

Part 12(B)

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23.BASIS OF SALVATION

What a shame that our adversaries raise criticisms whilst having absolutely no understanding of the realities of Islamic masa'il (rules). If they do understand, then the reason for their criticisms is pure hasd (jealousy). In actual fact nobody can ever level any valid criticisms against Islamic masa'il (rules).

From this discourse of mine the purity of tawhid should be as clear to you honoured folk as the clearness of the blazing day.

This topic that we were discussing was that the first fundamental item. And the first lesson is this that one should be Muslim and that one's death should also be as a Muslim.

Do not die except as Muslims. S.3 a.102

This has been demanded from us. That is why it was stated that all religions in conflict with the religion of Islam have been abrogated:

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

The status, the rank and the virtue of Islam are so elevated that salvation lies solely in Islam. Without Islam there is just absolutely no question of salvation.

24.THE BARKAT OF THE KALIMAH TAYYIBAH

The question now to be answered is: How do we attain salvation?

My dear friends! The means is: having the conviction of the Kalimah sharif in one's heart and to vocalise it with one's

tongue. The Kalimah sharif is:

There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah, (and) Muhammed (sallallaa hu alaihi wasallam) is the Rasul of Allah.

This will efface all kufr and it will connect one with Allah Ta'ala. This will cause the darkness of kufr to vanish and result in the light of iman to fill the heart.

This is that Pak (Pure) Kalimah which, at the time that the earth and the heavens were created, was given to one of the mala'ikah (angels), specially created for the task of reciting: "A ـA î»aA à. That very malak (angel) is even now reciting the Kalimah in a loud voice and will continue to do so till the time of the blowing of the Horn (i.e. till the Day of Qiyamat).

If a mu'min recites this Kalimah with proper respect and honour four thousand of his sins get forgiven!

Upon viewing something that is amazing and wondrous one recites this Kalimah then for each and every letter of the Kalimah a verdant tree is created for him in Jannat. Each tree will have such an abundance of leaves as to equal the days in this world, and each leaf will be making tasbih (reciting the praises of Allah Ta'ala) and istigfar (seeking forgiveness) for the reciter of.... till the Day of Qiyamat.

25.A QISSAH CONCERNING FIR'OUN

A qissah comes to mind:

Allah Ta'ala ordered Hadhrat Musa (A.S.), together with Hadhrat Harun (A.S.):

And (when the two of you go to Fir'oun) converse with him gently, that perchance he may (enthusiastically) accept your advice or that he may fear. S.20 a.44

In its commentary some mufassirin (commentators of the Qur'an sharif) have stated that Hadhrat Musa (A.S.) asked Allah Ta'ala, "Lord of the worlds! What is meant by 'conversing gently'?" The reply was, "You tell Fir'oun (on My behalf), 'Do you desire reconciliation? Just see - for four hundred and fifty years you were submerged in gratifying your nafs (carnal desires). So, now if you were to follow Our wishes for only one year then all your sins will be forgiven. And if you are unable to do this, then be obedient for only one month. And if you cannot do this then for even one day it is sufficient. And if you find even this to be distasteful then for one hour would be sufficient. If you are unable to do so for even this period, then just in one breath recite and there will be reconciliation between Myself and you.'"

When our Nabi Hadhrat Musa (A.S.) fulfilled the rights of his Risalat and made tabligh (propagated the Din) to Fir'oun then that rebellious and disobedient king, instead of saying boasted:

I am your lord most high! S.79 a.24

Upon this the heavens and the earth trembled and requested from Allah Ta'ala permission to destroy him. Allah Ta'ala instructed, "He (Fir'oun) is like a dog. A little stick is sufficient for him. O Mىsa! Cast your staff on the ground." The moment Hadhrat Musa(a.s.) cast down his staff, immediately it changed into a serpent. Fir'oun was terrified.

