for the *Tajwīd* and *Qirā'āt* courses *Sautul Quran* will soon offer to students not studying formally in *madrasah*. May Allah make the task easy for us. I'm currently using *Al Tanzil Institute's* course layout to get an idea. *Al Tanzil* is an institute based in Cape Town, South Africa dedicated solely for Quranic studies. It is run by Qari Saleem Gaibie حفظه الله, an expert in the sciences of *Tajwīd* and *Qirā'āt*. I love all of their publications and resources they have to offer on their website. May Allah accept from him and his team. *Amin*.



Few Publications of Al Tanzil Institute

Lunch with Sheikh Ahmad Mubarak

For lunch, Mir Bhai and I sat with Sheikh Ahmad Mubarak حفظه الله among others. I've been wanting to benefit from this unique personality since day one, but couldn't find the opportunity to do so. This was the opportunity I long awaited for alhamdulillah. Sheikh is an African American *Mālikī* who has studied Islam abroad in places like Azhar, Syria, and Hijāz. While we were eating our pizza, I asked the Sheikh to tell us a bit about his studies in Egypt, Syria, and the Hejaz region. From here, an enjoyable conversation began.

Sheikh had the opportunity to study at the famous Al Azhar University in the faculty of Hadīth studies. There he benefited from the likes of Sheikh Usama al Azhari (aka the famous Azhari Sheikh who was seen petting a cat during his lessons in a video) and Sheikh Ahmad Ma'bad, the great *muhaddith* of our times.

In Syria he benefited from a number of scholars including *Sheikh Ramadān al Būtī* (2013) and *Sheikh Ahmad Kaftārū* (2004), the founder of the *Jāmi'ah Abu al Fath* in Damascus. He told us about the time Sheikh Kaftārū met Elijah Muhammad, the then leader of the Nation of Islam movement during his visit to the states. There Sheikh Kaftārū requested him to send African American students to study at his university. This task was taken by Elijah's son Warith Deen Mohammed who sent many students to study at the university. Quite interestingly, the university gave special attention to the African American students by providing them with special living facilities as well as private teaching. When I heard this, I was very much delighted to see the good character Islam came with!

After some time, Mir Bhai asked the million dollar question: Did Imam Mālik practice *Sadl in Salāh* due to his arms being injured? As the Sheikh began to laugh, he remarked how such a claim is insane. He also quoted the famous *Mālikī* text *Al Mudawwanah al Kubrā* by *Sahnūn* (240 h) wherein Imam Mālik (179 h) was asked about tying the hands in *Salah*, to which he replied that he hasn't come across such thing regarding *Fardh* salah. As for the tying of the hands mentioned in the *ahādīth*, that is specific for *nafl* salah as a person stands longer therein. We ended our fruitful conversation by exchanging numbers alhamdulillah. This trip was surely filled with many gems, some yet to be discovered.

We had an extra session after *Maghrib* as well today. After the session, Qari Mujib made *duās* for our 2 *shuyūkh* who are giving us their precious time. Maulana Abdullah Saleem Sahab حفظه الله spent 8 ½ hours with us today despite his old age (he's 85). Sheikh Abu Bakr Daniel حفظه الله had spent the whole night sacrificing his sleep for us. He hopes that we will continue the legacy of passing down his *ijāzāt* which will serve as a *sadaqah jāriyah* for him inshāAllāh. May Allāh be pleased with all of our *mashāyikh*. *Āmīn*.

Library Chat with Sheikh Mazen

After dinner, a few of us decided to go check out the personal library of Qari Abdurrahman Saleem حفظه الله. With us was Sheikh Mazen Bleibel, Mahdi bhai, and another student of the institute. Earlier during the day, I had asked Sheikh Mazen a question about familiarizing ourselves with books, so this opportunity was golden. Sheikh is a Palestinian *Hanbali* student of knowledge. I heard about him through some individuals, but this was the first time we were having an official conversation alhamdulillah.

The first section of books we came across were some works on *tabaqāt*, or biographical accounts of '*ulamā*'. Sheikh Mazen started to introduce us to the famous *tabaqāt* works of the *Shawāfi*' and *Hanābilah*. His deep knowledge and interest in books and authors reminded me of my teacher, Mufti Mahdi Alam حفظه الله, while his informality and genuine nature reminded me of another teacher, Mufti Aminul Islam حفظه الله.

We then moved on to a few works on *asmā al rijāl* and he practically showed us how to use such books. As we moved on touring the library, I felt like a child in a candy shop eager to be given more candy. I recall seeing an 80 volume work on the history of Damascus by *Ibn 'Asākir*. This was the largest Arabic work I've seen in my life.



