

TESTIMONY 5

Testimony of the Shūrā Committee of
Salafi Centre in Manchester

**One of the oldest Marakiz in the
North of England.**

Witness of Salafi Center Shūrā

Regarding the Behaviour of Abu Mu'aadh Taqweem Aslam

In The Name of Allah, The Most Merciful, The Bestower of Mercy.

Introduction

For over two decades, members of the Shurah have had extensive dealings with Taqweem, with some knowing him for more than 20 years and others for at least 16-17 years. Our interactions with him have been far from superficial; rather, they have been marked by firsthand observations of numerous concerning behaviours some few years after his return from Saudi. These behaviours have not only been witnessed by members of the Shurah but also by others outside of it. Over time, a pattern of control, division, and discord has become increasingly evident, necessitating this document.

Control and Manipulation

The initial red flags regarding Taqweem surfaced when he began delivering lectures at Maktaba Salafiyyah. His enthusiasm was apparent, and given our longstanding relationship with him, we immediately noticed a change in his demeanour. He frequently remarked, "We

understand what's going on now" and "You all are just here in Manchester," i.e. he felt that he has become more connected and important than others.

By 2015, Taqweem's conduct had become increasingly troublesome. He started to undermine certain committee members while praising others. Initially, he worked well with Amjad and Faizal; however, he soon attempted to impose his views on their roles, believing them to be inexperienced. He expressed this opinion to Abdullah Jallow, who clarified that Faisal and Amjad, like all members, do not make independent decisions, instead they do consult the Shurah before proceeding. There were also occasions when Amjad and Faizal presented Taqweem's suggestions to the Shurah, which led to his frustration when they were not accepted. This was particularly notable given his lack of experience and decision-making authority, even though his involvement, along with that of other non-Members of the Shurah, was exclusively focused on collaborating upon Birr and Taqwah, and we did have plans to get him more involved in future.

Upon his return from Hajj, the situation deteriorated as he communicated to Abdullah Jallow his decision to cease collaboration with Amjad and Faizal, opting instead to work solely with Abdullah and Dawud. Abdullah responded by emphasizing that all members of the Shurah were entitled to consultation, asserting that regardless of his personal preferences, any chosen

representative would still need to seek input from the entire Shurah before finalizing any decisions. This reply only deepened Taqweem's dissatisfaction, leading him to further isolate individuals he regarded as less capable. Consequently, Abdullah deemed it essential to gently remind him that, similar to how not every student of knowledge is sought for advice on every matter, he too would not be consulted on every issue.

Social Media Use

Taqweem used the Masjid's Twitter to post refutations without the permission of the Masjid committee. One such instance involved him tweeting an image to criticize "Dawah Man" (Ali Dawah). When the committee decided to remove the tweet, he became angry, claiming he would not be "told what I can or cannot write." We clarified that while he was free to express himself personally, official Masjid accounts required committee oversight.

Moreover, he began to undermine and disrupt our initiatives at the Learn About Islam website and the Sunnah Radio broadcast channel, which, by the grace of Allah, continues to benefit individuals worldwide. He propagated unfounded allegations that Manchester was seeking to monopolize audio content. He claimed that the decision of certain Marakiz not to publish their audio content on Learn About Islam was made independently. However, this assertion has been

disproven and countered by committee members from Leeds/Bradford, who revealed that it was, in fact, an initiative promoted and spread by Taqweem.

The core concern is not whether recordings from other Marakiz should be shared on Learn About Islam. These centres initially aimed to enhance benefits and promote Dawah. However, Taqweem, along with his existing hostility towards Faisal and Amjad—who managed Learn About Islam—exploited this situation. His unfounded suspicions regarding monopolization provided him with an opportunity to utilise the trust placed in him elsewhere and create division among brothers who were collaborating without any hidden agendas.

Accusing the Masjid

Taqweem further displayed arrogance by ridiculing masjid decisions, particularly regarding fiqh issues, such as the placement of the minbar and the practice of combining prayers during hot summer months. Initially he shared his views in a group with members of the shura, however when the committee: Abul Farooq Kamal, Shaikh Dawud, Faisal and Abdullah chose not to follow his opinion, he accused the committee of making things too easy and weakening the community. This despite the fact that these decisions were based on fatawa and advice of scholars such as Al-Allamah Hassan al Banna and Al-Allamah Ubaid Bin Abdillah Al-Jabiri

(rahimahumullah). Al-Allamah Hasan on his visit to Manchester in the summer, explicitly commented on the circumstances first hand, *"it makes sense, look outside, and look at the time."*

Being An Obstacle

Taqweem deliberately created barriers and division within various Salafi communities by misrepresenting facts and distorting intentions.

