

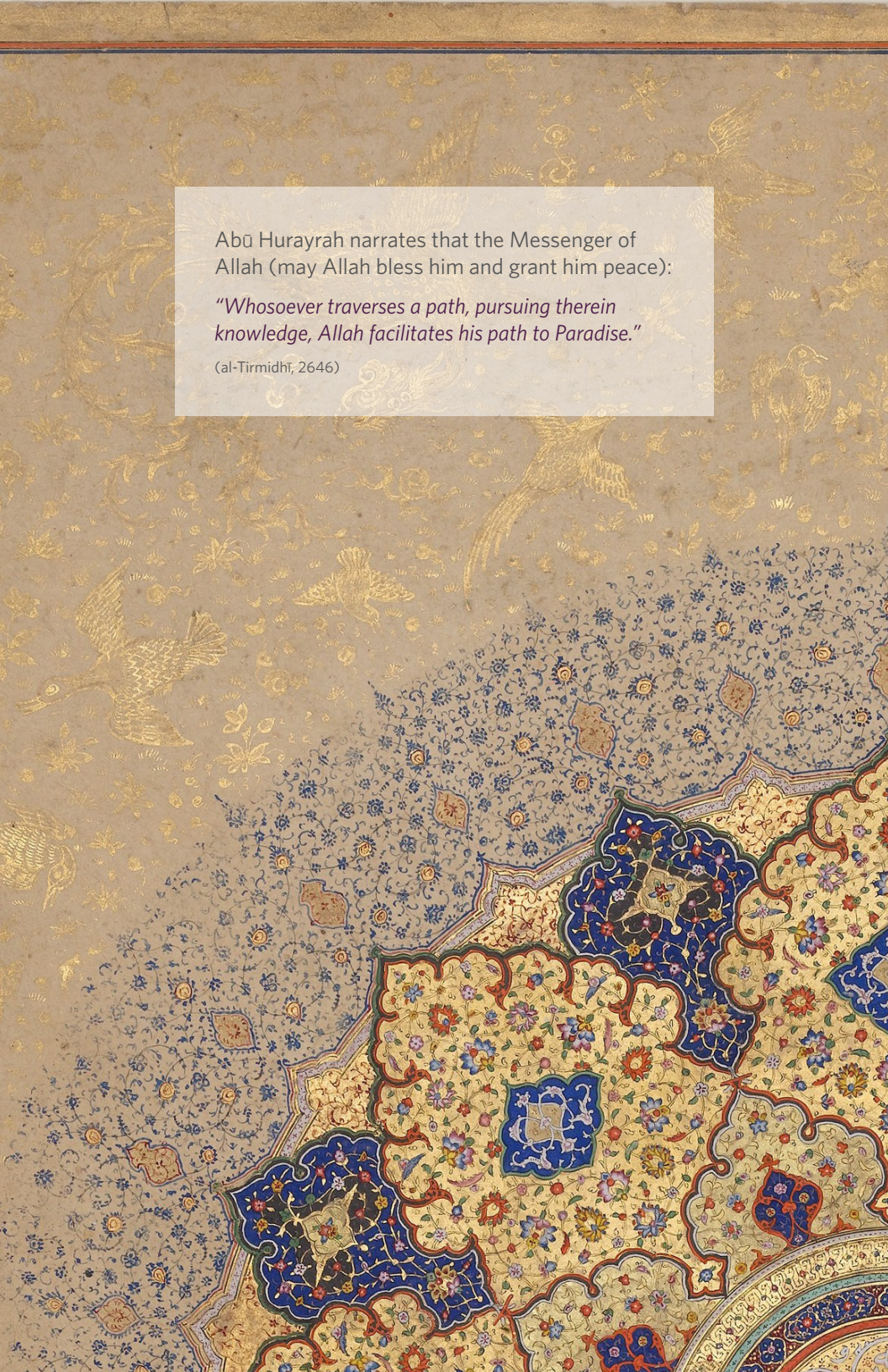
# DARUL QASIM

IN THE QUEST FOR  
MORE KNOWLEDGE

## KNOW YOUR FACULTY

Gems You Never Knew  
About the Educators Who  
Guide You On Your Quest for  
More Knowledge at  
Darul Qasim

