

The Man of Da`wah
- Dr. Yusuf Al-Qaradawi

The best greeting I can start with is the greeting of Islam, and the greeting of Islam is peace. So, peace and mercy be upon you. I thank those who arranged this symposium in the memory of our Sheikh, Al-Ghazaly, may Allah bless his soul and be pleased with him. I wish to thank the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), the Royal Conference for Research on Islamic Civilization (Al al-Bait Organization) and The Society of Islamic Studies and Research. This is an example of cooperation that should be repeated and "help you one another onto righteousness and pious duty" (al-Ma'idah; verse 2). Cooperation always produces good.

I don't know how I can talk to you about Sheikh Al-Ghazaly. How can I summarize half a century in a few minutes? How can I put the sea in a bottle?

It is not easy to talk about our Sheikh Al-Ghazaly. And I am saying 'our Sheikh' even if he is just nine years older than me. So, the difference in our ages is not a lot, but I assert that I am a student of his. I got to know him first by reading his articles and then by reading his books, since his first book, Islam and Economy, and his second book, Islam and Social Systems. I also admired his articles. At that time, I was only busy with literature and poetry. All my readings were focused into that direction. But when I read Al-Ghazaly's articles in the Muslim Brotherhood weekly magazine, I found him to be an astoundingly eloquent writer. At that time, I was not aware that he was an Azhari Sheikh. Sheikhs have a different style of writing and discuss different issues from him. They simply have a completely different spirit. Sheikh Al-Ghazaly used to write under different titles. Such examples are his Free Thoughts, Pages of Glory, and The Underprivileged People. This is not a Sheikh's style. That is why I never imagined that Al-Ghazaly of the Muslim Brotherhood magazine was an Azhari Sheikh. One day he signed 'Mohamed Al-Ghazaly Al-Wa'ez' (the preacher). I asked some brothers, "Is he from the Al-Wa'ez family or is he really a Wa'ez (preacher)?" They answered, "Yes, he is a preacher. That is his job." I asked, "Is he Azhari?" They replied, "Yes, he is a Sheikh and he even wears an Al-Azhar uniform." This made me love him more and read more of his articles. Al-Azhar, at that time, was proud of all its men and Sheikhs.

It wasn't written that I meet him until I was moved from the prison of Tanta. My brother, Ahmed Al-Assaal, who is sitting here among the audience, and some other brothers accompanied me. After our forty days stay in the Tanta prison, we were transferred to the Hike Step Jail. Then, we were to be transferred to Al-Toor Jail in Sinai. On our trip on the ship a quarrel started between some brothers. I saw a young man who was slightly shorter than average without a head cover, who spoke only a few words that put an end to the conflict. He said: "Brothers, you have to be patient, until we reach the place, which is destined to be our place of residence. It is the land from which revelation emerged to liberate a captivated nation, which appeared before Mohamed (pbuh). We are going to the Mountain of Al-Toor." Silence overtook the group. I asked some Ikhwan from Cairo, "Who is this speaker?" They answered, "Don't you know him? He is the al-Azhari Sheikh, Mohamed Al-Ghazaly." I told them, "He is a dear brother to me. I loved this Sheikh before seeing him, and here I am gazing upon him for the first time."

Allah destined that I be with him in the same section of the jail. That jail was originally a place for health examinations for people returning from Hajj. It was divided into sections, and each section was divided into several rooms. Allah destined that I be in the same area that Sheikh Al-Ghazaly was appointed an Imam for. I remember his first Khutbah there. It was an angry revolution regarding the living conditions of this prison. The prison guards were stealing the food from the prisoners! And it was just canned food to begin with. We were getting almost nothing to eat. After the Khutbah, Sheikh Al-Ghazaly led a rally inside the prison, the slogan of which was: "Stop the Hunger! Stop Organized Theft!" We were all rallying behind Sheikh Al-Ghazaly. At that time he was thirty-two. The jail administration was startled. Those in charge in it swiftly agreed to negotiate with the prisoners. We ended up receiving all our designated food – on the condition that we cook it ourselves!

