

## AL-ISLAAH PUBLICATIONS

## Part 1

Discourses of Hazrat Maseehullah Khan Saheb(R.A.): FOR FRIENDS Part 1

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## 1. FOREWORD

A series of discourses of Maseehul Ummat Hadhrat Maulana Maseehullah Khan Saheb have been recorded on tape. His unique approach to our Deen in this day and age, make these discourses invaluable to that Muslim who wishes to live a life seeking the Pleasure of Allah Ta'ala.

A number of people have felt that there is a great need for these discourses to be available to the English reader. This humble servant has made an attempt at translating one such discourse from the Urdu. InshaAllah, attempts will be made with other discourses as well. The phrase that comes to mind is, "fools rush in where angels fear to tread."

The dictionary meanings of "dost" is "friend; lover". Which is applicable? Thinking about it, both are applicable.

In a lifetime of service to the Ummat, Hadhratjee has made untold friends In the Indo-Pak subcontinent as well as in other parts of the world. The word "friend" would apply here.

In the special terminology of the Sufi, "dost" is that person who is treading the Path of Suluk. Being in love with Allah Taala, this person has sought out the Real Lovers of Allah Ta'ala, the Auliya-Allah, to get closer to the Loved One. In this sense, the meaning of "lover" is applicable.

Hadhratjee once pointed out an interesting fact: Every Muslim has love for Allah Ta'ala and His Rasul (Sallallahu alaihi wa Sallam), this love coming to the fore whenever an attack is made on the Deen. In this sense, the title "Dosto ke liye..." for these discourses, is appropriate for the whole Ummat.

(Not related to the title, may I slip in a word of thanks and say "jazakallah" to those friends who prompted, encouraged and assisted in this publication.)

Dr.I.M.

## 2.INTRODUCTION

Hadhrat Maulana Maseehullah Khan Saheb (barakatohum) needs no introduction. Hadhratjee, as most people have come to call him, is the founder of the Darul-Ulum in Jalalabad, U.P., India. Many are the Ulema who have graduated from his Darul-Ulum, from India as well as different parts of the world. However, it is as a Sheikh of Tariqat in the field of Tasawwuf that Hadhratjee has benefited the Ummat to an unfathomable extent.

In Jalalabad, surrounding the courtyard of the Madressah Masjid, are some sixteen rooms. Originally built for casual visitors, over the years this area has come to be known as the "Khanqa". - a residence for those involved in their self - rectification.

An important part of the programme of self-rectification is attendance at the majlis. It is thus, essential to understand what a majlis is. The word "majlis" is translated as "assembly/committee". In our context it refers to the gathering which a Sheikh arranges and addresses: "Majlis" refers to the gathering and also to the discourse delivered. A Sheikh will have three types of majalis (pl. of majlis) - majlise-am, which is for the general body of Muslims; majlise-khas, which is for the benefit of a selected group; majlise-akhas, which is attended by a few selected, specially privileged elite'. Those in the Khanqa are expected to attend the majlise-am and the majlise-khas.

(The discourse that follows is a translation of a majlise-khas).

### THE SUBJECT OF A MAJLIS

At a waiz (lecture) a specific subject is taken and discussed in detail. A majlis differs in that no specific subject is chosen. The Sheikh speaks "off the cuff" and the topics will cover a wide spectrum. The main aim is islah - the improvement of those that are attending. The discourse will vary from day to day, in subject matter as well as level of discussion. (The titles of the majalis have been chosen by me and reflect the general theme only.)

It is not unusual to hear topics discussed so simply that even non-Muslims may understand. On the other hand, with the presence of doctors, lawyers, engineers, university professors, students and Ulema, the level of talk can be so elevated that not all those attending will understand what is being said.

The rule that applies is: digest and assimilate what you do understand, and leave the rest till later:

Topics discussed are not purely "theological". Islam covers every aspect of life; and every aspect of living has to be according to the Shariat. Therefore, guidance from the Sheikh is on any and every aspect of life as it affects the Muslim.

### METHOD.

Although the Sheikh speaks "off the cuff", each sentence is full of meaning, and completely relevant. The Sheikh will encourage, he will guide, he will correct - through qissas, through reason - quoting Quran and Hadith, never by taking the names of those present. For maximum benefit, each individual present must have the attitude that the Sheikh is addressing him personally.

Hadhratjee aims to remove apathy, to provoke thought and contemplation. An appeal is made to the individual's reason and logic. He is encouraged to adopt those thought processes that will cause him to become self-motivated. Only when the individual allows the lid of stifling apathy to be removed will he be able to soar into those realms which are so fascinating as to have caused Kings to give up their worldly Kingdoms!!

#### WHO WILL BENEFIT?

Two groups of people will definitely benefit:

In the FIRST GROUP are those who have faith and confidence in the speaker. They know that their Sheikh is a Sheikh-e-Kamil and will speak only what is Haq. They realise that application of his advice will definitely cause an improvement in themselves.

In the SECOND GROUP are those who attend with open minds. They have no preconceived ideas, nor prejudices, but will listen and think over what is said, and accept what is logical and right, what is Haq.

A THIRD GROUP will not benefit at all. In this group are those who listen to criticize, those who are prejudiced and will not allow what is being presented to change their attitude.

#### PREPARATION

The basic preparation is to open one's mind and one's heart for the Haq to enter. Any one majlis will have sufficient material to benefit anybody irrespective of who he is. Obviously, the more familiar one is with the subjects discussed, the greater the benefit. Kitabs recommended are: "Good Character", Shariat and Tasawwuf", and "Hayaatul Muslimeen"\*. For maximum benefit these kitabs have to be read at least three times. This applies to the majalis as well. Those who understand Urdu, will benefit more by reading the latter two kitabs in the original Urdu. At this point let me add that the translation of the majlis that follows is not an exact word for word translation. A minimal amount of editing has taken place to ensure a reading style that is smooth. Obviously, the spoken word is more effective, more charming and more vibrant than the written word. Apologies for not being able to get these features across. Not to break the beauty of these discourses completely, a maximum of relevant original terms have been maintained instead of using the English equivalents. Those familiar with the subject will appreciate this fact. Those not familiar are encouraged to familiarize themselves with these words to enjoy these discourses to the fullest extent. A glossary has also been included.

Finally...

...may Allah Ta'ala give you and me the tawfiq to make amal on these teachings

Dr.I.M.

## TARTIB OF SULUK

We have been sent here, into this world, to be in business (tijarat) for the Akhirat. Whatever activity we are involved in here falls in the category of tijarat for the Akhirat.

The supporting ayet of the Qur'an is:

"And I have not created the Jinn and Mankind but that they should worship Me". (Surah 51, Ayet 56)

It is clear that Allah Ta'ala has brought us into this world for the sole purpose of making His ibadat, and for no other purpose whatsoever! It follows that our lifestyles - all aspects of our daily lives - are subordinate to, and related to, the Akhirat.

It then follows that the laws and rules relating to the Akhirat automatically apply to our lives here, and **WHEN OUR LIVING OR LIFESTYLE IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THESE RULES, OUR WHOLE EXISTENCE IS NOW IBADAT.**

Now, we have a stomach, which is housed in a physical body. The stomach requires food and the body requires clothing and shelter. The means for attaining these requirements are various - agriculture, industry, commerce, professional services, employment, etc. To fulfill our bodily needs, these worldly activities are necessary.

There appears to be a paradox: on the one hand we have been made dependent on these worldly activities, and, on the other hand, the command given to us is that our sole activity should be ibadat. The explanation is that fulfilling our bodily needs for the purpose of ibadat makes the means adopted also ibadat.

This means that the activities listed above - agriculture, industry, etc. will consequently be counted as ibadat.

As an individual, what does all this mean to you? Involvement in any enterprise, whether in one's individual capacity or whether in partnership with others, means interaction with others. Associating with others becomes unavoidable. Different individuals have different temperaments. To be able to deal with different personalities, to be able to avoid friction with people of different temperaments, the most important factor is one's personality.

