

For Friends - Part 15

Book:

[Discourses of Maulana Maseehullah Khan Sahib \(RA\)](#)

Chapter No.:

17

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Hadhrat Mawlana Muhammad Maseehullah Khan Sahib (RA) was born in Sarai Barlah in the district of Aligarh in the year 1329 or 1330 H. Hadhrat's (RA) lineage is linked to the noble Sharwani family of landed nobility, and being linked to Sayyid Hussain Ghauri (RA), the lineage is also Sayyid. Hadhrat (RA) attended the local government school up to standard six, but did not continue with his secular education, preferring to study Din, which he studied initially in his home town, and thereafter completing his studies in Deoband. Hadhrat (RA) became bay't to Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA), from whom Hadhrat (RA) received his Khilafat the same year that Hadhrat (RA) qualified from Deoband. Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA) stationed Hadhrat (RA) in Jalalabadi, where Hadhrat (RA) established the madrassah, Miftahul-Uloom, and a khanqah where saalikeen stayed for their self-rectification. He passed away in Jalalabad on the 17th Jamaadul-Ulaa 1413 H. (14th November 1992).

FOREWORD

Alhamdulillah, Once again, solely through the fadhli of Allah Ta'ala and the barkat of my Sheikh (RA) this fifteenth discourse is ready. (Also, not forgetting the valued du'as of our readers!)

Many readers found the majlis translated in Booklet Number Fourteen a bit difficult to understand. I thus felt that the next majlis to be translated should be easy to understand. Through Allah Ta'ala's fadhli, I was given some tapes of some majalis that were conducted by Hadhratji (RA) on one of his trips to South Africa. Among these was a majlis on eating, drinking, clothes and homes - simple and basic topics that affect everybody. One may feel that there cannot be much to discuss as far as these subjects are concerned, but

with the unique talents that Allah Ta'ala had bestowed Hadhratji (RA), these basic topics are discussed with such perspectives as to leave one quite wonderstruck.

May Allah Ta'ala give us all the tawfeeq to benefit from these discourses.

Dr. Ismaiel Mangera

Clarification: The "For Friends" series are translations of works in Urdu, mostly from recorded tapes. The original discourses in Urdu are not necessarily recorded by me. For example, the Wasayet that appears at the end of Booklet Number Six was given to Hadhrat Mawlana Dr. Hafiz Tanweer Ahmed Khan Sahib (RA) who noted it down in Urdu, and which was then translated by me into English. Yes, I do remember being present in some of the majalis, but not all of them. It is not possible to note down all those who were instrumental in recording these majalis or printing the Urdu versions or making them available to me. Readers are requested to make du'a for all involved in having these booklets published.

[This is a translation of a majlis held by Hadhrat Maulana Maseehullah Khan Saheb (RA) in South Africa, either in 1982 or 1984.]

Food, Drink, Clothes & Homes

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُلُوا مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِلَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ

O ye who Believe! Eat what is tayyib - pure, delicious and of high quality - which We have provided for you. (2:172)

I have been requested to conduct a majlis - that there should be discourse for a period. So, this is a majlis, but it has also taken on the form of a bayan (lecture).

Pondering on what to speak on, the thought came that bayans on different topics are being given on an ongoing basis on various occasions. And generally, in the minds of people, this thought is embedded that the Molvi Sahiban (learned scholars), what else will they speak on except namaaz and rozah (prayer and fasting)? And that we have heard these topics discussed many times already.

Reality Of Wudhu

So, I could not think that if there is to be a bayan on what topic it should be. Ears are already well-acquainted with these topics. I would go so far as to say that people are filled to the brim. And whatever item one's heart is filled to capacity, no delight or enjoyment remains in that item. If one were to lecture on wudhu (ablution) people will say that they know how to make wudhu. However, if one has to ponder over the correct meaning of the word "wudhu", that the root word from which it is derived is "dhau" which means "light / brilliance", that, making wudhu for years on end, the light and brilliance that is kept in wudhu, has still not entered one's heart, can one still claim that one knows how to make wudhu? If one knew, it may be that one has performed what is fardh (compulsory) but has not paid any attention to what is sunnat (lesser category than fardh) and mustahab (optional), there being no waajib (category lesser than fardh, but higher than sunnat) acts in wudhu. Also, one may have had no qualms on having left out what is sunnat and mustahab.

Contrary to this, let us look at those personages who, because of their ta'alluq (connection) with Allah Ta'ala, their nisbat (attachment) with Allah Ta'ala, their muhabbat (love) of Allah Ta'ala, that if they leave out any act commanded to them, even though they may not be it in the category of fardh, waajib, but may be in the category of sunnat and mustahab, they feel as if there is a massive burden placed on them, as if a snake has bitten them in their very chests. Until they have not compensated for their lapse, they are not at ease and do not rest. The worrying thought is, "On the Day of Qiyaamat what face will I show to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)?"

Qissah Concerning Khwajah Mu'innudin Chisti (RA)

So much so, that Khwajah Mu'innudin Chisti (RA) once read his Isha namaaz (late evening prayer) and went to sleep. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) came to him in his dream and said, "Mu'innudin! You claim to have muhabbat for me, but you have omitted a sunnat? When making wudhu for Isha you left out making khilaal of your fingers?" Khwajah Sahib's temperament was not like mine and yours. His disposition had a completely different hue to it. His eyes opened from his sleep. He got up, repeated his wudhu and performed his Isha namaaz again. Was his initial wudhu not valid? It was. Was his initial Isha namaaz not valid? It was. Yet, people like us make an effort to bring perfection to all our worldly tasks, that there should be no defect at all in that task. Here, there was a shortcoming, a certain defect - a sunnat was omitted, a mustahab act was neglected. How could he tolerate this? His ta'alluq with Allah Ta'ala was not like ours. He made wudhu again and repeated his namaaz. He was not satisfied with only this - he was not complacent with this act only, he was not content at merely doing this. However, in compensation for his neglect, being penitent, "Why had I omitted the mustahab of khilal of the fingers?" he performed a hundred rak'ats of nafl (optional) namaaz daily for a period of six months certainly, but I think it could have been for a year! This is why there was an illumination produced in his heart from the act of wudhu. What his namaaz did was a stage much higher.

As I was saying, were I to speak on wudhu, people will say that we know how to make wudhu. The same will be said about namaaz. So, my mind kept on pondering: What should I speak on? People have heard everything - bayans take place almost daily. Also, may Allah Ta'ala cause the Tablighi Jamaa't to progress more, with blessings (barkat) and sincerity (ikhlaas) - its talks are ongoing, mostly on Kalimah Tayyibah and namaaz. So, nothing came to mind. Just now, a little while ago, when I entered the Ibaadat khaanah (place of prayer) for the Maghreb namaaz (prayer immediately after sunset), and as I sat down, this ayet (verse of the Qur'an Shareef) which I have recited a little

while ago before you, came to mind. Bayans on namaaz and rozah are given all the time, so why not speak on eating and drinking? That is why I recited that short ayet before you. Make du'a (supplicate) that Allah Ta'ala gives the tawfeeq to give a bayan in connection with this ayet.

Eat What Is Pure, Delicious and of High Quality

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُلُوا مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ

In this ayet Allah Ta'ala is addressing the Mu'mineen (Believers).

O ye who Believe! Eat what is tayyib - pure, delicious and of high quality - which We have provided for you. (2:172)

That is, "Eat of the rizq - Our provisions - given to you by Us." "Tayyib" means what is not only pure but of high quality and delicious as well. This is the meaning of this ayet.

The question arises: Why is the word "Amanu" (Believers) attached to eating? The grammatical form is that of a command, making it compulsory (wajib). So, how is it that it is wajib to eat? Together with this command is the condition of "tayyib" - pure and delicious. And further on it is stated, "Which We have provided". A number of issues need to be discussed.

Firstly, the order is to eat. Why has the order been given to eat? The reason is this that those addressed are the "Amanu" - those who believe, the Muminen. Much is contained in the words employed. "Imam" means to have conviction - to firmly believe, to accept. To have conviction on something implies that whatever is kept in that word is firmly believed - all those aspects that are covered by this word are accepted. This would then mean, "O those of you who believe in Allah Ta'ala - those who have brought faith on His existence, with the attribute of "Wahdaniyat" (Him being One, with no partners), seeing He is Alim, Qadir, Sami', Basir, Mutasarrif being One Who, bearing in mind your needs, created the heavens and the earth and whatever

is on the earth, and whatever is between the heavens and the earth (the wind, clouds, etc.), through His Power. And you cannot deny this. You have to acknowledge that our Magnanimous and Bountiful Creator has created all these for us."

Furthermore: "When I have been your Creator through My Power, then from the aspect of Divinity, why should I not be the only Deity worthy of being worshipped? When, through My Power, for your sake I created everything for your every necessity, that you are dependent on Me for all your needs for your existence, and this you acknowledged and accepted, what is the reason for you not accepting My Divinity in the aspect of worshipping Me only in the manner prescribed (tashri'i)? It is absolutely necessary that you also accept Me as One being worthy of worship. And, when this the case that I am the only One worthy of being worshipped - that I am your Master, your Nourisher and Cherisher, your Creator, Most High, All Powerful, All Hearing and All Seeing, All Domineering, having full power and control over everything - what other being can there be that is worthy of being worshipped? It therefore becomes conclusive and necessary that there is none other worthy of worship except Me, and that your service - which is termed 'ibadat' - becomes necessary."

This conclusion is compulsory, but nonetheless, there is also an ayet laying down the instruction (tasrihan), the purpose for the creation of mankind. Allah Ta'ala has stated:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

"I have not created Jinn and Man except that they worship Me only..." (51:56)

What was compulsory from the aspect of takwin, has now been placed in a tasrihi context.