Tārīkh Damishq al Kabīr of Ibn'Asākir

Throughout this informal library chat, Mahdi Bhai and I asked many questions related to becoming active readers and better acquainted with books. One tip he shared was to read with a partner. This will keep both partners motivated to keep going forth and not get bored.

Sheikh shared a lot of fun facts about the *Hanbali madhab*, particularly its history and books. As we were chatting, my eyes happened to fall on a *Tajwīd* and *Qirā'āt* section, and knowing me, I had to go through all of it. I asked Sheikh Mazen if we could do so together. We eagerly went through each book and shared everything we knew about it. This was probably my favorite part in the library alhamdulillah. After more than 2 hours of journey into our rich past by talking about books, authors, and history we called it a night. I was indebted to Sheikh Mazen for sharing so many gems with me and being so down to earth. May Allah protect him!

Day 8 - August 19

There was a new item on the breakfast menu today: bagels with cream cheese! I'm not so much of a sweet breakfast person if you didn't know. Illinois's weather is quite interesting. During the morning *maqra'ah* session, it was cloudy as ever. However as the evening approached, the sun decided to appear out of the blue.

Meeting Mufti Abrar Mirza

After our morning session finished, I noticed a familiar face sitting in the back. It was none other than Mufti Abrar Mirza حفظه الله! Mufti Sahab is an elite student of the late Mufti Ebrahim Desai رحمه الله with an expertise in *Hanafi Fiqh*. He is currently in charge of the *Iftā* department here. After *Dhuhr*, there was an interesting sight in the corner of the masjid. Mufti Mujib, Mufti Abrar, Sheikh Abdullah Chaabou, and Sheikh Mazen were seen seated together discussing something. It was simply pleasant to see 3 *Hanafis* with a *Hanbali*.

I had an interesting thought today. Imagine if some of the current *shuyūkh* on this journey permanently stayed here and became my teachers. It would be a great honor to study *Usūl* and *Fiqh* under Sheikh Abdullah Chaabou, *Tārīkh* and acquainting myself with books and authors with Sheikh Mazen Bleibel, and improving my tone in recitation with Qari Moaz.

P.S: Daydreaming is an amazing escape from reality at times.

Day 9 - August 19

This morning *Fajr* was led by none other than Qari Yasseen, one of our *dawrah* graduates this year. He is a figure who I've always looked up to and took much benefit from alhamdulillah. May Allah accept his hard work and allow him to be a means of goodness for the *ummah*!

An Emotional Incident

Something worthy of mention occurred today. While the reciter read the *ahādīth* with a sweet tune, he got emotional when reading the *hadīth* of *Abu Talhah* رضي الله عنه donating his garden *Bairuhā* in the path of Allah when the āyah, لَنْ تَتَالَوْا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ was revealed. Such was the *iman* of the *sahabah*!

Library Chat Part II

After dinner, I met up with Sheikh Mazen in the second library of the institute. I noticed many more *hadīth* collections in this one compared to the previous library we had visited. I was proud to see the voluminous *Hadīth* works of our 'Ulama from the subcontinent on the shelves. *Awjaz al Masālik*, a 16 volume commentary on Imam Malik's *Muwatta* written by Sheikh Muhammad Zakariyyah Kandehlawī (1982) رحمه الله is just one example of the countless others. Despite being non Arab, they were masters of *hadīth* and served as examples.

As I browsed through the shelves, I further noticed more books on *Qirā'āt*. While I was happy to see books of the field I'd love to specialize in, I was also sad thinking about the lack of *Qirā'āt* books at our institute's library. The only work on *Qirā'ah* I've come across there is *Al Nashr* by *Ibn al Jazarī*, and that too a DKI print. Our *madāris* really need to step up their library game when it comes to housing books of various sciences, as well as keeping in mind the best editions for each book. I recall a teacher once saying that, "a *madrasah* without a library is like a person without a soul."



Tafsīr and ‘Ulūm al Qurān Section of the library

After viewing some of the books, we took our seats to talk about a complex topic. I asked Sheikh Mazen something about the *Athari* creed. This led to an explanation of the 2 main differences the *Atharis* have with the *Māturīdīs*/*Ash’arīs*. The differences are as follows:

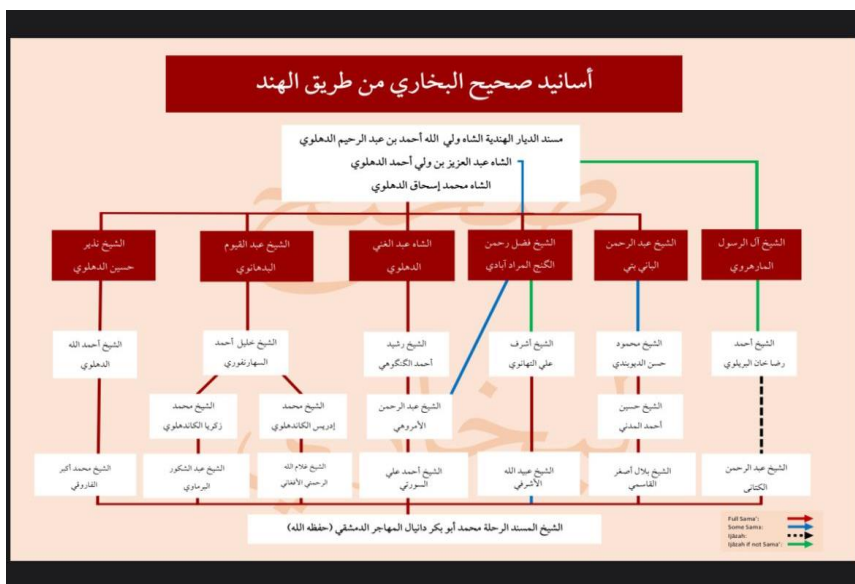
1. *Atharis* do not subscribe to ta’wīl whereas the *Ash’arīs* and *Māturīdīs* do.
2. *Atharis* do not divide the Quran into being Kalam Lafdhi or Kalam Nafsi with regards to it being a divine attribute of Allah.

This is a much more detailed discussion covered in the *‘ilm al Kalām* books by the famous *Hanbali*, *Ibn Qudāmah al Maqdisī* (689 h). My brain was fried trying to keep up with what Sheikh Mazen was talking about. After about an hour or so, we called it a night alhamdulillah.

Day 10 - August 20

Khatm Day

Today is the day we've all worked so hard to reach: *Khatm day*. The *maqra'ah* sessions went smoothly throughout the day alhamdulillah. Our *Khatm* was expected to take place after *Maghreb Salah*, but guests started to arrive at 'Asr time *SubhānAllāh!* Sheikh Abdullah Chaabou recited in our last session of this beautiful *maqra'ah*. At last, Maulana Abdullah Saleem Sahab completed the last *hadīth* of *Bukhārī* himself. It was an emotional moment for all of us. After reciting over five thousand *ahādīth*, we finally reached our end goal alhamdulillah. Maulana Abdullah Sahab gave a small talk on the system of *isnād*, highlighting this unique characteristic our *dīn* takes pride in. Thereafter, Sheikh Mohammed Daniel gave the 'Ulamā present verbal *ijāzah* for *Bukhārī*. The talk was concluded with a heartfelt *duā* along with the distribution of certificates of *ijāzah* and a brief biography prepared on Maulana Abdullah Saleem Sahab. I was more happy to receive the biography rather than the certificates. Something outstanding that this biography work included were many pictures of documents from the Sheikh's life, as well as pictures of books. Shortly after that, we prayed '*ishā salah* and had dinner.



The Indian chains of *Bukhāri* through which Sheikh Mohammed Daniel narrates



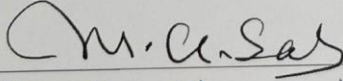
**The asānīd of Qāri Maulana Abdullah Saleem and Sheikh Mohammed
Abu Bakr Daniel**

إجازة الحديث

الحمد لله الذي خلقنا في أحسن تقويم وهدانا إلى خير الأديان وما كنا لنهتدي لولا أن هدانا الله. وبعث للهداية الأنبياء والرسل وفي ختامهم أفضلهم وأشرفهم محمد بن عبد الله القرشي الهاشمي، فالصلاة والسلام على جميع الأنبياء والمرسلين، خصوصاً على خاتمة النبيين وعلى آله وصحبه، ومن تبعهم بإحسان إلى يوم الدين. أما بعد

فيقول العبد الضعيف أخوك في الله محمد عبد الله سليم المتخرج في دارالعلوم ديوبند الهند، والمدرس فيها سابقاً ومؤسس معهد تعليم الاسلام في قرية أيلجن من مضافات شكافو الولايات المتحدة، ومدرس كتب الحديث فيه من عشرات سنين، إن جمعاً من الأخوة العلماء اجتمعوا لدي لقراءة صحيح البخاري من أوله إلى آخره وطلبوا مني الإجازة في الحديث بالسند المتصل مني إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم

فطلباً من الأخ الفاضل [Redacted] أجزه بسندي عن مشايخي منهم شيخ الاسلام مولانا حسين أحمد المدني والشيخ فخر الدين المراد آبادي والشيخ ابراهيم البلباوي، كلهم عن شيخ الهند مولانا محمود حسن الديوبندي، عن حجة الاسلام مولانا محمد قاسم النانوتوي، عن الشيخ عبد الغني المجددي، عن الشاه محمد إسحاق، عن الشاه عبد العزيز، عن الشاه ولي الله المحدث الدهلوي (وسنده إلى أصحاب الكتب السنة في ثبته) توكلنا على الله، وموصياً للأخ بتقوى الله سبحانه، والأخلاص في النية، والسعي المشكور لنشر علوم الدين، وأن لا ينساني في دعواته الصالحة، والله الموفق وآخر دعوانا أن الحمد لله رب العالمين

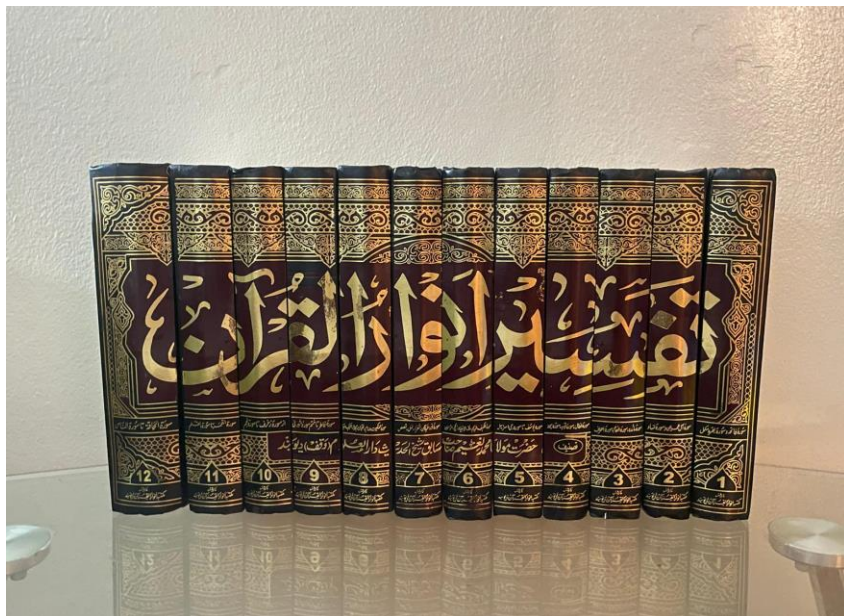

شيخ الحديث حضرت مولانا محمد عبد الله سليم القاسمي

Ijazah of Maulana Abdullah Saleem

Receiving Tafsir Anwar al Quran

I recall Maulana Ubaidullah Sahab mentioning on the 1st day of the *maqra'ah* that at the end of the program, each participant will be gifted a set of his paternal grandfather Maulana Na'eem Sahab's رحمه الله famous work

of *Tafsīr*. Before dinner, I went to him to remind him about that. After some time, we all went to the library to pick up our set of books. The work spans 12 volumes, and each volume has a beautiful Arabic calligraphic design on it. I started to pack my belongings along with the beautiful gift I received into my suitcase.



Tafsīr Anwār al Qurān

An Eerie Setting

The following day was the first day of the school year, so we moved to the guest rooms which were located in a building adjacent to Maulana Abdullah Saleem Sahab's residence. As we loaded in with our belongings, I got an eerie vibe. The brick walls of the rooms, along with the old school Lawson couches brought shivers down my spine. After officially settling in the room, we retired for much needed rest alhamdulillah.

Day 11 - August 21

Humility of Qari Abdurrahman

Qari Mujib Sahab was scheduled to leave after Fajr today. Most of our flights were not until evening, so we still had some time left here. As I walked into the *masjid* for *Dhuhr*, I noticed dozens of students of knowledge scattered around. The atmosphere made me reminisce about a normal weekday at our *madrasah*. After *Dhuhr*, I met a friend of mine who's a *Dawrah* student of the institute. We were previously classmates at Darul Uloom al Islamiyah in Sacramento. After a walk around the *madrasah*, we had lunch with the other students. I will mention that lunchtime here felt much more peaceful than our *madrasah*. The kids were much more "civilized" here compared to kids I've seen elsewhere. As we waited in line to get our lunch, I noticed Qari Abdurrahman Sahab patiently serving the kids with his own hands. This action of his really reminded me of the kindness and love our *Nabi* ﷺ had for his juniors!