It occurred to him that this is some charismatic effect of Hadhrat Mىsa's (A.S.) magic. Fir'oun thus arranged for his magicians to contest Hadhrat Musa(a.s.). The whole episode is quite famous. At the contest Hadhrat Musa(a.s.) threw his staff on the ground and it immediately turned into a serpent and swallowed up the magical tricks that the magicians had performed. Seeing this, all the magicians fell into sajdah (prostration) and recited: bringing iman. Fir'oun, on the other hand, instead of bringing iman also, ran away into his palace. Hadhrat Musa(a.s.) followed him to the palace and called out, "O Fir'oun! If you do not come out of your palace I shall send my staff behind you and order it to get you!" Fir'oun heard this and called back, "O Mىsa! You should grant me some respite!" Hadhrat Musa(a.s.) replied, "I have no permission to grant you a respite." Upon this Allah Ta'ala sent wahi (revelation) to Hadhrat Musa(a.s.), "O Mىsa! Grant him respite. I have given him respite up to now. I am Halim (most forbearing). I am not hasty in meting out punishment." Fir'oun was given respite.

However, Fir'oun had such a fright that the effect of this dreadful experience caused his health to suffer, causing him to run to pass faeces forty times every day, which was not his habit formerly!

You have seen the grandeur of the bounty and sovereignty of Haq Ta'ala, that He was prepared to grant a decree of forgiveness to such a notorious rebel just on recital of the Kalimah ...

26. ANOTHER QISSAH CONCERNING FIR'OUN

There is another story about this same Fir'oun:

Hadhraat Musa(a.s.) said to Fir'oun, "Bring iman." Fir'oun responded, "If I bring iman what will I receive?" Hadhraat Musa(a.s.) said, "You will be granted the following four gifts: Firstly, you will remain alive till the Day of Qiyamat; secondly, this kingship (and empire) will remain yours till the day of Qiyamat; thirdly, you will remain in the prime of your life till the day of Qiyamat; and fourthly, you will remain in excellent health till the day of Qiyamat - you will not be afflicted with any illness." On hearing this Fir'oun said, "Very well. I will first make mashwarah (discuss it first)." Hadhraat Musa(a.s.) said, "Make mashwarah with whomsoever you like, but do not make mashwarah with your wazir, Haman."

Consequently Fir'oun went to make mashwarah with his wife Biwi Asiyah (R.A.). She exclaimed, "These four promises are great blessings! Every person is desirous of these very four bounties. You should definitely bring iman, and you should do so quickly! Remember: Time slipped by cannot be reclaimed."

Fir'oun got ready, but the rascal Haman got wind of it. He came running to Fir'oun. Drawing his sword he placed it in front of Fir'oun and said, "I cannot bear it that up to the present the tongue with which Haman called you a god, should now call you a bondsman! First separate the neck of Haman with this sword - then you can do as you wish!" Fir'oun was swayed by this emotional outburst from Haman and consequently deprived himself of iman.

From these qissas it is apparent that from the side of Allah Ta'ala there was generosity and forgiveness, but from the side of Fir'oun the response was one of obstinacy - the rebel was not going to recite the Kalimah and he did not do so. The nett result was that he suffered the punishment, in this world, of being drowned in the sea and, in the hereafter, the punishment of being drowned in the painfully torturing flames of the fire of Jahannam.

27. THE ELEVATED STATUS OF THE KALIMAH

Allah Ta'ala has described the elevated status of the Kalimah in the following way:

"The example of the Kalimah is like that of a tree - it is pure and clean (extremely pure and beautiful, bearing delicious fruit), its roots running deep and firm (that even though there may be gale-force winds and hurricanes it will remain firm in its place so that there is absolutely no question of it being affected by these). Its branches spread heavenwards, conversing with the skies. With the command of Allah Ta'ala it continuously produces fruit." S. 14 a.24-25

This is the condition of the Kalimah Tayyibah. Whoever has embedded it in the heart with honesty and sincerity he will find that the root and the foundation is grounded in his heart. Then, whatever challenges and debates the kuffar present, whatever doubts (waswasah) the Shayatin (pl. of Shaitan - Satan) instil and whatever nafsani (of the carnal self) imaginations and perplexities arise he will remain unshaken. Yes, if he commences to undermine the root himself by not irrigating it - by not carrying out good deeds (amilus- salihah) - then this deficiency will be the basis of wavering. This will be the final result. Otherwise the Kalimah Tayyibah has contained in itself splendid and delicious fruits.

This is the reason that the Kalimah Tayyibah has, at times, being likened to water: just as water cleanses and purifies the body and one's clothes of all dirt and filth, similarly the Kalimah Tayyibah cleanses and purifies one from the dirt and filth of sins.