Bolton Incident

We supported the Bolton masjid by setting up their website, covering hosting fees, and providing access to our broadcast channels. However, Taqweem falsely claimed that Manchester was attempting to control Bolton's audio content. **Statements from trustworthy individuals such Dr. Omer (involved in Bolton Da'wah) confirmed it was Taqweem who initiated this to disrupt co-operation and portraying us as having questionable intentions.**

Al-Sabeel Leeds Incident

Taqweem distorted the facts and falsely claimed that we were "stealing" audios, **misleading others and seeking to sow distrust between us and Al-Sabeel.**

Cardiff Conference Incident

Taqweem's unfounded evil suspicions extended to Cardiff. When the brothers there requested help setting

up their sound system for a conference, Faizal and Dr. Omer traveled to assist. However, Taqweem, fearing we would let them use Sunnah Radio, instructed Muhammed Somali to investigate our “intent.” This was despite the arrangement being made weeks in advance to help Cardiff establish its own broadcast channel which is why we went and ended up setting up..

Bradford Incident

We were informed of Taqweem’s continued efforts to spread suspicion and mock our masjid by a senior member of the Bradford community. We subsequently held a meeting with the Bradford brothers to clarify misconceptions, exposing Taqweem’s divisive actions.

Nelson Incident

In August 2016, during Shaykh Uways’ visit, the Manchester shurah and Taqweem from Nelson had organized a clear itinerary. However, shortly before the visit, the Nelson brothers suddenly rescinded our invitation to attend the dinner gathering, an act we suspected and later confirmed to be Taqweem's decision by Abu Ismaeel Shuhood, resident of Nelson and close companion at the time,. Later, upon realizing that we would inform Shaykh Uways of this abrupt change, Taqweem reversed his stance, allowing us to attend. His attempts to create division in Nelson followed his usual pattern of fostering distrust. By that time, it was clear he had turned the Nelson brothers against us, as one of

them mocked Amjad, saying, “I thought you were the mature one.” In summary, we could clearly see that Taqweem’s behaviour, especially after we stopped him from imposing his views on us, consistently followed a troubling pattern.

Bullying and Intimidation

Taqweem repeatedly used intimidation tactics to enforce his will on Dr. Omer, who was actively assisting in uploading lectures and helping with technical aspects of broadcasting. As a proactive member of the Salafi community, Dr. Omer contributed not just to Bolton but also to Manchester and other maraakiz. This made him a target for Taqweem, who viewed his efforts as a challenge to his own influence. Taqweem resorted to threats and bullying, labelling Dr Omer as "difficult" and "rude." Taking this further, he summoned Dr. Omer to a meeting with the Bolton shurah. Recognizing this for what it was—an ambush designed for interrogation, attacks, and mockery—we strongly advised Dr. Omer against attending. After seeking advice, he refused to engage. This inappropriate conduct, which is uncharacteristic of a student of knowledge, stemmed from Dr. Omer's delay in removing the audio files that Taqweem requested to be taken down. Dr. Omer was informed that action would only be taken upon direct orders from the Marakiz, necessitating a wait for their instructions. Taqweem was understandably upset, as he wished to be the primary authority on the matter.

Furthermore, additional delays in the removal of other audio files occurred due to Dr. Omer's demanding schedule as a physician. Dr. Omer has already provided a statement regarding this situation.

Opinionated

He dismissed the observations made by committee members concerning the community's needs, arrogantly asserting, as someone who is only present in the city on lesson days, that he possesses a better understanding of these needs than those who live and work there regularly. A notable instance of this occurred when two young girls left their homes to join ISIS, with individuals in the city actively encouraging this behaviour. We proposed that this situation warranted clarification and discussion, and we asked if he could address this serious matter. However, our suggestion was rejected, and we were informed that only he understands the community's needs, despite his limited engagement, attending only once a week from outside.