This was Sheikh Al-Ghazaly. He would never tolerate oppression. From that incident on, I accompanied Sheikh Al-Ghazaly. It was then Ramadan. I enjoyed my Ramadan, praying behind him. He memorized the entire Qur'an perfectly. He would read the whole Qur'an twice during the month of Ramadan; the one time over the Taraweeh prayers and the other divided over all other prayers. At each prayer, he would begin reading with where he left off with until he finished the Qur'an. Then he would start the whole Qur'an again.

He would make Dua' during every prayer, the Dua' of Calamity. He would just say a few brief words. He would say: "Oh Allah, liberate us by Your power. Heal us with Your mercy. Take care of our affairs with Your kindness. Oh Allah, cover our bodies and make us secure from our fears. Oh Allah, take revenge on our oppressors." Sometimes, he would add a few other words.

I lived with Al-Ghazaly in prison - praying behind him and learning from his lectures. The theme of his lectures was, Islam and Political Oppression. The book that he later published under the same title was a collection of these lectures in prison. He was quite aware that those present were scrutinizing his words. But this never affected what he said. The prisoners' leader was our teacher and Sheikh, Al-Bahey Al-Kholi. Then, Sheikh Al-Bahey was taken out to attend a court case with the Ikhwan Secret Services. The Ikhwan in the jail agreed among themselves that Al-Ghazaly should be their new leader. He was quite young, but proved himself to be a wise and mature leader.

When we were freed we all kept strong ties with Sheikh Al-Ghazaly, and especially I and brother Ahmed Al-Assaal. He invited us to his place many times. We would very much enjoy his food and talk. That was good for our stomachs and our minds. I always accompanied Sheikh Al-Ghazaly. Even when I moved to Qatar, I would seize any opportunity to meet the man. I learned from him, as a Khateeb, as a lecturer, as a teacher, as a speaker, and as a writer.

I wrote a book on the Sheikh while he was still alive as a small gratitude. Many people do not show their gratitude to great men until after their deaths. Islamists, sadly, are guilty of this. Others, as for example Marxists, hail their men, their writers, their poets, and their thinkers. They over-exaggerate the greatness of their people. They adulate each other in the eyes of the public, while Islamists don't do this. The title of my book is Sheikh Al-Ghazaly, as I Knew Him: A Journey of Half a Century. Actually, this book started with an attempt of a group of writers to write a book on the Sheikh. It was planned to be a gift for him on his seventieth birthday. A committee was formed to publish this book, but unfortunately did not complete the project. The only one who published something was Brother Dr. Mohamed Emara. It was a small book titled, Sheikh Al-Ghazaly and his Place as a Thinker. Some articles written by others were gathered and published in a book by Dar Al-Sahwa. My book started off just as an article. The article had become too long. I realized I couldn't write just an article on the Sheikh. It would have to be a book. Although it turned out to be ten chapters long, I still think it falls short of being an adequate portrayal of the Sheikh. Each chapter of this book could easily be expanded into a separate book on Sheikh Al-Ghazaly.

Sheikh Al-Ghazaly was a man of Da`wah before anything else. He was, in fact, a top-level man of Da`wah. Da`wah or a being a caller to Islam was in his blood. He worked in it during the day and dreamt about it during the night. He lived for Da`wah in his past, his present, and his future – his entire self was dedicated to it. When he wrote, gave Khutab or lectures, he was doing it all for the sake of Da`wah. When he attacked, defended, or criticized, he was doing all of this for the benefit of Da`wah. He was a man of Da`wah.

