



*The Life of  
Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr*

Dr. 'Ali bin Mūsā az-Zahrānī

# **The Life of Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr (*rahimahullāh*) His Manhaj and Efforts in Establishing 'Aqeedah and Refuting the Opposing Sects<sup>1</sup>**

*By*  
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<sup>1</sup> Abridged from Dr 'Ali bin Mūsā az-Zahrānī, *Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: Manhajuhu wa Juhudahu fī Taqreer il-'Aqeedah wa'r-Ra'd'ala'l-Firaq al-Mukhaalifah* (Riyadh: Dār ul-Muslim, 1425 AH/2004 CE, First Edn.), pp.1-233.

This work was a Ph.d thesis which was defended in front of a committee of scholars at the department of 'Aqeedah, *Umm ul-Qurā University* in Makkah. The scholars on the panel were: Dr 'Abdullāh bin Sulaymān al-Ghufaylī, Dr 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar ad-Dumayjī and Professor Mahmood bin Muhammad al-Mazrū'ah. The thesis achieved a distinction (*mumtāz*). The thesis is some 880 pages and this translation represents just 150 pages of it, so about a meagre eighth of the entire thesis has been translated here.

As Dr 'Ali bin Mūsā az-Zahrānī makes recourse to copious footnotes any notes by translator will be clearly demarcated by 'Translator's Note' in bold type or by the following abbreviation: [TN]

The virtuous Shaykh, Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr (rahimahullāh) is well-known to us and he was of sound 'aqedah. I read some of his books and what they contained of advice for the sake of Allāh to His servants pleased me, and so did his refutations of those who dispute with Islām. I ask Allāh to multiply his reward and to cover us and him with Mercy, for indeed He is All-Hearing and Near...<sup>1</sup>

Imām Bin Bāz (rahimahullāh)

His enthusiasm and agitation in defending the 'aqedah had a huge impact in Pakistan and other places, and anyone who was concerned with monitoring the activities of the people of innovation within these last ten years is not ignorant to this fact. I had been closely linked to the late Shaykh over the years and I had a close relationship with him. I often insisted for him to exert caution and not to disseminate his activities and movements so as not to increase hostility. So they plotted a plan from Shaytān against him, for indeed Shaytān is a clear enemy unto man.<sup>2</sup>

Shaykh Sālih al-Luhaydān (hafidhabullāh)

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<sup>1</sup> A statement that was sent to Dr 'Alī az-Zahrānī from Riyadh dated 25/4/1419 AH corresponding to 18<sup>th</sup> August 1998 CE, no.667/1 and formerly stamped by Imām Bin Bāz (rahimahullāh).

<sup>2</sup> See the introduction by Shaykh Sālih bin Muhammad al-Luhaydān to the book by Shaykh Ihsān, *Darasāt fi't-Tasawwuf*, (Lahore: Idārah Tarjumān is-Sunnah, 1409 AH), p.5.

It was from Allāh's Wisdom to make use of him and his outstanding courage for combating the enemies, i.e. the enemies of the religion and deen from the innovators, heretics, deviants and hypocrites who sneak into the ranks of the Muslims. Such enemies are more dangerous than the kuffār who manifest open enmity and war against the Muslims. Shaykh Ihsān (rahimahullāh) utilised his pen and tongue to combat those deviants and thus he authored, classified, preached and gave lectures unveiling the covers of filth from the Rawāfid, Ismā'ilīs, Bahā'is, Qādiyānīs, Barelwīs and others. His writings are distinguished by abundant information and a referral to many sources.<sup>1</sup>

Shaykh 'Abdul'Azeez al-Qārī' (*hafīdhahullāh*)

I knew Shaykh Ihsān from the Islamic University of Madeenah when he was a student of knowledge there. He was (rahimahullāh) from the most prominent students of this university and he was intelligent and had understanding. He used to discuss with some of the 'Ulama with understanding and skill, taking and giving knowledge. I knew him as a Mujāhid in the field of 'aqeedah, giving da'wah to it and defending it and those who carry it from the Sahābah and those who followed them in goodness from the Ahl ul-Hadeeth and the Imaams of Ahl us-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah. He was also known for defending the people of the Qur'ān and Sunnah and refuting the opposing sects of misguidance from the Rawāfid, the Qādiyānīs, the Bahā'iyyah and the Barelwiyyah. He enriched the Salafī bookstores with ammunition which was of great value...<sup>2</sup>

Shaykh Rabī' bin Hādī al-Madkhalī (*hafīdhahullāh*)

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<sup>1</sup> An authorised letter written by Shaykh 'Abdul'Azeez al-Qārī sent to Dr 'Alī az-Zahrānī dated: 27/12/1419 AH.

<sup>2</sup> An authorised letter written by Shaykh Rabī' given to Dr 'Alī az-Zahrānī during his meeting with him in Makkah al-Mukarramah on 2/1/1420 AH.

I knew Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī from the Islamic University of Madeenah when he was a student. However, he was not like the other students rather he was prominent among them due to his studies and his superiority in giving sermons and admonitions. He had memorised the Book of Allāh and much of the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh (sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam). He fanned the flames of īmān and yaqeen, and was dedicated to love of the Salafī 'aqeedah and the 'Ulama of the Salaf and supported the truth for the truth. Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr for the sake of Allāh did not fear the blame of those who always blame. He loved his teachers, especially the Imām of the era al-'Allāmah, Shaykh 'Abdul'Azeez bin 'Abdullāh Bin Bāz, the Assistant Rector of the Islamic University of Madeenah at that time, may Allāh have mercy on him...What distinguished him (rahimahullāh) is that he read much in all arts and had memorised much, Allāh provided him with strong memorisation and a good memory...In the same way he had huge efforts, which have to be mentioned and thanked, in seeking to implement the Islamic Sharee'ah in Pakistan and during the last stages of his life he was almost the most prominent person in this regard.<sup>1</sup>

Shaykh Wasīullaah 'Abbās (*bafīdbabullāb*)

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<sup>1</sup> An authorised letter written by Shaykh, Dr Wasīullāh Muhammad 'Abbās, dated 15/6/1421 AH.

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## INTRODUCTION

Indeed all praise is due to Allāh and may prayers and peace be upon the Messenger of Allāh (*salallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*), to proceed:

The knowledge of *tawbeed* is of the most noble and glorious of sciences, this is because it is the knowledge of Allāh, His Actions, His Attributes and His Rights upon His servants. Likewise it knowledge of Prophethood and all that it related to matters of the Hereafter such as the Resurrection, Paradise, Hellfire. Allāh undertook responsibility to preserve *'aqeedah* and its sources, the Book and the Sunnah, Allāh says,

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**“Indeed, it is We who sent down the Qurān and indeed, We will be its guardian.”**

{*al-Hijr (15): 9*}

And He bestowed people to preserve and study them. The Messenger of Allāh (*salallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) took them from His Lord via revelation and then taught it to his companions and the companions in turn transmitted it to the Successors and in turn the Successors passed it on to their followers. Allāh assigned to the Islamic Ummah sincere scholars such as Imām Ahmad bin Hanbal, Shaykh ul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah and his student Ibn ul-Qayyim, Shaykh Muhammad bin 'AbdulWahhāb – in order to defend the Islamic *'aqeedah* which was the *'aqeedah* of the *Salaf us-Sālih*.

From those who Allāh had assigned to hold up the divine *'aqeedah* and defend it and call to it during this era, were those like Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr who for the sake of Allāh did not fear the blame of those who always blame when defending the Islamic *'aqeedah*. His life, may Allāh have mercy on him, was filled with serving Islām and the Muslims and he challenged the sects and contemporary trends of belief that opposed Islām. This was done within his writings, sermons, lectures, seminars and conferences – all of this was in the path of Allāh even though there was imminent danger to him. Shaykh Sālih al-Luhaydān stated, after expounding the contribution of Shaykh Ihsān (*rahimabullāh*) in combating innovation and defending the *'aqeedah*, that:

I used to say to him often to be careful so that his activities not be disrupted by the great amount of those who he argued with who may plot a plan of Shaytān against him.

However he, may Allāh have mercy on him, based on what was apparent to me, continued in defending the truth. His love of shaming the intentions of the people of transgression and corruption and his exposing of their evil intentions caused him to not be affected by the blame of those who constantly reproach or by those who called to be patient in combating bātil.<sup>1</sup>

In reality when I came across the books of the Shaykh, may Allāh have mercy on him, I found that they were filled with defending the *'aqeedah* of the Salaf and were also full of safeguarding the *deen* and love of it. The one who reads the books of the Shaykh will notice his sense of bitterness with the activities of Ahl ul-Bida' and their profusion, this is because the Shaykh (*rahimabullāh*) lived among them and came across their books and saw their efforts. The reader of the Shaykh's books will also notice the fear that the Shaykh had from hiding knowledge based on the saying of Allāh,

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**“But indeed, a party of them conceal the truth while they know [it].”**

{*al-Baqarab* (2): 146}

The Shaykh himself sensed the danger around him yet with this he persevered in his defence and his jihad refuting the statements of the misguided ones and the extremists, exposing their mysteries, obscurities and beliefs which all opposed Allāh's *deen*. Shaykh Ihsān said:

I have devoted my self, my body, my wealth, my honour all for the Countenance of Allāh and to seek His Pleasure.<sup>2</sup>

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**“Say, “Indeed, my prayer, my rites of sacrifice, my living and my dying are for Allāh, Lord of the worlds. No partner has He. And this I have been commanded, and I am the first [among you] of the Muslims.”**

{*al-An'am* (6): 162-63}

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<sup>1</sup> See the intro to the book *Darasāt fi't-Tasawwuf*, p.5 by Shaykh Ihsān.

<sup>2</sup> Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr, *at-Tasawwuf: al-Manshā' wa'l-Masādir* [Sufism: Its Development and Origins], p.5



What aided Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr (*rahimahullāh*) to probe the delusions and secrets of the misguided sects which opposed the authentic 'aqeedah was his knowledge of the Persian and Urdu languages, as he said himself.<sup>1</sup> Shaykh 'Atiyyah Muhammad Sālim<sup>2</sup> said in his introduction the Shaykh Ihsān's book *al-Qādyāniyyah*:

This treatise has increased strength and value in exposition and clarity because the author was brought up knowing the Urdu language and also studied Persian along with *fiqh* of the Islamic *Sharee'ah*. He began his studies within the schools and universities of the Ahl ul-Hadeeth and the University of Punjab in Pakistan and then he completed his studies at the *Islamic University of Madeenah*. His treatise therefore is marked by an understanding of the

<sup>1</sup> Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr, *al-Bābiyyah: 'Ard wa Naqd* [The Bābees: A Presentation and Critique], p.27.

<sup>2</sup> Shaykh 'Atiyyah Muhammad Sālim (*rahimahullāh*) was born in Mahdiyyah Sharqī in Egypt in 1346 AH (1927 CE) and began his academic studies in *Masjid an-Nabawī* in Madeenah where he read with some of the Mashā'ikh books such as *Bulūgh ul-Marām*, *Riyādhus-Sāliheen*, *Muwatta' Mālik*, *Nayl ul-Awtār*, *Saheeh ul-Bukhārī* and other works. Then he went to study at the *Ma'had 'Ilmī* in Riyadh and then went on to study at the Sharee'ah and Language College where he graduated from. At that time he stayed close to his Shaykh, al-'Allāmah Muhammad al-Ameen ash-Shanqītī from whom he gained tremendous benefits in terms of knowledge of *tafseer*, *Usool*, Arabic language and all Islamic sciences. He also studied with Shaykh 'AbdurRahmān al-Afrīqī in *Masjid an-Nabawī*, and likewise studied with Shaykh Muhammad al-Harakāt, Shaykh Muhammad bin Turkī, Shaykh Bin Bāz, Shaykh 'Abdul'Azeez bin Sālih. Then later he began his academic life and taught at the *Ma'had 'Ilmī* in al-Ahsa, then at the Sharee'ah College in Riyādh, then at the Islamic University of Madeenah and then taught in *Masjid an-Nabawī* wherein he had many students. He also worked within the judiciary as a *Qādī* in Madeenah and he had great efforts in travelling for *da'wah*, giving lectures and conferences, appearing on broadcasting networks and authoring books. Of his works are: *Tatimmat Adwā' ul-Bayān fī Tafseer il-Qur'ān bi'l-Qur'ān li'sh-Shanqītī*. He died in 1420 AH (1999 CE), may Allāh have mercy on him. He taught Shaykh Ihsān a number of sciences such as *fiqh* and Shaykh Ihsān studied Ibn Rushd's *al-Bidāyah wa'n-Nihāyah* with him. Shaykh Ihsān had a very strong connection with Shaykh 'Atiyyah Sālim.

See Muhammad Majdhūb, *'Ulamā wa Mufakkirūn 'Araftuhum* [Scholars and Thinkers I Knew], vol.2, p.201; interview with Dr 'Āsim al-Qaryūtī on the evening of 18/9/1421 AH; Interview with Shaykh 'Atiyyah Sālim on Tuesday 17/5/1419 AH in Madeenah; Interview with Shaykh 'Ābid Ilahī Thahīr on Jumu'ah 15/4/1419 AH; Interview with Dr Fadl Ilahī Thahīr, the brother of the Shaykh on 28/11/1418 AH; Interview with Shaykh as-Subayyal on 23/11/1419 AH; Sābir Husayn Thāqīb, *Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr wa Juhoodahu fī'd-Difā' an 'Aqeedat is-Salaf* [Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: His Efforts in Defending the 'Aqeedah of the Salaf], p.12; 'AbdusShakūr, *al-Ustādh al-'Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: Hayātuhu wa Mu'allifātuhu* [Professor, al-'Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: His Life and Works], p.11.

**Translator's Note:** I have abridged the above from Dr 'Alī bin Mūsā az-Zahrānī, *Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: Manhajuhu wa Juhoodahu fī Taqreer il-'Aqeedah wa'r-Ra'd'ala'l-Firaq al-Mukhaalifah* (Riyadh: Dār ul-Muslim, 1425 AH/2004 CE, First Edn.), p.117.

reality of the Urdu language as well as of the wisdom of Persian and a knowledge of the precision of the Islamic *Sharee'ah*, as the just and fair reader will see.<sup>1</sup>

So as every student within higher studies has to write a piece of research within their specialisation I viewed it proper that I undertake an academic study of the efforts of this glorious scholar in defending the *'aqeedah*, explaining the deviation of those sects which opposed Islām and refuting such sects in light of the Book and Sunnah, I have entitled this piece of research as *Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: Manhajuhu wa Jubūdahu fī Taqreer il-'Aqeedah wa'r-Ra'd 'ala'l-Firaq al-Mukhālīfah* [Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr and His Efforts in Affirming the 'Aqeedah and Refuting the Opposing Sects].

## **THE MOST IMPORTANT TOPICS - HIGHLIGHTING THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES WITHIN THE FOLLOWING POINTS:**

**Firstly:** the necessity to present the personalities who possessed sound *manhaj* and defended the *'aqeedah* of the *Salaf* and devoted their lives to that.

**Secondly:** the vast amount of writings belonging to Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr in refuting the sects who opposed the *'aqeedah* of the *Salaf*, this is what encouraged me to write this thesis.

**Thirdly:** his life traversing the *Salafī manhaj* in affirming the *'aqeedah* and basing himself on the Book and Sunnah. The Shaykh admitted this himself when he said:

We do not make our criterion to distinguish between the true and lies, truth and falsehood, good and bad, pure from filth – except the Book and the Sunnah. All sayings that oppose the saying of Allāh, and all actions that oppose the practice of the Messenger of Allāh (*salallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*), are to be abandoned, rejected and no attention should be paid to them. This is whether such practices emanate from the major or the minor, the pious or the wretched, as the Muslims are not obligated to follow any men and their own views rather the Muslims have been instructed to follow the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh (*salallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*).<sup>2</sup>

He also said in another instance:

I have clarified the position of the Muslims in regards to that in keeping with the way of the *Salaf us-Sālih* and via making use of the verses from the Clear Book and authentic and verified ahādeeth of the great Messenger (*salallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr, *al-Qādiyāniyyah*, intro.

<sup>2</sup> Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr, *Darasāt fī't-Tasawwuf*, p.12

<sup>3</sup> Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr, *al-Bābiyyah: 'Ard wa Naqd* [The Bābis: A Presentation and Critique], p.22-24.

Shaykh Ihsān translated *Kitāb ut-Tawbeed* (by Shaykh Muhammad bin 'AbdulWahhāb) and was the president of the journal *Tarjuman ul-Hadeeth* and all of this asserted his adherence to the 'aqeedah of the *Salaf*, serving it and defending it.

**Fourthly:** the Shaykh's debating with those sects who would not be well-known to the Muslims within our lands unless he had mentioned them. Like for example the *Barailwiyyah*, Shaykh 'Atiyyah Muhammad Sālim said in his introduction to Shaykh Ihsān's book *al-Barailwiyyah*:

If not for the strong link between the respected author and this sect in terms of his debating with them, mixing with them, our trust in him in terms of knowledge, and the sources of this sect that supported him in this book - we would not imagine that such a sect of this kind exists.<sup>1</sup>

**Fifthly:** The Shaykh lived as a contemporary with these sects which opposed the 'aqeedah of the *Salaf* and this is what made him delve into understanding their secrets and their beliefs. Indeed, the Shaykh used to debate them within their own forums and places of gathering, the Shaykh mentioned this when he said:

Allāh placed fear into their hearts and their knights would become fearful at the mention of my name, I thanked Allāh for what He had blessed me with in this regard in defending His deen and His Unlettered Prophet. I promised that I would not leave off refuting those transgressive rebels whenever I had the opportunity. By the virtue of Allāh such people became narrowed within their institutes, places of worship and centres and I launched attacks against them...<sup>2</sup>

**Sixthly:** These personalities that are being studied are distinguished by their refutations of contemporary sects of deviation such as the *Barailwiyyah*, the *Bahā'iyah*, the *Bābiyyah*, *Qādiyāniyyah* and others. These refutations of them were based on their own books in light of the Book and the Sunnah in a sober academic manner.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr, *al-Barailwiyyah: 'Aqā'id wa Tāreekh* [The Barailwīs: Creed and History], p.1

<sup>2</sup> *Al-Bābiyyah*, pp.14-15

<sup>3</sup> **Translator's Note:** Some contemporary writers have attempted to accuse Shaykh Ihsān of being "virulently sectarian" as is found within the article *Islamic Extremism in Pakistan* (in the *South Asian Journal*, Oct.-Dec. 2003 CE) by Khaled Ahmed (a Consulting Editor of the *Friday Times*), it can be read here: [http://www.southasianmedia.net/Magazine/Journal/islamicextremism\\_pakistan.htm](http://www.southasianmedia.net/Magazine/Journal/islamicextremism_pakistan.htm) Likewise, Khaled Hasan in the *Friday Times* (9-15 June 2006, vol.18, no.6) in an article entitled *Pakistan's Mullah Takeover*, stated that Shaykh Ihsān produced "poisonous literature...circulated all over Pakistan." These are not fair assessments as rather Shaykh Ihsān's works were clear in referring to all relevant source references for his arguments.

## REASONS FOR CHOOSING THIS TOPIC:

In addition to what was mentioned prior regarding the importance of this topic, we will mention the most important reasons for my choice of topic:

**FIRSTLY: SHAYKH IHSĀN WAS DISTINGUISHED BY HIS PRECIOUS MANHAJ WHICH IS RARE DURING THIS ERA, BELOW ARE SOME GLIMPSES OF HIS MANHAJ WHICH I HAVE PRESENTED:**

### **1. Refuting the opposing argument by referring to their own books and sayings**

Shaykh Ihsān's studies of the sects were academic and based on their own books and sayings which were uttered by them and transmitted within their books. The Shaykh mentioned in his book *Darasāt fi't-Tasawwuf* that he does not blame the opponent except based on what the opponent has said or uttered. He also stated that he did not transmit from any book or author who was not depended upon or trusted by the people of his respective sect themselves. Shaykh Ihsān also stated that if he was to take from other than the books of the opponent then that testimony would not be depended upon without further investigation and verification. This was from his justice and trustworthiness, may Allāh have mercy on him.<sup>1</sup>

### **2. Academic comparisons and foundations**

The Shaykh's studies of the sects were comparative studies of religions and other sects, for that reason his books were marked by good academic research and a solid foundation. An example of this is that the Shaykh would compare Sufism and Shī'ism, and Sufism with Christianity, and other religions. Shaykh Ihsān stated:

We will not suffice with just presenting the Sufī texts rather we will also relay the texts (which these Sufi writings) resemble from other religions...<sup>2</sup>

This indicates his *manhaj* of referring issues back to their sources.

### **3. Gathering statements and a lack of depending with just one saying on a matter**

Within the Shaykh's writings he traversed the most difficult task in that he did not suffice with one narration in an issue, or with two narrations, rather he classified many

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<sup>1</sup> *Darasāt fi't-Tasawwuf*, p.12

<sup>2</sup> *At-Tasawwuf: al-Manshā' wa'l-Masādir* [Sufism: Its Development and Origins], p.8.

narrations so as not to give the opponent any way out, and so as not to judge a matter based on odd or rare narrations.<sup>1</sup>

#### **4. Broad-reading of the issue he wanted to write about**

The capacity of investigation that the Shaykh had with regards to schools of thought and religions is apparent to whoever read his books. Sufficient as an example of this is what he mentioned regarding his reading of over 300 books and treatises about the *Barailwiyyah* wherein he said:

I have expended as much effort as I am able and as much energy as possible and I pushed myself to read more than 300 treatises and books regarding the topic.<sup>2</sup>

#### **5. A strong attack when refuting the opponent and affirming the Salafi 'aqedah**

The strong attack of the Shaykh and his courage in establishing the 'aqedah and refuting its opponents within his books and debates is clearly apparent. Wherein he said (*rahimahullāh*):

What led us to write this book, and other books about the invalid deviant sects, is our honest desire to outline for the believers the path of the messenger of Allāh (*salallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) devoid of *shirk*, idolatry, innovation, deviation and misguidance...<sup>3</sup>

### **SECONDLY: THE ABUNDANCE OF CREEDAL ISSUES THAT THE SHAYKH DISCUSSED AND PRESENTED WITHIN HIS BOOKS, SUCH AS:**

1. *Ulūbiyyah*, *Rubūbiyyah* and the presence of their claimants.
2. Prophethood and the Prophets and how these matters have been mixed into the beliefs of the misguided sects, such as: the seal of prophecy, the Prophet, a *Walī*, cursing the Prophets, peace be upon them.
3. Infallibility, revelation, the angels, the Messiah, the awaited Mahdī, the beast of the earth.
4. Issues related to knowledge of the unseen realm of existence.
5. Issues related to abrogation of the Islamic *Sharee'ah* and removing responsibility
6. Unity of religions.
7. The *Qiblah*
8. The issue of the actions of the worshippers and if they are created or not?

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<sup>1</sup> *Darasāt fi't-Tasawwuf*, p.12.

<sup>2</sup> *al-Barailwiyyah: 'Aqā'id wa Tārīkh*, p.1

<sup>3</sup> *Darasāt fi't-Tasawwuf*, p.14.

9. Incarnation and reincarnation (*tanāsukh*).
10. al-Walā' wa'l-Barā'.
11. The issue of *takfeer*.
12. Issues related to the resurrection and rejection of it; the Sirāt; Paradise and Hell; the Account etc.
13. The Throne; the Qur'ān and its (alleged) distortion; al-wasāyā; the belief in *ar-Raj'ab*<sup>1</sup>; the issue of beginning; *ghulū* (extremism); *taqiyyah*.
14. The issue of seeking relief and help (*istighātha*) from other than Allāh.
15. Graves and building domes on them along with making *tawāf* around them.
16. Celebrations
17. *Tabarruk* (seeking blessings).
18. The *da'wab* of Shaykh Muhammad ibn 'AbdulWahhāb and defending him.
19. The Sahābah (*radi Allāhu 'anhum*).
20. Leadership (*imāmah*) and the *Khilāfab*.
21. The issue of jihad and carrying its flag and the claim that it has been abrogated.

And other affirmed matters that are discussed within his writings.

### **THIRDLY: THE LARGE NUMBER OF DEVIANT SECTS THAT HE DEBATED AND REFUTED IN LIGHT OF THE AQEEDAH OF THE SALAF**

He debated and refuted the sects whether they were from the past such as: the *Shi'a*, the *Sūfis* and the *Ismā'īlīs*, or present-day sects such as: the *Qādiyānis*, *Baha'is*, *Bābiyyah*, *Baraihwīyyah*, *Druze* and others. Indeed, he even used to debate the Christians and refute them and in India there is a famous sect who are based there who emerged and he refuted them.

### **FOURTHLY: THE STUDIES OF THIS ISSUE REVEAL TO US A SOBER ACADEMIC METHOD IN REFUTING THE OPPOSING SECTS WHICH BENEFITS THE STUDENT OF KNOWLEDGE**

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<sup>1</sup> This is the *Shi'i* belief that a there will be a return of a group of people to life before the Day of Resurrection - simultaneous with the appearance of their promised Mahdi. They believe that a group of people will return to this world before the Day of Resurrection, then they will return to the eternal abode once the requirements of *Raj'ah* are fulfilled, so that they will be resurrected with all mankind. They also believe that the spirit will never return to another body once it departs the world. [TN]

**AND LEADS THE STUDENT TO TRAVERSE THE SAME METHOD**

**FIFTHLY: THE ABSENCE OF AN ACADEMIC STUDY HIGHLIGHTING HIS EFFORTS AND HIS DEFENCE OF THE CORRECT 'AQEEDAH AT AN ACADEMIC LEVEL, AND ALLĀH KNOWS BEST**

**SIXTHLY: THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BOOKS HE AUTHORED DUE TO WHICH HE WAS ASSASSINATED BY THE ENEMIES OF THE CORRECT ISLAMIC 'AQEEDAH, WE ASK ALLĀH TO GRANT HIM THE REWARD OF A MARTYR AND THE STATION OF THE TRUTHFUL**

## **MY RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**First:** I tried to touch upon all aspects of the life of Shaykh Ihsān (*rabimabullāh*) due to his virtue, and because he was of the contemporaries the researcher and the reader need extra in this regard. My attempt highlights the following points:

- a. A biography of some books written in the Urdu language which featured the life of the Shaykh (*rabimabullāh*).
- b. Referral to some treatises or small research papers which were written about the Shaykh in the Arabic language.
- c. Referral to Islamic journals and magazines which featured aspects of the life of the Shaykh.
- d. Meeting the senior scholars and Shaykhs who taught the Shaykh or whom he had links with and were his reference points, such as: Shaykh 'Abdul'Azeez bin Bāz (*rabimabullāh*), Shaykh 'Atiyyah Muhammad Sālim (*rabimabullāh*), Shaykh 'AbdulMuhsin al-'Abbād, Shaykh Abū Bakr al-Jazā'irī, Shaykh 'AbdulQādir Shaybat ul-Hamd, Shaykh Sālih al-Luhaydān, Shaykh Muhammad as-Subayyal, Shaykh 'Abdullāh al-Jibreen, Shaykh 'AbdurRahmān al-Barrāk, Shaykh Muhammad Nāsir al-'Abūdī, Shaykh 'Abdullāh al-Ghunaymān. May Allāh have

mercy on those of them who have died and we ask Allāh to preserve those remaining.