In order to cope with various situations a good character is essential - a personality that will know how to respond to different conditions in the correct manner.

It should not happen that flaws in one's character disrupt the smooth running of one's affairs. It is obvious that greed and avarice, or pride and arrogance, will result in eventual disunity - such qualities are bound to cause friction and disharmony.

Having understood the importance of good morals (i.e. a good character) in our worldly activities involving association with others, we can now proceed further:

The ibadat that one is involved in falls into two categories:

i) mutaallaq bil zahir (connected with the external e.g. namaz, roza, etc.)

ii) muta'allaq bil batin (connected with the internal, with one's character). We are accountable for both.

Of the two, ibadat bil batin, first, has to be established before ibadat bil zahir. By doing this one will attain tranquility, steadfastness and permanence in one's ibadat bil zahir, and also gushu and guzu.

#### WHAT IS GUSHU?

Gushu is, to avoid bringing thoughts of anything except Allah Taala into ones heart deliberately during ones ibadat. Note the emphasis on the word deliberately (igtiari). Those thoughts that are gair-igtiari (come involuntarily) are of no consequence.

It is not only in namaz that gushu is essential, but the concept of gushu is that at all times the heart should be free of gairullah, that thoughts not connected with Allah Taala should not be brought to mind deliberately.

This is the original occupation of the heart - Huzure Haq: to be aware of the Presence of Allah Ta'ala at all times.

Many still have the wrong concept that gushu is essential only in namaz. Added to this is the misconception that only namaz is ibadat.

However, the Momin, that person imbued with Iman, bears the responsibility for performing all ibadat. As explained already, our sole purpose In this world is the ibadat of Allah Taala.

Namaz is the zahiri ibadat of the body, but a more important ibadat is the ibadat of the heart. This batini ibadat of the heart is to have the Presence of Allah Ta'ala in the heart at all times. This is a basic, primary ibadat.

Linked with this ibadat of the heart are other forms of ibadat. It follows that all activity carried out with this primary ibadat firmly established in the heart, will all be counted as ibadat. Now there will be reality in the purpose of one's existence, namely, that we have been brought into existence for the sole purpose of the ibadat of Allah Ta'ala.

All the necessary branches and off-shoots of our lives will then be connected to ibadat, whether it is agriculture or commerce, the practice of medicine or law, teaching or lecturing, writing or publishing.

This being the case, the primary pre-requisite before undertaking these activities is attaining the necessary Ilm (knowledge). Whether one works alone or with others in a group, one has to know the Shari laws and rules related to that particular activity.

The very fact that we are Muslim, makes it compulsory for us to gain knowledge. This is a Muslim's primary duty. The knowledge that he has to seek is that of the Shar'i laws and rules. which is called Ilm. The attainment of Ilm is also ibadat. Any person who becomes a Muslim and Momin has to undertake this essential and compulsory ibadat in the first instance. Without Ilm - without this pre-required ibadat - no other ibadat performed will be completely correct, and any ibadat not performed correctly has no chance of being accepted!

How important is this acquisition of IIm? This can be gauged from the following: On occasions of Jihad not all the Sahaba (R.A.) were permitted to proceed into battle at once. (The exception being those situations where there were general hostilities - nafeere am):

The Quranic ayet states: (Surah 9 Ayet 122)

This ayet instructs that one jamat from amongst you (the Sahaba R.A.) should go forth in Jihad and one jamat should remain behind with Rasullullah (Sallallahu alaihi wa Sallam) for the purpose of attaining IIm.

When the first jama't returns then they should be taught.

In emphasizing the importance of IIm, the ayet also lays down an important principle:

Actions are of two categories: firstly, the removal of harm, and secondly, the gaining of benefit. The principle laid down is that the process of removal of harm takes priority over the gain of benefit. To avoid injury, to remove those things which are harmful, to save oneself from injurious items, comes first. Then only should one turn to what is beneficial.

In other words, firstly remove the bad things from oneself, those things which are filthy and offensive. Then adorn oneself with good. Here is an illustration: If you wish to fill an empty hauz (pond) with clean water, you will first make sure that it contains no filth, nothing malodorous. You will make sure that it has no holes nor defects in it, any fault that will cause the water to leak away.

You will take care to clean the hauz properly, repair the cracks, and then only will you fill it with clean water.

This is a common-sense method, an instinctive, natural way of going about the work.

When it comes to our Deeni affairs, the same method applies. When preparing for ibadat, one will have to look closely at oneself: are there re defects within, no such offensive matters that will prevent good from entering? If not, are there no such factors that will cause the good that has entered from seeping away?

Obstructing factors are of two types: firstly, those that impede good from entering; and secondly, those that dissipate the good already present.

What are these obstructive factors? In one's batin these are the Akhlaqe razilah, also called Akhlaqe zamimah - the debasing qualities in a character. These debasing qualities are ingrained. The aim is to control and discipline them in such a way as to avoid their wrong usage.

(Surah 91 Ayet 8)

The Akhlaqe razilah are obstructing factors, factors that prevent good from coming into a person.

These factors have to be removed first, then only can there be any consistency in the good one is aiming at. What is "good"? It is ibadat.

The aim is to establish zahiri a'mal. The method is that which has been outlined already.

At this point an important axiom has to be borne in mind. This is: that person whose zahir only is good, and his batin is bad, is better than that person whose batin is good and his zahir is bad. This is from the Shariat point of view. This will be explained.

In other words, that person who carries out the external commands of the Shariat only, and his internal character is defective, is better than that person whose character appears to be excellent, but he does not carry out the external orders of the Shariat.

The reason that the first person is considered to be better is that, at least, he has respect for the Orders of Allah Ta'ala. This awe and respect that motivates him make all the difference!

Secondly, baring deeper, that person whose character appears to be excellent but does not carry out the zahiri orders of the Shariat, is, in actual fact, rotten in his batin as well.

This point requires further elucidation:

A bad character is recognized as such even by the kafir. Ask any kafir about takabbur, about hirs and tama', about gussah, about hiqd and keenah, and he will also tell you that these are bad qualities to have in one's character. The differentiation from a kafir will not show except in one's zahiri activities.

The question arises: What is the difference in the good character of a kafir and a Mo'min, if both appear to have a good character? The difference is that the kafirs good character has been attained through simple intellectual reasoning. What his reason has told him is bad, he has eliminated. The Momin, on the other hand, has gone through a process of tazkiyah of his nafs and ended with a good character. The motivation in his case has been nisbat m'allah - a special bond with Allah Ta'ala. The Mo'min has khauf of Allah Ta'ala, a quality conspicuously absent in the kafir.

The kafir with a "good" character will not get into a rage because his intellect and reason tell him it is bad. The Mo'min differs in that his motivation is the firm belief that Allah Ta'ala is Hazir- Nazir (Omnipresent and Omniscient). To this Momin this concept is not just theoretical but a tangible bond affecting his behaviour.

Another point: a persons reasoning can be faulty. Any conclusions arrived at purely from reason - as is the method adopted by the kafir -cannot be taken as valid. Only if there is a Shariat basis for that conclusion will it be valid.

This applies to character as well. A character that is termed "good" purely on reason is not necessarily good. Only that character can be labelled "good" where the Momin has cleansed himself of the akhlaq razilah, based on nisbat mallah, which means that his behaviour will be according to the Shariat.

This answers the question that arose after stating the important rule that that person whose zahir is good but not his batin, is better than that person whose batin appears to be good but not his zahir.

(Obviously, a person whose zahir and batin are both good is better than both.)

When it is said that the zahir is good, it means that his zahir is according to the Shariat as far as ibadat is concerned, as far as muasharat is concerned, as far as mu'amalat is concerned, even though he may have takabbur (which only Allah Taala can gauge).