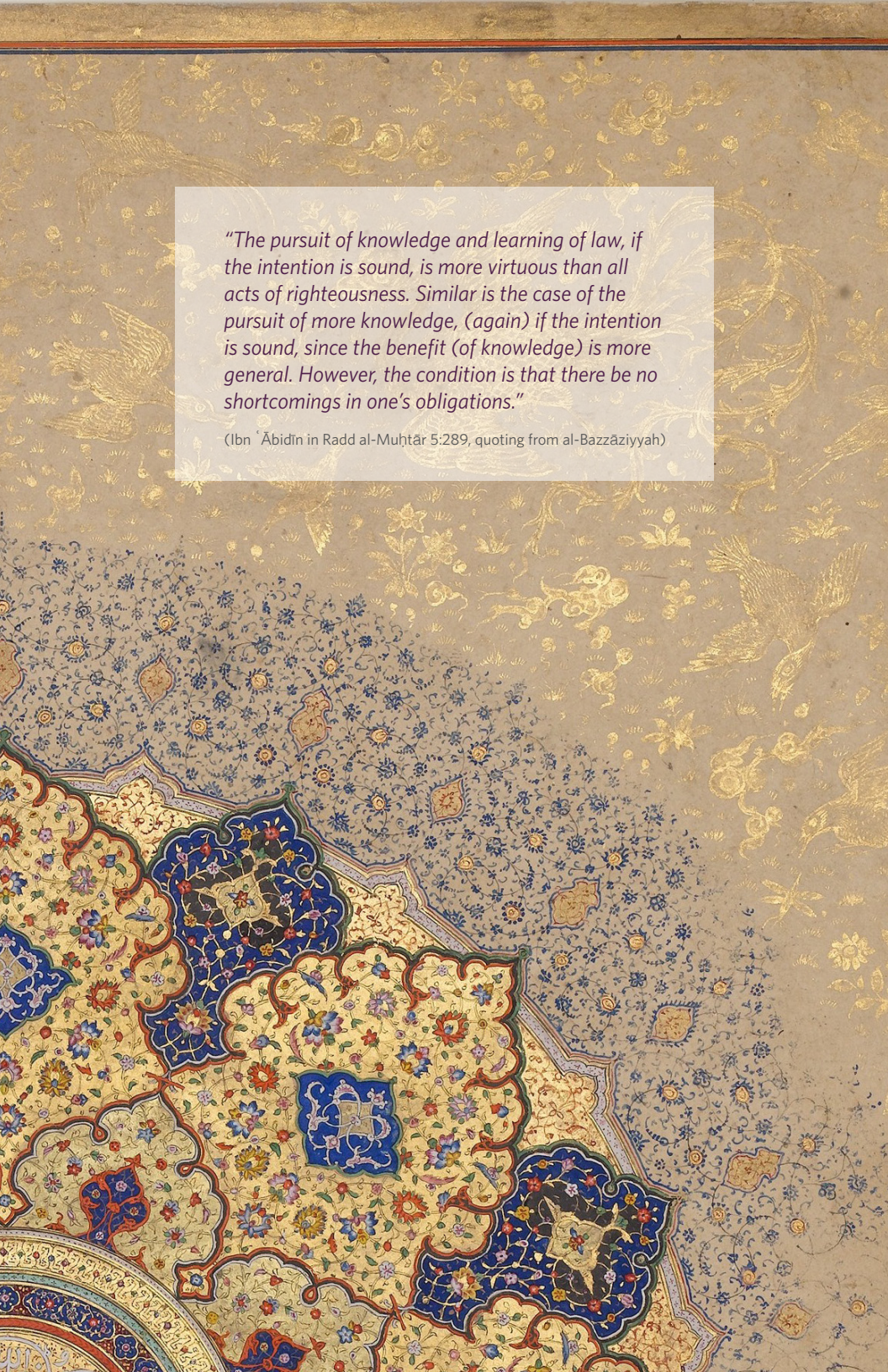




Abū Hurayrah narrates that the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace):

*"Whosoever traverses a path, pursuing therein knowledge, Allah facilitates his path to Paradise."*

(al-Tirmidhi, 2646)



*"The pursuit of knowledge and learning of law, if the intention is sound, is more virtuous than all acts of righteousness. Similar is the case of the pursuit of more knowledge, (again) if the intention is sound, since the benefit (of knowledge) is more general. However, the condition is that there be no shortcomings in one's obligations."*

(Ibn ʿAbidin in Radd al-Muhtār 5:289, quoting from al-Bazzāziyyah)



