

For Friends - Part 16

Book:

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

Chapter No.:

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Hadhrat Maulana 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 Khilaafat the same year that Hadhrat (RA) qualified from Deoband. Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA) stationed Hadhrat (RA) in Jalalabad, where Hadhrat (RA) established the madrassah, Miftahul-Uloom, and a khanqah where saalikin stayed for their self-rectification. He passed away in Jalalabad on the 17th Jamaadul-Ulaa 1413 H. (14th November 1992).

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FOREWORD

Al-hamdulillah , once again, solely through the fadhli of Allah Ta'ala and the barkat of my Sheikh (RA) also, not forgetting the valued du'as of our readers - this sixteenth discourse is ready.

Looking at the correspondence of those who used to write to Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Maseehullah Khan Sahib (RA), one notices that time and again the du'a and the advice given is to develop istiqaat. The dictionary meanings of istiqaat are: "firmness; stability; constancy; steadfastness; rectitude; uprightness." The word also implies carrying out tasks correctly and perfectly. The message conveyed is that one should carry out tasks perfectly, constantly and with steadfastness, even though the quantity is small.

In this majlis a variety of topics are discussed by Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Maseehullah Khan Sahib (RA). The topics discussed are important for all of us. Several topics are emphasised over and over again. The purpose is to develop istiqaat in the saalik: the saalik may have heard a topic discussed previously, but the importance may have escaped his notice. By discussing the topic again, its importance is brought out. It is an occasion for the saalik to look at himself whether he has brought that particular aspect into his/ her life and whether there is perfection and constancy in carrying that task. In this way, the saalik progresses step by step, stage by stage, but, under the guidance of his sheikh he reaches his/ her destination.

May Allah Ta'ala grant us all the tawfeeq to follow the teachings of our Sheikh (RA). May Allah Ta'ala save us from being swayed this way and that way by all the different winds that are blowing around us. Aameen

[This majlis was conducted by Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Maseehullah Khan Sahib (RA) in South Africa, most probably in the year 1982 or 1984]

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

نحمد و نصلي على رسوله الكريم

ENTER INTO ISLAM FULLY

أعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

(ا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي السَّلَامِ كَافَّةً وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطَوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ (بقرة 208

Fulfilling promises

Before this, by the tawfeeq of Allah Ta'ala, and the focused attention, du'as and the sincerity of intentions of all you honoured people here - before going on to narrate something in connection with this aayate-kareemah - it is appropriate to say that, it was brought to my attention at about 2 o'clock or half-past two, that a majlis or a bayaan (lecture) shall take place. At the time of salaah I had no knowledge of having to deliver a bayaan. That is why I was unperturbed. Zuhr salaah was performed in another masjid. When returning from there, as I was about to go upstairs to my room, it was indicated to me to proceed to a room downstairs. Thinking that some arrangements had been made for tea, I came this way. I do not eat any lunch. Whatever my habit is at home, that is my habit away from home, whether it concerns my ma'mulat or my eating habits. There, in the room, a dastarkhan was laid, some cold refreshments were served - what you call "ice-cream", very delicious - I partook a very little of it and drank a very small amount of tea, not even a quarter cup.

We were in haste to come here, seeing that word had been dropped into my ear about this majlis, because it is not decent that when a written or verbal promise has been made to someone, when one has committed oneself, to act contrary to it. My temperament feels ashamed. It is a human, Shar'i and natural demand that a person should carefully weigh a promise before committing oneself, and once one has committed oneself, one should fulfil the promise. Punctuality as far as time is concerned, my honoured friends, is an

Islamic teaching. We have absolutely no need to take from others any aspects, whether they relate to matters intellectual, temperamental, Shar'i or common law. What is there lacking in our home, Islam? Each and every facet and every situation has been set forth in detail. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has not neglected to comment on every topic for his ummat. Whatever was of benefit, or could be of benefit, from whatever aspect - not only on aspects of 'ibaadat, but also on matters concerning ma'aasharat (social etiquettes and lifestyle) - has been narrated. Our thinking, which has become the general attitude amongst our people, is that Islam is only concerned with salaah and saum (salat and fasting), these few necessary acts of 'ibaadat. This is not the case. From the time of one's birth till the time that one enters the grave, and whatever is going to transpire in the grave till the time of Qayaamat, and then till entry into Jannat or Jahannam and the conditions to be found there - that is, from birth till one's final abode in the hereafter - have all been narrated. We have absolutely no need to ask any other individual, any other nation, any other country, concerning anything connected to any aspect of our lives.

Istinjaa - its method

Take a simple act like istinjaa - cleansing oneself after answering the call of nature: we have been taught even its method. From here we can assess that other (more important) aspects will definitely have been narrated. Besides the thawaab and reward we will be earning in the hereafter - this being our basic intention, that Allah Ta'ala should be pleased with us, this being our aim and objective in every each of our actions - nevertheless, other benefits also accrue. With regard to istinjaa, we have been shown and taught even its method: Do not stand and urinate; squat and urinate; when squatting select a spot that is elevated (if one had to urinate in an open place); if the spot is low, urinate in such a manner that urine-drops does not splash back on you but gets quickly absorbed into the ground. If drops of urine are allowed to splash

onto one's trouser-legs, or feet or shoes, then, after death, one will be liable for punishment in the grave as well.

