

Part 11

FOR FRIENDS: PART 11 (DISCOURSES OF HAZRAT MASEEHUL KHAN SAHEB(R.A.))

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1.FOREWORD

Allhamdu-lillah, Through the fadhli of Allah Ta'ala and the barkat of our sheikh, this eleventh booklet in the series "For Friends" is ready.

Having this issue of "For Friends Number Eleven" in one's hands, it is a most appropriate time to re-assess one's priorities and perspectives. Looking back, from the time Booklet Number One was read, have one's objectives been achieved? Has there been any progress? At least, has there been some benefit? In order to make it easy to answer these questions, some of the objectives for compiling this series need to be listed:

FIRSTLY: If one has created a ta'alluq (a connection) with a sheikh-e-kamil and one is now following a programme of islah then one has progressed to the desired extent.

SECONDLY: If the above has not been achieved, but by reading these booklets one has made significant changes to one's life, then too one has benefited, but not necessarily to the maximum.

THIRDLY: Even if there have been no changes made to one's worldly or Dini life, yet one now knows what is Haq and what is batil then too one has benefited. Insha-Allah, One's iman will remain intact by adhering to what is Haq.

FOURTHLY: One is reading merely for the pleasure of the qissas related - ("I really enjoyed the qissas Hadhratji related!") - then too this is not without benefit. Hadhratji (r.a.) said that at the appropriate time these qissas, or anything that has been read, Insha-Allah, will come to the fore and will be of use.

However, the question to be answered is: Has one benefited to the MAXIMUM? If all four objectives have been realised then the answer will be yes. If not, then it is necessary to re-assess one's intentions, and re-exert oneself in the right direction.

At this point it is important to be aware of the traps laid by Shaitan: Our Hadhrat (r.a.) pointed out that many people will remark: "Where are there any masha'ikh like Junaid, Shibli and the rest?" They therefore do not turn to the present-day masha'ikh for their islah. Pointing out the fallacy of this argument our Hadhrat (r.a.) said that an ill person wanting a cure for his illness will turn to the physicians available at the time, and he will not endure the suffering brought on by his illness, wistfully longing for the great physicians of previous times. In fact one sees how, at the scene of an accident, the injured are only too glad to get help from others, whether the persons are qualified doctors or whether they just have some first aid experience only! The salek should do the same and turn to those who are qualified in the field of islah, of whom there a number of individuals present at any given time. Of course, one has to search for the right sheikh-e-kamil.

A second strategy of Shaitan is to put the waswasah into a person's mind that he is a hypocrite. "Don't expect me to be like that - I don't want to appear pious when I know I am not. I don't want to be a hypocrite!" This is an argument one hears repeated time and again. This person is actually stating that he does not want to be a proper Muslim, because then he would be a hypocrite! He does not want to be spiritually sound and healthy because then he would be a hypocrite! Can one imagine a sick person telling the doctor, "Doctor, I know that you have promised that I will be cured of my illnesses if I take the necessary treatment, but I know I am an ill person, so do not expect me to take the treatment and become healthy, because then I would be a hypocrite!"? The ludicrousness of this statement is self-evident.

The booklets previously published in this series contain enough material for the sincere salek to reach his destination. Also, Allhamdu-lillah, there is sufficient Dini literature available in English on a variety of topics. The aim of carrying on with this series is not merely to add another booklet to the list of literature available, but the aim is to stimulate and motivate the sincere salek to greater effort in his striving to attain qurb-e-Ilahi and nisbat-ma'Allah. Those already treading the path will also benefit.

May Allah Ta'ala grant these blessings of qurb-e-Ilahi and nisbat-ma'Allah to this humble servant, as well as to all the readers. Ameen.

Dr.I.M.

[The majlis that has been translated in this number was held in Jalalabad, India, by Hadhrat Maulana Masihullah Khan sahib (r.a.) on the 15th Jamadi-ul-akhir 1409, corresponding to the 24th January 1989.]

DIL-JO'I - MAKING HEARTS HAPPY

It has been stated in the Hadith sharif that Rasulallah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) has said:

As far as Allah Ta'ala is concerned, after the performance of fara'idh (compulsory acts), the best loved act is that which makes a Muslim brother happy (provided that he himself suffers no harm) - Hadith sharif: Targib.

2. AN IMPORTANT PRINCIPLE

At times, provided that there is no worldly or Dini harm, to perform a certain task that will bring joy, bring cheer to another, bring pleasure to the person and make him happy as an act of kindness, is also an *usul*, a principle. This is also one type of order amongst other orders as far as the ahlullah are concerned. And whosoever does so is from the ahlullah!

3. AN INCIDENT CONCERNING HAJI SAHIB

Hadhratwala (Hadhrat Thanwi(R.A.)) related the following incident to us in his majlis:

Some folk from Ranpur and surrounding areas went to perform Haj. Whilst there they went to visit and meet Hajisahib, (i.e. Haji Imdadullah sahib(R.A.) as Hajisahib was also (originally) from Ranpur.

When one is in a foreign country and one meets somebody from one's own country, and this person is also from one's hometown, and, on top of that, it is some relative and, moreover, a very close relative - for example, without

prior notification one's son or brother pitches up - and one meets him, then how great will not one's happiness be! How much will one not enquire about his health and welfare, about the well-being of relatives, of acquaintances and of the people in the neighbourhood! This is part of a human being's natural disposition of empathy.

So, these people from Ranpur arrived at Hajisahib's (r.a.) place and met him. They made salam, musafahah (i.e. shook hands), and got involved in inquiring about one another's health, the health of friends, the conditions prevailing back home, and in this way the conversation carried on and on. When about to take leave, these people commented to Hajisahib (r.a.) concerning their visiting him, "Hadhrat, we have wasted so much of your time! You could have been making 'Allah! Allah!' - making the zikr of Allah Ta'ala, making ibadat and you could have kept yourself occupied and busy with your shagl. That is your normal practice. By our coming here, we have obstructed you!" This is the normal habit of asking for forgiveness at the end.

4.A SUPERFLUOUS CUSTOM

It has become a baseless custom for some people to apologise in this way, and it sometimes happens that inappropriate remarks are made without there being any necessity for it. In the same way some write in their letters to me or in their islahi notebooks, "If I have written anything contrary to proper etiquette please forgive me." My reply to this is, "This statement is superfluous. My heart is clean." Before writing (or speaking) one should take care to have full control over one's pen (or one's tongue), and when one writes with vigilance (or when one speaks having pondered first and understood properly) then why should the necessity arise for apologising?

5.A MISCONCEPTION

To carry on: When these folk apologised, our Dadapir, Haji Imdadullah sahib (r.a.) replied, "Is that so? To keep oneself occupied with zikr, this is ibadat? And to sit with one's friends and to converse with them in order to bring happiness to their hearts, is this not ibadat?" (This our Hadhratwala (R.A.) related to us.) "Is it correct that to be engaged in zikrullah," - what people commonly recognise as zikrullah - "that only is ibadat? And to sit with one's friends to bring cheer to their hearts and to make them happy by talking to them, is this also not ibadat?"