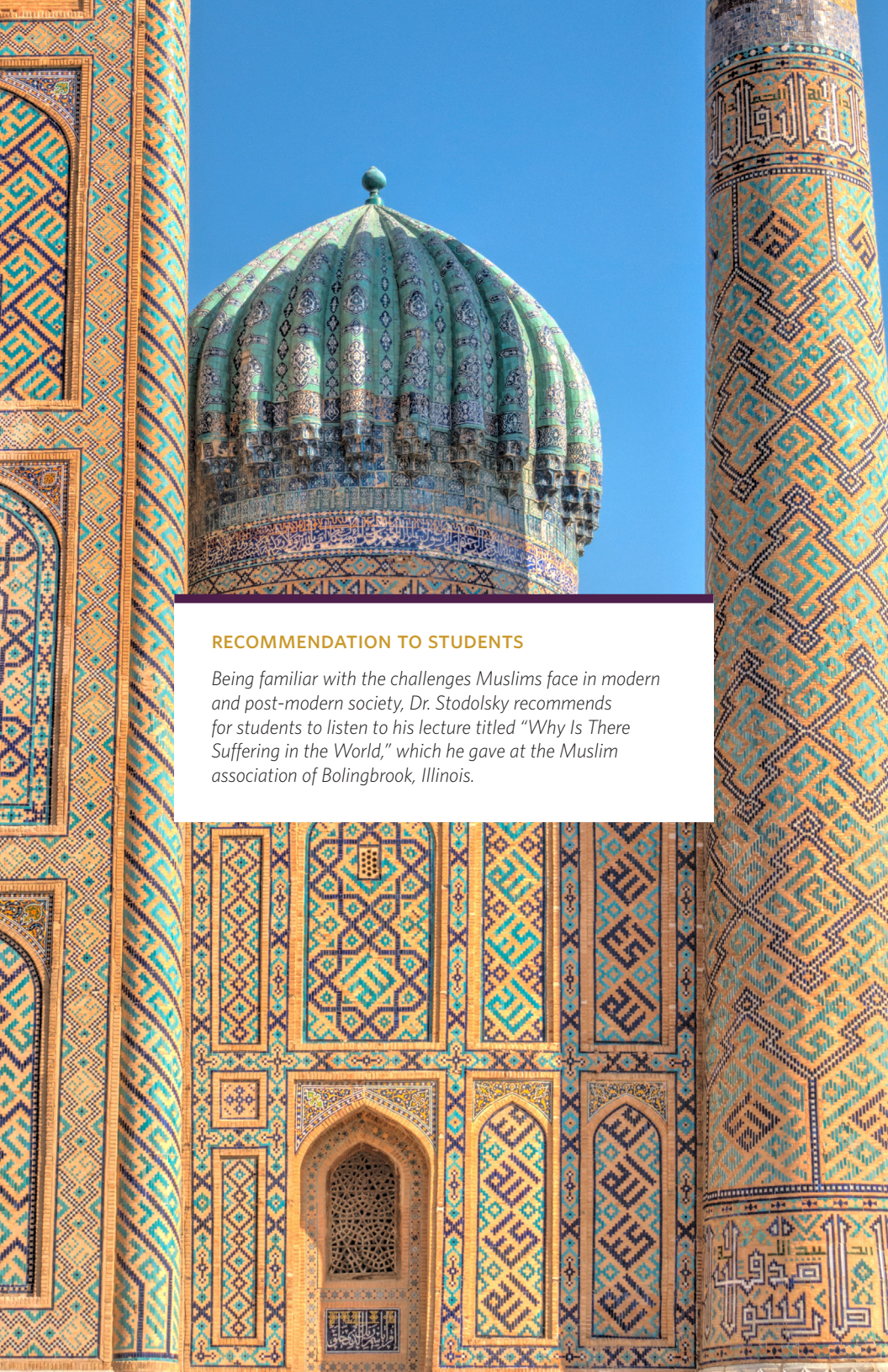
## FOREWORD

The faculty at Darul Qasim are an incredible wealth of knowledge. Their experiences are invaluable and their dedication is exemplary.

The persons you see that make up the faculty at this institution are not here by chance. They were hand-selected by Shaykh Amin Kholwadia to be the perfect fit for the pedagogical canon which they teach, and for the richness of the mastery that they bring to the table.

Each faculty member brings a unique angle to the subject matter they teach and research. We hope that this summary of their backgrounds serves as an introduction to you; highlighting the caliber of the esteemed teachers at our institution.

Our teachers did not materialize in a silo. Your path to knowledge should not be travelled alone either.



### RECOMMENDATION TO STUDENTS

*Being familiar with the challenges Muslims face in modern and post-modern society, Dr. Stodolsky recommends for students to listen to his lecture titled "Why Is There Suffering in the World," which he gave at the Muslim association of Bolingbrook, Illinois.*

# DR. MUHAMMED VOLKAN YILDIRAN STODOLSKY

- *Liaison, Theology Department*

## SPECIALITY

He is an instructor of Islamic law, legal reasoning, dialectic theology and Arabic syntax and linguistics.

## EDUCATION

### *Ph.D. and a Master's*

As a Beinecke fellow, he completed his M.Phil. degree in Classical and Medieval Islamic History at Oxford University. At the University of Chicago, he studied in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, completing an M.A. degree and his Ph.D. dissertation.