The grammatical construction is such that emphasis is placed on the word "only". Seeing that at this moment it is Mankind that is being addressed, the ayet states that insan (mankind) has been created for the ibadat of Allah Ta'ala alone. We have restricted the meaning of ibadat to namaz and rozah only. Note that the word is "liya'budan" (to make ibadat) and not "liyasollun" (to perform salat), or "liyasumun" (to keep fasts), or "liyazukkun" (to pay zakat), or "liyazakkarun"(to make zikr). The wording is not that we have been created for specific acts only, like performing salat, or keeping fasts, or giving zakat, or making zikr. A general term has been used - that we have been created for His worship solely.

Duties Of A Slave

The root word of "ya'budun" is "abd" and it means "a slave". In Farsi, the word is "bandah". Thus, Allah Ta'ala is our Master and we are His slaves. The meaning of the ayet would thus be as follows:

"I have created mankind for My slavery - that he should live as my slave." As you know, a slave has no specified duties but general duties. If he is told to cook food, he cooks food; if he is told at any time to massage the legs of his master, he massages his legs; if he is instructed to spread out the dastarkhan (tablecloth) and feed others, he spreads it out and feeds others; if he is told to prepare water for wudhu or istinja (cleansing after answering the call of nature), he prepares the water; and, dear brothers, if the king is invited anywhere at any time and he is unable to attend, he will give the very same slave of his the necessary royal credentials and send him to represent royalty at the function. This is the reality of being a slave.

From here it is apparent his position is not the same as that of a servant, worker or employee. In this latter situation the worker is given a specific duty to perform in a specific time period and he is liable to be paid when his duties end.

The whole creation was present for this type of duty. The various creations had the necessary fortitude, they had the necessary strength. Allah Ta'ala had created vegetation, minerals, animals, malaikah (angels), and so forth. There is not a single creation from amongst these which is not making a very specific ibadat of Allah Ta'ala.

Shah Waliyullah (RA), in his amazing kitab, "Hujjatullahul Balighah", has written an amazing commentary. He states that if we look at the trees, they are also occupied in ibadat: their ibadat is qiyam - standing erect. Creation like stone and rock, in the form of mountains, are also in ibadat. The ibadat of mountains is qu'ud - to sit down firmly. Animals are of varied forms. The quadruplets are in ruku (bowing)- they are bent forward. Some animals are in perpetual sajdah (prostration). These are animals like the snake, the turtle and the scorpion - animals that drag themselves along the ground and remain on the ground entirely. In this way animals, minerals and vegetation are all in ibadat - some standing erect, some bowing forwards, others in prostration and others firmly set in the ground.

Similarly, the malaikah are also in ibadat. They have very specific ibadat. Those who were instructed to be in ruku when they were created, are in ruku and will remain in ruku till the day of Qiyamat. Others, when created, were commanded to be in sajdah, will remain in sajdah till the day of Qiyamat. Others are in qiyam, others in jalsah, others in qadah. (To sit after sajdah is called jalsah; and to sit after the erect, qiyam, position is called qadah - both terms refer to sitting). So, the malaikah are also in ibadat, but in very specific ibadat of only one type. So much so that seventy thousand malaikah circum-ambulate (make tawaf of) the Baitul Ma'mur on a daily basis, and those who have had an opportunity once, do not get an opportunity to make tawaf again till the Day of Qiyamat. Daily, a new group of seventy thousand malaikah continue to make tawaf of the Baitul Ma'mur. So, what must their numbers be? From this you can see that the ibadat of the malaikah is in the category of an employee, that they have been set to do a specific duty for a specific time-

period. On the contrary, the situation as far as insan (man) is concerned; his ibadat, his obedience and his service are not in the category of a worker or employee, but in the category of a slave, of a khalifah. A slave has no one specific duty. Whatever work is entrusted to the slave he is willing and ready to carry it out. The master of a slave has the right to order him as he wishes, and even to sell him.

So, when Allah Ta'ala states that He has created man only for His worship it means that man has been created for servitude to Allah Ta'ala. One cannot say that, since man has been created solely for the worship of Allah Ta'ala, that he has now to stay in the confines of the masjid only and occupy himself with namaz, rozah, recitation of tasbih, tilawat (recitation) of the Qur'an Sharif only. This is only one type of ibadat. This is not the correct meaning of ibadat. Real servitude is to carry out at whatever time, whatever duty, whatever obedience, whatever service has been commanded. When told to eat, the slave is ready to eat. When told not to eat, he is ready to remain hungry. Being civilized, he may, at times, be told to behave in an 'uncivilized' manner, he is prepared to do this even: when told to take off his clothes, wrap himself in two pieces of cloth, and told to run bareheaded, to walk round and round, he does this. When an 'irrational' action is commanded, that he is to take some pebbles and fling them at some specific rocks, he is prepared to do this also. Obviously, I am referring to the person going for Haj, donning the ihram, making tawaf of the Kabah Sharif, and pelting the Jamarat in Minah. Goodness, is this also something rational, that you take off your normal clothes and replace them with two sheets of cloth to wrap around you, that you become bare-headed, that you cut neither your nails nor your hair? Doing all these, has the person ostensibly not gone crazy? Shaytan is neither visible nor does he stand at certain spots, but you throw pebbles at him! Hundreds of animals are present and there is no way that they will all be eaten, nevertheless, slaughter them! These, by way of illustration, are a few examples that have been placed before you.

What type of ibadat is all this? But, seeing he has placed himself in bondage to Allah Ta'ala, to perform whatever task, at whatever time, in whatever manner, this slave carries out these orders and does whatever is commanded, at whatever time and in whatever manner told to him.

When you have understood the above and this concept has become embedded within you, then the word "amanu" demands from the tashri'i aspect [as set out in the Shariat], the service, the obedience and the varied acts of ibadat, all of which cannot be undertaken until the person has the strength to carry them out. Think about this: Until this person has not the strength and the power, what tasks will he be able to undertake? How will he hasten, how will he run, how will he climb, how will he stay hungry, how will he be able to slaughter, and, several times daily, how will he bow down, how will he be able to prostrate himself, how will he be able to stand and for how long will he be able to stand? So, if he has no strength and power in his body, how will he be able to carry out these acts of obedience, service and ibadat? For a human, from the aspect of servitude, the demands of the Iman of a mu'min (believer/ one with Iman), is to remain ready at all times for obedience, service and ibadat, and for this a special physical strength and power is necessary. Mere ruhani (spiritual) strength and power by themselves are not sufficient. This ruhani strength and power are inherently present in the malaikah, who are in no need of eating and drinking as they do not possess a physical body. They have no mood-swings. They do not fall ill. They do not become weak. They do not have the basic components in their makeup for these to display themselves, in contradiction to man, who possess the basic components for these limitations to show themselves.

The Ruh Was In Mushahadah-e-Haqq

This Ruh (soul) that is inside the physical body was occupied in ibadat from before, like the malaikah. It is not that the Ruh was not occupied in ibadat in the 'Alame-Arwah (World of Souls) before it came into the world - it was involved in the ibadat of Mushahadah-e-Haqq. However, it was the wish of

Allah Ta'ala that this Ruh should be placed in a physical body, become activated in it, and then be occupied in ibadat. Otherwise, the malaikah were present for mere ibadat. But Allah Ta'ala's wish was that there should be a noble and honorable distinctive creation, with the Ruh placed in a physical body having some special qualities, and having an intelligence that could think and be able to discern, and be placed in this world. Thus, it became necessary, in order to obey, serve and make the various forms of ibadat, that this physical body has strength and power. The more strength and power that this body has, proportionately the greater will be the ibadat that it will be able to undertake. If a person wishes to stand and recite His Word to Him, but he has no strength in his legs, he will not be able to do this. If he has no strength and power in his back, he will not be able to make ruku and stay in sajdah for any length of time. This is proved daily by one's observations. How do people make ibadat when weak and when strong, when ill and when well, when at home and when on a journey? So, until there is no strength and power in this body, it will not be able to make ibadat.

So, it has become manifest that the demands of Iman are that of obedience and ibadat. And the demand of obedience and ibadat is that of physical strength and power. Now, in order to acquire these, to attain these, it is necessary that the proper means, the procedures and the methodologies, be employed. This is because this world is an 'Alam-e-Asbab - a world where means have to be employed. Until and unless the means are not utilized, Allah Ta'ala's system (Adatullah) is that the objective will not be attained. We have come to know that it is necessary to eat in order to make ibadat. And, in order to eat, edible items are necessary. And it orders to obtain these the means and methodologies for obtaining and procuring them are necessary. And the rule is that the means that are necessary also fall into the category of necessity. Therefore, seeing ibadat is wajib, and in order to carry out ibadat eating also becomes wajib; and in order to eat utilizing the means is wajib. So, it follows, according to the rule enunciated above, that, in order to make ibadat, it becomes wajib to use the means for obtaining food. When this is so,

that it becomes wajib to utilize the means for earning a livelihood, then it follows that earning a livelihood and utilizing the means for this, also fall in the category of ibadat. Ponder over this!

However, it is important to bear the following perspective in mind: The fundamental or original objective is ibadat. This is of primary importance. The means to this objective, although also falling into the category of wajib, take on a secondary importance, because they are not objectives in themselves but are a means to the primary objective of ibadat. They are subservient to the primary objective. According to values, the primary objective of ibadat will hold the highest position and will be of greatest importance, whereas the means will hold a lesser value and will be of lesser importance. So, the original ibadat will be of primary importance, eating to make ibadat will be of lesser importance and the means to attain food for eating will also be of secondary and lesser importance.

