

SHAYKH
ʿABD AL-FATTĀḤ ABŪ GHUDDAH

(1336-1417 AH/1917-1997 CE)

رحمه الله عليه

Based on an obituary by

ʿAllāmah Muftī Muhammad Taqi Usmani

Foreword by Shaykh Muhammad Saleem Dhorat

SHAYKH ʿABD AL-FATTĀḤ ABŪ GHUDDAH

(1336-1417 AH/1917-1997 CE)

رحمه الله عليه

Based on an obituary by

ʿAllāmah Muftī Muhammad Taqi Usmani

Foreword by Shaykh Muhammad Saleem Dhorat

Obituary translated by Abu Unaysah & Ibrahim Amin al-Kuwaiti
Endnotes and addendum by Abu Asim Badrul Islam & Zameelur Rahman

First edition: January 2012
3000 copies (for free distribution only)
Free online edition: April 2012

No copyrights

Provided that no alterations are made, this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the authors.

Contents

About the author 3

Preface:
Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﵀ the inspiration 6

Foreword 15

Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﵀ 20

Notes 30

Addendum:
Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah's ﵀ commendation (*taqrīẓ*)
of ʿAllāmah Muftī Muhammad Taqi Usmani's *Takmilah Fatḥ al-Mulhim* 38

Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah's ﵀ commendation (*taqrīẓ*)
of ʿAllāmah Ẓafar Aḥmad ʿUthmānī Thānawī's ﵀ *Iʿlāʾ al-Sunan* 45

Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah's ﵀ letter to
Shaykh al-Ḥadīth Mawlānā Muḥammad Zakariyyā Kāndhlawī ﵀ 51

About the author

Abu Asim Badrul Islam

Born in the town of Deoband (U.P., India) on 5th Shawwāl 1362 AH (3rd October 1943 CE), ʿAllāmah Muftī Muhammad Taqi Usmani is one of the greatest living authorities in the sciences of Islām, particularly ḥadīth, Islamic finance, Islamic law and its modern application. He was brought up and trained over a period of thirty years by his illustrious father, the legendary Imām ʿAllāmah Muftī Muḥammad Shafīʿ ﷺ, the grand Muftī of India and Pakistan consecutively, one of the founding fathers of the Islāmic Republic of Pakistan, and popularly known as the author of *Tafsīr Maʿārif al-Qurʾān* (see: *Lamḥāt min Ḥayāt al-Qāḍī Muḥammad Taqī al-ʿUthmānī*, p. 11).

Muftī Muhammad Taqi Usmani studied under some of the greatest *ʿulamāʾ* and *mashāyikh* of the last century, all of whom granted him formal *ijāzāt* in the sciences of Islam. The depth of his knowledge of fiqh and its application can be gauged from the fact that one of his first formal published fatwas was issued whilst he was still a student of the *Dars-e-Niẓāmī* course (before commencing the final *Dawra-e-ḥadīth* year) during 1378 AH (1959 CE) at the astonishing age of sixteen, which was checked and endorsed by his illustrious father who expressed his surprise and satisfaction at this in a written note added to the fatwa (see: *Fiqhī Maqālāt*, 2:33). In the foreword to his recently published four-volume *Fatāwā ʿUthmānī* (1:33), he himself mentions how he had written his first fatwa even before then. He says that during 1377 AH (1958 CE), when he was still a student of the first two volumes

of the four-volume lithographic Indian edition of Imām Al-Marghīnānī's ﷺ *Al-Hidāyah* in Ḥanafī fiqh, his illustrious teacher, Shaykh Muftī Walī Ḥasan Tonkī ﷺ (who later became the grand muftī of the prestigious Jāmiʿah al-ʿUlūm al-Islāmiyyah in ʿAllāmah Binnorī Town, Karachi), had instructed him to write a fatwa regarding ṭalāq (divorce). His teacher endorsed this and signed it himself. Since then, he has been writing and lecturing extensively in Arabic, Urdu, [Persian] and English. His currently published works number over sixty, the largest and most splendid being his *Takmilah Fatḥ al-Mulhim bi Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Imām Muslim* in six large volumes, written over a period of eighteen years (see endnote vi).

Besides his unparalleled grounding in the exoteric sciences of Islam, he is a leading master in the esoteric science of taṣawwuf, in which he has *ijāzah* from two of the leading masters of the last century, Shaykh Mawlānā Muḥammad Masiḥullāh Khān Sherwāni ﷺ (Jalalabad, India) and Dr. ʿAbd al-Ḥayy ʿ*Ārifī* ﷺ (Karachi, Pakistan), both of whom were *khulafāʾ* of the legendary Imām *Ḥakīm al-Ummah* Mawlānā Ashraf ʿAli Thānawī ﷺ (see: *Lamḥāt min Ḥayāt al-Qāḍī Muḥammad Taqī al-ʿUthmānī*, p. 22-23, p. 53).

ʿAllāmah Muftī Muhammad Taqi Usmani, in following the footsteps of his elders, Imām ʿAllāmah Muftī Muḥammad Shafīʿ ﷺ, *Shaykh al-Islām* Mawlānā Shabbīr Aḥmad ʿUthmānī ﷺ, Imām ʿAllāmah Mawlānā Muḥammad Yūsuf Binnorī ﷺ, Imām ʿAllāmah Mawlānā Ẓafar Aḥmad ʿUthmānī ﷺ and others, is one of the pioneers of the Islamisation of Pakistan. He is also one of the pioneers of the global implementation of Islamic finance. His positions and services in a wide spectrum of international Islamic organisations, previously and currently respectively, include: judge, Federal Shariʿah Court of Pakistan (1980-1982 CE); judge, Shariʿah Appellate Bench, Supreme Court of Pakistan (1982-2002 CE); member, Syndicate University of Karachi (1985-1988 CE); member, Board of Governors, International Islamic University, Islamabad (1985-1989 CE); member, International Institute of Islamic Economics (1985-

1988 CE); member, Council of Islamic Ideology, Pakistan (1977-1981 CE); member, Board of Trustees, International Islamic University, Islamabad (2004-2007 CE); member, Commission for Islamisation of the Economy, Pakistan; chairman, International Shariʿah Standard Council, Accounting and Auditing Organisation for Islamic Financial Institutions, Bahrain; deputy chairman and permanent member, International Islamic Fiqh Academy, Jeddah (sponsored by the OIC); member, Islamic Fiqh Academy, Muslim World League, Makkah al-Mukarramah; chairman, Centre for Islamic Economics, Pakistan; vice president, *Shaykh al- Ḥadīth* and Muftī, Jāmiʿah Dār al-ʿUlūm Karachi.

Preface

Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﵀ the inspiration

Abu Asim Badrul Islam

Imām al-Bukhārī ﵀, in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, states: "The Companions of the Prophet ﷺ acquired knowledge in their senior age."[i] Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﵀ was a follower in their footsteps. He is an illustration of how, when there is true and sincere determination, not only can one acquire knowledge of the Qurʾān and sunnah, but can reach such exalted excellence in knowledge and piety that one's name remains alive in academic circles from both the Occident and the Orient after one's demise.

After spending much of his youth in various trades and apprenticeships, he turned to knowledge during the final year of his teens. At the age of nineteen he enrolled at the Madrasah Khusruwiyyah in his hometown of Ḥalab (Aleppo). Shortly after his enrolment, the madrasah authorities changed their minds and wished to remove him merely due to his advanced age, something they felt did not sit right for that institute. Allāh Most Gracious wished otherwise. After studying for six years at the Madrasah Khusruwiyyah, he travelled to Cairo in 1944 CE and enrolled at Al-Azhar University's College of Sharīʿah from where he graduated with two degrees in 1950 CE.[ii]

He was a true inspiration to the student and scholar alike, some illustrations of which the reader will find in the obituary written by our master ʿAllāmah Muftī Muhammad Taqi Usmani and the preface by the honourable Shaykh Muḥammad Saleem Dhorat. As a student who has benefited immensely from the works of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ, I wish to briefly mention a few aspects of the inspirational life of the *shaykh*, which my fellow students and brethren in *īmān* will, *inshā Allāh*, find also inspirational.

As a student of the Madrasah Khusruwiyyah, Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ won the affection and respect of his teachers, some of whom were prominent scholars of the age. When any of his teachers would have to be absent from teaching due to unforeseen circumstances, they would ask the young ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah to cover for them. Whatever the subject, he would teach very competently without any prior preparation. His fellow students would always rejoice at such occasions and they would benefit from his knowledge.[iii] Shaykh Mujāhid Shaʿbān relates from ʿAllāmah Shaykh Muḥammad al-Salqīnī ﷺ that during his student days at Al-Azhar University's College of Sharīʿah, Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah's ﷺ teachers would gather around his exam papers and benefit from the answers that he had written.[iv]

After completion of his formal education, he remained obsessed with, and immersed in, books. They were the joy of his life. He himself gives a detailed account of his extreme passion for books in his extraordinary work *Ṣafaḥāt min Ṣabr al-ʿUlamā' ʿalā Shadāʾid al-ʿIlm wa 'l-Taḥṣīl* (*Pages illustrating the patience observed by the ʿulamā' in the face of hardship in acquiring knowledge*)[v] and in the introduction to his annotated edition of the first volume of Imām Mullā ʿAlī al-Qārī's ﷺ *Fatḥ Bāb al-ʿInāyah bi Sharḥ Kitāb al-Nuqāyah*[vi] (in Ḥanafī fiqh). He relates how, upon the recommendation of his teacher, ʿAllāmah Muḥammad Zāhid al-Kawtharī ﷺ, for six years he searched for *Fatḥ Bāb al-ʿInāyah bi Sharḥ Kitāb al-Nuqāyah* in the bookshops of Cairo. After his return to his native

Ḥalab (Aleppo), he continued to make enquiries at bookshops and would ask people who he thought would know about it until his first Ḥajj in 1376 (1957 CE) when in Makkah al-Mukarramah, after a remarkable search, he finally found his long-desired treasure. The story is truly inspiring for any student of the Islāmic sciences. In view of brevity, the story is not being mentioned here in its entirety. It can be read at length in the above Arabic books. He mentions in *Ṣafaḥāt min Ṣabr al-ʿUlamā'* that "books in the life of a scholar permeate his being just as a soul and wellbeing permeate a body." In the footnote he adds that Imām Al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār al-Qurashī al-Zubayrī ﷺ (172-256 AH/788-870 CE) relates: "My niece said to my wife, 'My uncle is an excellent husband to his wife; he does not marry a co-wife nor does he purchase a slave girl.' My wife replied, 'His books are harder for me [to tolerate] than [tolerating] three co-wives.'"[vii] Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ was such an example. If he could save an hour or two from his sleep to engage with books, he would. During his student days he would spend much of what little money he had on books. He would sometimes borrow money to purchase books. He recalls how he once came to hear of the arrival of a rare book, which he very much desired, but could not afford due to poverty. He sold a luxury cloak of much sentimental value that he had inherited from his late father to purchase the book. After obtaining the book, he was so happy that he forgot the loss of his father's cloak. He would often vow to perform a certain number of *rakaʿāt* of prayer, should Allāh Most Gracious bless him with a certain book.[viii]

It is no wonder, then, that his exhaustive personal library contained books in every Islāmic and Arabic science. It contained books published in the Middle East, North Africa, Turkey, India and Pakistan. It was constantly growing, especially after his relocation to Riyadh. This impressive library was not for ostentation or adornment. Rather, it was for his prodigious and thorough study, research and authorship. His teacher, Shaykh Muḥammad al-Salqīnī ﷺ, once said: "Enter the library of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ and pick up any

book you wish. You will find in it corrections, annotations and beneficial notes [made by Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ]."[ix] Indeed, this was the case.