- e. Meeting some members of his family who are those who know the most about the Shaykh, such as his brothers: Dr Fadl Ilahī, Shaykh 'Ābid Ilahī, Shaykh Shakūr Ilahī. Likewise, I meet some of his relatives such as: Shaykh Muhammad Iqbāl Rafeeq and as for those who I could not meet I corresponded with via the phone and letters, such as: Shaykh Ibtisām bin Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr.
- f. Meeting with some of the colleagues of the Shaykh who knew him such as: Dr Luqmān Salafī, Dr Wasiullāh 'Abbās, Dr 'Abdul'Azeez al-Qārī, Dr Marzūq az-Zahrānī, Dr 'Alī al-Faqīhī, Dr Rabī' al-Madkhalī, Professor Ahmad 'Abbās, Shaykh 'Atā'ur-Rahmān ash-Shīkūbūrī and others. Those who I was not able to meet I spoke to via phone or wrote to.
- g. What the Shaykh (*rabimabullāh*) wrote about himself within the introductions to his books.
- h. I utilised the commendations that the senior scholars had given him along with their praise of him in their own handwriting or by their own dictation. These are present within the appendices.<sup>1</sup>

**Second:** I expounded the *manhaj* of the Shaykh in presenting the statements of the sects and his refutations of such statements within his writings. Therefore, I read all of the Shaykh's books with precision and then I set about categorising what appeared to me to be his *manhaj* and within this many factors emerged to me that I tried to compile as a whole, I strove hard to complete this.

**Third:** I highlighted the efforts of the Shaykh in presenting the beliefs of the sects from their books and refuting them, he did this by initially presenting their beliefs and then refuting them. These beliefs and refutations are traced and compiled in a dispersed manner as the Shaykh would present the beliefs in many places and refute one issue with various refutations within his books.

**Fourth:** I have numbered the Qur'anic verses and the Sūrahs they are from

**Fifth:** I used *abādeeth* from the Two Saheehs and the Four *Sunan* and if not from these then from other collections of *hadeeth* such as the Musnad of Imām Ahmad, the *Sunan* of al-Bayhaqī, *Adab ul-Mufrad* and other collections. Then I mention the ruling of 'Ulamā

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<sup>1</sup> See original book by Dr 'Alī az-Zahrānī for this documentation. [TN]



like al-Albānī and Ahmad Shākir on those *hadeeth* if such *hadeeth* are not from the Two Saheehs.

**Sixth:** I tried to avoid repetition as much as possible.

**Seventh:** I have provided biographies of those not well-known who are mentioned within the thesis and these can be found when their names are first mentioned therein. Whether they are from the past or recent, and as for those who I was not able to find biographies for then I have indicated this in the footnotes. There is also an index of all the scholars who have biographies mentioned within at the end of the thesis which makes it easy for the reader to refer to.

**Eighth:** Whenever the reference of the Shaykh's life is via an interview with one of the Mashaa'ikh or a member of his family then I have noted this in the footnotes with 'interview with...' I also mention the date of the interview and if it was via the phone then I have also noted this with: 'interview via phone with...' If it was via letter then I have also noted this within the footnotes along with the date the letter reached me.

**Ninth:** In reference to the citations then I mention the name of the source and the author's name when I mention the source initially in the thesis and if this source is oft-repeated then I have just mentioned the name of the source thereafter. As for the complete details of the citation then I have mentioned these within the index towards the end of the thesis. However, at the beginning of the thesis I do mention the full details for some citations.

**Tenth:** I set about correcting some of the words that are found in some of the writings of the Shaykh (*rahimabullāh*), I highlight these in the footnotes, these errors were either due to typo errors or the like.

**Eleventh:** I set about defining the sects that the Shaykh wrote about along with the terminologies and strange words that are found within the works of the Shaykh.

**Twelfth:** When I discuss the *manhaj* of the Shaykh (*rahimabullāh*) I do not mention anything of that unless it was dismissed by him and reoccurring with him. As for that which is rare from him then I have not included that as being from his *manhaj*.

**Thirteenth:** There are some aspects of creed related to some of the sects mentioned by Shaykh Ihsān however he did not refute them or he has very short refutations of them due to them not being worth conducting a separate treatise on and where this arises I have indicated this.

**Fourteenth:** Towards the end I have placed a number of indexes in order to easily find topics which cover: Qur’anic verses; Prophetic *hadeeth*; lines of poetry; scholars; sects and schools of thought; sources and references; contents.

## **DIFFICULTIES I ENCOUNTERED**

**First:** The books which detail the life of the Shaykh (*rahimabullāh*) are written in Urdu and thus had to be translated and this takes time and effort and the translator had to be one who was conscientious and trustworthy. This took up much of my effort to search for both in the Kingdom (of Saudi Arabia) and in Pakistan.

**Second:** There are many works that the Shaykh referred to regarding the sects and I was in need of them in order to verify the texts yet some of these works are not present here (i.e. in Saudi) and thus I had to travel to Kuwait and Bahrain on many occasions in order to be convinced by such documentation, such as the book *Bihār ul-Anwār* by al-Majlisī which is a work in 110 volumes, and likewise with other books of the *Shī’a*, *Sūfīs*, *Ismā’eelīs* and others.

**Third:** The difficulty in obtaining the works of authors from the contemporary sects and their organisations, such as the books of the *Barailwiyyah* and some of the books of the *Qādīyanīs*, *Bābiyyah* and *Bahā’iyyah*.

**Fourth:** When speaking about the *manhaj* of the Shaykh in presenting the beliefs of the sects and refuting them, this entails a complete extrapolation from his books and knowledge of his *manhaj*. Bringing attention to this demands much time and effort from me in order to explain his *manhaj*, may Allāh have mercy have of him.

**Fifth:** Difficulties in obtaining biographies of some of the contemporary scholars who had connections with Shaykh Ihsān or with the general topics of the thesis.

**Sixth:** The Shaykh often refutes a sect on a creedal issue in various places and thus I had to set about extracting these refutations from the various pages of a book or more, this is how his writings are in regards to the *Shī’a* and their beliefs for example, it should not be hidden that this was difficult to deal with.

This introduction should not pass without me expressing my many thanks to my Shaykh who supervised this thesis, Professor, Dr Mahmood Mazrū’ah who opened his heart, and his library, to me and also directed and guided me, may Allāh reward him with the best. I also have to express my thanks to *Umm ul-Qurā’ University* in particular the *Da’wah and Usool ud-Deen College, Department of ‘Aqeedah* – for giving me the opportunity to complete my studies. Likewise, I express my thanks, after thanking Allāh, to all the senior

scholars in this fine country (i.e. Saudi Arabia) who helped me to prepare this thesis and encourage me to conduct research into the subject, beginning with: the respected father, Shaykh 'Abdul'Azeez bin Bāz (*rahimabullāh*), the noble Shaykh 'Abdullāh al-Jībreen, the noble Shaykh Sālih al-Luhaydān, the noble Shaykh Muhammad as-Subayyal, the noble Shaykh 'AbdulMuhsin al-'Abbād, the noble Shaykh 'Abdullāh al-Ghunaymān, the noble Shaykh 'AbdulQādir Shaybat ul-Hamd, the noble Shaykh 'Atiyyah Muhammad Sālim (*rahimabullāh*), the noble Shaykh Abū Bakr al-Jazā'irī and other 'Ulamā may Allāh reward them with good.

Likewise, I thank my Shaykhs and teachers such as: Dr 'AbdurRahmān Mahmood, Dr 'Abdullāh ad-Dumayjī, Dr 'AbdurRazzāq bin 'AbdulMusin al-'Abbād, Dr Sulaymān as-Salūmī, Dr 'Abdul'Azeez al-Humaydī, Dr Ahmad 'Atiyyah az-Zahrānī, Dr Ahmad al-Umārī az-Zahrānī, Dr 'Abdullāh al-Qarnī, Dr 'Isām al-Qaryūtī. Likewise, I thank all of my noble colleagues such as Dr Mūsā al-'Ubaydān, Dr 'Uwaydh al-'Atūwī. Primarily here I have to thank my respected parents, my wife, my brothers and my uncle Shaykh 'Abdul'Azeez az-Zahrānī, may Allāh reward all of them with good.

I must not forget to thank the family of Shaykh Ihsān (*rahimabullāh*) such as his brothers: Dr Fadl al-Ilahī, Shaykh 'Ābid Ilahī, Shaykh Shakūr Ilahī and the Shaykh's son, Shaykh Ibtisām bin Ihsān Ilahī. I also thank, and make *duā'* for, the two noble Shaykhs who discussed this thesis on the doctoral panel and accepted it: Dr 'Abdullāh ad-Dumayjī and Dr 'Abdullāh al-Ghufaylī. Finally, I do not claim that I have given this subject its due worth or that I have covered all aspects, this work is my attempt to present something for those who wish to research into the writings of this man, Shaykh Ihsān (*rahimabullāh*), and into his life that he gave in the way of Allāh.

*I ask Allāh to accept this work and make it sincerely for His Countenance, and may prayers and peace be upon our master Muhammad, upon his family and all of his companions, and our final duā' is that all praise is due to Allāh, the Lord of the Worlds.*

Written by,

**'Alī bin Mūsā az-Zahrānī**

**The researcher**

# THE LIFE AND BIOGRAPHY OF THE SHAYKH HIS PERSONAL LIFE

## HIS NAME, ASCRIPTION AND FAMILY

He is Shaykh, al-'Allāmah, ad-Dā'iyyah, al-Mujāhid, Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr bin Thuhūr Ilahī bin Ahmaduddeen bin Nadhām, from the family "Sītī" (Seethi). This ascription is mentioned by the brother of the Shaykh, Dr Fadl Ilahī Thahīr.<sup>1</sup> In another source it is mentioned:

Ihsān Ilahī bin Thuhūr Ilahī bin Ahmaduddeen bin Nadhām bin Altāf from the family of "Sītī" who are traders and the name "Shaykh" is also applied to the family, the family is well known for the cloth trade.<sup>2</sup> The Shaykh was born in Sialkot which is one of the old cities of Pakistan and is found in the northern Punjab province. It is a historical city known for its men and famous scholars, for the famous poet of Pakistan, Muhammad Iqbāl<sup>3</sup> was from there, and so was Shaykh 'AbdulHakeem as-Siyālkūtī<sup>1</sup> and Shaykh

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Dr Fadl Ilahī Thahīr, the brother of the Shaykh on 28/11/1418 AH. See Ibrāheem bin 'Abdullāh al-Hāzimī, *Mawsū'at A'lām ul-Qarn ar-Rābi' Ashar wa'l-Khāmis Ashar al-Hijri* in *al-'Ālim al-Islāmī* (Riyadh: Dār us-Shareef, 1419 AH, First Edn.), vol.1, p.209. Also see the completion of *al-'Ālim* of az-Ziriklī by Muhammad Khayr Ramadān Yūsuf entitled (Beirut: Dār Ibn Hazm, 1418 AH/1998 CE, First Edn.), vol.1, p.23. Also see Muhammad Riyadh al-Mālih and Dr Nirāz Ibādah, *Itnām ul-'Ālim* (Beirut: Dār Sādir, 1999 CE, First Edn.), p.20.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with 'Ābid Ilahī on the evening of Jumu'ah 15/4/1419 AH. Also see Muhammad Khayr Ramadān Yūsuf, *Takmilatu Mu'jam il-Mu'aliffeen* (Beirut: Dār Ibn Hazm, 1418 AH/1997 CE, First Edn.), p.25.

<sup>3</sup> He Shaykh, Dr and philosopher Muhammad Iqbāl, born in Sialkot in the Punjāb Province (which is now a part of Pakistan) in 1873 CE, he was from a family that used to live by cultivation. As a child, his father took responsibility for his education and then later achieved certificates for higher studies from the Scottish (Mission) College, gaining distinctions in his results. He then studied at: the *Government College* in Lahore, the *Oriental College* in Lahore and then at College (Trinity College) Cambridge in England. He obtained a doctorate in philosophy along with other qualifications. He held many positions and was the first to call for Muslims to be free of the yoke of Hindu dominance in India. He died in 1938 CE and is buried in Lahore. See Muhammad al-Bahī, *al-Fikr ul-Islāmī al-Hadeeth wa Silatahu bi'l-Isti'mār il-Gharbī*, pp.333-334.

Muhammad bin Ibrāheem as-Sīyālkūtī.<sup>2</sup> Likewise, famous 'Ulama were born there such as Shaykh Hakeem Muhammad Sādiq as-Sīyālkūtī.<sup>3 4</sup>

The Shaykh (*rahimahullāh*) said:

I was born in the city of Sialkot which is one of the cities of the Punjab Province in Pakistan and is famed for its scholars, thinkers and Islamic poets such as al-'Allāmah al-Muhaddith Muhammad Ibrāheem al-Jundalwī (i.e. Ghondalwī) the Imaam of Ahl ul-Hadeeth,<sup>5</sup> and the Islamic poet Muhammad Iqbāl.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> He is Shaykh, al-'Allāmah 'AbdulHakeem bin Shamsuddeen as-Sīyālkūtī al-Bunjābī (Punjābī), one of the famous and notable scholars of India. He was born and raised in the city of Sialkot and became one of its senior scholars. He had sound 'aqeedah and defended the truth and he was the head of the 'Ulama of India during his time. He was a number of writings such as: 'Aqā'id Sīyālkūtī, Hāshiyat 'alā Tafseer, Zubdat ul-Afkār and other works. He died on the 18<sup>th</sup> of Rabī al-Awwal in 1076 and was buried there. See al-'A'lām bi man fee Tāreekh il-Hind min al-'A'lām entitled Nuzhat ul-Khawātir wa Bahjat ul-Masāmi' wa'n-Nawādhir, vol.5, p.558, no.321; az-Ziriklī, al-'A'lām, vol.2, p.101.

<sup>2</sup> I did not find a biography of him.

<sup>3</sup> I did not find a biography of him.

<sup>4</sup> See:

- ✓ Qādī Muhammad Aslam Sayf Fīrūz Yūrī, *Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr* (Faisalabad: Jām'eeyat Ta'leem ul-Islām), pp.33-34;
- ✓ *Tatimmatu 'A'lām li'z-Ziriklī*, vol.1, p.33;
- ✓ *Majallat 'Ard ul-Isrā*, no.104, Sha'bān 1407 AH, p.16, an article entitled *Man Qatala Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr?* [Who Killed Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr?].
- ✓ *Majallat al-Jundī al-Muslim*, no.48, 1408 AH, p.18, article by Khālid bin Ahmad Shantūt entitled *Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr (rahimahullāh)*

*Takmilat Mu'jam ul-Mu'alliffeen*, p.26.

Also based on Interview with Dr Fadl Ilahī Thahīr, in Riyadh on 28/12/1418 AH.

<sup>5</sup> He is Shaykh, al-'Allāmah, al-Hāfidh Abū Bakr 'Abdullāh Muhammad Ibrāheem bin Fadluddeen al-Jundalwī (Ghondalwī). He was born in the village of Ghondalwa in 1315 AH (1897 CE) and had an academic upbringing whereby he memorised the Qur'ān when he was young and when he was 13 years old he travelled to Amritsar and studied under a number of scholars such as Shaykh, Imām 'AbdulJabbār Ibn Shaykh al-Imām 'Abdullāh al-Ghaznawī. He also studied under Shaykh 'AbdulAwwal bin Muhammad al-Ghazanawī and Shaykh 'AbdulGhafoor bin Muhammad al-Ghaznawī and Shaykh Jundalwī obtained a number of *ijāzāt* from them. He also obtained a qualification in medicine. The Shaykh Jundalwī returned to his village and began teaching there and he had not passed 23 years of age at this time. His reputation spread and different schools and universities began to ask him to teach at their institutions, he taught in many of such institutions such as the *Salafi University* in Faisalabad and the *Islamic University of Madeenah*. He was also the head of *Jam'eeyat Ahl ul-Hadeeth* in Western Pakistan. He had memorised Saheeh ul-Bukhārī word for word to the extent that if he was asked about a hadeeth supposedly in Bukhārī he would respond with "that is not the form of the hadeeth that is found in Bukhārī". 'Atiyah Sālim said:

**We studied the Muqaddimah of Saheeh Bukhārī with Shaykh Jundalwī and he was an amazing man in terms of assessing the meanings, texts and wordings of hadeeth. Ihsān benefitted greatly from him and Ihsān married his daughter.**

There is no doubt that the birth and upbringing of the Shaykh within the city of Sialkot had a clear influence on him acquiring knowledge, how could this not be the case when it was a city of scholars? As for the year of the Shaykh's birth then the sources differ and in front of me are some sources which say he was born in 1360 AH/1941 CE;<sup>2</sup> some which say he was born in 1945 CE<sup>3</sup> and Dr Fadl says he was born in 1940.<sup>4</sup> There is another report that he was born "44 years ago"<sup>5</sup> yet this is vague as it could include a year or many years. There are interviews with the Shaykh himself with the following journals and magazines: *Majallat ul-'Arabiyyah*,<sup>6</sup> *Majallat ud-Da'wah*<sup>7</sup> and *Majallat ush-Sharee'ah*<sup>8</sup> wherein the Shaykh was asked about the date and place of his birth and he stated "I was born in 1945 CE", this is the more accurate view as it is from the Shaykh himself.

The Shaykh had a number of students such as Shaykh, al-'Allāmah Muhammad 'Atāullāh Haneef, Shaykh Abu'l-Barakāt Ahmad al-Madrāsī, Shaykh al-Muftī al-Muhaddith Muhammad 'Alī Jāmbāz and others. Of his works are: *Irshād ul-Qārī ilā Naqd Fayd il-Bārī*, *Risālat fī Khātīm il-Qur'an* (a refutation of the Qādiyānīs), *Tuhfat ul-Ikhwān fī'l-Kalām wa'l-'Aqā'id* and other works which influenced Shaykh Ihsān. 'Allāmah Jundalwī died in 1405 AH, may Allāh have mercy on him.

From the interview with Shaykh 'Atiyyah Sālim on the evening of Tuesday 17/5/1419 AH in Madeenah; Sābir Husayn Thāqīb, *Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr wa Juhoodahu fī'd-Difā' 'an 'Aqeedat is-Salaf* [Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: His Efforts in Defending the 'Aqeedah of the Salaf], p.12; Muhammad Ibrāheem ash-Shaybānī, *Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: al-Jihād wa'l-'Ilm min al-Hayāt ila'l-Mamāt* (Kuwait: Maktabat Ibn Taymiyyah, 1408 AH), p.1.

**Translator's Note:** I have abridged the above from Dr 'Alī bin Mūsā az-Zahrānī, *op.cit.*, pp.109-110.

<sup>1</sup> *Al-Majallat ul-'Arabiyyah*, no.87, Rabī uth-Thānī, 1405 AH/1985 CE, p.90, prepared by Fahd al-'AbdulKareem, and based on a letter from the son of the Shaykh, Ibtisām bin Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr dated 24/9/1419 AH.

<sup>2</sup> See:

- ✓ *Tatimmatu 'A'lām li'z-Ziriklī*, vol.1, p.24;
- ✓ Muhammad Ibrāheem ash-Shaybānī, *Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: al-Jihād wa'l-'Ilm min al-Hayāt ila'l-Mamāt* (Kuwait: Maktabat Ibn Taymiyyah, 1408 AH), p.1;
- ✓ *Takmilat Mu'jam ul-Mu'alliffeen*, p.25;
- ✓ *Itmām ul-'A'lām*, p.20;
- ✓ *Mawsū'at A'lām ul-Qarn ar-Rābi' Ashar wa'l-Khāmis Ashar al-Hijrī in al-'Ālim al-Islāmī*, vol.1, p.209.

<sup>3</sup> *Majallat al-Jundī al-Muslim*, no.48, 1408 AH and Qādī Muhammad Aslam, *Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr*, pp.34.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Dr Fadl Ilahī Thahīr, in Riyadh on 28/11/1418 AH

<sup>5</sup> See *Majallat 'Ard ul-Isrā*, no.104, Sha'bān 1407 AH, p.16, an article entitled *Man Qatala Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr?* [Who Killed Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr?].

<sup>6</sup> *Al-Majallat ul-'Arabiyyah*, no.87, Rabī uth-Thānī, 1405 AH/1985 CE, p.90, prepared by Fahd al-'AbdulKareem.

<sup>7</sup> *Majallat ud-Da'wah*, no.1113, dated: 4/3/1408 AH, pp.22-23.

<sup>8</sup> *Majallat ush-Sharee'ah al-Urduniyyah*, no.242, Jumadā al-Ulā, 1406 AH, pp.4-5.

## HIS FAMILY

The Shaykh has a respectable family which are famed for knowledge, virtue, jihad in the way of Allāh and righteousness. All members of the family are traders<sup>1</sup> however they spent much in the way of supporting Islamic facilities such as places of prayer and *masājid* which the Muslims were in need of. The family safeguarded that its offspring would have scholars and Mujāhiddeen, Khālid ash-Shantūt<sup>2</sup> stated:

The family of al-'Allāmah Ihsān were distinguished by their passionate deen, knowledge and wealth, this was due to his ancestors being traders since time immemorial. His father sought from him that he dedicate most of his time to knowledge and not think about how to profit and how to survive, indeed his father exhorted him to just seek knowledge and be involved in da'wah to Allāh.<sup>3</sup>

This indicates that the Shaykh's father was of those men who comprehended the importance of knowledge and seeking it and was of those fathers who were concerned with the sound education of their children. The fact that he spent his wealth on his children in the way of knowledge and *da'wah* clearly indicates the comprehension of his father of the importance of knowledge and its virtue. Dr Fadl says:

All of the Shaykh's family were behind his studies and his father, mother and grandparents all encouraged him. The Shaykh's father, indeed the Shaykh's family as a whole, spent their wealth and efforts in the way of educating their son Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr in obtaining knowledge. During his studies at school the school used to feed the students but the Shaykh's father used to prevent him from partaking in this and used to bring food to him himself and used to instruct him to drink juice and milk instead of water.<sup>4</sup>

This indicates the great concern that the father gave to his son to the extent that he served food to him himself and prevented him from drinking water and prepared juice or milk for him to drink as he thought that they would benefit his son more than water. Dr Fadl also stated that: the father of the Shaykh subjected all material means to purchase

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with the Noble Shaykh Muhammad bin 'Abdullāh as-Subayyal, the Imām of the Haram and member of *The Council of Senior Scholars*. Dated: the morning of Thursday 23/11/1419 AH in Makkah. Also based on an interview with Shaykh 'AbdulQādir Shaybat ul-Hamd on 8/2/1421 AH.

<sup>2</sup> Dr Khālid bin Ahmad ash-Shantūt authored *at-Tarbiyah as-Siyasiyah fī'l-Mujtama al-Muslim* (Ammān: Dār ul-Bayariq, 2000 CE). [TN]

<sup>3</sup> *Majallat al-Jundī al-Muslim*, no.48, 1408 AH, article by Khālid Shantūt, p.118

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Dr Fadl Ilahī Thahīr, in Riyadh on 28/11/1418 AH after 'Asr.

whatever books or sources that his son required. He also mentioned that the father of Shaykh Ihsān was a trader and loved the gatherings of the *'Ulamā* and benefited from them greatly. He also held firm to the books of the Sunnah and was passionate about the *da'wah* to the *Salafī 'aqeedah*, despite the fact that he himself was a trader.<sup>1</sup>

The author of the book *al-'Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr* mentioned that the father of the Shaykh was a pious religious business man from the sincere men. He used to trade in cloth and was of those businessmen who were well-known for their trustworthiness, *deen* and spreading the *Salafī 'aqeedah*. He chose that all of his children would be those who call to Allāh and for this reason he paid particular attention to their praiseworthy Islamic education and cultivation. The author also mentions that the mother of the Shaykh had a clear direction in cultivation and education upon the *manhaj* of the *Salaf us-Sālib*. She was also of those who were constant in fasting and prayer and was of abundant worship and remembrance of Allāh. After Allāh, she had a major influence in the knowledge and virtue of the Shaykh, and the Shaykh used to mention her within some of his gatherings and then burst into tears out of his realisation of her virtue and out of his love and estimation for her. When Shaykh Ihsān was assassinated she bore the ordeal with abundant patience, a beautiful patience, may Allāh have mercy on her.<sup>2</sup> Dr Fadl said that she died in 1417 AH during Ramadān and that she was an illiterate woman who only knew how to read the Qur'ān. She was not seen often except that she would be reciting the Qur'ān or praying, Dr Fadl also mentioned that she called to Allāh according to her ability.<sup>3</sup>

The family of Shaykh Ihsān loved knowledge and the *'Ulamā* and his father used to attend the lessons and gatherings of Shaykh Muhammad Ibrāheem Meer<sup>4</sup> and was likewise influenced by the ideas of: al-'Allāmah, Shaykh Thanāullāh al-Amritsarī,<sup>5</sup> the

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Dr Fadl Ilahī Thahīr, in Riyadh on 28/11/1418 AH after 'Asr.

<sup>2</sup> See Qādī Muhammad Aslam, *Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr*, pp.35.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Dr Fadl Ilahī Thahīr, in Riyadh on 28/11/1418 AH.

<sup>4</sup> I did not find a biography of him.