Just see - in his era - exactly who was Haji Imdadullah sahib (r.a.)? Ask the giants, those August personages recognised as "Qutbul Irshad" - Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi sahib; "Hujjatul-Islam" - Hadhrat Maulana Qasim Nanotwi sahib and "Hakimul-Ummat Mujaddidul-Ummat" - Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali (R.A.). Ask these giants who was Hajisahib (r.a.) and what his qualities were!

6.SUNNAT-E-RASUL(SALLALLAHU ALAIYHI WASSALLAM)

Do you understand? This method is in accordance with the sunnat of Nabi-e- Karim (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam). We belong to his ummat, so it is him that we refer to. So much so that there is a narration of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam):

Conduct yourself with people according to their character and habits. - Hadith Tasharruf

The teaching in this statement is that in one's permissible social conduct one should take into consideration the temperaments of one's friends, so that the one should not feel anxious or be in dread of the other.

The following is narrated in the Hadith sharif: In Rasىlullah's (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) majlis, tales of olden times were also related. The Sahaba Kiram (R.A.) used to relate their experiences of the days of Ignorance (Jahalat) and Huzur (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) used to listen silently. Once a Sahabi(R.A.) was relating some episode from the days of Jahalat. It so happened that the majlis sharif ended before he could finish his tale. The next day, on the occasion of the majlis, that same Sahabi r.a. was also present and Huzur (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) remarked, "That incident that you were relating was left incomplete. What happened subsequently?"

It may be that my voice is not reaching you. Are you able to hear me, brothers? [A loud "Yes!" was the response from those present. Hadhratji (r.a.) then continued:] I am merely trying to point out to you what the comprehensive qualities of the Allahwala are. If some foolish and ignorant persons were to hear such talks taking place at a buzurg's place then they will remark, "We have come to listen to some other topics. The talks here are about agriculture, about the price of goods, about kilos of wheat, 'Brother, what is the price of wheat these days?'" They then get up and walk away. One does not know what concepts they had before coming to the buzurg, and with what muhabbat (love and affection) and aqidat (faith and confidence) they had come.

7.TESTING THE SALEK

Oh! Their examination has been taken! It is for this reason that suddenly such topics will come to the fore, and such

persons are automatically tested, to see how firm is their aqidat (faith and confidence). They came professing tremendous muhabbat and tremendous aqidat. But they walk out commenting, "We have come to listen to other topics. The talks here are about agriculture and business!"

8.SUNNAT-E-ILAH

Let us progress further. (This is for those who have correct aqidat and correct i'tiqad and i'timad with regard to their sheikh!) We can state that this type of discussions are also Sunnate-Ilahi - the practice of Allah Ta'ala. Just see: are there not references made to commerce in the Qur'an Sharif? And see also, are there not references made to agriculture in the Qur'an Sharif? Is there not mention of trades and skills?

It was not their hands that made this.... S.36. A.35.

One will find mention made of animals:

.....And have subdued them [i.e. animals] unto them... S.36.A.72.

These ayat appear in the Qur'an Sharif.

Mention is also made of incidents of previous ages and the people of previous ages: mention of Fir'oun; mention of Qarun; mention of the tribes of Thamud and of ad; mention of the Companions of the Elephants (Ashab-e-fil). After all, these are commentaries of the Age of Jahalat! And then, finally, Allah Ta'ala states by way of a lesson for us to take heed, "Just see what type of people were these! I have described the Age of Jahalat, I have narrated to you the conditions of the people of previous times, and I have mentioned the manner in which I dealt with them, but see how rock-hard their hearts were, how stony-hearted they became, how they became filled with animosity. Seeing their situation those without iman should have been filled with fear, taken heed and accepted iman; and those with iman should have paid even greater attention to the safeguarding and progress of their iman."

9.INCREASE IN IMAN & REMOVAL OF NEGLIGENCE

The iman of the mu'minin and mukhlisin increased: they had developed fear of Allah Ta'ala. Their hearts were now kindled. They had come to recognise what the system, the habit, the sunnat of Allah Ta'ala was. This we saw with the iman of the mu'minin and sincere Sahaba(R.A.), that with an increase in their fear their iman increased, that they become an embodiment of the ayet:

....that they might add faith unto their faith. (S.48. A.4.)

In the same way the conditions of the ambiya (A.S.) and of the pious, and kamil obedient mu'min people of previous times have also been mentioned, as well as the munificent way they were accommodated by Haq Ta'ala by being showered abundantly with blessings upon blessings, bounties upon bounties, so that those who are mu'minin may feel happy and the iman of the mu'minin may increase. The result is, as Allah Ta'ala Himself has stated in the ayet quoted above, that the iman that they had, now increased. Therefore, those whose temperaments are congenial, whose understanding is of a noble quality, they will ponder on His blessings and His mercy, they will perceive something more and they will progress further with honour and dignity; and they will avoid anything which is of a corruptive nature. As for those whose temperaments are ignoble, whose hearts are not evil but whose hearts are hard, when they hear of what happened to past nations and how Zate Bari Ta'ala challenged them and punished them, the hardness of their hearts will melt and their hearts will become soft. Each one ponders, "Is this the system that Haq Ta'ala follows? Is this His methodology? How long can I persist with my evil ways? How long can I continue with my waywardness? It should not happen that I am suddenly apprehended!"

Lo! the punishment of thy Lord is stern. (S.85. A.12.)

In this way their hard-heartedness changes into softness.

To continue: Zate Bari Ta'ala has related qissas from the days of Jahalat and of previous nations, and the manner in which He dealt with the two groups mentioned above so that the Ummat of His Mehub (i.e. the Muslim Ummat of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) may learn lessons from these incidents. Those mu'minin Muslims who have lapsed into negligence may remove their negligence thereby; and those who have an awareness and concern of the hereafter and have already entered the phase of obedience, that their obedience may increase even more thereby. Also, these incidents have not been mentioned just once in the Qur'an Sharif, but they have been mentioned several times, in varying tones and in different chapters.

Do you understand?

To continue: Various topics were discussed in the majlis of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam). However, those

filled with animosity would try to corrupt the plain and simple Musalman Sahaba (R.A.). Once they were outside they used to say, "We do not know what was being said. We fail to understand what he said, and why he said it." These people were, in all appearances, considered to be among the important people of the precincts of Makkah. They were the so-called intellectuals and intelligentsia. They would argue, "If the talk had any sense in it, if it warranted being understood, then - seeing people of our calibre of intelligence could not understand it - what are the chances that these simple-minded poor folk sitting there would understand?" This was the stratagem used to mislead others. This was the ploy to seduce the simple and straight-forward folk. All this is also mentioned in the Qur'an Sharif.