### *Bachelor's Degree*

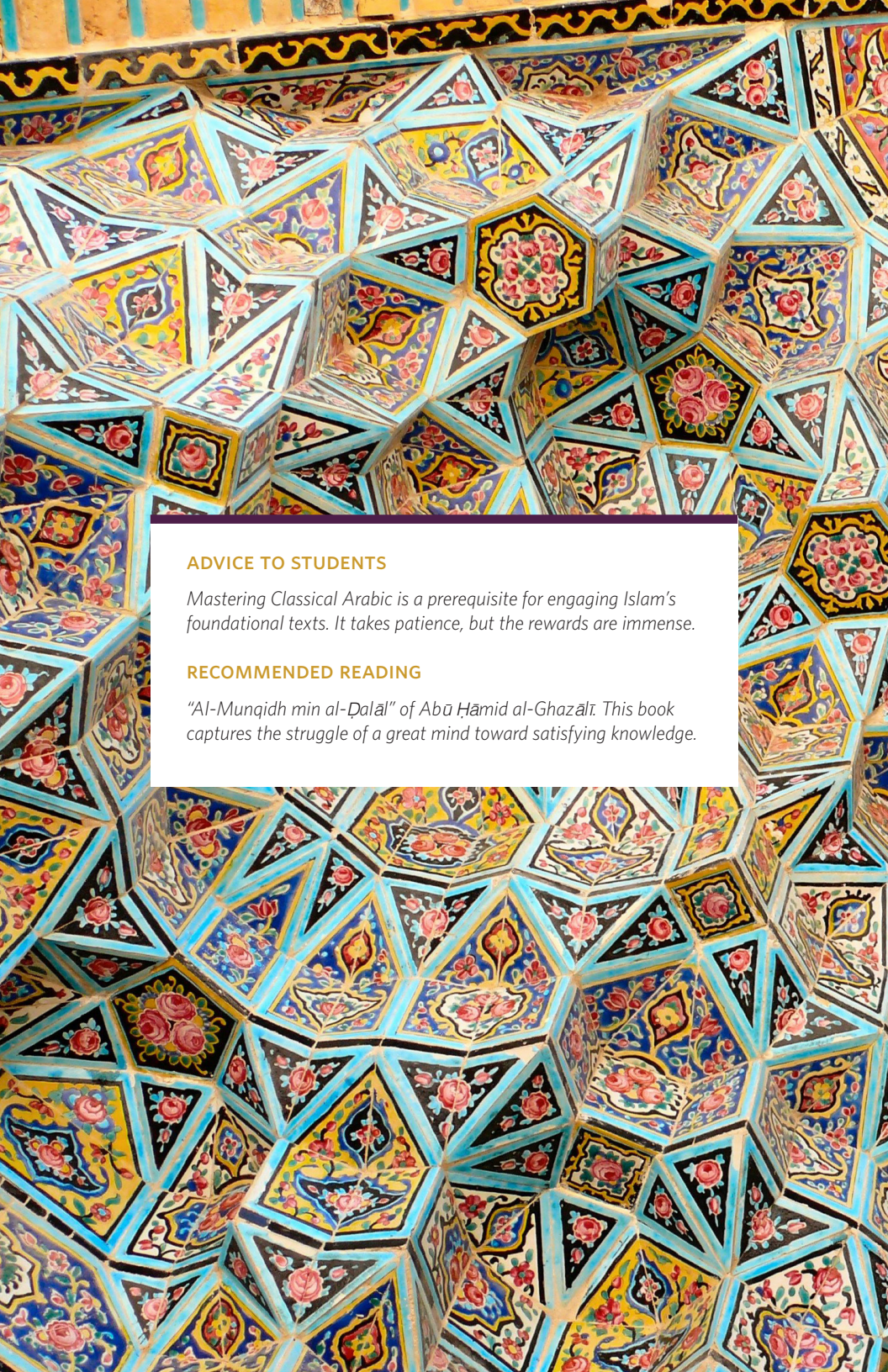
He received his undergraduate education at Bates College, graduating Summa Cum Laude with honors in History.

## TRAVELS & TEACHERS

He went to Syria as a Fulbright fellow to conduct research on the Ḥanafī school of Islamic law. Dr. Muhammed has studied classical Islamic texts with Arab, Turkish, and Indian scholars and is familiar with both the Ottoman and Nizami curricula. His teachers include Shaykhs Dr. Nūr al-Dīn ʿItr, Dr. Issam Eido, Ḥasan al-Hindī, and Muḥammad Naʿīm al-Araqūsī in Syria, Mehmet Savas, Ahmet Akin Cigman, Seyyid Ahmet Gezer, Seyyid Abdurrahman Balca, and Abdurrahman Ercan Elbinsoy in Turkey, and Shaykh Amin Kholwadia at Darul Qasim.

## FACULTY VIGNETTE

His vision is to educate students who know how to approach and benefit from reason, empirical knowledge, and revelation to improve themselves and the people they influence. Uniquely suited to teach Islamic theology from both the Islamic and Western perspectives, Dr. Stodolsky's courses in theology and law are popular amongst both students and Islamic studies graduates. Some of his courses include Introduction to Hadith & Islamic Law, Islamic Legal Methodology: Ifāḍat al-Anwār Sharḥ al-Manār I, and Advanced Readings in Islamic Dialectic Theology II.



#### ADVICE TO STUDENTS

*Mastering Classical Arabic is a prerequisite for engaging Islam's foundational texts. It takes patience, but the rewards are immense.*

#### RECOMMENDED READING

*"Al-Munqidh min al-Ḍalāl" of Abū Ḥamid al-Ghazālī. This book captures the struggle of a great mind toward satisfying knowledge.*



## DR. CHOUKRI HEDDOUCHI

- *Liaison, Arabic Department*
- *Dean of Student Affairs*

### SPECIALITY

He is an instructor of Arabic literature (*adab*), rhetoric (*balāghah*), advanced Arabic linguistics, and research methodology.