<sup>5</sup> He is al-'Allāmah, the noble Shaykh Abu'l-Wafā' Thanāullāh bin Muhammad Khidr al-Kashmīrī and then, al-Amritsarī. He was famed for his debates against the enemies of the religion and *deen* from the sects and groups. He was born in 1287 AH and was raised in Amritsar in the Punjab. He studied Islamic knowledge, classified many works, was gave many lectures and participated in debates. He was a book-seller and established a publishing house, he also began a newspaper entitled "*Ahl ul-Hadeeth*" which was a weekly publication. He also has a number of works such as *Tafseer ul-Qur'ān bi-Kalām ir-Rahmān* and also *al-Balāghah wa I'jāz ul-Qur'ān* but he did not complete this. He also has a number of works refuting Ghulām Ahmad al-Qādiyānī who was the founder of the sect of *kuffār* Indians who had the most enmity to Islām in India. Shaykh Thanāullāh al-Amritsarī moved from Amritsar to Gujranwala



Shaykh of *badeeth* Muhammad Ismā'eel as-Salafī, Shaykh 'Abdullah Thānī<sup>1</sup> and others. The father of the Shaykh was asked about the history of the family and when they chose the *Salafī 'aqeedah*, he replied:

We are from a family known as “Shaykh” which is a branch of the *Sīrī* clan, my grandfather embraced the Salafī manhaj after consultation with his cousin Mayān Muhammad Ramadān.<sup>2</sup> My father was a trader in Sialkot, his name was Shaykh Muhammad Ahmaduddeen and I was his only son who took on the cloth trade which was the trade of my forefathers and I was blessed within this trade and it has become easy for me and all praise is due to Allāh, the Lord of the Worlds.

He was also asked if there were present in the family any '*Ulamā* who influenced them? he replied:

My father Shaykh Ahmaduddeen was illiterate however he possessed deen, I studied the Qur'aan when I was young and had elementary education and when I reached puberty I attended the lessons of Shaykh Muhammad Ibrāheem Siyālkūtī<sup>3</sup> who was a Ālim Rabbānī. I studied with the Shaykh and benefited from him greatly and this inspired me to teach my children the Qur'aan and the sciences of the Sharee'ah. I believe that the most beneficial thing that I did for the people is that I dedicate myself and my children to serving the deen. For within the trade of the dunya is profit and loss but the trade with Allāh contains profit and benefits which have been mentioned in the Noble Qur'ān.

Then the father of Shaykh Ihsān mentioned that there were scholars who had a role in his life such as: Dāwood Ghaznawī, Muhammad Ismā'eel as-Salafī, Muhammad 'Abdullāh Rūbarī, 'Abdullāh Thānī, Muhammad Husayn Karjākahī and Shaykh ul-Islām Thanāullāh al-Amritsarī, may Allāh have mercy on them all.<sup>45</sup> The family of the Shaykh are known for being linked to Ahl ul-Hadeeth, “the Salafi trend which is found in

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in Pakistan after a *fitna* in India led to his publishing house being burned down and his only son being killed by the Hindus. He died in Pakistan in 1367 AH, may Allāh have vast mercy on him. See:

- ✓ *Nuzhat ul-Khawātir wa Bahjat ul-Masāmi' wa'n-Nawādhir*, vol.8, p.1205, no.100;
- ✓ *az-Ziriklī, al-'A'lām*, vol.2, p.101;
- ✓ Abi'l-Mukkarram bin 'AbdulJaleel, '*Ulama Ahl ul-Hadeeth fi'l-Hind wa Mawqifahum min Da'wat il-Imām Muhammad bin 'AbdulWahhāb wa'd-Dawlat is-Sau'diyyah*, p.79;
- ✓ 'Umar Kakhālāh, *Mu'jam ul-Mu'alliffeen*, vol.1, p.467, no.3516

<sup>1</sup> I did not find a biography of him.

<sup>2</sup> He was the cousin of Shaykh Ihsān's grandfather, may Allāh have mercy on them. I did not find a biography of him.

<sup>3</sup> I did not find a biography of him.

<sup>4</sup> See *Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr*, pp.52-59.

<sup>5</sup> These Shaykhs had an influence on Shaykh Ihsān's father, I was unable to find biographies of any of them except for Shaykh Thanāullāh al-Amritsarī.

India.”<sup>1</sup> The education of the father of the Shaykh produced its fruits within his son Shaykh Ihsān and indeed within all of his brothers who are:

### **THE SHAYKH’S BROTHERS:**

1. Dr Fadl Ilahī, a Professor at the Department of Da’wah, *Imām University in Riyadh*. He obtained a Masters from the University of Punjab and obtained another Masters and a Doctorate from *Imām Mubammad bin Saud University*. He has a number of writings such as:<sup>2</sup> *Fadl Āyāt ul-Kursī*, *Wujoob us-Salāt ul-Jumu’ab* and other works. I met Dr Fadl (*hafidhabullāb*) and I found him to possess exemplary character and manners, I viewed him as being from the people of goodness and rectification who safeguarded the prayer and I do not praise with Allāh anyone. My meetings with him were so that he would increase me with information about his brother Shaykh Ihsān (*rahimabullāb*).
2. Mahboob Ilahī Thahīr he works as a trader in Hyderabad, Sind and is a youth who possess good manners and character.
3. Shaykh Shakoor Ilahī Thahīr, he is a Hāfidh of the Qur’ān and after Allāh supported his father in the business in the city of Gujranwala. I meet him in Makkah al-Mukarramah when he came for Hajj in the year 1419 AH and he increased me with information about his brother, Shaykh Ihsān (*rahimabullāb*).
4. Shaykh ’Ābid Ilahī Thahīr, he is a Hāfidh of the Qur’ān and obtained a Bachelors degree from Pakistan and then went on to study at *Imām Mubammad bin Saud University* in Riyadh, he obtained a Masters and works in the Islamic book trade.<sup>3</sup> I met him in Makkah and he informed me of valuable information about Shaykh Ihsān and that he works in the Islamic book industry and lives in Riyadh. He has many conditions while working within this trade such as no images should be present within the books that he sells and this indicates that the family of the Shaykh held firm to the noble Islamic *Share’ab*.

Shaykh ’Ābid said:

We did not learn giving in charity, duā’ and worship except from our father, may Allāh have mercy on him. Our mother however possessed more worship and safeguarding than our father, indeed our father would sometimes be so surprised at her that he used to say to

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<sup>1</sup> See *Majallat ul-Isrā*, no.104, Sha’bān 1407 AH, p.16.

<sup>2</sup> See *Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr*, pp.52-59.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

her “I find you praying in the Musallah all the time!?” This indicates that she used to perform much in the way of the voluntary acts of worship and tahajjud. We did not see the likes of our mother in our family, for she was a Zāhidah and an ’Ābidah from the women who used to remember Allāh frequently. She had a great impact on him due to her duā’ for him and providing him with an excellent Islamic cultivation.<sup>1</sup>

The Shaykh has three sons: Ibtisām, Mu’tasim and Ihtishām. Ibtisām is a Hāfidh of the Qur’ān and has concern with the sciences of the Sharee’ah and he is an engineer. He obtained a Masters in English and has a major efforts in *da’wab*. Mu’tasim is the Shaykh’s second son and is also a Hāfidh of the Qur’ān, he has a university degree. As for Ihtishām then he graduated from secondary school, memorised the Qur’ān and studies the sciences of the Sharee’ah.<sup>2</sup> The Shaykh was not heedless to the Islamic education and cultivation of his own children even though he was constantly busy, he gave this matter its due right. The elder son Ibtisām stated:

My father engrained in my heart a love of the Islamic ’aqeedah and of reading books of the Salaf of this Ummah. He used to take me to conferences and lectures and he used to instruct me to give a few words so that I would improve my speech, may Allāh have abundant mercy on him.<sup>3</sup>

There is no doubt that the cultivation of the Shaykh bore its fruits as all of the three sons here memorised the Noble Qur’ān. His son Ibtisām is a preacher in the way of Allāh, his youngest son Ihtishām began his studies at the *Islamic University of Madeenah* in 1421 AH and will hopefully follow the way of his father who also studied at the same university.<sup>4</sup>

## **HIS UPBRINGING AND FEATURES:**

The Shaykh was brought up by a family distinguished by *deen*, manners and righteousness. He was brought up in a land famed for its ’Ulamā and poets, Sialkot. His father, mother, brothers and all of his relatives were Salafis who used to ascribe themselves to Ahl ul-Hadeeth and there is no doubt that this had an effect on the Shaykh’s upbringing and made him safeguard knowledge and goodness. His father safeguarded giving him a righteous upbringing based on the Book and the Sunnah. Since his birth Shaykh Ihsān was righteous and safeguarded the five daily prayers in congregation and memorised the Qur’ān from an early age, meaning within his early

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Shaykh ’Ābid Ilahī Thahīr on Jumu’ah 15/4/1419 AH

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Letter from Ibtisām ibn Shaykh Ihsān dated 24/9/1419 AH.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Dr ’Isām al-Qaryūti on 18/9/1421 AH.

years. From his early years he was famed for his intelligence, acumen and love of knowledge and seeking it, *da'wah* to Allāh and engaging in debating. Shaykh Ihsān said:

I studied the Qur'ān when I was young and when I had reached nine years of age I had memorised the entire Qur'ān. My father sought from me that I be a student of knowledge and put me on the path of Allāh. He exhorted me to give *da'wah* to Allāh.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, from his birth, Shaykh Ihsān (*rahimabullāh*) took his father's request to be upon goodness, righteousness and memorisation of the Qur'ān, to the extent that he engaged in debating while he was at a young age and had not passed ten years of age, Shaykh Ihsān (*rahimabullāh*) said when he was asked "You did not enter upon the sects in debate?":

Actually yes, I discussed much with them since I was young and I caused a large Baha'i congregation to be closed down. I was walking to my school Dār ul-Hadeeth one day when I was in the intermediate level and I passed in front of a Bahā'ī gathering and heard a voice emanating from a microphone. I wanted to hear what they were talking about and so I thus went into their gathering and I found that the people were talking about issues related to belief. I had no idea about the Bahā'īs and I continued going to this place for eight days and all praise is due to Allāh, during this period I comprehended the beliefs of these people and understood their indignities and sources, memorised them and presented them to them. I warned the people about these dangerous beliefs which are being discussed at this gathering and then it was closed down immediately.<sup>2</sup>

Good causes and his pious upbringing led to Shaykh Ihsān gaining knowledge, he strove hard in this and achieved much in this regard, and even if he only achieved standing in opposition to the Rāfidah with courage that would be sufficient for him as an exalted status. However, he debated and refuted all of the misguided sects of Pakistan and in other countries, and from his good actions is that many people left those sects and embraced the correct creed. Also from his good actions are those books that he authored about the *Shi'a*, the *Sūfīs*, the *Qādiyānīs*, the *Bābīs*, the *Barehvwīs* and others. These books greatly benefited the Muslims and especially the students of knowledge and researchers, may Allāh have mercy on the Shaykh and reward him, Āmeen.

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<sup>1</sup> "Dialogue with the Islamic Preacher Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr" in *al-Majallat ul-'Arabiyyah*, no.87, Rabī uth-Thānī, 1405 AH/1985 CE, p.90, prepared by Fahd al-'AbdulKareem.

Also based on an interview with Shaykh 'AtāurRahmān Muhammad Husayn ash-Shīkhūbūrī on the evening of Wednesday 3/4/1421 AH in Makkah.

<sup>2</sup> "Dialogue with the Islamic Preacher Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr" in *al-Majallat ul-'Arabiyyah*, no.87, Rabī uth-Thānī, 1405 AH/1985 CE, p.91.

## HIS FEATURES

I did not see Shaykh Ihsān (*rahimabullāh*) but those who saw him described him to me, such as his relatives like Dr Fadl and Shaykh 'Ābid or from those people who were his contemporaries or those who went to his lectures and seminars. The Shaykh was well-mannered, pious, kind, strong in *īmān*, firm in holding onto his *deen*, strong in defending the truth, who at times showed his protection of the *deen*. He commanded the good and forbade the wrong and was a Mujāhid via speech and the pen and dedicated all of his time in giving *da'wah* to Allāh and used to say “my night-times are for giving sermons while my daytimes are for writing books”. The Shaykh did not, for the sake of Allāh, fear the blame of those who always blame, he safeguarded seeking knowledge and studying and adhered to reading the Qur'ān often as he had memorised it. His brother 'Ābid said:

If he drove a car he would hold the steering wheel and begin to recite the Qur'ān and revise his memorisation. He would say to me “test me 'Ābid on the Qur'ān from any part” his memorisation was strong, may Allāh have mercy on him.<sup>1</sup>

The Shaykh was a charismatic preacher of the first class as described by both those who loved him and those who hated him. The Ummah of Pakistan was agreed on the fact that Ihsān was the most enigmatic speaker of the people.<sup>2</sup> I heard some of the Shaykh's sermons and lectures which were recorded on audio cassette<sup>3</sup> and I found that as a preacher he was enigmatic just as had been described to me, maybe his passion for the *deen* led him to be like this. The Shaykh was courageous as his brother described: “...as if it was courage more than what was necessary.”<sup>4</sup> Shaykh Muhammad as-Subayyal said about Shaykh Ihsān:

He was courageous, bold, frank, did not hide what was in himself, and for the sake of Allāh did not fear the blame of those who always blame.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Shaykh 'Ābid Ilahī Thahīr on Jumu'ah 15/4/1419 AH and with Shaykh 'AtāurRahmān Muhammad Husayn ash-Shikhūbūrī on the evening of Wednesday 3/4/1421 AH in Makkah.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Such as his lectures given in the *Islamic University of Madeenah* entitled *Asbāb Ikhtilāf ul-Muslimeen wa'l-Hal* [Reasons for the Disunity of the Muslims and the Solution]. Also like his lectures like *ar-Rāfidah*, *As-Sunnah wa'sh-Shī'a*, *as-Shī'a wa'l-Firaq ad-Dālah*, *Alāqat us-Sūfiyyah bi't-Tashayyu'*, *al-Mahdī 'inda'sh-Shī'a*, *Hiwār ma'sh-Shī'i*, *ar-Ra'd 'ala'sh-Shī'i ar-Rāfidī*, *ash-Shī'a wa't-Tashayyu'*, *ash-Shī'a wa'l-Qur'ān* and other lectures. All of these are extant and have been produced by some Islamic recording studios in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, like *Tasjeelāt at-Taqwā* in Riyadh and *Tasjeelāt Khālīd* in al-Madeenah al-Munawarra.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Shaykh 'Ābid Ilahī Thahīr on Jumu'ah 15/4/1419 AH.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Shaykh as-Subayyal on 23/11/1419 AH.

Shaykh Ihsān was courageous in manifesting what he held to be the truth,<sup>1</sup> Shaykh 'AbdulQādir Shaybat ul-Hamd said about him:

I do not know anyone from the youth who was more enthusiastic than him in manifesting the truth and proclaiming the *da'wab* to Allāh. He did not pay attention to those who opposed whether it was from those in authority or others. There is no doubt about his courage which can be applied to him and there is no problem in that.

There are many real examples which indicate his courage: he was a religious advisor for the Pakistani President Diyā ul-Haq (Zia ul-Haq)<sup>2</sup> however he felt there were things with the President which did not please him. Ibtisām ibn Shaykh Ihsān said:

Then came the epoch of General Diyā ul-Haq (Zia ul-Haq) who departed from power in 1987 CE. Shaykh Ihsān assumed the position of special religious advisor to him however is wasn't long until the Shaykh left this position and then began to oppose the President Diyā ul-Haq quite severely and used to say to him: "I would not oppose you if you were to apply the Islamic Sharee'ah practically and not verbally."<sup>3</sup>

The Shaykh used his courage in *da'wab* to the correct *'aqeedah* and *da'wab* to apply the Islamic *Sharee'ah* within his country, this was what he gave importance to and was preoccupied with whatever responsibilities that may have had on him. Shaykh Wasīullāh Muhammad 'Abbās said that Shaykh Ihsān had:

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Shaykh Muhammad Nāsir al-'Abūdī on the morning of 19/3/1421 AH.

<sup>2</sup> Muhammad Diyā' ul-Haq (Zia ul-Haq), the President of the Republic of Pakistan (1977 - 1988 CE), he was born in the city of Jalandhar (in the Punjab, India) in 1343 AH (1924 CE). He was educated at the St. Stephen's College in Delhi and then joined the British army in India and assumed a variety of military positions and participated in the war between India and Pakistan in 1965 CE. In 1976 CE the then President Dhu'l-Fiqār Ali Bhutto promoted Diyā' ul-Haq to Chief of Army Staff and in 1977 CE Diyā' ul-Haq orchestrated a military coup against Bhutto which ended with Bhutto being overthrown. Diyā' ul-Haq then became the leader of the country and then the President of the Republic. Within his rule he strived to implement the Sharee'ah just as he supported the Afghān Mujāhideen in their war against the Soviet occupation. He also had an important role Islamic Conference in order to bring about a settlement for the Irān-Irāq conflict. A number of assassination attempts were made against him. On 17 August Diyā ul-Haq was killed when his military plane exploded while travelling within Pakistan, a number of other people were also killed including senior military officers, this was in the year 1409 AH (1988 CE). See *Tatimm ul-'A'lām*, vol.2, pp.93-94.

**Translator's Note:** It has also been suggested by some within Pakistan that he may have been assassinated by Mossad or by the CIA.

<sup>3</sup> Letter from Ibtisām ibn Shaykh Ihsān dated 24/9/1419 AH.

**Translator's Note:** Shaykh Ihsān was in the position to advise the leader on this matter, he was neither a mere rabble-rouser with no standing nor one who made *takfeer*.

...huge efforts which have to be mentioned and thanked, in calling for the application of the Islamic Sharee'ah within Pakistan and it could be said that he was the most prominent person in this regard.<sup>1</sup>

Also from these efforts are: that the governor of an area within the Punjab Province gathered all of the scholars of the area on one day and this governor was an oppressive Communist tyrant from the persuasion of Bhutto,<sup>2</sup> he is still alive today. When he gathered all of the scholars he defamed and blamed them and paid no concern to the scholars. When he had finished speaking, Shaykh Ihsān got up and rejected what he said and actually reprimanded him in front of the people who thanked him for that courageous stance.<sup>3</sup>

Also from these efforts are: what occurred with the governor of another area in the Punjab Province who was a Muslim and a Sūfī and used to seek blessings (*tabarruk*) from the grave of 'Alee al-Hujwīrī,<sup>4</sup> a Sūfī of the past. This area governor used to wash the

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<sup>1</sup> A letter sent to me with a authorised stamp and signature from Shaykh, Dr Wasīullāh Muhammad 'Abbās, dated 15/6/1421 AH.

<sup>2</sup> He is Dhu'l-Fiqār 'Al ī Bhutto, one of the former Prime Ministers of Pakistan and the leader of the Pakistan People's Party, he was born in Sind to a father who was a feudal lord named Shāh Fawāz. He entered the Cathedral School in Bombay and then completed his education in California and London. He then returned to practice as a lawyer and loved indulging in politics and the military generals. He assumed a ministerial position within the government of President Ayyoob Khān and then became the head of the ministry after the separation of Eastern Pakistan from Western Pakistan. He wanted a practical separation, taking advantage of the war with India. In 1977 CE the military made coup against him led by General Diyā ul-Haq in order to gain the reins of power, then in 1397 AH Bhutto was arrested on a number of charges such as ordering the killing of many political opponents during elections. He was also arrested on the charge of fabrication, after this the High Court in Lahore sentenced him, and four other security officers that aided him, to death. May international leaders attempted to have the sentence on him lightened but to no avail and thus the sentence on him was enacted and he was executed in 1398 AH (1979 CE). Those who Bhutto himself had ordered the killings of during his rule were in their thousands and hundreds of thousands were imprisoned on his request. See *Tatimm ul-'A'lām*, vol.1, pp.171-172.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Dr Fadl Ilahī Thahīr, in Riyadh on Thursday 28/11/1418 AH after 'Asr.

<sup>4</sup> He is Abu'l-Hasan 'Al ī bin 'Uthmān bin Abi'l-Julālbi al-Hujwīrī al-Ghaznawī al-Lāhoorī of the Sufi 'Ulama of the 5<sup>th</sup> Islamic Century (11<sup>th</sup> century CE). His date of birth is unknown and as for the date of his death then he died in the year 465 AH in the city of Lahore. His grave is apparent and well-known and from his writings are *Kashf ul-Mahjoob* [Unveiling the Veil]. See *al-'A'lām bi man fee Tāreekh il-Hind min al-'A'lām*, vol.1, p.69, no.12. Also see the intro to his book *Kashf ul-Mahjoob*, p.7 and the pages following.

**Translator's Note:** He was born in Ghazna in present-day Afghanistan, his grave or mausoleum is also known as 'Data Durbar'. See: [http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/ooroutesdata/1000\\_1099/ghaznavids/dataganj/dataganj.html](http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/ooroutesdata/1000_1099/ghaznavids/dataganj/dataganj.html)

grave of this Sūfī Shaykh with rosewater and Shaykh Ihsān forbade the governor from doing this and rejected these actions and made clear to him that his action was *shirk* and opposed the *Sharee'ah*.<sup>1</sup>

When Shaykh Ihsān authored a book against the deviated sects he would send a copy of it to the famous 'Ulamā, indeed to the extent that he would even send a copy to the enemies from the Shī'a and others. As for the Shī'a then they used to author books against him and try to refute them but they would not send him their books whatsoever. Rather indeed they would use pseudonyms and hide their names on the books that they authored,<sup>2</sup> but as for Shaykh Ihsān then he used to send his books to them along with his full title and name along with telephone number. There is no doubt that this indicated his courage, may Allāh have mercy on him.<sup>3</sup> The Shaykh said:

In 1980 CE some senior scholars from the Shī'a met me in Makkah during Hajj and spoke to me about my book *ash-Shī'a wa's-Sunnah*. They said: "It is not befitting that the likes of this book be written during these circumstances and times." I said to them: Yes, you have a right. However, is there anything mentioned in the book that you can inform of which is not to be found within your own books? They said "Yes, all that which is mentioned in your book is in our books. However, it is not befitting to bring up these issues." I said: "What do you view should be done?" They said out of joy and happiness due to me listening to them: "Print this book and then burnt it and do not reprint it again." I said: "Yes, okay I agree, but with a condition though if you accept it?" They answered, while not believing what I was saying due to their immense joy: "With conditions and acceptance before you mention them", but I said "These conditions have to be mentioned and (in any case) there is just one condition that I request." They said: "Ok, what is it then?" I said: "That you produce all of the books that I mentioned in my book along with the superstitious beliefs and ideas – and burn them so that after that there will not remain any differences at all, and also so that no one else will refer to these works again. In this way we will remove the roots before it grows into a tree." They reflected to themselves and said "You know full well that these things are already widespread within the papers and pages of books and are not exposed to all and sundry. You however, have authored a book and compiled all of these things into one book desiring to divide the word of the Muslims..."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Shaykh 'AtāurRahmān Muhammad Husayn ash-Shikhūbūrī on the evening of Wednesday 3/4/1421 AH in Makkah.

<sup>2</sup> A common tactic of people of misguidance! [TN]

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Shaykh 'Ābid Ilahī Thahīr on Jumu'ah 15/4/1419 AH.

<sup>4</sup> Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr, *ash-Shī'a wa Ahl il-Bayt*, p.5.



Then the Shaykh mentioned that he authored about the *Shī'a* creed and exposed it so that the people would not be deceived by it, he also explained that these beliefs were taken from none other than their own books. There is no doubt that the discussion which took place between the Shaykh and the *Shī'a* demonstrated his courage and strength on the truth and exposing *bātil*. It is also a clear indication of the destruction of the people of falsehood when their books are exposed. This is not the only time wherein the Shaykh's effort and striving was witnessed, indeed the head of the Agā Khān Ismā'īlīs named Kāreem Agā Khān<sup>1</sup> invited Shaykh Ihsān to Britain in order to meet him and convince him not to publish his book on the Ismā'īlīs. The Agā Khān sent a private jet to Karachi to take the Shaykh but Shaykh Ihsān rejected this offer.<sup>2</sup> As a result, the Agā Khān could do nothing except write a letter to Shaykh Ihsān saying: "It is incumbent to write that which will unite the ranks of the Muslims and not divide them." Shaykh Ihsān replied to this saying:

Yes, to unite the ranks of the Muslims, those who believe in only Allāh and His Messenger and their teachings; not to unite the ranks of the Muslims with kuffār who deny the seal of Muhammad's Prophethood and believe in the message of Muhammad bin Ismā'eel!<sup>3</sup>

One day one of the major Iranian *Shī'a Ulama* who was an "Ayāt" went to visit Shaykh Ihsān at his house and he had been sent by Khomeini the head of Irān and a Shī'a "Ayāt" as they say. The "Ayātullāh" expressed to Shaykh Ihsān the joy of Khomeini<sup>4</sup> in

<sup>1</sup> He is the fourth Agā Khān, Kāreem bin 'Alī bin Sultān Muhammad Shāh al-Husaynī, the grandson of the Agā Khān Muhammad al-Husaynī. He was born in 1936 CE in Geneva, Switzerland and his grandfather passed their "khilāfah" to him. The Ismā'īlīs venerate the Agā Khān and name him as the "infallible Imām" and give him divine attributes and give to him a fifth of what they earn. He became their head in 1957 CE and is still the head up to this day. He studied in an American university. See Rāshid 'Abdullāh al-Farhān, *al-Adyān al-Mu'āsirah*, p.69. Also see *al-Mawsū'ah al-Maysarah fī'l-Adyān wa'l-Madhāhib al-Mu'āsirah* (Riyadh: WAMY), p.49. Also see Mustafā Ghālib al-Ismā'īlī, *al-A'lām al-Ismā'eeliyyah*, p.434.

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Ibtisām ibn Shaykh Ihsān dated 24/9/1419 AH.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Shaykh 'Ābid Ilahī Thahīr on Jumu'ah 15/4/1419 AH.