However, these very simple and straight-forward folk, after they had stayed with obedience in the service of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) finally turned out to be people with great minds! Their understanding and insight became so deep, their temperaments became so highly attuned and tranquil that all those who had considered themselves to be great intellectuals, far above others, all came to be proven to be complete and utter fools.

This discourse is meant for those mu'minin, sincere seekers, who desire an increase in their iman and progress in their batin and their obedience, with an accompaniment of concern for the akhirat within themselves. These incidents are meant for them, that they will heed the lessons contained in them and discard their previous ways and, having knowingly chosen this route, henceforth adopt good ways and choose these new ways in a firm and well-grounded manner. It is stated in the Qur'an Sharif:

Say: This is my Way: I call on Allah with sure knowledge, (on evidence clear as the seeing with one's eyes), I and whosoever followeth me. Glory be to Allah! (S.12 A.108.)

10. BASHASHAT OF IMAN

This results in the bashashat (joy/ exhilaration) of iman coming into their hearts, and when the bashashat of iman enters the heart then iman continues to increase and there is no question of it decreasing. This was testified to by none other than the non-Muslim Christian king Heraclius

The incident referred to appears in Bukhari Sharif and, briefly, is as follows: At the time that the letter from Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) with the invitation for him to embrace Islam was received by Heraclius, Abu Sufyan and others were also in the same country. At this stage Abu Sufyan had as yet not accepted Islam and he and his group had come there merely to trade. Having received the letter from Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) and knowing as well of the presence of the Makkans, Heraclius summoned Abu Sufyan and read out the letter. He then proceeded to find out more details about the Muslims. Among several other questions put to Abu Sufyan, he was also asked as to those who entered into Islam, did they progress or did they retrogress? Bearing in mind that Abu Sufyan had not brought iman as yet, he replied that they progressed.¹

So, Heraclius, despite being a Christian king, a non-Muslim, testified to this that it is the demand of the bashashat (joy/ exhilaration) of those with iman, that when bashashat enters iman then those with iman progress, and they do not retrogress. Heraclius himself was very well informed of his own Christian religion in order to have made this observation. This is exactly what Allah Ta'ala has stated in the Qur'an Sharif in the ayet quoted previously: In answer to the question, "What is the benefit of these a'mal (deeds), what are the effects?" it is stated that these are the bases for an increase and progress of their iman.

11. LAUGHING ALOUD

To continue: The Sahaba (R.A.) used to mention incidents from the days of Jahalat in the court of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam). Whenever an episode was not completed Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) himself used to remind the narrator, "What was that incident? Just complete it." If there was any humour in the narrative, Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) used to smile as well. But he never laughed out loud. The Arabic word is "Qahqahu" - to laugh loudly; burst into laughter; roar with laughter. One should not laugh loudly. As far as possible one should stifle such laughter. And as for the ahle-ilm - the scholars of Din - to laugh loudly is contrary to their honour and dignity (shan). However, if one does laugh out loud incidentally, it is not mamnu' (forbidden). Similarly, if involuntarily it should happen, then also it is not forbidden. But to deliberately laugh loudly as is practised among the common people, is completely contrary to the shan of tulaba (students of Din) and ulema. That Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) laughed out loudly (qahqahah) is not proven anywhere, but dhahak is proven. Dhahak means "to laugh." That is, to laugh just sufficiently loudly that those nearby hear it. This is dhahak. It is stated in "Sharah Tahzib":

It is the nature of man (that if there is any amazing humorous occurrence) he tends to laugh.

It has also been proven that Rasulallah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) had laughed in this manner (dhahak), although it was only twice. It was not his habit to laugh, but nevertheless it has been narrated that he did. Therefore, if any alim were to laugh it would not be contrary to the sunnat. These are Dini masa'il mentioned incidentally in-between.

12.RASULULLAH'S (SALLALLAHU ALAIYHI WASSALLAM) FEAR (KHAUF)

The reason was the fear that Rasulallah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) had. The du'a that Rasulallah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) made was:

"O Allah! Make Your fear and dread dominant in me, greater than anything else!"

Rasulallah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) is saying, "Grant me such fear, such tremendous fear of You, that nobody else in the whole world can experience." This is the result of ma'rifat-llahi - having gnosis of Allah Ta'ala. As one's ma'rifat-llahi increases - as one's knowledge of Allah Ta'ala increases - to that degree does the condition of the heart also become imbued with colours and becomes firm. I do not wish to comment further. Having made this statement I do not wish to state anything further as to the manner of the heart being coloured with splendid hues and firmness.

However, it has been established that Rasulallah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) had tremendous khauf. The lesson to take is this, that Rasulallah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) could bear that degree of fear. He could in no way transgress the limits. In no way could he move away from equilibrium. However, the Muslim Ummat could not bear such khauf. Therefore, the limits of fear were also set out, as appears in a du'a at another place:

"I seek that much of khauf of You that it is a barrier between myself and the commission of sins against You."

That is, " I desire that much khauf from You that it forms a barrier between me and sins committed against You, that I do not perform any act or any deed, anything whatsoever, contrary to Your orders."

Over there, the request was for "Akhwafal ashya" (extreme fear), and over here, the request is for fear within certain limits. Therefore, for the general mu'minin populace, that amount of fear is sufficient that they do not do anything contrary to the orders of Haq Ta'ala. That is enough.

13.TWO METHODS OF CORRECTION

So, Zate Bari Ta'ala has related two types of qissas in the Qur'an Sharif. Those whose hearts are of the one type will be affected to that degree, and they will abstain from sinning and they will draw towards obedience (ta'at). And those whose hearts are of the other type and they are already in obedience, they will be those who will progress in their ta'at (obedience).

Some are such that their hearts will be seasoned and primed by mention of the showering of blessings and they will bend and submit towards obedience. Others' hearts are such that by the mention of punishment and wrath on wrongdoing their hearts will cause to soften and be drawn towards obedience. In essence, Zate Bari Ta'ala's purpose is to save one from contrary actions and persistence therein, and to draw and bind one to obedience.

Take this example: A father sees his child doing wrong. At times he puts fear into him; at times he uses harsh words; at times he threatens him; at times he relates to him incidents of how others came to suffer harm and injury, trying to get him to bring into focus some concern. What is the purpose of all this? The purpose is that he should save himself from evil; save himself from being corrupted; save himself from situations of harm and disgrace; save himself from injury; save himself from sitting in the company of undesirable persons.

On the other hand, take another child who is also doing wrong: the father speaks to him with softness, with affection, with love, that he should save himself from wrongdoing. This child's temperament is such that he will heed this approach. The father's purpose is the same in this case as well, that he should save himself from wrong; he should abstain from evil; he should avoid situations of shame and disgrace; that he should rather veer to avenues of good and of benefit and honour.

In both cases the purpose is the same, at times using stern expressions and harsh words; and at times using tones of affection and love.

In the same way Zate Bari Ta'ala sets forth in the Qur'an Sharif blessings of the highest order. In mentioning these ne'mats (blessings) He uses amazing tonalities in Surah Ar- Rahman:

Then which of the favours of your Lord will ye deny? (S.55. A.63.)