On the other hand, the statement that a person has no takabbur, but his zahir is bad, is contradictory. In truth, if a person had no takabbur then this would automatically manifest in his zahir being good also!

Take an example:

Somebody comes from behind and gives this person a thump on his back with a closed fist. This person ignores the thump, carries on with what he is doing, and does not even glance back to see who hit him. He has no takabbur, haqiqatan.

Take somebody else. He is also similarly thumped on his back. He responds by turning round, a stern expression on his face, and angrily rebuking the person who hit him.

This reaction betrays him. His humble attitude in front of others was mere social politeness. This reaction of his shows that the absence of takabbur was only apparent, and not real - suratan, not haqiqatan.

Why did he not maintain his composure? At the time that he was thumped, his true colours showed. Why did he flare up? Why did the expression on his face show displeasure? Why did anger show and unbecoming expressions issue from his lips?

Why did he not recognise the opposite party and the occasion? Did he not see that it was his principal, his superior? Did he not recognise that his position demanded that he speak politely?

His angry reaction betrays the fact that all the akhlaq razilah have not been completely removed.

Another example:

Somebody has personal problems. Now for someone to go around trying to get details of his problems from others, and then spread these items of gossip shows that one is still lacking. One has not yet developed that talluq mallah in ones heart that is the desired state - even though in ones zahir one may have a beard, wear a kurta and ijar, one may even be a hafiz or alim!

These are simple illustrations - illustrations to show-up takabbur and gheebat.

What is noteworthy about gheebat, is that the backbiter is continually committing sins all the time that he is involved in gheebat. Compare his situation with that person committing an act of zina (fornication): his sin lasts for the duration of the act only. Also, the evil act of zina is condemned by all. Quite rightly so, but what about gheebat because gheebat is worse than zina!

The Quran shareef is quite emphatic:

(Surah 49 Ayet 12)



"Do not spy on one another and do not back-bite..." Knowing full well the gravity of the sin of gheebat, yet you are still involved in it?!

So, firstly those internal, obstructive factors have to be cleared up. This is to be done in the correct and proper manner - not in terms of social politeness, but in the proper Shariat sense.

The next step is to assimilate the akhlaq hamidah. With the akhlaq razilah removed, the personality will now shine forth and emit grace and elegance, beauty and adornment.

If this method is NOT followed, the result is an odd mixture of the akhlaq razilah and hamidah. Saddled with contradictory qualities, how can there be grace and elegance? There can be no adornment. The whole situation is faulty.

Let me ask a question: When is ittar applied? The obvious answer is that ittar is applied when one's clothes have been washed and cleaned, when the dust and dirt have been removed, and the sweaty smell has been cleared. When one's clothes come back neatly ironed and pressed, then only is ittar applied. Now do you understand?

Similarly, the batin has to be cleaned. How? By an abundance of "istigfar" - which has many facets (to be detailed later). With the batin cleansed, now is the occasion for durud shareef - now will the durud shareef show its full effect.

Istigfar is analogous to cleansing and durud shareef is analogous to the application of ittar. Is there any sense in reciting durud shareef but not istigfar?

Istigfar has several aspects. Istigfar, in the context of self-rectification (islah), has a methodology. We have already mentioned the inspection of one's batin. One also has to inspect one's zahir:

From the age of puberty one became mukallaf - the responsibility of following the Shariat was laid on one's shoulder. From the age of 14 or 15 years certain a mal became incumbent on one. Take stock. See if there are any deficiencies in these amal.

The first stage to tackle as far as one's zahiri amal are concerned, is namaz. The performance of namaz five times daily, became compulsory on reaching puberty. This is why children should be encouraged to perform namaz from the age of 7 years.

We are even enjoined to inflict physical punishment in this respect at the age of 10 years. So that, by the time a child reaches the age of puberty,

The performance of namaz is ingrained and natural, part of the child's tabiyet. He will not neglect his namaz.

Roza (fasting) also becomes compulsory at the age of puberty. Unlike namaz, roza is not a daily function, but is compulsory only during the month of Ramadhân annually. There is no emphasis of inculcating the habit of fasting at an early age, as is the case with namaz.

Tartib - methodology - is our main theme. Let us re-iterate this tartib. When Realisation strikes a person; when the fear and dread of Qiyamah has entered the heart; when he has become aware of a

t'alluq m'allah, at this crucial time he should inspect himself and take stock of his situation: "Have I not neglected some huquq?" is the question he should be asking.

Neglected huquq will have to be compensated for. The act of taubah will wipe out sins but not neglected huquq. These have to be compensated for.

For example: A person may have committed zina. or he may have succumbed to the shameful act of drinking liquor. Both of these acts do not involve huquq. A sincere, proper taubah will cause these sins to be forgiven, and the person can forget about his misdeeds.

Not so with namaz. This involves huquq. Missed namaz is not overlooked, even after taubah. Missed namaz have to be performed. The person has to do a simple calculation. For example, he has to say to himself: "I attained puberty at the age of 15 years. I was negligent till the age of 30 years, when I became punctual. Thus, I have missed out 15 years' namaz. He now has to compensate for these years of neglect.

This is the correct method. Many people have made taubah and thereafter become regular with their namaz, but they give no thought to compensating for what they have missed. Dirt still remains. Clean-up this dirt. How? By performing qadha namaz of those missed. An easy method is to perform one qadha namaz each time one performs a regular namaz. Repeat only the fard of the missed namaz. Leave out the sunnat and nafl namaz, but include the wit r with the Esha 'qadha.

It is important to make a firm intention and resolution to repay, and to be steadfast. Death is not in our hands. Should death intervene, there is great hope that Allah Taala, the Generous, the Bountiful, will overlook those namaz still not repaid. He is fully aware of our niyet.

Yes, if one has free time, one may perform as many qadha namaz as one wishes, and at any time of the day or night, except the three prohibited periods. These are at the time of the rising of the sun, at the time that the sun is at its zenith, and at the time of the setting of the sun. The sooner you repay, the better.

Tackle roza similarly. Calculate the number that had been missed since puberty, whether through neglect, illness or being on a journey, etc. Start compensating for these by fasting regularly, taking into account your health and strength, the climate and environmental factors.

Zakat comes next. Calculate the amount of zakat that you were liable for since puberty. Total these amounts and start distributing according to your means.

Yes, if you are completely destitute, you have no alternative but to humble yourself completely in front of Allah Ta'ala, and tearfully plead for His Mercy and forgiveness. Also promise to distribute the missed zakat as soon as you have the means.

This brings us to Haj. If you were liable for Haj, but neglected to go, then fulfill this obligation as well. If you are very old and sickly and physically incapable of going yourself, you may send another on your behalf, sponsoring him from your wealth.

If you do not have the financial means now, although you had the necessary wealth in the past, there is no need to panic! Throw yourself in front of Allah Taala, prostrate in taubah to Him. There is hope - nay, there is certainty - that He will forgive the sincere taib.

These remarks are directed at that person in whom the khauf at Allah Ta'ala has entered, at that person who has developed talluq mallah in his heart. Indifference and apathy have lifted from his heart. He has placed his foot firmly on the path of Suluk. We are speaking to him.

Thus far we have dealt with the huquq that Allah Taala has on one. But what about His creation? He has also ordered us to rectify their huquq.

If you have offended anyone, go to him and ask his forgiveness. Do this in the proper manner: clasping your hands in contrition, cap in hand, ask forgiveness from your heart. If not today, tomorrow; if not tomorrow, the day after. But do as commanded.

Despite this, if the opposite party does not forgive you, do not grieve. It is said: A person, clearly in the wrong, not asking for forgiveness is a shaitaan; the opposite party not forgiving, is an ass!

We are still dealing with the tartib of islah - the proper manner of rectifying oneself. After taubah one has to remove the accumulated dirt first, eliminate contaminating factors first. Thus the need to compensate for past shortcomings.