At times the Kalimah Tayyibah is likened to the sun. The reason for this is that just as the sun lightens and emblazons the earth and the skies with its beams of light, in a similar manner this Kalimah Tayyibah emblazons the heart of its reciter and also spreads its light in the grave.

At times the Kalimah Tayyibah is likened to the stars. The reason is that just as the stars act as guides and means of navigation to the traveller, this Kalimah sharif also takes those who are lost in waywardness out of their darkness and places them on the common road of hidayet (spiritual rectitude).

At times the Kalimah Tayyibah is likened to a date tree. There are a number of reasons for this:

Firstly, that just as the date tree does not flourish on every piece of soil, in a like manner the Kalimah Tayyibah does not find a home in every heart.

Secondly, the date tree grows higher than other trees. Similarly, the root of the Kalimah Tayyibah is embedded in the hearts of the Muslims and its branches throws its shade below the Arsh (Throne of Allah Ta'ala).

Thirdly, it will be noted that the lower portion of the date tree is rough and thorny, while the upper portion is laden with fruit. Therefore, anyone wishing to climb the date tree will have to undergo some toil and difficulties initially, then only will he be able to lay his hands on the rich and delicious fruit. In a similar manner, in the early phases the reciter of this Kalimah has to endure some difficulties, some trials and tribulations, then he reaches the goal of his quest and the delicious 'fruit'. The greatest 'fruit' being the blessing of didar-e- ilahi (beholding the Vision of Allah Ta'ala).

This Kalimah Tayyibah is also the Key to the doors of Jannat. It is necessary for keys to have teeth and the 'teeth' of the Kalimah Tayyibah consist of abstaining from all those items that have been made haram (impermissible) by Allah Ta'ala and performing all those deeds that are wajib (compulsory) because Rasulullah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) has said:

"That person who recites "A ۞A ۞ with conviction (aqidat) in his heart and with sincerity of intention (khalis-e-niyyet) shall definitely enter Jannat. Those who were present asked, "O Rasulullah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam)! What is ikhlas?" Rasulullah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) said, "To abstain from whatever Allah Ta'ala has made haram."

Nabi-e-Karim(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam)is also reported as saying, "O Abu Hurairah (R.A.)! Every nèki (good deed) will be weighed, but the Kalimah Shahadat will not be weighed for this reason that the reward for it will be unlimited!"

28. THE ANWAR OF THE KALIMAH TAYYIBAH

Hadhrat Ibn 'Ata (r.a.) has stated that the zakir (reciter) of the Kalimah Tayyibah attains three anwar (plural of nىr - light/ effulgence/ radiance) - (1) nىr-e-hidayet (light of guidance), (2) nىr-e- kifayet (light of sufficiency) and (3) nىr-e-'anayet (light of favour).

(1) Through the blessing of nىr-e-hidayet the darkness and gloom of shirk (polytheism) is eliminated.

(2) That person on whom the bounty of nىr-e-kifayet settles is saved from all types of major sins and obscenities.

(3) That person blessed with nىr-e-'anayet is secure from all corruptive thoughts and from those activities that the neglectful are involved in.

(1) Those blessed with the first type of nىr are those making zikr (reciting) of the Kalimah Tayyibah with their tongues (zikr-e-lisani). However their hearts are not attentive and are not affected.

(2) The second category of nىr is for those whose hearts are present and attentive, who are blessed with zikr-e-qalb (remembering in the heart).

(3) The third category of nىr is the portion of those who do not forget their Rabb for even a moment.

There is an indication towards this in the following ayet:

And there are some from amongst them who oppress their own souls; and there are some who are of an average level; and some from amongst them are such that with the tawfiq of Allah Ta'ala, continue to progress in doing good deeds (nèkies). S.35 .a.32.

Allah Ta'ala has stated:

Keep yourself busy in My remembrance (and) I shall remember you. S.2. a.152.

O Muslims! Ponder! The basis of all our evil is not remembering Allah Ta'ala. See, Allah Ta'ala states that we should remember Him and He will remember us. Yet, we prefer to remain far, far away. The mu'azzin calls out "Come to namaz!" but we rush towards the bazars and the pavilions! The mu'azzin again calls out, "Come to success!" and we rush towards mischief.

ah! Somebody has said, very appropriately,

We are calling you - yet you flee from Us;

Ungrateful you have become - (do you think that you) are you out of Our sight?