Then a very short ayet is narrated: Dark green with foliage. (S.55.A.64.)

Thereafter He asks again, as if to say, "Which of My ne'mats are you going to deny? Ponder a bit and see in what different ways I am trying to explain to you!" Just see in what amazingly loving tones these statements are set forth!

14. ALLAH TA'ALA'S LOVE & COMPASSION

At a different place Allah Ta'ala states:

Shall We utterly ignore you because ye are a wanton folk? (S.43 A.5)

As if to say, "Oh dear! You have debased yourself somewhat. So, shall We stop advising you?" Just see how lovingly it is put! That individual with a soft heart, one who has even the slightest spark of muhabbat for Zate Bari Ta'ala, should break down into tears on hearing this. Or should he not? How excellent is not Your mercy! How excellent is not Your affection! Wah! Wah! How much hope is He not instilling!

Just ponder what Haq Ta'ala is saying, "So, shall We stop advising you? How can that happen when, in actual fact, I have created you? Now then, just look at yourself, what have you turned yourself into? But, despite My admonitions why are you not taking heed and why are you not turning towards good? No matter how much you have dropped below the boundaries should I stop giving you advice? That will not happen! From here onwards you look at yourself: To what degree do you have sensibility within yourself? You gauge for yourself. I am pulling you towards Me. I am giving you nasihat." ("Nasihat" implying "having your welfare at heart".)

Are you listening or not? Ponder on this!

Then again Allah Ta'ala has made an amazing statement, a very endearing statement, full of compassion. These are statements meant for those who have living hearts. We are all mu'min sitting here, and which mu'min is such that he does not possess a living heart? Yes, it is a different matter that there are differences between one heart and another, one being very soft and another not so soft. It can never be that a mu'min's heart is like stone, and it should also never be so!

At a different place Haq Ta'ala states:

What can Allah gain by your punishment if ye are grateful and ye believe? Nay, it is Allah that recogniseth (all good) and knoweth all things. (S.4. A.147.)

Have you pondered? This is a very enchanting statement - a very enrapturing statement; a statement to set the heart aflame; a touching statement to melt the heart! What an amazing tone has been used, O dear! What will Allah Ta'ala gain by punishing you? What an endearing statement! Are you listening; What will Allah Ta'ala gain by punishing you? It is such that it causes the heart to weep! Tears may or may not gush from one's eyes, but the heart weeps! What will Allah Ta'ala gain by punishing you? What will it benefit Allah Ta'ala to cause you grief? What will He gain by beating you? How will He benefit by causing you injury or harm? What, will there be an increase in the Grandeur of Allah Ta'ala, as we see with important worldly people?

What happens with important worldly people is that somebody utters something that offends them. Arrogantly they command, "Bring the culprit here!" He is brought forth. "Beat him up! Bash him up!" So this Big Shot sahib's honour has risen! He has vanquished a poor weak man and made an impression - He is a man of great strength! He is a man of power! He is a man of influence! His esteem has gone up! In hushed tones people would whisper to one another, "Never mind this poor wretch, even the Thanedar (Chief Police Inspector) would be dealt with in this way." And mind you, it was no small feat for the Thanedar to be given a beating. That was in the old days. You are still children, too young to have seen those days.

However, Allah Ta'ala states, "What will I gain by punishing you, by causing droughts, by causing you takleef, by causing you sorrow? Will My honour and grandeur increase thereby? My honour and grandeur is as it was. There is no question of increase and decrease, of becoming more or getting less." Allah Ta'ala is not such that His qualities increase or decrease, that they rise and decline, that they ascend and descend in status, that His superiority can wax and wane. Dear brother, Allah Ta'ala is not like that. This is an absolute principle that He is not like that. And when He is not like that, then think for yourself:

What can Allah Ta'ala gain by your punishment?

However, if you wish to summon punishment onto yourself then that is your affair! In any case, this is a most

beautiful ayet, is it not?

Dear brethren, one's gaze should fall on all the ayat whenever one recites the Qur'an Sharif. So, in conjunction with this one take the following: Allah Ta'ala is saying, "I have already stated to you:

Your Lord hath prescribed for Himself mercy. (S.6.A.54.)

15.SUBTLETIES OF QUR'ANIC LANGUAGE

ah! Just see! Over here the word "Rabb" has been used, whereas over there the word "Allah" has been used. The niceties and implications only the linguist, the expert in rhetoric, will appreciate - the subtle change in nuance slipped in unobtrusively occasioned by using the word "Rabb" here and the word "Allah" over there!

This is the reason why the linguists and literary experts of those days threw down their weapons in defeat and admitted that the words of the Qur'an Sharif can never be the words of a human being. You may have read or heard of "Sab'ah Mu'allaqah" [The Seven Suspended]. What used to happen was that from every region of Arabia the greatest poets, experts in the sciences of eloquence and rhetoric and highly qualified in the art of Arabic poetry, composed highly intricate and eloquent verses. A poet would hang up his written qasidah in the Ka'bah. Others would then scrutinise this qasidah. Somebody else would compose something better and lower the first qasidah and suspend his above it. A third poet would compose something even more eloquent and suspend his qasidah right on top. In this way seven qasidas were suspended on the Ka'bah, hence the name given to these as "The Seven Suspended". This was in the Age of Jahiliyah (Ignorance). However, when these very poets heard the Qur'an Sharif they confessed "It is quite obvious that this Qur'an is the Word of Allah - the Kalamullah! It can never be the word of any human being!" From then onwards the custom of hanging up qasidas of poets on the Ka'bah came to an end.

The Jinnat also testified to the Qur'an Sharif being the Word of Allah Ta'ala: Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) was making Fajr salat when the Jinnat arrived on the scene and stood listening. Merely by listening they brought iman. Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) did not even have to extend an invitation to them to accept iman! They attested "This is the Kalamullah! It can never be the words of any human being!"

To continue: Haq Ta'ala is saying, "I have already stated to you:

Your Rabb, your Nourisher and Sustainer, has made it compulsory on Himself to be merciful'."

Is this not beautifully put? "Therefore, conclude from this, can I ever cause you any difficulty, or punish you unnecessarily? Yes, if you wish for punishment, if your attitude is that you will not reform without My punishment befalling you, that you will not mend your ways without being beaten, then that is your affair!" Does a loving father like beating his child without a good reason? He will explain to him time and again and try to make him understand, but if the child does not take heed then he will beat him to correct him. Obviously he will not beat him out of pleasure! And - Allah Ta'ala forbid! - if he were unintentionally to strike him in such a way that the stick wounds the child, immediately the father will feel remorseful. He will get the doctor to attend to him. He will see to his treatment. If it was his purpose to cause injury, why call the doctor? Why do tears stream from his eyes? The blow was not intentional, but accidental. He is now regretful. If this is the condition of the father, the rabb-e-majazi (the father is referred to as the figurative or substitute nourisher), then will Zate Bari Ta'ala send down punishment for no reason? But if you want punishment to descend, then it is your affair. Allah Ta'ala is stating, "I have already stated that from My side I have made it incumbent upon Myself to be merciful. If you wish otherwise, it is your affair. However, there are some amongst you that, even though punishment descends on you, you are not prepared to believe. So much so, there are even some who may be sent to Jahannam and in Jahannam they will plead, 'Take us out of Jahannam and send us back to the world then we will bring iman on You'. If this were to be done and if they were to be taken out of Jahannam and are sent into the world again then, too, they will not bring iman!" Some are like this. Who can make such people understand?