He was known for paying attention to the most minute of details and seeking absolute perfection. Those who have studied his works, and have compared with others the depth of research contained within them — the mind-boggling bibliographies mentioned in them, and the overall quality of paper, choice of fonts, binding and design —, cannot but testify to this fact. He would make constant improvements and add material to his works even when they had already seen several editions. Sometimes he would ask publishers to enter additional material even when a book was at the printing press. His son, Shaykh Salmān ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah, states that his father added new material to his work *Ṣafaḥāt min Ṣabr al-ʿUlamā' ʿalā Shadāʾid al-ʿIlm wa 'l-Taḥṣīl* over a period of twenty years.[x] This was the case with all his works. He was an author and researcher who did not rest satisfied after the completion and publication of his thoroughly researched works; he would constantly make note of any further material that he came across during his studies, the addition of which he thought would enhance his already published works. Indeed, this has always been the way of the great *ʿulamā'* of Islām. The research scholars who have recently worked on possibly the best edition to date of Imām Ibn Kathīr's ﵀ unparalleled exegesis (*tafsīr*) of the Noble Qur'an[xi] note in their introduction to the edition how, during the course of their research of the nine manuscripts of the exegesis that they had obtained, they could see that Imām Ibn Kathīr ﵀ was constantly adding new material as he taught his work during his lifetime.

Shaykh Salmān mentions how his father would sometimes write a single sentence, but would have spent three nights and sometimes even a week researching before writing that sentence.[xii] His student, Shaykh Muḥammad ʿAwwāmah, recalls how when he once came to Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﵀ with some pages from his annotated edition of the book *Al-*

Ajwibah al-Fāḍilah, which was being prepared for publication, he found all the seating within the room covered in books. Upon his enquiry, Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ informed him that he had come across a word in this book, which had intrigued him. In researching the word over a period of three months, he had taken out book after book from the shelves and laid them out on the seating.[xiii]

Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ was a keen seeker and sharer of subtle points of knowledge. In his annotated edition of *Imām al-ʿAṣr* ʿAllāmah Sayyid Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī's ﷺ *Al-Ṭaṣrīḥ bi mā Tawātara fī Nuzūl al-Masīḥ* (see notes xxvii, xxxi and xxxii), Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ mentions the following incident:

"From the many priceless anecdotes is that which was related to me by our *shaykh* and our blessing, the *ʿallāmah*, the *muḥaddith*, the possessor of [many] sciences (*jāmiʿ al-ʿulūm*), Shaykh Muḥammad Idrīs al-Kāndhlawī, the author of *al-Taʿlīq al-Ṣabīḥ ʿalā Mishkāt al-Maṣābīḥ* (may Allāh Most High protect him) when I visited him at al-Jāmʿiah al-Ashrafiyyah in Lahore (Pakistan) during my trip to India and Pakistan during 1382 AH (1962 CE).

He said that he heard his *shaykh*, *Ḥakīm al-Ummah* Ashraf ʿAlī al-Thānawī, who had heard from his *shaykh*, Muḥammad Yaʿqūb [al-Nānotwī], the first head teacher of the Dār al-ʿUlūm in Deoband (India), commenting on the desire of our master, Khālid ibn al-Walīd, to die a martyr, say: 'His desire was in vain because the Prophet (may Allāh bless him and grant him peace) had given him the title of *Sayf Allāh* (the Sword of Allāh) and the Sword of Allāh cannot be broken nor killed. That is why he did not attain martyrdom. May Allāh be pleased with him.'

I said to our *shaykh* [Mawlānā Muḥammad Idrīs al-Kāndhlawī] (may Allāh Most High protect him): 'This anecdote is worth a trip, in my view!'"[xiv] In

other words, had I not gained anything except knowledge of this point during my trip to India, it would have been sufficient.

One who studies his works cannot but notice the countless subtleties that the *shaykh* points out and unravels, citing from the depths of the voluminous works of the great *ʿulamā'* of previous eras. For example, he devotes two pages in his annotated edition of Imām Mawlānā ʿAbd al-Ḥayy Lucknowī's ﵀ *Al-Rafᵏ wa 'l-Takmīl fi 'l-Jarḥ wa 'l-Taʿdīl*, explaining why, despite its prevalent use, the word *mashāʾikh* (with the consonant *hamzah*) is grossly incorrect. He then light-heartedly recalls how, during one of his visits to India, he said to one of the *ʿulamā'* there: "If I were to be asked as to why I have come to India, I will say that I have come to say 'do not put a *hamzah* in the word *mashāyikh*, for, the *hamzah* in the word *mashāyikh* is not permissible.'"[xv]

Just as he had a refined taste in academia, Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﵀ possessed an extraordinary attention to, and preference of, hygiene and tidiness. He would say to anyone whom he saw not being gentle with a book or leaving cards and other pieces of papers within it: "Do not treat your book as a trumpet or a locker" ("*Lā tajʿal kitābaka būqan wa lā ṣundūqan"*). If he saw anyone take their shoes off and leave them in a disorderly manner, he would tell them to straighten them and place them against the wall.[xvi]

Despite his lofty station in the world of Islāmic academia, and the dignity and veneration that he enjoyed, he was the possessor of the utmost humility and compassion for others. Perhaps it was this, added to his tremendous value for time, which enabled him to reach the great heights that he did. During one of his visits to India, he was once travelling to a library on a wagon pulled by a man. After boarding the wagon, his travel companion said the sunnah *duʿāʾ* for such a means of transportation, a part of which is:

سُبْحَانَ الَّذِيْ سَخَّرَ لَنَا هذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لَه مُقْرِنِيْنَ ، وَإِنَّا إِلى رَبِّنَا لَمُنْقَلِبُوْنَ

Exalted is He who subjected this to us, and we could not have subdued it. Verily to our Lord we shall return. (Qurʾān 43:13)

Upon hearing this, Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ said: "No! Allāh has not subjected this man to us."[xvii]

His utmost and impeccable reverence toward his direct teachers as well as those from whom he had benefited indirectly, and all the great *ʿulamā'* of Islām — particularly, the *ʿulamā'* of the Deobandī school — was truly remarkable. When he would visit his teacher ʿAllāmah Muṣṭafā Aḥmad al-Zarqā ﷺ, he would kiss his hand and straighten his shoes. He would not allow any of his own students to straighten the shoes of ʿAllāmah Muṣṭafā Aḥmad al-Zarqā ﷺ nor anyone kiss his own hand.[xviii]

In addition to some of what has been written at the end of this booklet, the following incident beautifully illustrates Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah's ﷺ value for knowledge and those who possess it. He writes regarding Mawlānā Muḥammad Badr-e-ʿĀlam Miruthī ﷺ, the famous student of *Imām al-ʿAṣr* Mawlānā Sayyid Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī ﷺ, who transcribed in Arabic the lectures of his teacher on *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and later published them with the title *Fayḍ al-Bārī ʿalā Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*:

"When I was honoured and blessed with the opportunity to visit the illuminated city of Madīnah (may the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon it's inhabitant) for the second time after Hajj toward the end of 1384 AH (1965 CE), I had completed the publication of the book *Al-Ajwibat al-Fāḍilah li 'l-Asʾilat al-ʿAsharat al-Kāmilah* by Imām ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Lucknowī al-Hindī ﷺ that same year. I had edited and annotated the book before publication. I

took a few copies of the book with me to Madīnah so that I could present them as gifts to some of my eminent shuyūkh residing in the illuminated city.

At the forefront of these eminent shuyūkh was our *shaykh al-ʿAllāmah al-Muḥaddith al-Faqīh al-Shaykh* Muḥammad Badr-e-ʿĀlam al-Miruthī al-Hindī ﷺ, who had chosen permanent residence in the abode of hijra (the illuminated city of Madīnah). I went to visit him in his house. He had been, at the time, incapacitated by illness and was permanently confined to his bed. Due to this poor health he was unable to study, research and satiate himself with knowledge the way he desired.

I presented a copy of *Al-Ajwibat al-Fāḍilah* which he accepted with much joy and appreciation. He praised the book and said to me: 'I had purchased the book as soon as it had arrived in the bookshops of the illuminated city of Madīnah. As you can see, I do not have the strength or the health to be able to read and study the way I would have wished to. But my intention in purchasing this book was to leave books of knowledge for my children and family. This is better for them as inheritance than wealth.' These words were for me a priceless lesson. I learnt a lot from them and have benefited, therefore, I have related this incident regarding the *shaykh* – may Allāh have mercy on him. He passed away in the illuminated city of Madīnah during 1385 AH."[xix]

I am conscious that this preface has become longer than what would normally be expected in a booklet of this size. I have, nonetheless, written the above so that others, many of whom will not have access to the treasures left behind by the *shaykh*, may get a glimpse of the life and legacy of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ and thereby appreciate the rich heritage of the Qurʾān and sunnah and its guardians that Allāh Most Magnificent has blessed us with. Undoubtedly, much more can be and ought to be written about Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ. A whole dimension of his life

has been left untouched in this booklet — Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah as the caller to Allāh (the *dāʿī ila Allāh*). Perhaps one day someone will write a more detailed and properly structured biography of the *shaykh* in English. Until then, it is hoped this brief endeavour will go some way in filling the void.

Foreword

Shaykh Muhammad Saleem Dhorat[xx]

This is a short obituary of a great scholar of Islām, an exceptionally beautiful fragrant flower from the bouquet of those who have mastered both *ʿilm* and *ʿamal* (knowledge and practice), whose fragrance emits till today and will continue to do so until the Final Hour, *inshāʾ Allāh*. He is Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ.

The honourable *shaykh* ﷺ was indeed a great personality of our time. He was not just a master in a few sciences; rather, his deep knowledge and insight extended to a number of diverse and intricate sciences. His expertise in the sciences of the Noble Qurʾān, ḥadīth, fiqh and its principles, *asmāʾ al-rijāl* (the thorough and critical study of the lives of reporters of ḥadīth), history etc. was well known, but the honourable *shaykh* ﷺ was also a master of Arabic literature, grammar, eloquence, poetry and other related sciences. The tens of priceless works that he had accomplished are a testament to this.

The honourable *shaykh* ﷺ was also an expert in the science of the *nafs*, and it was his great qualities of humbleness, kindness and sincerity that subjugated every heart. Love for *ʿilm*, *Ahl-al-ʿilm* (possessors of knowledge) and the *al-Salaf al-Ṣāliḥūn* (Righteous Predecessors) was an outstanding feature in the honourable *shaykh* ﷺ, and this effected in him immense love and admiration for the great *ʿulamā'* of Deoband (the *'Akābir'*) who were, without doubt, great masters of *ʿilm* and *ʿamal.*

The honourable *shaykh* ﷺ was an adherent to the same school of theology and jurisprudence as the great masters of Deoband. His visits to the great seminaries of the Deobandī School were somewhat like coming home, where he would find solace, comfort and peace. The teachers and students of those seminaries would be mesmerised by his speeches and words of wisdom, which would take them back in time to the *majālis* (gatherings) of their pious predecessors (the *Akābir)*. The honourable *shaykh* ﷺ not only acknowledged the rank, status, eminence and calibre of our pious elders, rather, his love and admiration extended to our *Akābir* of the past as well as the present. This is evident in his exceptional academic footnotes to their works and his endeavour and toil in making them available to the Islamic academia of the Arab world so they, too, may recognise these luminaries.