A Bittersweet Goodbye

After lunch, we loaded our bags into the *madrasah* van. Our hearts were heavy as we bade farewell to the *madrasah* we called home for the last 10 days. We got to the airport at around 4 O'Clock and took our different ways. My flight wasn't until 9:45 PM, so this gave me a lot of time to get some work done alhamdulillah.

My 10 day journey here in Illinois has officially come to an end. It was a very memorable trip, filled with many *fawā'id* and memories alhamdulillah. When a person travels, he truly realizes what he's been missing out on.

I ask Allah to accept this journey from me, my teacher, and all other fellow *tullāb al 'ilm*. May Allah abundantly reward the extraordinary *mashāyikh* I met during this trip. May He invite us to His *Haramain* al *Sharīfain* again and again and allow us to continue traveling for *'ilm*. May He be pleased with each and every single one of us in this life and the next. *Āmīn*.

الدنيا سفر يوم والآخرة مقام أبدي

تمت بالخير

APPENDIX

Biographies of Selected ‘Ulamā

1. Sheikh Qāri Maulana Muhammad Abdullah Saleem al Qāsimī:

Shaykh Maulana Abdullah Saleem was born in 1358 AH (1939 CE) in India, and was raised under the guidance of his father, Shaykh Na’eem Sahib (may Allah have mercy on him), a distinguished Hadith scholar and teacher at the renowned Darul Uloom Deoband. Growing up in this environment of profound scholarship, Shaykh Abdullah Saleem enrolled in Darul Uloom Deoband at a young age, where he completed his studies in the late 1950s. During his time at the seminary, he studied *Sahih al-Bukhari* under Shaykh al-Islam Husain Ahmad al-Madani and Maulana Fakhruddin al-Muradabadi, *Sahih Muslim* and *Sunan al-Tirmidhi* under ‘Allamah Ibrahim Balyawi, *Sunan al-Nasai* under Maulana Bashir Ahmad Khan Bulandsheri, *Sunan Abu Dawud* under Maulana Fakhr al-Hasan al-Muradabadi, *Sunan ibn Majah* and *Muwatta Malik* under Maulana Zahur Ahmad al-Deobandi, and *Muwatta Muhammad* under Maulana Jalil Ahmad al-Kiranawi. Additionally, he studied *Sharh Ma’ani al-Athar* of Imam al-Tahawi under Maulana Sayyid Hasan al-Deobandi.

In the field of Qur’anic recitation (Qira’at), Shaykh Abdullah Saleem furthered his studies under the tutelage of Qari Hifzur Rahman Partabghari, a student of the renowned Qari Abdur Rahman Makki, author of *Fawa'id Makkiyah*. From 1388 to 1402 AH, Shaykh Abdullah Saleem served as an instructor in the Qira’at department at Darul Uloom Deoband, and from 1397 to 1402, he held the esteemed position of head of the Qira’at branch. During this time, many prominent scholars, such as the late Qari Ahmadullah (former head of the Qira’at branch at Darul Uloom Dabhel, Gujarat), Qari Abul Hasan (author of over 40 works on Qira’at), Qari Jamshed (current instructor in the Qira’at department at Darul Uloom Deoband), Mufti Abul Qasim Nu’mani (Principal

of Darul Uloom Deoband), and Maulana Abdul Hamid Ishaq (Principal of Darul Uloom Azaadville, South Africa), benefited from his teachings.

Shaykh Abdullah Saleem also had the honor of meeting many distinguished scholars throughout his career, including Maulana Rasul Khan, Maulana Idris Kandelwi, Shah Wasiyullah, Shah Abdul Qadir Raipuri, and others, all of whom left a lasting influence on his intellectual and spiritual development.

In 1982, Shaykh Abdullah Saleem moved to the United States, where he has since served the Muslim communities in Chicago and beyond. He dedicated 25 years to holding Tafsir programs, in which he covered the entire Qur'an. His lectures on Tafsir are currently being compiled for future publication. Additionally, he led Tarawih prayers in the Chicago area for over two decades, starting in the 1980s.

In 1989, he founded the Institute of Islamic Education (IIE) with the aim of raising the standard of Islamic education. His own father, Maulana Na'eem Sahib, later joined the institute to teach *Sahih Bukhari*. Following his father's passing in 2007, Shaykh Abdullah Saleem continued his legacy, teaching *Sahih Bukhari* and a range of other advanced Islamic texts at IIE. Despite advancing in age, he remains committed to dedicating long hours to the service of Islam, ensuring that his students receive the finest instruction.

May Allah (SWT) grant Shaykh Abdullah Saleem long life, continued health, and an abundance of reward for his tireless service to the preservation and propagation of Islamic knowledge. May we continue to benefit from his guidance for many years to come.