### EDUCATION

#### *Ph.D. and a Master's*

He studied at the University of Chicago's Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, with a specialization in the field of Anthropology. He also holds a Master's degree from Middle Tennessee State University, Department of History.

#### *Bachelor's Degree*

He studied at the Moroccan National Institute of Archaeology.

### BACKGROUND

Dr. Heddouchi was a lecturer of Arabic at the University of Chicago and has researched and published in the field of Islamic Archaeology, particularly in Egypt and West Africa, as well as medieval coinage in Sijilmasa, Morocco.

### FACULTY VIGNETTE

A lifelong student of Islam, he continues to pursue a study of the sacred sciences at Darul Qasim and is appreciated by students and colleagues for his profound humbleness in and out of the classroom as well as his amicable demeanor.



### ON TEACHING AT DARUL QASIM

*In all of my years of teaching, I have not found an environment more conducive to learning and teaching than at Darul Qasim. The self-motivated and genuinely curious students, the small classroom environment, the incredible facilities, and the overall openness of all members of the institution, from students to board and faculty, to be humble enough to sit at the feet of others and learn, makes Darul Qasim truly a House of Knowledge Distribution, a home away from home.*

# MAWLANA BILAL ALI ANSARI

- *Liaison, Hadith Department*
- *Academic Advisor*

## SPECIALITY

His research interests include early Hadith methodology and nomenclature, Ḥanafī legal theory, Education and curriculum development, Mental Health, and Islamic Bioethics. He currently teaches courses in Arabic, Islamic Law, and Hadith Studies.

## EDUCATION & TEACHERS

### *Advanced Studies*

Mawlana Bilal's experiences in Arabic and Islamic education span a variety of celebrated institutions of Islamic learning: Jāmi'at al-Ḥasanayn (Green Town, Faisalabad), Pakistan, Jāmi'at Dār al-'Ulūm (Korangi, Karachi), Jāmi'at al-'Ulūm al-Islāmiyyah (New Town, Karachi), and Darul Qasim.

### *Ijāzahs*

He has certification (ijāzah) in Hadith transmission from a prominent list of scholars: Mufti Muḥammad Taqī al-'Uthmānī, Mufti Muḥammad Rafī al-'Uthmānī, Mufti Maḥmūd Ashraf al-'Uthmānī, Mufti 'Abd al-Ra'ūf al-Sikharwī, Mawlana Iftikhār Aḥmad al-A'zamī, Khwāja 'Ubayd Allāh, Mawlana Salīm Allāh Khān, Mawlana Sarfarāz Khān Ṣafdar, Mawlana 'Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Sawātī, Mawlana Khān Muḥammad, Mawlana Faḍl al-Raḥmān al-A'zamī, and, finally, his research mentor Dr. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Nu'mānī (al-Chishtī), the critical Hadith scholar and doctor in Library and Information Sciences who supervised Mawlana Bilal's specialization-level research in Hadith studies.

### *Bachelor's Degree*

He studied Computer Engineering at the University of Illinois in Urbana, IL, and a received a BA in the Applied Behavioral Sciences from National-Louis University in Lisle, IL, with a focus on adult learning theory (andragogy).

## EXTERNAL ENDEAVORS

He co-founded the largest and first Islamically-integrated psychotherapy institution, Khalil Center, and has extensive experience as a non-profit manager, counselor, and religious consultant for mental health specialists.

### ADVICE TO STUDENTS

*A man without fiqh is a man without hands. Fiqh is the most “handy” discipline in Islamic studies.*

### INSPIRATION & RECOMMENDATION

العلم لا يعطيك بعضه حتى تعطيه كلك

*Knowledge will only give you a portion of it, if you give it all of yourself.*

*I recommend that students read “Ṣafaḥāt min Ṣabr al-‘Ulamā” by Shaykh ‘Abd al-Fattāḥ. As the path to knowledge is long, a student needs encouragement to continue pushing forward. Anecdotes of scholars and their struggles in pursuing knowledge refresh and rekindle the spirit of acquiring knowledge. The author is also an expert muḥaqqiq and, as in all of his works, brings priceless gems in the footnotes.*

## MUFTI HISHAM DAWOOD

- *Liaison, Islamic Law Department*

### SPECIALITY

Mufti Hisham Dawood is the liaison of the Islamic Law Department and also serves as a member of the Dār al-Iftā' at Darul Qasim.

### EDUCATION & TRAVELS

In addition to having memorized the Quran, Mufti Hisham studied Arabic and Islamic Studies at the Madrasah In'āmiyyah in Camperdown, South Africa and graduated from the 'Ālimiyyah program at Dārul 'Ulūm Zakariyyā in Johannesburg, South Africa.

### *Certifications*

He has certification in Hadith transmission from Mufti Riḍā' al-Ḥaqq and completed his iftā' studies at Dar al-Iftā' Maḥmūdiyyah under the mentorship of Mufti Ebrahim Desai and Mufti Husain Kadodia.