Wherever you go, there We will be, O ignorant one!

Flee as you wish - but how will you conceal yourself from Us?

29. BARAKAT (BLESSINGS) OF ZIKR-E-ILAH

The majlis (gathering) of zikr-e-ilahi is that special gathering best explained in the words of Rasulallah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam): At times a bandah (bondsmen) comes to the gatherings of zikr-e-ilahi burdened with countless sins. However, when he departs from that mubarak majlis he leaves clean and pure, due to the barkat of that majlis, so that he is now not accountable for any of those sins. This is why Rasulallah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) has stated that the majlis of zikr is an extremely pleasurable and lush garden of the burgeoning and verdant gardens of Jannat.

Hadhrat Bayzid Bustami (r.a.) has stated, "Anyone who remains in zikr-e-ilahi remains in the shade of 'Shajarah-Tىba'." ['Shajarah Tىba' is the name of a tree in Paradise, yielding extremely delicious fruit.]

Hadhrat Abu Darda (R.A.) has narrated that Janab Rasulallah Akram (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) has stated: On the Day of Qiyamat such people will be raised from their graves that their faces will be brilliantly radiant with nىr and they will be seated on mimbars (platforms) of glittering pearls. They will neither be Ambiya (Prophets) nor martyrs, but will be another category of people. A Bedouin, on hearing this, sat "do-zanى" [a respectful manner of sitting, as when one sits in "tashahhud"], and asked, "O Rasulallah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam)! Who are these people? Kindly state to us clearly." Rasulallah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) said, "These are those who had affection for one another solely for Allah and gazed at one another with love and respect and gathered amongst themselves to make zikr-e-ilahi. These people are not from one place or one neighbourhood, but they are from various tribes, from numerous towns and varying villages."

It is a great shame that this is that age that, instead of muhabbat (love and affection) and accord, there is animosity; instead of looking at others with respect, one looks upon the other with eyes of disdain and contempt. Also, instead of there being zikr-e-ilahi (remembrance of Allah Ta'ala) in peoples' hearts, there is gaffat-e-ilahi (negligence of Allah Ta'ala).

Another virtue is that Allah Ta'ala will establish the zakir in Jannat-e- Darul-Jalal (Place of Splendour in Paradise).

Allah Ta'ala has emblazoned this with His own Name:

Blest be the name of thine Lord, Owner Of Majesty and Beneficence! S.55 a.78

30. SUBTLE POINTS OF THE KALIMAH

There are untold amazing and fascinating subtleties in this Kalimah.

One is that this Kalimah, in its pronunciation, is confined to the oral cavity. It has no affiliation with the lips. This is an intimation that it is connected to that pure cavity - i.e. the heart.

Secondly, all its letters (in Arabic) have no dots. In this is the intimation that one should have no association with anybody else. In making His zikr one should cut off all thoughts connected with anything else that is not Allah Ta'ala. The heart should be cleansed from the grasp and affiliation of all else besides Allah Ta'ala.

Thirdly: A year consists of twelve months. This Kalimah also has twelve letters (in Arabic). This covertly implies that whosoever recites this Kalimah with heartfelt conviction will have one year's sins forgiven.

Fourthly: A full night and day has twenty four hours. This Kalimah, if combined with Muhammad Rasulallah(sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam) contains twenty-four letters (in Arabic). This intimates in the direction that that person who recites this Kalimah once during the day and night, then each letter will be a kaffarah (atonement) for the sins of each and every hour of the day and night.

Fifthly: The Kalimah has seven words in it. Jahannam also has seven doors. In this is the intimation that each of the seven doors close by the reciter reciting each of the seven words.

