

Part 12(A)

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1.INTRODUCTION

Alhamdu-lillah,Booklet Number Twelve is now ready, solely through the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala and the barkat of our sheikh (r.a.). In preparing this booklet there is a slight departure from previous issues in that this is a translation, not of a majlis, but of a lecture on Tawhid delivered by Hadhrat Maulana Masihullah Khan sahib (r.a.). The place and date of deliverance are not stated. Hadhrat Wakil Ahmed Sherwani sahib had it published in Urdu in Hijri1411 (1990). The foreword is by him.

A Hadith sharif that creates a lot of concern is the following:

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (R.A.) narrates that Rasulullah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) said:

"Be prompt in doing good deeds (before you are overtaken) by turbulence which would be like a part of the dark night. During (that stormy period) a man would be a believer in the morning and turn to disbelief in the evening, or he would

be a believer in the evening and turn to disbelief in the morning, and sell his faith for worldly goods." (Muslim sharif)

Faith - iman - is that precious gift that needs to be safeguarded at all costs. What is iman? What are its ramifications? It is in answer to these and many other questions concerning iman that the subject of Tawhid has been chosen for Booklet Number Twelve.

2. AN INTRODUCTION TO HADHRAT WAKIL AHMED SHERWANI SAHIB (R.A.)

Hadhrat Wakil Ahmed Sherwani Sahib (r.a.) is the illustrious son of an illustrious father - his father being Hadhrat Shah Maulana Hafiz Jalil Ahmed Sherwani sahib (r.a.), who was also known as Piyare-Mia, khalifah of Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (r.a.). Mention of him has been made in the foreword of Booklet Number Ten.

Hadhrat Wakil Ahmed Sherwani Sahib (r.a.) was born in Thanah Bhawan, in the house of Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (r.a.). Although the family was originally from Aligarh, Hadhrat Wakil Ahmed Sherwani Sahib's (r.a.) father stayed for seventeen to eighteen years in the company of Hadhrat Thanwi (r.a.), staying in his house, this being the reason why Hadhrat Wakil Ahmed Sherwani Sahib (r.a.) was born there. After his birth he was blessed by being fed some dates chewed by Hadhrat Thanwi (r.a.).

His dini education started in "Khanqah Imdadiyah Ashrafiyah" in Thanah Bhawan. Two years after Hadhrat Thanwi's (r.a.) demise Hadhrat Wakil Ahmed Sherwani Sahib's (r.a.) father returned to Aligarh where his father taught him the initial Arabic kitabs. After the formation of Pakistan his father settled in Lahore and became engrossed in the establishment of the "Majlis Siyanatul Muslimin, Pakistan" - for which purpose he had taken up residence in Pakistan - and Hadhrat Wakil Ahmed Sherwani Sahib's (r.a.) completed his studies in Lahore, graduating in 1957 as an alim and mufti in "Jamiah Ashrafiyah".

Two years after qualifying he commenced teaching at the same institute and he has been there ever since. He is also the Deputy Mufti at the same institute. He is also tirelessly involved in furthering the aims and objects of the "Majlis Siyanatul Muslimin, (Pakistan)". As mentioned previously in Booklet Number Ten, the "Majlis Siyanatul Muslimin, (Pakistan)" was established by his father, Hadhrat Shah Maulana Hafiz Jalil Ahmed Sherwani Sahib (r.a.), to give practical force to the all-comprehensive programme that Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (r.a.) had laid down for the reformation of the Muslim Ummah. Hadhrat Wakil Ahmed Sherwani Sahib (r.a.) is a member of the Shurah of "Majlis Siyanatul Muslimin, (Pakistan)". He is also editor of the monthly magazine, "As-Siyannah", that the organisation prints and distributes. He has eight other publications to his name.

3. CONNECTION WITH HADHRAT MAULANA MASIHULLAH KHAN SAHIB (R.A.)

Hadhrat Wakil Ahmed Sherwani Sahib (r.a.) is the nephew of our Hadhrat Maulana Masihullah Khan Sahib (r.a.), his mother being our Hadhrat's (r.a.) sister. Besides that Hadhrat Wakil Sahib is also our Hadhrat's (r.a.) son-in-law, being married to one of our Hadhrat's (r.a.) daughters. Hadhrat Wakil Sahib is also our Hadhrat's (r.a.) khalifah.

Dr. I. M.

[Hereunder follows the foreword to "Al-Tawhidul Haqiqi" as penned by Hadhrat Wakil Ahmed Sherwani Sahib (r.a.)]

4. FOREWORD

This "At-Tawhid-ul-Haqiqi", which is in your hands and appears in the form of a treatise, is an all-encompassing, forceful w'az (lecture) which arif-billah, Hadhrat Maulana Shah Masihullah Khan Sahib, Jalalabadi (r.a.), Khalifah-Arshad of Hakim-ul-Ummat, Mujaddid-ul-Millat, Hadhrat Thanwi (R.A.), had delivered somewhere. This w'az maintains its vibrancy by perusing it and reading it; it is an excellent rendering on "tawhid"; it refreshes one's iman; it is a magnificent gift for the mu'min (believer); it is an amazing source of employment for writers and lecturers. Reading it or listening to it mollifies the stoniest of stony hearts; and it reveals the way (to guidance) to the antagonists of tawhid!

It has been delivered in a manner both charming and pleasing, and in a mode that it involuntarily draws every reader towards his Ma'b'ud-Haqiqi (i.e. Allah Ta'ala). Every Muslim, in general, and every writer and every public speaker, in particular, should read this w'az repeatedly and make it his/her prized object.

Wakil Ahmed (may he be forgiven).

Baitul-Ashraf

78 A Model Town

Lahore.