2. Sheikh al-Musnid Mohammed Daniel al-Muhajid al-Damishqi

Shaykh al-Hadith al-Musnid Mohammed Daniel al-Muhajir al-Damishqi, originally from Great Britain, found his spiritual home in Damascus, Syria, where he migrated to pursue the Sacred Sciences. Until recently, he worked in Kuwait as a consultant to the Director of Public Affairs at the Kuwait Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs, alongside numerous other roles in various organizations. However, he resigned from these positions to devote himself fully to humanitarian work, particularly supporting Syrian refugees. In Turkey, he played a pivotal role in establishing a center focused on the personal development of Syrian youth in Gaziantep.

Shaykh Mohammed Daniel's unwavering commitment to seeking '*beneficial knowledge*'—as described by the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)—has driven him to study under some of the world's most renowned scholars in a wide array of Islamic disciplines. His belief in learning from scholars of the Sunnah, regardless of their affiliations, has shaped his approach to scholarship, fostering an attitude of tolerance and respect toward others. This openness has been widely recognized by both his students and peers.

Over the course of his academic journey, Shaykh Mohammed Daniel has studied extensively in Syria, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and across more than 45 countries. His travels have included intensive study periods in India, Pakistan, Hejaz, Malaysia, Turkey, Bangladesh, and Morocco. These experiences allowed him to meet and receive personal recognition and *Ijazah* from hundreds of scholars, covering a vast array of classical works in Tafsir, Hadith, Fiqh, Mantiq, Usool, and Seerah.

During his years of study in Damascus, he was privileged to attend two of the most prominent institutions of learning, Mahad Abu Nour and Mahad Fath al-Islami. There, he completed a Master's degree in Islamic Studies through Al-Azhar University. In his second term at Mahad Fath al-Islami, he was invited to teach Islamic studies to postgraduate students at the Faculty of Islamic Studies in International Languages, a role he embraced while continuing his own studies under the tutelage of eminent scholars.

Shaykh Mohammed Daniel's scholarly focus includes the Hadith Sciences, Comparative Religion, and Qur'anic Exegesis. He is a staunch proponent of traditional methods in acquiring the Sacred Sciences, emphasizing classical approaches to learning and scholarship.

By the grace of Allah, Shaykh Mohammed Daniel, with the support of his wife, founded Cordoba Academy. Over the past six years, the academy has taught over 2,000 serious students worldwide through more than 800 classes covering over 70 classical Islamic texts.

**Some of the scholars who have authorized Shaykh Mohammed Daniel,
(for brevity only five scholars for each region has been provided below):**