Going Against His Own Statements

He contradicted his previous statements and positions. He would claim that he did not need to be invited to events where elder du'aat were present, stating he would take a break when senior speakers were available. However, when the Shurah took him at his word and did not include him in certain conferences, he complained to many that he had been sidelined. A notable incident

occurred during a one-day conference where six senior du'aat were invited, and despite the logistical challenges, the schedule was adjusted to accommodate them all. Taqweem, who had previously insisted that he did not need to be included in such gatherings, became enraged that he was not invited and claimed he was being deliberately excluded. His reaction was contradictory to his prior statements, showing that his primary concern was personal validation rather than community benefit.

Mockery

Taqweem frequently mocked Shurah members in his lessons, belittling individuals much older than him. One elder, approximately 20 years his senior, often attended his lessons despite a physically demanding job. However, Taqweem made disparaging remarks about him sitting at the back of the room. This led young attendees to view the elder with disdain.

On another occasion, upon seeing a Shurah member enter the masjid, he sarcastically remarked, "Here come the main men of dawah." Similarly, when an elder moved his car to allow someone else to leave, Taqweem mockingly announced, "Everyone get a good look," further belittling him.

There are further examples of this, but this will suffice the sincere reader.

The Fitnah of Hajuri and the Hajaawirah

When the fitnah of Hajuri and the Hajaawirah arose, Manchester was heavily affected as there were vocal supporters of Hajuri spreading falsehoods and speaking ill of noble scholars such as Shaykh Rabee and Shaykh Ubayd.

The Shurah decided that it was necessary to clarify this matter to the masses using the speech of the scholars. When we approached Taqweem to address the issue from the minbar, he refused. This was despite the fact that Shaykh Rabee and other major scholars had already refuted Hajuri and his harmful ideology. Consequently, two members of the Shurah took it upon themselves to compile the necessary information and publicly refute Hajuri's falsehoods. The response from the community was overwhelmingly positive, as people were grateful for the clarification, which removed many doubts.

Preventing of Dawah and Ustadh Abu Arwa Ali Mir from Giving Lessons

When Abu Arwa Ali moved to Nelson, we proposed that he give lectures in Manchester on Fridays, recognizing his potential to benefit the community. However, Taqweem immediately dismissed this suggestion, which raised suspicions, and upon further inquiry, it became evident that Taqweem had influenced Ali to decline our invitation. When Abu Arwa later began his lessons in Nelson, Amjad asked him on behalf of the Shurah to

start fortnightly classes; it transpired that Taqweem had insisted Ustaadh Ali to sit in the front row of his lesson in Nelson instead to be an example for others, despite Ali initially agreeing to teach in Manchester. His actions directly deprived the community of an opportunity to gain knowledge from a capable teacher simply because it did not align with his views.

Conclusion

Indeed, although Taqweem's conduct became increasingly intolerable, we chose to allow him to continue teaching, prioritizing the importance of the dawah and unity over our personal sentiments. In the past, we have sought guidance from our senior teachers, who have consistently counselled us to exercise patience and forbearance, and to acknowledge Taqweem's rights as a student. We made efforts to uphold these rights; however, such rights do not extend to behaviour that involves maligning, attacking, ridiculing, mocking, or creating divisions, nor to exhibiting disrespect towards those who are older or those who have contributed to Dawah before him. Furthermore, Shaikh Abu Khadeejah had once proposed that we include Taqweem in our Masjid Committee. However, recognizing his challenging demeanour and difficulty in being accommodating on certain issues, we communicated to Shaikh Abu Khadeejah (Allah preserve him) that he was unsuitable for a committee position. We ask Allah to reward Abu Mu'aadh with good for the time he

dedicated to teaching at Salafi Centre. However, due to the deterioration of his circumstances and his actions that are leading to division, we have made the independent decision to remove him from our platforms. May Allah guide him towards what is better and protect all of us from harm Ameen..

Alhamdulillah, for nearly two decades, some accomplishments have been realized. These include the provision of Quran and Arabic lessons, the establishment of a Tuition Club aimed at educating children aged 4 to 18, which helps safeguard their fitra. Additionally, various activities have been organized for children and youth to foster their connection to the masjid, as well as outreach efforts directed towards new Muslims and emerging Salafis, linking them to the teachings of the scholars and knowledgeable students from both the East and the West.

This document is agreed upon by all of the Masjid Committee namely:

26/05/24

Abu Khalid Dawud

Abul Farooq Kamal

Abu Mu'aawiyah Abdullah Jallow

Abu Eesa Faizal Kara

Abu Aa'isha Amjad Khan