5.THE REALITY OF TAWHID-THE BASIC PILLARS OF ISLaM

The mubarak (honoured/ blessed) statement of Huzىr-e-Akram (i.e. Rasulullah (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) is that Islam is founded on five basic pillars. Firstly, to bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah Ta'ala, and that Muhammed (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) is the bondsman and messenger of Allah Ta'ala; secondly, to perform salat (i.e. the five daily compulsory prayers) with punctuality; thirdly, to give zakat (i.e. the compulsory charity for those who are of means); fourthly, to keep the fasts of Ramadhan sharif; and fifthly, to perform Haj (i.e. the pilgrimage to Makkah). From the above translation of the Hadith sharif you will have come to realise that the foundation of Islam has been placed on five items. Also, it will be known to everybody that only when the foundation of any item is firmly established on some definite aspects then only will that item and structure be considered to be perfect and solid, worth relying on, and it will then qualify for producing peace of mind. Otherwise it will cause a variety of apprehensions and a dispersion of thoughts, making life veritably bitter. This being so, why then is constructive benefit not taken from the accepted principles and known prerequisites of the Islamic foundations? If even one foundation of Islam becomes weak or deficient in a person then that person's Islam will be shaky and defective, not strong and perfect. A statement of Hadhrat Umar (R.A.) is as follows:

"We are such a nation that Allah Ta'ala has blessed us with izzat (honour) with Islam."

These are the five fundamental teachings of Islam. When one has developed firmness and permanence in them will one then attain that jah aur jalal (prestige and grandeur), that izzat aur hashmat (honour and dignity), whereby one will then be called a kamil (exemplary/ perfect) Muslim, and one will be able to live a life full of izzat (honour) because one has fulfilled the call inherent in:

"We are such a nation that Allah Ta'ala has blessed us with izzat (honour) with Islam."

For the Muslim, who is also a claimant of another life (in the Hereafter) and has firm belief in it, it is his primary fardh (compulsory duty) to grasp firmly on to the five fundamentals of Islam and to remain steadfast on them. The command of Allah Ta'ala is:

All of you grasp firmly to the silsilah (rope) of Allah Ta'ala. (S.3 a.102)

This rope, this silsilah, is veritably this Islam on which we have been given the instruction to hold steadfastly on to! Consequently, in order to be exemplary (kamil) Muslims, in order to live with honour and respect, in order to attain a life of serenity and comfort in both the worlds, and in order to be blessed with the true pleasure and happiness of our Ahkamul-Hakimin (i.e. Allah Ta'ala), it is necessary to come to know the details of these five items and to understand their reality. And this is the primary lesson of our lives.

6.THE BASIC PRINCIPLE

From amongst the principles the first principle is the Kalimah- Shahadat, that is:

I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah Ta'ala and I bear witness that Muhammed (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) is His bondsman and messenger.

This is a basic principle for the following reason:

Everybody knows that in Din (religion) there are various categories, some of which are principles and others are branches of these. Then, among the principles, one is a basic principle and the others are ordinary principles. Who is not aware that the principles take precedence over the branches, and also that, among the principles, the basic principle takes precedence and priority over all the other principles? This means that the basic principle is such that all the branches are dependant on it.

Thus, whoever accepts the basic principle enunciated above will be called a Muslim.

Therefore, the first basic aspect without which no virtuous actions are acceptable, without which no ibadat (worship) is beneficial, without which no ta'at (obedience) is a basis for qurb-e-Khudawandi (closeness to Allah Ta'ala), is this Din-e-Muhammedi and Mazhab-e- Islam (i.e. the religion of Islam as brought to us by Muhammed (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam)).

The (only) Din (acceptable) by Allah Ta'ala is Islam. S.3 a.19

Another statement of Bari Ta'ala (Allah) is as follows:

That person who desires and searches for another din besides Islam, then (this other din and mazhab) will never be accepted. S.3 a.85

7.THE STATUS OF ISLAM AND IMAN

This status of Islam and iman is such that no matter how magnanimous a deed a person performs, but if he is not a Muslim then that deed has no worth. A person may undertake a thousand acts of mujahadah and riyadhat (special spiritual exercises) but if he is not a Muslim then there will be no beneficial results. It is in connection with such people that Bari Ta'ala states:

These are those people for whom there is nothing else in the Hereafter except the Fire (Jahannam - Hell), and whatever they did in the world will be in vain and of no effect. S.11 a.16

From this you would have come to realise the virtue of Islam and to what degree is the above principle fardh (compulsory) from among the fardh principles. Without it there is absolutely no salvation, neither complete nor partial. This is the greatest ne'mat (blessing) from among the a'mal and fara'idh (deeds and compulsory acts).

By leaving out what is sunnat and mustahab (i.e. non-compulsory acts) there is reproof and it is also possible that there is no reproof. And by leaving out what is fardh and wajib there is punishment, even though it is possible that there is magfirat (forgiveness) without punishment. However, Islam and iman are such fara'idh that in their absence there is no situation except that of punishment. Punishment becomes compulsory, and that too permanently (da'imi-abad-ul-abad) - punishment for a time period that will never come to an end! This is because the absence of iman and Islam is kufr (blasphemy/ heathenism rejection of Islam and/or iman) and shirk (polytheism/ paganism), and in relation to kufr and shirk Bari Ta'ala states:

Verily, Allah Ta'ala will not forgive shirk, beside which He will forgive all (save) to whom He will. S.4 a.48

8.ISLAM AND IMAN AND UNITARIANISM

Upon this if any person perhaps has the doubt that this ayet (verse) states forgiveness for shirk and not kufr that there are some kuffar who are not mushrik (who do not make shirk) but are mawahid (unitarians, believing in One God), but reject Islam, and therefore asks, "So, where is there mention in this ayet that they will not be forgiven?" The answer to this is as follows: Firstly, kufr is that very entity which is contrary to Islam, whether it is associated with shirk or not. The punishment is the same for both. Secondly, at another place an ayet related to the kuffar also appears:

Those from amongst the people of the Book (Ahle-Kitab) and the mushrikin who have adopted kufr, will go to the Fire of Jahannam, wherein they will remain forever, (and) these are the worst of the creation. S.98 a.6

In this ayet the kuffar have been equated to the Ahle-Kitab (People of the Book) and the mushrikin, and they are also stated as entering Jahannam. Also, to dispute that entry into Jahannam means a stay for a short while, which does not necessitate a permanent stay, is incorrect. The reason is that it is incorrect to impute different meanings to one word in a single statement. Thus, when it has been proven that the stay for the mushrik is permanent then, it follows, that this is also proof that the stay for the kafir is also permanent, because the order applies to both in this ayet.

