

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*The Tradition
of the Scholars
of Deoband*

The Tradition of the Scholars of Deoband



QARĪ MUḤAMMAD ṬAYYAB

Translated by

ISMAEEL NAKHUDA



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Author Qārī Muḥammad Ṭayyib
Translation Ismaeel Nakhuda
Language Editor Yahya Birt
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Cover image is that of Yahya Batha's late father Moulana Muhammed ibn Ahmed Batha's *ijāzah* from Darul Uloom Deoband. May Allah have mercy on him, illuminate his resting place and elevate his status in *Jannah*. *Amin*.

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Introduction

BY MUFTI TAQI USMANI

IN THE NAME OF ALLĀH, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful. All praise is for Allāh and that is sufficient for us, and peace on His slaves whom He has selected.¹

Fundamentally, there is no great need to compile a book to explain and clarify the way (*maslak*) of the scholars of Deoband.² This is because the scholars of Deoband are not a sect or group that has moved away from the majority of the Ummah and derived a separate ideology and set of actions. Rather, the way of explaining and defining Islām that has been that of the majority of scholars for over 1400 years is also the way of the scholars of Deoband. The fundamental fountainhead of the religion and its teachings are the Qur’ān and *Sunnah*, and all of the teachings of the Qur’ān and *Sunnah*, in an all-encompassing way, are also the foundation of the way of the scholars of Deoband.

¹ A version of this introduction was earlier published on Deoband.org. (Translator’s note.)

² *Maslak* literally means ‘way’ or ‘path’. Within the context of this book and South Asia, *maslak* denotes the particular characteristics of a school, group, movement or even individual. It is this way that this book defines in the context of the scholars of Deoband. (Translator’s note.)

Select and look at any of the reliable books on the creed (*‘aqīdah*) of the *Ahl as-Sunnah wa ‘l-Jamā‘ah*: whatever is written in them is the belief of the scholars of Deoband. Study any of the reliable books of Ḥanafī jurisprudence (*fiqh*) or the legal theory of jurisprudence (*uṣūl al-fiqh*)—all of the rulings and principles contained therein are the way of jurisprudence of the scholars of Deoband. Refer to any of the reliable and accepted books on manners and spiritual perfection (*iḥsān*)—they are the Deoband scholars’ source in relation to the purification of manners (*tazkiyah-i-akhlāq*) and *iḥsān*. From the noble Prophets ﷺ and the Companions and Followers to the *awliyā’* of the Ummah and the pious, those individuals whose lofty rank and whose academic and pious actions the majority of the Ummah is agreed on are, in the view of the scholars of Deoband, those very same personalities who are exemplars and worthy of being followed.

In short, there is no aspect of the religion in which the scholars of Deoband have differed by even the breadth of a hair from Islām’s popular and transmitted explanation and its accurate temperament and attitude. It is because of this that there is essentially no need for a separate book to explain and clarify their way. If their way needs to be known, then it is mentioned in detail in the reliable books on the exegesis (*tafsīr*) of the Qur’ān, the accepted commentaries of ḥadīth, in [the books of] Ḥanafī jurisprudence, in writings on creed and *kalām*, and the books of *taṣawwuf* and manners that are reliable and authentic according to the majority of the scholars of the Ummah. However, in this recent era there have been two causes on account of which the necessity has been felt for the way, disposition, religious temperament and attitude (*dīnī mizāj wa mazāq*) of the scholars of Deoband to be clarified in the form of a separate book.

The first cause is that Islām is a religion of moderation (*i’tidāl*). The Noble Qur’ān has, by describing the Muslim Ummah as the