<sup>4</sup> He is the one who the Rāfidah call "Rūhullāh", bin Mustafā bin Ahmad al-Mūsawī (Musavi) al-Khomeini, an "Ayatullāh" as they claim!? He is of the Twelver Imāmī Shī'a and their senior leader. He is of Indian origin and was born in 1318 AH (1902 CE) in the city of Khomein (Markazi Province) near Qum and thus his *nisba* is from this city, he also studied there. After World War Two he became the main critic and opposer of the Shāh of Irān and thus achieved notoriety and was therefore imprisoned. He became the supreme leader of the *Shī'a Ulama* in Irān and when the rule of the Shāh became weakened in Irān due to Khomeini's agitation, which was claimed to be an "Iranian Shī'a intifada", he left Irān. At this point Khomeini became victorious and established an "Islamic republic" and was the supreme leader of the revolution. "Ayatullāh" Muntadherī (Montazeri) declared in a fatwa that whoever did not believe that Khomeini was infallible had apostated from Islām!? Khomeini died in 1409 AH

regards to Shaykh Ihsān's book *al-Bābiyyah wa'l-Bahā'iyyah* and invited Shaykh Ihsān to visit Irān. Shaykh Ihsān said to the man who had been sent by Khomeinī "why don't you remove the defamation of the Sahābah (*ridwānullāb 'alayhim*) that is found within your books?" The Shaykh had with him a book that he had purchased, the man was silent and said "What defamation of the Sahābah is found in this book?" The title of the book was *Wusool al-Akhyār ilā Usool il-Akbbār* by Husayn al-'Āmilī. Shaykh Ihsān opened the book at page 168 wherein it is stated: **"We gain nearness by cursing those individuals and hating them and hating whoever loves them."** Then the Shī'ī submitted to Shaykh Ihsān a letter from Khomeinī and then posed a question to Shaykh Ihsān before the meeting ended and before the Shaykh had even read the letter asked: "What's your view on Khomeini?" Shaykh Ihsān replied: "I ask Allāh to lengthen his life!" Then the Shi'ī cut the Shaykh before he had finished what he was saying, saying "You are open with us so give your honest opinion." Shaykh Ihsān said: "Allow me to finish what I was saying, I ask Allāh to lengthen his life and to make him continue in his war until Allāh brings him to account and the Muslims will be at ease from his evil!" The Shī'ī said: "This is how the enmity is?!" Then the meeting ended.<sup>1</sup>

Also from his courage is that: there used to be a staunch Hanafī scholar named Nūruddeen 'Itr and he was a teacher in the Islamic University. He taught Shaykh Ihsān *mustalab* and used to include many of his own things and promote the Māturīdī creed<sup>2</sup> within lessons on *mustalab*. Shaykh Ihsān used to refute him with good manners and would debate him with respect, but Shaykh Ihsān did not say "I am your student and I fear that he may give me a lower mark or grade" rather Shaykh Ihsān was open and frank in what he believed to be the truth.

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(1989 CE) and was buried in Besht Zahrā (Behesht-e Zahra), Southern Tehrān. He has a number of works which are venerated with the Shī'a and I have come across some criticisms of these books by Ahl us-Sunnah in regards to those books of Khomeinī which praise the Imaams over the Prophets and Sahābah, Khomeinī was frank in this issue and Allāh's refuge is sought. Khomeinī also praised Tabarsī who authored *Fasl al-Khitāb fee Tahreef Kitāb Rabbi l-Arbāb*. Khomeini in his book *Kashf ul-Asrār* he defames and curses the Sahābah, may Allāh be pleased with them, and mainly attacks Abū Bakr and 'Umar (*radi Allāhu 'anhum*). From Khomeini's other books are *al-Hukūmah al-Islāmiyyah*, *Wilayat ul-Faqeeh*, *Kashf ul-Asrār*, *Masābih ul-Hadiyyah ila Khilāfah wa'l-Wilāyah*, *Ādāb us-Salāh*, *Jihād ul-Akbar* and *Saheefat un-Noor*. He also has a commentary to the book *Sharh Fusūs ul-Hikam* of Ibn 'Arabī. See *Tatimm ul-'Ālām*, vol.1, pp.185-187 and also see *Dhayl ul-'Ālām*, p.84.

<sup>1</sup> Interview with Shaykh 'Abdullāh al-Mawsilī in 1419 AH in Kuwait.

<sup>2</sup> **Translator's note:** For more on this creed see: [http://www.salafimanhaj.com/pdf/SalafiManhaj\\_Maturidi.pdf](http://www.salafimanhaj.com/pdf/SalafiManhaj_Maturidi.pdf)

Also from his courage is that, may Allāh have mercy on him, he repossessed those *Salafī masājīd* which had been taken by the sects of misguidance as there were old disputes regarding the ownership of such properties and each group was claiming that they belonged to them. Shaykh Ihsān however was able to regain the rightful ownership of these *masājīd* for the Salafis.<sup>1</sup> This is what Ma’ālī Shaykh Muhammad Nāsir al-’Abūdī relayed to me about his courage, may Allāh have mercy on him, when Shaykh Ihsān was a student and Shaykh al-’Abūdī was the rector of the Islamic University:

The President of the Republic of India at that time visited Madeenah al-Munawarra and his name was Dhākīr Husayn (Zakir Hussein). We invited him to visit the Islamic University because he was a Muslim and the President of India. Then Shaykh Ihsān came to me, and at this time he was a student and he said to me “Yā akhī you know that this man is the head of the Republic of India which has been harming the Muslims and making things constricted for them. It has also openly taken Kāshmir from the Muslims even though they know that the people do not want to be a part of India.” I said to him: “What do you want then?” He said: “We want a delegation to go to the President and criticise him and for him to hear that which does not please him. We also want to clarify to him how the Indians deal with the Muslims and how they harm the Muslims.” I said to him: “Yā akhī, he is a guest of the country. I thank you for your concern however it is not correct for us to say this to him, rather we have to respect him. We know that his position is honorary and not executive as in India executive political power is wielded by the Prime Minister.”<sup>2</sup> So there was nothing Shaykh Ihsān could do except for understanding the situation and to ease up because he came to me with enthusiasm, may Allāh have mercy on him. This position indicates his concern for the deen and the importance he gave to the issues affecting the Muslims, may Allāh have mercy on him.<sup>3</sup>

The Shaykh was also described as being generous and charitable, giving much wealth in the way of Allāh. On one day the people were invited to spend out on a Markaz for Ahl ul-Hadeeth and he was the first to arise and give 50,000 Rupees and when the people saw

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<sup>1</sup> **Translator’s Note:** This enmity against the Salafis in India is still widespread and has led to fanatical Deobandīs and Barelwīs to even attack and firebomb Ahl ul-Hadeeth and *Salafī masājīd*. Furthermore, it is known from the Salafis in India that the Salafis do not resort to violence of this nature wherein they will attack the *masājīd* and places of worship in this way.

<sup>2</sup> **Translator’s Note:** The Prime Minister of India is, in practice, the most powerful person in the Government of India. The Prime Minister is technically outranked by the head of state, the President of India. But, as is typical in most parliamentary democracies, because the head of state's duties are largely ceremonial, the Prime Minister is the head of government and has effective responsibility for executive power.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Shaykh Muhammad Nāsir al-’Abūdī on 19/3/1421 AH

this they spent much wealth on the Markaz and on that occasion the people collected 7 million Rupees to build a Markaz.<sup>1</sup> He was also generous with the *'Ulamā* and respected them, he was famed for his truthfulness and honesty and he joked little. He neither flattered anyone nor compromised for anyone and if he were to praise anyone then it would be known that the Shaykh was truthful in that.<sup>2</sup>

The Shaykh had fun with his companions and friends and also advised them, he was also stern and quick-tempered however he was gentle when he gave sermons and admonishments wherein he would make people cry and affect them. Indeed, if one were to sit in one of his gatherings it would be seen that he had passion and emotion. Professor Sālim as-Sālim spoke to me, and he knew the Shaykh, about one occasion within the gathering of Shaykh Ihsān when he was discussing the *Rāfidah* and their abuse of the Sahābah. He also mentioned the Rāfidah story about their awaited so-called “Mahdī” who upon his return will allegedly whip ‘Ā’ishah (*radī Allāhu ‘anha*), the Mother of the Believers and will establish the *Hadd* punishment on her – Allāh’s refuge is sought from these vile claims. Shaykh Ihsān burst into tears upon relaying these claims, out of his love of the Sahābah and the Mother of the Believers, pained at what the enemies of the religion of Islām claim.<sup>3</sup>

The Shaykh safeguarded the prayers, prayed the Night Prayer and if he had any problems he would make ‘Umrah immediately, and his mission was facilitated by the Saudi Ambassador in Pakistan.<sup>4</sup> He also used to fast and make *duā’* abundantly and his brother ‘Ābid used to see him return late at night, after having been at a *da’wah* conference at various places in his country, pray and then sleep.<sup>5</sup>

The Shaykh was brown in colour, of stocky build, had short hair and a bellowing voice which was husky, if he spoke or gave a sermon the people would be amazed as if he was created to be a preacher.<sup>6</sup> He would wear good clothes and shoes and at times would wear the clothes of the *'Ulamā* of Hind from the past, his clothes used to be of an expensive quality, to the extent that at times he would wear the garments which were not

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Shaykh ‘Ābid Ilahī Thahīr on Jumu’ah 15/4/1419 AH.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Professor Sālim as-Sālim in Riyadh on 12/10/1421 AH.

<sup>4</sup> **Translator’s Note:** Shaykh Ihsān therefore had the utmost respect for Saudi Arabia and its efforts and it is not known from him that he spoke ill of them, as some of the rabble-rousers do of it today. As a result, Shaykh Ihsān (*rahimahullāh*) was on excellent terms and relations with Saudi Arabia.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Shaykh ‘Ābid Ilahī Thahīr on Jumu’ah 15/4/1419 AH.

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Shaykh Muhammad Nāsir al-‘Abūdī on 19/3/1421 AH

worn by either scholars or princes of his land. Some of his clothes were from his factory which used to produce cloth, as the Shaykh was a wealthy trader he had a factory. When Shaykh Ihsān was asked about his clothes and the importance he attached to them he responded,

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“But as for the favour of your Lord, report [it].”

{*ad-Dubā* (93): 11}<sup>1</sup>

## HIS DEATH

His death came after a life full of struggle, striving, seeking knowledge, learning and *da'wah* to Allāh within various parts of the earth such as gatherings, masājid and conferences. Dr Luqmān Salafī, a close associate of the Shaykh described the importance that Shaykh Ihsān gave to *da'wah* to Allāh:

In this way he travelled from masjid to masjid, from platform to platform and from hall to hall. It was as if he was the greatest defence lawyer for Islām during this era or a defence commando who knew no cowardice or fear. He took to the minbars and corrected the course of Islām in all places as if he was the son of Islām who had been created just to defend it without competition.<sup>2</sup>

Before his death he had a dialogue on just the day before the incident, the discussion was between him and those who sought to implement “**Hanafi-Ja'fari fiqh**” along with other schools of *fiqh*. Shaykh Ihsān said to them: “I do not accept a substitute for the Qur'ān and Sunnah” and the discussion went on for six and a half hours of the Shaykh defending the Qur'ān and Sunnah and calling to hold firm to them both. The adjudicators of the discussion announced the result the next day and said:

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<sup>1</sup> Letter received from Professor Ahmad 'AbdulHameed 'Abbās dated 17/9/1420 AH. Also based on:

- Interview with Shaykh 'Abid Ilahī Thahīr on Jumu'ah 15/4/1419 AH.
- Interview with Shaykh 'AbdulQādir Shaybat ul-Hamd on 8/2/1421 AH
- Interview with Shaykh 'AtāurRahmān Muhammad Husayn ash-Shikhūbūrī on the evening of Wednesday 3/4/1421 AH in Makkah.

<sup>2</sup> Dr Luqmān as-Salafī, “*Qisat ul-Mawt Ihsān Ilahi Thaheer*” in *Majallat ul-Istijābah*, no.11, Dhu'l-Qa'dah, 1407 AH, Second Year of Print, p.34.

**The truth is with al-'Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr and his Jama'ah, he was the clear victor for the truth and the opposition were defeated miserably.<sup>1</sup>**

He fought against the misguided sects with severity to the extent that they threatened to kill him on a number of occasions and he was almost assassinated in America. He was threatened via letters<sup>2</sup> and telephone calls, Shaykh 'Atāur-Rahmān<sup>3</sup> said:

One day a person gave me a letter for Shaykh Ihsān, may Allāh have mercy on him, and it said: "We will kill you and we do not know where yet (we will kill you)!"<sup>4</sup>

His life was threatened frequently and his blood was deemed permissible to shed on one occasion by Khomeini who said: **"Whoever brings me the head of Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr will be rewarded with \$200,000."** He had many enemies, one of whom even said: **"Whoever brings me the head of Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr is a Shaheed!"** Some of his enemies used to threaten him by saying **"if you walk in the streets we will pour a hot chemical concoction over you to burn you"**, but Shaykh Ihsān, may Allāh have mercy on him, used to walk without fear and not caring about these threats, he feared none except Allāh.<sup>5</sup> Some of the enemies fired bullets at him and Shaykh 'AbdulQādir Shaybat ul-Hamd said:

I visited him in Pakistan on one occasion and he was wounded, his life had been threatened many times by the people of desires as they had not seen anyone like him from the contemporaries since Muhibbuddeen al-Khateeb<sup>6</sup> who was more severe than him.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid. Also from interview with Shaykh as-Subayyal on 23/11/1419 AH and the interview with Shaykh Muhammad Nāsir al-'Abūdī on 19/3/1421 AH

<sup>2</sup> **Translator's Note:** this is the archetypal way of the people of misguidance, for they will threaten via letters and hate-mail instead of having the gall and the nerve to face the people they have so much hatred for. We also see this in the contemporary development of the internet and the worldwide web which has served as another means for people to disseminate their hate-filled sentiments against others with neither a shred of proof nor etiquette.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Shaykh 'AtāurRahmān Muhammad Husayn ash-Shīkhūbūrī on the evening of Wednesday 3/4/1421 AH in Makkah. The Shaykh is from the du'āt of Pakistan and was one of the close friends of Shaykh Ihsān, he accompanied him on a number of journeys.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Shaykh 'AtāurRahmān Muhammad Husayn ash-Shīkhūbūrī

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Shaykh 'Ābid Ilahī Thahīr on Jumu'ah 15/4/1419 AH.

<sup>6</sup> He is the noble Professor, Muhibbuddeen bin Abi'l-Fath Muhammad bin 'AbdulQādir bin Sālīh al-Khateeb, his *nisba* is related to 'AbdulQādir al-Jilānī al-Hasanī. He was from the senior Islamic writers and was born in 1303 AH (1886 CE) in Damascus which was also where he studied. He later travelled to Yemen then returned to Damascus and then travelled to Cairo in 1909 CE where he worked as an editor. He then travelled to Makkah and established the newspaper *al-Qiblah*, then he returned to Damascus and ran the newspaper *al-'Āsimah*. After that he resided in Cairo and worked as the editor of *al-Ahrām* and also published his magazine *az-Zahrā'* from there too. He also established a Salafī printing press and office in Cairo and supervised the printing of a number of heritage books and other works. He has a

These death threats that Shaykh Ihsān received and this enmity that he faced was all due to his opposition to those misguided sects and his calling to correct their agendas and expose them, this is because:

He was very coarse in his refutations of them and his shaming of their false beliefs, this is where their hatred of him emanated from, due to his coarse style found within his books and sermons alike. As a result of this, he was their target for a long time and it was known that previously in Pakistan the Qādiyānīs would assassinate or kidnap some of the 'Ulamā of Ahl us-Sunnah. As for Shaykh Ihsān however his arguments with the Barelwī groups were more intense.<sup>2</sup>

And likewise with the Rāfidah, Shaykh 'Abdul'Azeez al-Qārī said:

It appears that his way was harsh with the Rāfidah to the extent that they influenced his assassination despite the obstacles that were in their way.<sup>3</sup>

Shaykh Ihsān was still waging jihad against the sects of misguidance and calling to Allāh up until the Pre-Decree of Allāh came and up until that day came when:

That scholar, that Mujāhid sat in a conference of scholars<sup>4</sup> which was organised by *Jam'eeyat Abl ul-Hadeeth* in Lahore. Shaykh Ihsān gave his lecture on 23/7/1407 AH, the twenty third of Rajab 1407 AH (23 March 1987 CE) and during the lecture night began to draw near, more specifically it was 11 PM. The explosion was caused by a bomb which was planted under the table that was being used for the conference and the attendees of the conference numbered around 2000 Muslims, 18 of these were killed and were martyred<sup>5</sup> while 114 were seriously injured. The incident was recorded on video and the

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number of writings such as *ar-Ra'eel al-Awāl fi'l-Islām*, *Dhikrā Mawqī'at Hateen*, *al-Hadeeqah* and *Tāreekh Madeenat az-Zahrā wa'l-Andalūs*. His most famous book is *al-Khutoot al-'Areedah*. He died in 1389 AH, see az-Ziriklī, *al-'A'lām*, vol.5, p.282.

**Translator's Note:** for more on him see: <http://www.asharqalarabi.org.uk/center/rjial-muhib.htm>

<sup>1</sup> Interview with Shaykh 'AbdulQādir Shaybat ul-Hamd on 8/2/1421 AH

<sup>2</sup> *Majallat ul-Mujtama'*, no.812, 13<sup>th</sup> year of print, Tuesday 9 Sha'bān 1407 AH

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Shaykh, Dr 'Abdul'Azeez al-Qārī on 9/12/1419 AH in Madeenah after *dhuhr*.

<sup>4</sup> Ibtisām bin Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr says that the bomb exploded while his father was giving a lecture during a conference on the Seerah, based on a letter from the son of the Shaykh, Ibtisām bin Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr dated 24/9/1421 AH.

<sup>5</sup> **Translator's Note:** It is not permissible to ascribe someone as being a "Shaheed", it is reported in At-Tirmidhī (1114), Abū Dāwūd (2106), Nasā'ī (vol.6/1170), Ibn Mājah (1887) and Ahmad (285) and (340) from 'Umar (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*) regarding some of what he prohibited:

"Some say that the one who is killed during a military expedition, or died, that such and such person the shaheed was killed or that such and such person the shaheed died. Do not say that! Rather, sat as the Prophet (*sallallāhu alayhi wassallam*) said "However is killed, or dies in the way of Allāh, he is in Paradise."<sup>6</sup>

Imām Albānī (*rahimahullāh*) in *al-Irwāʾ* authenticated it (no.1927). al-Hāfidh Ibn Hajar (*rahimahullāh*) made it *hasan* in *Fath al-Bārī* (vol.6/90) saying:

**So due to this, what is actually intended is the prohibition of describing and specifying one to be a shaheed, but it is permissible in a general sense.**

The statements of al-Hāfidh (*rahimahullāh*) here were under the chapter “**It is not to be said that so and so is a Shaheed**” from Saheeh al-Bukhārī.

*Al-Allāmah* Shaykh Muhammad bin Sālih al-ʿUthaymeen, may Allāh cover him with mercy, stated:

**It is not permissible for us to bear witness that a specific person is a shaheed, even if this particular person was killed unjustly or was killed defending the truth. As it is not permissible for us to say: so and so is a shaheed! This differs from what the people today do wherein they permit it and make everyone who has been killed, even if the one killed was due to partisanship and ignorance, a shaheed! This is not permissible, as your saying that “this person who has been killed is a shaheed” is considered a declaration that you will be asked about on the Day of Judgement where you will be asked “have you got any knowledge that this person who was killed was a shaheed?!” For this reason, the Prophet (sallallāhu alayhi wassallam) said “No one is injured in the Path of Allāh - and Allāh knows best who is truly wounded in His Path - except that he comes (with his wound) on the Day of Resurrection, its colour the colour of blood, and its scent that of musk.”**(Muslim and Musnad Ahmad)

#### **THE CHAPTERING OF AL-BUKHAAREE IN HIS SAHEEH**

For this reason, al-Bukhārī (*rahimahullāh*) included a chapter in his saheeh entitled “**CHAPTER: IT IS NOT TO BE SAID THAT SO AND SO IS A SHAHEED**” as only Allāh know what is in the hearts. So the issue of the intention is a great issue, as how many men have sought to establish a matter yet between them (their intentions) is like the distance between the heavens and the earth, due to their different intentions. **The Prophet (sallallāhu alayhi wassallam) said:** “*Indeed actions are only by intentions and every person will earn that which he intended. Therefore, he whose migration was for Allah and His Messenger (sallallāhu alayhi wa-sallam), then his migration will be for Allah and His Messenger; and he whose migration was to achieve some worldly gain or to take a woman in marriage, then his migration will be for that for which he migrated.*” **Allāh knows best.**

He also said in another answer to a question that was put to him:

**As the testimony of a thing cannot be established except with knowledge, and the condition of one who is a shaheed is that he had been killed whilst trying to make the word of Allāh the most high, which is an inner intention in which there is no path to having knowledge of it.**

He also said (*rahimahullāh*) in conclusion:

**Because if we declare with certainty that so and so is a shaheed, it is necessary for us to also testify that so and so will also be in Paradise and this opposes what the people of sunnah are upon. As they do not testify or specify that any person will be in Paradise except for those whom the Prophet (sallallāhu alayhi wassallam) testified, specified and described (would be in Paradise).**



power of the explosion caused some buildings and houses near the location of the conference to be destroyed.<sup>1</sup>

A bouquet of flowers in a vase was sent to the conference platform for the table and the powerful and dangerous chemical compound for the explosion was placed within that vase. This bouquet had written on it “Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr for the sake of Allāh does not fear the blame of those who lay blame”, and the bouquet was passed up to the platform. After 24 minutes into his talk (*rahimahullāh*) the vase exploded and had been set on a timer so as to explode during the Shaykh’s talk in order for the harm inflicted to be at a maximum and cause death. When the device exploded it threw the Shaykh for a distance of 20 or 30 metres and nine people died immediately. As for the Shaykh, then he lost a third of his body, he lost his left eye, his side, his foot, his ear and all of his side but he still had not lost consciousness throughout this ordeal. Rather indeed, he had strong determination to persevere in raising the flag of the Book and the Sunnah and he said to those gathered around him “Leave me and go and help the other people.” He instructed those around him to be patient and to persevere in giving the *da’wah* to the *deen* and raise the flag of the Book and the Sunnah. When one of his beloved friends saw him he started weeping and Shaykh Ihsān said to him “If you are crying then how will others be?” There is no doubt that this indicated his patience and courage, may Allāh have mercy on him.

The Shaykh was seriously injured and was immediately taken to the central hospital in Lahore in order to be treated there. Based on communication with some of the people in positions of responsibility in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and also based on the yearning of Shaykh Bin Bāz the Mufti of the Kingdom at the time (*rahimahullāh*), with the then Custodian of Two Holy Sanctuaries, the Saudi Consulate went to the hospital in Lahore and began the proceedings to have Shaykh Ihsān be treated in Riyadh, in the Kingdom (of Saudi Arabia). A team of doctors also travelled with Shaykh Ihsān to Riyadh as well as his relatives and Shaykh Ihsān was treated in the Military Hospital in Riyadh, all paid for by the Kingdom (of Saudi Arabia). Shaykh Ihsān said upon his departure from Pakistan “I will return to continue serving Islaam after I have been treated in Saudi” this is what he stated to a journalist at the airport before his departure

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See *Al-Manāhī al-Lafdhiyyah* (no. 64 and 65) of Imām Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (*rahimahullāh*). Also see: *Mu’jam al-Manāhī al-Lafdhiyyah* (319-320) of Shaykh Bakr Abū Zayd (*rahimahullāh*). *Jazzā’ ash-Shimmirī* has a treatise entitled *ar-Ra’ī Sadeed fī hal yuqāl Fulān Shaheed?!*

<sup>1</sup> Muhammad as-Sāyim, *Shuhadā’ ud-Da’wah il-Islāmiyyah fīl-Qarn il-’Ashreen* [Martyrs of the Islamic Da’wah During the 20<sup>th</sup> Century] (Cairo: Dār ul-Fadeelah, 1992 CE), p.166

to the Kingdom (Saudi Arabia). Upon his arrival in the Kingdom (of Saudi Arabia) there was a heavy security presence and the senior officials, *Māshayikh* and *'Ulamā* received him upon his arrival. Upon his arrival in Riyadh he was then taken to the Military Hospital and the doctors of the Shaykh stated that his leg would have to be amputated yet the Shaykh did not agree to this. He was treated in the Military Hospital and on Monday 1 Sha'bān 1407 AH corresponding to 30<sup>th</sup> March 1987 CE after 4 AM before *fajr*, the soul of the Shaykh left the body and went to its Creator before the treatment had been fully administered. His body was washed there and when the news of his death had spread the people were intensely grieved by it. Academic institutes were closed in Riyadh, businesses and shops by the main congregational Masjid (al-Jāmi' al-Kabeer) in Riyadh were closed and the people gathered to pray the Janāzah for the Shaykh (*rahimabullāb*). At the head of these people was al-'Allāmah 'Abdul'Azeez bin Bāz (*rahimabullāb*), who used to lead the prayer at al-Jāmi' al-Kabeer in Riyadh.<sup>1</sup> The tears and sobbing of the people could be heard throughout as an expression of their grief of this noble Mujāhid. After he had been prayed upon his body was taken to Madeenah by a military aircraft and his relatives and close friends accompanied as well. The aircraft carrying the Shaykh had just six people in it while the other friends and relatives travelled in other aircraft. When they all arrived in Madeenah they were given a military reception and the senior officials and *'Ulamā* also received them, from the scholars present was Shaykh 'Atiyah Muhammad Sālim and the Rector of the *Islamic University of Madeenah*, Dr 'Abdullāh bin Sālih al-'Ubayd. He was also prayed upon in *Masjid an-Nabawī* and many people prayed over him to the extent that some people who did not know about Shaykh Ihsān said when they saw the vast amount of people praying over him and attending his funeral: “who is this Shaykh who has died?” The teachers and students of the Islamic university also prayed over him in Madeenah and Madeenah was overflowing on that day. He was then taken to al-Baqī' and was buried there with the Sahābah, the Ahl ul-Bayt, the Mothers of the Believers and the Tābi'een. It was as if Shaykh Ihsān's duā' was answered for he used to make the duā': “O Allāh provide me with martyrdom in Your Way and make my death be in the land of Your Messenger.”<sup>2</sup> Those who placed him into the grave were the father of the Shaykh,

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<sup>1</sup> **Translator's Note:** Now the noble Muftī, Shaykh 'Abdul'Azeez Aali Shaykh is the Imām of the *Masjid Kabeer* and is the main *masjid* for the Muftī of Saudi Arabia wherein his *durūs* and *fatāwā* are given.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Shaykh, Dr Wasīullāh Muhammad 'Abbās, dated 21/9/1420 AH in Makkah.

his brothers, Shaykh 'Atiyyah Muhammad Sālim, Dr 'Abdullāh bin Sālih al-'Ubayd and the senior officials of the State, may Allāh have mercy on him and reward him.<sup>1</sup>

The bomb blast which ended the life of the Shaykh also led to the deaths of other *Salafī 'Ulamā*.<sup>2</sup> Shaykh Muhammad Nāsir al-'Abūdī said:

The Shaykh was assassinated after a plan by the innovators and the deviants from Islām and it may have been the case that behind them were major hands which were planning to kill the Shaykh because he was a unsheathed sword against the enemies of Islām who would have loved to obscure this sword. So they certainly transgressed against him openly with the bomb which ended his life and the lives of many other 'Ulamā of Ahl ul-Hadeeth and others, and injured many others.<sup>3</sup>

Arabic and international news agencies reported the explosion and it was broadcast on television<sup>4</sup> and radio stations in Riyadh and the report was one of a tragic shock, to the extent that the grief entered all homes within Saudi.<sup>5</sup> When the Islamic world knew about the incident and the severe injuries that the heroic Islamic Mujāhid and preacher Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr received, it spread to the extent that sadness and discontent could be seen in people's faces. This was especially the case within Pakistan wherein people closed their

<sup>1</sup> See Muhammad Ibrāheem ash-Shaybānī, *Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: al-Jihād wa'l-'Ilm min al-Hayāt ila'l-Mamāt* (Kuwait: Maktabat Ibn Taymiyyah, 1408 AH), pp.23-24; Muhammad as-Sāyim, *Shuhadā' ud-Da'wah il-Islāmiyyah fi'l-Qarn il-'Ashreen* [Martyrs of the Islamic Da'wah During the 20<sup>th</sup> Century], p.166; *Majallat al-Jundī al-Muslim*, no.48, 1408 AH, p.19, article by Khālid bin Ahmad Shantūt entitled *Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr (rahimahullāh)*; Interview with Dr Fadl Ilahī Thahīr, the brother of the Shaykh on 28/11/1418 AH; Interview with 'Ābid Ilahī on the evening of Jumu'ah 15/4/1419 AH; letter from the son of the Shaykh, Ibtisām bin Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr dated 24/9/1419 AH; Interview with Shaykh as-Subayyal on 23/11/1419 AH; interview with Shaykh 'AbdulQādir Shaybat ul-Hamd on 8/2/1421 AH and an interview with Dr Muhammad al-'A'dhamī (Azamī) on 4/12/1419 AH.