Also, another statement of Bari Ta'ala is as follows:

Verily, those who have become kafir and they have stopped (others) from the Path of Allah Ta'ala and they have remained as kafir and died (as such), then Allah Ta'ala will never forgive them. S.47 a.34

Thus, it is quite plain to see that the kafir will permanently be in punishment, from which it will also be understood that the kuffar will never be forgiven.

9.THE APPROPRIATENESS BETWEEN CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

This is also an answer to a doubt some people harbour. They ask, "Why does the Shariat (the laws of Islam) lay down permanent punishment for kufr? - whereas punishment should be appropriate to the crime. The crime is limited, but the punishment meted out is unlimited. For example: a particular kafir's age has reached fifty years and he has died in the state of kufr. So, the crime of kufr that he has committed is only for a period of fifty years, but his punishment is going to be for an unlimited period, much longer than fifty years. What is the reason for this?"

FIRST ANSWER:

It is accepted that the punishment should be in conformity with the crime. However, it is accepted by everybody that

conformity does not mean that the crime and the punishment should be equal in duration. If this were so, then a thief who is involved in stealing for a period of two hours should be sentenced by the judge to two hours of imprisonment! Nobody would say that such a judge is just. From this it is apparent that as far as crime and punishment are concerned the meaning is not that both should be in conformity with regard to the time-periods of both. However, the meaning is that the severity of the punishment should be in conformity with the severity of the crime.

Do you not know that in many actions the niyet (intention) also plays a big role? Reward and punishment are not dependant merely on the outward appearance.

For example: A person is deceived into drinking alcohol unwittingly. There is no sin on him for this, even though the settings appear to be those of sin. As his intention was not to drink alcohol this is not a crime. On the other hand, take a person who goes to a bar with the intention of drinking alcohol. The bartender serves him sharbat instead of alcohol and he drinks it thinking that it is alcohol then this person will be sinful. The reason is that it was his intention to drink alcohol.

Take another example: A person in a dark room has sexual intercourse with a woman, thinking her to be a stranger (i.e. not his wife), but it turns out that she is his wife! He will be a sinner. In a similar manner, if he were to have sexual intercourse with his wife and imagines her to be some other woman in order to extract extra enjoyment, then too, he will be a sinner! The question is: why should he be a sinner? The reason is that his intention was that of having intercourse with a strange woman, even though the apparent setting was not of sin. On the contrary, take the situation where it is the first night of marriage and the groom (not having met his bride previously) mistakenly has sexual intercourse with some other woman (thinking her to be his bride), then the groom will not be a sinner. In technical terms this is called "Wati-bish-shubah". Any offspring conceived as a result will be legitimate. Iddat for the woman will be compulsory.

So, in a similar manner, is the situation of the kafir: Even though his crime is limited in time, but his intention was to remain in kufr for always, for he is virtually saying, "If I were to live for eternity I will remain in this condition of kufr." Therefore, in accordance with his niyet (intention) he will suffer everlasting punishment. [If his intention was not to remain in kufr forever, but to bring iman before he died, then he would not have waited but would have brought iman as soon as possible, seeing that death can occur at any moment - Tr.] In the same manner, the Islam of a Muslim appears to be for a limited period, but his niyet is, "If I were to remain alive I would remain steadfast on Islam forever." Therefore, he will be rewarded according to his intention and he will remain in Jannat forever.

SECOND ANSWER:

Kufr is an abrogation of Huqىq-e-Ilahi (rights of Allah Ta'ala). And, as Huqىq-e-Ilahi are unlimited, the punishment should also be commensurably unlimited.

THIRD ANSWER:

If one takes a person who is extremely capable and has all the excellent qualities to a very high degree but, at the same time, he is also guilty of treason, everybody knows what his punishment should be. It is obvious that he will be executed or exiled to a far distant land or be imprisoned for life. However, up to today no philosopher has ever thought of criticising this punishment and asked, "Why this permanent punishment?" The judge will not even have a whispering doubt that the sentence is unreasonable upon passing this sentence. However, when Khuda Ta'ala (Allah) does the same then one has a doubt about it! What type of iman is this and what type of Islam? To Allah Ta'ala do we belong and to Him is our return!

Essentially, it has been proven that if an individual is not obedient to the government in power all his excellent qualifications will not be able to save him, whether he be a very prominent scientist or mathematician, engineer or doctor, manufacturer or merchant, historian or publisher, poet or author, philosopher or sociologist, officer or ruler. All these accomplishments will not be able to save him from the punishment of having committed treason. Because of his having committed treason he will necessarily be liable to be sentenced to death or be imprisoned for life. Alas! For that person who commits treason against the state it is fully accepted that all his deeds and all his good qualities become nullified, whereas that person who commits treason against the Mightiest of Rulers - Ahkamul-Hakimin (i.e. Allah Ta'ala) by not bringing iman - this being synonymous to treason that he does not accept the Laws - that the punishment for his treason is criticised and condemned!

Irshad-e-Rabbani (i.e. the statement of our Rabb) is as follows:

These are such people that, besides Jahannam, there is nothing for them (in the way of thawab, etc.) in the Hereafter, and whatever they did will in its entirety prove to be futile, and (in reality) whatever they are doing now also is without effect. S.11 a.16

10.LAWAZIM-E-MUHAQQIQIYAT

[The necessary qualities of a true scholar. Muhaqqiq: scholar/ philosopher/ one who has an in-depth knowledge of what is Truth.]

The above types of doubts are emitted from the lips and tongues of those who consider themselves to be firm and truthful Muslims, even considering themselves to be leaders of the nation and their reformers! The reason for such doubts arising is that these people think, "We are muhaqqiq!" All this corruptive thinking is the result of the claim to being a muhaqqiq, whereas one of the compulsory requisites of being a muhaqqiq is not to consider oneself to be a muhaqqiq, even though a person may be a qualified and excellent alim (scholar/ graduate of a Darul-ul-#1609;m). So, what of that person who is not a qualified alim and considers himself to be a muhaqqiq and allamah (scholar)? So much so that nowadays the knowledge of those people who consider themselves to be muhaqqiq is very limited. Let us take just one example: They consider imkan-e-zat (the mere possibility of something existing) to be wujىb (the definite existence of that item - so much so that it is impossible for it to exist). Similarly, they consider imtina-e-'adi (something which is improbable - that which is not normally possible) to be imtina'e-'aqli aur mahal (theoretically improbable and impossible). Having studied a bit of history, having learnt a bit of philosophy and having a passing acquaintance with modern literature they now consider themselves to be muhaqqiq! And when a person considers himself to be a muhaqqiq then the following line of reasoning predominates: "Whosoever opposes our opinions is also opposed to factual evidence and research." They then feel free to express whatever fanciful criticisms that cross their minds. One such criticism expressed by them is the one that has been discussed above.