A doctor uses the same principle in his methods. For example: a patient presents with intestinal disease. Those factors causing the disease are first eliminated, and then gamirah - an invigorating tonic - is prescribed. Only if the intestines are free of the disease-causing factors will they be capable of assimilating the strengthening agents in the tonic. (The doctor may prescribe a tonic simultaneously at his discretion, but that is a different situation).

To continue: We are dealing with the rights of the creation - huququl ibad. The rights that Allah Ta'ala has - huququllah - have already been dealt with. It has been emphasised that taubah does not cancel obligations. Past shortcomings have to be compensated for.

Huququl ibad are more important than huququllah in terms of compensation. This importance can be gauged from the following: A Momin is obligated to another person for the mere sum of 3 paisa. The Momin has neither repaid this sum, nor has he asked to be pardoned if unable to pay. On the day of Qiyamat 700 accepted namaz of the Mo'min will be given to the creditor in lieu of the unfulfilled debt of 3 paisa.

Just think! Are 3 paisa anything? On the other hand, what is the value of namaz...? Allahu Akbar!!...And 700 namaz? Allahu akbar!!...And such namaz that have been accepted...? All to be given to the creditor!!

To what extent is this haq not being deliberately transgressed these days! Houses on houses are taken over; land on land is snatched; wealth on wealth is usurped.

Just one such example is the case where the father dies. The eldest son seizes possession of the whole estate and the Shariat laws on distribution of the estate are completely ignored.

This type of thing is done by Muslims! Those having faith and belief in the Akhirat Yet, most sorrowfully, their actions show how weak that belief is! How deficient is that concept of Allah Taala being Hazir-Nazir.

Yes, that person whose t'alluq m'allah is such that the concept of Allah Taala being Hazir-Nazir is part of his conscious and subconscious state, will act differently.

The Presence of Allah Ta'ala will be with him always. His actions will be according to the Shariat, according to the manner shown by Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihi wa Sallam). Neither land nor wealth will be usurped; hOU868 will be distributed justly.

These remarks are directed at the Salek - that person who has come for his tazkiyah, for the cleansing of his batin, for the adornment of his inner self. He is the primary person one is addressing.

This is the order and structure (tartib and targib) of attaining t'alluq m'allah. This is the methodology of attaining that elevation, that status, that strengthening that is the Special Bond one aims to develop with Allah Ta'ala.

Think on it. Contemplate on it. Judge yourself on it.

We are still dealing with huququl ibad.

Gheebat has been mentioned as a sin. But there is a further point here: One has made gheebat of another person. One becomes aware that he has come to know of it. Taubah and istigfar are not sufficient. One has to ask that persons forgiveness as well.

Once the opposite party comes to know of your gheebat concerning him, the sin goes into the category of huququl ibad. If the opposite party is not aware of your gheebat, the sin of gheebat remains in the category of huququllah, in which case taubah and Istigfar are sufficient.

The Ahlullah, the Allah-wala, those who have attained the correct talluq m'allah, however, will not allow the matter to rest there.

Should they perchance get involved in gheebat, their taubah and istigfar is automatic. But they remain perturbed and restless, and are in a state of discomfiture until they have not asked the opposite party's pardon, even if they know that the opposite party is not aware of the gheebat!!

Nay! Even though they have not made gheebat verbally, even though they have not spoken out others' faults, but have deliberately brought the faults of others into their hearts, they have breached their talluq m'allah by an act of omission!

This is a very fine and subtle point, and needs to be thought over very carefully:

Speaking of the fault of another is obvious gheebat. A person has not done this, but he has deliberately and volitionally - on an igtiari basis -brought the thought of another's fault/s into his mind. This is against the concept of gushu - gushu demands that only Allah Ta'ala should be in his heart, and gairullah should have no place in his heart or mind on an igtiari basis.

Note the emphasis on the word "igtiari". At times, thoughts may crop up involuntarily. Unintentionally, ones thoughts turn to somebodys faults, but there is immediately a repugnance for such thoughts. The situation is completely different here. These unintentional thoughts are termed 'Waswasa'. The response to waswasa is an inner distaste for such thoughts, contriteness, followed by a desire to eliminate these thoughts, with "La howla...." coming to ones lips immediately.

With this understanding of what gheebat is, that even bringing thoughts of the faults of others into one's heart is included, can there be any question of actually uttering words of gheebat?

An incident:

Zunaid Baghdadi (R.A.) saw a handsome young man, fair in complexion and neatly dressed, begging in the masjid.

The thought came to Zunaid: "A healthy young man, and wearing a good set of clothes, and yet he is begging?"

That night Zunaid Baghdadi (R.A.) had a remarkable dream. (One notes that persons in the class of such people are corrected very quickly by Allah Taala!) In the dream he saw a man approaching him and saying:

"Eat this meat!" He placed in front of Zunaid Baghdadi (R.A.) a dead body. Zunaid: "But this is a corpse! To eat it is haraam!"

Person: "O Yes! To eat this is haraam! But when you were eating the flesh of your dead Muslim brother, that was not haraam?! I"

Zunaid: "I never did such a foul thing".

Person: "O No? Let me ask you: does the Qur'an Shareef not state that one should not make gheebat, would any of you love to eat the flesh of your dead brother?"

Zunaid: "Yes. The Qur'an shareef has stated thus."

Person: "Well, then you have eaten!"

Zunaid: "When did I do so?"

Person: "When you saw the young man begging, you brought the thought into your heart, A young handsome man, fit and healthy, yet begging.'

Did you imagine gheebat is only when you relate a persons fault to others, and when you think of the faults of others it is not gheebat? You deliberately brought his fault to mind".

Let us pause here for a while and elaborate on some points.

To deliberately bring the faults of others into ones heart is also gheebat. That is point number one.

Point number two is that looking at others' faults has with it an attitude of contempt for them. Contempt for others is also haraam.

Point number three is finer and more subtle. What is the haq of the heart? The haq of the heart - its special privilege - is to be connected to Allah Taala permanently, with the awareness of Him being Hazir-Nazir. This being the case, why has the heart deviated for that little while to involve itself with the thought of gairullah? To be involved with gairullah is the direct opposite of talluq m'allah.

Point number four. If this thought was not igtiari, why was there no repugnance at the thought? Why was there no contriteness, nor discomfort? This shows that at that moment the talluq m'allah was absent.

We are still speaking in general terms. These points are for our benefit. However the condition of people is such that any attempt to make others leave this habit of gheebat is difficult. Tell a person involved in spying and carrying tales that it is wrong, that it is against the commands in the Qur'an shareef; so why involve yourself for nothing in such activity?

What is his response? In his arrogance, he is prepared to go further. "Wahl I will even go up to him and tell him to his face!" Daring and rash!

Here is a thought: Persons involved in zina will be ashamed of their actions - any normal person will come away shame-faced, regretful of his weakness, contrite. This is taubah.

Somebody involved in gheebat, on the contrary, is neither ashamed, nor regretful. Instead of being contrite he is more daring!

And - if he has some Deen in him - he will even try to justify his sin by saying, "I am doing this for his islah," or "I am saying this to save you from the persons evil"

These are just excuses. There is justification only if there is some connection between the parties, or if there is an islami t'alluq.

These are the different aspects of gheebat. We had digressed while relating the qissah about Zunaid Baghdadi (R.A.).

To continue with the qissah:

The person's remarks had the desired effect. Zunaid Baghdadi's heart was in turmoil, and in this anxious state his eyes opened from sleep. He got up, put on his clothes, and went out in search of the youth to ask his forgiveness.

It has to be pointed out here that this compulsion of Zunaid Baghdadi's to set out in search of the youth to get his pardon, was a special state related to Zunaid's elevated status. Where the opposite party is not aware taubah is sufficient.

Approaching the river, Zunaïd saw a young man strolling along the river-bank and recognised him as the same youth he had seen in the masjid. Zunaïd greeted him. "Assalamo alaikum."