<sup>2</sup> Such as Shaykh Habeebur-Rahmān Yazdānī (the Deputy Secretary-General of *Jam'eeyat Ahl ul-Hadeeth*), AbdulKhāliq Qudūsī, Muhammad Khān Najeeb, Muhammad Aslam, Bihā'ī Muhammad 'Ālim, 'AbdusSalām Muhammad 'Ālim, Saleem Fārūqī, Ihsānullāh and another scholar also died. This brought the death toll of 'Ulamā and du'āt to ten, may Allāh's expansive mercy be upon all of them.

See: Muhammad Ibrāheem ash-Shaybānī, *Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: al-Jihād wa'l-'Ilm min al-Hayāt ila'l-Mamāt* (Kuwait: Maktabat Ibn Taymiyyah, 1408 AH), pp.23; Muhammad as-Sāyim, *Shuhadā' ud-Da'wah il-Islāmiyyah fi'l-Qarn il-'Ashreen* [Martyrs of the Islamic Da'wah During the 20<sup>th</sup> Century], p.167; *Majallat ud-Da'wah*, no.1115, Monday 18<sup>th</sup> Rabī' al-Awwal, 1408 AH/9 November 1987 CE, p.31, article entitled "*Muhāwilāt 'Adwāniyyah Tasdahif al-Harakat as-Salafiyah fi Bākistān*" [Aggressive Attempts Made Against the Salafi Movement in Pakistan] by 'AbdulQādir 'AbdulKareem.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Shaykh Muhammad Nāsir al-'Abūdī on the morning of 19/3/1421 AH.

<sup>4</sup> Ash-Shaybānī, *Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr*, p.21

<sup>5</sup> *Shuhadā' ud-Da'wah il-Islāmiyyah fi'l-Qarn il-'Ashreen* [Martyrs of the Islamic Da'wah During the 20<sup>th</sup> Century], p.166

shops for a few days in the cities of: Lahore, Islamabad and Karachi.<sup>1</sup> Within Pakistan there was intense grief at the assassination within many Pakistani cities and there was discontent from some governments at the incident, and likewise from many of those who loved the Shaykh and the readers of his books.<sup>2</sup> The author of the book *Ihsān Ilahī Thabīr* says of the political situation at the time:

The political situation: the absence of an execution of the culprits made the situation worse in Pakistan and could have led to a revolution by the Muslims and their supporters if wise procedures were not taken to ensure a trial of the assassins along with their execution.

The author of *Shuhadā' ud-Da'wah il-Islāmiyyah fi'l-Qarn il-'Ashreen* [Martyrs of the Islamic Da'wah During the 20<sup>th</sup> Century] says:

The reality was that the people in Pakistan were not at ease and there were many demonstrations by those demanding that those responsible be executed immediately and if not then a revolution would be staged.<sup>3</sup>

As mentioned prior, sadness for the loss of the Shaykh descended upon all of the people, 'Ulamā, du'āt, Mashā'ikh, heads of state and the common people<sup>4</sup> were all grieved, the Shaykh passed away and we ask Allāh to grant him the status of a Shaheed. As for his knowledge and books then they did not go and this is what made it easier for the Muslims to take the calamity. Shaykh Muhammad bin Ibrāheem ash-Shaybānī said:

The bombs silenced the life of the Shaykh Ihsān and the bombs were the cause of his death. However, were the books of Ihsān withheld from distribution? This is what worried falsehood and its people, for after his death all means were put to use in order to gather his books and burn them, with methods as deployed by the yahood. **However, how could it be possible for them do to this when his books had already reached the horizons and whoever obtained them had already. There was a major Arabic, Islamic, and even Western, role in printing, publishing and distributing the Shaykh's books in large quantities. Indeed, to the extent that his life and books have become the subject of researchers and students in their studies, research, lessons and sermons.** The lesson to take is from the value of things which are

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Ash-Shaybānī, Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr, p.23

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p.167

<sup>4</sup> There are two audio cassette tapes about the assassination of Shaykh Ihsān and both of them are *Jumu'ah khutbahs*. One is by Shaykh Ahmad al-Qattān and the other is by Shaykh Sa'd al-Burayk, there were both distributed by *Tasjeelāt Taqwā al-Islāmiyyah* in Riyadh.

precious...and upon Allāh is our trust and we seek from Him increase in help, success and precision.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A letter sent to me with a authorised stamp and signature from Shaykh Muhammad bin Ibrāheem ash-Shaybānī, dated 6/12/1420 AH.

## HIS KNOWLEDGE SEEKING AND TRAVELS

### HIS KNOWLEDGE SEEKING

Ihsān was very intelligent and had acumen since his childhood, he also loved knowledge and the 'Ulamā and this helped him in terms of his academic achievement.<sup>1</sup> I mentioned prior that he was born in a city famed for its scholars, the city of Sialkot, and that his father had a concern and interest for his education. Shaykh Ihsān said in an interview that:

My father sought from me that I be a student of knowledge and put me on the path of Allāh. He exhorted me to give da'wah to Allāh.<sup>2</sup>

He studied at elementary level when he was 4 years old as he mentioned himself<sup>3</sup> and then dedicated his time to memorising the Noble Qur'ān<sup>4</sup> as his father put him into Masjid Banādī in Sialkot wherein he memorised the whole Qur'ān and completed it when he was 9 years old.<sup>5</sup> Shaykh Ihsān said:

I studied the Qur'ān when I was young and when I had reached nine years of age I had memorised the entire Qur'ān.<sup>6</sup>

His elementary education was conducted at *al-Madrasah ash-Shābiyyah* in the city of Sialkot<sup>7</sup> and completed his Middle Schooling at the same school and his teachers liked his intellectual prowess at his early age as he was a bright student.<sup>8</sup> After this he went to the

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<sup>1</sup> Qādī Muhammad Aslam Sayf Fīrūz Yūrī, *Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr* (Faisalabad: Jām'eeyat Ta'leem ul-Islām), p.25; Interview with 'Ābid Ilahī on the evening of Jumu'ah 15/4/1419 AH.

<sup>2</sup> "Dialogue with the Islamic Preacher Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr" in *al-Majallat ul-'Arabiyyah*, no.87, Rabī uth-Thānī, 1405 AH/1985 CE, p.90, prepared by Fahd al-'AbdulKareem.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Dr Fadl Ilahī Thahīr on 28/11/1418 AH

<sup>5</sup> 'AbdusShakūr, *al-Ustādh al-'Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: Hayātuhu wa Mu'allifātuhu* [Professor, al-'Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: His Life and Works], p.9

<sup>6</sup> "Dialogue with the Islamic Preacher Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr" in *al-Majallat ul-'Arabiyyah*, no.87, Rabī uth-Thānī, 1405 AH/1985 CE, p.90, prepared by Fahd al-'AbdulKareem; Interview with Shaykh 'AbdulQādir Shaybat ul-Hamd on 8/2/1421 AH.

<sup>7</sup> 'AbdusShakūr, *al-Ustādh al-'Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: Hayātuhu wa Mu'allifātuhu* [Professor, al-'Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: His Life and Works], p.9-10; Interview with Dr Fadl Ilahī Thahīr on 28/11/1418 AH; Interview with Shaykh 'Ābid Ilahī Thahīr on Jumu'ah 15/4/1419 AH; Letter from Ibtisām bin Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr dated 24/9/1419 AH.

<sup>8</sup> Qādī Muhammad Aslam Sayf Fīrūz Yūrī, *Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr* (Faisalabad: Jām'eeyat Ta'leem ul-Islām), p.52.

Islamic University of Gujranwala which was 40 miles from Sialkot, the University was called *Muhammadiyah University* and it is one of the large Salafī Universities of Pakistan.<sup>1</sup> At this university he studied the sciences of the Qur’ān, *hadeeth*, *mustalab*, *fiqh*, *usool*, *tafseer* and its foundations, *nahw*, *sarf*, *adab*, *balāgha* and *mantiq*. The length of studies were eight years and he studied these sciences with senior ‘Ulamā such as the Shaykh, Imām and Muhaddith Ahmad Abū Barakāt.<sup>2</sup> After Shaykh Ihsān graduated from the Islamic University of Gujranwala he went to Faisalabad in order to study at the Salafī University there wherein he studied the sciences of *hadeeth* and Saheeh Bukhārī at the hands of Shaykh al-Hāfidh Muhammad al-Jundalwī (Ghondalwī). Shaykh Ihsān said:

I graduated from the University of Ahl ul-Hadeeth in Pakistan in 1961 CE and obtained a qualification in *Takhsees ush-Sharee’ah wa Darasāt Islāmiyyah ‘Āmah* [Specialisation in Sharee’ah and General Islamic Studies] and after I graduated from the University of Ahl ul-Hadeeth I specialised in studying the sciences of hadeeth at the hands of the most senior Shaykh of Ahl ul-Hadeeth (in Pakistan) the Senior Muhaddith Muhammad al-Jundalwī (Ghondalwī).<sup>3</sup>

Likewise, Shaykh Ihsān studied the intellectual sciences of logic, philosophy and the likes<sup>4</sup> at the hands of Shaykh Muhammad Shareefullāh, to the extent that he excelled in it and this is evident within his intelligent and academic refutations within his writings rebutting different religions, sects and creeds. Likewise, Shaykh Ihsān studied with other scholars within the Salafī University there,<sup>5</sup> then the Shaykh travelled to Madeenah an-Nabawiyah in order to seek knowledge and enrolled at the *Islamic University of Madeenah* in 1963 CE and was nominated for admission at the university. Here he met senior Mashā’ikh, Imaams and ‘Ulamā, he got to know them and benefit them,<sup>6</sup> he lived with Arab students and that improved his Arabic language and writing and within six months

<sup>1</sup> Letter from Ibtisām bin Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr dated 24/9/1419 AH.

<sup>2</sup> He was born in 1926 CE and had many students but Dr ‘Alī could not find his date of death, Shaykh Ihsān studied the sciences of hadeeth with him. See Dr ‘Alī bin Mūsā az-Zahrānī, *op.cit.*, pp.111. [TN]

<sup>3</sup> “Dialogue with the Islamic Preacher Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr” in *al-Majallat ul-‘Arabiyyah*, no.87, Rabī uth-Thānī, 1405 AH/1985 CE, p.90, prepared by Fahd al-‘AbdulKareem.

<sup>4</sup> ‘AbdusShakūr, *al-Ustādh al-‘Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: Hayātuhu wa Mu’allifātuhu* [Professor, al-‘Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: His Life and Works], p.10

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Dr Fadl Ilahī Thahīr on 28/11/1418 AH

<sup>6</sup> ‘AbdusShakūr, *al-Ustādh al-‘Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: Hayātuhu wa Mu’allifātuhu* [Professor, al-‘Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: His Life and Works], p.11; *Majallat ud-Da’wah*, no.1113, dated: 4/3/1408 AH, pp.22-23; *Al-Majallat ul-‘Arabiyyah*, no.87, Rabī uth-Thānī, 1405 AH/1985 CE, p.90-91, prepared by Fahd al-‘AbdulKareem; Interview with Shaykh Muhammad Nāsir al-‘Abūdī on the morning of 19/3/1421 AH; *Majallat al-Jundī al-Muslim*, no.48, 1408 AH, p.18, article by Khālid bin Ahmad Shantūt entitled *Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr (rahimahullāh)*

he perfected the Arabic language in speaking and writing, due to mixing with the vast number of Arab students.<sup>1</sup> The Shaykh completed the full length of his studies at the *Islamic University of Madeenah* and benefited and was increased with knowledge of the Sharee'ah due to studying at the hands of senior Mashā'ikh and 'Ulamā. Dr Luqmān as-Salafī, a colleague of Shaykh Ihsān during their studies at the *Islamic University of Madeenah* said:

I knew this Mujāhid who dedicated his soul to the path of Allāh for over twenty-five years since I was seated next to him during our studies at the Islamic University of Madeenah in the 1960s. I sat side-by-side with him for four years and I realised that he was an intelligent and clever student who surpassed his classmates and colleagues in his studies, research and discussions. I found that he had memorised thousands of Prophetic *abādeeth* by heart and would leave the class following the Muhaddith of the era, al-Hāfidh Nāsiruddeen al-Albānī, may Allāh preserve him. He (Shaykh Ihsān) would sit in front of him (al-Hāfidh al-Imām al-Albānī) in the courtyard of the university on the gravel asking him about *hadeeth*, *mustalah* and the men. He would discuss many topics with him and the Shaykh (Albānī) would listen to him (Shaykh Ihsān) and answer his questions and discuss with him. It was as if he glimpsed into his eyes and realised what this youth would be in terms of his great role in the path of *da'wah* to Allāh and jihad in His Path by his pen and tongue.<sup>2</sup>

Shaykh Ihsān completed the full formal length of his studies within the Sharee'ah Department of the *Islamic University of Madeenah* which is four years and he graduated with the level of *Mumtāz*' [Excellent] and First Class. There is no doubt that this clearly indicates the Shaykh's preservation of benefiting from his time and his love of obtaining knowledge, it also shows his acumen, intelligence and genius. His Shaykh, 'AbdulQādir Shaybat ul-Hamd, said about him:

His intelligence and safeguarding of lessons was apparent, he was a good student of Islamic knowledge and was active, he left no room for time-wasting or jest.<sup>3</sup>

Ihsān surpassed some of his Professors yet still sat in front of them and sat as a well-mannered student would out of respect to the teachers.<sup>4</sup> He traversed the way of the Salaf in learning and took the way of the 'Ulamā of the past in memorising books and texts of different sciences. He memorised *Alfiyyah Ibn Mālik* in *nahw*, *al-Fawz al-Kabeer fi*

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<sup>1</sup> Qādī Muhammad Aslam Sayf Firūz Yūrī, *Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr* (Faisalabad: Jām'eeyat Ta'leem ul-Islām), p.52.

<sup>2</sup> *Majallat al-Istijābah*, no.11, Dhu'l-Qa'dah, 1407 AH, p.33, article by Dr Luqmān as-Salafī.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Shaykh 'AbdulQādir Shaybat ul-Hamd on 8/2/1421 AH.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Shaykh 'Atiyyah Sālim on Tuesday 17/5/1419 AH in Madeenah; Interview with Shaykh 'Ābid Ilahī Thahīr on Jumu'ah 15/4/1419 AH.



*Usūl it-Tafseer* by Shaykh Shāh Waleeullāh,<sup>1</sup> *Nukbbat ul-Fikr* in *mustalah hadeeth*, *Talkhees ul-Miftāh* in *balāgha* and *bayān*, *al-Hidāyah* and other works.<sup>2</sup> He memorised many *abādeeth* and thousands of lines of poetry in Arabic, Persian and Urdu.<sup>3</sup> He had mastered a number of different languages in addition to Urdu, for he mastered Arabic, Persian and English.<sup>4</sup> Shaykh 'Atiyyah Sālīm mentioned that Shaykh Ihsān was strong in *mantiq* (logic), Arabic language, *adab* (literature), history and studied the six books of *hadeeth* before he had enrolled at the *Islamic University of Madeenah al-Munawarra*.<sup>5</sup> When the Shaykh graduated from the Islamic University he was offered the chance to teach at the university due to his academic level but he rejected this offer and said “my land is in more need of me.”<sup>6</sup>

## HIS ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

I mentioned beforehand that he graduated from the University of Gujranwala and the University of Faisalabad and then from the Islamic University of Madeenah and then returned to his country straight away in order to establish *da'wah* to Allāh. He was aware that the people despised religious knowledge and view the 'Ulamā as not being able to absorb contemporary sciences. For this reason, he affirmed to the people the opposite of this and obtained a number of Masters Degrees in the following:

### 1. MA in Arabic

<sup>1</sup> He is Shaykh, al-Faqeeh Abū 'Abdul'Azeez Ahmad bin 'AbdurRaheem al-Fārūqī ad-Dehlawī al-Hindī, known as Shāh Waliullāh. He was born in 1110 AH in Delhi, India and Allāh revived the Sunnah in India via him and his children. He has a number of works such as: *al-Fawz al-Kabeer fee Usool it-Tafseer*, *Hujjatullāh Bālighah*, *al-Irshād ilā Muhimmāt il-Isnād*, *al-T'tiqād as-Saheeh* and other works. He died in 1176 AH, see az-Ziriklī, *al-'A'lām*, vol.1, p.149.

<sup>2</sup> : 'AbdusShakūr, *al-Ustādh al-'Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: Hayātuhu wa Mu'allifātuhu* [Professor, al-'Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: His Life and Works], p.32; Qādī Muhammad Aslam Sayf Fīrūz Yūrī, *Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr* (Faisalabad: Jām'eeyat Ta'leem ul-Islām), p.52-56; *Al-Majallat ul-'Arabiyyah*, no.87, Rabī uth-Thānī, 1405 AH/1985 CE, p.91, prepared by Fahd al-'AbdulKareem.

<sup>3</sup> Qādī Muhammad Aslam Sayf Fīrūz Yūrī, *Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr* (Faisalabad: Jām'eeyat Ta'leem ul-Islām), p.52-56; Interview with Dr Luqmān as-Salafī on Sunday morning of 25/3/1419 AH in Tā'if; Interview with 'Ābid Ilahī on the evening of Jumu'ah 15/4/1419 AH.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Dr Luqmān as-Salafī on Sunday morning of 25/3/1419 AH in Tā'if; interview with Muhammad Nāsir al-'Abūdī on the morning of 19/3/1421 AH in Makkah.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Shaykh 'Atiyyah Sālīm on 17/5/1419 AH.

<sup>6</sup> Sābir Husayn Thāqib, *Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr wa Juhoodahu fi'd-Difā' 'an 'Aqeedat is-Salaf* [Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: His Efforts in Defending the 'Aqeedah of the Salaf], p.12. This work is a thesis that was presented by the student for fulfilment of his course from the College of Da'wah and Usool ud-Deen, Islamic University of Madeenah in 1408 AH. Also see: 'AbdusShakūr, *al-Ustādh al-'Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: Hayātuhu wa Mu'allifātuhu* [Professor, al-'Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: His Life and Works], p.15.

2. MA in Persian
3. MA in Urdu
4. MA in English
5. MA in Philosophy
6. MA in Sharee'ah and Islamic Sciences
7. MA in Law and Politics from the *College of Rights* at the *University of Punjab*.<sup>1</sup>

Then the Shaykh (*rahimabullāh*) applied for a Doctorate and his thesis was to be on Shaykh Siddeeq Hasan Khān al-Qannawjī,<sup>2</sup> yet he did not complete the topic due to the

<sup>1</sup> *Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thaheer wa Juhoodahu fi'd-Difā' an 'Aqeedat is-Salaf* [Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: His Efforts in Defending the 'Aqeedah of the Salaf], p.12; Muhammad Ibrāheem ash-Shaybānī, *Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: al-Jihād wa'l-Ilm min al-Hayāt ila'l-Mamāt* (Kuwait: Maktabat Ibn Taymiyyah, 1408 AH), p.7; *Al-Majallat ul-'Arabiyyah*, no.87, Rabī uth-Thānī, 1405 AH/1985 CE, p.91, prepared by Fahd al-'AbdulKareem; *Majallat al-Jundī al-Muslim*, no.48, 1408 AH, p.18, article by Khālid bin Ahmad Shantūt entitled *Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr (rahimahullāh)*; *Majallat al-Istijābah*, no.11, Dhu'l-Qa'dah, 1407 AH, p.33, article by Dr Luqmān as-Salafī.

<sup>2</sup> He is al-'Allāmah Abu't-Tayyib Siddeeq Hasan bin 'Alī bin Lutfullāh al-Husaynī al-Bukhārī al-Qannawjī al-Būfālī, his *nisba* is traced back to 'Alī bin Abī Tālib (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*). He was born in 1248 AH (1832 CE) in Bānis Brīlī and studied under the scholars of his era within many different cities. He married the Queen of Būfāl (Bhopal) Shāh Jeehān Begum in 1288 AH after he husband had died. He was occupied with knowledge just as he was with the affairs of the state of Būfāl (Bhopal). He has a number of works such as: *Fath ul-Bayān fee Maqāsīd il-Qur'ān*, *Tarjumān ul-Qur'ān*, *Abjad ul-'Ulūm*, *Tāj ul-Makallal min Jawhar Māthar it-Tirāz al-Ākhir wa'l-Awwal* and other works. He died in 1307 AH (1890 CE), may Allāh have mercy on him. See Siddeeq Hasan Khān al-Qannawjī, *at-Tāj ul-Makallal*, p.546, no.543; Abī'l-Mukarram bin 'AbdulJaleel, *'Ulama Ahl ul-Hadeeth fi'l-Hind wa Mauqifahum min Da'wat il-'Imām Muhammad bin 'AbdulWahhāb wa'd-Dawlat is-Sau'diyyah*, p.33 and *az-Ziriklī, al-'A'lām*, vol.6, p.167.

**Translator's Note:** Siddeeq Hasan Khān (*rahimahullāh*) is also said to have had over 200 works in Arabic, Persian and Urdu. One of his main teachers was Shaykh 'AbdulHaq the Muhaddith of Benaras who himself was a student of Imām ash-Shawkānī. He also studied with Yahyā bin Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Hasan of Aden and Nu'man Alūsī the Muftī of Baghdād.

Bhopal was ruled by four female sultāns from the 19<sup>th</sup> century CE up to 1926 CE, they built mosques, Islamic schools, supported Islamic teachers, architects and poets.

See:

- ✓ Saeedullah, *The Life and Works of Muhammad Siddiq Hasan Khan, Nawab of Bhopal, 1248-1307 AH/1832-1890 CE* (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1973)
- ✓ Siobhan Lambert-Hurley, *Muslim Women, Reform and Princely Patronage: Nawab Sultan Jahan Begum of Bhopal* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007).
- ✓ Claudia Preckel, *Begums of Bhopal* (New Delhi: Roli Books, 2000).

Shaykh's disagreements with the university and its Professors in regards to some academic issues. There was a university that bestowed upon him an honorary doctorate.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with 'Ābid Ilahī on the evening of Jumu'ah 15/4/1419 AH but he did not mention the name of the university as he had forgotten the name of it.

## HIS ACADEMIC LEVEL AND THE SCHOLARS PRAISE OF HIM

### HIS ACADEMIC LEVEL

The Shaykh was fortunate to have an elevated status with the 'Ulamā, Mashā'ikh, students of knowledge and common people. indeed, even with those who opposed him and his enemies from the misguided sects, some of his enemies used to attend his lectures and listen to him and benefit from his way of giving lectures and sermons. His brother relayed that:

I saw that 'Ulamā, both from those who had taught him and others, would praise the Shaykh as well as his knowledge, virtue, jihad and da'wah, may Allāh have mercy on him. When al-'Allāmah Shaykh Muhammad al-Jundalwī (Ghondalwī), the Imām of his era in hadeeth, saw him (Shaykh Ihsān) and his intelligence, good manners, sound 'aqeedah and love of knowledge, he married his daughter to him.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the Shaykh increased his benefit from the Shaykh and the link between them increased and so did the influence. There is no doubt that this is a good position and connection between the Shaykh and teacher as the student holds his Shaykh in good esteem.<sup>2</sup> Shaykh Ihsān was proficient in his knowledge and within his stages at university when he was a student. As mentioned beforehand he had even surpassed some of his teachers yet had the utmost respect for them as his teacher Shaykh 'Atiyah Sālim (*rahimahullāh*) informed me.<sup>3</sup> What also indicates his academic status during his university years was when he authored his book on the *Qādiyānīs* while he was studying at the *Islamic University of Madeenah*, Shaykh Ihsān says:

When I authored my first book *al-Qādiyāniyyah* I sought permission from the head of the university, who at that time was the noble Shaykh 'Abdul'Azeez bin Bāz, if I could write after my name "Graduate from the Islamic University of Madeenah" and I had not yet graduated but they permitted me (to write this on the book). I said to them: "However what if I fail?" They said: "If you fail we will close the gates of the university!"<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Shaykh 'Ābid Ilahī on the evening of Jumu'ah 15/4/1419 AH

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Shaykh Dr Muhammad DiyāurRahmān al-'A'dhamī on Sunday 4/12/1419 AH in Madeenah after *dhuhr*.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Shaykh 'Atiyah Sālim on the evening of Tuesday 17/5/1419 AH in Madeenah.