11.TREASON WITH REGARD TO RISALAT

[Risalat - the acceptance of Hadhrat Muhammed (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) as the final Rasul (Messenger) of Allah Ta'ala.]

Having dealt with that criticism, another criticism will now be discussed, the essence of which is:

"Fine. This much has been understood that if a person commits an act of treason against Allah Ta'ala then all his deeds should be cancelled and nullified. But if a person believes in Allah and he does not believe in Rasulullah (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) then what is the reason for his deeds being cancelled and him being declared a kafir?" Take it that there are also many such who consider themselves to be Muslim but do not consider rejection of Risalat to be kufr. They say, "Just tawhid is sufficient." Whereas in the Qur'an-e-Pak, which is the Kalam-e- Ilahi (Word / Speech of Allah Ta'ala) several references have been made to our Nabi (Prophet) (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) being the Rasul of Allah Ta'ala. A clear statement is the following:

Muhammed (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) is the Rasul of Allah. S.48 a.29

When in the Kalam-e-Ilahi itself it has explicitly been stated that Muhammed (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) is a Rasul, what grounds are there for refutation? By its refutation it is necessary to conclude - we seek the protection of Allah Ta'ala! - that Allah Ta'ala is a liar and that Allah Ta'ala is not perfect in the attribute of Sidq (Honesty)! In actual fact "to believe in Allah Ta'ala" means that one has to believe that Allah Ta'ala is free and pure of all faults and deficiencies, and that He is considered to be the embodiment of all the cumulative and comprehensive Attributes (Sifat) of perfection. From among these Attributes is that of Sidq. If an individual does not have this belief then he will not be considered to believe in Allah Ta'ala, but to believe in his own fancies.

Thus, it has been proven that if a person rejects Risalat and does not believe in it, then he has committed treason against Allah Ta'ala, and it is obvious that whoever commits treason against Allah Ta'ala his punishment is everlasting.

12.THE STATUS OF AQA'ID & A'MAL (BELIEFS & DEEDS)

Some intellectuals of modern times have eliminated aqa'id - not at the theoretical level but at the practical level - from the circle of the notion of rectitude. They even consider themselves to have free choice in the matter. They feel that aqidah (sing. of aqa'id) consists only of some thoughts and therefore fall into a category of non- essentials.

That leaves one with a'mal. They do consider them to be necessarily effective to some degree, but even then only some qualities are considered to be so. For example: mercy; self-sacrifice; compassion; assisting others; generosity

and benevolence; love of one's people; etc. They have based the whole concept of being civilised and cultured on these few qualities. They consider portrayal of these qualities to be a very high degree of being civilised. They have therefore based a'mal on these few qualities and have put forward this criticism, "Take a person who respects and honours a buzurg (pious, saintly person), he believes Allah Ta'ala to be One, he is not even disrespectful with regard to the Rasuls, he is obedient to his parents, he has beautiful manners and politeness, he is shy and humble, he speaks softly and with humility, he is a good host, he keeps to his promises, as far as possible he tries to relieve the grief and suffering of others, he has good relations with his neighbours, and he is even merciful to the animals. In essence, he is a treasure of very good qualities. However, we fail to understand why, by the absence of just one issue, how can all his achievements be washed away? On the other hand is that person who does not bother about halal and haram (permissible and forbidden), who does not fulfil his fara'idh (compulsory duties), who does not perform his namaz (daily obligatory prayers), who does not keep his fasts, is of horrible manners and is an extremely perverse sinner - a fasiq and fajir - such a Muslim will live in Jannat forever. Even though he is punished but eventually he will definitely enter Jannat. This we do not understand. This appears to be absolute bigotry and narrow-mindedness."

13. ANSWER TO THIS CRITICISM

This has been explained already but needs repetition.

Let me ask this critic the following: A person is exceptionally capable, he has acquired the highest qualifications, he is an engineer without peer, a craftsman par-excellence, a brilliant mathematician, a philosopher unrivalled, an outstanding historian, an unsurpassed commander of the armed forces, a matchless marksman, a scientific researcher and inventor, BUT he is guilty of committing treason, being neither prepared to accept the laws of the country nor prepared to submit to them. Everybody knows what punishment the judge will impose on this person. It is obvious that the law of the government will cause him to be exiled, executed or to be imprisoned for life. In fact, I take qasm (an oath) and say that nobody will ever have a waswasah (a fleeting doubt) with regard to this sentence of the judge and state that such a severe sentence is plain bigotry and contrary to fairness or contrary to being merciful. Everybody understands that treason is such a crime that the punishment should be severe, irrespective of the quantity or degree of the perpetrator's good qualities and achievements. Should any doubtful person have any waswasah with regard to the judge's pronouncement then it will be said, "The poor fellow! What can one do? He is simple-minded - an idiot."

Therefore, whatever waswasah apply to Allah Ta'ala should apply equally to the judge, but the indignant irony and contradiction is that at no time is there any waswasah with regard to the judge's pronouncement but when Allah Ta'ala has made a pronouncement based on similar lines doubt is cast on it! That person who commits treason against the state and consequently all his deeds and good qualities become nullified and ignored and his punishment is permanent, all this is accepted completely and considered to be according to reason, whereas the punishment for that person committing treason against Allah Ta'ala one must place doubt on it? "Aji-NmA! Nobody will object that a person who has been gambling, stealing, usurping trusts, assaulting others, raping - one who has been involved in such flagrant offences and has displayed the worst of worst behaviour, that he should be dealt with so leniently as to be sentenced for a period limited to a mere two to four years and thereafter be released! In comparison, that person who has several accomplishments, he is capable and honoured, generous, humble in nature, a man of his word, modest and soft-hearted, on his committing treason his punishment should be permanent? The poor fellow will never be released. He will spend his whole life in prison. He will now be permanently separated from his friends and acquaintances, from his mother and father, from his wife and children. Heavens, is this fair? On the one hand is that person of evil disposition and character, who is sentenced to a short-term punishment and, on the other hand, is that person of beautiful conduct and having the welfare of the creation at heart, who is punished for an indefinite period just on one issue! This apprehension, this doubt, has never occurred to anybody and it is unlikely to occur. Should any criticism arise and relayed to the judge, the judge will reply, "There is a difference between the two. The one, even though he is contravening the laws of the state, yet he accepts the rule of the lawgiver - the king. He does not commit treason. The other, from the very outset, does not accept the state and desires to overthrow it. He does not accept the king."