The youth replied: Wa alaikum salarn." Without a pause, the youth continued, "Having seen a dream you have now come to ask for forgiveness! Without investigating, you jumped to conclusions: a fit young man, dressed in neat white clothes, and begging! You should, at least, have verified the facts first! How many days have I not spent without food. In spite of searching for work, I found no means. Is it not permissible, under the circumstances, for me to ask? As for these clothes that you see me wearing, they were handed to me Just this morning. Seeing externals only, you jumped to conclusions!"

Who is saying all this? The youth! He is not just anybody. He was one who had some rank! It just goes to show that it is not only old people who attain high spiritual ranks. Nay. This youth had also reached an elevated stage, through ibadat, taqwa, zikrullah, abstention from sin and t'alluq m'allah.

The youth addressed Zunaïd Baghdadi (R.A.) further:

"I had thought that you had attained a very elevated rank, but it appears that you still have some deficiency!"

The youth was addressing whom? Zunaïd Baghdadi (A.A.) - one of our foremost masha'eg!

Do not misunderstand. Do not conclude that this act of Zunaïd's in any way lowered his rank. No. This was a detail, a fine point, which had to be brought to his notice to enable him to progress even higher. This was his islah at the pinnacle that he already was on, to enable him to move on to a higher pinnacle.

The above point should be well remembered. Students often get confused. For instance, when students are studying Mishkat shareef and come across the virtues of the Sahaba (R.A.) they form wrong conclusions.

A case in point is that of the status of Hadhrat Abubakr (R.A.) relative to that of Hadhrat Umar (R.A.). Some of the virtues of Hadhrat Umar (R.A.) are such that the impression gained is that he has a higher status. The narration of a particularly excellent quality will create this impression. However, one should not look at a virtue in isolation, but one should look at the composite whole, the complete picture. It will then be seen that the virtues of Hadhrat Abubakr (R.A.) are such that he enjoys a higher rank.

Let us take a specific virtue of Hadhrat Umar (R.A.): Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihi wa Sallam) said that if there was a Nabi to come after him, it would have been Hadhrat Umar (R.A.) From this one may think: "Oho! What a high rank he has!" Remember, this is stating one particular virtue and is not a verdict over others.

Such points are confusing to the student. When teaching Hadith in the Madressah we have to explain these points at length to the students. This digression has a relevance to our qissah. Although the youth appears to be rebuking Zunaïd Baghdadi (R.A.), it does not mean that he has outstripped him in rank. (Indallah he may have - but that is something we cannot know.)

Lapses in a person may occur. It does not necessarily mean that the persons rank is lowered, nor that there is any difference in his perfection. A Wali may have such a lapse as to be involved in an outwardly haraam deed. If this is just a momentary lapse, it makes no difference to the perfection in his wilayat.

One may even read of some Sahaba (R.A.) having such lapses, but this makes no difference to their rank, nor to their wilayat. The emphasis on the words "temporary lapse" is to be noted - there should be no persistence. And if the person makes proper taubah, where can there be persistence?

We are still dealing with huququl ibad and the topic of gheebat. We mentioned that some are not prepared to stop their gheebat, but will go a step further and tell the person "to his face". This is worse. It is haraam. Such a person is cursed in the Quran shareef:

Surah 103 Ayet 1: "Woe unto every slanderer, traducer...."

Just as gheebat is haraam, reproaching or taunting - telling a person to his face" - is also haraam.

Huququl ibad and wealth. If you are in debt, settle your debts. If you do not have the means, ask your creditor to forgive you. The costliness of unsettled debts has already been brought to your notice - payment of 700 accepted namaz for every 3 paise owing! Rather fulfill your trusts and settle your debts.

If a businessman has cheated his clients, but now the fear of Allah Ta'ala has gripped his heart, he should take pen and paper and calculate the sums involved.

These amounts should then be returned to his respective clients.

Similarly, unlawfully seized land and houses should be returned to their rightful owners. If the owners are deceased, the heirs become the owners.

If you have stolen anything, return the stolen item/s. In business partnerships you may have cheated your partner/s. Calculate the amounts and return these to the respective partners.

In a situation where you do not have the means to settle, nor can the creditors be traced, or they have died, make istigfar and dual for them.

On attaining t'alluq mallah and becoming be'it - or even without becoming be'it - many people make taubah and start going straight. But what about compensating for past sins? Many give no thought to it. The water in the houz is still contaminated.

This qissah concerns a person who had become be'it to Hadhratwala. One day Hadhratwala spoke to him: "It is a long time since you have become be'it, but in all this time you have not related your condition or progress. The talluq of be'it is for the purpose of relating your hal (condition)."

How can a mureed adopt an attitude of independence while his Sheikh is still alive? How can he maintain silence and not relate his inner state to his Sheikh?

Once, (I was also present), a khalifa of Hadhratwala asked him concerning continued correspondence from a khalifa. This is an important point in suluk. Hadhratwala replied with a note



of warning: "If one's contact with ones Sheikh is severed, if one does not maintain this islami contact, there is a real danger of a change coming into one's nisbat, into one's t'alluq m'allah".

The message is quite clear. One should continue relating one's hal to one's Sheikh even after having attained the rank of Khalifa. While in Hadhratwala's presence, we used to see islami letters coming from prominent Ulema like Moulana Waseehullah and others.

To continue:

The mureed answered Hadhratwala: "What is there to say or ask? I am a poor person. I am performing my five daily namaz. What is shown to me I do. I keep my roza in Ramadhân. I do not have wealth, so there is no zakat to give, and the question of Haj does not arise at all."

Hadhratwala said, "Is that so?" He then proceeded to question the mureed concerning his past and his business dealings (muamalat). From what he said his ibadat appeared to be in order, but what about his muamalat?

Then only did the mureed's eyes open. "Oho! Then I am tainted from the roots of the hair on my head to the nails on my toes! In what way? Well.. before becoming be'it he used to be a thief! What must I do now? I do not have any wealth so as to return the money I had stolen." Hadhratwala advised him: "As far as you have knowledge of the people from whom you stole, go up to them and ask their forgiveness. What else is there to do except to get them to overlook what you stole."

The mureed was a sincere person. He went. His heart had already developed t'alluq m'allah. The medan of Hashr filled his vision. He went. After a long period of absence he returned, clutching a piece of paper with a list of names in his hand. The names were of the people from whom he had stolen. Next to each name was the amount stolen. What good people they were - they pardoned him and even signed their names to that effect.

There was a Hindu persons name as well - 500 rupees of his had been stolen (500 rupees of those days would be equivalent to some 500 000 rupees today!). The Hindu had written: "Hasbatalillah I have forgiven him." For the sake of Allah the Hindu had pardoned him the entire sum!

Having noted all this, Hadhratwala asked: "How can one be sure that you had gone to them and that these are their signatures?"

Mureed: "You may use whatever method you please to confirm it." Hadhratwala: "Very well. Go to the post office and get as many reply-paid envelopes as there are names on your list. Writing for confirmation will be sufficient."

Mureed: "Very well". He went to the post office, bought the envelopes and presented these to Hadhratwala.

Hadhratwala: "No. No. I had no intention of writing to them. But, seeing you have bought the envelopes, I will buy them from you."

Mureed: "I did not bring them to sell to you. I will use them for the mail-order business I am doing. Give them back to me."

Hadhratwala returned the envelopes to him.

Huququl ibad! Are you beginning to understand what it means?

This is the tartib of tazkiyah of the nafs, the methodology for the rectification of the character. How many persons exist so desirous of forgiveness as this mureed? How many are prepared to go around asking to be pardoned by those whom they have cheated?

Zunaid Baghdadi (R.A.) is one of the "Greats" among our masha'eg, with countless people having benefited from him.

Shibli came to him, requesting to become beit.

Zunaid Baghdadi replied: "I have no objection to making you beit and entering you into the silsilah. However, work should have a methodology. You have been a Ra'is in your province and you have been a hakim there as well. Firstly, proceed to your locality and ask forgiveness from all those over whom you have ruled. Then we will consider be'it."