<p>Syria:</p> <p>Shaykh Mohammed Ali al-Sabuni Shaykh Hussain Hasan al-Sa'biyah Shaykh Nizaar al-Khateeb Shaykh Wahbi Sulayman al-Ghawji al-Albani Shaykh Shukri al-Luhafi</p> <p>Hejaz:</p> <p>Shaykh Abdullah Ibn Abdur Rahman Saad Shaykh Umar al-Jaylani Shaykh Abdul Hafeez al-Makki Shaykh al-Ghumri Shaykh Abdur Rahman al-Ayaaf</p> <p>India:</p> <p>Shaykh Mohammed Yunus al-Jaunpuri Shaykh Zainul Abideen al-Azami Shaykh Mohammed Saalim al-Qasimi Shaykh Abdul Haq al-Azami Shaykh Taqi Uddin al-Nadwi</p> <p>Bangladesh:</p> <p>Shaykh Shah Ahmad Shafi Shaykh Qadhi Mu'tasim Billah Shaykh Mufti Abdur Rahman Shaykh Fadlul Haq Amini Shaykh Abdur Rabb al-Mazahiri</p> <p>Pakistan:</p> <p>Shaykh Mohammed Taqi al-Uthmani Shaykh Saleemullah Khan Shaykh Abdul Mannan Nurpuri</p>	<p>Nepal:</p> <p>Shaykh Abdullah Jolam Shaykh Haider Ali al-Nadwi Shaykh Ayyub al-Nadwi Shaykh Ibrahim al-Qasimi Shaykh Mohammed Sha'id Hussain al-Mazahiri</p> <p>Iraq:</p> <p>Shaikh Akram Abdul Wahab al-Mosuli Shaikh Subhi Jasim al-Samura'ee Shaikh Bashar Awaad Maruf Shaikh Maher Yaseen Fahal Shaikh Dr Ali Mohiuddin Al-Quradagi</p> <p>Egypt:</p> <p>Shaykh Abdul Baith al-Kittani Shaykh Moawad Awadh Ibrahim Shaykh Mohammed Basyouni Zaghoul Shaykh Ali Ibn Mohammed Tawfiq al-Nahaas Shaykh Ahmed Ma'bad al-Azhari</p> <p>Gulf:</p> <p>Shaykh Abdur Rahman al-Attas Shaykh Dr Yusuf al-Qardawi Shaykh Abu Bakr al-Mashoor Shaykh Dr Waleed al-Munayis al-Kuwaiti Shaykh Dr Abdullah Ibn Hamoud al-Tuwaijri</p> <p>Malaysia:</p> <p>Shaykh Nik Mat Nik Abdul Aziz Shaykh Mohammed Rajab al-Khairanee</p>
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<p>Shaykh Mazhar Akhtar Shaykh Abdul Haleem Nu'mani</p> <p>Al-Maghrib:</p> <p>Shaykh Abdur Rahman Al-Kittani Shaykh Abdullah al-Tilidi Shaykh Dr Idris al-Fasi al-Fihri Shaykh Mohammed Amin Bu Khubza Shaykh Abdur Rahman al-Sheybaan</p> <p>Yemen:</p> <p>Shaykh Mohammed Ibn Isma'il al-Imrani Shaykh Hamoyd al-Moayid Shaykh Mohammed Ibn Ali Mansoor as-Sanani Shaykh Mustafa al-Qudaymi Shaykh Abdullah al-Shoaibi</p> <p>Jordan:</p> <p>Shaykh Mohammed Shakur al-Mayadini Shaykh Yusuf Atoum al-Jirshi Shaykh Shuayb al-Arna'ut Shaykh Essam Hadi Shaykh Sharif Umar Sharow</p>	<p>Shaykh Haji Salih bin Musa Shaykh Abdullah al-Bukhari Shaykh Wan Izzudeen al-Mazahiri</p> <p>Indonesia:</p> <p>Shaykh Abdullah Ridwaan Shaykh Nuruddin al-Marbu Shaykh Ahmed al-Jamhooree Shaykh Husain Filambani Shaykh Yahya Zikri</p> <p>Afghanistan:</p> <p>Shaykh Ghulamullah Rahmati Shaykh Hameedullah Jaan Shaykh Misbah al-Uloom Shaykh Anwar Badakhshani Shaykh Muhiuddin al-Afghani al-Madani</p> <p>Burma:</p> <p>Shaykh Mohammed Nadir al-Arkani Shaykh Abdus Shakur al-Burmawi Shaykh Rahmat Ullah al-Burmawi Shaykh Yahya al-Mudarris Shaykh Abu al-Ashbaal al-Arkani</p>
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3. Sayyid Maulana Arshad Madani

Sayyid Maulana Arshad Madani, the son of the esteemed Maulana Syed Hussain Ahmad Madani—former President of Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind and a prominent leader who was imprisoned in Malta during British colonial rule—is a distinguished Islamic scholar and leader. Maulana Syed Hussain Ahmad Madani was also the Sadr al-Mudarrisīn and Sheikh al-Hadīth at Darul Uloom Deoband, a position of great academic and spiritual significance. Following in his father's footsteps, Maulana Arshad Madani assumed the presidency of Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind in 2006, continuing the legacy of his family in Islamic scholarship and

social reform. In 2012, he was elected a member of the Muslim World League in Makkah, Saudi Arabia, and became a professor of Hadith at Darul Uloom Deoband in Saharanpur, Uttar Pradesh.

Maulana Arshad Madani's educational journey began in Deoband, where he studied under the guidance of Hazrat Mawlana Asghar Ali, a disciple of his venerable father, Hazrat Shaykhul Islam Mawlana Sayyid Hussain Ahmad Madani. He then enrolled at the renowned Darul Uloom Deoband for higher education, where he received instruction from some of the greatest scholars of the time. His teachers included Hazrat Mawlana Naseer Ahmad Khan, under whom he studied several classical texts, including *Sharh al-Aqaa'id*, *Musaamirah*, and *Maqaamaatul Hariri*. Maulana Arshad Madani completed his studies in 1964, including the study of *Sahih al-Bukhari* under Hazrat Mawlana Sayyid Fakhruddin Ahmad Moradabaadi. Upon graduation in 1965, he began his teaching career at Jamiah Qasmiyyah in Bihar, where he was nurtured with love and guidance by Mawlana Fakhruddin Sahib. In 1969, he followed his teacher's advice to join Madrasah Shaahi in Moradabad, where he taught texts such as *Mishkatul Masabeeh*, *Sahih Muslim*, and *Muwatta Imam Maalik*.