My question is: Is this statement of the judge accepted or not? It is obvious that the answer is in the affirmative. The answer of the judge is according to reason and logic. So, it is astonishing that an answer that is issued from the lips of the judge sahib is accepted and if a similar answer is issued from the lips of the ulema-e-Islam it is not acceptable! And the latter are accused of harshness and bigotry!

It is difficult to understand. Is it a crime to be an alim, that whatever issues from his lips has to be rejected, no matter how correct he may be? And if the same statement issues from the lips of a modernist it should be accepted immediately? If a doctor says that drinking alcohol is harmful to one's health then one is prepared to stop drinking immediately. And if the same statement is made by a r#1609;hani (r#1609;h - soul) doctor, that drinking alcohol is harmful to one's r#1609;hani health then no credibility is given to this statement!

In actual fact this poor alim sahib is not making this statement on his own behalf but he is making it under the instruction of that hakim (physician) of the body and the r#1609;h, of mind and matter, leader of both the worlds, Muhammed (sallallaa hu alaihi wasallam) and on the authority of the statement of Allah Ta'ala. In fact, the relevant statement of Bari Ta'ala is the following:

It is nothing else but that alcohol and gambling and idols and arrows of divination are the filthy works of Shaitan. S.5 a.90

It is astounding that this is the condition of Muslims and then they say, "We are mu'min (believers) and Muslim!" These types of persons are also present in abundance in this age. That is why I have presented examples. Otherwise there is no requirement or necessity for examples, for examples are there for clarification. In this instance there is no obscurity which necessitated the presentation of examples for the sake of clarification. So, the actual need that arose for these examples to be presented is that the attitudes of people have become so subverted that even in simple, plain issues they create suspicion and doubt. Issues may not be in the category of aqidah, but they definitely fall in the category of opinions. That is why the necessity was perceived to clarify by means of examples, because the basis of salvation in Islam is similar to the situation of obeying the state as a basis of his acceptance by the state. Such a person, even if he commits crimes, after he has served the sentences for his crimes, one day but one day he will be freed again. On the contrary, there is just no way in which the punishment will be terminated for that person who has committed treason against the state.

14. THE WEALTH OF ISLAM

After my aforementioned discussion, together with the examples cited, it has been adequately established that if there were any set of beliefs that are worthy of being taken to be the fundamental ideology of life and the bases of all actions then that can only be of Islam. There are no other sets of beliefs that are worthy of being made the fulcrum around which all a'mal (deeds) revolve.

Hence, the claim that I had made in the beginning: that if any concept can be given the highest eminence and priority, then it is only Islam. This has been clarified adequately. Also, from this talk of mine, the virtue of Islam and its mandatory nature would also have been understood. Its absolute value would have been realised that the qab#1609;liat (acceptance) of all that is fardh and wajib is based on having the correct aqidah of Islam and that neither any fardh nor any wajib can be performed without this basis.

15. THE STATUS OF FARDH RELATIVE TO NAFL

Nowadays people consider the nafl and mustahbat (non-obligatory) to have more virtues than the fardh (compulsory), so much so that those who are punctual with their nawafil and mustahbat are praised extensively even though they are not performing properly what is fardh. On the other hand, that person who is content in performing only what is fardh, wajib and sunnat-e-mu'akkidah, but does this beautifully and correctly, he is not valued and heeded and nobody praises him. People think, "What does he do? Nothing special." In actual fact the reality is just the opposite. The haqiqat (reality) is this: The virtues of what is fardh are more extensive than that of nawafil and mustahbat, and the thawab (reward) is also greater. As an illustrative example we can liken what is fardh to basic food and what is nawafil and mustahbat to condiments like chutney. It is obvious that basic food will have greater virtue, value and priority over the chutney. Merely consuming chutney without food is without gain, but food without chutney is not so. This theme has been narrated in a Hadith-e-Qudsi as follows:

Whosoever shows animosity to my wali (friend), I declare war upon him; and no bandah (bondsmen) of mine can attain closeness to Me by means more beloved to Me than by virtue of such acts which I have made fardh on him; and My bandah will continue to draw closer to Me by means of nawafil until I make him My beloved.

The noble muhaqqiqin fuqaha (jurists) and the sufiyan have also clarified it very nicely, that by means of fara'idh closeness to Allah Ta'ala is attained to a much greater extent than merely by nawafil. This is the status of the fara'idh. And our situation is this that we place greater importance on being punctual with the nawafil and mustahbat. So much so that we have seen that some people do not perform the fara'idh with as much enthusiasm and fervour as

they do the nawafil. Then there are also those people who are performing the fara'idh, but have the deprecating thought, "We are doing nothing. We are only performing our fara'idh."

Now, if this thought presents itself out of a feeling of humility and lowliness then it is *maḥmūd* (good and noble). However, if it arises because he considers nawafil and mustahbat to be superior to fara'idh, then this thought is reprehensible. The result of this is that the *tawfiq* (capacity) to make *shukr* (be thankful and show gratitude) on this *ne'mat* (blessing) is reduced.

Another point: With regard to that person who is involved in performing nawafil and mustahbat and performs his fara'idh only under duress, one finds that others become devoted to him and he himself becomes convinced of his own status! He now considers himself to be a *shab-guzar* (a pious person who stays awake at night in *salat*), even though he tends to shy away from the fara'idh - that is, his fara'idh consist merely of up and down movements and do not contain the serenity, etiquettes and correctness that they should be performed with.