31. AN INCIDENT: THE PILGRIM & THE PEBBLES

At this point an incident comes to mind:

It is written in the kitab (book) "Al-Haqaiq" that a certain person stopped at Arafat and then made his way to Muzdalifah and then to Mina. [These are places near Makkah. Pilgrims follow this route at the time of Haj.] Having collected his pebbles, he cast them at the Jamarat. As he cast the pebbles, he addressed them, "O Pebbles! Bear witness! With a sincere heart I am reciting:

Saying this he cast the pebbles. That night this person had a dream. In the dream he saw that it was the Day of Qiyamat (Resurrection). The Throne of Justice of Allah Ta'ala had been set in position. Accounting of deeds was taking place. A'mal (deeds) were being weighed. His turn also came. His sins outweighed his good deeds, resulting in the order being given that he be sent to Jahannam. The mala'ikah were dragging him towards Jahannam. When this person reached the doors of Jahannam he saw those very pebbles taking up positions in front of the door. They prevented him from entering. The warder at the door of Jahannam tried to remove them, but he was unsuccessful. After repeated attempts, when he and the other mala'ikah failed to remove the pebbles, this person was brought back to under the Arsh (Throne). Following closely behind him were the pebbles, hastening to intercede for him. Their intercession was accepted and the order was given for this person to be entered into Jannat.

These are the virtues of the Kalimah sharif which have been narrated:

32. THE KALIMAH & FORGIVENESS: A FEW INCIDENTS

There was a person, from the Bani Isra'il, who was involved in disobeying his Rabb for four hundred and eighty years. One day muhabbat-e-ilahi (passionate love of Allah Ta'ala) welled up in his heart and he came to Hadhrat Musa(a.s.) and recited,

Just then the angel Hadhrat Jibril (A.S.) descended and said, "O Musa! Allah Ta'ala has forgiven his sins of four hundred and eighty years!"

Is there any wonder, then, that Allah Ta'ala will also forgive the sins of a faithful bondsman (imandar bandah) by him reciting:

It is stated in the Hadith sharif that the moment the bandah recites an angel takes it upwards to the heavens and an angel from the heavens descends to receive it. The angel descending from above asks the first one, "From where have you come?" This one responds by asking, "Where are you going to? I am taking the shahadat (witness) of such-and-such person's Kalimah Tawhid to his Rabb." Hearing this, the other angel says, "I am descending for this reason that I may convey to him the good news of salvation from the punishment of Jahannam."

Hadhrat Imam, Hujjatul Islam, Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi (r.a.) narrates that somebody saw Zubaidah in a dream. He asked her, "How did Allah Ta'ala treat you?" She replied, "O Son! Allah Ta'ala forgave me on account of four Kalimas: The first Kalimah was: There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah - I am annihilating my whole life for it; the second Kalimah was: - There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah - I will enter into the grave with it; the third Kalimah was: - There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah - I will pass my solitude (in the grave) with it; and the fourth Kalimah was: - There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah- I will meet my Rabb with it."

Hadhrat Ali (R.A.) was passing by a particular cemetery. He stood there and called out in a loud voice: Peace be upon you, O dwellers of the graves! How have you found "A Kalimah" (i.e. What did you reap by virtue of this Kalimah?)" A voice replied, "Through this sacred Kalimah we have found salvation from every form of destruction and calamity."

Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Abbas (R.A.) has narrated, "The meaning of it is this that there is nobody who can bring benefit or cause harm except Allah Ta'ala. Besides Him nobody can cause disgrace and nobody can give respect. Besides Him there is no one who can give and there is no one who can withhold."

There is another narration by Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Abbas (R.A.) that under the Arsh (Throne of Allah Ta'ala) is a Caller who calls out, "O Jannat! You and your everlasting blessings - for who are these?" The reply comes forth, "I have been prepared for the reciters of.. and I am haram for those who reject, Jahannam says, "That person will reside in me who rejects the Kalimah."

33. TAWHID-E- KHALIS - PURE TAWHID

The reciters of the Kalimah have four states:

The illustration is that of a shell, the skin, the kernel and the extract of the kernel. Take an almond: firstly, it has a shell; secondly, there is a thin skin; thirdly is the almond itself; and, fourthly, is its oil - the oil being the essence. However, obtaining the oil is dependent on the almond kernel being succulent, which is dependent on the integrity of the skin, which, in turn, is dependent on the integrity of the shell. In other words, each is dependent on the other for its existence and survival. Take a mango: just the skin without the kernel and the juice, is useless. The juice, in turn, cannot remain intact without the protective skin.