Nowadays be'it has become very cheap. It is an everyday request: "Make me be'it." This appears to be the only desire - to become beit.

In these days of our decline as Muslims, some are made beit on request, others are given little tasks to perform before their request is acceded to.

The reason for giving in easily to such requests is the following: in this era of our decline the process of beit will, at least, keep the mureed away from customs and bidah, get him/her to perform the five daily namaz, get him/her involved in some waza'ef, and simultaneously it is hoped, that others will be saved from any mischief from the mureed. These are some simple objectives attained by the process of be'it nowadays.

But before...Oho! Great trials and tests took place before initiation into a silsilah. Candidates were scrutinised properly.

Among other things, was the candidate capable of eating properly? Unknown to him, he was being "interviewed". You must know what "interview" is - this is a word very much in vogue nowadays! The masha'eg in days gone by used to "interview" the potential mureed. The idea was to see whether he had any worth in him for the important privilege of entering a silsilah.

One Sheikh used to provide the applicant with a meal, making sure that the salin and roti provided were in proportional amounts.

After the candidate had eaten, the Sheikh would inspect the remains of the meal. If both salin and roti had been eaten, well and good. If the salin was eaten but the roti remained; or the opposite, the roti was eaten and the salin remained, he would tell the candidate: "There is no equilibrium in you. Our temperaments are not the same, and we will not get along together." He would not make him beit. The candidate had 'Tailed' the "interview".

In worldly affairs, a lot of emphasis is placed on interviews. We hear of people having passed their written examinations, but failing on the results of an interview.

Here is another qissah:

Goolam Yahya is well known to students. He was a great scholar, excelling in philosophy and logic. In fact his kitab has been, and still is taught as a standard textbook.

He presented himself at the residence of a very well-known Sheikh, Mirza Jan-jana. The doorman went inside to obtain permission for him to enter -nobody was allowed to enter without permission. The appointment of a doorman was a common practice with the Naqshabandi masha'eg of old.

When permission had been obtained, Goolam Yahya entered and greeted: "Assalamo alaikum."

Mirza Jan-jana replied, "Wa alaikum salam". But as he lifted his head and his eyes fell on Goolam Yahya, he quickly covered his face with his one arm, and shoo-ed away Goolam Yahya with the other hand, saying, "There is no place here for a bear!" Quite perplexed, Goolam Yahya left the room.

In actual fact, that one glance by Mirza Jan-jana was sufficient to size up Goolam Yahya. The reason for calling him a bear was that he had a big, thick beard which was unkempt and disorderly. Being an alim, a molvi saheb, the condition of his beard betrayed a streak of disorderliness in his personality.

Once outside Goolam Yahya paused to ponder over Mirza Jan-jana's reaction. "It must be my beard," he surmised correctly, Straightaway he went to a nearby barber to have it trimmed.

When he presented himself again, beard neatly combed and shaped, the response was completely different.

Mirza Jan-jana welcomed him happily, asked him to be seated, and complimented him, "Ma sha Allah! You now look like a human being"

Did you notice how quick the "interview" was? Just a glance and the "interview" was over. Each person is judged according to the rank he wishes to attain.

In our worldly affairs, a candidate applying for the governmental position of Collector, will be interviewed with regard to qualities desired in such a person. Is he strong-willed? Is he firm and dependable? etc.,etc.

Here is another way a Sheikh may "interview" a candidate: provide him with a cup of tea. If he drinks audibly, slurping his tea, he has failed. Our Deeni teaching is that water (or any liquid) should not be drunk in a noisy fashion - animals drink that way!

When eating, chew silently. This is also part of our Deeni teachings. These etiquettes are also part of Mans natural temperament, specifically made part of our lifestyle by our Deen. The fact is that others have adopted our teachings, whereas we have neglected these very teachings.

Many are under the wrong impression that these etiquettes belong to another culture. Careful study will show that these are from Qur'an and Hadith.

A few other illustrations:

A person lifts up the bamboo door-screen and enters without seeking permission first. Failed. Why did he not seek permission? This etiquette is also ours. The Qur'an shareef instructs us to seek

permission before entering a person's abode. Another person leaves the room. In doing so he lifts up the door-screen and lets it fall back askew, one corner down and the other corner up. Failed. Why this disorder? Why not depart with serenity? Others now have to take the trouble to set the screen straight.

Do you understand these etiquettes? They are part of our own teachings. These are etiquettes which bring "admiyet" into a person.

This discussion has come in incidentally. Let us continue with the qissah of Zunaid Baghdadi (R.A.) and Shibli. Shibli had been refused *beit*. Instead he had been instructed to ask forgiveness from his former subjects. Shibli departed and did exactly as instructed. He went around for a whole year asking for forgiveness, and returned.

Zunaid Baghdadi (R.A.) was impressed by his sincerity. He now instructed Shibli to go out and beg from the people for a whole year. Just consider: Shibli, a man from the nobility, a former ruler, told to go and beg! His *islah* was in progress. *Be'it* will take place at the proper time, but in the meantime his *islah* was in full swing.

In this age ask even a nonentity to go out and beg and see the reaction. The person will feel most offended. He will consider it an insult. He will leave, mumbling: "What kind of Sheikh is this? Me, go and beg?"

In days gone by, seekers of Truth were sincere. Shibli went out begging. A whole year he begged. In all this time he received...nothing! He reported back.

Zunaid Baghdadi (R.A.): "Ofo! People gave you nothing? What a shame! Never mind. Go out and beg again. But this time, whatever people give you, see that you distribute to the poor!"

Food was provided by the *khanqa*. Those were the times when the *khanqa* and the *madressah* were sponsored by the Muslim rulers. The expenses of these institutions were specifically budgeted for. This was all done according to the teachings in "*Hedaya*". Now, no more. These institutions are forced to go out for collections in order to continue functioning.

Shibli set out to beg again. This time people gave, but whatever Shibli received he gave to the poor. In this way another year went by.

How many years had passed by? Three. Yes, three years had passed by since that day that he had come with the request to become *beit*. One year was spent asking for forgiveness; one year went by in begging and not receiving anything; and one year went by in begging and giving to the poor.

Now only did he have permission to sit in the *majlis*. His *islah* had been made. The exercises that he had been put through in the three years had made sure that there was no *takabbur*, no *ujub*, etc. The correct *tartib* had been followed - that is the removal of the *akhlaq razilah*, before going on to the next stage.

Nowadays, people want to be raised to the level of khalifa even before becoming be'it! A person wrote to me about a dream he had. In the dream a particular buzrug had asked him why was he not making others be'it. This was now bothering him!

Only after three years of effort was Shibli allowed the privilege of sitting in the majlis of Zunaid Baghdadi (R.A.) Only now was some shagl shown to him.

Many people come here requesting to be shown some zikr, some tasbih, on the very first day! Very well. InshaAllah Taala, that will be shown, but the tartib is that islah comes first!

Remove all the debasing qualities first. Remove the akhlaq razilah and emblazen yourself with the akhlaq hamidah. Clean the nafs first. Remove all the dirt and filth, all the malodorous items, all the bad and evil. Get this right first, properly. Remove the deficiencies. Fill up the cracks and the holes. The heart can attain a glow and lustre only after the filth and impurities - the akhlaq razilah - have been removed.

What had happened to Shibli in those three years? The animalism in him was removed, the animalism that is kept in every human being.

Students of Logic will understand the following: When it is asked, "Min al-insan?" (What is Man), the answer is, "Hayawanun natiqun" (an animal having intelligence).

Hadhratwala used to say that the scholars have given the above answer, but, in his humble opinion, a more correct answer would be "hayawanun motafakkirun" (an animal having fikr). "Fikr" means having ones vision on the eventual outcome, at first sight.