The effect of this error is that people do not appreciate the value of such a great *ne'mat* (blessing) as Islam and a person will think, "What have I ever got? I have nothing!" In actual fact he has a very great treasure which the richest person in the world does not have, and that is the wealth of Islam and *iman*. If he has shortcomings in the other fara'idh then he will be sinful, and the effect will be that he will not enter immediately into *Jannat*, but only after some time. However, without Islam there is just no question of attaining salvation, not through any other means. And it is also just possible that some sinners may be forgiven and not be punished. This also will happen.

16. AUDACITY TO COMMIT CRIME

Upon this perhaps somebody may raise the following argument:

ARGUMENT

"Really? Do the Muslims believe that sin and disobedience can be forgiven without punishment? If this is so then the Muslims will develop the boldness and audacity to commit sin and be disobedient and, even after having committed the greatest of major crimes, they will still have hope of salvation."

ANSWER

The answer to this is as follows: If, for argument's sake, the consequence of the above belief is that one is motivated into committing crimes, then the result would be that these consequences will be evidenced to a greater extent in those who are closely connected to Islam, i.e. in the *ulema* (scholars), the *ittiqiya* and the *sāfiya* (the pious and saintly). These groups should manifest the consequences more and more. The reason is as follows: The general principle is that the effects of a religion are manifested more among those people who are closely attached to the religion. Whereas we see - and the *kuffar* also bear testimony to the fact - that those people who have more knowledge about Islam and are more closely connected, never mind being involved in crimes, they refrain from getting involved even in doubtful deeds.

17. AN INCIDENT DEMONSTRATING TAQWA

This incident concerns a *khalifah* of our *murshid* (spiritual guide), *Hakim-ul-Ummat Hadhrat Thanwi* (r.a.):

Once, while travelling by train, he had with him luggage greater in weight than stipulated by the regulations. He had the funds to pay for the excess luggage but, because of the limited time before the train's departure, he could not see to the weighing of the luggage.

Arriving at his destination he related to the clerk at the station what had happened. He had the luggage weighed and requested the clerk to take the money for the excess. The clerk said that he had no time and told him to carry on and that there was no need to pay. However, this person replied, "You are not the owner of the railways. You are just an employee." (That is, as an employee he had no authority to cancel the payment. Only the owner could do this.) He kept on insisting on paying.

Finally, he went to the station master and related the whole story to him. The station master also told him, "Do not be concerned. You just carry on." However, this person was adamant on paying. The clerk, who had followed him to the office, and the station master started discussing the matter between themselves. Speaking in English (thinking that this person would not understand), the one commented to the other, "This fellow appears to be drunk. Despite our refusing he insists on paying for the excess." This person was a *saleh* (virtuous) individual. He was also well versed in English and understood every word spoken by the two. He said, "I do not drink. But it is our religious instruction that one should not be negligent concerning the rights of others." Despite this the two railway officials refused to take payment.

He thought to himself, "What should I do now?" The idea occurred to him, "Let me buy a train ticket to the value of

the excess luggage and then tear up the ticket. In this way I will have discharged the rights of the railways." This is what he eventually did.

Thereafter it came to be well known among the officials of the railway that those persons who are on their way to Thanah-Bhawan to be with Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib (r.a.) do not travel without first having their luggage weighed. Thereafter they used to weigh the luggage without any dilly-dallying.

This was the tremendous importance given to m'amalat (dealings) in the teachings of our Hadhrat Thanwi (r.a.). And huqىq-ul-ibad (rights of the creation) is also a form of m'amalat. Truthfully, can any nation portray the type of example shown in this incident?

To continue: If the aqidah mentioned previously were to have the effect of causing "boldness and audacity to commit sin and be disobedient" then the ulema and suleha would be the foremost in boldness and audacity. This is not the effect of the aqidah, as the critics would have us believe. However, its effect is to cause abstention from sins and revulsion for sins.

But, alas! The condition of the critics is as follows:

"The gaze of my corrupted sight is lifted up, (by reason of which) his every achievement appears flawed."

In other words, such a virtuous mas'alah (religious ruling) that cuts the very roots of crime, those with corrupted sight see it as an invitation to being audacious in committing crimes!

Besides this, even looking at it from the theoretical point of view, this aqidah can never be the basis for the perpetuation of crime. If such were the case, it would mean that Haq Ta'ala will forgive whomsoever he wishes despite that individual having committed major sins, whereas no person from amongst us knows whether Allah Ta'ala will deal with him in terms of favour and forgiveness or in terms of punishment because, basically, the Laws of the Shariah are the criteria. In this situation no individual can be unconcerned about being punished. To the contrary, every individual has the fear that he will be dealt with in accordance with the Laws.

AN EXAMPLE

The example of this is as follows:

A person is sexually impotent. Out of regret and shame he swallows some strychnine in an attempt to commit suicide. By chance he does not die, but the strychnine gets digested into his system and makes him potent! (There are cases reported where this has happened.) However, the point is: because of this incidental and isolated occurrence will anybody suffering from impotence be rash enough to take strychnine? Never! In fact, every intelligent person knows that the specific effect of poison is to destroy. If, by chance, the specific effect of the poison is not seen, it does not mean that the poison has lost its specific quality. Therefore, neither will anybody give permission to others to swallow strychnine to improve his manliness and sexual drive nor will anybody be rash enough to do so himself.

In the same way everybody knows that the state or a ruler will grant an amnesty to a murderer as a royal favour. Despite this knowledge nobody will be rash enough to go around committing murder because it is known that the basic sentence for murder is execution by hanging and this sentence is carried out in practice as well, according to the laws of the country. On the other hand, royal favours and amnesty are not laws, but are dependent on the wishes of the ruler. It is not known with whom he will deal favourably and grant amnesty and with whom he will not. Therefore, trusting and depending on the probability of an amnesty can never be cited as being the basis for instigating people to commit crime.

In the very same way it is not a Law that sins will be forgiven without punishment - it is merely a Royal amnesty. How can anybody infer this to be the cause of incitement to sin?

ANOTHER EXAMPLE

If somebody were to pick up a clod of earth for istinja (cleansing oneself after answering the call of nature) and - by chance - the clod of earth turns out to be a gold nugget, so, should one now depend on this type of coincidental happening, discard trading and agriculture, and just sit back? Obviously the answer is in the negative. This being so, can anyone involved in major sins sit back complacently on the basis of someone being forgiven incidentally for

having committed a major sin?