Applying this to the Kalimah: Merely to recite with the tongue and the heart to be completely heedless is like having a mere shell, as in the illustration above. This was the situation with regard to the tawhid of the munafiqin (the hypocrites in the age of Rasulullah (sallallaa hu alaiyhi wasallam)), that it benefited them as long as they remained in the world in that they were dealt with in the same (generous) manner as the mu'minin and they benefited from them. However, when the munafiqin leave this world they are cast in the blazing fire of Jahannam.

The tawhid of the mu'min is like the kernel of the almond, in that the kernel contains a variety of waste products also. So, the mu'min is also not free of inclining towards worldly display. The essence of the almond is its oil, which is not contaminated with anything else. This is the quality of the pure tawhid of the arif-billah [a person with Gnosis of Allah Ta'ala - a very high spiritual stage]. It is free of everything besides Allah Ta'ala; it is safe from riya and sam'ah (show/ostentation). His vision can accommodate nothing except Allah Ta'ala. His eyes sees nothing except Allah Ta'ala.

A poet has quite aptly stated:

"By reason of my seeing my Friend, I am oblivious of my life;
and, by reason of the remembrance (zikr) of my Friend, I am oblivious of the universe!"

34. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE KALIMAH

Hadhrat Junaid Baghdadi (r.a.) was in the throes of death. The talqin (repetition) of... was made in his presence. He responded by saying, "What, do you think that I have forgotten my Allah Ta'ala that I should be reminded of Him now?" What he is saying is that He is in his heart all the time.

35. A QISSAH: THE PRINCESS & HER FATHER

There is another qissah of Hadhrat Junaid Baghdadi (r.a.). He states:

"Once, I left home with the intention of performing Haj (the Pilgrimage to Makkah). The camel I was riding turned its direction towards Constantinople. I tried very hard to stop it from proceeding in this direction and get it to turn back in the direction of Makkah, all to no avail - it persisted in going in the direction of Constantinople [modern day Istanbul - Tr.]. When it repeatedly turned in this direction, I left it to proceed on its own.

"We finally reached Constantinople. When we entered the city we found the inhabitants very agitated. Very much perplexed at this state of the people, I enquired as to the reason for this. I was informed that the king's daughter had become insane and the people, rushing about here and there, were in search of a physician. I told the people, 'I will undertake her treatment immediately. Take me to her.'

"When I reached the place where she was kept, the princess called out to me from inside, 'O Junaid! Although you tried to turn your camel away from my direction, but just see how my jazbah (brimming enthusiasm) forcefully drew you to me!'

"When my gaze fell on her I saw that the princess was laden with a heavy iron yoke around her neck and that her feet were bound in chains. She addressed me again, saying, 'O Junaid! Prescribe some medicine for my ailment!' I told her, 'Recite... The moment she recited the Kalimah the iron yoke on her neck and the chains on her feet split asunder and fell to the ground and she immediately became well.

The princess's father, the king, saw this amazing recovery and remarked, 'You appear to be an excellent physician! Prescribe some medication for me as well.'

"I said, 'You also recite this Kalimah.'

"The king also recited the kalimah and became a Muslim. With him many others also became Muslim."

Respected friends! This Kalimah enjoys such a high status that Allah Ta'ala has prescribed for His bandas (bondsmen) all acts of worship and all obedience - in fact, the whole of the Shariat - for the purpose of embedding and maintaining it. This Kalimah is the means for attaining Ma'rifat-e-ilahi (Gnosis of Allah Ta'ala), through worship and obedience. Whether the wird (repetitive recitation) of this Kalimah is done in the inner recesses of the heart, or whether done by a person who is an arif-billah, having tasted the delight of the affection and the ma'rifat of the Exalted Creator, he will be blessed with the enrapturing delight of both life and death.

"If the enrapture of the one who has a passion for death were to be narrated, Even (Hadhrat) Isa and (Hadhrat) Khidr (r.a.) would yearn for death!"

36. ANOTHER QISSAH:

Hadrath Khawas (r.a.) relates an episode:

"The thought crossed my heart that I should visit the city of Rome. I consulted with my heart and put forward that it would be better to make one's way to Baitul Muqaddas or Madina Tayyibah, but my heart would not accept this. Even though I patiently explained the benefits of these options to my heart time and again, my heart would not accept my alternate suggestions. The final outcome was that I made a firm resolve to visit Rome.