### FACULTY VIGNETTE

Mufti Hisham is known for his incredible retention of the particulars of Islamic law and his proficiency in the principles of the Ḥanafī legal methodology. His intuitive understanding of the Islamic legal tradition and his ability to recall minute rulings of the Ḥanafī school from memory make him uniquely suited to lead the Islamic Law Department at Darul Qasim.



### PATH TO KNOWLEDGE

*It was my time spent Tablighī Jamā'at for 2 months that got me motivated to study. There were several 'ulamā with me in that Jamā'at. Spending time in their company was the primary factor that let me to the path of Islamic Studies.*

### RECOMMENDED READINGS

*I would recommend students to read Islamic history. The scholars and their works were not created in a vacuum.*

# MUFTI EHZAZ AJMERI

- Lecturer, Islamic Law Department

## SPECIALITY

Mufti Ehaz Ajmeri is a lecturer in the Islamic Law Department at Darul Qasim and a member of Darul Qasim's Dār al-Iftā'. Having studied traditionally for 9 years, and then pursuing a BA and MA, his qualifications allow him to present classical issues in a contemporary manner.

## EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

He graduated from 'Ālimiyyah Arabic and Islamic studies at the Dār al-'Ulūm Zakariyyā in South Africa and received formal certification (*ijāzah*) to transmit Hadith from Mufti Riḍā' al-Ḥaqq. Mufti Ehaz has formal training in the field of *iftā'* (issuance of legal Islamic verdicts) under Mufti Ebrahim Desai at the Madrasah In'āmiyyah in Camperdown, South Africa. He has years of experience serving as a muftī and issuing legal verdicts for the Iftā' Department of Rahmat-e-Alam Foundation (Shariah Board of America), as well as experience serving the community as a masjid imam. He has over a decade of experience teaching the sacred sciences at various institutions of Islamic learning.

Mufti Ehaz has a Bachelors in Philosophy from Elmhurst College and a Masters in Middle Eastern Studies from the University of Chicago.

## FACULTY VIGNETTE

He is well-recognized as an energetic, passionate, and compassionate teacher whose tireless work ethic has allowed him to uniquely balance studies, teaching, and community service work. His interests include western philosophy and its intersections with Islam and Ottoman Intellectual History.



### ADVICE TO STUDENTS

*Purify your intentions and seek the knowledge of the dīn solely for Allah's pleasure. Try not to seek knowledge on any matter with a pre-formulated opinion. Always study and research the different proofs on any given issue first, and then allow that to form your opinion on it.*

### INSPIRATIONAL QUOTE

قال أبو عبيد القاسم بن سلام: بركة العلم عزوه لقاتله

*Which means that the barakah in knowledge comes with honestly and correctly attributing each and every statement to the person who said it. In short, barakah in knowledge comes with honesty. Part of honesty in knowledge is that you don't falsely attribute someone else's work or research to yourself.*



# MAWLANA ABDURREHMAN HAJI

- Lecturer, Hadith Department

## SPECIALITY

Mawlana Abdurrehman specializes in Hadith and the principles of the Hadith sciences (Uṣūl al-Ḥadīth).

## EDUCATION & TEACHERS

### *Advanced Studies*

He spent four years in post-graduate studies in Hadith specialization at the Jāmi‘at Mazāhir al-‘Ulūm in Sahāranpūr, India under the tutelage and guidance of Mawlana Muḥammad Yūnus al-Jawnpūrī.

### *Ijāzahs*

He also has multiple ijāzahs in Hadith transmission from prominent Hadith scholars, such as Mawlana Iftikhār al-Ḥasan al-Kāndhlawī and Mufti Aḥmad Ḥasan Khan Tonkī.

### *Early Studies*

He has completed the memorization of the Quran and completed ‘Ālimiyyah studies at Dar al-‘Ulūm al-Madania in Buffalo, New York and Dār al-‘Ulūm Canada in Chatham, Ontario.

## FACULTY VIGNETTE

He is recognized far and wide for his vast readings in the field of Hadith and his intimate knowledge of publications in the field. His passion for Hadith chain-study and proficiency in the science of Hadith narrator criticism make him an indispensable contributor to Hadith studies at Darul Qasim.



### ADVICE TO STUDENTS

*"The scholars are the heirs of the prophets. The prophets did not leave behind dīnars nor dirhams in inheritance. It was but knowledge that they left behind in inheritance."*

*(al-Dārimī, 342)*

# MAWLANA KAMIL UDDIN

- *Liaison, Quran Department*

## SPECIALITY

Mawlana Kamil Uddin is the primary *tafsīr* (Quranic exegesis) instructor at Darul Qasim and consultant for the Mawlana Anwar Shāh al-Kashmīrī Library Project.

## EDUCATION

Mawlana Kamil completed the memorization of the Quran and obtained a formal 'Ālimiyyah Degree (equivalent to a Master's degree) from the Institute of Islamic Education, Elgin, IL.

Mawlana Kamil also completed a BA in Organizational Leadership from Benedictine University.