18.SPECIAL FORGIVENESS

Also, the person being forgiven for such a sin will be forgiven because of some pious deed of his, a deed that was exceptionally maqbul (accepted) by Allah Ta'ala. Through its barkat (blessings) other sins are forgiven. And nobody even knows whether he has any such deed which is exceptionally maqbul by Allah Ta'ala and through the barkat of which his other sins will be forgiven! Therefore, the attitude, "Commit whichever sins you want to. They will be forgiven without being punishment," - this degree of unconcern - can never be correct under any circumstances.

It is because of Allah Ta'ala's attributes of 'Afuwwun aur Karam (Forgiveness and Grace) that some sins may be forgiven without punishment. He is Rahim (Most Merciful) and Karim (Most Bounteous) to an unlimited extent towards His bondsmen. Upon hearing this, instead of becoming brazen enough to commit sins, the compulsion should be to increase one's obedience. This is because the greater the favours of one's Master the greater will be the indebtedness shown by that person with sense and who is right-minded. He will progress further in the enthusiasm and fervour of his ta'at (obedience) and ibadat (worship). This effect is witnessed by those who have a greater connection with Islam and by companions of a king.

So now, based on this aqidah, if there develops an urge in anybody to be audacious and commit crimes, then it will be said that this is not the effect of the aqidah, but it is the effect of the person's innate perversity and depravity. This would be similar to the situation where a king is bountiful and the right-minded become more loyal as a result. However, some foolish people are brash enough to commit crimes, despite the king being so magnanimous. Will the evil actions of these people be attributed to the king's generosity or to their own malevolence? Obviously, the king will not be to blame.

19.DEFINITE FORGIVENESS

Be impartial. Put your intelligence to use. Where is His mercy; and where is our obstinacy!

Some people quote,

Do not despair of the Mercy of Allah Ta'ala. Verily, Allah Ta'ala will forgive all sins. Verily, He is Most Forgiving. S.39 a.53

This is Allah Ta'ala's statement. They maintain that from this it appears that Allah Ta'ala will definitely forgive all sins, because here -"whom He wishes" - does not appear.

However, these people should understand that the occasion of the revelation of this ayet is in connection with those who had desired to discard kufr and accept Islam and had even done so. They had this apprehension, "In future we will refrain from sin. But what will our accountability be with regard to the enormous crimes we committed when we were sunk in kufr - we caused harm to the Sahaba (R.A.)and we caused a variety of torments to Rasulallah(sallallaa hu alaihi wasallam)? If, after having accepted Islam, we are penalised for these then what is the benefit of having accepted Islam?"

It comes in the Hadith sharif that the kuffar presented themselves to Rasulallah(sallallaa hu alaihi wasallam) and said,

"If we accept Islam what will be the treatment meted out to us with regard to our previous sins?"

It was in answer to this query that the above ayet was revealed. There is a phrase that appears at the beginning of this ayet:

The meaning of this ayet will therefore be, "Those bondsmen of Mine who have made zulm (oppressed) on themselves... (Note that the past tense is used here.) ...should not despair of the Mercy of Allah Ta'ala. Verily, Allah Ta'ala will forgive all sins. Verily, He is Most Merciful."

Hence, the categorical promise of forgiveness that is contained in this ayet applies not generally but specifically to new Muslims.

20.CONDITIONAL FORGIVENESS

In another ayet there is the restrictive condition of Allah Ta'ala's Will (mashiyet) being applied to those who are disobedient after becoming Muslim and are forgiven without being punished:

He forgives besides that whom He wills. S.4 a.116

And if it is said, (the general application of the word will be taken into account and the specific application will not apply) that, according to this rule, the ayet will be kept generalised and unrestricted, then I shall say that if one does not restrict it to the specific occasion of its revelation with this ayet then we will have to restrict it with another ayet, because it is compulsory to restrict one ayet with another ayet to bring uniformity in the situation. It is apparent that the above ayet and the one before are both with regard to sinners and those who are disobedient. In the one the forgiveness is restricted by the condition of Will (mashiyet), and in the other it is generalised. Therefore, what is generalised shall be subordinate to the restrictive. The one ayet concerns rules and Laws, whereas the other ayet concerns alleviation of the despondency of the despondent. This latter condition was that of the kuffar that, without being reassured, their despondency would not be alleviated. That is why it was told to them that they should not be worried. They should accept Islam. All sins committed in the state of kufr would be forgiven by their acceptance of Islam. The Hadith sharif states:
Islam annuls all sins committed before it.

Allah! Allah! How great and virtuous is not Islam! How magnificent is not the grandeur and exalted status of Islam! Despite the enormity of the crimes yet, when this good and beneficial task of accepting Islam has been performed, this nèki (good deed) has washed them all away! The cleansing has been such as if they are as pure as the day they emerged from their mothers' wombs. Subhanallah! (All glory is to Allah Ta'ala!) What can one say about Allah Ta'ala's Mercy?

Verily, Allah Ta'ala's Mercy is close to those doing pious deeds. S.7 a.56

The nèki of accepting Islam has washed away all the rebelliousness of the years of kufr. How well has it not been stated:

Come back! Come back! In whatever condition you may be, come back,
Irrespective of whether you are a kafir, a fire-worshipper or an idol-worshipper!
Our court is not one of despair.
Even if your taubah has broken a hundred times, come back!

Do not despair - has the specific purpose of alleviating the despondency of the despondent. The root word qun#1609;t (despondency) does not mean that it is not necessary to perform a'mal and that it is not necessary to take care and vigilance to save oneself from committing sins. However, qun#1609;t itself provides proof that one has to perform a'mal. The word actually forbids despair, which is a result of sin. And raja (hope, which is the opposite of despair) cannot arise without good deeds. At the time that a criminal is aware of his criminality, at that particular moment the concept of raja (hope) cannot enter his mind. So, when it is wajib (compulsory) to abstain from qun#1609;t (despondency) then it is also wajib to abstain from the means that bring on despondency, the reason being that the rule is that the antecedent to wajib also becomes wajib. An obstinate slave can never be blessed with the rank of raja (hope). Put it to the test.