He mastered using all the tools for Da`wah; first, the Holy Qur'an. He memorized the Qur'an as our brother, Dr. Ali Jum'ah said, "As if the Qur'an is one line in front of his eyes." I lived with the Sheikh and saw this myself. He would quote from the Qur'an as if it appeared all on one page in front of him. He considered the Qur'an as the first source for a Da'ee or caller. He believed that it should be the supreme judge over all other sources, such as the Sunnah, Qiyass (comparing of cases), and consensus. He believed that the Qur'an is the pivotal and fundamental source of `Aqeedah and Shari`ah. Sheikh Al-Ghazaly was a man of the Qur'an by all means. He saw things in the verses that nobody else would see easily. I was in Algeria discussing with some students of Justas Malik Bin Nabi, may Allah bless his soul. They were talking about Malik's theory on the tendency of Muslims to fall under imperialism. I told them that Sheikh Al-Ghazaly had first developed this theory. They asked how and where. I replied: It was in his book, Islam and Economy. Al-Ghazaly wrote: "Nations are occupied when they develop tendencies for mischief. Occupation follows mischief." He went on very eloquently quoting some verses from Surat al-Isra'. These verses mention how mischievous the Children of Israel were and how this led to their oppression and the occupation of their lands. They were oppressed by the Babylonians, Persians, Romans, etc.

The Sheikh was living with the Qur'an. Since his early books, one can easily conclude he saw in the Qur'an what nobody else was capable of. Dr. Al-Assaal described how Sheikh Al-Ghazaly would dedicate his books. At the beginning of his books he would write his dedications as follows: "In the way of Allah and the underprivileged." He took from the verse: "Why do you not fight in the way of Allah and the underprivileged." Therefore, it is a Qur'anic principle; "In the way of Allah and the underprivileged." He formed a group with some other scholars from Al-Azhar. Among them was Sheikh Khalid Mohamed Khalid (before he went in another direction). This group's slogan was "Religion at the Service of the Masses". This slogan was a response to those who say, "Religion is the Opium of the Masses". Sheikh Al-Ghazaly wrote this slogan on the covers of his first and second book.

Sheikh Al-Ghazaly would judge real life situations, Fiqh, Qiyass, and virtually everything by the words of the Qur'an. That is why he refused to accept anything that contradicts the teachings of the Qur'an. For example, he refused to accept the Hadith that Muslim narrated in his authentic collection, saying that the father of the Prophet (pbuh) is in the hellfire. Unfortunately, some brothers who work in the way of Da`wah quote this Hadith. When the birthday of the Prophet (pbuh) comes, one of the first things they say is: "People you have to know that the father of the Prophet (pbuh) is in the hellfire." Subhannallah, Sheikh Al-Ghazaly said: This is completely contradictory to what is written in the Qur'an. Allah, glory to Him, said, "We will not punish a people until We (first) send a messenger." Arabs did not receive a messenger according to four verses in the Book of Allah, one verse stating for example, "To warn people, whose fathers were never warned," and another, "We have not sent him a Warner before you."

This is why he refuted this Hadith, even though it is found in the authentic collection of Muslim. The Qur'an, however, is the absolute truth. And Sheikh Al-Ghazaly was a man of the Qur'an. The Qur'an, of which he had immense knowledge of and experience with, was his main tool as a caller.

The second tool was his encyclopedic knowledge. In a book I authored many years ago titled, The Knowledge of the Caller, I mentioned that a caller requires six kinds of knowledge. Among them is the theoretical Islamic knowledge. This includes knowledge on Tafseer, Hadith, Fiqh, fundamentals, etc. Another type of knowledge is knowledge in literature. Sheikh Al-Ghazaly was one of the most eloquent writers of the Ummah. He was so keen not to make any grammatical or semantical mistakes. He, like the excellent Azhari scholars, had a firm linguistic and religious background.

This is the reason behind his flawless writing and highly articulate speech. If he ever made a mistake, he would confess and apologize. One day he was so emotional while speaking, and so made a grammatical mistake. He thereafter said, "Strong feelings caused me to err in my speech. I will try not to get so emotional." In his early books he sometimes made grammatical mistakes in conditional statements. When he realized it he simply never repeated this mistake. He used to memorize thousands of verses of poetry. I think he memorized most of the standard Arabic poetical works, if not all of them.

Moreover, he had a solid background in Islamic history, particularly the life story of the Prophet (pbuh). He also had a

very strong background in the humanities, as well as knowledge in the sciences. Dr. Fahmi Jud'an said that Sheikh Al-Ghazaly was interested in science. Actually, a caller to Allah cannot do without science. Al-Ghazaly also kept up with current affairs occurring around the world and all strains of life. All this knowledge was his second tool after the Book of Allah, glory be to Allah.