The honourable *shaykh*'s ﷺ especial endeavour in this regard was in relation to the works of ʿAllāmah Mawlānā ʿAbd al-Ḥayy Lucknowī ﷺ, for whom he had great admiration and love. His work on the great ʿAllāmah's ﷺ manuscripts not only exposed to the academic circles of the Arab world the high rank of the ʿAllāmah ﷺ, but it also opened the eyes of many in the Indo-Pak subcontinent who were in ignorance and unaware of what treasures lay within their homes.

Similar was his approach in relation to many other *Akābir* of the last century, including ʿAllāmah Sayyid Muḥammad Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī, *Ḥakīm al-Ummah* Mawlānā Ashraf ʿAli Thānawī, *Shaykh al-Islām* Mawlānā Sayyid Ḥusayn Aḥmad Madanī, *Shaykh al-Islām* Mawlānā Shabbīr Aḥmad ʿUthmānī, ʿAllāmah Ẓafar Aḥmad ʿUthmānī Thānawī, ʿAllāmah Sayyid Muḥammad Yūsuf Binnorī, ʿAllāmah Muftī Muḥammad Shafīʿ, *Shaykh-al-Ḥadīth* Mawlānā Muḥammad Zakariyyā Kāndhlawī and others ﷺ. This approach of respect and admiration also reached out to the juniors, such as the author of this obituary, ʿAllāmah Muftī Muhammad Taqi Usmani (may Allāh ﷻ protect him). This is evident in

the honourable *shaykh*'s ﷺ forewords, introductory notes, footnotes and statements in his various works.

The honourable *shaykh*'s ﷺ contribution to the library of Islām is no hidden fact. His eloquent and sweet writings that have emitted from the depths of his heart take every reader out of this mortal world. Shaykh Salmān, the honourable *shaykh*'s ﷺ son, writes of how his late father had many concerns, desires and hopes regarding students of the Islāmic sciences of today. He constantly strove to instil in their hearts the yearning to seek knowledge and excel in it. His highly popular works *Ṣafaḥāt min Ṣabr al-ʿUlamā' ʿalā Shadāʾid al-ʿIlm wa 'l-Taḥṣīl* and *Qīmat al-Zaman ʿind al-ʿUlamā'* were a result of this.

Shaykh Salmān mentions how his father ﷺ would always aim for excellence and would strive to progress from good to best. In particular, he would long to see the advancement of Muslims in every sphere of moral character, business, profession and knowledge, to the extent that Muslims should be at the forefront in everything.[xxi]

It is difficult for a student like me to elaborate much on this great personality, and I also fear that I will be unjust in what I may say in regard to the status of the *shaykh* ﷺ. I shall therefore suffice on mentioning the reverence and admiration even the great *ʿulamā'* had for him. The famous Syrian master of recent times, Shaykh Muṣṭafā Aḥmad al-Zarqā ﷺ, writes:

'[...] My beloved and noble Brother, for whom I find more love in my heart than for myself and for whom I find in myself reverence despite him being younger than me [...]'

The legendary *shaykh* of the Indo-Pak subcontinent of recent times, ʿAllāmah Mawlānā Sayyid Abu 'l-Ḥasan ʿAlī Nadwī ﷺ writes:

'[...] The Rabbānī (Allāh-fearing) scholar, the murabbī (nurturer and educator), the reminiscence of the Salaf in ambition and high aspirations, and in having the depth of insight and in diversity of knowledge and mastery [...]'

The great researcher and *muḥaddith*, ʿAllāmah Mawlānā Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān Aʿẓamī ﷺ recognises him as the *Imām of Shām* (greater Syria) and that none before him had held such a position in knowledge after the great ʿAllāmah Muḥammad Amīn ibn ʿĀbidīn al-Shāmī ﷺ. The great *muḥaddith*, ʿAllāmah Mawlānā ʿAbd al-Rashīd Nuʿmānī ﷺ grants the *shaykh* titles such as *Al-Shaykh*, *the Ocean of Knowledge* and *the Muḥaddith.*

Indeed it is a great favour from Allāh ﷻ that the obituary of a luminary, written by another luminary, ʿAllāmah Muftī Muhammad Taqi Usmani, has been translated to English by Abu Unaysah and Mawlānā Ibrahim Amin al-Kuwaiti and made available to us. It does not end there, for, the beneficial article and notes of Mawlānā Badrul Islam, who holds much love and respect for the *ʿulamā'* of *Ḥaqq* in general and the *ʿulamā'* of Deoband in particular, has added to its benefit. Likewise, the translations by Zameelur Rahman in the addendum present to the English reader beautiful examples of the love and admiration Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ had for the great *ʿulamā'* of Deoband (the *'Akābir'*).

The mention of the pious and chosen servants of Allāh ﷻ is the means of much *barakah* (blessings). Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah ﷺ would say:

عِنْدَ ذِكْرِ الصَّالِحِيْنَ تَنْزِلُ الرَّحْمَةُ

'The mercy of Allāh descends when His pious servants are mentioned.'[xxii]

Shahīd al-Millah Shaykh Mawlānā Muḥammad Yūsuf Ludhyānwī ﷺ mentions in the introduction to the biography of *Shaykh-al-Ḥadīth* Mawlānā

Muḥammad Zakariyyā Kāndhlawī ﷺ that the biographies of the accepted and beloved servants of Allāh ﷻ hold great significance because:

(1) Their mention and discussion is equivalent to being in their company;
(2) Allāh's ﷻ special attention and mercy descends upon them and, therefore, their mention attracts the mercy of Allāh ﷻ;
(3) The study of their lives which encompasses many great characteristics of patience, steadfastness, sincerity, struggle and trust etc. gives us the beacon with which we can bring reform within ourselves;
(4) Their presence was a sign of the truth of Islam and through them the proof of Allāh ﷻ has continuously manifested in His servants.

May Allāh ﷻ grant the writer, the translators, Mawlānā Badrul Islam, Zameelur Rahman and all those who made this publication possible recompense for this excellent work in both worlds, may He increase them in their abilities and grant them *barakah* to render further service to His Dīn. Āmīn

Muhammad Saleem Dhorat
Islamic Daʿwah Academy
Leicester, ENGLAND

Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ [xxiii]

ʿAllāmah Muftī Muhammad Taqi Usmani[xxiv]

My heart grieves at the painful news received on the 9th of Shawwal, 1417 AH (16th February, 1997 CE) that the ḥadīth scholar who was the pride of the Muslim world and an unrivalled stalwart of the Islamic sciences, the most revered ʿAllāmah Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ has passed way.

إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَ إِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُوْنَ

'To Allāh we belong, and to Him is our return.'

The *shaykh* ﷺ was from the famous Syrian city of Ḥalab (Aleppo) and had been living in Riyadh (Saudi Arabia) for a major part of his later life. He was prominently known in the Arab world due to his oceanic knowledge, [strict] adherence to the sunnah, and his virtuous nature and piety. He had gained widespread eminence in almost all scholarly circles of the Indian subcontinent and was dearly loved by everyone.

I first heard his name in 1956 CE/1375 AH when my honourable father Mawlānā Muftī Muḥammad Shafīʿ ﷺ visited Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine to attend a conference hosted by the World Muslim Congress (Muʿtamar al-ʿĀlam al-Islāmī). My father's ﷺ correspondence from Damascus carried accounts of his meetings with the scholars of Syria. From among them, my father made special mention of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ. Even after his return from this journey, my father would

remember him affectionately and, in respect to him, would emphasise how there were still many scholars in the Arab world who could be aptly described as flag-bearers of authentic knowledge and academic research. However, he insisted there remained only a few scholars who —along with depth in learning — strictly adhered to the sunnah in their practice and whose speech and conduct would be reminiscent of the conduct of the righteous predecessors *(al-Salaf al-Ṣāliḥūn)*. Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ was among those blessed personalities.

Upon hearing these words from my father ﷺ, a strong yearning to visit him was born in my heart. However, there was no apparent means to fulfil this hope at the time, as he was in Syria, and it was impossible for us to even contemplate travelling there at that time.

A long time afterwards, however, we received the welcomed news in 1962 CE/1382 AH that the respected *shaykh* ﷺ was coming to Pakistan. There was no end to my joy on hearing this. The purpose of the revered *shaykh's* ﷺ visit was to seek and research manuscripts in the libraries of Pakistan and India, as well as to forge a relationship with academic circles here.

The *shaykh* ﷺ stayed here in Karachi for a few days. During this period he visited Dār al-ʿUlūm,[xxv] where the management organised an assembly in his honour. I was a teacher of the primary books of Arabic at the time. My respected father ﷺ instructed this humble servant to deliver a speech in Arabic in his welcome. I gave a speech as instructed. As well as welcoming the honoured guest, I briefly recounted the history of *madrasahs* (Islamic seminaries) in the Indo-Pak subcontinent, the inception of Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband and the [religious] services of the scholars of Deoband. The honourable *shaykh* ﷺ gave me generous commendations upon this *ṭālib-e-ʿilmānah* (student-esque) speech. At the conclusion of the gathering, he noted his impressions in Dār al-ʿUlūm's visitors' book and went as far as to write:

"Indeed, the eloquence of my beloved brother for the sake of Allāh Muhammad Taqi, the scion of Mawlānā Muḥammad Shafīʿ, is such that it exposes the weaknesses of the Arabs in their [own] language."

It is obvious that these words were written only as encouragement for this humble servant. However, they indicate his high level of compassion for, and tendency to give, encouragement to his juniors. Later, when leaving Dār al-ʿUlūm, he expressed his compassion and love for this worthless one by saying: "If you were an apple, I would have eaten you!"

Since then, he began referring to me with the epithet *Tuffāḥat al-Hind wa Bākistān* (the apple of India and Pakistan), and even made mention of me with it in some of his works.[xxvi] It was during this journey that this humble servant also obtained *ijāzah* (permission to narrate) in ḥadīth from the revered *shaykh* ﷺ, which he granted with great affection.

This was his first visit to Pakistan. After this, the political upheaval that took place in Syria made life extremely tough for Islamic academia and those affiliated to religious circles. Hundreds of sincere scholars were put to the sword. Several of them were imprisoned and made targets of severe oppression and tyranny. Many more were forced to flee their homeland and take refuge in other countries. Even though the honourable *shaykh* ﷺ was a man of academic inclination and had kept aloof of power-seeking politics, he was still not spared the oppression and tyranny of the government. He was forced to leave his homeland and had to settle in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where, for a long time, he served as a lecturer and involved himself in a variety of academic research at the Faculty of Islamic Sciences (*Kulliyah Uṣūl al-Dīn)* at the Imām Muḥammad ibn Saʿūd University.