"When I reached Rome I found the inhabitants gathered at one place. It appeared as if they were caught up in some great difficulty, some alarming problem. It turned out that some girl had become insane and the girl in question was the king's daughter. I promised to undertake her treatment.

The people enquired, 'Are you a physician?'

"I replied, 'I am not a physician but I am the slave of a Physician.'

"The inhabitants took me to the king, who took me to his daughter. The moment the princess set her eyes on me she said, 'O Khawas! That very Physician Whose slave you claim to be, is the very One Who has thrown me into "insanity"! Listen! The commencement of this "illness" of mine was as follows: One night I was immersed in my comforts and pleasures when, suddenly, Jazb-e-ilahi (passionate love of Allah Ta'ala) created an unusual emotion in my heart, a pulling and drawing force, that drew me to His qurb-e-khas (special and unique closeness.) Zikr-e-ilahi automatically came to my lips uninterruptedly. I turned my back on the world (dunya). I heard an extremely melodious voice, one that was most alluring, telling me

- Say, He is Allah, the One; and Ahmed is (His) Messenger."

"I told the princess, 'Do you not desire for the tranquillity of our Islamic country?'

"She replied, 'Goodness, Khawas! What will I go and do there?'

"I said, 'There are situated the blessed places of Baitul Muqaddas, Makkah Mukarramah and Madinah Munawwarah.'

"She remarked, 'Is that so? Just lift your head and look up.'

"When I lifted my face heavenwards what did I see? The Khanah Kabah, Madinah Tayyibah and Baitul Muqaddas were circling above my head!

"The princess then continued, 'O Khawas! That person who traverses this Path with the heart, the Kabah Mu'azzamah itself comes to circumbulate that person.' Thereafter, the princess addressed me in a passionate and ecstatic voice, 'O Khawas! The time to meet my Friend is near!'

"I said, 'Death in a city of kufr? How can that be?'

"She said, 'What harm is there in it? Flesh and bones will be in the city of Rome; the ruh (soul) will be by the side of Janab-e-ilahi! (Allah Ta'ala).' Saying this, she let out an ecstatic cry and she departed from this world. At that moment a Voice was heard:

"O Soul that has attained tranquillity! Proceed towards your Nourisher (Rabb), in the manner that you are pleased with Him and He is pleased with you!" S.89 a.27-28

37. THE FOCUS OF NAZAR-E-ILAHY (ALLAH'S GAZE)

Gafiat (negligence) is an evil thing. Huzىr-e-Akram (sallalaa hu alaihi wasallam)has stated:

Keep your tongue constantly moist with the zikr of Allah Ta'ala.

All one's work - dini or duniawi (religious or worldly) - is accomplished with this. Ponder over its meaning and remove from the heart the love of everything besides Allah Ta'ala. This is the reason for the creation of the bandah (bondsmen).

Make the zikr of Allah Ta'ala in abundance that you may attain success. S.8 a.45

They make the zikr of Allah Ta'ala while standing, sitting or lying down. S.5 a.103

Zikr-e-ilahi has been eulogised. Jama' khawatir (concentration) is an order given to us. The method of attaining this state is the repetitive recitation (wird) of Kalimah Tayyibah, performed with heartfelt enthusiasm. That Being is extremely Merciful and Bounteous, but sincerity is essential. This means that one should be obedient to Allah Ta'ala solely with the understanding that this is the right and the order of Allah Ta'ala, and one should have no other motive.

If one ponders on the fact that none of the creation will accept anything when the contributor has a corrupt intention

and contaminates his intention with impurities, then what can one say about that Great Being whose Name is "Latif" (One Who is Most Sublime) and "Quddىs" (One Who is Most Sacred)? Even though our obedience may not be absolutely clear and sincere, then too He favours us with His Attributes of "Rahim" (One Who is Most Merciful) and "Rahman" (One Who is Most Benevolent).

Neither does the blood nor flesh (of the sacrificial animal) reach Allah Ta'ala, but your taqwa (i.e. your sincerity) reaches Him. S.22 a 37.

A Hadith sharif states:

Allah Ta'ala does not look at your form - He looks at your hearts and your a'mal (deeds).