The scholars of Logic are all agreed that the subject of Logic is meant for people like us and not the Auliya. The gaze of the Auliya-Allah falls immediately on the correct outcome of a situation without them having to study the science of Logic.

This human being, this "hayawanun natiqun", whose tazkiyah has been made has had the animalism removed. This leaves him with the second quality in the afore-mentioned definition, namely "intelligence". This is how he is differentiated from animals.

An important point to remember is that the process of tazkiyah removes the "animalism", but not the "animal" in man.

The instinctive animal qualities have not been entirely eliminated by the process leading to islah - these instinctive drives have been subjected to intelligence. There is no change in those basic instincts Man shares with animals. What has changed is that these instinctive qualities will not find expression contrary to the dictates of intelligence. There will be no abuse of ones faculties.

Man has three basic faculties - Quwate Gazbiyah (Rage), Quwate Shahwiyah (Passion), and Quwate Aqliyah (Reason). Each of these can exist at any one of three levels - deficiency, equilibrium or excess.

Should Quwate Gazbiyah be in a state of deficiency and be absent, the person will not be able to express any anger. Who is then going to wage jihad? Who will make the correct effort to protect his possessions and his life? How will law and order be correctly established in the land?.

Should Quwate Shahwiyah be eliminated how will off-spring be born? The Ambiya (alaihimus salam) had off-spring, proof of the desirability of a certain degree of passion. The aim is not to eliminate the basic instincts, but to terminate their abuse.

This is tazkiyah of the nafs. The purpose of Suluk is the proper and correct Shari tazkiyah of the nafs. Islah, carried out correctly, will bring about this tazkiyah.

This was the process Zunaid Baghdadi (R.A.) put Shibli through. Huququl ibad had to be fulfilled through the asking of forgiveness from Shibli's subjects. Tazkiyah was done through begging, which broke all pride and arrogance in him.

After the tazkiyah, or with it, comes tajliyahe qalb (embellishing the heart) with the akhlaq hamidah, making sure that both huququllah and huququl ibad are taken into account.

In the beginning, it was said that Man has been sent into this world for the sole purpose of ibadat. What has been laid out in front of you is the tartib involved in the fulfillment of this responsibility. The Salek and the Tabibe islah have to follow this method.

Suluk is not merely reciting wazaef. Many hanker only for wazaef and do not look at the tartib. These people hanker for that for which one will not be called to account, and neglect that which comes first and for which one is accountable. One bears responsibility for fulfilling huquq and not for huzuz.

The mustahabat, the mustahsanat, are all parts of the huzuz. Similarly, kaifiyat also form parts of the huzuz. These are not parts of the huquq. Some tend to run after kaifiyat. Kaifiyat produce enjoyment and delight. Sometimes there is crying. At times the heart is also crying. Some or other emotional state overwhelms the person.

But remember, kaifiyat are also part of 'makhluq. So, how can the salek pursue the makhluq when his objective is the Khaleq?

Allah Taala is not going to ask: "Why did you neglect your waza'ef? Why did you neglect your nafli ibadat?" No. But Allah Ta'ala is definitely going to ask: "Why did you neglect the necessary Shariat commands of the Deen?"

"Did you perform your namaz?"

"If you did, why did you not perform it with jamat? What Shari excuse prevented you from making your namaz with jamat?" etc., etc.

Do you understand this difference between huquq and huzuz? Let us illustrate it in another manner:

Food that we eat can be put into two categories. The one category is essential for the proper nutrition of the body. In this category we have items like roti, meat, dhal, etc. It is the huquq of the body to have these basic foods in order to thrive properly. If one interferes with this right of the body by not eating - staying hungry for no valid reason - one will be questioned for one's neglect.

The rule is: Eat to fill ones stomach, not to fill ones desires. Why did you not eat your fill? Why did you deliberately stay hungry so that you became weak? You will be answerable for this neglect. To eat your fill and maintain your health and strength falls in the category of huquq.

The second category of foodstuff contain items prepared in addition to the basics. These items are not essential for the nutrition of the body. Examples of such items are chutney, achar, halwa, morabbo, etc. This is the category of huzuz. These items add taste, whet the appetite.

If a person leaves out the roti, dhal and meat, and eats only chutney and achar, a bit of fruit and morabbo, will he be able to maintain his health and strength? No, obviously not. Yes, he may experience some temporary pleasure, but the eventual outcome will be injurious.

In a similar manner, one's roohani nutrition can be categorised into the category of basic and essential - the huquq - and the category of huzuz -what is additional to the basic. The huquq cannot be neglected; the huzuz may or may not be performed.

Nafil ibadat, whether namaz or roza, fall in the category of huzuz - like chutney and achar, they add to the taste and delight! Nafil namaz may be those that are performed at the times of the five daily namaz, or they may be those at other prescribed times - Ishraq, Chasht, Awwabin, Tahajjud.

The nafil roza are kept in the months of Shaban (15th), Shawwal (any 6 days), Zil Haj (9th), Moharram (9th & 10th or 10th & 11th). One may keep three nafil roza every month too (13th, 14th & 15th).

Being nafil, if not performed, one will not be answerable. However, nafil and waza'ef bring joy and light to one's ibadat. That is one reason why they are prescribed.

Another reason for recommending them is to fill-in any deficiencies in our necessary ibadat. Just like condiments, fruit, salad and halwa will provide vitamins and minerals lacking in the basic food, similarly the nafil is there to fill-in any shortcomings in our huquq.

The following comes in Hadith shareef: When ones namaz are weighed on the Day of Qiyamat, and are found to be deficient, Allah Taala will ask the mala'ekah to see whether there is any nawafel in ones Book of Good Deeds. The malaekah will look and say, "Yes, there are". Allah Taala will then order, "Compensate the deficiency in his fard with the nawafel!" And this will be done. The nawafel will have been of benefit.

This is an even more important reason than the first for performing ones nafil. Who is there who can say that his fard is absolutely perfect? The importance of performing even more nawafel is obvious. In this manner one may be able to compensate for the weakness in ones huquq.

What has been presented to you today is the tartib of tazkiyah, the method of islah.

This has two parts to it: Firstly, tazkiyah - the removal of the akhlaqe razilah from the nafs: secondly, following tazkiyah, comes embellishment of the heart with akhlaqe hamidah. The islah should not be merely superficial. It should be done in such a way as to be permanent.

How to judge? How to see if there is permanence in ones islah? In the case of tazkiyah which is deep-rooted, at the time of any inclination towards akhlaqe razilah, the person will immediately stop himself without consciously devising any specific plan. Understand this last phrase well. The person will stop himself without consciously telling himself "Allah is watching me!"; without consciously looking through the different remedies for that particular unseemly inclination.

This is the standard!! This is the criterion!!

You may not have reached this level. In that case, the second level is good enough. This is to immediately stop the nafs when it inclines towards the akhlaq razilah, by consciously putting into operation any of the procedures prescribed for that particular bad quality.

This will indicate that the person has attained the objective of islah of the nafs.

Thus, today the tartib of suluk has been laid out in front of you. Supporting ayat from Qur'an and Hadith, and qissas of the Akabir, the Auliya-Allah and their mureeds have been quoted.

It was emphasised that, with our Akabir, islah took place before the formality of beit. The following qissah will further go to illustrate this point:

Hadhratwala had gone to some place. A Rais residing there had requested to become be'it. Hadhratwala had acceded to his request and had appointed a specific time for the Rais to present himself for the formal ceremony of beit.

Because the mureed-to-be was a Ra'is, he felt he had to distribute mithai to mark this happy occasion. This is not part of our custom - when a person becomes be'it, he is not expected to distribute mithai. On the other hand, if the person does distribute mithai, there is no objection either. But still, it is not part of our practice.