<sup>4</sup> *Al-Majallat ul-'Arabiyyah*, no.87, Rabī uth-Thānī, 1405 AH/1985 CE, p.91, prepared by Fahd al-'AbdulKareem

This was said out of jest and it was if they were testifying to the strength of Shaykh Ihsān, may Allāh have mercy on him. It has been said that the one who made that term of expression was Shaykh Bin Bāz (*rahimabullāh*).<sup>1</sup> This also indicates the trust that Shaykh Bin Bāz had in his student Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr<sup>2</sup> due to his academic station which the Shaykh was fortunate to have. What also indicates the trust of the *'Ulamā* in the knowledge of Shaykh Ihsān was that there used to be a scholar called Muhammad 'Ali al-Kandalwī<sup>3</sup> who lived in the same area as Ihsān. Whenever a matter would be difficult for him to understand he would enquire from Ihsān as to the answer even though Ihsān was a student at that time. The people also had trust in Shaykh Ihsān's knowledge and thus they took their queries to him when they needed to.<sup>4</sup> He was well regarded and held in great estimation even with senior people in authority within the Kingdom and elsewhere, due to his academic status and position. The brother of the Shaykh, 'Ābid Ilahī, saw one day when he was with him:

...visiting Shaykh Sālih al-Luhaydān, the head of the Supreme Judicial Council in Saudi Arabia and the Minister of Justice was also present. When Shaykh Ihsān saw the Minister he called him and then spoke privately with him in another room while I remained outside.<sup>5</sup> All I could hear was the voice of Ihsān as he had a loud bellowing voice.<sup>6</sup>

There is no doubt that this indicates his position with the people in authority and the *'Ulamā* due to his knowledge, virtue and *jibād*.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 'AbdusShakūr, *al-Ustādh al-'Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: Hayātuhu wa Mu'allifātuhu* [Professor, al-'Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: His Life and Works], p.12.

<sup>2</sup> Qādī Muhammad Aslam Sayf Fīrūz Yūrī, *Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr* (Faisalabad: Jam'eeyat Ta'leem ul-Islām), p.65-66

<sup>3</sup> A relative of the author of the book *Hayāt us-Sahābah*. I could not find a biography of him.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Shaykh Muhammad Iqbāl Rafeeq, the uncle of Shaykh Ihsān, in Makkah on Tuesday 12/4/1419 AH

<sup>5</sup> **Translator's Note:** Pay attention here, the Shaykh not only had the authority to do this as he was known to the people of authority and had standing with them as a Shaykh of the Muslims, but also he spoke to people depending on the individual. So we do not find that the Shaykh was like the rabble-rousers of today who rush to make *takfeer* of Muslim countries and their scholars and call for them to be overthrown, indeed Shaykh Ihsān had the utmost respect for Saudi Arabia due to their contribution to aiding Islām in the current era.

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Shaykh 'Ābid Ilahī on the evening of Jumu'ah 15/4/1419 AH

<sup>7</sup> Interview with Shaykh 'AbdulQādir Shaybat ul-Hamd on 8/2/1421 AH.

## THE SCHOLARS PRAISE OF HIM<sup>1</sup>

The position of the Shaykh is huge within the souls of the *'Ulamā* and many of the scholars praised him and described him as being a *Mujāhid*, a scholar, a *dā'iyyah*, a lover of knowledge and the *'Ulama*. Here then, we will transmit some examples of this praise of him (*rahimahullāh*) from the statements of the people of knowledge and virtue:

**1. The respected Shaykh, al-'Allāmah 'Abdul'Azeez Bin 'Abdullāh Bāz (rahimahullāh),** he said in my meeting with him in Riyadh at his office:

**Yes, the man with us is famed for knowledge and sound 'aqeedah, may Allāh forgive him.<sup>1</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> **Translator's Note:** This chapter is particularly pertinent as some of the Ruwaybidah of the era have attempted to refute Shaykh Ihsān (*rahimahullāh*)?! Examples include the likes of Fālih al-Harbī and the Sūfī propagandists such as G.F. Haddād, the student of al-Kabbānī. As for Fālih al-Harbī then during his formative years of *ghulū*, *Haddādiyyah*, *tashnī'* and other absurdities, he claimed that Shaykh Ihsān was **“not known for Salafīyyah, but rather Siyāsiyyah”** (?!). Fālih al-Harbī initiated the horrific attitude of *ghulū* into the *Salafī Manhaj* and was able to dupe a whole mass of youth in the West into following his extremist ideas. As a result, a website was even dedicated to him wherein he was referred to as being a *“mujāhid”*, *“Allāmah”* and *“major scholar”*!!? Fālih al-Harbī's deviation was initially recognised by the *Muhaddith* of Yemen, Imām Muqbil ibn Hādī (*rahimahullāh*) who was criticised by Fālih who claimed that *“King Fahd's toenails are better than Shaykh Muqbil”* and other vile statements regarding Imām Muqbil (*rahimahullāh*). Imām Muqbil (*rahimahullāh*) said about Fālih *“Lan yuflihu Fālih,”* and indeed Fālih al-Harbī has not been successful, and has been heavily criticised by the *muhaddith* of Madeenah Shaykh 'AbdulMuhsin al-'Abbād al-Badr (*hafīdhahullaah*) which rendered Fālih inept of a response. More recently, Fālih al-Harbī claimed the Shaykh Rabī' ibn Hādī al-Madkhālī (*hafīdhahullāh*) has begun a new sect and has accused Imām Albānī (*rahimahullāh*) of *'Irjā'*! This indeed is the sick reality of al-Harbī, who wages war against the scholars with his extremism. Many of those who were entrenched in *ghulū* and blinded by it were quite reluctant to openly free themselves from *ghulū*, and whilst they have warned against *ghulū* in *Salafīyyah* many of them have not admitted or acknowledged that *they* actually fell into it!? Shaykh Rabī' (*hafīdhahullāh*) said recently in his book *The Acquittal of the Trustworthy* (translated by Mūsā Richardson) about Fālih al-Harbī:

**And I have not seen camouflaging tactics that create such confusion, and the turning of tables, more than what has come from the Haddādiyyah, with Fālih al-Harbī...leading the way.**

Shaykh Rabī' also said:

**At the very head of those who speak ill (of Ahl us-Sunnah) are Mahmood al-Haddād and Abdul-Lateef Bashmeel and Fālih al-Harbī...the latter has actually become the worst and most evil of them all!**

As for G.F. (the 'Grand Fool'!) Haddād, then his feeble attempted responses (which are not even five pages long in length!?) to Shaykh Ihsān's refutation of the Barelwīs is but an example of intellectual bankruptcy and academic inconsistency at its very best!

In another meeting he said to me:

**Yes, the man and his efforts are good in regards to da'wah to Allāh, may Allāh reward him with good and forgive him.<sup>2</sup>**

I received a letter from Shaykh Bin Bāz's office in regards to Shaykh Ihsān which stated:

**As-salāmu alaykum, the virtuous Shaykh, Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr (rahimahullāh) is well-known to us and he was of sound 'aqeedah. I read some of his books and what they contained of advice for the sake of Allāh to His servants pleased me, and so did his refutations of those who dispute with Islām. I ask Allāh to multiply his reward and to cover us and him with Mercy, for indeed He is All-Hearing and Near, wa's-salaam.<sup>3</sup>**

I had regular meetings with Shaykh Bin Bāz in order to increase my knowledge further in regards to Shaykh Ihsān as his responses were brief but comprehensive. The eminent Shaykh also said when he was asked about Shaykh Ihsān after his assassination:

**Our brother, Shaykh, al-Hāfidh Ihsān was well known with the people of knowledge. For he has many works refuting the Shī'a, the idol-worshipping Barelwīs and other sects of kufr and misguidance. He was a Mujāhid, may Allāh have mercy on him, and he graduated from the Islamic University of Madeenah and occupied himself with da'wah to Allāh in Pakistan and other places. For he used to travel for the sake of da'wah to Allāh, teaching and refuting those who oppose Islaam, he has a beautiful influence and his writings are good and beneficial, may Allāh have mercy on him and honour his abode.<sup>4</sup>**

**2. Shaykh, al-'Allāmah 'Abdullāh bin 'Abdurrahmān al-Jibreen, said after praising Allāh:**

I knew the virtuous Shaykh called Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr al-Pākistānī (*rahimahullāh*) and I sat with him and heard some information about him which his creed, manners, involvement with the sciences of the *Sharee'ah*, adherence to the Prophectic Sunnah were known for. His creed of the *Salaf* of this *Ummah* and its Imāms is evident from his books, research, discussions and efforts in defending the *'aqeedah* of Ahl us-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah. He was

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with the eminent Shaykh Bin Bāz in Riyadh at his office on the morning of Wednesday 27/11/1418 AH.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with the Eminent Shaykh Bin Bāz in Tā'if at his office on Sunday 24/4/1419 AH after *dhuhr*.

<sup>3</sup> A statement that was sent to me from Riyadh dated 25/4/1419 AH corresponding to 18<sup>th</sup> August 1998 CE, no.667/1 and formerly stamped by Imām Bin Bāz (*rahimahullāh*).

<sup>4</sup> From a lecture entitled *as-Sunnah wa'sh-Shī'a* by Shaykh Ihsān recorded on audio cassette and these words from Shaykh Bin Bāz are at the end of the tape. Shaykh Bin Bāz was asked about Shaykh Ihsān and gave his *tazkiyah* of his student Ihsān, may Allāh have mercy on them both.

tested in his society by the vast amount newly invented matters and despicable innovations due to the people of innovation being well established there and their arguments were many and thus due to their strength they spread in that part of the state confidently.<sup>1</sup> The Shaykh dedicated his efforts to refuting the innovators and supporting the Sunnah and the main innovation that he dealt with was that of *rafīd* and *tashayyu'* which renewed itself within Pakistan. When he saw those *Rāfīdah* openly cursing the *Sahābah*, negating the *Khulāfah* and making *takefeer* of Ahl us-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah he viewed that it was incumbent on him to support the Sunnah and its people and refute the doubts of those sects of *Rāfīdah* and clarify the inconsistency of their false evidences. It was made easy for him to refer to their books and sources and transmit from them...Allāh granted him success and help for what he was looking for and his books became widespread during his life and after his death. The enemies from the *Rāfīdah* thus had hatred for him and plotted against him until they killed him oppressively. Allāh granted him martyrdom<sup>2</sup> at the hands of the enemies of the religion and appointed Ahl us-Sunnah to pray over him within the Kingdom and for him to be buried in the *Baqī'* in Madeenah al-Munawarra. We were honoured to have participated in praying over him when I was at *Masjid al-Jāmi' al-Kabeer* in the city of Riyadh, and the senior scholars were present and prayed over him. Supplications were made to Allāh for His Expansive Mercy to be upon him, may Allāh have mercy on him and grant his abode honour. And may peace and blessing be upon Muhammad, his family and his companions.

Written by 'Abdullāh bin 'AbdurRahmān al-Jibreen.<sup>3</sup>

### 3. Shaykh al-'Allāmah 'AbdulMuhsin bin Hamad al-'Abbād said:

Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr was one of those who graduated from the Islamic University of Madeenah and was from the first wave of new students<sup>4</sup> and he was active in public speaking and writing. He had a good impact in refuting the people of innovation and exposing their false beliefs. He has many works in this regard and paid particular attention to referring back to the books of the people of innovation in order to extract much of their falsehoods herein.<sup>5</sup> Due to this there

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<sup>1</sup> Their strength in numbers and in plotting and planning, not their strength of arguments and evidence. [TN]

<sup>2</sup> Refer to a previous footnote regarding attributing absolute martyrdom to a particular individual. [TN]

<sup>3</sup> A letter given to me with a authorised stamp and signature from the Shaykh during our meeting in Tabūk on the morning of 29/1/1419 AH.

<sup>4</sup> In 1961 CE the university was founded as a centre for higher education of Islamic studies. [TN]

<sup>5</sup> As he was a scholar who was skilled in this field he was fit to undertake this task, as for the common peoples then it is not advised for them to refer back to the books of the people of innovation as this should be a domain for students of knowledge and the scholars. [TN]



was no way out for the innovators to justify their innovations. May Allāh have mercy on him and bring benefit via his books. And may peace and blessings be upon His Final Servant and Messenger, our Prophet Muhammad, his family and his companions.

Written by 'AbdulMuhsin bin Hamad al-'Abbād al-Badr on 18/5/1419 AH.<sup>1</sup>

#### 4. Shaykh Abū Bakr al-Jazā'irī said:<sup>2</sup>

In the Name of Allāh, to proceed: I have been asked about the teacher, the *dā'iyyah* and the rectifier Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr al-Pākistānī, so I say based on my knowledge of him that he was a righteous student of knowledge who studied at the Islamic University and attended my *tafseer* lessons in the *College of Sharee'ah* and was with me during his studies. It reached me that he was angered for the sake of Allāh and thus wrote a book wherein he shamed the *Shi'a* and manifested the filth and corruption of it. They thus prepared a plan against Ahl us-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah and when his treatise was published they plotted to assassinate him and he died as a *Shabeed*. May Allāh join us with the righteous martyrs.

Signed by Abū Bakr al-Jazā'irī.<sup>3</sup>

#### 5. Shaykh Muhammad bin 'Abdullāh as-Subayyal said:

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<sup>1</sup> A letter given to me with an authorised stamp and signature from Shaykh al-'Abbād (*hafidhahullāh*) during my meeting with him in Madeenah on 18/5/1419 AH after *dhuhr*.

<sup>2</sup> Shaykh al-Wā'idh Abū Bakr Jābir bin Mūsā bin 'AbdulQādir bin Jābir al-'Jazā'irī, he was born in the village of Līwah in Algeria in 1921 CE. His family was well known for safeguarding the deen and righteousness and memorisation of the Qur'ān. He was raised as an orphan in the care of his mother, his uncles and aunts. He began seeking knowledge and memorised the Noble Qur'ān and studied some texts in *nahw*, *Mālikī fiqh*, *mantiq*, *hadeeth*. He studied in Algeria with scholars such as Shaykh al-'Uqbī who was one of the brothers of Shaykh Ibn Bādīs, then he travelled to the Hijāz and studied at Madeenah with 'Ulamā such as 'Umar bin Birī, Muhammad al-Hāfidh, Muhammad al-Khayyāl, 'Abdul'Azeez bin Sālih, the then Imām of Masjid ul-Harām, may Allāh have mercy on them all. The Shaykh obtained a number of ijāzāt and served as the head of studies in *Masjid an-Nabawī* and still holds this position. He has a number of books such as: *'Aqeedat ul-Muslim*, *Minhāj ul-Muslim*, *Aysār ut-Tafseer* (which is a book wherein he explains the Qur'aan simply and beautifully).

See: Muhammad Majdhūb, *'Ulamā wa Mufakkirūn 'Araftuhum* [Scholars and Thinkers I Knew], vol.1, p.27; interview with Dr 'Āsim al-Qaryūti on the evening of 18/9/1421 AH.

**Translator's Note:** I have abridged the above from Dr 'Alī bin Mūsā az-Zahrānī, *op cit.*, p.119. Shaykh Abū Bakr al-Jazā'irī does have a *shādh* view, largely viewed as being incorrect by the majority of the scholars of Ahl us-Sunnah, which supports the *Tablighī Jama'at*, this view however has been totally rejected by most of Ahl us-Sunnah, the *Salafī* scholars.

<sup>3</sup> A letter given to me with an authorised stamp and signature from Shaykh al-'Jazā'irī (*hafidhahullāh*) after my meeting with him in Madeenah on the morning of 18/5/1419 AH.

All praise is due to Allāh, and may prayers and peace be upon the Messenger of Allāh, his family and his companions, to proceed: Indeed the noble Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr was a respected scholar and an insightful *dā'iyyah* from the 'Ulamā of Ahl us-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah in Pakistan and from the famous *du'āt* there. He had blessed efforts in *da'wah* to Allāh especially in regards to that related to explaining the condition of the misguided sects, warning from them and exposing their deviated beliefs. He has a number of writings in this important field and we realised within him his firm safeguard of supporting Ahl us-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah and explaining the condition of its opposers from the people of deviation and misguidance. He had strength in evidencing and had an intense influence in his sermons and admonitions. We ask Allāh to cover him with expansive mercy and to reward him for that good. May prayers and peace be upon Muhammad, his family and his companions.<sup>1</sup>

**6. Shaykh 'Atiyyah Sālim said** in his introduction to Ihsān's book *al-Barelwiyyah*, after praising Allāh:

**To proceed: I was given to read the book al-Barelwiyyah by the noble and upright teacher in regards to that obscure sect. As for what is possible for me to present to the noble reader are summarised words and partial aspects. These words will be about the author of this book and his academic efforts and jihad against those sects and what he has presented to the Muslims within India and outside of it during this era which is of a strong academic method. In this way he is considered like his predecessors who authored works during their times about those sects which they lived with and were contemporaries to. What helped him in this was his combining of two heritages, the Persian and the Arabic as well as his proficiency in local languages of Persian, Urdu and Arabic. Also his understanding in old and contemporary studies, Usool of the Islamic manāhij, the Book and the Sunnah, Usool ul-Fiqh, his proficiency in Hanafī fiqh, fiqh of hadeeth and the Salafī 'aqedah whether in his country or his studies within the Islamic University of Madeenah al-Munawarra.**

**For this reason all of his writings are full of sobriety, justice, evidence and honest transmission, the most important of this being his referral to the books of sect (being refuted) which they have no doubt over.<sup>2</sup> He was specialised in taking**

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<sup>1</sup> An authorised letter written by Shaykh Muhammad as-Subayyal dated: 2/12/1419 AH.

<sup>2</sup> **Translator's Note:** Some contemporary writers have attempted to accuse Shaykh Ihsān of being "virulently sectarian" as is found within the article *Islamic Extremism in Pakistan* (in the *South Asian Journal*, Oct.-Dec. 2003 CE) by Khaled Ahmed (a Consulting Editor of the *Friday Times*), it can be read here: [http://www.southasianmedia.net/Magazine/Journal/islamicextremism\\_pakistan.htm](http://www.southasianmedia.net/Magazine/Journal/islamicextremism_pakistan.htm)

from their sources to the extent that his books have become resources and references for students and researchers.<sup>1</sup>

#### 7. The noble Shaykh Sālih bin Muhammad al-Luhaydān said:

The well known teacher and writer, Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr, may Allāh have mercy on him, sought from me that I write an introduction to his book *Darasāt fi't-Tasawwuf* and it is no secret that he contributed greatly, via his pen and sermons, to combating innovation and the innovators. His enthusiasm and agitation in defending the 'aqeedah had a huge impact in Pakistan and other places, and anyone who was concerned with monitoring the activities of the people of innovation within these last ten years is not ignorant to this fact. I had been closely linked to the late Shaykh over the years and I had a close relationship with him. I often insisted for him to exert caution and not to disseminate his activities and movements so as not to increase hostility. So they plotted a plan from Shaytān against him, for indeed Shaytān is a clear enemy unto man. Shaytān's helpers enforce his aims, spread his corruption and disseminate his enticements; these helpers are more active than other ones. It is apparent to me that he dedicated his enthusiastic self to the truth and he had a love for exposing the evil intentions of the people of transgression and corruption. This caused him to be effected by neither the blame of the critic nor the call to patience in combating falsehood.<sup>2</sup>

He also said elsewhere:

I realised that he was enthusiastic and solid on the truth and was severe against the people of innovation. I came across some sections of his works in regards to his life (*rabimahullāh*) and I found that he paid attention to precision in transmitting from the books of those he wished to refute and he did not depend on transmitting from others. The noble Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī (*rabimahullāh*) beat the creedal activities of the people of innovation and the inaction of many 'Ulamā of the Sunnah in combating *bātil*. From that which he (*rabimahullāh*) gave rise to was enthusiasm for aiding the truth and defending it.

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Likewise, Khaled Hasan in the *Friday Times* (9-15 June 2006, vol.18, no.6) in an article entitled *Pakistan's Mullah Takeover*, stated that Shaykh Ihsān produced “**poisonous literature...circulated all over Pakistan.**” These are not fair assessments as rather Shaykh Ihsān's works were clear in referring to all relevant source references for his arguments.

<sup>1</sup> Shaykh 'Atiyyah Muhammad Sālim's introduction to the book by Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr, *al-Barailwiyyah: 'Aqā'id wa Tāreekh* [The Barailwīs: Creed and History] (Lahore: Idārah Tarjumān is-Sunnah, 1403 AH), p.1.

<sup>2</sup> See the introduction by Shaykh Sālih bin Muhammad al-Luhaydān to the book by Shaykh Ihsān, *Darasāt fi't-Tasawwuf*, (Lahore: Idārah Tarjumān is-Sunnah, 1409 AH), p.5.

What I also came across from his books were refutations in the books *ar-Rad 'ala'l-Qādiyāniyyah*, *as-Sunnah wa'sb-Sbī'a*, *asb-Sbī'a wa Ahl is-Sunnah*, *Bayna'sb-Sbī'a wa Ahl is-Sunnah*, *asb-Sbī'a wa'l-Qur'ān*. He has other works that I have come across such as a refutation of the Barelwīs, he was an example of a researcher who established the proofs on the opponent from the words of the opponent himself. He also refuted the Ismā'īlīs and was well-informed of their principles. He was a Mujāhid by his tongue and pen and his book *Bayna'sh-Shīa wa Ahl is-Sunnah* represents a refutation of those of Ahl us-Sunnah who had been deceived by the Twelver Shīa. Yet within his refutations against his enemies he was a just man...<sup>1</sup> I ask Allāh to aide the truth and its people and to cause bātil and its people to fall. I ask Allāh to shame bātil and increase those who shame it, *as-salāmu alaykum wa Rahmatullāh wa Barakātuhu*.<sup>2</sup>

#### 8. Shaykh 'AbdurRahmān al-Barrāk said:

Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr (*rahimabullāh*) was famed for his jihad against the Rāfidah and for this reason most of his writings ashamed them and explained their indignities. There is no doubt that his concern with refuting the people of innovation, especially the Rāfidah, is from jihad in the path of Allāh. The Rāfidah are worthy of being cautioned against as are their deceptions, there also has to be a clarification of the enmity that they conceal against the best of this Ummah, the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) and those who follow their way. May Allāh reward Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr with a best of rewards for his jihad and for the benefit of his writings and may prayers and peace be upon Muhammad.<sup>3</sup>

#### 9. Shaykh 'Abdullāh al-Ghunaymān said:

What I know about the Shaykh and *dā'iyyah* to the Sunnah, Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr, from when he was studying at the *Islamic University of Madeenah*, is that he was serious in seeking the truth and courageous in refuting *bātil* at whatever the cost. Then after his graduation from the Islamic University he strove hard in giving *da'wah* to Allāh and became the head of the publication *Majallat Tarjumān il-Hadeeth* in Lahore. Within his writings are to be found refutations of the people of innovation especially the *Rāfidah*. He did much in the way of

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<sup>1</sup> See translator's note in one of the footnotes two pages back regarding the claim that Shaykh Ihsān was "virulently sectarian" and produced "poisonous literature". [TN]

<sup>2</sup> An authorised letter written by Shaykh Sālih al-Luhaydān given to me during me meeting with him in Makkah al-Mukarramah on the evening of Jumu'ah 21/3/1421 AH.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Shaykh 'AbdurRahmān al-Barrāk in Makkah al-Mukarramah in Masjid ul-Harām in Rabī' al-Awwal 1421 AH.

refuting them and giving sermons and lectures about them, within these (activities) he depended on the books that they regards as being dependable and trustworthy. For this reason he angered them greatly to the extent that they worked to have him assassinated and thus he died in this path as a Mujāhid suppressing *bātil* and manifesting the truth. Ahl us-Sunnah lost him and it is few and far between to find the likes of him in terms of his courage in challenging *bātil* and his convincing evidence-based refutations. His jihad however was not just against the *Rāfidah*, rather he also refuted the *Ismā'īlīs*, the *Sūfis*, the *Qubūriyyah*, the *Qādiyānīs* and other people of distortion and deviation. He left behind many writings in this regard and he understood the *madhdbab* of the *Rāfidah* from their own books of Usool. For this reason his books and lectures compelled them, may Allāh have mercy on him and grant him the best of rewards.<sup>1</sup>

#### 10. Shaykh, Dr Wasiullāh Muhammad 'Abbās said:

I knew Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī from the Islamic University of Madeenah when he was a student. However, he was not like the other students rather he was prominent among them due to his studies and his superiority in giving sermons and admonitions. He had memorised the Book of Allāh and much of the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allāh (sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam). He fanned the flames of imān, yaqeen and was dedicated to love of the Salafī 'aqedah and the 'Ulama of the Salaf and supported the truth for the truth. Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr for the sake of Allāh did not fear the blame of those who always blame. He loved his teachers, especially the Imām of the era al-'Allāmah, Shaykh 'Abdul'Azeez bin 'Abdullāh Bin Bāz, the Assistant Rector of the Islamic University of Madeenah at that time, may Allāh have mercy on him. Shaykh Ihsān was kind to the young and used to always advise us, may Allāh have mercy on him, and he would exhort us to be serious in seeking and gaining knowledge. If he sat and spoke in a gathering then the gathering would be solely for him and he would speak with knowledge and discuss with evidences and none of the people would depart from the gathering except that they would realise his knowledge and virtue and they would be influenced by his personality. What distinguished him (rahimahullāh) is that he read much in all arts and had memorised much, Allāh provided him with strong memorisation and a good memory.

When he graduated and completed his studies from the Islamic University of Madeenah he went to Pakistan. He was chosen by al-'Allāmah, Shaykh

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<sup>1</sup> An authorised letter written by Shaykh 'Abdullāh al-Ghunaymān that I received on Tuesday 11/3/1421 AH.

Muhammad Ismā'eel as-Salafī (rahimahullāh)<sup>1</sup> to work for Jam'eeyat Ahl ul-Hadeeth. He was an example of sincerity and dedication to da'wah to Allāh via the media, sermons in masājid, general gatherings. He also has huge efforts in guiding the youth to the Salafī 'aqeedah and made many long travels in the path of da'wah. The people would yearn to hear his admonitions and sermons and the people would go to the masjid where he would be giving a khutbah and people would travel from far away cities and ask him to go to their cities. As a result, he travelled to Europe, Africa and other places.