To summarise: Haqq Ta'ala has stated, "I have created you solely for My ibadat. For this ibadat strength and power is necessary. The means and methods to attain these are also ibadat as far as you are concerned, in that you may be able to eat and become stronger so that you may make more and more ibadat."

The Progress Of Iman

The progress of Iman is dependent on deeds (amal).

الكَلِمُ الطَّيِّبُ وَالْعَمَلُ الصَّالِحُ يَرْفَعُهُ

All good words rise to Him and He raises up all virtuous deeds. (35:10)

The Kalimah Tayyibah ascends upwards, towards the heavens. However, in soaring upwards and maintaining its momentum and attaining an elevated stage, it has no intrinsic power to do so. It requires the assistance of an

external force in order to be able to propel it. Haqq Ta'ala has said that the force of elevating this Kalimah is "amilus-salihah" - good/pious deeds.

Thus, because of the demands of Iman and by virtue of the need to make ibadat, it becomes necessary to eat, so that one can have the necessary strength and power for this, and one can perform good deeds - "amilus salihah" - to increase and elevate one's Iman more and more.

That is why Allah Ta'ala has ordered, "O you with Iman, eat!" Without eating you will not be able to do anything. And this eating will be included in your ibadat. You should not consider this eating to be a "worldly" activity and you stop eating! Yes, when, together with eating and performing good deeds with taqwa (piety), you attain spiritual strength - a ruhani power - and your spirituality (ruhaniyet) becomes very elevated, eating less or not eating at all for a few days, will not bring about any physical weakness in you. But do not try to do this in the initial phases.

From the stories of the Auliya Allah, annotated in the books of history of the Auliya Allah, the following practice is proven to be true:

A wali of Allah Ta'ala took out an almond from its shell and started fasting. At the time of iftar (breaking the fast) he took out the almond and nibbled a very small piece from it, making the intention (niyet) of breaking the fast and at the same, making the intention of keeping fast on the following day. The amount of water that he drank was the amount that the webspace between the thumb and the index finger can hold. Having eaten this amount and sipped this amount of water, he fasted again on the following day! By that one nibble and sip, he has made his iftar and his sehri and has had his meal. It is not necessary that only if one sleeps and then one wakes up for a meal, then only one made sehri. He did not neglect his niyets.

In a similar manner, when entering a masjid the more niyets for khair (good deeds) that one makes the more reward (thawab) one will receive. One may make the niyet for i'tikaf, for namaz, for zikr, for tilawat, and so forth.

To continue: In this way the one almond lasted him for six months! How he managed to do this, what was his ruhani strength, how he managed to survive, are issues that he - and those who have attained some ruhaniyet - would have been able to explain. These are matters that I and you cannot fathom.

Let us leave aside such situations. These are individualised incidents to do with juzb (fervour). Generally the situation is that the demand of Iman is ibadat and this is dependent on eating. That is why Allah Ta'ala has stated:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُلُوا مِن طَيِّبَاتِ

Eat! Without eating you will not have the strength to make ibadat. However, bear in mind:

كُلُوا مِن طَيِّبَاتِ

Eat what is halaal, pure and clean. Do not eat what is haram (forbidden). The word used is tayyib (good) and not tahir (pure). The word tayyib denotes that the food should not only be pure but delicious. This is the meaning of the word. If you wish you may check on the tafsir (commentary to the ayet). Tayyib refers to what is not only pure but delicious and enjoyable as well - that which the temperament will welcome and accept; that which will strengthen the blood. Whatever is gross and coarse that you eat in your diet will become excreta and the production of blood will be less. The blood that is formed will not be of a fine quality. When blood is not of a fine quality then there will be no special power and life produced. So, why should Allah Ta'ala say that one should eat what is coarse and indigestible, eat what is not pleasant?

Eating & Drinking What is Delicious Is Not Contrary To Zuhd

There was a Sahabi, Abul Haytham, R.A who owned an orchard situated outside of Madinah, in which there was a well. The well produced very cool water. He used to bring cool water from this well for Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) to drink. From this it is apparent that if a person, according to his capabilities and strength, were to make some arrangements, without any special and undue formality, to obtain or use an item, then this would not be contrary to zuhd (asceticism/ abstinence). It is not contrary to being unattracted to worldliness in one's heart. Zuhd means that a person, in his heart, is not attracted to or attached to dunya. By taking this cool water and drinking it, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) did not forbid us from enjoying what is delicious. The degree of joy, cheer and fulfilment experienced at drinking cold water is not experienced by drinking hot water. Yes, drinking hot tea will bring about cheer and enjoyment because these are the inherent qualities of tea. However, we are seeing people drinking cold tea - drop in some ice - as is the custom in Europe!

That is why our Haji Imdadullah Sahib (RA), the Pir of our Pir, Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA), among the many advices that he gave our Sheikh, he also gave the following bit of advice, "Mia Ashraf Ali, whenever you drink water, drink cold water, so that you may make shukr (show gratitude) with your heart. Otherwise the shukr will be only from the throat and not from the heart."

When I was still a student at Darul-'Uloom Deoband, I once wrote to Hadhratwala (RA), that from a young age my temperament is such that I desire to eat nice food, even though it be little. I wrote, "Eating nice food, good food, produces a cheer and joy in one's disposition and from inside, from my heart, the urge arises to make shukr. So, I have the desire to eat delicious food." This is what I wrote to Hadhratwala (RA). The method of replying to letters was not to write a separate letter, but to draw a line on the same letter at the relevant area and write the reply there. Hadhratwala (RA) wrote back,

الطعام الشاكر كالصائم الصابر

That person, having eaten and making shukr of Allah Ta'ala, is the same as that person keeping fasts and making sabr (showing forbearance). We will not go into the debate of the Sufis whether Sabr has a higher stage or Shukr.

From the incident where arrangements were undertaken to provide cool drinking water for Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), we can deduce the following principle in order to obtain a working rule: to eat what is delicious; to wear what is "delicious", to build a house that is "delicious" - that is, to enjoy good food, to wear good quality clothes and to build comfortable homes - all fall in the category of being "delightful", producing cheer and elation in one's temperament. On entering the home one's spirits lift up.

We are in need of food all the time and, generally, everybody is need of food, and strength is dependent on eating food, that is why food is being mentioned. Eat, but eat what is tayyib - what is pure, what is delicious. Another reason for this statement is that from the time of his creation, from conception to birth, this human has been safeguarded from what is haram. He has been protected from the use of impure substances. When he was in his mother's womb, you are aware that the child is being fed through blood vessels in the umbilical cord which connects the child to the mother. The mother's menses stop. The child is thus nourished through the mother's blood via the umbilical cord and not orally. Allah Ta'ala could also have made it that the mother's blood could have flowed into the mouth of the foetus and the infant be nourished orally. However, the infant has been protected from ingesting anything haram while in the mother's womb. This is an intimation from Allah Ta'ala that, "Seeing I had made these arrangements for you while you were in your mother's womb, it is now your responsibility, after coming into this world, to maintain this arrangement yourself." If tayyib was not supposed to be for him could najis (impure) be his lot? Unthinkable!

The ruhaniyet and nuraniyet (spiritual light and effulgence) that is produced by eating what is tayyib, cannot be produced by eating what is najis (impure) and

what is haram. And also, whatever the nutrition is of the species, if it is utilised in the correct manner, then the body will grow and thrive and gain strength.

The examples I can quote are those of animals. Animals are of various types and their nutrition also varies. If one species tries to imitate another and eat the food eaten by the other, it will not thrive but will destroy itself. The food of the lion is meat. If cattle or goats start eating meat will they thrive or die? They will definitely die. There is an animal called khinzir (pig). There are other species of animals which are the cow, the water-buffalo and the goat. The food of the former is rubbish and excreta, while the food of the latter are items like grain and grass, etc. If the khinzir eats what is filthy and impure, it will thrive and grow fat and strong. But if the cow, water-buffalo or goat were to eat the excreta that the khinzir eats, will they also thrive and grow fat and strong, or weak? These animals should not be eating the food eaten by the khinzir. They will obviously be harmed by this food.

In a similar way, nay, even more so, the food of insan is what is tayyib - what is pure and good, because man is more delicate than the animals. Another aspect: If the kuffar (non-believers) eat what is haram, they may thrive and become big and fat, but when the Muslim eats what is haram, his health is going to suffer. His ruhaniyet will be corrupted. Whatever ibadat he used to do while eating halaal, he will stop performing that ibadat on eating haram. His temperament will not be lively, it will not be cheerful, and he will not be able to make ibadat - and making ibadat is the objective.

Eating Halaal and Tayyib Produces Ruhaniyet And Nuraniyet

There is the story of Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (RA) that goes as follows:

He went into seclusion for a period of forty days - a chillah. (We heard this qissah from Hadhratwala (R.A). The forty days passed, but he experienced no ruhaniyet or nuraniyet - there was no spiritual upliftment or exhilaration in his Iman experienced within his heart. He became perturbed. He had been

fasting; he had been up at night in prayer; he had been busy with zikr and tasbih - but all to no effect. He went to his mother and said, "Ammajan, I have spent forty days fasting, staying awake at night in prayer and making zikr, but I have not noticed any effulgence in the Iman in my heart. I see no upliftment within myself. It appears that you had fed me some haram morsel. Some haram item had entered my system."

Just see where his gaze has focused on! Notice also what the qualities of the women were in that age:

She replied, "Dear son, never mind feeding you haram, I myself have never ate anything haram!" Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (RA) had such a strong conviction that he requested, "No, Ammajan, think carefully again."