During this period he visited Pakistan on several occasions. He considered my respected father his teacher and had even obtained *ijāzah* in ḥadīth from him. He had a similar relationship with *Shaykh al-Ḥadīth* Mawlānā Muḥammad Yūsuf Binnorī ﷺ. Therefore, sometimes he resided with us and, on other occasions, with Mawlānā Binnorī ﷺ. Either way, during his stays we continuously benefited from his knowledge.[xxvii]

When he visited Pakistan after my father's ﷺ demise, he wept for a long time remembering him. Thereafter, we observed a distinct increase in his compassion over us. Once, he even stayed with us at Dār al-ʿUlūm for two months and completed a number of his works. His attitude was very relaxed with almost all students and teachers; in humility he was unequalled.

The honourable *shaykh's* ﷺ life revolved around books; he remained drowned in them day and night, and it was due to this that he was naturally a reclusive scholar. However, the status quo forced him to take part in regional politics for religious objectives. Around 1962 CE, he was also appointed a member of the Syrian parliament. In those regions, Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn was the only authoritative group striving to revive the religion. The revered *shaykh* ﷺ associated himself with this party and, in 1966 CE, was condemned to eleven months in the desert prison of Tadmur for his role in acting against the dissolution of Islamic law in Syria. Even though he took up residence in Riyadh after emigrating from Syria, he continued his efforts to aid the standard-bearers of religion against the oppression and tyranny of the governments of the Arab world in general and that of Syria in particular. In 1986 CE, he was made leader of the Ikhwān. Later, he conferred this responsibility to Dr. Ḥasan al-Huwaydī and dedicated himself to his academic pursuits.

This humble servant was also able to meet him frequently during his stay in Saudi Arabia. On one occasion, I even travelled to Riyadh at his invitation.

Otherwise, by the grace of the Almighty, I continued corresponding with him through letters and benefited from him academically.

The respected *shaykh* ﷺ had once visited Dār al-ʿUlūm when this humble servant had begun to write *Takmilah Fatḥ al-Mulhim.*[xxviii] He expressed great joy at this initiative and even wrote a foreword[xxix] for it by way of encouragement.

The *shaykh* was ʿAllāmah Muḥammad Zāhid al-Kawtharī's ﷺ leading student. ʿAllāmah al-Kawtharī's ﷺ peculiarity is that, owing to his vast knowledge, he was able to repel attacks against Ḥanafī *fiqh* and the Ashʿarī school. He answered tit-for-tat those who made the Ḥanafī scholars and the Ashʿarīs targets of taunts — nay, targets of slander and insult — on the basis of subsidiary *(furūʿī)* differences. As with every other scholar, there is scope for disagreement with some of ʿAllāmah al-Kawtharī's ﷺ positions and his method of expression. There is no doubt, however, that he discharged the communal obligation *(farḍ kifāyah)* of defending these oppressed *Ahl al-ʿIlm* (scholars), who were unjustifiably accused of deviancy and were rained upon with taunts and insults.

In this respect, the revered *shaykh* ﷺ aptly honoured the legacy of his teacher, ʿAllāmah al-Kawtharī ﷺ, with the added value of not allowing even a doubt of curtness or disrespect [to emanate] from his pen against the scholars of the past with whom he differed. In this regard, he restricted himself to fair scholarly discourse and remained within academic confines in his research. He never allowed these differences to become personal. His differences with ʿAllāmah Ibn Taymiyyah ﷺ and Ḥāfiẓ Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī ﷺ are evidently manifest. However, I never saw harsh words come from his pen nor leave his lips about these pious elders. In fact, I personally witnessed that he once became highly emotional whilst recounting the academic rank of Ḥāfiẓ Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī ﷺ, and when someone once

remembered ʿAllāmah Ibn Taymiyyah ﷺ in a manner that was unbefitting his status, he immediately made his displeasure known.

Despite this cautiousness, some unappreciative elements — having taken it upon themselves to make a front against him — not only made him a target of rebuke, but of taunts, which on occasions entered the boundaries of slander and insult. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return. In all eras, the servants of the religion of Allāh ﷻ have faced such ordeals, which only serve to elevate their rank [in the sight of Allāh ﷻ]. If only the etiquette of keeping differences of opinion in *furūʿī* matters within their contexts was to regain currency within the Muslim Ummah, then how many rifts within our ranks would simply disappear?

In this respect, my father's (Mawlānā Muftī Muḥammad Shafīʿ ﷺ) diligent practice was to avoid feeding differences of opinion in *furūʿī* matters to the masses; [he felt] they should be confined strictly to scholarly and academic circles. [He believed that] until a particular person's view in *furūʿī* matters did not amount to clear deviancy or disbelief, differences with him should never be blown out of proportion to create a warfront against him.

Instead, all Muslims who agree upon the fundamentals of religion should work together to counter those trials and tribulations of the present era which are directly aimed at attacking the core principles of religion. My respected father ﷺ has authored a treatise on this subject entitled *'Waḥdat-e-Ummat'* (Unity of the Ummah). Its Arabic translation, *Ikhtilāf Umm Shiqāq*, was also distributed in large quantities throughout Saudi Arabia; the fundamental call of the book is just this.

By the blessings of Allāh ﷻ, I have inherited my honourable father's ﷺ temperament; I have usually attempted to maintain a balance between differing academically and working together with those people with whom I

have differences in *furūʿī* matters. My academic differences with the Salafī scholars of Saudi Arabia in *furūʿī* matters, in their correct context, exist even to this day, regarding which we also have open dialogue in private gatherings. However, these differences have never, with the praise of Allāh ﷻ, superseded our [good] relations, and we continue to assist each other in matters of mutual concern and appreciate each other's good works.

Some time ago — whilst probably interpreting this practice of mine incorrectly — someone informed Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ؒ that I had become prone to permissiveness with regards to my school of thought. Therefore, in accordance with his saintly affection, he expressed his concern about this [to me]. However, when I explained my aforementioned viewpoint and practice in detail to the *shaykh* ؒ, he was not only fully content but impressed upon me that these issues be not made the basis of argumentation and fighting, nor should they prevent mutual assistance in [achieving] common religious objectives. The situation has been worsened by those who have transgressed the boundaries of academic differences and descended into accusations of deviancy and misdemeanour.

The revered *shaykh* ؒ had initially written a foreword for this humble servant's book, *Takmilah Fatḥ al-Mulhim*, when my manuscript had not yet reached a hundred pages. Thus, this foreword was brief. Later, when it was completed and its six volumes had been published, the *shaykh* ؒ himself informed me that he would now like to write a second foreword to it. Accordingly, he wrote and sent to me an extremely detailed foreword, and those unusual words of encouragement which he had written in there were far more than I deserved and were only a reflection of the honourable *shaykh's* ؒ enormous compassion.

The *shaykh* ﷺ had been living a life of exile for years on end and had also been separated from his library, which was the result of his lifelong collection. There appeared no means for him to return to his native land. However, last year some leniency towards the *Ahl al-ʿIlm* was granted by the Syrian government and he returned to his native Ḥalab after many years. During this period, he had developed soreness in his eyes and he had also previously suffered a heart attack. He returned to Riyadh to receive medical treatment to his eyes. There, he began to bleed from his eyes, (most probably due to the strain caused to his eyes by constant reading) which continued to worsen despite treatment, until he lost consciousness.

The honourable *shaykh's* ﷺ nephew, Dr. ʿAbd al-Sattār Abū Ghuddah, who is a close friend of mine (in recent years we have become so close that we are deemed to be family members), informed me that during this [period of] unconsciousness, when on one day the *shaykh* ﷺ gained some consciousness, the first words that he uttered were: "Have the templates for the book arrived from the printing press yet?" Thereafter, he again fell unconscious.

Finally, on the 9th of Shawwāl, 1417 AH (corresponding to 12th February, 1997 CE), at the hour of dawn, his soul transpired towards the abode of eternal bliss. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return.

'O Allāh! Ennoble his abode and expand his grave and reward him with dwellings better than his [mundane] dwelling and with kin better than his worldly kin and wash him with the coolest of waters and cleanse him of his shortcomings just as a brilliant cloth is cleansed of its dirt.'

It was probably eight o'clock in the morning of this day that I was informed by phone of this heartbreaking loss, firstly by our honourable friend, the respected Qāri ʿAbd al-Bāsiṭ from Jeddah, and then by another friend in

Riyadh. On that same day, the *shaykh* ﷺ was taken to Madīnah Ṭayyibah and buried in Jannat al-Baqīʿ.

The order of this world is constantly in flux, with total disregard for who comes and goes. However, there are few personalities whose departure causes the hearts of humans in the east and the west to cry, and even those who have not had a close relationship with them consider their death a personal loss. The *shaykh* ﷺ was undoubtedly such a personality. Firstly, even outward forms of learning are continuing to decrease with the passage of time. However, scholarship to this extent still exists. But such personalities — whose speech and conduct flow with knowledge and learning, whose lives are illuminated with adherence to the sunnah and the manner and custom of the pious predecessors, whose every action is an evident manifestation of humility, God-consciousness and good character — are almost extinct. When such a person is taken away, the void created by the departure remains for a long time.

Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ's ﷺ published works number approximately fifty.[xxx] He himself did not author many works – his own works are probably less than twenty – but did a lot of work in sifting, verifying and annotating the works of the pious predecessors. He once gave the reason for this, explaining that we do not have any independent identity, and our greatest fortune is to associate ourselves with any of the pious predecessors, and therefore, in serving a work of our elders there is safety and blessings.[xxxi] Why would divine assistance not be attracted to any work that is done with this humility, sincerity, respect and esteem of the pious predecessors? Therefore, at times, his annotations and research offer more detailed insight and carry finer points than the original work.

My father ﷺ had compiled *Al-Ṭaṣrīḥ bi mā Tawātara fī Nuzūl al-Masīḥ*[xxxii] on the instruction of *Imām al-ʿAṣr* ʿAllāmah Sayyid Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī ﷺ.[xxxiii]

Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ edited this work and published it with detailed footnotes. Apart from this, his annotations on the introduction to *Iʿlāʾ al-Sunan*,[xxxiv] *Al-Ajwibah al-Fāḍilah*,[xxxv] and *Al-Rafᶜ wa ʻl-Takmīl*[xxxvi] are prime examples of his insight into ḥadīth.

Some time ago, when the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies had announced the Sultan of Brunei Award for services to ḥadīth, it was aptly awarded to Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ. This humble servant was among those who had nominated the *shaykh* ﷺ for this award. However, the *shaykh* ﷺ was among those lofty souls whose stature owes nothing to such customary awards. It is the good fortune of the award that it reaches such a worthy place; the services of the *shaykh* ﷺ are not in need of it.

Today, the honourable *shaykh* ﷺ is not in this world. However, his works, the students whom he prepared and his life and conduct are blooming orchards, and if Allāh ﷻ wills, they will remain as a memorial [to him] for as long as those who value knowledge and [good] conduct exist in the world.

NOTES

[i] وقد تعلّم أصحاب النبي صلّى الله عليه وسلّم العلم في كبر سنّهم. (صحيح البخاري: باب الإغتباط في العلم والحكمة – حديث 73)

[ii] *Biography of the author* in *Ṣafaḥāt min Ṣabr al-ʿUlamā' ʿalā Shadāʾid al-ʿIlmi wa 'l-Taḥṣīl*, 6th edn. (Beirut: Dār al-Bashāʾir al-Islāmiyyah, 1421/2000), p. 13-14.