Azhari knowledge has certain characteristics. Al-Azhar, like most religious schools and universities, follows the Ash'ari school of Aqeedah. I know that our Salafi brethren do not like this, but I would like to say that the whole Muslim Ummah follows the Ash'ari school. So, has the whole Ummah gone astray? Azhar, Zaituna, Al-Qarawayah, and Dupand of India are all Ash'aris. All religious schools in the world are Ash'aris. So, Sheikh Al-Ghazaly was an Ash'ari. He just was not fanatical about it. He studied the Ash'ari school during his primary, secondary, and college years. His book, *The Aqeedah of the Muslim*, was written with a Salafi spirit and an Ash'ari breath. One can notice the Ash'ari touch in the way he defined and organized the chapters of the book. Nobody would be able to avoid this Ash'ari touch. He, moreover, took the opinion of applying both logic and scripts in Aqeedah. I would like to respond to what Dr. Fahmi Jud'an said. Logic is the foundation of scripts. Without logic we cannot accept the scripts. Proof of Prophethood is based on logic. Therefore, if we do not endorse logic, we cannot prove Prophethood or revelation. This is why Al-Ghazaly, and Ash'aris before him, said that logic is the foundation of scripts. A further reason behind his statement is that Ahadeeth coming from a single chain are not a strong enough evidence for proving Aqeedah. Single chains of Ahadeeth are doubtful and never absolute. Our brothers who criticize Sheikh Al-Ghazaly about this should know that the Sheikh did not come up with this means of judging Ahadeeth on his own. Ash'aris, Matridis, and most fundamentalists (Usoolis) are in the same consensus. I mentioned in my book that the Hanbalis' best scholars believe the same. I was referring to Abu Ya'la Al-Faraa's book, *Al-Oddah (The Tools)*, Abu Al-Khattab's book, *Al-Tamheed (The Introduction)*, Ibn Qudamah's book, *Al-Rawdah (The Garden)*, and Ibn Taymeyah's book, *Al-Moswaddah (The Draft)*. The fundamentalists of the Hanbali school, themselves, say that single chain Hadiths are not absolute.

This is what follows from straight logic. Single chain Hadiths are weak because they are subjected to mistakes that can occur anywhere along their narration.

Logic is another tool that Sheikh Al-Ghazaly used in *Da'wah*. I mean by logic, the logic of the faithful. And in this case, logical reasoning works within and respects the Islamic fundamentals.

This is why I would like to comment on the claim that logic has no role to play in some areas. I understood from Dr. Fahmi Jud'an's talk that logic should have no role in determining Shari'ah rules. He said that Shari'ah is an area that should only be understood through revelation. I disagree. Analysis and reasoning has a role to play, and most definitely in this area. The use of logic is not confined to physics. It plays a fundamental role in revelation. There are, for example, issues that are not clearly defined within the revelation; there are issues that the revelation deals with in very general terms. Furthermore, there are issues that the revelation covers; however, the script can be understood in numerous ways. This is where the role of logic is integral to inferring what the script does not explicitly state. The application of reason and logic is crucial for grasping the meaning of the script. Hence, we have several schools of thought. Our Sheikh Al-Ghazaly used logic to understand Shari'ah and `Aqeedah. He, thus, refused to accept those few Ahadeeth that go against common sense. For instance, he refuted Ahadeeth such as, "If it were not for the doings of the Children of Israel, meat would not rot today" and "If it were not for Eve, no wife would betray her husband." These Ahadeeth are in Bukhari. Sheikh Al-Ghazaly said: "Meat rots because this is a scientific fact of life that was valid before and after the Children of Israel. If one leaves meat out at room temperature, it will rot after some time." He added: "Eve did not betray Adam. We do not have this notion in Islam." Thereby, he is using his mind and logic. Some people ridiculed him for this by saying, "How can he deny authentic Ahadeeth?" Some people went as far as accusing him of apostasy because he denied a few "authentic" Ahadeeth. I affirm that Sheikh Al-Ghazaly never denied the Sunnah. On the contrary, he defended it in many of his books, such as in, *Fiqh of the Seerah and Un-Islamic Practices*. I included in my book quotes of where he defends the Sunnah. He is a man who is defending Islam. But he is a caller who wants to present Islam in a logical, acceptable and sensible way. If a single chain of a Hadith were to contradict with simple facts, he would reject it, even if it were termed authentic.