In the same way he had huge efforts, which have to be mentioned and thanked, in seeking to implement the Islamic Sharee'ah in Pakistan and during the last stages of his life he was almost the most prominent person in this regard. Towards the end of his life he was a shining star who was pointed at in the skies of Pakistan due to his Islamic and Political efforts and his activism against the misguided sects via his valued writings, such as the disbelieving Qādiyāniyyah. To the extent that one of his beloved said to him in Makkah: "You have now reached a stage of knowledge, action and successful effort that now there is fear for you." He (Shaykh Ihsān) answered saying: "The end results are in the Hand of Allāh, may He provide me with martyrdom in Your Way and make my death be in the land of Your Messenger." He achieved this, inshā'Allāh, and was successful. O Allāh forgive him and have mercy on him.<sup>2</sup>

#### 11. Shaykh Rabī' al-Madkhalī said:

I knew Shaykh Ihsān from the Islamic University of Madeenah when he was a student of knowledge there. He was (rahimahullāh) from the most prominent students of this university and he was intelligent and had understanding. He used to discuss with some of the 'Ulama with understanding and skill, taking and giving knowledge. I knew him as a Mujāhid in the field of 'aqeedah, giving da'wah to it and defending it and those who carry it from the Sahābah and those who followed them in goodness from the Ahl ul-Hadeeth and the Imaams of Ahl us-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah. He was also known for defending the people of the Qur'aan and Sunnah and refuting the opposing sects of misguidance from the Rawāfid, the Qādiyānīs, the Bahā'iyyah and the Barelwiyyah. He enriched the Salafī bookstores with ammunition which was of great value and indicated his knowledge, investigation and ability to refute falsehood and support the Prophetic Sunnah with compelling evidences and gleaming proofs for the enemies of the truth and Sunnah. May Allāh

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<sup>1</sup> I could not find a biography of him.

<sup>2</sup> An authorised letter written by Shaykh, Dr Wasiullāh Muhammad 'Abbās, dated 15/6/1421 AH.

have mercy on him and reward him with the best of rewards due to what he presented for Islaam and the Muslims in terms of blessed academic ammunition. Indeed, my Lord Hears the supplication and may prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and companions, wa's-salām.<sup>1</sup>

## 12. Shaykh 'Abdul'Azeez al-Qārī' said:

All praise is due to Allāh and may prayers and peace be upon his slave and messenger, our master Muhammad, and upon his pure family and his honoured companions, and upon those who followed them in goodness until the Last Day, to proceed:

The respected brother 'Alī bin Mūsā az-Zahrānī informed me that he is preparing a research thesis on the Mujāhid and martyr Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr (rahimahullāh). What a great topic he has chosen, for within it is loyalty to the Mujāhid and scholar and also a caution against whom he (Shaykh Ihsān) also used to caution against from the enemies and infiltrators. This topic is also an act of defiance against those corrupt elements and defines the schemes of the Munāfiqeen from the people of innovation and deviation such as the hateful Rawāfid who are enemies of the Sunnah and deen. This topic reflects the situation we are all currently living through and this is how research and books should be.

The researcher (i.e. 'Alī az-Zahrānī), may Allāh grant him success, has requested from me that I write a few summarised words and give my impression about the Shaykh and martyr, Ihsān, may Allāh have mercy on him. We were colleagues at the Islamic University of Madeenah and our connection was maintained up until after he graduated, which was before I did, and after his return to his country Pakistan to be occupied with the political, ideological and da'wah struggle in his country. However, he used to visit Madeenah from time to time, and if it was possible for me to describe him in two words then I would say that he was a fighter of the first degree, not with weapons but rather with thought, teaching and the tongue. He was also an eloquent preacher in the language of his people and this helped him in this regard, he was also bold and excitable and did not fear danger and did not think about the end results. It was from Allāh's Wisdom to make use of him and his outstanding courage for combating the enemies, i.e. the enemies of the religion and deen from the innovators, heretics, deviants and hypocrites who sneak into the ranks of the Muslims. Such enemies are more dangerous than the kuffār who manifest open enmity and war against the Muslims.

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<sup>1</sup> An authorised letter written by Shaykh Rabī' given to me during my meeting with him in Makkah al-Mukarramah on 2/1/1420 AH.

Shaykh Ihsān (rahimahullāh) utilised his pen and tongue to combat those deviants and thus he authored, classified, preached and gave lectures unveiling the covers of filth from the Rawāfid, Ismā'ilīs, Bahā'is, Qādiyānīs, Barelwīs and others. His writings are distinguished by abundant information and a referral to many sources. The importance of his works is that he transmitted from their own books and compiled a library which was very precious indeed due to it containing the sources of those whom he wrote about, shamed and exposed. He presented these sources in front of sight without covering their private things. Because such people had no proofs for them, they faced this concept with weapons and combated the proofs with arms, and so the Rawāfid killed him out of hatred and anger for what he exposed of their filth. Thus we always warn the Muslims from them as there is no protection for them and they are not be branded as "Muslims" at all and none should be deceived by them except for those who are heedless and none should believe them except for those who are ignorant. May Allāh have expansive mercy on our mighty brother, the martyr, the scholar, Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr.<sup>1</sup>

### 13. Shaykh Muhammad bin Nāsir al-'Abūdi:

I knew the Shaykh from when he enrolled at the *Islamic University of Madeenah*. After he graduated from the university he began his practical life which was totally one of academia. He began to author books refuting sects of innovation and misguidance and within his personality he had overpowering and manifest characteristics. The most important of them being, throughout the period I knew him, that he had an intense concern for (the correct) *'aqeedah*. He also put intense pressure on those who opposed the (correct) *'aqeedah* and he neither relented nor failed in this regard. **He used to strive against them with his tongue, pen and body and he was very sensitive in regards to matters which affected his Muslim brothers who were in India. He used to follow the news about them and sought from us, and from others, that we comment on what was necessary in regards to their conditions. He also sought from us that we reject the practices of the Indian government against the Muslims especially in regards to Kashmir, as the Indian government had rejected United Nations resolutions which were supposed to grant self determination for the Kashmiris.**

Shaykh Ihsān was also a writer and used to refer back greatly to books of literature, he loved Arabic poetry to the extent that he had memorised a good amount of it. He used to lend me literary works which I would read and then give back to him. This is possibly what helped him in his writing because a taste for literature helps when writing as is well-known. The Shaykh lived in a praiseworthy

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<sup>1</sup> An authorised letter written by Shaykh 'Abdul'Azeez al-Qārī dated: 27/12/1419 AH.



manner and died as a martyr, inshā'Allāh. We were saddened by losing him because losing a sincere hard-working scholar like him is a great loss as he had projects refuting other sects that had feigned Islām and which Islām are free from, such as the Qādiyānīs, the Bābīs and the Bahā'īs. He refuted them, however he intended more in this regard, may Allāh have expansive mercy on him.<sup>1</sup>

**14. Shaykh, Dr 'Alī bin Muhammad Nāsir al-Faqīhī said:**

All praise is due to Allāh, to proceed:

Shaykh Ihsān met me during his visit to the Islamic University after he had graduated and began writing his books which called to the *manhaj* of Ahl us-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah and refuted the *Rawāfīd*. From what was apparent to me he was a righteous man who called to good and he had efforts which he should be thanked for in defending the Book of Allāh, the Sunnah of His Messenger and the noble Companions. We ask Allāh to reward him for his actions and efforts, this is what is apparent to us and Allāh knows the secrets,

Signed by 'Alī ibn Nāsir al-Faqīhī

18/5/1419 AH.<sup>2</sup>

**15. Dr 'Abdullāh bin 'Abdul'Azeez al-Yahyā said:**

All praise is due to Allāh, to proceed:

The noble Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr devoted his tongue, pen, time and life in order for *da'wah* in Pakistan via sermons and refutations of destructive movements in his books and nullifying their falsehoods from their own books. He left the *Islamic University of Madeenah* and continued being firm on this *manhaj* until his death, may Allāh have mercy on him.

His book about Sufism was published after his death and there remained other refutations that he strove to collect information on, write about and publish. Such as a refutation of the Christians, the Hindus, the Tablighīs and the Deobandīs. **There is no doubt that he presented as much as he was able to at the time all of which had a good effect for Ahl ul-Hadeeth in Pakistan and their Salafi brothers in other parts of the world. This is particularly the case considering that the “Khomeini revolution” was at its peak of its influence, yet Shaykh Ihsān (rahimahullāh) was distinguished by being sharp, frank and strong all of which caused him suffering from his rivals and made them become worried about him. As a result they desired**

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<sup>1</sup> An authorised letter written by Shaykh Muhammad al-'Abūdī dated: 9/3/1421 AH.

<sup>2</sup> An authorised letter written by Shaykh 'Alī al-Faqīhī given to me during my meeting with him in Madeenah on 18/5/1419 AH.

to put an end to him until they actually achieved that, may Allāh have mercy on him and bless him for his correct knowledge and Allāh is the Guardian of success.<sup>1</sup>

**16. Shaykh Muhammad al-Muntasir al-Kattānī<sup>2</sup>** said in his introduction to Ihsān's book *al-Qādiyāniyyah*:

...and with this Ustādh Ihsān was from the Mujāhiddeen via his tongue before his weapon and via his pen before his sword in his exposition of the realities of the false English prophet (i.e. Ghulām Ahmad)...<sup>3</sup>

**17. Shaykh, Dr Marzooq bin Hayyās az-Zahrānī said:**

Shaykh Ihsān (*rahimabullāh*) was an exceptionally intelligent scholar who had good character and said his mind without fearing the consequences. He was a caller to acting by the Book and the Sunnah in word, writing and activity. He loved to serve his *deen* and defend its *'aqeedah* and he looked for a better future for the Muslims generally and for his country particularly. He had great ambition, yet not all what a person hopes for is ascertained, may Allāh have mercy on him.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> An authorised letter written by Shaykh, Dr 'Abdul'Azeez al-Yahyā dated: 12/10/1421 AH.

<sup>2</sup> He is Shaykh, al-'Allāmah Abū 'Alī Muhammad al-Muntasir billāh bin Muhammad az-Zamzāmī bin Muhammad bin Ja'far al-Kattānī al-Idreesī al-Hasanī, a Muhaddith and Faqeeh. He was born in Madeenah al-Munawarra in 1332 AH (1914 CE) and studied in Damascus as his family moved there in 1336 AH (1918 CE), then they moved to Fez in Morocco. He opposed French persecution when he was young and studied at *Qarawiyyeen University*, he also attended the lessons of his father and grandfather and studied at *al-Azhar* specialising in *hadeeth* sciences. He then returned to Morocco and began teaching and then worked in the *Higher Sharee'ah Court* in Rabāt. He then worked at *Muhammad the Fifth (Khāmīs) University* in Morocco, and then taught at the *University of Damascus*. He also taught at *King 'Abdul'Azeez University* in Makkah and Jeddah, then at *University of Petroleum and Minerals* in Dhahrān and then at the *Islamic University of Madeenah* wherein he was a teacher of *hadeeth* and *fiqh* in the *Sharee'ah and Usool ud-Deen Department*. He was also an advisor to Rābitah al-'Aalim al-Islāmī [Muslim World League] and taught at the Two Holy Sanctuaries. He has a number of works such as: *Imām Mālik, Takhreej ul-Ahādeeth Tuhfat il-Fuqahā li's-Samarqandī, Mu'jam Fiqh is-Salaf wa'l-Mu'tarah, Sharh Musnad Imām Ahmad bin Hanbal, Fiyat Tāriq wa'l-Ghāfiqī* and other works. He died in 1419 AH (1998 CE), may Allāh have mercy on him.

See Dr Nirāz Ibādhah, *Itmām ul-'A'lām* (Beirut: Dār Sādir, 1999 CE, First Edn.), p.270; Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr, *al-Qādiyāniyyah*, p.'Alif.

**Translator's Note:** I have abridged the above from Dr 'Alī bin Mūsā az-Zahrānī, *op.cit.*, p.121.

<sup>3</sup> Introduction by Professor Muhammad al-Muntasir al-Kattānī (written on 27 Sha'bān 1386 AH in Madeenah) to Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr, *al-Qādiyāniyyah* (Lahore: Idārah Tarjumān is-Sunnah, 1404 AH, 16<sup>th</sup> Edn.), p.'Alif.

<sup>4</sup> An authorised letter from Dr Marzooq az-Zahrānī dated: 19/1/1421 AH.

**18. Professor Ahmad 'AbdulHameed 'Abbās**, one of the colleagues of Shaykh Ihsān said:

Shaykh Ihsān came to Madeenah to study at the Islamic University which was the beginning of the road and he then met with the senior scholars and took from them, the main ones being: the respected Shaykh 'Abdul'Azeez bin Bāz (rahimahullāh); Shaykh Muhammad al-Ameen ash-Shanqīti (the author of *Adwā' ul-Bayān fī Īdāh ul-Qur'ān bi'l-Qur'ān*); Shaykh Muhammad al-Mukhtār ash-Shanqīti; Shaykh Hammād al-Ansārī;<sup>1</sup> Shaykh 'AbdulMuhsin al-'Abbād, Shaykh 'Atiyyah Muhammad Sālim and others from the best 'Ulamā of Madeenah.

Shaykh Ihsān joined the *Islamic University of Madeenah* after he had graduated as an understanding and conscious student from universities in his country Pakistan however he sought an increase in his knowledge of the Islamic sciences while in Madeenah of the Messenger of Allāh (*sallAllāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) the cradle of the revelation and the birthplace of the message of Muhammad. He was an outstanding colleague who

<sup>1</sup> He is Shaykh, al-'Allāmah, al-Muhaddith Hammād bin Muhammad bin Muhammad bin Hinnah bin Mukhtār bin Muhammad al-Basheer from the offspring of Qays bin Sa'd bin 'Ubādah al-Khazrajī al-Ansārī (rahimahullāh). He was born in 1344 AH (1926 CE) in the city of Tād Makkah in West Africa in the land which is now known as Mali. He was raised in a family of knowledge which includes Mutfis and judges. He studied with the scholars of his land the most important of them being: his maternal uncle Shaykh al-Muqtī Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Taqī al-Ansārī; his cousin, the *Muhaqqiq*, al-'Allāmah Shaykh Mūsā ibn al-Kasā'ī al-Ansārī; his paternal uncle Shaykh Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Muhammad. When Shaykh Hammād arrived in Makkah in 1367 AH (1948 CE) he studied with the senior scholars there such as: al-'Allāmah Muhammad 'AbdurRazzāq Hamza, al-'Allāmah Shaykh Hamood at-Tuwajjūrī, Shaykh Hāmid al-Fiqhī, Shaykh Muhammad 'Abdullāh bin Mahmood al-Madanī, an Imām of *Masjid an-Nabawī* at that time, Shaykh Muhammad bin Ibrāheem, the former Muftī of Saudi Arabia and many others, may Allāh have mercy on them all. He then studied at *Dār ul-'Uloom ish-Sharee'ah* and graduated from there and then went on to work at the *Sharee'ah College* in Riyādh and then went on to the *Islamic University of Madeenah* and worked there until 1410 AH. He had many students and likewise has a number of books such as: *Balghat ul-Qāsī wa'd-Dānī fī Tarājim Shuyūkh it-Tabarānī*, *'Aqeedat Imām Abi'l-Hasan al-'Ash'arī* and many other works. The Shaykh was also skilled in poetry and has many pieces of poetry in regards to the famous narrators of hadeeth. The Shaykh fell ill and then died on the morning of Wednesday 21/5/1418 AH (7 September 1997 CE) in Madeenah, he was prayed over in *Masjid an-Nabawī*, rahimahullāh.

See: Dr 'Āsim al-Qaryūti, *Kawkabāt min A'immat il-Hudā*, p.67; Muhammad Majdhūb, *'Ulamā wa Mufakkirūn 'Araftuhum* [Scholars and Thinkers I Knew], vol.1, p.49; Hammād al-Ansārī, *I'lām uz-Zamrah bi-Ahkām il-Hijrā*, p.83.

**Translator's Note:** I have abridged the above from Dr 'Alī bin Mūsā az-Zahrānī, *op.cit.*, p.118. For another biography of 'Allāmah Hammād al-Ansārī in the English language refer to:

<http://www.fatwa-online.com/scholarsbiographies/15thcentury/hammaadalansaaree.htm>

safeguarded seeking knowledge, he had the characteristics of the *Ulamā*, the humility of the students of knowledge and was warm to his colleagues who he listened to with understanding and depth. He was strong in discussing with his professors and returned to the truth if it was made clear to him without biased partisanship and excess. This Mujāhid and *dā'iyyah* came openly out with the truth and articulated it based on the promise of Allāh for victory of His *deen* even if it comes after some time.

He desired death in the way of Allāh and thus Allāh ordained for him martyrdom and elevated his remembrance. His *da'wah* continued to spread among the ranks of the Muslim youth and it encouraged them to work in the way of Allāh. He was a role model and scholar and worked according to what Allāh taught him, he gave himself for Allāh and Allāh honoured him with being buried in the Baqī' al-Gharqad in Madeenah al-Munawarra. His burial in itself was an honour from Allāh for one of his soldiers and a martyr from those who are martyred in the way of Allāh. May Allāh grant him the mercy which befits the righteous and gather us in the abode of His Mercy and Forgiveness.<sup>1</sup>

#### **19. Finally, Shaykh Muhammad bin Ibrāheem ash-Shaybānī said:**

Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr is a man the like of which are few and far between in this epoch, he was courageous in speaking the truth and came out openly with it. He exposed his enemies, shamed their plots and researched for the reality as a form of advice to the Ummah. Ihsān Ilahī lived his life for many years in order to manifest the filth and hidden secrets of falsehood and dedicated his self to Allāh, to grant victory to His *deen* and to establish it. He did not pay attention to the blame of the blamers within his publications and clarifications, neither the screams of the ignoramus nor the heresy of the liar and neither the response of the stubborn nor the threat of the coward, all of that cost him his life...<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> An authorised letter from Professor Ahmad 'Abbās dated: 17/9/1420 AH.

<sup>2</sup> An authorised letter from Shaykh Muhammad bin Ibrāheem ash-Shaybānī dated: 6/12/1420 AH.

## THE 'AQEEDAH OF SHAYKH IHSĀN (RAHIMAHULLĀH)

The *'aqeedah* of Shaykh Ihsān (*rahimabullāh*) was the *'aqeedah* of the *Salaf us-Sālih* (*ridwānullābi 'alayhim*) in regards to the issue of the Names and Attributes of Allāh or in any other issue related to *'aqeedah*. This is evident due to the following:

1. Shaykh Ihsān was raised by a Salafī family who were associated with *Jam'eeyat Abl ul-Hadeeth* in Pakistan, this Jama'ah is well known for its distinguished *Salafī manhaj*.
2. He studied in Salafī schools and universities whether they were in Pakistan or in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, such as: the *Salafī University* of Faisalabad in Pakistan and the *Islamic University of Madeenab*.
3. Shaykh Ihsān studied and extracted the *Salafī manhaj* at the hands of the senior scholars who are considered as being Salafī Imāms of the era such as: the respected Imām, Shaykh 'Abdul'Azeez bin Bāz, the Muhaddith of the era, Imām Muhammad Nāsiruddeen al-Albānī, the Muhaddith, al-'Allāmah, Shaykh Muhammad Ibrāheem al-Jundalwī (Ghondalwī), the Muhaddith, al-'Allāmah, Shaykh Hammād al-Ansārī, al-'Allāmah, the Imām, the Usūlī, the Mufassir Muhammad al-Ameen ash-Shinqītī, al-'Allāmah Abū Bakr al-Jazā'irī and others.
4. Shaykh Ihsān (*rahimabullāh*) in his books was frank about adhering to the *manhaj* of the *Salaf us-Sālih*, he said for example: **“I have clarified the position of the Muslims in regards to that in keeping with the way of the Salaf us-Sālih and utilising the verses of the Clear Book and the great and authentic ahādeeth of the Messenger.”** He also said in his book *al-Bahā'yyah*: **“In no chapter in this book did I depart from the 'aqeedah of Ahl us-Sunnah.”**
5. The Shaykh's affirmation of the *'aqeedah* of the *Salaf us-Sālih* which is based on the Book and the Sunnah. This can be seen within his refutations of the sects of deviation as he referred back to the books of the *Salaf*, defended the Imāms of the *Salaf* and defended the *Salafī da'wab* of Shaykh Muhammad ibn 'AbdulWahhāb.
6. His sermons, lectures, conferences and debates against the sects (of deviation) included calling people to the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of His Messenger with the understanding of the *Salaf* of the two.

7. The praise of the senior Salafī scholars of the era of Shaykh Ihsān and their testimony that he was upon the *Salafī 'aqeedah*. This has been mentioned within the scholars' praise of him, for example the statement of Shaykh Bin Bāz: **“Yes, the man with us is famed for knowledge and sound 'aqeedah, may Allāh forgive him.”**<sup>1</sup> And Shaykh Muhammad as-Subayyal said: **“Indeed the noble Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr was a respected scholar and an insightful dā'iyah from the 'Ulamā of Ahl us-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah in Pakistan...”**<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with the eminent Shaykh Bin Bāz in Riyadh at his office on the morning of Wednesday 27/11/1418 AH.

<sup>2</sup> An authorised letter written by Shaykh Muhammad as-Subayyal dated: 2/12/1419 AH.

## HIS KHUTBAHS, LECTURES AND CONFERENCES

Shaykh Ihsān had a major role in *da'wah* to Allāh, how could this be otherwise when he had devoted most of his life to the way of Allāh? Shaykh Muhammad bin 'Abdullāh as-Subayyal stated about the *da'wah* efforts of the Shaykh that:

He was dedicated within this field, rather he dedicated all of his time to this, may Allāh reward him with good.<sup>1</sup>

It is enough that he was killed in its path and we ask Allāh to grant him martyrdom, the reality is that the one who follows the life of the Shaykh will find the Shaykh's frequent sensitivities regarding the activities of the people of innovation and their spread, this is because he lived among them. Whoever comes across his books will see that their efforts affected him. Shaykh Muhammad Nāsir al-'Abūdī said:

**He had the strongest opposition that I knew of and I did not know of anyone from the children of the Muslims outside of the Arab lands who was strong against the people of innovation, with proofs, logic and contemporary studies, like Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr. For that reason, when the news of the transgression against him reached me I was greatly disturbed by that and so were others besides me, because we knew that one of the swords of Allāh had been sheathed.**<sup>2</sup>

The Shaykh felt the danger around him yet continued in his defence of Islām in order to clarify and expose the secrets of the opponents of the correct Islamic *'aqeedah*. If he was called to come to a particular location for *da'wah* he would not delay, whether it was for a conference, *khutbah*, seminar or lecture. *Majallat ush-Sharee'ah al-Urduniyyah* [The Jordanian Journal of Sharee'ah] mentioned in an interview with Shaykh Ihsān:

This interview is with one of the senior scholars of Pakistan, Ustādh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr who does not relent from attending any Islamic conference he is called to attend in the Eastern or Western parts of the earth.<sup>3</sup>

There were debates which took place between Shaykh Ihsān and the leaders of the *Rifā'iyyah Sūfīs* in the city of Sāmarā' (in Irāq) wherein he asked the *Rifā'iyyah Sūfīs* to perform their "miracles" of not being harmed or affected by weapons.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Shaykh as-Subayyal on 23/11/1419 AH

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Shaykh Muhammad Nāsir al-'Abūdī on the morning of 19/3/1421 AH in Makkah.

<sup>3</sup> *Majallat ush-Sharee'ah al-Urduniyyah*, no.242, Jumadā al-Ulā, 1406 AH (February 1986 CE), pp.4.

<sup>4</sup> Shaykh Ihsān, *Darasāt fi't-Tasawwuf*, (Lahore: Idārah Tarjumān is-Sunnah, 1409 AH), p.232.

The Shaykh gave great importance to his sermons and when he returned to Pakistan, after his studies at the *Islamic University of Madeenah* he began giving khutbahs in a large Masjid called “Sīnyān Wālī” (Chinianwali) wherein only senior *’Ulamā* give khutbahs, he gave khutbahs in here for 20 years and rarely did not give a *khutbah* in it. He had a loud bellowing voice and was called “**the Khateeb of the religion**” and “**the Khateeb of the people**”. The Shaykh gave importance to khutbahs early on since he was a student at the *Islamic University of Madeenah*, Shaykh ’Ābid said:

**During the Arab-Israeli war, the lights of the Haram al-Madanī were all turned off and this had never happened before but it was done in protest to the occupation of al-Quds (Jerusalem).<sup>1</sup> At that time the Shaykh was a student, dressed in Pakistani clothes (i.e. Shalwār Khamees), yet he got up and gave a talk about jihad and exhorted the Muslims to it and the people were moved by it...<sup>2</sup>**

This clearly indicates the importance that the Shaykh gave to giving khutbahs (sermons) from an early age and it also demonstrates his courage as he was not the formal Khateeb of the Masjid yet his enthusiasm for *da’wab* and his protection of the people and al-Quds made him stand up and speak. It also testifies to the fact that since his youth he was known as being a successful preacher and being the most eloquent of the people who had utilised extensive information and referred to Qur’ānic verses, ahādeeth and lines of poetry. His khutbahs would open people’s hearts and overcome their hearing and many *’Ulamā* praised his sermons such as Muhammad al-Ameen ash-Shinqīī. A competition was held in 1966 CE among the different Islamic universities in the Arab world and Shaykh Ihsān won the competition and this was while he was still a student at the *Islamic University of Madeenah*. The university also assigned Shaykh Ihsān at that time to give sermons to those performing Hajj in Makkah, he would start with the Urdu language and then comment in Arabic.<sup>3</sup> Shaykh, Dr Luqmān as-Salafī said:

Shaykh Ihsān was a superb and eloquent speaker whom the history of Pakistan has not seen the likes of. The far, lowly, truthful, the enemies all testified to his great stature in this

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<sup>1</sup> It is correct that the lights were turned off at that time out of fear of a Jewish (i.e. “Israeli”) attack but not out of it being a protest.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Shaykh ’Ābid Ilahī Thahīr on Jumu’ah 15/4/1419 AH; ’AbdusShakūr, *al-Ustādh al-’Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: Hayātuhu wa Mu’allifātuhu* [Professor, al-’Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: His Life and Works], p.25.