To continue: Allah Ta'ala states, "When I have made it incumbent on Myself to show mercy, what will I gain by punishing you?" What will it benefit Allah Ta'ala by punishing you? What affectionate words! How full of muhabbat are these tones not! Allah Ta'ala continues, "If you keep on showing gratitude..." Let us stop to ponder. Ponder over your existence. Who made it possible? These limbs and different parts of the body - who has given them? Out of all the creation no other creation has been given what you, O Insan, has been given! "The first stage of gratitude is this, that you believe in Me as you should - believe in My Zat (Being) with the Sifat (Attributes)." With what beatitude has it not been said!

The short ayet with which I started .I find most entrancing, absolutely enchanting!

Let us now combine all the ayat: Your Rabb, your Nourisher and Sustainer, has made it incumbent on Himself to

show mercy. Therefore - it follows according to the laws of logic - what will He gain by punishing you? Will there be an increase in His glory and majesty? And if you keep on living this way, living with gratitude as mu'minin bandas (believing bondsmen), without showing any ingratitude for His ne'mats (blessings), then there will only be mercy upon mercy! The ayat ends:

"Allah Ta'ala is ever appreciative of you."

Note that the word "Allah" appears here, and not "Rabb". The term "Allah" denotes that Being Who is such and such, such and such - that is, all the attributes of perfection are combined in that Being Who is absolutely pure and free of all faults and deficiencies. Despite this absolute perfection He states, "If you are mu'minin and remain as My bandas (bondsmen), then you have a great worth and value with Me In the word "alima" we have been shown: "I am well aware of this gratitude of yours and your iman and ikhlas (sincerity) and the condition of the heart (which is the site of ikhlas). So, why should I not value you? Especially so, when you have effaced from within yourself certain other passions solely out of consideration for Me. You have left off all of these on My saying so and out of consideration for Me. It is in My knowledge that, being a mu'min, you are remaining as a grateful bandah. So, if I do not value you, who else will? I am One who is highly appreciative." As Allah Ta'ala states at a different place: And whoso desireth the Hereafter and striveth for it with the effort necessary, being a believer; for such, their effort findeth favour (with their Lord).(S.17.A.19.)

16.INDEBTEDNESS

The pre-requisite of being mu'min has been laid down. "...This effort on your part is of great value in My eyes." The words "mashkur" and "shukr" that is applied to Zate Bari Ta'ala in the Qur'an Sharif means "One who values." (On this basis) in our idiom we would say, "We say shukriah to you." This is a phrase used day and night. For example: Somebody gives you an item in sheer happiness. If it is an elder you would say, "Shukriah!" If it is somebody junior to you, and he does something agreeing with your tabiyet, you would say, "Jazakallah!" So, a younger person we will thank by saying, "Jazakallah! Khairul-Jaza!" and an elder we would thank by saying, "Shukriah!"

On the other hand Zate Bari Ta'ala says to this insignificant insan, this human born of an insignificant drop of sperm, who has brought iman on Zate Bari Ta'ala merely by Him saying so, and is now involved in His obedience. What does Haq Ta'ala say to him, this inferior creation? In other words "Shukriah to you!"

Ponder! Think about this! This is pure patronage, otherwise how can an inferior be addressed with "shukriah"? A lesser one should be told "Jazakallah." However, Zate Bari Ta'ala is so happy, is so happy at his listening to Him and being obedient to Him that He says, "You have great value with Me!" This is Sunnate-Ilahi - the system that Allah Ta'ala follows. "You have made Me happy, therefore I will keep you happy!" Is Allah Ta'ala indebted to the bandah? Not at all! This is for the benefit of the bandah. Allah Ta'ala is not indebted to anybody.

Take this illustration again: A father advises the son out of concern for him and the son accepts the advice. Is the father now indebted to the son? Not at all. It is the other way round: the son is indebted to the father for having advised him for his benefit. Yet the father will say, "Wah Wah! Wah Wah! You have brightened our name! You have erased all the evil of your previous actions." Nobody will now mention these past activities - or will they?

Take another illustration: Who takes note of a poor person? Nobody. Take a person who was absolutely poverty stricken or destitute, but has now become very wealthy. Those who had no time for him when he was poor will now treat him with respect. He will now be honoured. Those who looked at him with contempt will now be respectful and will be gracious towards him when he visits: "Please do come in. Quickly, bring a chair for our visitor!" Whereas previously when this person was down-and-out, and he came, nobody took any notice of him. He had to sit on the floor in one corner. Ponder. Do such occurrences not take place?

The point is that with an improvement, the previous sorry state is forgotten. This is what Allah Ta'ala is stating. What loving and affectionate statements is He not making! How much cheer is He not bringing to the heart! How much encouragement is He not giving! Is He not giving encouragement? What benefit is there for Allah Ta'ala? Yet, when the bandah has brought iman and thrown himself into His obedience then Haq Ta'ala encourages and spurs him on further, just like a loving and affectionate father.

We can thus conclude that to give encouragement is Sunnate-Ilahi. To bring cheer to the heart (dil-jo'i) is Sunnate-Ilahi. To spur somebody on is Sunnate-Ilahi. To make a person happy is Sunnate-Ilahi. Whereas Allah Ta'ala is not

in need of it. Do you understand the point?

The point I was making is that some issues are such that, in appearance, they do not seem to be ibadat. But what do we know? Yes, those with knowledge will know that these are also part of zikrullah, that these are also included in ibadat.

17. ATTEMPTING AND ACHIEVING

Can anybody fulfil perfectly and completely those commands that have been given in accordance to the shan of Allah Ta'ala - in conformity to His grandeur and majestic status? Never but never! That order that Allah Ta'ala has given to be carried out, in the time set for it, in the manner it is to be done, in keeping with the shan of Haq Ta'ala, can anybody carry out that task to that degree of perfection? Never. However, this person who carries out that task in the set time, yet unable to do it according to the shan of Zate Bari Ta'ala, nevertheless Allah Ta'ala looks at the effort with a gaze of appreciation: "My bandah has made an effort. Where is he able to do so at the level of My Zat (Being)? Yet, I know that he did it according to his capabilities, weak as he is. He attempted it. Therefore, he is of value and appreciated in My gaze. Therefore, do not fall into too deep research and inquiry, into too deep introspection and mystification, into too deep thought and anxiety.