The power of thought and meditation is such that if it is used correctly and sincerely, whatever shortcomings a person has, will present themselves to him.

She pondered deeply. After a few moments she said, "I have just remembered something: When I was pregnant, one day I was on the roof-balcony, I plucked a berry from the branch of our neighbour's berry tree and ate it, without the permission of the neighbour. This I have just remembered." (The neighbour had a berry tree and one branch spread over their house.) Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (RA) said, "How nice would it not be if you ask forgiveness from our neighbour." His mother felt embarrassed. "What need is there to ask to be forgiven for a mere berry?" Nevertheless, she went to the neighbour and asked to be forgiven for having eaten that one berry without permission. Her neighbour herself was amazed and exclaimed, "Is a mere berry something to make an issue of and ask to be forgiven?" Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi's (RA) mother said, "My son insists. Please forgive me in clear terms." The neighbour said, "I forgive you whole-heartedly!" Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi's (RA) mother returned home and said, "Son, I went to ask for forgiveness and our neighbour has forgiven me, and she has done so very happily." Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi

(RA) again started a chillah, fasting, staying up at night in ibadat and making zikr. Hardly four days had elapsed when he experienced within his Ruh a special effulgence, a special ruhaniyet and nuraniyet, whereas he had not experienced anything previously after forty days of effort. He told his mother, "My observation turned out to be correct!"

Just ponder over this: When was the berry eaten? On the other hand we see that the situation where people are deliberately, out of choice and with knowledge aforethought eating what is haram, but their conscience does not prick them. The reason is that light has, as yet, not entered their hearts that their conscience should prick them. If one takes clean, white clothes and a speck of ink or dirt were to fall on the clothes; one would become aware of this immediately. However, if the clothes are already filthy and full of stains, how will one become aware of that speck of ink or dirt? A normal reaction should be that these clothes are very dirty - do not use them as this will be most unbecoming. Do you now understand?

كُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتٍ

Do you now understand? The condition attached is that of "tayyib" - pure and full of goodness. Eat what is tayyib - consider this to be Allah Ta'ala's rizq (sustenance). What is rizq from Allah Ta'ala is tayyib, and what is haram is not rizq from Allah Ta'ala. Allah Ta'ala may have created it but it is not meant for you.

To recapitulate:

Iman has to be clothed with good deeds - these are the demands of Iman. Together with this it is necessary and compulsory to eat. It becomes necessary to adopt the means and the methods for attaining what one has to eat. What is initially wajib makes the means also wajib, so earning also becomes wajib.

Now, to earn a living in order to obtain one's rizq and food, there exist many means and methods. Amongst these is that of trade. Just as there is agriculture, artisanship and employment, there is trade as well. From my comments above, it should be apparent that this trade is also ibadat. This is a means of obtaining wealth, which is the means of obtaining food, which, in turn, is the means of making ibadat - so trade and business also becomes ibadat. This commerce is not a "worldly" activity. It cannot be categorised as "dunya". It is also included in ibadat.

Virtues Of An Honest Trader

It comes in the Hadith Sharif that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has stated:

التاجر الصدوق الأمين مع النبيين و الصديقين و الشهداء

What more can one want? The trader - that person whom we consider to be involved in a "worldly" activity - who is truthful, honest and trustworthy will be, on the Day of Qiyamat, with the Ambiya (Messengers), the pious and the martyrs. Neither has this person fought in battle and become martyred, nor has he progressed to the stage of the siddiqin (pious), and one knows what an extremely high position is that of Nabuwat (Prophethood) yet Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) states that trade is a very elevated occupation. Doing business, many issues present contrary to one's temperament; there is much temptation towards greed and avarice in it; many do become greedy and avaricious. Turning one's tabiyet (temperament) away from these temptations and pitfalls, immersing in trade with honesty and trustworthiness, is a great mujahadah (struggle against the nafs). The rule is that the greater the mujahadah the greater the qurb-e-ilahi (closeness to Allah Ta'ala). Thus, even in this trade there is that much qurb-e-ilahi, and it is this qurb-e-ilahi that will result in this trader being with the Ambiya, the siddiqin and the shuhada' (martyrs). The task is small, the work is not much, but the reward and status and elevation and qurb are so high.

If trade is not ibadat then how can there be companionship with the Ambiya, the siddiqin and the shuhada'? The reason is that trade is a great ibadat. From this it is obvious that no work, no effort, of a Muslim is "worldly". Everything is Din.

Qissah of the Neighbour of Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (RA)

Hadhratwala related a qissah concerning Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (RA). When he passed away, somebody saw him in his dream and that he was in Jannat. He was happy and cheerful. This person asked him, "Hadhrat, how did you fare?" "Alhamdulillah, I was forgiven," was the reply. "Hadhrat, did you attain any elevated stages?" Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (RA) replied, "Alhamdulillah, I also managed to achieve elevated stages."

When we pass a way we are presented before Haqq Ta'ala. As you know that when a criminal is apprehended, there is first a pre-trial (kachhi-peshi) before the actual trial (pakki-peshi). When a visitor goes to the palace of a king as a guest, the visitor is first accommodated in the reception area before going to the royal court itself. Similarly, before the Day of Qiyamat, there is a "pre-trial" (kachhi-peshi) in the 'Alam-e-Barzakh (the world of departed souls). These comments are in answer to the question as to how are we presented before Allah Ta'ala? This is a brief explanation.

To continue: Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (RA) said, "I have been forgiven and been given the glad tidings of Jannat here in the 'Alam-e-Barzakh. I have also been granted high stages. However, I have been left behind by my fellow Muslim brother, my neighbour." The questioner was amazed at this comment. He said, "Hadhrat, your neighbour who has passed away, was not known for any special deeds. We had never seen him make any special mujahadah, or carry out any special riyadhat (spiritual exercises), or ibadat like staying up at night in prayer, or make an excess of nafl namaaz, or keep optional fasts in abundance. We have not seen any of these. So, why has he excelled?"

Over there, realities (haqa'iq) come to the fore and present themselves. Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (RA) replied, "The fact of the matter is this: I was alone with no responsibilities: no wife, no dependants. I was care-free. So I busied myself with communicating with Allah Ta'ala. However, my neighbour was married and had a family to support. He was obliged to go and work so that he could support his family. Also, his nafs had certain rights on him:

إنّ لنفسك عليك حقا و لزوجك عليك حقا

Your nafs (life) has rights over you; your wife has rights over you.

"He was involved in his necessary ibadat, he kept way from haram, he fulfilled the rights others had on him, and it was on the basis of this taqwa, together with the intention and Dua that he made that 'O Allah, free me as you have freed Junaid, so that I can also make your ibadat as he is doing,' that he achieved what he did."

To earn what is halaal tayyib is no ordinary achievement. While occupied in earning halaal this was his intention. It was because of his intention that he earned this high position. Allah Ta'ala was virtually saying, "My bondsman desired to make such ibadat as Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (RA). Even though he did not find the opportunity to do so, but he attained that reward based on his intention."

إنما الأعمال بالنيات

Deeds depend on the intention - Hadith Sharif.

Just ponder: To be involved in farming and watering the fields, or to be a labourer and earn in this manner and, simultaneously, make meager ibadat with taqwa, is a great ibadat. So, this trade is not "dunya" - it is also ibadat and a very great ibadat. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) stated that the trader will be with the Ambiya, the siddiqin and the shuhada. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) also said that when this trader comes home tired

and exhausted after a day's work - running from here to there, fetching this and that - and falls asleep at night tired out, he sleeps completely forgiven. He has performed his Isha namaaz with Jama't (congregation) and he then performed his Fajr namaaz with Jama't, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) states that the whole night is written down for him as ibadat and forgiveness! On the night of the fifteenth of Shaban some are staying awake at night busy with nafl ibadat, they have visited the cemetery and recited Fatihah for the forgiveness of the deceased, but this trader, tired out from the day's work, is unable to keep awake and sleeps away, he still gets the thawaab (reward) of the virtues promised for the night of the fifteenth of Shaban!

Do you now understand what trade is?

It comes in the Hadith Sharif that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has stated that when this trader, being occupied with his business the whole day, comes home in the evening and places his foot in his house the mercy of Allah Ta'ala descends much more on him. And Allah Ta'ala has a special muhabbat (affection) for him.

Raha'ish, Asa'ish, Ziba'ish, Numa'ish

The seeking of a livelihood has a number of degrees. The first is fardh (compulsory), the second is mustahab (optional), the third is mubah (neither mustahab nor haram) and the fourth is haram (impermissible/ forbidden).

That person who has nothing to eat and is in abject poverty and is destitute, for him to seek an income is fardh. This stage is referred to as raha'ish. This stage is fardh - to attain that much is compulsory

If the person has sufficient to eat twice a day, but he desires to have something more, so that he can eat with some comfort, then for him to earn

that much more is mustahab. This stage is referred to as Asa'ish, meaning comfort. After the stage of raha'ish comes the stage of asa'ish.

This will apply not only to food and drink, but will apply to clothes, to food and drink, to housing, and so forth. Applying these stages to housing we have the following: Having a small house which will provide shelter from the rain and the wind, from the cold and the heat, would be at the level of the first stage of raha'ish: One's needs have been fulfilled. Having a house providing some comfort in addition to providing the basic necessities would fall into the next stage of asa'ish. (By the way, these words I am using were coined by Hadhratwala (RA). He had a habit of rhyming his words.)

This second stage of asa'ish - to earn that much as to be in comfort - is mustahab. To earn so that one has more than the basic necessities and be comfortable and have the means to be at ease, will cause one to have peace of mind. The ibadat that is performed now will also be with peace of mind and tranquility (sukun). Otherwise it will be the situation of:

Evil income will result in an evil heart.