His rejection of questionable Ahadeeth should never be a reason to discredit Sheikh Al-Ghazaly. During the days of the companions, `Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, refuted some Ahadeeth that some companions claimed to have heard with their own ears. She said, "No, they either did not understand or changed the wording by mistake." She simply saw that these Ahadeeth were contradictory to the Qur'an. And in such situations she would reply to the companions saying, "How can you narrate this while Allah says so and so...."

There are several books that were written on what `Aisha discarded of the other companions' narrations. However, no one ever said that Aisha was an apostate because she rejected those Ahadeeth. In fact, there is not a single Imam who did not reject some Ahadeeth for some reason or another, and for example, Malik and Abu Hanifa. So, it was simply logic that propelled Sheikh Al-Ghazaly to develop his own opinions on many issues. And certainly when he chose an opinion over another, he did not do this out of personal whims. He had, as Dr. Al-Sawwa illustrated, a well-defined methodology and fixed fundamentals. He used common sense, but it never caused him to reject revelation. For instance, when he chose the opinion that the blood money for a woman is equal to that of a man, some people blamed him because they said that his opinion went against the four schools of thought. It is correct that this is not the opinion of the four schools of thought. But it is not a matter of consensus (Ijmaa). Al-Assamm and Ibn Aleya have different opinions, as mentioned by Shawkani. Moreover, all the Hadiths that were cited to support the claim that blood money for a woman is half that of a man's are not authentic. This is agreed upon by top scholars of Hadith. This is the thinking of Sheikh Al-Ghazaly. And it was a useful way of thinking when he used his arguments to counter Communists' attacks.

He always thought that belief is love for the sake of Allah and hate for the sake of Allah. I would like to name this soul a

soul of a poet. Sheikh Al-Ghazaly said:

In 1951, the young Indian Islamic caller, Sheikh Abu Hassan Al-Nadawi, visited Egypt. He brought with him several letters that had written. One of them is titled, From the World to the Arabic Peninsula and From Arabs to the World. The world was asking the Arabic Peninsula about its mission it was to carry out. These were very strong and emotional words. Then the Peninsula answered the world. By Allah, no one can serve this Islam unless he/she has the soul of a poet.

I wasn't aware that Al-Ghazaly wrote poetry. But his son, Dr. Alaa, mentioned a while ago that he did write some verses. In any case, he was not a poet. But he had the soul of a poet. His emotions were always flooding out of his heart. A caller must have a lot of emotions. He or she cannot be rigid. Al-Ghazaly reproached some people for "not having a heart." These are people who only cared about the literal meaning of words. These rocks are not capable of calling for Islam. The call for Islam is not rigid. It is a nice and sweet emotion. That is why everybody who knew Sheikh Al-Ghazaly well loved him - even those who held different opinions to his. He was a tolerant, gentle, and witty person. There is not a single time one would sit with him without hearing a joke. He would even sometimes use jokes in Da`wah. Once he was asked if a man could direct his own destiny or if his future was predestined. He answered: "In the West a man directs his own destiny. But in the East one's life is predestined." It is obviously a tough question that is eternally asked. So, he solved the whole problem with this joke. That is how he was.

There is one more tool, with which I will end my talk. It is Sheikh Al-Ghazaly's tremendous spirituality. He had a heart of a Sufi. However, he never joined any Sufi group. I invited him a few years ago to be a visiting professor in Qatar. He stayed three happy years with us. One brother came to visit him, who was a Sufi and previously an Ikhwan, and said: "Oh respected Sheikh, I want you before the end of your life to give a covenant to my Sufi Sheikh." He asked him, "Is there a Sheikh after Hassan Al-Banna? I have taken from Hassan Al-Banna the Islam with all its comprehensiveness, balance, and depth." Yes, Al-Ghazaly learned from Hassan Al-Banna the all-inclusive Islam and lived it. Moreover, he had this tremendous spirituality that anyone who knew him would feel. Whoever reads what he wrote becomes moved by his words. I think he was sincere. I never listened to him without becoming emotional. The man was talking from his heart and expressing his inner thoughts. He never pretended in his speeches or faked his emotions. He acted quite naturally and never mixed the Islam with anything else. In his book, *The Spiritual Side of Islam*, he explained a part of a book, *Words of Wisdom*, written by Ibn Ataa Al-Sakandari. This contemporary explanation was wonderfully eloquent.