On the other hand, that day in which you feel that you have performed a task befitting the shan of Allah Ta'ala that is the day of mourning for you! In other words, it is a day of immense grieving. The very audacity! "O puny bondsman! Do you consider that your performance is at the level of My grandeur and majesty?" Better is that day when you humbly submitted, "This is the extent of my effort. I have tried my level best. Where can I do anything befitting the grandeur and majesty of Haq Ta'ala?" Where is it possible to do anything befitting the shan of Haq Ta'ala? Astighfirullah!

O ye brothers! O ye salikun! O ye zakirun! O ye talibun! O ye mutiyqun! Do you understand? This is encouragement - instilling courage for those who have work to do! Have you understood the points made?

18. A SINNER ENTERS A MASJID

It comes in the Hadith sharif that when a mu'min bandah sets out to perform his namaz and he reaches the door of the masjid then the mala'ikah attempt to stop him from entering. The reason being that he had committed some sins previous to this. And sins constitute filth and pollution. Now, how can the mala'ikah allow such a person to enter the masjid, the Royal chamber of Allah Ta'ala, in this condition? He thus asks Allah Ta'ala...

To digress a bit: The communication between Allah Ta'ala and the mala'ikah is instantaneous. An instant also is a time period, but here there is not even a time period. To illustrate this let us take the wireless (radio). These modern inventions make it easier to explain and understand. How much time does it take to communicate by radio? It is virtually instantaneous. Very early on I was in Pakistan. I had not as yet travelled by plane. Somebody took me to see a plane. When we were there I asked one of the officers, "I have heard that when a plane is flying a person can speak to another person flying in another plane. How does this work?" He said, "Quite right. Wait, I'll show you." He informed somebody of what he was going to do and then placed the earphone set on my head. He reassured me, "Do not worry, Hadratji!" There were four or five others standing there. A conversation then took place between the other party and myself. Not even a second's delay. Do you understand? Here there may still be fractions of seconds involved, but communication between Zate Bari Ta'ala and the mala'ikah does not even involve that much of a delay. This illustration of a wireless has been given merely to make one understand.

To continue: The mala'ikah says, "How can I allow him to present himself in Your Royal chamber in this condition, contaminated with filth as he is?" One is prone to commit some sin or other, a "big" sin or a "small" sin and become besmeared with "big" filth or "small" filth. One's inner condition is known to the mala'ikah. If somebody were to be summoned by the wazir for a social meeting would he go wearing clothes which have stains and blotches? Obviously not. The wazir will see only the external, but Zate Bari Ta'ala and the mala'ikah know the inner condition as well.

That is why it is written about a person intending entering the toilet: There are mala'ikah with him - these are the Kiramin-katibin, one on the right side and one on the left side. The one on the right side writes down the nékis (good deeds) and the one on the left writes down the sins. These are the C.I.D.'s, the detectives, who watch over all his actions. If only one can have this awareness all the time it is also an achievement. Subhanallah! That these two mala'ikah are performing the work of C.I.D.'s is referred to in the Qur'an Sharif in the following ayat:
When the two Receivers (guardian angels) receive (him), seated on the right hand and on the left, He uttereth no word

but there is with him an observer ready. (S.50. A. 17-18)

Therefore, on the day of Qiyamat every atom of good deed and every atom of evil that has not been washed off with the waters of taubah, will be presented in one's Book of Deeds (Namah A'mal), as Allah Ta'ala states at another place:

And whoso doeth good an atom's weight will see it then And whoso doeth ill an atom's weight will see it then. (S.99.A.7-8.)

Allah Ta'ala is reminding us, warning us.

19. IN THE TOILET

To continue: It is written that this person now enters the toilet. He thinks that he is now alone in the toilet and that there is nobody else there, because the mala'ikah Kiramin-katibin do not enter - they remain waiting outside. He now thinks of Allah Ta'ala just in his heart. Because it is not permissible to make the zikr of Allah Ta'ala in the toilet with one's tongue, he thought of Allah Ta'ala, he remembered Him and he made His zikr just in his heart. On the other hand, if he did not do this, but he thought to himself that there is nobody present. Even the Kiramin-katibin are not present, so he indulges in some self-enjoyment, playing and stimulating himself. He then comes out thinking that nobody is aware of his self-indulgence. Now, we find there are experts at physiognomy - those who claim to assess a person's character merely by looking at his face - this being so, then how can the Kiramin-katibin not know what he did while he was in the toilet?

So, when he leaves the toilet, and he had remained in the toilet with nekies, as in the first instance, then the mala'ikah on the right will write down nekies for him, even though he may not have said anything with his tongue, the zikr of Allah Ta'ala having been made in his heart. The nekies of the heart are written down. If, on the other hand, he performed some unbecoming and indecent act while in the toilet, the person having the misconception that he is alone and that nobody knows about it, then the mala'ikah on the left will write it down.

Do you understand? If this awareness exists that nothing can be concealed, then jalwat and khalwat are equal. Then being in seclusion or being amongst others would have the same significance! Is my voice reaching you? Jalwat and khalwat will be the same. Who is there present in the toilet with him? Even though the Kiramin-katibin are not present in the toilet yet they write down one's activities. They are such.

To continue: This person is proceeding to the Royal chamber of Allah Ta'ala i.e. the masjid, when he is stopped from entering by the mala'ikah. The mala'ikah says, "How can I allow him to present himself in Your Royal chamber in this condition, contaminated with filth as he is?" Immediately the order of Allah Ta'ala is given, "O mala'ikah! Lift up the sins that this person is laden with! Remove the filth that is in him and on top of him!" Do you see the bounty of Rabbul-alamin, of that Being Who is our Sustainer and our Nourisher?

The mala'ikah immediately removes his sins. The person now enters the Royal parlour of Allah Ta'ala, the masjid, in a pure (pak) condition. This is something to ponder over. The moment the filth of his evil actions has been lifted from him, he enters and he performs his namaz, in whatever manner. He then departs from the masjid, but the mala'ikah is waiting for him on the outside. He has no option. He then asks Allah Ta'ala, - this is from Hadith sharif - "The impurity (na-paki) which I had lifted from him, shall I settle it on him again?" Haq Ta'ala replies. "When you have lifted off from him his sins, why burden him again? Throw them away!"

Do you see? Allah Ta'ala has stated..... Allah Ta'ala has made it compulsory on Himself to show mercy. Can you see the application of this incumbency? Is this not an act of love and affection? Does it not behove us to sacrifice ourselves on His orders?