And if the heart is filled with evil the person's deeds will be evil.

So, to strive in work in order to attain some comfort and ease (asa'ish) would be mustahab.

Necessities Of Life

The necessities of life are: to have food, clothes and a house to stay in.

The third stage is that of ziba'ish, also referred to as zinat - elegance/ adornment. Food should be delicious as well. The clothes should be presentable as well. The house should be elegant. There is some decorative work. These features, over and above the level of comfort, are termed zinat.

This would then be mubah. A mubah act is one for which there is neither reward nor punishment.

When I went to London, before my previous trip here to South Africa, I saw that they had carpets laid on the floors of their toilets. I was quite amazed at this, not having seeing this done before. My initial reaction was, "What unnecessary expenditure! What a waste of money!" This was just a thought. I enquired, "There are carpets in the rooms, where we walk with our shoes, but why are there carpets in the toilet as well?" They explained, "Mawlana, the cold here is intense. You will find thick wallpaper hanging on the walls and the floors will have carpets. If these were not there, and one were to walk barefoot on the floor, the cold enters the body and one will get sick. These are methods used to ward off the cold and to protect ourselves."

Just see: What we had thought was an act of show (numa'ish), what we had thought was an indication of pride and arrogance (takabbur) - may Allah Ta'ala protect us from sin, as the thought of sin is also sin, thinking evil of others (bid-gumani) is also a sin - turned out to have a sound basis. Now I understood. The carpet was in the category of necessities. At the most it would fall in the category of asa'ish. It does not fall into the category of zinat and ziba'ish. However, even it was done for beautification and for decorative purposes, then it would be mubah.

There are thus three categories of earning discussed so far: the first of fardh, the second mustahab and the third of mubah. Yes, the fourth category of earning would be Haraam. Possibly there are those who did not know this. Is there a category of earning that is fardh, a category that is mustahab and a category that is mubah? Offo! This is an amazing elucidation! And there is a fourth category of earning and this is Haraam. This category is that of numa'ish. This is to do something for show; to impress others; to do something out of pride and arrogance; to show one's high social status in the eyes of others. This is all Haraam. One should not have this intention (niyet). One can have any of the other three intentions - they would all be permissible.

The first is fardh, the other two are permissible, that of mustahab and mubah. There is no sin attached to these two.

One aspect that should be obvious to you after knowing the different stages is that we are referring to those earnings which are earned by halaal means. One has to attain halaal rizq. That is why that person who earns a living with the intention of fulfilling the waajib rights on himself, his family and dependents, so that he can feed and clothe them, and, besides this, he also has the intention of seeing to the needs and the welfare, from time to time, of the poor and destitute, and also of his neighbours, that he may attend their needs and comfort, and that is the reason why he is exerting himself more and more in earning, it comes in the Hadith Shareef that such a trader's face will shine more beautifully than the brilliance of the moon of the fourteenth night on the Day of Qiyaamat!

So, just see: the trader sleeps in a state in which he is forgiven; Allah Ta'ala is happy with the trader; the trader's face will outshine the brilliance of the moon of the fourteenth night on the Day of Qiyaamat - but which trader is being referred to? It is that trader mentioned in the Hadith Shareef I had quoted:

It is that trader who does not betray the trust placed in him and does not deceive others during his business and transactions with others. The virtues mentioned above refer to this category of trader. Do not for a moment question: What will I sell and what will I earn by using halaal means? It is stated in the Hadith Shareef that those earnings that have come through deceitful and impermissible means, may appear to roll in and come in abundance, but in the end the result is that of loss and destruction. There is no barkat (blessing) in that wealth. Money will be seen to be coming in but how it disappears will not be perceived.

Qissah Of The Bamboo-Seller

Hadhratwala (RA) mentioned that there was a person in Kanpur who started a business selling bamboo. (Hadhratwala (RA) had stayed in Kanpur for some time. He taught at the madrassah there for fourteen years.) This businessman had taqwa in him. The mas'alah (ruling) is that if there is a fault in any item you are selling, you should reveal it to the buyer. Bamboo may have holes, or various other defects. Reveal these to the customer. Similarly, clothes or other items, may have defects which the customer may not be aware of. The trader knows these and he should tell the customer. According to the defect the price of the item will also be less. So, this businessman selling bamboo, used to point out to the customers that this particular bamboo has this problem, that that bamboo has this particular defect and shortcoming in it but the other bamboo was of good quality. The price of the former was less and the price of the latter was more. Because of his forthright manner, his business was not flourishing. The other adjacent bamboo-sellers who did not have this taqwa and did not exercise this precaution, saw his plight and mocked at him. They said, "Is this the way to make business, that you mention such things to the customers and do not make a sale and get no profits? This is definitely not the way to do business!" However, this bamboo-seller was of an honourable temperament and "sidiqul-amin" (as in the Hadith Shareef above) and carried on as he used to.

But, dear brothers, after the buyers developed confidence and trust in him, his business picked up and the business of the others began to wane. This person's business flourished to such an extent that the business of the others virtually collapsed. He became very wealthy. If a person acts according to the Shariat with taqwa, and he remains steadfast, that he should find himself in straitened conditions? This can never be!

Imam Abu Hanifah (RA) And The Roll Of Faulty Cloth

Imam Abu Hanifah (RA) was a cloth merchant running a flourishing business. This trade was a family trade that had been running in the family from the time of his grandfather. He had inherited his shop from his father's inheritance. The

shop was huge and he had employees as well. Buyers used to come to the shop to buy but he also had a worker who used to take the cloth to the marketplace to sell. On this one occasion a worker was sent out with some bales of cloth to sell. One roll of cloth had a defect in it. Imam Abu Hanifah (RA) instructed the worker that if anybody wished to buy this cloth it should be pointed out to him that the cloth has a defect. The worker took the cloth and went to sell it. When the cloth was sold, this particular roll was also sold. When he returned, he gave the details of his sales to Imam Abu Hanifah (RA) and handed over the money received. On being handed the money Imam Abu Hanifah (RA) enquired, "When you sold that particular roll of cloth, did you reveal the defect to the buyer?" The worker said, "Hadhrat, I forgot! I did not point out the defect. I sold that cloth for such-and-such an amount." Imam Abu Hanifah (RA) said, "That money has now become intermingled - halaal and Haraam have now become mixed. It does not behove us to utilise this money." The entire proceeds - the entire amount that had been realised from the sale of all the bales of cloth, amounting to thousands - he gave away in charity!

These virtues which have been explained, and what has been shown and proven that trade is not dunya, that trade is also Din, and Din is also ibaadat, and ibaadat has some rules and regulations governing it, and that trader that takes all this into consideration, and is involved in trade, his stage is very high. What can be higher than that one should be in the company of the Ambiya (AS), in the company of the siddiqin, in the company of the shuhada'; sleeping at night he is forgiven; the mercy of Allah Ta'ala descends on him; Allah Ta'ala shows muhabbat towards him; and on the Day of Qiyaamat his face will shine brighter than the fourteenth moon?

However, my dear friends, brothers and buzurgs , having listened to the virtues working and of earning, do not criticise such personages who have restrained themselves from working. They are not involved in seeking a livelihood. The condition attached to seeking a livelihood is that it should be halaal. The Hadith Shareef states quite categorically:

طلب كسب الحلال فريضة بعد الفريضة

Seeking of a halaal livelihood is fardh after the fardh of ibaadat.

It is apparent that the basic fardh is the fardh of ibaadat. And seeking a livelihood is merely an instrument to fulfil the fardh of ibaadat. And it should not happen that what is the means is made into the primary objective, and the primary objective is relegated to a secondary position, that the primary objective of ibaadat is discarded and one is occupied mainly in trade. This is topsy-turvy - the objective has been discarded and the means has been made into the objective; what is primary is made secondary and what is secondary is made primary.

For example: When we wake up in the morning, our first fardh is this that we should cleanse ourselves by means of wudhu and proceed to the masjid - provided that the masjid is not at a distance - and perform our Fajr namaaz with Jamaat. The order for namaaz is that whichever namaaz that we have been ordered to perform - i.e. the five obligatory prayers - should be performed in whatever time - i.e. the stipulated times - in the prescribed manner - i.e. with Jamaat - in whichever place - i.e. in the masjid - provided that there is no Shar'i excuse. This is the order we have to obey first on waking up in the morning. Thereafter we have to fulfil the other fardh of seeking a livelihood by involving ourselves in work.

The Status Of Tawakkul Is Higher

However, if some bandah (bondsmen) of Allah Ta'ala keeps himself occupied only in the fardh of ibaadat and pays no attention to seeking a halaal livelihood - how can a person be engaged in two occupations at the same time? - and he is a zahid (an ascetic), one should not level any criticism at him, as we see being done. People say, "What has happened to him that he has broken his arms and legs and sits in the masjid? Can't he go out and work? We have heard many virtues of earning a livelihood." Undoubtedly, that is true. For me

and you this is true. However, for that person in whose heart Allah Ta'ala has instilled the strength of taqwa - that person whose gaze is not on means - and he does not utilise these, and, with strength of heart, he places his trust completely on Allah Ta'ala - which is termed tawakkul, for which there are certain pre-conditions, which he has attained already - his status is much higher than the one going out to seek a livelihood. It comes in the Hadith Shareef that that person who is so busy in the tilawat (recitation) of the Qur'an Shareef that he has not one free moment from his tilawat, Allah Ta'ala says that he has no need to earn a livelihood and that He will be sufficient to see to his needs, to that extent that he does not even need to free himself to make du'a. Du'a is also a methodology. Allah Ta'ala is saying, "Do not even make du'a. I am sufficient for you."

وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ وَكِيْلًا

And put thy trust in Allah. Allah is sufficient as Trustee. (33:48)

The status of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is very high and noble. One should think twice before criticising. What work did he undertake? Before Nabuwat, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) used to take the goods of Hadhrat Khadijah (RA) and sold these for her, but after Nabuwat can anybody prove his going out to earn a living? What trade was he involved in? What agricultural activity did he undertake? Whose employment did he seek? What profession or method did he employ to accumulate wealth? None. It was "Tawakkul-alallah."

Among the Na'ibane-Rasul (representatives of Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), if such representatives are to be found in the Ummat, if they and those associated with them - their wives and their children - have in their hearts this strength of Tawakkul-alallah, then nobody can criticise them. Nobody can find fault with them. They do not go out to earn a living, but do not criticise them. Should they ever come to your door to beg from, you may feel justified in telling them off, but remember that you will be destroying your Din.

In fact, they do not go to anybody to beg, because then how could this be Tawakkul-alallah? To go to somebody's threshold is contrary to the concept of Tawakkul-alallah. At times a weakness does creep in and mistakes are made. Two qissas come to mind.

Lesson From A Dog

(This qissah appears in one of the Arabic kitubs - Nafhatul Yemen.)

One person opted for Tawakkul-alallah and went into the mountains to spend his life in ibaadat. Food kept on coming to him. Allah Ta'ala placed a test on him and the food stopped coming. One mealtime passed without any food. The second mealtime passed without any food. The third mealtime also passed but still no food. This person became gabbriified - worried and anxious. In this unsettled state he came down the mountain and went to the nearby town. He approached the house of a Christian woman and asked for food. She gave him three rotis. Taking these, he started walking away from the house. The Christian woman had a dog. The dog followed him. As they reached the outskirts of the town the dog started barking at him and leapt at him as if he wanted to bite him on his leg. The buzurg threw down one roti at the dog. The dog went after the roti and started to eat it. As soon as it had eaten the roti the dog went after him again. Barking again he charged for his leg. The buzurg threw another roti at him. The dog ate the second roti and charged after him again. The buzurg, in his fright, threw the last roti at him. He had received three rotis and he lost all three rotis, having thrown all three to the dog. The dog ate the third roti and again charged at him. The dog was on the point of biting him when this aabid (one devoted to ibaadat) addressed the dog, "O Shameless Creature! I had obtained three rotis from the house of your owner and I have given all three to you, so why do you still wish to attack me, O Shameless One?" Allah Ta'ala wanted the buzurg to learn a lesson and gave the dog the power of speech. The dog said, "Am I shameless or are you shameless? I had chosen to lie at the threshold of my master's house and there were many a times when my master forgot to give me food. At times,

days went by without my receiving any food, but I never left the threshold of my master. But you, having missed out on merely three meals, left the threshold of your Real Master and came begging to the door of my master! Am I shameless or are you shameless?" Allah Ta'ala taught him a lesson through the dog. This also happens.

Each According To His Status

Hadhrat Ibrahim Bin Adham (RA) was a king. He is a well-known figure. Ask him what did he attain by giving up his kingdom and choosing the Path of Faqeer (the path of the Mendicants - i.e Tasawwuf). He had tasted the delight of both these domains. The wazir approached him to resume his kingship, saying, "The door is still open for you to rule. Please return." He replied, "I have no need of it." He must have found a better substitute. He carried on along his journey. Night came and he stopped over at a particular spot. Allah Ta'ala sent some food for him. The food was very delicious, of high quality and very fragrant. In the same vicinity there lived on the mountainside another poor buzurg. He had been there for several years. Allah Ta'ala used to send him food daily as well but his food was very simple. On witnessing what had been sent to Hadhrat Ibrahim Bin Adham (RA), he thought to himself, "I have been here for so many years, having left off worldly affairs - having become a tarik-e-dunya - I have been engaged in the ibaadat of Allah Ta'ala, and I get only simple food whereas that person is having food so delicious and appetising that its aroma is reaching me even!" Very perplexed, he addressed Allah Ta'ala, "Wah, Allah-Mia, Wah! I am an aabid for so many years and I receive only this food, whereas that person just came today and he has such delicious and excellent food?" Allah Ta'ala instilled into his heart by way of ilhaam, "That is correct. You have just seen the superficial aspect. You have not taken account into account who he was and who you were."

Let me just digress to point out the following: People speak of "equality". The cry is, "Equality! Equality!" Equality is not a factor even by Allah Ta'ala. Even He does not deal with everybody on an equal basis. He is the Khaliq (Creator)

of everybody and deals with everybody according to his status, taking into account factors like temperament and disposition.

To continue: Allah Ta'ala went on, "He was a king. He set aside his crown for My sake. You, on the other hand, were a grass-cutter, earning your livelihood by cutting grass. This food you are receiving is far better than what you used to eat. This other person, what he has left aside, how will he tolerate the food you are eating? If you are unhappy, your hoe and basket, which you had left behind, are still there. You may climb off the mountainside, reclaim your hoe and basket, cut grass and sell it and eat!" However, having been making the zikr of Allah Ta'ala for so long, there had developed a very beautiful relationship with Allah Ta'ala. This person became penitent, "I have erred. I had not realised what the real situation was."

What work was he doing? None. He was assisted by Allah Ta'ala from the Unseen. If a person has Tawakkul-alallah, with strength of heart in oneself and those connected to one, then it is not necessary to adopt any external means of livelihood. To the contrary, these are people who are there to distribute - to take and give the best of things to others and not to take for themselves. I am attempting to refute a criticism. People tend to say, "Whatever people we have seen who are muttaqi and parezghar (fearing Allah Ta'ala and abstinent), we have seen that they are dying of hunger. Neither do they possess proper food nor do they have presentable clothes, nor a decent house to stay in! What type of muttaqi, what type of Auliya Allah, what type of Allahwale are they? We are better off than them. If Allah Ta'ala was pleased with them then He would have given them more than us." Being Muslim, for a Muslim to make such statements...? This is similar to the statements hurled at Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) by the kuffar of the Quraish of Makkah. One should make taubah (ask to be forgiven by Allah Ta'ala). For a kaafir (non-believer) to mouth such statements is to be expected, but for a mu'min to say such things...? Remember very well that Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had no shortages. He was told, "If you so wish, I will convert

the mountains of Uhud into gold for you." His reply was, "No. I prefer to eat at one time and the kitchen fire should be cold at another." [1] There was a reason for this also. However, the point is that Allah Ta'ala made the offer to him, but the bondsman, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), was not in favour.

Similarly, as for the Auliyya Allah - those who are true walis - they have no shortages. But they themselves decline. Why get involved in arguments and fights? Why have the burden of keeping accounts? Why have the worry of having to make Qurbani and pay zakat? Then the worry of spending the money correctly. These are distractions, diverting attention in another direction. Seeing their weaknesses they make du'a, "O Allah! We do not desire wealth." Allah Ta'ala wanted to give them, but they declined.

On the other hand there were such bandah of Allah Ta'ala, Auliyya Allah, to whom Allah Ta'ala offered wealth and their response was, "Certainly, I will gladly accept! I shall keep proper records. I will see to the poor and destitute, fulfil my obligations of qurbani, fitrah and zakat. I will attend to the destitute and see to their needs and welfare. Bring forth Your bounties."

Abdul Qadir Jilani (RA) Buys An Expensive Material

Gauthe-Pak, Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jilani (RA), was blessed by Allah Ta'ala with a great deal of wealth and he accepted. He used to eat murg-pulao - a chicken and rice delicacy - daily. It is well known among the Auliyya Allah that the excellent food he ate and exquisite clothes he wore, no other wali has ever ate or worn. There is an incident related about him:

A cloth merchant went to the king to sell some cloth. This material was so expensive that the king could not afford to buy it from his personal funds. The merchant left without the king buying the cloth. Being in Baghdad, the merchant decided to pay a visit to Gauthe-Pak, Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jilani (RA). During the course of their conversation Gauthe-Pak (RA) asked him the

reason for his visit to Baghdad. The merchant explained that it was a business trip. What was he selling? Cloth. Gauthe-Pak (RA) requested him to bring forth his material so that he could also see it. When he saw it so happened that the very cloth the king could not afford to buy because of insufficient funds, Gauthe-Pak (RA) expressed the wish to buy it. The merchant said, "Huzur (Sir), forgive me for saying this, but this cloth is so expensive that even the king could not afford to buy it." Gauthe-Pak (RA) could afford it and he gave him the required sum and bought the material. The tailor was then summoned and the cloth was given to him to sew a chogah[2] for him. The king came to know of this whole affair and he became infuriated. He told the wazir, "What I could not afford to buy, Abdul Qadir has bought? This is an insult to me! Go and question him about it!" The wazir went and met Gauthe-Pak (RA). They were still sitting and chatting when the khadim-e-khas (special attendant) came and addressed Gauthe-Pak (RA), "Huzur! That cloth that you had given for the chogah to be sewn is insufficient and there is not enough material to complete the one sleeve. How shall we complete the sewing of the sleeve?" Gauthe-Pak (RA) said, "Is that so? Well, it is not a problem. Go to my room and you will find lying there a piece of hessian cloth. Take this hessian to the tailor and tell him to join it up to complete the sleeve."