[iii] Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Hāshimī, *Al-Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah kamā ʿaraftuhū*, (Beirut: Dār al-Bashāʾir al-Islāmiyyah, 1425/2004) p. 116.

[iv] *Ibid*, p. 89.

[v] p. 278-281 (6th edn. 1421/2000).

[vi] p. 8-9 (2nd edn. 1426/2005).

[vii] *Ṣafaḥāt min Ṣabr al-ʿUlamā' ʿalā Shadāʾid al-ʿIlmi wa 'l-Taḥṣīl*, 6th edn. (Beirut: Dār al-Bashāʾir al-Islāmiyyah, 1421/2000), p. 256.

[viii] *Ibid*, p. 278-279.

[ix] Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Hāshimī, *Al-Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah kamā ʿaraftuhū*, (Beirut: Dār al-Bashāʾir al-Islāmiyyah, 1425/2004) p. 30.

[x] *Ṣafaḥāt min Ṣabr al-ʿUlamāʾ ʿalā Shadāʾid al-ʿIlmi wa 'l-Taḥṣīl*, 6th edn. (Beirut: Dār al-Bashāʾir al-Islāmiyyah, 1421/2000), p. 27.

[xi] ʿImād al-Dīn Abu ʻl-Fidāʾ Ismāʿīl ibn Kathīr al-Qurashī al-Dimashqī al-Shāfiʿī, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿAẓīm*, (Dammam/Riyadh: Dār Ibn al-Jawzī, 1431/2010).

[xii] *Ṣafaḥāt min Ṣabr al-ʿUlamāʾ ʿalā Shadāʾid al-ʿIlmi wa ʻl-Taḥṣīl*, 6th edn. (Beirut: Dār al-Bashāʾir al-Islāmiyyah, 1421/2000), p. 26.

[xiii] Muḥammad ibn ʿAbdillāh Āl Rashīd, *Imdād al-Fattāḥ bi Asānīd wa Marwiyyāt al-Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ*, (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Imām al-Shāfiʿī, 1419/1999), p. 130.

[xiv] Sayyid Muḥammad Anwar Shāh al-Kashmīrī al-Hindī, *Al-Ṭaṣrīḥ bi mā Tawātara fī Nuzūl al-Masīḥ*, 5th edn. (Aleppo: Maktab al-Maṭbūʿāt al-Islāmiyyah, 1412/1992), p. 212.

[xv] Abu ʻl-Ḥasanāt Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Ḥayy al-Laknawī, *Al-Rafʿ wa ʻl-Takmīl fi ʻl-Jarḥ wa ʻl-Taʿdil*, 6th edn. (Aleppo: Maktab al-Maṭbūʿāt al-Islāmiyyah, signed 1420/1999), p. 46-48.

[xvi] Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Hāshimī, *Al-Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah kamā ʿaraftuhū*, (Beirut: Dār al-Bashāʾir al-Islāmiyyah, 1425/2004) p. 162.

[xvii] *Ibid*, p. 168.

[xviii] *Ibid*, p. 167.

[xix] *Ṣafaḥāt min Ṣabr al-ʿUlamāʾ ʿalā Shadāʾid al-ʿIlmi wa ʻl-Taḥṣīl*, 6th edn. (Beirut: Dār al-Bashāʾir al-Islāmiyyah, 1421/2000), p. 325.

[xx] *Khalīfah* of Shaykh Mawlānā Muḥammad Yūsuf Ludhyānwī *Shahīd* ﷺ; founder and *Shaykh al-Ḥadīth*, Jamiʿah Riyāḍ al-ʿUlūm; founder, Islāmic Daʿwah Academy (Leicester, England); editor, *Riyāḍul Jannah* Magazine.

[xxi] For examples of this, see Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Hāshimī's *Al-Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah kamā ʿaraftuhū*, (Beirut: Dār al-Bashāʾir al-Islāmiyyah, 1425/2004).

[xxii] رواه أبو نعيم في الحلية، قال: حدثنا أبو حامد أحمد بن محمد بن الحسين، حدثنا الحسين بن محمد الجعيني، حدثنا محمد بن حسان، قال: سمعت ابن عيينة يقول: عند ذكر الصالحين تنزل الرحمة.

[xxiii] Translation of an obituary published in *Nuqūsh-e-Raftegān* (Karachi: Maktabah Maʿārif al-Qurʾān, p. 387-394).

[xxiv] See *About the author* for a brief biography of ʿAllāmah Muftī Muhammad Taqi Usmani.

[xxv] The author is referring to the renowned centre of learning, Jāmiʿah Dār al-ʿUlūm Karachi (Pakistan), founded by his father, Imām ʿAllāmah Muftī Muḥammad Shafīʿ ﷺ (d. 1396 AH/1976 CE).

[xxvi] Some examples of the extraordinary and lofty titles that Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ uses before the name of ʿAllāmah Muftī Muhammad Taqi Usmani can be seen in the former's introduction to ʿAllāmah Ẓafar Aḥmad ʿUthmānī Thānawī's ﷺ introduction to *Iʿlā al-Sunan*, edited, annotated and published separately by Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ, entitled *Qawāʿid fī ʿUlūm al-Ḥadīth* (see footnote xxxiii), and in his two forewords to ʿAllāmah Muftī Muhammad Taqi Usmani's *Takmilah Fatḥ al-Mulhim bi Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Imām Muslim*.

[xxvii] The passionate love and reverence Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ had for the great *ʿulamā'* of the Indian subcontinent can be gauged from the extraordinary words and veneration with which he mentions their names throughout his tens of published works. In his book *Tarājimu Sittatin min Fuqahāʾ al-ʿĀlam al-Islāmī fi 'l-Qarn al-Rābiʿ ʿAshar* (*Biographies of Six Jurists of the Fourteenth Century Islamic World*), he opens the book with the longest biography – that of Imām Mawlānā Sayyid Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī ﷺ. The chapter is entitled *Imām al-ʿAṣr Muḥammad Anwar Shāh al-Kashmīrī* (*The Imām of the age – Muḥammad Anwar Shāh of Kashmir*). See note xxxii for an

example of the exalted words with which Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ mentions Imām Mawlānā Sayyid Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī ﷺ. See, also, the addendum by Zameelur Rahman.

[xxviii] Entitled *Takmilah Fatḥ al-Mulhim bi Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Imām Muslim*. Work on the *Fatḥ al-Mulhim* was originally commenced by *Shaykh al-Islām* Mawlānā Shabbīr Aḥmad ʿUthmānī ﷺ. Despite repeated requests from the most eminent *ʿulamāʾ* of his age, including Imām ʿAllāmah Muḥammad Zāhid ibn al-Ḥasan al-Kawtharī ﷺ of Cairo (Egypt), the *shaykh al-Islām* ﷺ was unable to complete this eagerly-awaited Arabic commentary on the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Imām Muslim ﷺ. He had written the first six volumes but passed away before he could complete the work. Later, ʿAllāmah Muftī Muhammad Taqi Usmani, upon the instruction of his noble father, Imām ʿAllāmah Muftī Muḥammad Shafīʿ ﷺ, completed the remaining six volumes. This is the only commentary of its kind written by a, and later completed by another, Ḥanafī *faqīh* and *muḥaddith*. It is probably the second most widely used commentary on *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* after that of Imām al-Nawawī al-Shafiʿī ﷺ. After many exhausted publications in India and Pakistan, the complete book was published in 1427 AH (2006 CE) by Dar al-Qalam publishers in Damascus and Beirut in six large and beautiful volumes. This was quickly followed by a twelve-volume edition in the same year by Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-ʿArabī in Beirut. See the addendum by Zameelur Rahman for a translation of the foreword to *Takmilah Fatḥ al-Mulhim*, which ʿAllāmah Muftī Muhammad Taqi Usmani is referring to.

One of the works of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāh Abū Ghuddah ﷺ that still awaits publication is the exhaustive introduction of *Shaykh al-Islām* Mawlānā Shabbīr Aḥmad ʿUthmānī ﷺ to his *magnum opus*, *Fatḥ al-Mulhim bi Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Imām Muslim*. Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ had taken the introduction of the *Shaykh al-Islām* ﷺ and annotated and prepared it for publication separately, entitled *Mabādiʾ ʿIlm al-Ḥadīth* (*Essentials of the Science of Ḥadīth*).

[xxix] This has been translated by Zameelur Rahman and included in the addendum of this booklet.

[xxx] Many of the *shaykh*'s ﷺ works which he left unpublished were later published by his son Shaykh Salmān ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah. His published works now number approximately seventy-five. All of his works represent an extremely high-level of scholarship and research, varying in size from single-volume books to some comprising many volumes. One of his largest works to have been published in recent years posthumously has been the monumental *Lisān al-Mīzān* of *Shaykh al-Islām al-Ḥāfiẓ* Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī ﷺ, earlier editions of which were published in nine large and beautiful volumes with a tenth volume as an index. This is a core text in *Asmāʾ al-Rijāl* (a branch of the sciences of ḥadīth that deals with the thorough and critical study of the lives of reporters of ḥadīth) and had seen many publications from various publishing houses in the world during the last century, but until now it had not been researched, edited and annotated the way it deserved to be. Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ, using five different manuscripts, edited, annotated and thoroughly indexed the work in an outstanding manner. Indeed, this is the case with all his seventy-five or so works that have thus far been published.

[xxxi] In his introduction to the third annotated edition of *Al-Rafʿ wa 'l-Takmīl fi 'l-Jarḥ wa 'l-Taʿdīl*, Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ mentions that some *ʿulamā'* had suggested that he separate his own commentary from the original text of Imām Mawlānā ʿAbd al-Ḥayy Lucknowī ﷺ and publish it as a separate book in his name. He says: "I replied that the completion of that which fathers had built is a hundred times better than sons building something anew, let alone the fact that such a completion by sons is a duty they owe, and a right of their fathers upon them; for, [the fathers] are the original roots, guiding lights, sound understanding and knowledge [...]."

[xxxii] As its name suggests, this is a book that seeks to present to the reader *mutawātir* ḥadīths (that is, ḥadīths that have been reported consecutively by a significant number of narrators through multiple chains of transmission) concerning the descent of Sayyidunā ʿĪsā ﷺ before the day of Judgement. Originally authored by the phenomenal *Imām al-ʿAsr* Mawlānā Sayyid Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī ﷺ, Imām ʿAllāmah Muftī Muḥammad Shafīʿ ﷺ was instructed by the author, his teacher, to further expand the book and to render an Urdu translation of it. The book was later

edited and annotated by Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ, the latest edition comprising some 373 pages.

Written in response to the poisonous emergence of the 19th century *dajjāl*, Ghulām Aḥmad Qādiānī, in Punjab, it is a book unparalleled in its subject matter. Imām ʿAllāmah Muftī Muḥammad Shafīʿ ﷺ mentions in his introduction that in his research for the book, Imām Kashmīrī ﷺ studied all the books of ḥadīth that were at his disposal. He studied the entire ḥadīth corpus of Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal ﷺ – the *Musnad* – for a second time (after having studied the entire book previously to prove the obligation, as is maintained by the Ḥanafī school of sacred law, of the three *rakaʿāt* of *witr* prayers. To date, the best edition of the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal ﷺ has been published in fifty volumes by Muʾassasah al-Risālah in Beirut, edited by Shuʿayb al-Arnaʾūṭ and thirteen other researchers). In his introduction to the third edition of the book, Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ states that when fifteen years previously he had served the book, little did he know that the book would be so much appreciated by, and benefit, the *ʿulamāʾ* of Islām.