20. ALLAH TA'ALA IS APPRECIATIVE

Just see further: We know the poor quality of our deeds. Yet Zate Bari Ta'ala states: "And Allah Ta'ala is appreciative and well-knowing of one's deeds", You have made namaz. You have not performed it with the intention of showing any person. Deliberately you did not make the niyet of showing the people. The niyet was for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. So, Allah Ta'ala knows the condition of the heart, the sincerity, the ikhlas, that the deliberate intention was to please Allah Ta'ala, and not - Allah forbid! - to show the people. On the other hand how can he perform any deed the way it should be performed, according to the shan of Allah Ta'ala? No, never. Despite this, Allah Ta'ala's attitude is, "Seeing your effort is for Me, and not for the creation. And seeing it was done for My sake, if I do not accept who is

there to accept? In whatever manner it has been performed, the point is that it has been performed. Therefore, qabى! Accepted!"

Do you understand, dear brethren? BUT, on performing namaz! The above point is valid if one performs namaz. On not performing namaz there is no question of having hopes of acceptance! Therefore, first continue with your effort, then have hope.

So, now when he leaves the masjid he leaves pure - cleansed and clean. Allah Ta'ala has purified him without him having made the effort himself at purifying himself and He has allocated a servant, a mala'ikah, to cleanse him. So, upon leaving the masjid he needs to have some prudence and sensibility, an awareness of his state of cleanliness. And, especially seeing that he has now even heard this with his own ears, should he now contaminate himself again? He should rather, as far as is possible, take care and be vigilant to safeguard himself from obscenity, from sins, from evil, from flagrant undignified acts and from scandalous and disgraceful acts.

These are aspects that one should sacrifice oneself for - for that person with a sharif-ut-taba' and a salim-ul-qalb (an honourable nature and a heart that is conducive to accepting goodness). Therefore, now that you have left the masjid cleansed, keep a close scrutiny on yourself. Keep pondering. Keep on safeguarding your gaze. Keep on restraining your tongue. Keep your ears also curbed. Keep your feet also from being wayward: do not travel to just any old place; do not go to places where acts of disobedience take place; save your footsteps from walking to places of iniquity. Do not deliberately bring evil thoughts into your heart. Why? The reason is that Allah Ta'ala has said that we should safeguard our feet, safeguard our ears and safeguard our eyes. It is stated in the Qur'an- e-Pak: ...every act of hearing or of seeing or of (feeling in) the heart will be enquired into (on the Day of Reckoning). (S.17.A.36)

21.PLACES OF EVIL

Furthermore, Allah Ta'ala states in the Qur'ane Pak:.....

It is the shan, the honour and dignity, of a mu'min Muslim that he does not go to places of evil. He does not sit in places of iniquity. Do you understand? This is the dignified and honourable status of a mu'min Muslim. Allah Ta'ala does not want him to sit in places of evil.

Allah Ta'ala states further: Never mind sitting in wrong places but...

If he were to pass by any evil places, places where people are sitting involved in futile activities, if this mu'min were pass to that way, he proceeds with his eyes cast down, with complete dignity and utmost grace. He passes by in such a manner that it is apparent that he does not look with contempt at those involved in those wrong activities and that he does not consider himself to be superior to them.

Wah! Wah! What a splendid statement! Is my voice reaching you or not?

To repeat: When he passes by people involved in futile activities, "marru; kirama" - he proceeds in a very cultured manner, that by his manner of behaviour there is no sign of him showing any superiority and there is no evidence of him looking with contempt at them and considering himself to be better than them. The mu'min does not even incline towards them. He does not even look at them. Neither does he think himself superior, nor does he consider them inferior. Provided that he is a talib! So, never mind sitting there - rather he passes by such places. This is the shan of a mu'min Muslim.

Coming back to what I had said initially, that some actions are such that externally they do not appear to be zikrullah, nevertheless these actions are carried out to encourage others and for their dil-jo'i - to make them happy. In this event they are also included in zikrullah. They are also acts enjoined by the shariat (mamىr-behi) from among many other acts.

22.A PERSON'S TEMPERAMENT: AN IMPORTANT MAS'ALAH

What was the reason for bringing this topic to my lips, and mentioning the incident concerning Haji Imdadullah sahib (r.a.)? This is something I have not mentioned before, but the purpose is to mention something connected to the tape recorder that has been placed here. Leave it here - I have already given permission previously. However, my tabiyet does not approve of it. In the first instant it jolts me - it causes me an inner agitation. My tabiyet feels ashamed. This does not mean that you should not record. I am merely intimating the condition of my temperament.

What I mean to indicate is that there are certain matters that are not harmful from the duniyawi (worldly) point of view, and they are not harmful from the point of view of the akhirat (hereafter). The duniyawi harm would be harm to jan (life and limb), harm to mal (wealth) and harm to abrى (honour). Harm to honour is considered to be severer than harm to life and limb and to wealth. It is indeed considered a very severe harm. Yes, that person who has no sensitivity to and awareness of disgrace he is no admi (human being). So, worldly harm would be bodily harm, material harm and harm to honour and dignity. What would constitute Dini harm, harm to one's akhirat? This would be sin (gunah).

So, in placing the tape recorder here what bodily or material harm is there to me or to my honour? To the contrary, in the eyes and in the thinking of others, it is a means of greater honour. The thoughts running through their minds most probably are as follow: "Oho! Just see how great a personality is Hadhrat! Just see the people listening to him! Also, how attentively are they not listening! And they are even taping his talk! What great worth do they not place on his talks!" Such thinking is a basis of honour and not harm. So, there is no harm in it for me, neither worldly nor in the hereafter.

Any harm to one's hereafter is intolerable. Obedience in such matters is not wajib. A statement of Rasulallah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) states:
And do not obey in the transgression of Allah Ta'ala's orders.

On the other hand, it is also wrong to think that people may say what they like but we are unconcerned. Is my voice reaching you?

23.HAYA - AND WHAT PEOPLE THINK

Remember! Haya (a sense of modesty and shame) is a very virtuous quality. The Hadith sharif states:
Haya is a branch of iman.

Haya is a good quality. Insan abstains from a lot of evil because of it. If one's sense of shame were to disappear then to abstain from evil becomes very difficult. To the extent of one's haya one will abstain even from the minutest of evils. Haya and a sense of shame are great qualities. These are branches of iman.

Thus, to think, "Aré Mia! People may say what they like, I could not be bothered in the least!", this is not an admi (civilised human being). The reason is that that person who has a conducive temperament, a respectable disposition, will be extremely concerned. Even though he may not be guilty of the actions people attribute to him - he may be uninvolved and completely pak - yet he will be affected. When he comes to know that this type of filthy rumours concerning him have spread from people's lips his temperament will definitely feel aggrieved. He is blameless, nevertheless he feels hurt when such talks reach his ears. So, that person who thinks to himself, "I could not be bothered in the least!" is no admi - he is not one whom we would call respectable and cultured.

I have proof of this. And not only one proof but many:

Take the case of Ummul-mu'minin Hadhrat Aishah (R.A.): Was she slandered or not? The incident is mentioned in Surah Nur. Yet she was innocent, was she not? Yet a hue and cry arose. Hadhrat A'ishah (R.A.) herself was unaware of the slander against her. An elderly lady (Hadhrat Umme-Mustah (R.A.) brought her attention to it: "Do you know something? There is a hue and cry about you. This is the slander levelled against you." Yet she was innocent. She was chaste. Allah Ta'ala revealed ten ayats in the Qur'an Sharif concerning her chasteness. (S.24 a.11 .). However, by these slanderous statements having come to the lips of the world what happened to her? When she heard about them she developed a fever, even though she was pure and chaste.