Just ponder: What was the quality and value of that material and what was the quality and value of the hessian? But in his eyes, gold and silver were equal to pieces of broken clay-pot. He did not buy the cloth for purpose of showing off, for num'ish. (Just now I had explained to you the four different levels.) He bought it for refreshing the ruhanayet of the heart and as a sign of Shukr for a blessing (ne'mat) that was showered on him by Allah Ta'ala. It comes in the Hadith Shareef words to the effect that Allah Ta'ala states, "When I see on my bondsman the effects of My blessings, then I am happy with him." Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has pointed out that when Allah Ta'ala sees the effects of His ne'mats (blessings) on the body of his bondsman He becomes happy. This person has valued the ne'mat.

The wazir became 'gabbrified' - anxious and frightened. He thought to himself, "Is this person one to be questioned on his actions? In his eyes the expensive cloth and the hessian held equal value. No. He did not buy the cloth out of pride and conceit or out of arrogance. He had a ne'mat of Allah Ta'ala with him and he bought it to express his Shukr-lillah. (Gratitude to Allah Ta'ala)" He remained silent and did not pursue the matter. When he returned he told the king, "Huzur, there is a major difference in temperaments between us and him in regard to niyet (intention)." "What is that?" the king asked. The wazir said, "Such an expensive piece of cloth, which you yourself saw, was sewn into a chogah but there was not enough material to complete the sleeve. Hadhrat then instructed, 'Take that piece of hessian cloth and join it up.'" The king was also completely amazed at hearing this.

The excellent food that Hadhrat Gauthe-Pak (RA) had eaten and the fine clothes that he had worn was unmatched by others. And what was his status? He was among the great Auliya Allah: His status was higher than that of the Abdaals. In fact, the rank of Abdaaliat is distributed from the Gauth.

The Piety Of Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA)

The honoured father of our Hadhratwala (RA) [i.e. the father of Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA)] was a landowner and had some good properties. After his demise, when the properties had to be distributed, there arose some doubt in Hadhratwala (RA) concerning the share that he would inherit. He asked Mawlana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (RA) on the permissibility of taking the property. Mawlana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (RA) replied, "If you take it, it is a fatwa, and if you do not take it is taqwa." [That is, the legal ruling would be that it is permissible to take the property, but not to take the property would be an act of piety.] Consequently Hadhratwala (RA) did not take the property. For a short time he also suffered abject poverty. So much so that visitors used to come and were fed while husband and wife went to bed without food. Such a time was also experienced. However, thereafter, dear brethren, when the ne'mats of Allah Ta'ala started showering, it was like royalty! Once, a very

large sum of money came to him. Hadhratwala (RA) became gabbriified. "What shall I do with this?" he exclaimed anxiously. After some thought he said, "My heart desires that I send one thousand rupees to Deoband Madrassah and one thousand rupees to Saharanpur Madrassah." What was the level of Hadhratwala's fairness and justice? These were of the highest degree. His taqwa was of a very elevated level. His life was led at a very high level of caution and vigilance. Yet, what trade was he involved in? What agricultural activity did he undertake? Whose employment was he in at a later stage? Where was there a desire to accumulate wealth? Where was there any sign of greed and avarice? He distributed everything. The poor of Thana Bhowan, orphans and widows were given a monthly allowance, which was noted down in a book. Some came forward to collect this allowance themselves; others had the allowance sent to their homes.

His Fairness And Justice - Qissah Of The Two Melons

His fairness and justice? Allahu-Akbar! Once a peasant farmer brought two melons and gave it to Hadhratwala (RA), "One was enough. Why was it necessary to bring two?" In the simple straightforward manner of the rural people the peasant replied, "Who does not know that you have two wives? The one is for the one wife and the other is for the other." Hadhratwala (RA) said, "Very well. But, dear brother, they should be exactly equal." Just take note that the melons should be exactly equal in order that the one wife receives exactly the same as the other wife.

Many people have a great desire to marry a second wife. In fact, Badi Pirani Sahibah - Hadhratwala's (RA) first wife - once remarked to Hadhratwala (RA), "By marrying a second wife you have opened the road for your muridin to marry second wives also!" Hadhratwala (RA) replied, "To the contrary, I have closed the road!" She said, "Closed the road? In which manner?" Hadhratwala (RA) said, "My muridin witness all the time how I treat both of you with complete fairness and justice. Every item is shared equally between the two of you. If some parcel is tied in a string and is given to me then the item is

divided equally. For measuring there is a scale present in the khanqah. Also, that very string is cut and given equally to the two of you. What goes to one goes to the other." Nowadays even one wife is not treated with fairness and justice, so how will justice be done between two wives?

To continue: The peasant responded, "I know you. You are particular about being equal; therefore I have weighed both melons before coming. You can weigh them and see for yourself. There is your scale." Hadhratwala (RA) weighed the melons and, really, they were of equal weight! Hadhratwala (RA) then said, "Fine. They are of equal weight. But show me, out of the two which is the sweeter one and which is not so sweet?"

Just ponder: To what degree is there fairness and justice? To what extent is there mujahadah with the nafs? To what extent is there riyadhat? How much effort is not undertaken?

The peasant said, "You draw very fine lines! Did I thrust myself into them? I do not know." Hadhratwala (RA) said, "Not to worry." He took a knife and cut both the melons in half, setting one half of each melon into the one pan of the scale and the other half of each melon into the other pan. Adjusting them until they were equal he sent one set to the one wife and the other set to the other wife. Now there was equality. What an extremely high level of taqwa does this not demonstrate!

There are certain topics that are not suitable to be discussed in public gatherings, but the masha'ikh will mention them. Mawlana Gangohi (RA) had discussed some amazing topics in his majlis, topics that appear to be contrary to modesty. In any case, what has been narrated above is amazing in itself. Yet there is more. I am attempting to show you the qualities of our Akabir (pious elders) who preceded us. Hadhratwala (RA) used to say - and in this there was no boasting but an invitation to simulate - "When I am having marital relations with my one wife I consider it Haraam to hold the picture in my mind of my second wife at that particular time - I see that a mental image

of her's should not come." Hadhratwala's (RA) one wife was a bit elderly and the second wife was of a younger, youthful age. There is a big difference in the mental images and the imaginings pertaining to the two. Hadhratwala (RA) used to say, "These are very fine points. To control one's thoughts is very difficult. But I consider it to be Haraam and I avoid this visualising. "

Of course, the other mas'alah is in its place, namely that the gaze of a person, coming from the shopping centre, falls on some attractive and beautiful woman and her image now sits in his brain, and at night, or at any other time, he has marital relations with his wife, and he brings forth that image to ignite and increase his passion. Though he is having relations with his wife, yet he is guilty of having committed the sin of zina (adultery)! Yes, he has committed the sin of zina!

Shah Abdul-Quddus Gangohi (RA) And The Ta'wiz Of Barkat

To continue. We were discussing the topic of asbaab (means). If certain personages have not made use of the means (asbaab) and have not resorted to the recognised methods of earning a livelihood, we should not criticise them. They have no need of using means. Their lives were that of tawakkul. Their wives and children were also on tawakkul. Shah Abdul-Quddus Gangohi (RA) at times had no food to eat. Occasionally he used to go into the house and then sit down and say to himself, "It is the misfortune of Abdul-Quddus that he has to stay hungry because of his sins, but the wife is also staying hungry." Very occasionally his wife used to complain and he used to reassure her, "Make a little sabr - have patience and fortitude. Excellent and delicious food is being prepared in Jannat!" If we were to say the same thing to our wives, they would say, "What is being prepared in Jannat you eat - give me my food here to eat!" However, his wife was also of that calibre and level of tawakkul and she was also able to dispense with means. Once it so happened that Shah Abdul-Quddus (RA) was away on a journey and his Sheikh came to visit. At the time there was no food in the house to eat at all. The servant scurried about here and there hoping to find some flour. The Sheikh sensed

something was not right. He enquired, "What is the problem?" She said, "Huzur, there is nothing to eat. I am trying to find some flour." He took out a rupee and gave it to her. "Go and buy some flour and prepare something. I shall then eat." She did this and he ate what was prepared. He then wrote out a ta'wiz (amulet) and said, "Place this in what you have bought, Insha-Allah, there will be barkat (blessings)." He then left. In the days that followed there was food twice a day. A worried Shah Abdul-Quddus (RA) asked his wife, "What is happening? Why are we not without food?" She explained, "Your Sheikh came the day you were gone out. There was no food in the house. He gave some money for food and left a ta'wiz to be placed in the grain. This is the barkat of that ta'wiz." Shah Abdul-Quddus (RA) said, "Is that so? It is disrespectful to keep such a ta'wiz in the grain. It deserves to be kept on my head and not in the grain. Where is it?" He went inside and took it out and placed it in the turban on his head. After a few days the grain was used up.

Mawlana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (RA) Is Given A Kimiya

Mawlana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (RA) was given a kimiya by a majzub. Mawlana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (RA) took it and placed it on a shelf in the house. The majzub passed by a few days later and commented drily to Mawlana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (RA), "Wah, Molvi, Wah! Your have lost it, haven't you?" When Mawlana went to check he found that, in fact, it was missing! Somebody had thought that it was just an ordinary bit of grass and threw it away!

These were our Akaabir buzurghs! Their gaze was not in this direction but directed at tawakkul. They were ones who distributed and did not accumulate.