[xxxiii] In his biography of *Imām al-ʿAsr* Mawlānā Sayyid Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī ﷺ, Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ describes the *imām* thus: "He is the *imām* of the age, the transmitter of the time, the traditionist, the exegete, the jurist, the legal theorist, the insightful dialectician, the perceptive mystic, the educated historian, the linguistic poet, the critical researcher, the gifted verifier, Shaykh Imām Muḥammad Anwar Shāh al-Kashmīrī."

Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ then notes: "These titles are not in the context of praise and eulogy, nor exaggeration and emphasis, but they are realities with which Imām al-Kashmīrī ﷺ was adorned. Those who have seen his works and have comprehended his overflowing knowledge know this. I am not one of those who mete out praise haphazardly and commendations randomly. All praise is due to Allāh." *(Majmūʿah Rasāʾil al-Kashmīrī,* Idārat al-Qurʾān wa 'l-ʿUlūm al-Islāmiyyah, 1:7)

[xxxiv] ʿAllāmah Ẓafar Aḥmad ʿUthmānī Thānawī's ﷺ twenty-volume *magnum opus*. Written in light of the knowledge he gained from his maternal uncle, Imām *Ḥakīm al-*

Ummah Mawlānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānawī ﷺ, the author sought to present detailed proofs of the Ḥanafī school of sacred law from Prophetic ḥadīths and ancillary sciences of ḥadīth. The book is exhaustive and is considered a unique ḥadīth-oriented encyclopaedia of the Ḥanafī school. It has undergone several publications in various countries of the world including India, Pakistan, Lebanon and Syria. However, the book – in its entirety – still awaits the service of a true research scholar of ḥadīth to edit and cross-reference the vast oceans of knowledge the author has traversed within it. Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ had taken the excellent introduction of the author before adding his own introduction and footnotes and publishing it as a separate book. The *shaykh* entitled it *Qawāʿid fī ʿUlūm al-Ḥadīth*. He mentions in his introduction that he first saw the book when it was sent to him in the radiant city of Madīnah, toward the end of the Hajj season of 1383 AH, by the author, ʿAllāmah Ẓafar Aḥmad ʿUthmānī Thānawī ﷺ, as a gift. After returning to his hometown of Ḥalab (Aleppo, Syria), he browsed through the book and discovered what rare pearls it contained. It was only when he had been imprisoned in the desert of Tadmur during 1386 AH did he read the entire book thoroughly. After describing the treasures that the book contains, he mentions how he resolved to work on the book and have it published in the Arab world for the benefit of the *ʿulamāʾ* and students of knowledge there. After reading the book for a third time during 1389 – 1390 AH in the Saudi city of Riyadh, he began work on it. The book has seen several editions in Syria, Lebanon and Pakistan. See the addendum by Zameelur Rahman.

[xxxv] Authored by the outstanding Indian ḥadīth scholar and Ḥanafī jurist, Imām Mawlānā ʿAbd al-Ḥayy Lucknowī ﷺ (1264 – 1304 AH), in response to ten questions posed to him by Mawlānā Muḥammad Ḥusayn Lāhorī ﷺ — a leading and highly influential scholar of the *'Ahl al-Ḥadīth'* from the then Indian subcontinent — regarding the books of ḥadīth and *ʿUlūm al-Sunnah.* Imām Lucknowī ﷺ states in his introduction to the book that he received the questions whilst residing [for academic purposes] in Hyderabad, Deccan and had little time to respond thoroughly, as he would have wished to. Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ, in his exhaustive and breathtaking commentary on the book marvels at the contents and depth of knowledge of Imām Lucknowī ﷺ apparent throughout the book. He states in the

introduction to his commentary that the book is unique in its subject matter. It had filled a void in the sciences of ḥadīth; no scholar before Imām Lucknowī ﷺ had written such a book. This book is a must for every serious scholar of ḥadīth literature.

After discovering the works of Imām Lucknowī ﷺ, the *shaykh* ﷺ had fallen in love with them to the extent that he embarked on the *Muʾallafāt al-Imām al-Lucknowī* (*The works of Imām Lucknowī series*) project. Through this, he sought to find the undiscovered works of the Imām in manuscript form, edit them whilst adding his own annotations and publish them in the best possible standard for the international Islamic academia, particularly the scholars of the Arab world. This continued till his demise.

[xxxvi] Also by Imām Mawlānā ʿAbd al-Ḥayy Lucknowī ﷺ, this is a book on the science of *al-Jarḥ wa 'l-Taʿdīl* (a branch of the sciences of ḥadīth that deals with scrutinising the chain of narrators, and thoroughly evaluating each narrator, in order to declare him credible or otherwise). Like *Al-Ajwibah al-Fāḍilah, Ẓafar al-Amānī bi Sharḥ Mukhtaṣar al-Sayyid al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī [fī Muṣtalaḥ al-Ḥadīth]* and other works of Imām Lucknowī ﷺ, this is a book that had left Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ astounded, which the *shaykh* ﷺ clearly expresses in the introductions to the now eight editions of this 564-page book. The *shaykh* ﷺ states that no scholar before Imām Lucknowī had written such a unique book on the science of *al-Jarḥ wa 'l-Taʿdīl*. This is undoubtedly another book by Imām Lucknowī ﷺ, with the commentary of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ, that no true scholar or student of Ḥadīth should be without.

To use a South Asian idiom, if one were to describe the works of Imām Mawlānā ʿAbd al-Ḥayy Lucknowī ﷺ as a beautiful young bride, then the annotations and commentaries of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ on those works ought to be described as the glamorous jewellery worn by her.

ADDENDUM

Zameelur Rahman

Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah's ﷺ commendation (*taqrīẓ*) of ʿAllāmah Muftī Muhammad Taqi Usmani's *Takmilah Fatḥ al-Mulhim*

All praise be to Allāh and He suffices. May peace be upon His chosen servants, at the forefront of them our master, Muḥammad, the Chosen one.

To proceed:

The best means by which the speech of our Generous Lord is made clear, and the text of the Glorious Qurʾān is explained, is the speech of our master, the truthful and trustworthy Messenger of Allāh - may the blessings and peace of Allāh be upon him, and may His pleasure be upon his noble companions and their followers in excellence to the Day of Recompense.

Indeed, serving the speech of our master, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, is from the very essence of serving the Noble Qurʾān, which is the primary source of the bright *sharīʿah*, and [the source of] firm might and felicity in the two abodes for those who seek guidance. Allāh, the Generous, had chosen from the very first day for the service of the sunnah and its auxiliary sciences exceptional men and leading luminaries who would assume responsibility of its preservation, its care, its reception and its narration, its commentary and its comprehension, and its transmission from the chief of the Prophets ﷺ to the pure believers with the utmost accuracy and precision, so that it became a well-guarded treasure and a providential guide. The dedication

with which they served the sunnah is unprecedented in [the history of] the services of the *ʿulamā'* to any science.

From the most important of that in which the scholars of the pure sunnah showed particular interest are the two *Ṣaḥīḥs* of al-Bukhārī and Muslim – may Allāh be pleased with them both and reward them abundantly. The book of al-Bukhārī has received the greatest share and the largest lot, and it is worthy and deserving of this [honour].

As for the book of Muslim, the dedication it has received has been less than that of the book of al-Bukhārī, even though from the perspective of the narrative structure in the presentation of its ḥadīths it is the sweetest and most satisfying drinking-source.

Great *ʿulamā'* and pious luminaries have served it with commentary and dedication, from the last of whom has been the researcher of the age, the embodiment of bright and radiant virtues, our master, the valiant *imām*, Shabbīr Aḥmad al-ʿUthmānī – may Allāh Most High have mercy upon him. His book in which he explained *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* was as he named it "the opening of the Inspirer in commenting on *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*" *(Fatḥ al-Mulhim bi Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim)*. He completed the commentary up to *Kitāb al-Raḍāʿ* (*The Book of Suckling*) when death overtook him before he could fulfil his wish [of completing the commentary].

Therefore, it became a duty upon those who knew him and those who drank from the waters of his knowledge and his successors to perfect his splendour and complete his favour. Thus, our teacher, the brilliant scholar of great learning, the grand muftī, Mawlānā Muḥammad Shafīʿ - may Allāh Most High have mercy upon him - spurred the aspirations of his intelligent son, the sagacious scholar of great learning, the distinguished ḥadīth master, the jurist and skilful man of letters, Muḥammad Taqī al-ʿUthmānī, to complete *Fatḥ al-Mulhim*. This he did owing to his recognition of the rank

and due of Shaykh [Shabbīr Aḥmad al-ʿUthmānī ﷺ], the commentator, and his payment of this due at the hands of his adept and learned son.

Thus, he – may Allāh Most High protect him - began to write from the point to which ʿAllāmah Shabbīr Aḥmad al-ʿUthmānī had reached, following his example in verification and exhaustion, and expending his full effort so the completion assumes the function of a [remaining] brick in that building, and his work settles with Allāh's permission and help in the place of perfection. [He did this work] with the seekers of benefit being grateful to him for appropriating for them the teachings and verifications that are hard to come by. May Allāh perfect [His] favour upon him by completing what was begun, and may He accept from him that in which he excelled and by which he produced benefit. May Allāh assist him and be his protector and may He honour me with his pious supplications. Indeed He has guardianship of the righteous.

Written by the one needy of Him Most High

ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah
in Karachi at the Dār al-ʿUlūm
Ẓuhr of Wednesday, 9th Rabīʿ al-Awwal, 1402 AH (1982 CE)

[The above] is how I commended the book *Takmilah Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* in the year 1402 AH when it was still a new moon in its early phases, just starting to grow. It has now turned into a full moon, its radiance and fragrance has blossomed, and it has taken its place amongst the commentaries of the pure sunnah [as a commentary] of the glorious book - *Ṣaḥīḥ* Muslim. How deserving it is of praise and commendation, and an elaboration of its exceptional merits and its superb qualities! It has become, with praise to Allāh, pleasing to onlookers and a coolness to the eyes of researchers and students, [as it is] a magnificent commentary and a comprehensive tome,

succeeding its original, *Fatḥ al-Mulhim*, by an opening from the Bountiful, in verification and comprehensiveness.

This is no surprise, as the author is an *ʿālim,* the son of an *ʿālim* who was an *imām* [of the Qurʾān and sunnah], an oceanic scholar and a jurist of high calibre, for, he is the son of our teacher, the magnificent scholar of great learning, the grand muftī, the highly perceptive ḥadīth master and jurist, Mawlānā Shaykh Muḥammad Shafīʿ al-ʿUthmānī al-Deobandī – may Allāh's mercies and great favour shower upon him.

The author - may Allāh Most High protect him - has exhausted in this book the explanation of every uncommon word from the text of ḥadīths and elucidation of every problematic sentence and difficult passage. He has sought herein to resolve the areas of reservation relating to the chains of narrators from a ḥadīth perspective. At the same time, he provided the correct vowelisation of the difficult names and ancestries, and brief and concise biographies of the narrators and transmitters when the context so demanded. In some places, he alerted to the subtleties of the chains of transmission in the style of ḥadīth scholars.