A conflict once took place between Al-Ghazaly and Ustaz Hassan Al-Hudaybi, which was later resolved. Al-Ghazaly later praised Al-Hudaybi greatly. When Al-Ghazaly discovered that Al-Hudaybi requested in his Will that he be buried in the charity graveyard, he was moved him to write the following:

Hassan Al-Hudaybi (the second general guide of the Ikhwan) died a few days ago. In his will he requested that he be given a quiet funeral and to be buried in the charity graveyard. I was amazed when I heard the latter request. I know Hassan Al-Hudaybi. I reconciled with him two years before he died. He was a man of dignity and if he believed in something he would give his life for it. I was puzzled why he chose the charity graveyard. I reached a conclusion. He was a well-established judge in a high court. If he had spent his life attacking the Islamic Shari`ah, he would have been given the highest State Award. And if he had served secularism he would have become rich. However, he spent his life serving Islam. This is why he gained nothing but hardship. He was stabbed; just in the same way that Islam was attacked. He was humiliated, also in the same way that Islam was put down. He wanted all this to appear in his record when he meets Allah. Therefore, let him be buried in the charity graveyards with the wretched - those who nobody cares about. Let him be buried with people who died from torture in the military prison. The truth is: The Egyptian nation and the Muslim Ummah in general should revise their actions carefully before the Day of Judgment.

One day a man came to him and said, "Oh Sheikh, I have committed a sin and would like to repent." He replied: "Who knows, maybe this man is closer to Allah than I am. Maybe because he feels guilty towards his sin, he is closer to Allah than I. Who knows. Maybe my actions are insincere." Sheikh Al-Ghazaly had a tremendous spirituality. He would read a poem that Ibn Al-Rumi wrote on night prayers. He would read this poem crying. My dear brothers and sisters, this is Sheikh Al-Ghazaly. He lived his life to call for Islam, defend Islam, and attack the enemies of Islam. His books are either a defense of Islam or attacks on the enemies of Islam. He attacked the Zionists in his book, *The Harvest of Pride*. He attacked the missionaries in his book, *A Cry of Warning from the Missionaries*. He attacked orientalist when he replied to Gold Zahir. He also attacked Communists in his book titled, *Islam and the Red Invasion*, as well as the onslaught of western ideas in *Darkness From the West*, *Imperialism with his Imperialism: Envy, and Greed*, and finally national secularism in *The Reality of Arabic Nationality and the Myth of the Arabic Revival*.

All his books were either an attack or a defense. This was Sheikh Al-Ghazaly. Brothers and sisters, I cannot give him his due credit in just a few words. We are talking about a great leader of thought and a great Imam of Da`wah and Islamic revival. We are talking about a completely distinct school of Da`wah, thought, and reform. We need several research studies to define this school's characteristics, positions, and effects. Al-Ghazaly does not belong to a group or a nation. He belongs to the whole Muslim Ummah.

We are talking about a thinker and scholar, who dedicated his entire life to Islam, and nothing else. He gave Islam his thoughts, heart, tongue, pen, Jihad, and hard work. He struggled all his life under the banner of Islam. His slogan was: "My Prayers, My Rituals, My life, and My Death are for Allah, Lord of all the Worlds. He has No Partner. This I am commanded, and I am the first of those who surrender"(Al-An`Am: 162, 163). Allah was his only friend, judge and Lord.

He lived with a feeling that always filled his heart – that he was a guard for this Deen, and that he should never allow Islam to be attacked. He thought that he should always be on guard from internal and external enemies. He believed that he should not only defend, but attack as well. Attack would be the best means of defense. He never rested,

because the fight for the Qur'an and Islam is continuous. He was concerned because Muslim blood was becoming cheap and most of the other guards were asleep, or otherwise; too busy arguing about trivial issues.