I shall end off by relating a few other qissas:

Shah Alamgir (RA) And His Brother, Dara Shiku

After Shah Jahan, his son Shah Alamgir (RA) was due to take over the throne. His brother, Dara Shikoh felt he should be the one to wear the crown. Dara Shikoh went to visit a buzurg. The buzurg welcomed him and, shifting from the quilt on which he was sitting, requested the young prince to come and sit there. The buzurg was acting according to the Hadith Shareef which states that one should treat every person according to his status. Dara Shikoh declined, "Huzur, who am I?" Out of respect for the buzurg he was hesitant to sit at the sitting place of the buzurg, on his very quilt, whereas one should not be rash enough to refuse. One should obey as instructed - there is goodness in this. But Dara Shikoh did not do this and he went to sit in front. They conversed with one another. As Dara Shikoh took his leave he requested, "Huzur, make du'a that I receive the crown and that I become the king." The buzurg replied, "That was my wish as well but what can I do...? Anyhow, very well, I shall make du'a for you." He did not want to hurt his feelings - anybody's feelings. Hurting people's feelings was something he could never do. "Very well. I shall make du'a for you." Dara Shikoh departed.

Shah Alamgir (RA) came to find out about his brother's visit to the buzurg. Shah Alamgir (RA) was a great Muhaddith (Scholar of Hadith Shareef). He also went to pay a visit to the buzurg. The buzurg saw the prince enter and again shifted from his quilt and said, "Honoured Prince, come and sit here." Shah Alamgir (RA) did not hesitate, "Very well." He went to sit on the quilt that the buzurg had vacated for him. They conversed with one another. As Shah Alamgir (RA) took his leave he requested, "Huzur, it is my desire that I receive the crown and become ruler." The buzurg replied, "You have it already!" In what way? The buzurg had offered him his quilt to sit on and he had done so! Shah Alamgir (RA) instantly saw the relationship. He said quickly, "Hadhrat, this is only one half of it and not the whole. I may have the throne but I have not been crowned." The buzurg replied, "Bhai, that is not in my hands. That slave of yours - the one that fills water in a jug for you to make wudhu - it is in his hands." Shah Alamgir (RA) thanked him and departed.

On reaching home he immediately ordered his slave, "Bring water for me to make wudhu!" The slave brought the water. Shah Alamgir (RA) took off the turban from his head and placed it on one side on a pedestal and he performed his wudhu. On completing his wudhu he ordered the slave, "Take this turban of mine and place it on my head!" The slave said, "Huzur, have mercy on me! Please excuse me, as I have never done it before. Your honoured turban should be touched by my lowly hands..?" Shah Alamgir (RA) spoke in a severe tone, "I order you to do it! Take it and place it on my head!" The slave had no option but to obey the command. "Very well." He took the turban and placed on Shah Alamgir's (RA) head. The slave then said, "You received the throne over there and you have received the crown over here. However, our secrets have been exposed. It is not proper that I remain here. Huzur, I request you to set me free." Shah Alamgir

(RA) said, "I am setting you free. You may go."

Who was this unknown person? A mere slave! What was in his power? The authority to crown! The throne was given by the one buzurg over there and the crown was received from the one over here. Yet, neither of the two had any worldly occupation. They were not doing any farming. They were not involved in business and trade. They were not employees. Their stage and level was that of Tawakkul-alallah.

Shah Abdul Aziz (RA) And The English Governor

It was during the time of British rule in India that the English Governor came to meet Shah Abdul Aziz (RA), the son of Shah Waliyullah (RA). The Governor's head had no ruhuniyet in it but was filled only with materialism. Shah Abdul Aziz (RA) was never involved in any business or sought any employment, and had no lack of food. The Governor was quick to notice that he had no obvious sources of income and of sustenance, so he asked, "How do you manage to eat?" Shah Abdul Aziz (RA) evaded the question and gave no reply. Later, when about to leave, the Governor took out some silver coins from his pocket

and presented them to Shah Abdul Aziz (RA), saying, "Huzur, please accept this gift." Shah Abdul Aziz (RA) said, "Very well." He took the money and immediately remarked, "This is how I eat!"

Shah Abdul Qadar Sahib (RA) Refuses A Gift

Shah Abdul Qadar Sahib (RA) is among those personages who had no worldly occupation but who lived a royal life. A person brought a collection of korya to Shah Sahib, who thought to himself, "This appears to be a poor person. How can I take these korya from him?" He did not take the gift. This person left, taking his gift with him. Subsequent to this, the presents and gifts that used to pour in, ceased. A stage came when Shah Sahib had no food even. He thought to himself, "What has happened?" The answer suddenly struck him, "That person who had brought the korya which I refused to take... I hurt his feelings! This is a result of that refusal of mine!" He sent his servant to call this person. When he came Shah Sahib said to him, "Bhai, at that time you gladly brought it. Now I am actually begging for it." This person said, "Hadhrat, I had brought it out of pure muhabbat (love). I had meticulously collected the korya one by one for you. When Hadhrat refused, I thought I would wait for the opportunity and present it to you again at a more appropriate occasion. Although I have had need for it, I have not touched it and have kept it intact." Shah Sahib said, "Bhai, go and bring it." He brought it and Shah Sahib accepted it. The paths opened up again. Shah Sahib was involved in the work of Din. He was involved in serving the Din of Allah Ta'ala with sincerity (ikhlaas) and honesty (sadaqat) and Allah Ta'ala opened the paths for him again. Whosoever becomes Allah's, Allah Ta'ala becomes his.

A Sincere Student's Arrangements For Food

Qari Panipati (RA) was well known for his qira't (the science of recitation of the Qur'an Shareef). Initially he was a Qari only, but later became a Molvi as well. A Mawlana went to him to learn qira't. Qari Sahib told him, "Bhai, first make arrangements for your meals and then come for your lessons." The Mawlana

said, "Huzur, I have come to correct my tajwid (the correct pronunciation) of the Qur'an Shareef, purely for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. Food He will give. I am not requesting you for food. I merely request you to teach me." Qari Sahib acceded, "Very well." One mealtime came and went and a second mealtime came and went, but there was no food forthcoming. The people in the neighbourhood were also not bothered. After taking his lesson the Mawlana went to stay in the nearby masjid. It so happened that one person in the neighbourhood passed away. This qissah was related to us by Hadhratwala (RA). He also made the following pertinent and concise statements. "There should be ikhlas (sincerity) for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. If there is ikhlaas where can there be iflaas (poverty)? Where there is khulus (sincerity) there is much fulus (money)." There was a local custom to feed the needy for forty days whenever anyone passes away. Otherwise nobody bothered about caring for the Mawlana. The Mawlana ate well for these forty days. At times he was sent some halwa, at other times some meat and roti, and so forth. When the forty days were over, news came that somebody else had passed away. Again there was food for the next forty days! When these forty days came to an end, news again came that somebody else had passed away! The people in the neighbourhood came to realise that every forty days somebody was passing away! They said, "Let us make arrangements for meals for the youngster or else everybody in the neighbourhood will die off!" The arrangements were made and thereafter the sequence of deaths stopped! It was as if Allah Ta'ala was saying, "If you do not make arrangements for such a bondsman of Mine, I will make the arrangements through your hands!"

In Conclusion

What I had said initially was that seeking a halaal earning is fardh after the other fara'idh is for me and you. This does not apply to those who are true Na'ib-e-Rasul (deputies of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), those who have khulus in the true sense of the word, who have tawakkul, with the necessary strength of heart in themselves and those connected to them.

These means, whether of trade or agriculture or employment, are asbaabegair-adiyah - means are a habit but not a necessity. It is not an absolute rule that earnings will only accrue through trade, farming and employment. That is why one should not criticise those who dispense with these means. The ayet and the Hadith Shareef that I have quoted is for me and you. I have tried to show that many talks and lecture have been given on the topics of wudhu, namaaz and rozah, but concerning clothes and food, which we consider to be 'worldly' topics, not much has been said. It is apparent that these are not worldly topics but form very much part of Din.

It is the fadhli of Allah Ta'ala that I have managed to discuss these topics. It is also a manifestation of your muhabbat and khulus. Those who know me know how very weak I am and that I suffer from dizzy spells and am unable to sit for long periods.

Today I have discussed briefly the subject of earning halaal and the associated virtues. Do not consider it to be dunya but consider it to be Din, making sure that you have the niyet (intention) of earning by halaal means. In the gaze of Allah Ta'ala that trader will be a loved one (mehboob); it will also be a source of showering of blessings (rehmat); it will be a means of being forgiven as well, as he sleeps at night exhausted from his day's efforts. On the Day of Qiyaamat his face will be shining bright like that of the glittering moon. It comes in the Hadith Shareef that nine parts of rehmat and barkat are kept in trade and one part in other occupations. You have also seen that the status of the Ambiya (AS), the martyrs (shuhada') and the siddiqin are attained by this trader, provided that he is earning halaal. From this you will realise that, as far as we are concerned, for a mu'min everything is Din and not dunya.

Allah Ta'ala has stated:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُلُوا مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ

O ye who Believe! Eat what is tayyib - pure, delicious and of high quality - which We have provided for you. (2:172)

On this I had said that garments should also be "delicious", homes should also be "delicious". I had explained to you the four levels as well.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had said:

طلب كسب الحلال فريضة بعد الفريضة

Seeking a halaal livelihood is compulsory after the fundamental fara'idh of ibaadat.

I had also said that the effects of Haraam, the results of Haraam, are not good. The nuraaniyet that is produced by halaal is not produced by Haraam. Therefore, when keeping rozah (fasting), if a person has Haraam or doubtful wealth, he should rather borrow halaal tayyib money as a loan to buy his food. Also, the loan should be taken from a non-Muslim, so that at least in Ramadhan his food that is ingested at the time of sehri and iftar is halaal.

In discussing in front of you the topic of earning a worldly livelihood, I have explained that this is Din and not dunya. Every task of a Muslim is Din and not dunys.

I end off by making du'a that Allah Ta'ala grant you and me the taufiq to earn halaal and grant us the taufiq to abstain from Haraam.