I love to whisper to my beloved.

However, by reason of the repeated crimes by the tongue of the criminal, imploration also stops.

All praise is due to Allah Ta'ala! All criticisms have been satisfactorily rebutted. The replies have been provided as to why Islam is the only religion acceptable from the religions of Hadhrat isa, M#1609;sa and Daw#1609;d (r.a.) and their disciples, or from any other religion; and why the basis of salvation rests only with Islam. Also explained is the reason why there is everlasting punishment awaiting those who do not accept Islam or who discard Islam after having accepted it. Also explained is why Muslims will attain salvation even though they may have committed sins, whether it be after being punished or without punishment.

21.THE EFFECTS OF REFUTING RISALAT

We now come to the second portion of Islam, that is Risalat - the acceptance of Hadhrat Muhammed (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) as the Rasul (Messenger) of Allah Ta'ala. The answers to the doubts and criticisms levelled at Risalat will be related in some detail,(Allah Ta'ala willing), as well as some virtues of Islam, and I shall terminate my lecture thereon.

Listen carefully! There are some people who are such that they do not consider belief in Risalat to be necessary and consider themselves and others to be perfect mawahids (unitarians/ monotheists) without faith and conviction (i'tiqad) in Risalat. They do not consider the refutation of Risalat to be kufr.

Take this illustration: The ruling king sends his appointed viceroy to us. It has been confirmed (i) by reports, (ii) by deduction and (iii) by certain special qualities that he is somebody special from the Royalty and that this individual is his viceroy. Now, if we do not accept him and we refute the fact that his statements to be that of the king, can anybody say that we accept the king and his rule?

So, (on the same bases) I am stating that (i) from clear-cut statements in the Qur'an sharif, there is proof of our Nabi (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) being the Rasul of Allah. Then Risalat is also verified on the basis of (ii) historical and biographical accounts and accounts given in various Divine Scriptures. Finally, (iii) the mu'jazat (miracles) are categorical proofs, as they are signs of Risalat.

Besides the above, there is a reply from an intellectual and imputative aspect as well and it is this: By not accepting Rasu (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) automatically it becomes compulsory that the person does not accept Allah Ta'ala! The reason is that belief in Allah Ta'ala and accepting Him means to believe in Him as He should be believed in. If someone has i'tiqad (faith and conviction) in any other manner then he has not believed in and accepted Allah Ta'ala.

Let me explain this by means of an illustration:

Somebody says, "I accept and believe in the ruling king." Someone else asks him, "And what is the king like?" He replies, "He is one-eyed. He has only one leg. Both his hands are cut off. He is mentally deficient. He is cowardly." In actual fact the king is just the opposite. He is very beautiful and handsome. He is an intelligent administrator. His speech is eloquent and endearing. He is brave and tolerant. He has no faults. He is blameless. Thus, can one say that that person really believes in and accepts the king? Obviously, the answer is: No!

So, to believe in Allah Ta'ala means that we should have strong faith and conviction in all His Attributes and Perfections. Among these is that of being Honest and Truthful. So, if a person does not consider Allah Ta'ala to be truthful and honest it means that he does not believe in and accept Allah Ta'ala. Now ponder carefully! Allah Ta'ala has stated in his Kalam (the Qur'an sharif):

Muhammed (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) is the Rasul of Allah. S.48 a.29

Thus, whoever refutes the Risalat of Rasulullah (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) he has considered Allah Ta'ala to be a liar. And the refutation of the attribute of Sidq (Veracity / Honesty) is a refutation of Allah Ta'ala.

Hence, we have shown adequately that a person who does not believe in and accept Rasulullah (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) will be included among the mutineers and are kuffar and will be punished by everlasting punishment.

22. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN IBADAT AND ITA'AT

The ita'at (obedience) of Rasulullah (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) is the ita'at (obedience) of Allah Ta'ala. Ibadat (worship) is one thing and ita'at is another. Some do not understand the difference between the two and consider the ita'at of Rasulullah (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) to be contrary to tawhid. And this too, from those who consider themselves to be great intellectuals! - To Allah Ta'ala do we belong and to Him is our return! Is this intelligence that one does not know the difference between ibadat and ita'at and one still considers oneself to be an intellectual of deep understanding?

It is quite apparent that in ibadat there is no partner to Allah Ta'ala as far as Muslims are concerned. Even Huzur-e-Akram (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) is not a partner in ibadat. This is the reason why it was not permissible to make sajdah (prostrate) to Rasulullah (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) in his lifetime and why it is not permissible to make sajdah at his grave.

Yes, in ita'at the ita'at of Huzur-e-Akram (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) is the ita'at of Allah Ta'ala. The reason for this is not that Rasulullah

(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) is a partner in ita'at, but the reason is that whatever Rasulullah (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) narrated was a message from Allah Ta'ala. Hence, the orders of Rasulullah (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) were, in reality, not his orders but by virtue of being a Rasul and a Messenger (Pegambar) they were Allah Ta'ala's orders through the tongue of the Rasul (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam).

It is naught save an inspiration that is inspired. S.53 a.4

There is also another statement of Allah Ta'ala:

Whoever has obeyed the Rasul he has indeed obeyed Allah Ta'ala. S.4 a.80

At another place it is stated:

Those who become bay'at (take a pledge) to you they verily are becoming bay'at to Allah Ta'ala. S.48 a10

The examples of this are those situations where the words of the wazir (the king's minister) are taken to be the words of the king; the viceroy is considered to be part of royalty; being obedient to the collector (regional administrator) is regarded as being obedient to the king; and insulting the judge is equivalent to insulting the king. Despite this nobody will ever think that the wazir and the king now have the same status. If any ignorant person were to think this and in future he respectfully kisses the chair of the wazir instead of the royal throne definitely he will be earning the displeasure of the king. Another example: Your appointed legal representative will act on behalf of you, i.e. the representative's actions will reflect your wishes, that you have told him so. It does not mean that he is now your equal and that he is now the owner of your property, for him to utilise as he pleases!

So, the Muslim is obedient to Rasulullah (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) in this respect. At no time does it become compulsory that he is now equal or in partnership (to Allah Ta'ala).