### *Further Studies*

He is currently enrolled in an American Library Association (ALA) accredited Master of Library and Information Science program at Dominican University.

## INTERESTS & PUBLICATIONS

A journey that began with the memorization of the Quran, he has been studying the Quran in various capacities for nearly two decades. His special interest in *tafsīr* and *'ulūm al-Quran* (Quranic sciences and interpretive methodology) is coupled with a unique proficiency in teaching Arabic syntax (*naḥw*). Mawlana Kamil has published in the Integrated Encyclopedia of the Quran (IEQ) and has travelled internationally to present his research in Quranic studies.

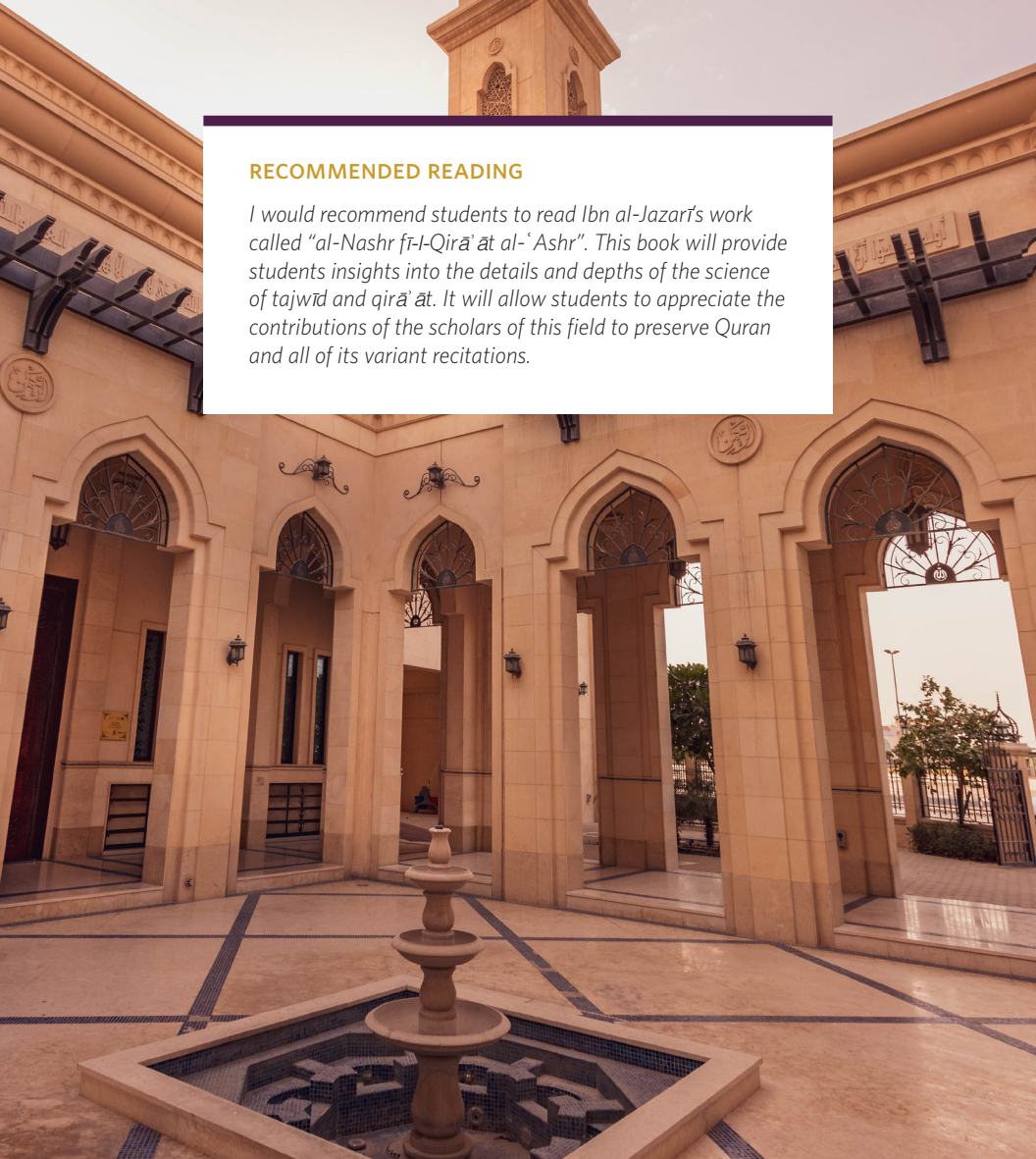
## FACULTY VIGNETTE

Mawlana Kamil is known and appreciated for his diligent work ethic, disciplined approach, and compassion as a teacher.



### RECOMMENDED READING

*I would recommend students to read Ibn al-Jazarī's work called "al-Nashr fī-l-Qirā'at al-'Ashr". This book will provide students insights into the details and depths of the science of tajwīd and qirā'āt. It will allow students to appreciate the contributions of the scholars of this field to preserve Quran and all of its variant recitations.*



# MAWLANA ARIF KAMAL

- Liaison, Quran Department

## SPECIALITY

He brings a unique passion for the Quranic sciences, particularly the art of Quran recitation (*tajwīd and qirā'ah*).