He gave the research its full due, of presentation and verification, in quoting from all four schools [of law]. He listed the proofs of every school when discussing the ḥadīths pertaining to rulings, on which there are different opinions from the perspective of narration and comprehension, while giving preference to the weightier of the different opinions from the perspective of narration and comprehension, with utmost fairness and balance, avoiding partiality and bias towards any particular school.

One of its distinctive features in such discussions is the summarisation of the speech of the earlier ḥadīth masters and jurists, and making it accessible to the minds, by means of a marvelous structure and arrangement whereby its comprehension and digestion becomes easy for the reader. [All] this is in addition to the useful notes and verifications which came to the mind of its author and the extreme cautiousness and

remarkable etiquette in all debates and discussions that Allāh Most High has endowed him with.

It is a tremendous distinguishing feature that he compiled the commentary in light of the teachings of the earlier imāms and *ʿulamā'* from the predecessors and successors while sourcing every quote to its speaker and its source with confidence and precision. Hence, the author – may Allāh Most High protect him - was not like some who gnaw at the speech of the imāms, deluded by their [own] understanding and knowledge, or [like those who] argue with them as equals. Rather, he had the utmost respect for, and estimation of, the earlier imāms and *ʿulamā'*. In this is a lesson for the readers of his book, who are students, to assume this praiseworthy quality, for, indeed a generation has come forth in these times whose custom it is to undermine the standing of the great *ʿulamā'* and to advance themselves in this race and to feign knowledge before the eyes, having succumbed to the intoxication of vanity.

Of that which increases the beauty and benefit of this commentary is that the author produced, while commenting on the ḥadīths, their additions and supplements which appear in other paths which Imām Muslim did not transmit, but other imāms of ḥadīth and authors of the *Ṣaḥīḥ, Sunan* and *Musnad* collections and other [ḥadīth compilations] transmitted, since the pure sunnah in its reliable collections is a single dining cloth. In this style lies the greatest assistance in elucidating the areas of questions and ambiguity in the texts and chains of the ḥadīths, as narrations are explained by one another. When the various chains of a chapter are not all collected, its coherence and its fragrance will not materialise.

Within the commentary there are important scattered discussions on the defects of ḥadīth based on a purely ḥadīth-oriented methodology which benefits the reader and completes [all relevant discussions] on a topic. In the course of the jurisprudential and ḥadīth-related discussions, there are authoritative academic criticisms of the assessments of other commentators like *al-Ḥāfiẓ* Ibn Ḥajar and others, and important amendments which are necessary for the completion of the study. There are also powerful refutations within the commentary of deviant groups, along with removal

of the doubts of heretics and followers of desires from the early or late peoples. He invalidated the doubts of contemporary Orientalists and Occidentalists with an authoritative and clear explanation and a calm and convincing style.

One of the unique features of this commentary is that the author has been particular about elaborating on the laws of contemporary jurisprudential matters under their relevant ḥadīths. In this lie priceless lessons, and an enlightenment for the possessors of knowledge of jurisprudence and ḥadīth simultaneously, and a connection of the age-old with the modern. In this is also a vindication that the Prophetic sunnah, from the perspective of its comprehensive principles and its inclusive rules, illuminates the rulings pertaining to new matters and emergent events, however diverse they may be.

The author has added for the benefit of the readers valuable introductions before each of the books of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* so it becomes a torch for the reader when entering that book. In these [introductions] are benefits and anecdotes for the researchers and the educationalists.

All of this is adorned with simple phrasing and clear explanation and a pure style, and many other exceptional merits and superb qualities which this commentary enjoys – and all praise be to Allāh.

May Allāh Most High reward with goodness its author, the respected brother, the sagacious scholar of great learning, the brilliant ḥadīth master, the jurist, the judge, Muḥammad Taqī al-ʿUthmānī on behalf of knowledge and its people, and reward him abundantly in this world and the next, and extend his stay in safety and happiness and a wholesome life, and grant him [further] ability of the likes of this magnificent achievement in righteous deeds that are benefiting and profitable in his worldly life and his ultimate end, and may He honour me with his righteous supplications in his private moments and public moments. Indeed He has guardianship of the righteous.

Written by the one needy of Him Most High

ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah
Riyadh
08/08/1415 AH (1995 CE)

(*Takmilah Fatḥ al-Mulhim*, Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-ʿArabī, 1:5-9)

Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah's ﷺ commendation (*taqrīẓ*) of ʿAllāmah Ẓafar Aḥmad ʿUthmānī Thānawī's ﷺ *Iʿlāʾ al-Sunan*

All praise be to Allāh, Lord of the Worlds, and blessings and peace be upon our leader and our master Muḥammad, and upon his family and all his companions.

To proceed:

One of the most important ways in which the pure sunnah is served is by commenting on the ḥadīths of rulings and extracting what is found in them of jurisprudence (fiqh) and teaching, commands and prohibitions, the lawful and the unlawful. The aspirations of the juristic ḥadīth masters vied with one another in every age and place to collect these ḥadīths on a single platform so they become a simple reference-point and easily attainable for every student of jurisprudence and seeker of benefit.

One of the best, nay *the* best, of what has been compiled on this [subject] in this fourteenth century, and the most far-reaching of them in comprehensiveness, from the perspective of the Ḥanafī masters, is the book *Iʿlāʾ al-Sunan*. This is a compilation by our teacher, the great scholar (*ʿallāmah*), the ḥadīth scholar (*muḥaddith*), the jurist (*faqīh*), the theoretician (*usūlī*), the proficient researcher, Shaykh Ẓafar Aḥmad al-ʿUthmānī al-Thānawī ﷺ, which was first printed in India using [old] lithographic print in the year 1341 AH (1923 CE) and [later volumes continued to be printed] thenceforth, and most of it was printed there. Its printing was later completed in Karachi (Pakistan), and was published in twenty volumes.* These included two volumes of prologue to the book. One of them was on the sciences of ḥadīth** and the other on juristic principles, in view of what the book contained of noble ḥadīths in the main text (*matn*) and the juristic rulings deduced from them in the commentary (*sharḥ*), so the book by means of this comprehensiveness and meticulousness came to

be at the pinnacle of what was compiled on its subject matter.

The reason for compiling this immensely beneficial book is what occurred in the course of this century when a group of people in some cities of India arose, before the partition of Pakistan, calling themselves 'Ahl al-Ḥadīth', claiming that the school of the Ḥanafī masters, which is the school of the majority of Muslims in those large and expansive lands, conflicts with the Prophetic ḥadīths in many issues, just as they claimed that the Ḥanafī masters prefer analogy over the noble ḥadīth, and just as they rejected *taqlīd* of the four Imāms ﷺ who are followed, and they stretched their tongues with respect to Ḥanafī jurisprudence, and more specifically, with respect to the jurist of this Ummah, Imām Abū Ḥanīfah ﷺ.

Outstanding scholars from those Indian lands arose to challenge these deviant beliefs and they falsified these claims through many well-researched ḥadīth-oriented works. They explained in these [works] the reliance of the Ḥanafī masters in their jurisprudence and their school on the noble ḥadīths, and that they prefer the noble ḥadīth, and even weak ḥadīth, over analogy, and that analogy with its set conditions is amongst the proofs which must be acted upon, and the Ḥanafī Imāms are no less in deducing rulings from the sunnah and holding firmly to it than other *imāms*, if not stronger than others in holding firmly to the sunnah and *athar* (reports from the Companions and their successors). Rather, our teacher, the author of *Iʿlāʾ al-Sunan* - may Allāh Almighty have mercy on him and increase his rewards - established in his ḥadīth-oriented introduction, *Qawāʿid fi ʿUlūm al-Ḥadīth* (p. 289), that the Ḥanafīs prefer the statements of the Companions ﷺ over analogy, due to their excessive adherence to reports from the Companions and their successors, let alone the noble Prophetic ḥadīths.

Owing to this unique, comprehensive and rare book - *Iʿlāʾ al-Sunan* - and other similar ḥadīth-oriented compilations, which the scholars of India and Pakistan undertook in those lands which have now carried from the lands of the Muslims the burdens of the sciences of the sunnah, its service and its propagation, those deviant claims against the Ḥanafīs have subsided in futility, and every arrogant, deviant or shameless

pretender of knowledge has been silenced, and it has become apparent to every possessor of eyes that the Ḥanafīs are amongst the greatest adherents to ḥadīth and reports from the Companions and their successors, while being people of analogy and research.

ʿAllāmah [Ẓafar Aḥmad al-ʿUthmānī] al-Thānawī - may Allāh reward him abundantly and raise his status and his mention before Him - exhausted in *Iʿlāʾ al-Sunan* the proofs pertinent to all the chapters of jurisprudence - from the chapter of purification to the concluding chapters of jurisprudence - with extraordinary effort and rigorous ḥadīth and fiqh-oriented methodology. Gazes turned to this book and the hands of the scholars from the time of its publication hastily seized it, and acquiring a copy of it came to be a major aspiration in the hearts of the scholars who knew about this book in comparison with other books or had heard about it.

It is sufficient testimony for you to know the lofty position of this book that the like of our teacher, Imām al-Kawtharī ﷺ, praised it with the most wonderful praise in his book, *Maqālāt al-Kawtharī* (p. 75), in an article in which he speaks of various lands taking turns in carrying the burdens of the sciences of the sunnah. After referring to the efforts of the scholars of India and Pakistan and their achievements in the field of the pure sunnah in the latter centuries, and their undertaking of the burdens of the sciences of the sunnah since the tenth century till now, he said:

"Some of their scholars also have specific compilations on the ḥadīths of rulings in a novel original style, which is to exhaust the rulings from their sources and collect them in one place, arranged into chapters, and to comment on every ḥadīth with criticism and accreditation of its reporters and [overall] strength and weakness of the report."

After Imām al-Kawtharī ﷺ loftily praised the book *Āthār al-Sunan*, written with the same objective, by the great ḥadīth master, the knowledgeable jurist, the critical analyst, Shaykh Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī, popularly known as Ẓahīr Aḥsan al-Nīmawī ﷺ, the summary of what Imām al-Kawtharī ﷺ said is:

"Similarly, the inimitable great scholar, the unique ocean, the teacher of the scholars of the Indian lands, the great ḥadīth master, the knowledgeable critical analyst, our master, the sage of the Ummah, Muḥammad Ashraf ʿAlī al-Thānawī ﷺ, the author of works, both small and large, numbering around five hundred, nay his works numbered to more than a thousand by the time of his death, turned to this matter and he authored *Jāmiʿ al-Āthār*. A description of this book is dispensable by the mention of the great name of its author. Although it was published in India, acquiring it has become somewhat difficult since its printed copies were depleted by the great number of those interested in collecting the works of this Godly scholar (*al-ʿālim al-Rabbānī*), who is a blessing of the Indian lands, and he has a high standing amongst the scholars of India such that they call him 'the sage of the Ummah' (*Ḥakīm al-Ummah*).

This magnificent scholar instructed his student and nephew, who completed his ḥadīth studies under his tutelage and supervision, the critical ḥadīth master, the excellent jurist, Mawlānā Ẓafar Aḥmad al-Thānawī - may his achievements increase - to compile the proofs of the chapters of jurisprudence by collating the ḥadīths of rulings, [arranging them] into chapters, from the sources that are difficult to obtain, while commenting on every ḥadīth in accordance with the requirements of the science of ḥadīth of strength and weakness and acceptance and rejection, as per the varying schools. This enthusiastic scholar occupied himself with this difficult task for approximately twenty years with the utmost commitment until he completed his work with the utmost brilliance by the will and enabling of Allāh Glorified is He.