So, a person who thinks, "Ah! Let the people think what they like, I am unconcerned!" is he an admi, taking into account that Ummul- mu'minin Hadhrat A'ishah (R.A.) who was siddiqah, faqihah, alimah, abidah, zahidah, arifah, zowjah-mutahharah of Rasulallah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) was also affected and developed a fever, chaste and pure as she was? Therefore, it is imperative to save oneself from such situations where people have an opportunity to pass comments. So much so that Rasulallah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) has stated:
(Always) save yourself from situations of slander.

As I was saying: in keeping the tape recorder here there is no Dini or worldly benefit for me. Nevertheless, from the aspect of my disposition I sense it to be shameful and a barrier. However, it does not mean that you should not bring

it tomorrow. This I had already clarified earlier. There may be some who may feel, "Oho! Hadhrat's temperament is bashful about the tape recorder. He finds it distasteful. Therefore we will not bring it tomorrow." The answer I have already given - this is a question of disposition.

In any case, going back to what I was saying initially and had mentioned the situation with Haji Imdadullah sahib (r.a.) that he was conversing with others in emulating Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) with passionate love for the sunnat. Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) has stated that deal with people according to their habits and akhlaq. So, whatever type of person presented himself to Rasulullah(R.A.) he behaved towards them accordingly. For example, if a farmer came to him then he would converse about farming; if a merchant came to him he would converse with him along lines of business. There were lessons in these. Every action and statement of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) contained lessons and teachings for us. If our behaviour is according to these criteria, then it is sunnat, otherwise not.

24.HUMOUR IN ISLAM

For instance: Some Sahaba (R.A.) enquired..... (You have studied Bukhari sharif, in which there is a chapter on "Humour". Shama'il Tirmizi sharif also contains these references.) To continue: some Sahaba (R.A.) asked, "O Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam)! You prevent us from being jocular, but you yourself are jocular?" Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) replied, "In my jocularly there is ilm and lessons, which are not to be found in your jocularly. That is why I forbid you."

However, when a person also reaches such a comprehensive status of dignity, then he will be an exception to the rule. Occasionally, with the niyet (intention) of sunnat, in order to bring cheer to another's heart - as a means of bringing joy - it would be permissible. On the other hand, if one's jocularly is the cause of creating discord and enmity, and the other person is offended - no matter how great a friend he may be but the jocularly is of this nature - he should refrain. He would be committing a sin. We are speaking of making hearts happy, but here his heart is grief-stricken. How can this be bringing cheer to him? How can this be considered to be making him happy? An injury has been caused. That is why Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) stated, "There is a difference between my humour and yours."

If one is not permitted to be a party to jocularly, then - Allah Ta'ala forbid! Allah Ta'ala forbid! - how can one ever be a party to others' unnecessary, futile and nonsensical deeds and activities and sinning?

Some instances of jocularly have great lessons in them. An incident comes to mind concerning a Sahabi(R.A.) and which is related in Shama'il Tirmizi sharif: The Sahabi's (R.A.) name was Zahir. He was a peasant, i.e. he lived in a farming area. Occasionally when he came to Madina Munowwarah he used to bring gifts from the farm to present to Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam). In reciprocation Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) used to present him also with something. So that whenever he came, Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) used to comment, "He is our farm, and we are his city." It so happened that once when the Sahabi Zahir (R.A.) came to Madina Munowwarah and was proceeding towards the bazar, Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) also came out of his home and proceeded in the same direction. Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) recognised him, upon which Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) quietly came up to him from behind and laid his hands on his shoulders. Bear in mind that Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) had great strength in his arms. The Sahabi Zahir(R.A.) did not recognise who it was, and asked, "Who are you?" Through the corner of his eyes his gaze fell on the mubarak hands and he realised immediately that it was Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam). Immediately he stepped backwards with the intention of pressing his back against the mubarak breast of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) with this thought in mind, "When will this opportunity arise again? If my back were to touch the mubarak breast of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) I will possibly be saved from the fire of Jahannam!" With his hands still on the shoulders of Zahir(R.A.). Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) said, "Who is there who will buy this slave?" Abdullah - the bondsman of Allah; the slave of Allah. This was in a manner of speaking. Zahir(R.A.) was not a slave in the shari' sense of the word. But was he not a slave of Allah Ta'ala - Abdullah? How did Zahir(R.A.) respond?

Is my voice reaching you?

Zahir r.a. said, "O Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam)! Who will buy me? (That person who is of no use to himself, how can he be of use to others?) Who will buy me?" Huzur Akram (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam),(the sheikh), replied, "That is what you are saying. Ask Allah and the Rasul of Allah of what degree of worth you are, of what great value you are!"

This incident appears, on face value, to be of a humorous nature, but in reality it has great ta'lim (lesson/s - teaching/s) in it. It is proof of ease in methodology. What great and glad tidings are not contained in it! Huzur Akram (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) is congratulating him and that he is happy with him. Credence should be placed on this statement.

25.A MAS'ALAH OF SULUK

From this also is proven the mas'alah concerning the relationship between the sheikh and the murid. What does the murid say and what reply does the sheikh give? The sheikh may state, "Mubarak! Congratulations!" By the sheikh's words of comfort there is peace of mind and tranquillity. Therefore the salek should not consider the sheikh's ta'lim to be superficial. He should consider it to be truthful and investigative (haqiqi tahqiq), because every statement of the sheikh is based on truth (waqi'i).

A second aspect should also become quite clear. What is it? This has to be explained. Very briefly: The question arises as to why did Rasulallah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) place his hands on the shoulders and why did he not place his hands over the eyes, as is the custom here? What we see happening here is that a friend creeps up silently from behind and then clasps his hands over the eyes of the friend to see if he can be recognised: "Tell me who is it?" Now why did Rasulallah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) not place his mubarak hands over the eyes of the Sahabi r.a. but placed them on his shoulders? The reason is that by placing the hands over the eyes a person becomes terrified. A burden settles on the heart.

So, Rasulallah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) is giving the ta'lim that it is not correct that a mu'min should behave towards another mu'min in such a manner and in such ways as to cause a burden to settle on him. Rasulallah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) gave the ta'lim of placing the hands on the shoulders and not over the eyes. What was the reason for this? As explained: by suddenly placing the hands over the eyes the heart becomes agitated. A weight settles on the heart. Rasulallah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) has shown by his action that a mu'min should take the utmost care and precaution not to behave towards another mu'min in such a manner as to cause a burden to settle on his heart.

26.DU'A

May Allah Ta'ala grant us the kamil taufiq to continually practise and live our lives in accordance with this. Ameen.