## EDUCATION & TEACHERS

Mawlana Arif Kamal began his journey of acquiring sacred knowledge at the Institute of Islamic Education (IIE) in Elgin, IL where he first memorized the Quran and completed the 'Ālim program.

### *Ijāzahs*

In addition to having memorized the Quran, he has long list of certifications (*ijāzāt*) in Quran recitation from today's celebrated masters, including *ijāzahs* in the recitation of Ḥafṣ from 'Aṣim in Ṭarīq al-Shāṭibiyyah from the Shaykh al-Qurrā' of Syria Kurayyim al-Rājīh, Shaykh Muṣṭafā Ṭulbā, Shaykh Walīd al-Manīsī, and Shaykh Mubashshir b. 'Abd al-'Azīz 'Uyūn al-Sūd, *ijāzahs* in Ḥafṣ from 'Aṣim in Ṭarīq al-Ṭayyibah from Shaykh Muṣṭafā Muftāḥ and Shaykh Walīd al-Manīsī, *ijāzah* in the ten recitations (*qirā'at 'asharah*) in Ṭarīq al-Shāṭibiyyah and Durrah (*Ṣughrā*) and Ṭarīq al-Ṭayyibah (*Kubrā*), a certification of excellent recitation (*shahādah ḥusn al-qirā'ah*) from the Shaykh al-Qurrā' of Egypt Aḥmad 'Isā al-Ma'ṣarāwī. He also has certification in the texts of *al-Jazariyyah* and *Tuḥfat al-Aḥfāl* from Shaykh Walīd al-Manīsī. He is currently completing individual *ijāzahs* in all of the *qirā'at* under Shaykh Ḥamid Aḥmad and in Ḥafṣ from 'Aṣim under Shaykh 'Abd Allāh al-Jār Allāh.

## FACULTY VIGNETTE

He is recognized for his untiring devotion to the Quran, his clear and precise recitation, his humility, and his willingness to accommodate any and all sincere students.



### INSPIRATION

*Mu'āwiyah (may Allah be well-pleased with him) once stated while addressing the people, "I heard the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) saying, "Whosoever Allah wills good for, He grants him comprehension of the faith. Verily, I am but a distributor (Qasim). Allah gives."*

*(al-Bukhārī, 71)*

## MAWLANA ASIF UDDIN

- Lecturer, Arabic Department and  
Islamic Law Department

### SPECIALITY

He studied numerous Islamic and Arabic sciences, namely; Arabic grammar, morphology, rhetoric, Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), Quranic exegesis (*tafsir*), prophetic narrations (*Hadith*), and Islamic theology (*'aqidah*). He is a primary lecturer for the Immersion Shaykh al-hind Program at Darul Qasim.

### EDUCATION & TEACHERS

Along with holding a degree from an 'Ālimiyyah program in Arabic and Islamic Studies (equivalent to a Master's degree) and memorizing the Quran at the Institute of Islamic Education, Elgin, IL, he also holds an undergraduate degree in Education from Benedictine University and has experience teaching in public schools.

#### *Ijāzahs*

Mawlana Asif additionally holds certification (*ijāzah*) in the Quranic recitation of Ḥafṣ from 'Āṣim and is currently pursuing further *ijāzahs* in Quranic recitation.

#### *Further Studies*

Driven by a passion for holistic health and nutrition, he is pursuing certification at the Institute for Integrative Nutrition (IIN) to become a Health Coach.

### EXTERNAL ENDEAVORS

Just as passionate about community service, Mawlana Asif serves as the youth coordinator at Al-Huda Youth and is regularly involved in leading youth-focused programming.



### INSPIRATION

*The Requisites of Knowledge:*

*A quick mind, zeal, poverty, foreign land,  
A Professor's inspiration, and of life a long span.*

*(Juwaini of Nishapur [d. 1085])*



## USTADH FIRAS ALKHATEEB

- *Lecturer, Humanities Department, Islamic Essentials Online Program  
& Islamic Studies For High School Students Program*

### **SPECIALITY**

Ustadh Firas Alkhateeb is a lecturer in the Humanities Department at Darul Qasim, and also serves as an instructor for the Essentials Online Program.

### **EDUCATION**

He holds a B.A. in History from the University of Illinois – Chicago and an M.A. in Middle Eastern Studies from the University of Chicago. He has High School teaching experience, having taught Islamic History at Universal School in Bridgeview, IL.

#### *Further Studies*

He is currently pursuing a PhD in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago, with a focus on Ottoman intellectual history and Islamic legal theory.

#### *Publications*

He is the author of *Lost Islamic History: Reclaiming Muslim Civilization from the Past*, a highly popular Islamic history book aimed at High School-aged readers that has been recommended by the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

### **FACULTY VIGNETTE**

Ustadh Firas's lectures on Western civilization, Islamic history, and comparative philosophy are favorites amongst students at Darul Qasim.