It was the Sheikh's destiny to fight on two fronts:

The front of the enemies of Islam; those who hate to see the spread of its light and dislike its return to lead the world. Some of those were international forces that fear or hate Islam. Examples include Zionists, Crusaders, Communists, and Idol worshippers. They have different religions and ways of thinking, but they are unified in their mission to attack Islam and put obstacles in its way. Allah said about them: "And those who disbelieve are protectors of one another" (Al-Anfal: 73) and "And the oppressors are friends to one another" (Al-Jatheyah:19).

Some others, unfortunately, are Muslims carrying Muslim names, like Mohamed, Ahmed, Hassan, Hussain, Omar, and Ali. However, their intentions are evil towards Islam and its callers. They, furthermore, deny its Shari`ah. Islam is their enemy because it teaches against their sinful lusts, their wild oppression, their hidden agendas, and their excessive greed.

The front of the ignorant friends; the ones who harm Islam while they believe that they are serving it. It is those that crush Islam's face in their attempts to swat a fly that settles on its face. They are named, "the misguiding callers." They make people busy with branches and not the fundamentals, with particulars and not the entirety, the controversial and not the agreed upon, and the works of the organs and not the works of the hearts.

He complained about callers, most of who cause disaster and harm for Islam. They never read or struggle. The few facts they know are not put into their correct contexts. The pains of the Ummah do not affect them. They continue to debate historical events. They do not recognize what is happening in the world; nor do they learn of the incredible leaps of change occurring within life on earth.

The body that is depleted of blood cells will fall. Similarly, the mind that is void of knowledge cannot fulfill the obligations of Jihad or truth.

The danger to the future of Islam, its nation, and its revival is those, who the Sheikh addressed in his final books. He hoped that they would learn and wake up. He wished that they would become less proud in their opinions and cease despising others they consider below them. He wished that they would learn to be humble with the believers, to respect the elderly, and to be kind to the younger ones.

I would like to say that Sheikh Al-Ghazaly was not flawless. He was a normal human being. Nevertheless, he was a man of Islam. He lived for Islam and he died for Islam. He remained in the battlefields until the very end and died with his sword in his hand. This was Sheikh Al-Ghazaly. If people wish to dwell on his mistakes, this does not discredit him. In the Hadith: "Water more than two Qullas (a measurement) can never be dirty." What if it were a sea?

You might have a different opinion from him in minor or major issues, and in few or many issues. However, if you got to know him well, you could not help loving and respecting him. You would certainly feel how sincere he is to Allah, how honest and how straightforward he is, and how keen he is to defend Islam.

He became quickly upset when somebody attacked Islam. When he was upset he was like a sea that floods and a volcano that burns. He hated oppression against himself or against any human being. He could not tolerate deviation, especially if it is disguised in a cloak of piety and religion. Therefore, if he witnessed oppression or deviation, from his point of view at least, he could not remain silent or permit his pen to be idle. He would angrily attack, regardless of the consequences. The Sheikh, however, never overstepped his boundaries in his enmity. He would also never slander his enemies or wish them harm.

The Sheikh was at the same time able to quickly cool down. He would return to the truth upon realizing the extent of his anger. He would not be ashamed to announce his errors made in any particular issue. This is a kind of bravery that is very rare.

May Allah bless Sheikh Al-Ghazaly's soul and gather him with the pious of His servants. May Allah reward him with the best reward He gives to knowledgeable leaders. May Allah reward him for what he did for this Ummah and this Deen with the highest reward. May Allah take care of his family and children the best way He does with sincere people. I ask Allah to guide us to follow the Sheikh in his footsteps, to adhere to the truth, to resist falsehood, and to call to Allah. "Who is best in speech than he who calls to Allah, does good deeds, and says I am among Muslims."

Finally, I ask Allah to forgive you and me and to bless our master, Mohamed, his family, and companions. And may the peace, blessings, and mercy of Allah be upon you.

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