Let us digress to elucidate this point further:

Some acts which are mubah are prohibited when harmful effects set in. An example of this is the distribution of mithai at the khatam of Qur'an - at the completion of the recital of the Quran shareef in tarawih during Ramadhân. This distribution is mubah. If it was not mubah, Hadhratwala would not have been a party to it: In the early years he gave consent, but when harm intruded he put a stop to the practice. What started happening was that people not making namaz came just for the mithai; others used to perform their tarawih elsewhere and arrive there for the mithai; very young children started coming on that night; the floor of the masjid and courtyard became strewn with mithai, with people trampling all over the mithai; others again, started queuing more than once for the mithai; etc. Because of the harm, this practice came to be prohibited.

The principle involved is that a permissible mubah act will become prohibited when harm or corruption sets in.

This principle must not be confused with the following: certain acts have two opposing approaches. Both are permissible. When one approach is adopted the other one does not fall into the category of being prohibited.

Examples of these are:

a) The imam facing the jamat after the Fajr and Asr namaz. He sits with the congregation on his right. To sit in such a way that the congregation is on his left, is permissible. However, I have not seen our Akabir adopting this latter position.



b) Qira't-galfe-imam. This is permissible by the ruling of Imam Abu Hanifa (R.A.) but he has chosen the opposite viewpoint. This is a long and complicated masalah.

c) Raza-i-dein. This is not so complicated. Imam Abu Hanifa (R.A.) has never said that it is haraam. What he has said is that leaving-off rafa-I-dein is superior (afzal).

A person who has never in his life practiced rafa'-i-dein, should occasionally do so, ensuring that one has acted on the Hadith in support of rafa-i-dien as well.

d) Position of hands in namaz. Imam Malik (R.A.) has ruled that the hands should be at the side, not folded.

Imam Shafis (R.A.) ruling is that the hands should be folded on the chest. Imam Abu Hanifa's (R.A.) ruling is that the folded hands should be placed over the lower abdomen. If you have never followed the other rulings, do so occasionally. They are not prohibited.

e) To recite "Ameen" loudly is also not prohibited. Occasionally say "Ameen" loudly as well.

All these alternate rulings have Hadith to support them. The difference that exists between the four Imams is in the question of "afzaliet"- which would be superior. Each Imam has placed his own ruling as superior, but has not categorised the other rulings as "na-jaez".

These are matters of thoughts, for the thoughtful.

This topic is incidental. Let us go back to Hadhratwala and the Rais: The Ra'is arrived at the appointed time for the ceremony of be'it. A basketful of mithai, carried by his servant on his head, was also brought with for distribution. The servant placed the basket on the floor and departed.

Hadhratwala said, "A certain person has requested to see me, and I have to proceed there now. You come with me. Insha'allah taala, if I have the opportunity, I will make you be'it there."

The servant had gone. Who was going to take the basket of mithai along? The Ra'is bent down, lifted the basket and placed it carefully on his own head. Walking thus, he followed Hadhratwala.

The process of islah had started, before the formality of beit. The Roohani Tabib, Hadhratwala, had recognised the temperament. "Coming to become beit himself, but getting the servant to carry the mithai! Ofo! This will not do!" The treatment was commenced immediately.

Arriving at their destination, Hadhratwala attended to his work. When finished, he said, "Ofo! I have another appointment as well. There is just not enough time to make you beit now. Never mind. Come with me. Insha'allah ta'ala, if I have time there I will make you beit." In this manner Hadhratwala got the Rais to go with him three to four different places, the Rais carrying the basket of mithai on his head, and onlookers marvelling at this unique parade.

Hadhratwala told us later in his majlis, "Knowingly, I led him through such places where his friends and acquaintances could see him." Finally, they returned to their starting point. Hadhratwala told the Ra'is, "Ofo! Unfortunately I had no time to make you be'it at any of the other places. I have the time and opportunity now". Hadhratwala went on to make him be'it.

Yes, the mithai also got distributed!

The Rais was, after all, a man of nobility, and therefore a man of understanding. Once outside, he told others, "I had understood immediately. The treatment of takabbur in me had started. I recognised my faux pas in getting the servant to bring the mithai. I should have brought it myself."

Here you have seen the way the roohani illness was treated by the Roohani doctor - how the treatment had commenced before beit. Hadhratwala used to say, "In my methods, the first step is fana." Moulana Abdul Bari Saheb, who was present at the time, was puzzled. But the kitabs have fana as the final stage."

Hadhratwala replied, "Yes, that is true . But with me, fana is the first step. Until there is no fana, islah will not take place."

Zunaid Baghdadi (R.A.) had put Shibli through a process which led to fana. Hadhratwala did the same thing with the Rais.

One has to work oneself up to such a stage. So much so, that if a person comes from the back and gives you a thump with his fist, you will not even turn around to see who it is. Not even for that moment must the heart be distracted from the remembrance of Allah taala. This awareness of Allah Taala, this gushu, is to be maintained all the time, not only in namaz.

That is why it was said, right in the beginning, that Allah Ta'ala had sent Man into this world for the sole purpose of making His ibadat. Our objective is to be in His ibadat during all our activities.

To put it in another way, Allah Ta'ala is saying, "When you eat and drink according to My laws and instructions, it is ibadat; when you answer the call of nature, according to My laws and instructions, it is ibadat..." and so forth. This can only happen when the nafs has been cleansed of the akhlaq razilah.

Remember that the basic instincts will remain, manifesting themselves when ordered to do so.

The Qazi Saheb will be told, "When you enter the court-room, do so with dignity, seat yourself with pomp, lean back in your chair with majesty." These instructions for the Qazi appear in the kitabs - if you so wish you may check them.

The critic may say, "But these are all signs of takabbur!"

Yes, very much so. The Qazi has been ordered to adopt this attitude. This is an occasion for such behaviour - so that awe is created in the public for this office, so that the administration of justice does not become a sport and game.

The majesty of the Qazi and the court-room have to be maintained. Should the Head of State, the Khalifa, be called to give evidence, then too, he will have to stand and give evidence, while the Qazi is seated. The fact that the Qazi has been appointed by the Khalifa who is his superior, does not alter the situation.

The takabbur that the Qazi exhibits is suratan, not haqiqatan. From this one can deduce another important rule: Do not judge yourself against the behaviour of the Ahlullah - they may exhibit certain characteristics which may appear haughty. Their haughtiness is suratan, yours is haqiqatan!

The Ahlullah have gone through the process of tazkiyah. They are aware of the Greatness of Allah Taala at all times. They bear the thought of presenting themselves in front of Him constantly.

We cannot draw an analogy with them. Their anger is suratan, our rage is haqiqatan.

The lives of the Ahlullah are according to the Shariat, whether one looks at ibadat, muasharat or muamulat. While the creation is lost in slumber, they are awake. Their muamulat are clean; their muasharat is such that they do not cause any inconvenience to others. On the contrary, they bring ease and comfort to others. Their temperaments are even, changing their attitude only when others deliberately break the relationship.

It certainly appears in the Hadith shareef that when Allah taala loves somebody it is announced on earth that the creation should love that person, too.

The Mufassirin write that this does not include that situation where somebody has caused a breach in the relationship because of some worldly affair. How is it possible to be affectionate to such people?

To end, let us recapitulate.

Why has Man been sent to this world? For ibadat.

What should ones every breath and act in this world be? Ibadat. These subjects have been explained at length to you. Many have categorised agriculture, commerce, etc as "worldly" activities, whereas, in fact, they are all ibadat. Only when these activities go beyond the limits of the Shariat, do they become the opposite of ibadat. We are to blame for taking them outside the bounds of the Shariat and making them "worldly" activities instead of ibadat. You will find the virtues of agriculture and commerce listed in our Deeni kitabs. If these activities were not ibadat, why would their virtues appear in Hadith?

We have been created for ibadat. It is in this light that each one of us should judge and assess ourselves.

May Allah Taala give us all tawfiq - with ikhlas and sidq, continuously. Khudda Hafiz.

(Translation of the majlis of Hadhrat Maulana Maseehullah Khan Saheb, held on the 21st September, 1988, in Jalalabad, India.)