In 1982, Maulana Arshad Madani returned to Deoband, where he began teaching advanced texts in the Dars-e-Nizami curriculum, including *Sahih Muslim*, *Tirmidhi*, and *Mishkatul-Masabeeh*. His lectures were marked by consistency and vigor, inspiring great enthusiasm in his students. He also served as the Naazim-e-Talimat (Director of Education) at Darul Uloom Deoband, a position he was entrusted with by the Shura (council members) of the institution. During his tenure, he made significant contributions to the standardization of the educational system, particularly in consolidating the foundational levels of education and enhancing the Qur'anic memorization department.

In addition to his academic contributions, Maulana Arshad Madani has played an active role in the social and political reform movements in India. Following in the footsteps of his father and elder brother, Maulana Sayyid As'ad Madani, he has been deeply involved in addressing issues of social reform and unity within the Muslim community. As an executive member of Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind and its president, he has focused on addressing factionalism within the Muslim community and advocating for unity and social justice.

Maulana Arshad Madani's scholarly works include the translation of *Tarjuma-e-Quran* by Shaykhul Hind and *Tafseer Uthmaani* from Urdu into Hindi, a project that spanned over 12 years. He has also conducted extensive research on the original manuscripts of *Nukhabul Afkaar* by Allamah 'Ayni and published a valuable commentary on *Sharh Ma'aani Al-Aathaar* by the renowned traditional scholar Al-Tahawi, which had not been previously published. One of his greatest academic contributions is his translation of *Naqsh-e-Hayat*, the biography of his father, Hazrat Mawlana Sayyid Hussain Ahmad Madani, from Urdu into Arabic, preserving his father's legacy for a broader audience. These works stand as a testament to Maulana Arshad Madani's dedication to the preservation and propagation of classical Islamic scholarship.

4. Professor Maulana Muhibbur Rahma

Professor Maulana Muhibbur Rahman is a distinguished scholar in the fields of Arabic and Islamic studies, with an extensive background in Hadith, Fiqh, and Qur'anic sciences. He had the privilege of studying and hearing a significant portion of *Sahih al-Bukhari* from renowned scholars, including 'Allāmah Riyāsah 'Alī Sylethi, who had heard it from the famous 'Allāmah Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī. Additionally, he studied much of *Sahih al-Bukhari* from 'Allāmah 'Azīz al Haqq ibn Irshād 'Alī al Dākowī, who received it through 'Allāmah Shabbir Ahmad Uthmānī and Sheikhul Hind Mahmūd al Hasan. His learning in Hadith continued with Sheikhul Hadīth 'Azīz al Haqq, who had also studied with these same notable figures, including Sheikh Zafar Ahmad 'Uthmānī and 'Allāmah Abdul Karīm Al Koriyā. He further benefited from the teachings of Sheikhul Islām Hussain Ahmad Madani. Maulana Muhibbur Rahman also studied *Mishkāt* under the guidance of 'Allāmah Khatīb 'Ubaidul Haqq Sylethi.

In addition to his scholarly pursuits, Maulana Muhibbur Rahman received Ijāzah (authorization) from Sayyid Maulana Arshad Madani and earned a Master's degree in Arabic and Islamic studies from Dhaka University. He further pursued his studies in *Ilm al-Qirā'āt* (science of Qur'anic recitation) at Darul Uloom Tangail, where he gained expertise in the rules of Qur'anic recitation. As a professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies at Islamic University Tangail, he has made significant contributions to the academic and religious communities. He also served as the editor of the monthly *Dawat* and coordinated important religious events, including the Seeratun Nabi Conference and the New York Local Hilal Committee.

Maulana Muhibbur Rahman is recognized as one of the most senior scholars in New York City, where he played a key role in the establishment of several masājid and

madāris. His leadership also extended to serving as Imam and Khatib at Madinah Masjid and Masjid al Aman. He was instrumental in hosting prominent scholars, including Sayyid Maulana As’ad Madani and Sayyid Maulana Arshad Madani. Despite the challenges of a limited number of local madāris, he raised four children with a comprehensive Islamic education. In addition to his scholarly and community work, Maulana Muhibbur Rahman was responsible for securing an interest-free house for his family, navigating the challenges of an environment lacking Sharia-compliant banking options.

A Few of His many Publications:

1. A Biography of ‘Allāmah Mushāhid Bhuiyanfurī
2. A Biography of ‘Allāmah Asad Madani
3. A Response to Falsehood (Baateler Jawaab)
4. Essentials of Islam
5. 34 years in America
6. The Noble and Significant Journey to the Land of the Prophets



MADANI

ACADEMY

info@madaniacademy.org
madaniacademy.org