Truth be told, I was astonished by this compilation, exhaustion and this extreme comprehensiveness in commenting on every ḥadīth in accordance with the requirements of the science [of ḥadīth], in relation to the text and chain of reporters, without any apparent superficiality in support of his [Ḥanafī] school. Rather, impartiality was his principle when speaking of the opinions of the various schools. Hence, I was extremely pleased with the work. This is how the aspirations of [real] men and the earnestness of [true] heroes are. If only some of the owners of the large publishing houses in Egypt were to obtain the book from its author and print it in

beautiful Egyptian type. If one of them were to do that, he would have rendered knowledge a service that would be appreciated, and he would have filled a gap in this subject." [Here] ends the statement of our teacher, Imām al-Kawtharī ﷺ.

Indeed Allāh Almighty has shown favour by bringing this preciously noble desire to reality. For, He has enabled the publishing of this brilliant ḥadīth and fiqh-oriented book in the city of Karachi in Pakistan, adorned with an academically distinguished service by the great scholar, the researcher, the ḥadīth master, the perceptive jurist, the man of letters, the esteemed Shaykh Muḥammad Taqī al-ʿUthmānī,*** the son of our respected teacher the Grand Muftī Mawlānā Muḥammad Shafīʿ ﷺ - may his lofty shadow be lengthened in good health and happiness.

That descendant, the brilliant heir, undertook the task of verifying, editing and annotating this book in a way that will complete its aims and objectives and perfect its pearls and its benefits with a lofty academic flavour and a novel typed artistic format, with a brilliant look from the beauty of modern printing. The first volume has become a wonderful academic treasure. The services of the sagacious researcher, the apple of Pakistan,**** is manifest therein, so this wonderful academic work deserves the gratitude of the students of knowledge and scholars.

Allāh is beseeched for the completion of this encyclopaedic beneficial book at his hands, so it becomes a great weight in his overflowing good deeds, Allāh willing. May Allāh reward him the best of rewards on behalf of knowledge and its people. May He also reward with goodness its distributor, publisher and all who helped in its production in this immaculate cover and beautiful printing. All praise is to Allāh by Whose grace good actions are completed.

Written by the one needy of Him Most High

ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah
College of Sharīʿah
Riyadh

03/02/1396 AH (1976 CE)
---

* The final volume was completed in 1357 AH (1938 CE).

** Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ ﷺ: This beneficial comprehensive ḥadīth-oriented introduction called *Inhāʾ al-Sakan ilā man yuṭāliʿu Iʿlāʾ al-Sunan* was printed in India in the year 1345 AH in [old] lithographic print. It was then printed in Karachi in Pakistan in the year 1383 AH in modern print. Later, Allāh, with Whom is grace and blessing, favoured me with serving this unique ḥadīth-oriented introduction by verifying, editing, annotating, publishing and distributing it with the title *Qawāʿid fi ʿUlūm al-Ḥadīth*. Its printing was completed in Beirut in the year 1392 in 550 pages and it became by the grace of Allāh Almighty an academic gift that is wonderful to look at and learn from, and it received the most pleasant acceptance and approval from the great scholars of this field. All praise belongs to Allāh, Cherisher of the worlds.

*** Abu Asim Badrul Islam: This commendation (*taqrīẓ*) must have been written by Shaykh ʿAbd al- Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ not long after our master ʿAllāmah Muftī Muhammad Taqi Usmani had commenced his work on *Iʿlāʾ al-Sunan*, as I know from the latter that he edited no more than the first two volumes out of the twenty-two volumes of the old Idārat al-Qurʾān (Karachi) edition.

**** Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattaḥ ﷺ: This is a title which I have designated to the verifier and editor of this book [Muftī Muḥammad Taqī al-ʿUthmānī] - may Allāh Almighty protect and maintain him - while he was in the prime of his youth approximately fifteen years ago during my first trip to Pakistan in the year 1382 AH (1962 CE) when I saw in him a vigorous talent, a sharp mind, expansive knowledge, overflowing brilliance, along with a high and transparent spirit and a rare Arabic eloquence in his sermons and his extemporaneous speech. May Allāh increase him from His favour and accordance, and benefit through him [His] servants and all lands, and bless me with his righteous supplications.

(*Iʿlāʾ al-Sunan*, Idārat al-Qur'ān wa 'l-ʿUlūm al-Islāmiyyah, 1:3-7)

Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah's ﵀ letter to *Shaykh-al-Ḥadīth* Mawlānā Muḥammad Zakariyyā Kāndhlawī ﵀

The following is a translation of a letter written by Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﵀. It was addressed to *Shaykh al-Ḥadīth* Mawlānā Muḥammad Zakariyyā ﵀ and was sent after the noble Shaykh ﵀ had been gifted the *Shaykh al-Ḥadīth*'s ﵀ multi-voluminous commentary of Imām Mālik's ﵀ *al-Muwaṭṭa'*, entitled *Awjaz al-Masālik ilā Muwaṭṭa' Mālik.* Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﵀ wrote:

'In the name of Allāh, the All Compassionate, the All-Merciful.

To His eminence, the *shaykh*, the magnificent *imām*, the jurist, the ḥadīth master, the outstanding noble scholar, the fragrance of India and the Ḥijāz, the tongue of the people of reality and metaphor, our master and our blessing, Shaykh Muḥammad Zakariyyā - may his lofty shadow be lengthened and his precious life be blessed. Āmīn.

From the needy slave, your admirer, ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah.

Al-salāmu ʿalaykum wa raḥmat Allāhi wa barakātuh

To proceed:

Together with you, I praise Allāh, and I hope you are in affluence and fortune from Allāh and in perfect health.

I received with the hand of gratitude and respect your priceless and precious gift *Awjaz al-Masālik.* May Allāh accept this immense effort and great [work of] benefit which He has foreordained for you. For, indeed you have expanded breasts and hearts by this commentary of the book *al-Muwaṭṭa'*, and you have illuminated by it the minds and sights, and you were earnest in benefitting the seekers of benefit, such that it is apt to say of *Awjaz al-Masālik*: 'Every game is in the belly of the wild ass'*.

All praise to Allāh for what He has bestowed upon you, and may Allāh benefit the Muslims through you, and give me, my family and my children the fortune of your pious supplications. I ask Allāh to protect you until a near longed-for meeting, in which I will kiss your hands and have the good fortune, if Allāh wills, of sitting in your company, in order to gain maximum benefit [from you] and provision [for the afterlife]. May Allāh protect you and preserve you with His fortune and grace, as a blessing upon us and the Muslims and His chosen ones.

Al-salāmu ʿalaykum wa rahmat Allāh wa barakātuh

Riyadh
7/6/1401 AH (1981 CE)
Your admirer,
Signed: ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah'

* An Arabic proverb meaning the wild ass is the greatest game. Whoever catches it, is not in need of any other game. Shaykh 'Abd al-Fattāḥ is therefore stating that *Awjaz al-Masālik* dispenses with all previous commentaries on *al-Muwaṭṭa'*. (ZR)

Since its completion, *Awjaz al-Masālik* has seen countless publications in many parts of the world, including India, Pakistan, Egypt and Lebanon. Funded by Shaykh Sulṭān ibn Zāyid Āl Nahyān (Vice President of the Council of Ministers, United Arab Emirates), it has been republished in 1424 AH (2003 CE) from Dār al-Qalam Publishers

in Damascus with the verification and editing of Dr. Shaykh Taqi al-Dīn Nadwī, student of the author. This latest edition, in eighteen large and extremely beautiful volumes, is by far the best edition to date. Like the countless other works of the great masters of the Deobandi school, this is a ḥadīth and fiqh encyclopaedia that left scholars astounded. To this day, the book and its noble author continue to receive words of extolment from scholars of the Mālikī school, a commentary of the work of whose great founder this book is. (AABI)

The following is a copy of the letter in the noble *shaykh*'s ﷺ handwriting.



بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

إلى سماحة الشيخ الإمام الجليل، والفقيه المحدث الجهبذ النبيل،
ريحانة الهند والحجاز، ولسانه أهل الحقيقة والمجاز، مولانا وبركتنا
الشيخ محمد زكريا، مُدَّ ظلُّه العالي، وبورك في عمره الغالي، آمين.

من العبد الفقير محكم عبد الفتاح أبو غدة

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته.
وبعد نأحمد الله تعالى إليكم، ونرجو أنه تكونوا بخير مع الله
ونعمة وعافية سابغة.
تسلمت ببالشكر والتقدير هديتكم النفيسة الغالية (أوجز
المسالك)، فتقبل الله منكم هذا الجهد الكبير، والنفع العظيم،
الذي أنشأه الله لكم، فقد شرحتم بهذا الشرح كتاب «الموطأ»:
الصدور والقلوب، وأنرتم به العقول والأبصار، واجتهدتم في
الإضافات المستفيضة، حتى صدق أنه يقال في «الأوجز»:
كل الصيد في جوف الفرا. فالحمد لله على إتمامكم، وأسأل الله
المجيد بكم، ونفعني بصالح دعواتكم أنا وأسرتي وأولادي.
وأستودعكم الله إلى لقاء قريب حبيب، أنتم فيه بيديكم، وأخلي
إن شاء الله بالجلوس في حضرتكم، لمزيد الاستفادة والزاد،
والله يحفظكم ويرعاكم بمنه وكرمه، بركة علينا وعلى المسلمين وعباد،
والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته.
الرياض ١٤٠١/٦/٧ محكم أبو غدة



This is a short obituary of a great scholar of Islām, an exceptionally beautiful fragrant flower from the bouquet of those who have mastered both *ʿilm* and *ʿamal* (knowledge and practice), whose fragrance emits till today and will continue to do so until the Final Hour, *inshāʾ Allāh*. He is Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ.

Indeed it is a great favour from Allāh ﷻ that the obituary of a luminary, written by another luminary, ʿAllāmah Muftī Muhammad Taqi Usmani, has been translated to English by Abu Unaysah and Mawlānā Ibrahim Amin al-Kuwaiti and made available to us. It does not end there, for, the beneficial article and notes of Mawlānā Badrul Islam, who holds much love and respect for the *ʿulamāʾ* of *Ḥaqq* in general and the *ʿulamāʾ* of Deoband in particular, has added to its benefit. Likewise, the translations by Zameelur Rahman in the addendum present to the English reader beautiful examples of the love and admiration Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah ﷺ had for the great *ʿulamāʾ* of Deoband (the *ʿAkābir*).

The mention of the pious and chosen servants of Allāh ﷻ is the means of much *barakah* (blessings). Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah ﷺ would say:

عِنْدَ ذِكْرِ الصَّالِحِيْنَ تَنْزِلُ الرَّحْمَةُ

'The mercy of Allāh descends when His pious servants are mentioned.

May Allāh ﷻ grant the writer, the translators, Mawlānā Badrul Islam, Zameelur Rahman and all those who made this publication possible recompense for this excellent work in both worlds, may He increase them in their abilities and grant them *barakah* to render further service to His Dīn. Āmīn

SHAYKH MUHAMMAD SALEEM DHORAT