<sup>3</sup> ’AbdusShakūr, *op.cit.*, p.20.



regard. He had memorised: the Qur'ān, thousands of ahādeeth, stanzas of Arabic, Persian and Urdu poetry and he was strong in his proofs and deductions.<sup>1</sup>

The Shaykh was famed for his khutbahs to the extent that some of his opposers from other parties, whether political or religious, would attend in order to learn from him the method of giving khutbahs and in order to benefit from him. The Pakistani Ummah concurred on Ihsān being the most eloquent of the people.<sup>2 3</sup> Shaykh 'Abdul'Azeez al-Qārī said: "In Urdu he was an effectual speaker and khateeb and would affect all."<sup>4</sup> In addition to the Shaykh's proficiency in giving khutbahs in Urdu he likewise reached a high level of eloquence and skill when giving khutbahs in the Arabic language. Shaykh Muhammad al-'Abūdī said:

**He was a superb khateeb in terms of his eloquence especially in the Arabic language, he was a writer and loved literature. I will mention about when King Faisal visited Pakistan, and at that time Shaykh Ihsān was a student at the Islamic University of Madeenah, Shaykh Ihsān got up and gave a sermon in front of King Faisal. King Faisal was amazed at his eloquence and speech and King Faisal asked the Shaykh what his name was and he replied "I am one of the students at the Islamic University of Madeenah."**

The Shaykh was specified as being the Khateeb,

In the congregational masjid of Ahl ul-Hadeeth in the Lahore well known by the name "Sīnīyī Wālī" (Chinianwali) which is an old Ahl ul-Hadeeth masjid wherein the senior scholars of Ahl ul-Hadeeth give khutbahs in Pakistan. So Shaykh Ihsān began da'wah from these two minbars, the minbar of the masjid and the minbar of the majallah.

Meaning: *Majallat Tarjumān* which Shaykh Ihsān was the head of. In his interview with *Majallat asb-Sharee'ah* Shaykh Ihsān said:

**Now I work as a Khateeb in the Jāmi' Masjid of Ahl ul-Hadeeth in Lahore which is the oldest Jāmi' Masjid of Ahl ul-Hadeeth and of the Salafis in the subcontinent.<sup>5</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> *Majallat al-Istijābah*, no.12, Dhu'l-Hijjah, 1407 AH, p.33-34, article by Dr Luqmān as-Salafī; *Majallat ud-Da'wah*, no.1087, dated: 15/8/1407 AH, pp.40-41.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Shaykh 'Ābid Ilahī Thahīr on Jumu'ah 15/4/1419 AH

<sup>3</sup> To the extent that senior leaders (of deviants in Pakistan) stated that Ihsān was the most eloquent of the people, for example "Pir Baqāla" a Muslim and a politician in Pakistan and Nasrullāh Khān a political leader who said "the best of speakers among the people in Pakistan is Shaykh Ihsān." Interview with Shaykh 'Ābid Ilahī Thahīr on Jumu'ah 15/4/1419 AH

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Shaykh, Dr 'Abdul'Azeez al-Qārī on 5/12/1420 AH in Madeenah.

<sup>5</sup> *Majallat ush-Sharee'ah al-Urduniyyah*, no.242, Jumadā al-Ulā, 1406 AH (February 1986 CE), pp.4; *Majallat ud-Da'wah*, no.1115, Monday 18<sup>th</sup> Rabī' al-Awwal, 1408 AH/9 November 1987 CE, p.31, article entitled "Muhāwilāt 'Adwāniyyah Tasdahdīf al-Harakat as-Salafīyyah fī Bākistān" [Aggressive Attempts Made Against the Salafi Movement in Pakistan] by 'AbdulQādir 'AbdulKareem.

This masjid was built over 200 years ago and Shaykh Ihsān did not take a salary for being the Imām, as Allāh enriched him from His Virtue so that the Shaykh worked as a trader. Shaykh Ihsān viewed that it was incumbent for a scholar of the deen to be wealthy so as not to (financially) need anyone and to be able to say the truth.<sup>1</sup> As for his debates that he used to give *da'wab* to the *deen* of Allāh via then these were not devoid of the importance of public-speaking, his brother Dr Fadl said:

Shaykh Ihsān had friction with the companions of other schools of thought because he would come across their books and then debate and discuss with them. He would return back to Sialkot every Thursday per week and go to the Qādiyānī centre there carrying with him their books and debate them. Ihsān would be involved in vital activity when he would come home on Thursdays.<sup>2</sup>

He would be occupied with *da'wab* to Allāh and debating the deviants and the enemies of Islām and the Shaykh did not fear the blame of the constant blamers for the sake of Allāh. Shaykh Ihsān went to 'Irāq and debated the Shī'a there in a place called al-Kādhimiyyah, which is a Shī'a place. He debated them after Jumu'ah and they presented him something to drink called "Coca Cola" and Shaykh Ihsān said: "I do not eat or drink within the lands of the Shī'a" and he was frank them within their own gathering. They said to him: "Do you know of Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr? Has he influenced you in anyway?" Ihsān said: "Yes, I know him! I am Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr!" They had heard about him, knew about him, were scared of him and had made his blood permissible to shed before, for there was never a Shī'a Imām except that he had made a threat on Shaykh Ihsān's life. But the Shī'a Imām who was present said: **"The Muslims have to unite, we all have to unite against the Zionist enemies of the Muslims!"** This is what the Shī'a always resort to when their arguments have been defeated,<sup>3</sup> they try and change the script to be "unity" and *da'wab* to "unify the Muslims" even though they have immense hatred against the Sunnah and Ahl us-Sunnah. Shaykh Ihsān confronted those Rawāfid and expressed the utmost defiance against them without fear despite the fact that they had an

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Shaykh 'Ābid Ilahī Thahīr on Jumu'ah 15/4/1419 AH

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Dr Fadl Ilahī Thahīr, the brother of the Shaykh on 28/11/1418 AH

<sup>3</sup> Indeed, even recently a Shī'a "scholar" who goes by the mere name of **"Shaykh Yasir al-Habeeb"** (possibly a pseudonym) claimed that the Prophet Muhammad (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) died on account of a Jewish conspiracy to poison and assassinate him!!? This ridiculous claim can be seen on *Youtube* and it seems as being nothing but a political move in order to "unite" Shī'a with Ahl us-Sunnah. None of the Islamic scholars from Ahl us-Sunnah over the centuries have ever mentioned this preposterous and unfounded claim. [TN]

influence and a party called “Ansār ul-Ja’fariyyah”.<sup>1</sup> As for his conferences, lectures and seminars then Dr Fadl said:

Shaykh Ihsān would go to seminars, conferences and lectures in different cities and then return in the middle of the night and then start reading and writing. Then he would pray Fajr and sleep and this shows his strong resolve in implementing what he wanted to, Ihsān was unique in conducting his affairs.

He once held a conference in order to expose the evil of the Barelwīs when the leader of the Barelwīs went to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in order to seek help in building a tomb for the Companions in Madeenah, Allāh’s refuge is sought. The Barelwī also had other requests of *shirk* and falsehood, Shaykh Ihsān held a conference on this matter entitled “*The Haramayn Conference*” in order to defend the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its scholars and to explain the correct *Salafī ‘aqeedah* which is based on the Book and the Sunnah.<sup>2</sup> Shaykh Ihsān also clarified that the requests of the Barelwīs had no connection to Islām whatsoever and are rather requests of *shirk* and superstition which Allāh has not revealed any authority for. Within this conference the Shaykh called on the Barelwī *‘Ulamā* to debate him yet none of them took him up on that. That conference was a painful blow to the Barelwīs and their requests of *shirk*, and this conference was not the only one against the Barelwīs as rather indeed Shaykh Ihsān held another conference wherein he challenged all of the grave-worshippers to debate him yet none of them were able to take him up on the open challenge. It reached the extent that if any of the grave-worshippers saw Shaykh Ihsān they would flee from him and not be able to face him!<sup>3</sup> Allāh brought benefit with the *da’wah* of Shaykh Ihsān via his conferences whereby many people would return back to the truth from the ways of the Rāfidah, Qādiyānīs and Barelwīs and all praise is due to Allāh.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Shaykh, Dr ‘Abdul‘Azeez al-Qārī on 5/12/1419 AH

<sup>2</sup> This indicates therefore that Shaykh Ihsān was not of the same *manhaj* as the rabble-rousing hot-headed elements that go to excess in speaking out against Saudi Arabia and even making *takfeer* of it and its scholars. But if one was to defend Saudi Arabia today some of the people would make *takfeer* or *tasfeeq* of you all day long! [TN]

<sup>3</sup> Letter from Ibtisām ibn Shaykh Ihsān dated 24/9/1419 AH; Interview with Shaykh ‘Ābid Ilahī Thahīr on Jumu’ah 15/4/1419 AH.

<sup>4</sup> Letter from Ibtisām ibn Shaykh Ihsān dated 24/9/1419 AH.

## HIS TRAVELS AND DA'WAH VISITS

Shaykh Ihsān's *da'wah* was not just restricted to Pakistan and its surrounding areas "rather it extended to Africa, America, the Arab lands, the Middle East, Europe and Asia." He held conferences, participated in seminars and gave khutbahs. He travelled regularly for *da'wah* to the *deen* of Allāh and he also defended the '*aqeedah* of the *Salaf us-Sālih* and debated the people of falsehood who were causing doubt against the correct '*aqeedah*, especially the Rāfidah, Qādiyānīs, Bahā'īs,

He travelled to London, America, France, Kuwait, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Emirates, Irān, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, Italy, Germany, Yugoslavia, Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, South Korea, Japan, Philippines, Hong Kong, Thailand, China and most of the Arab lands. He travelled much and must have exceeded a million miles roughly.

Allāh brought benefit with his travels and *da'wah* and many repented at his hands especially Qādiyānīs, some Shī'a, Bahā'īs, Bābīs, Hanafīs and people who held superstitious beliefs. When the Shaykh went to South Korea he met the head of state and invited him to Islām. Shaykh Ihsān was there in order to open a masjid on behalf of one of the Islamic governments and the President gave Shaykh Ihsān a key to the city of Seoul for him to enter it whenever he wished. This gift is still with the family of the Shaykh now in Pakistan. The Shaykh had major *da'wah* projects but he passed away before he could complete them. Governmental agencies benefitted from Shaykh Ihsān for their conferences and seminars and especially during Hajj season and on one occasion he received three different offers from three different government departments: the Ministry of Hajj in Saudi Arabia, the Ministry of Information in Saudi Arabia and the Awqāf of 'Irāq.

The Shaykh was able, by the virtue of Allāh, to stop the deviant sects in their tracks and refute their beliefs via lectures and debates which took place between him and the propagators and men of such sects. Such as the sects of: superstition, the blind-followers, biased partisans, socialists, communists, Shī'a, Qādiyānīs, Christians and Bahā'īs. He was arrested a few times due to this. Shaykh Ihsān was invited to many countries in order to give lectures, seminars and debates, such as:

1. He travelled to Kuwait to give lectures.

2. He came to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on many occasions and gave lectures in universities and mosques, and during Hajj.
3. He visited 'Irāq on a number of occasions and gave lectures and seminars, he also attended many conferences which were given there.
4. He visited America and gave lectures in many states within the different Islamic communities and Islamic centres such as the *International Islamic Union of Students*. In one of his lectures while in America he criticised Khomeini the then leader of the Rāfidah and explained their filth. Some Iranian students tried to dispute with him but some of the students from Ahl us-Sunnah resolved the situation.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from Ibtisām ibn Shaykh Ihsān dated 24/9/1419 AH.

## THE WORKS THAT HE UNDERTOOK IN DA'WAH TO ALLĀH

### THE REASON FOR HIS ENTRY INTO POLITICS

He participated in the field of politics in order to make *da'wah* to Allāh, yet despite his entry into political matters he did not view that as compromising. Especially in regards to the issue of the *Salafī 'aqeedah* he did not hide it and rather manifested his *Salafīyyah* and did not compromise like some people,<sup>1</sup> rather he called to the *'aqeedah* and was enthusiastic. His book *al-Bareihwīyyah* is a testimony for this because most of the people at that time (in Pakistan) were Barailwīs. Therefore, the presence of the Shaykh in the field of politics raised the Salafīs greatly and made all ranks know about *Salafīyyah*, as many people did not know about *Salafīyyah*. Yet due to the virtue of Allāh, and then the Shaykh's presence, *Salafīyyah* became known.<sup>2</sup> The Shaykh also called for not separating religion and state and manifested that Islām was suitable for all times and places, and for all affairs in life, as the journal *al-Istijābah* reported from him:

He is an experienced politician who was staunchly against the separation of religion and politics. He was frank upon pulpits, in newspapers, in interviews and in lectures about Islām being a perfect religion comprehensive for all matters in life. He was also adamant that the separation of politics from the *deen* was a conspiracy against Islām. He practiced politics with an Islamic point of view and he knew its details and friends and foes admitted that he had progress in this regard...<sup>3</sup>

It was known that in the arena of politics he was:

Frank in what he had to say and was imprisoned and arrested frequently during the epoch of the Pakistani leader Dhu'l-Fiqār (Zulfikar) 'Ali Bhutto.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> **Translator's Note:** This is an excellent observation by Dr 'Alī and it has to be taken into consideration. As nowadays many who merely claim to be upon the *Salafī 'aqeedah* disregard it when they deem appropriate merely for political expediency, the recent matter of the so-called 'pledge of mutual respect and co-operation' is a case in point. Furthermore, we also notice that Shaykh Ihsān was actually in the position to enter into this due to his position and influence, as for the mere common ignoramus it is not their domain to enter. Shaykh Ihsān also did not incline to *takfeer* of the rulers but rather advised them.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Dr Fadl Ilahī Thahīr, the brother of the Shaykh on 28/11/1418 AH

<sup>3</sup> *Majallat ul-Istijābah*, no.12, Dhu'l-Hijjah, 1407 AH, p.35; *Majallat ud-Da'wah*, no.1087, dated: 15 Sha'bān 1407 AH, p.41.

<sup>4</sup> A biography of him has been mentioned prior.

When Shaykh Ihsān entered into the political arena he was commanding the good and forbidding the evil, so if anything emerged from the state which was against the Islamic Sharee'ah and the Muslims then he would challenge it sternly, I have mentioned some of his positions in this regard prior. Due to his positions the Shaykh (*rahimabullāh*) was imprisoned on a number of occasions on the orders of the leaders of Pakistan at different times. The Shaykh was imprisoned by Ayyoob Khān, Yahyā Khān and Dhu'l-Fiqār (Zulfikar) 'Ali Bhutto as I mentioned beforehand. He was punished during his time in prison and on one occasion was prevented from food and drink for two days and the day before he was imprisoned on this occasion he was fasting. He was also placed in the boiling hot sun with his hands and feet tied up yet with all of this the Shaykh did not retract from the truth. Rather, he continued in making his *da'wab* to Allāh and he was neither shaken nor concerned with what they done to him. Even while he was imprisoned he called to Allāh and his *da'wab* affected many prisoners. He would also recite the Qur'ān constantly in prison<sup>1</sup> and even when different positions were offered to him by his country's government he rejected them due to him knowing that these offers were cheap bargaining chips in order for him to disclaim his strong *da'wab* to referring back to the Sharee'ah and commanding the good and forbidding the evil. From the positions he was offered were:

1. The Shaykh was offered the job of being the Pakistani ambassador to any Arab country of his choice. This was offered to him by the then President Dhu'l-Fiqār (Zulfikar) 'Ali Bhutto, however the Shaykh rejected this offer.<sup>2</sup>
2. The Shaykh was offered the job of being the Minister of Islamic Affairs during the epoch of Diyā' (Zia) ul-Haq yet the Shaykh rejected this offer.<sup>3</sup> So if he sought position he would have agreed and accepted this position and then progressed to whatever position he wanted, but he rejected the offer.
3. He was the Special Advisor to President Diyā' (Zia) ul-Haq yet when he saw that the role did not suit him he left it, and his courage has been mentioned prior.

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Dr Fadl Ilahī Thahīr, in Riyadh on 28/12/1418 AH; Interview with Shaykh 'Ābid Ilahī Thahīr on Jumu'ah 15/4/1419 AH; letter from the son of the Shaykh, Ibtisām bin Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr dated 24/9/1419 AH; Interview with Shaykh 'AtāurRahmān Muhammad Husayn ash-Shīkhūbūrī on the evening of Wednesday 3/4/1421 AH in Makkah.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Shaykh 'Atiyyah Sālim on Sunday 7/6/1419 AH in Madeenah; Telephone call from Shaykh 'Ābid Ilahī Thahīr 11/6/1419 AH

<sup>3</sup> Telephone call from Shaykh 'Ābid Ilahī Thahīr 11/6/1419 AH

As I mentioned prior for the sake of Allāh he did not fear the blame of the blamers with the rulers or the ruled and:

He used to refute whatever he thought was evil even if it was an evil that emanated from the state. An example of this is on one occasion some ministers were at a gathering and the Prime Minister was there as well. Shaykh Ihsān began speaking about *shirk* and the Barelwīs because most of the people at the gathering were Barelwīs and some of the ministers had been influenced by the Barelwīs. Shaykh Ihsān began explaining and clarifying that the Barelwīs seek help from graves and from the dead and make tawāf around graves. The people listening began laughing and some of them said “If this is the madhhab of the Wahhabis, then we are “Wahhabis”! Because most of us do not believe in seeking help through the dead or in making tawāf around graves!”<sup>1</sup>

The Shaykh wrote about the Barelwīs and their beliefs and there is no doubt that his book is a testimony to his lack of compromising for the leaders and politicians, as most people during that time were Barelwīs.<sup>2</sup> The Shaykh persevered in his *da’wah* to Allāh, supporting the truth, jihād with his pen, tongue and time, he did not fear anyone except Allāh. The temptations, positions and opportunities of the dunyā did not interest him. The head of the *Middle-East Bank* in Oman came to visit him and said to Ihsān: **“Leave the Shī’a and do not call to refute them and I will build for you a Markaz for Ahl ul-Hadeeth which will cost two million Riyals to build.”** The Ambassador of the Iranian leader al-Khomeynī (Khomeinī) visited Ihsān in his house and said to him **“burn your books about the Shī’a and leave them alone”** and it has been mentioned prior that the Agā Khān of the Ismā’īlīs sent a special helicopter from Britain or France to Karachi in order to take Ihsān to meet him so as to seduce him, but Shaykh Ihsān rejected this invitation.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Shaykh ‘Ābid Ilahī Thahīr on Jumu’ah 15/4/1419 AH

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Dr Fadl Ilahī Thahīr, in Riyadh on 28/12/1418 AH

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Shaykh ‘Ābid Ilahī Thahīr on Jumu’ah 15/4/1419 AH



## HIS SELECTION AS THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF JAM'EEYAT AHL UL-HADEETH

The Shaykh was selected as the Secretary-General for Jam'eeyat Ahl ul-Hadeeth which has branches in most Pakistani cities and villages. In an interview with the Shaykh (*rahimabullāb*) he said:

I was selected a few months ago as the Secretary-General of *Jam'eeyat Ahl ul-Hadeeth* and there is no city or village (in Pakistan) except there is a branch of *Jam'eeyat Ahl ul-Hadeeth* there.<sup>1</sup>

Then he mentioned that this *Jam'eeyah*: Is official and has about five thousand prominent scholars.<sup>2</sup> This *Jam'eeyah* is for the Ahl ul-Hadeeth and Salafīs in Pakistan and is formally called “**Jam'eeyat Ahl ul-Hadeeth al-Markaziyyah**”, yet there are other Salafī organisations but this one is the biggest. The Shaykh imparted his tremendous talents from his activities to this *Jam'eeyah* and it benefited from him as a scholar and famous *dā'iyah*.<sup>3</sup> The *Jam'eeyah* was fortunate to have this concern from the Shaykh as it represented *Salafīyyah* and so did its scholars. It was from the Shaykh's basic aims upon his return to his country after his studies at the *Islamic University of Madeenah* to organise *Jam'eeyat Ahl ul-Hadeeth* in his country and it was as he wanted.<sup>4</sup> To the extent that he (*rahimabullāb*) spent much of his wealth on the *Jam'eeyah*.<sup>5</sup> Shaykh Ihsān (*rahimabullāb*) said in an interview with *Majallah ash-Sharee'ah al-Urduniyyah* [Jordanian Journal of Sharee'ah]:

In 1983 CE I was selected to be the Secretary-General of Jam'eeyat Ahl ul-Hadeeth in Pakistan and it has 850 branches in Pakistan.

He was then asked about the aims of the Jam'eeyah and said:

1. To spread the *'aqeedah* of the Salaf us-Sālih purified from *shirk*, idolatry, superstition and innovation.
2. To enlighten public opinion and warn from null and void beliefs.

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Majallat ul-'Arabiyyah*, no.87, Rabī uth-Thānī, 1405 AH/1985 CE, p.91, prepared by Fahd al-'AbdulKareem

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Dr Fadl Ilahī Thahīr, in Riyadh on 28/12/1418 AH

<sup>4</sup> 'AbdusShakūr, *al-Ustādh al-'Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: Hayātuhu wa Mu'allifātuhu* [Professor, al-'Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: His Life and Works], p.16; letter from the son of the Shaykh, Ibtisām bin Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr dated 24/9/1419 AH.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Shaykh 'AtāurRahmān Muhammad Husayn ash-Shikhūbūrī on the evening of Wednesday 3/4/1421 AH in Makkah.

3. Spread the Islamic consciousness and educating the Muslim youth about the pure Islamic heritage.
4. Opening schools, institutes, universities and colleges to teach: Arabic language, teach the Book and the Sunnah, memorisation of the Qur'ān and *da'wah*.
5. Enlighten public opinion and prepare the Muslims to establish the Islamic state based on the regulations of the Lord of the Worlds and instructions of the master of the messengers.<sup>1</sup>

Dr Luqmān as-Salafī said:

Jam'eyat Ahl ul-Hadeeth in Pakistan used to call the people to: return to correct Islām, correct following of the Prophet (*sallallāhu 'alayhi wassallam*), censuring *shirk*, innovation and superstitions; abandoning stubborn and blind taqleed – so that ascendancy and honour would return to the Muslims.<sup>2</sup>

## HEAD OF MAJALLAH TARJUMĀN UL-HADEETH

When the Shaykh returned to his country he began to call to Allāh and viewed that a means to this is via newspapers. He attached importance to this as he was:

Specified as being the director of the magazine *al-T'isām* which belonged to Jam'eyat Ahl ul-Hadeeth in Pakistan and before that he used to write for the Jordanian and Arabic magazines *as-Sakhrab*, *al-Layl wa'n-Nabār*, *al-Iqdām* (which was published in Lahore) and *Hadārat ul-Islām* which was published in Damascus.<sup>3</sup>

Then after this the Shaykh printed a magazine entitled *Tarjumān ul-Hadeeth* which was a magazine that he owned himself and edited.<sup>4</sup> It was printed in Lahore and was established in November 1969 CE and was a monthly magazine. Within the magazine he used to call to Islaam and defend the truth and refute the people of misguidance, he also refuted the deviated sects like the Qādiyānī, *hadeeth* rejecters and socialists. He used to instruct to good and forbid the evil as he used to oppose some of the regional governors

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<sup>1</sup> *Majallat ush-Sharee'ah al-Urduniyyah*, no.242, Jumadā al-Ulā, 1406 AH, pp.4.

<sup>2</sup> *Majallat ul-Istijābah*, no.12, Dhu'l-Hijjah, 1407 AH, p.32.

<sup>3</sup> Sābir Husayn Thāqib, *Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr wa Juhoodahu fi'd-Difā' 'an 'Aqeedat is-Salaf* [Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: His Efforts in Defending the 'Aqeedah of the Salaf], p.16.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Dr Fadl Ilahī Thahīr on the evening of Wednesday 15/6/1419 AH; Muhammad as-Sāyim, *Shuhadā' ud-Da'wah il-Islāmiyyah fi'l-Qarn il-'Ashreen* [Martyrs of the Islamic Da'wah During the 20<sup>th</sup> Century] (Cairo: Dār ul-Fadeelah, 1992 CE), p.163; letter from the son of the Shaykh, Ibtisām bin Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr dated 24/9/1419 AH.

or ministers who opposed Islām in their activities and actions.<sup>1</sup> Shaykh Ihsān said in his introduction to his book *al-Bābiyyah*:

**I dedicated a few pages of my magazine Tarjumān ul-Hadeeth to refuting this sect along with others.<sup>2</sup>**

Dr Fadl said:

The intent of the magazine was to spread the Book and the Sunnah and refute those who rejected them. It was a magazine that Shaykh Ihsān (rahimahullāh) gave much importance to and just as he critiqued evil via the tongue he likewise critiqued evil via the pen in the form of the magazine.<sup>3</sup>

The magazine was concerned with Islamic issues and news<sup>4</sup> and the Shaykh stated in an interview:

The magazine was established in 1969 CE and is a literary, political and academic magazine that I own, the name of it is Tarjumān ul-Hadeeth and it is a monthly magazine that is still printed to this day.<sup>5</sup>

This magazine continued its publication and giving *da'wah* to Allāh until after the death of the Shaykh (*rahimahullāh*). The *Islamic University of Faisalabad* assumed responsibility of the magazine from the family of Shaykh Ihsān. The magazine itself is of around 50 pages and its director now is Shaykh Muhammad Yāseen Zumar, a graduate from the *Islamic University of Madeenah*.<sup>6</sup> We hope that maybe the Shaykh will be rewarded for these good actions.

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<sup>1</sup> 'AbdusShakūr, *al-Ustādh al-'Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: Hayātuhu wa Mu'allifātuhu* [Professor, al-'Allāmah Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr: His Life and Works], p.48.

<sup>2</sup> Shaykh Ihsān Ilahī Thahīr, *al-Bābiyyah: 'Ard wa Naqd* [The Bābīs: A Presentation and Critique], p.25.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Dr Fadl Ilahī Thahīr on the evening of Wednesday 15/6/1419 AH

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Shaykh 'Ābid Ilahī Thahīr on Jumu'ah 15/4/1419 AH

<sup>5</sup> *Majallat ush-Sharee'ah al-Urduniyyah*, no.242, Jumadā al-Ulā, 1406 AH, pp.4.

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Dr Fadl Ilahī Thahīr on the evening of Wednesday 15/6/1419 AH