Ponder! That aspect which the creation looks at, i.e. your appearance, can be cleansed with soap and made pretty with the application of make-up. Whereas the heart, which is the focus of Nazar-e-ilahi (the focus of Allah Ta'ala's attention) is brimming with the filth of association with gair (others besides Allah Ta'ala) and the excreta of pride, jealousy and show. It is appropriate to apply the following couplet to this state of affairs:

From the outside, the graves of the kuffar appear beautifully adorned;

But, were one to peep inside, one would see it filled with the Wrath of Azz-o-Jal (Allah Ta'ala).

38.AN INCIDENT: THE PRIEST AND THE CROSS

I am reminded of an incident concerning a Christian priest:

The priest was the head of all the other priests. He stayed in the church. Whenever he had to leave the church, he used to face the crucifix and leave. He never turned his face away from the crucifix.

His son once undertook a journey by sea during a season of storms and hurricanes. The priest was most uneasy. All the time he anxiously awaited news of his son's well-being. Suddenly the news reached him that his son had arrived home safe and sound. In his unbounded love he left the church to go and meet him, but he forgot his normal habit of not turning his face away from the crucifix. (In his haste to meet his son) he turned his back to the crucifix. After meeting his son he remembered his disloyalty to the crucifix.

Immediately he returned and confessed to the other priests of his negligence. They declared that the punishment for this was that he should be lashed a hundred times. The lashing started, halting only when the full hundred lashes were meted out.

The people thought that the priest's attitude to the crucifix would now have changed to one of anger because of the severity of the lashing. However, instead of the whipping having a negative effect and stopping him from the worship of the crucifix, the priest got hold of a knife and cut off his feet at the ankles and said, "This is the punishment for one who turns his face away from his lord and turns his back to him!"

If this is the attitude of the wayward people of batil (falsehood) on showing disloyalty to batil then what should the state of the people of Haq (Truth) be when they are negligent of the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala and turn their backs away?

39.ANOTHER INCIDENT: A GIFT FOR A PIOUS PERSON

In the same vein is another incident:

A certain person brought some cloth as a gift for a pious person and presented it to him, saying, "This is for you to wear."

The pious person said, "I will not accept it. I shall not wear it."

When the other person insisted on giving him the cloth, the pious person made it known to him the intention with which he was giving the gift. He said, "I only wear those clothes that have been presented purely for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. This cloth does not fall into that category."

The person had presented the cloth with the intention that Allah Ta'ala should fulfil his wishes through the barkat (blessings) of giving the cloth to the pious person. The latter had got wind of his intention.

If this is the situation with the creation, that an item is refused because it was given for gairullah (for motives other than the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala), then what can one say about that Being, Haq Subhanahu-wa-Ta'ala, Knower of the

Unseen? Even if one Kalimah were to issue from one's lips with complete sincerity, from where to where will that person not journey?

40. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN "SANAM" & "SAMAD"

There is this story of an old man living in a city in Hindustan. The best part of his life he had spent in worshipping an idol. It so happened that he faced an extremely important task for which he pleaded for assistance from his idol. Hours on end he rubbed his nose in obeisance in front of it; he implored it for help; he cried in front of it; he even presented it with sacrificial offerings; he reminded his idol, "O Sanam (idol)! For a long time have I worshipped you. I have even offered you sacrifices. I have left no stone unturned in my worship of you. Have pity on my condition! Look at my sorry state..!" But no sound came from the lifeless piece of rock fashioned into an idol. Repeating, "O Sanam! O Sanam!" he finally became exhausted.

The thought then occurred to him, "Very well. I should rather call on that One, that very One Who the Muslims consider to be Absolute." With this thought in mind he reflected on his past life and became remorseful about his lifetime of negligence and foolishness. He now called out, "O the Absolute Khuda! Please accept my supplication!" That is: "O Samad! Come to my assistance!"

A Voice was heard,

"O My bondsman! I am at your service! Ask! What is it that you desire?"

The mala'ikah, on witnessing this, spoke up, "O our Allah! We are amazed that, on the one hand, he called on the idol for ages and received no reply yet, on the other hand, he called on You just once and You responded by saying, 'Labbaik!(I am at your service).'"

Allah Ta'ala said, "O My mala'ikah! When he called on his 'Sanam' and received no reply, he became despondent and turned away to call on 'Samad' - if he received no reply from Me as well then what difference would there be between Me and that lifeless idol? Whereas there should be a vast difference between 'Sanam' and 'Samad!'"