Punishment in the grave

You may be aware or may have heard that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), accompanied by some of his Sahaabah (RA), was passing by a qabristan (cemetery), when he suddenly stood still and commanded, "Bring two green twigs." These were brought. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) planted the one on one of the graves and planted the other on another grave, letting them stand erect. The Sahaabah (RA) enquired, "O Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), why have you done this? We have never seen you do this before." Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "The person buried here, lying in this grave, is being punished. The reason is that he did not take care to protect himself from drops of urine splashing onto him. And this other grave that is here is of that person who was a tale-bearer. He is being punished because of his tale-bearing..."

Tale-bearing - definition, and a qissah

I am sure that you know what is tale-bearing: A person goes to another and tells him, "That other person said such-and-such about you. This is harmful to your interests." He then goes to the other person and tells him, "I am sure that you know that your so-called friend is scheming up plans to harm you and saying such-and-such about you." This is called tale-bearing. In this matter today's world has advanced a great deal! To create disunity and discord has become our profession. To bring about unity or strengthen any existing bond is something that we have distanced ourselves from. Tale-bearing is something that we have to take great care to save ourselves from.

In connection with tale-bearing, a qissah comes to mind:

There was this one person who was quite wealthy. He had a number of servants and slaves, as he had the necessary wealth, as is quite correct. The Shari'at states that of what use is that wealth, of what benefit is that opulence? If Allah Ta'ala has blessed a person with wealth, and employing servants is not harmful, neither at that moment nor in the future, and there is no danger of suffering financial difficulties, neither at that moment nor in the future, and this person does not keep servants, then he is a stingy person and a miser of the highest degree! Such a person should have a servant and take work from a servant.

To continue: This well-to-do person was in need of a slave and he went out searching for one. It was an age where slaves were kept. Slaves were being sold in the marketplace. In search of a slave, he wandered through the marketplace, inspecting the various slaves presented there. He then noticed an individual selling a particular slave: he noted that the slave was youthful and extremely handsome. His body was muscular, his limbs strong and firm. He was immediately drawn to him and his heart was set on buying him. He expressed this desire to the owner of the slave that he wished to buy this particular slave. The owner noticed, from the fine clothes, demeanour and speech of this person that he was from the nobility. He took him aside and quietly warned him, "For goodness sake, do not buy this slave! Think for yourself: if he had no serious fault - one that is harmful and damaging - in him, somebody who is young and strong and handsome like him, why would I ever sell him? He has such a major defect that you will surely suffer from its effects. He is a tale-bearer, and that is why I am selling him." But the buyer was not prepared to listen to the owner.

It behoves a person that, if he does not prepared to use his own common sense and reason, he should take the advice of another and have confidence in him, provided that there is no evidence of this person's enmity.

With great reluctance the owner sold him this slave. The new owner took him home. The slave was very intelligent. He worked hard and long at gaining the confidence of his new owner and his wife. When he was certain that he had achieved this and that they trusted him fully and would not reject anything he said, his old habit of tale-bearing, manifested itself. He told his owner, "I have been here now with you for a long time. You have observed that I have proved myself to be truthful. I can tell you something that is absolutely truthful: it is this that your wife has forged a liaison with a stranger, of which I am aware."

The husband thought to himself, "Such a long time has passed, and he has proved himself to be trustworthy, and this is what he is saying, but... should I take him seriously?" When the slave kept on repeating the same calumny, it had an effect on him, it being part of the nature of man that he is affected by the repetition of any statement. The slave then gave the owner a grave warning, "If you are not prepared to listen to me, just watch out for that day when your throat will be slit!" The slave then went to his owner's wife and said, "Do you know that your husband is having an affair with another woman? I have tried very hard to save him from this woman, but he is completely infatuated with her. Despite my efforts, he is just not prepared to listen to reason."

This is not a minor matter. How can any woman tolerate such a situation? When a man will not tolerate this shirk (Shirk - usually translated as polytheism; having partners with Allah Ta'ala. In this instance Hahdratji (R.A) is equating the wife sharing her affection with another male as shirk, whereas her affection should be solely for him), that his wife's eyes should wander onto another - this being the demands of an honourable disposition - similarly, a wife will not tolerate that her husband has an affair with another woman. From this you can gauge that if, humans being humans, a husband and wife, being of honourable dispositions, will not tolerate this shirk of sharing their partners with others, how can or will Allah Ta'ala be happy or tolerate the shirk of anybody making partners with him? This is a matter to ponder over.

To continue: The same tale the slave kept on repeating to the wife, just as he had kept on repeating the other tale to the husband. Then, one day the wife asked him, "Well then, what is the form of deliverance from this situation? What can one do to disenchant his heart from this other woman that his affair terminates?" The slave replied, "I know of a special talisman - a charm or amulet. I shall make an effort, by myself or with the help of others whom I am acquainted with. But the situation is serious..." Just see his guile! He had gone to the husband and said, "There will come a day when your throat will be slit, seeing that you are not prepared to listen!" He then went to the wife and said, "I know of the talisman to be used, but it is not going to be easy..." In desperation, she pleaded, "As far as is possible, I shall do whatever I can. What is it that I have to do?" The slave said, "When your husband is sleeping, and he is in deep sleep, you take a knife and go to him and cut some strupees of hair from the under section of his beard, and bring them to me." Can you see his shrewdness? He continued. "When you have brought the strupees of hair, I shall recite the special words of the charm on them and tie some knots, and this will result in discord and separation between him and this other woman." He then went to the husband and said, "Be alert! I fear that the time has come that your throat is going to be slit!" That night he lay in his bed, but where would sleep come? When the thought has been instilled in the mind that one's throat will be slit, can anybody still sleep peacefully? But he pretended to be fast asleep. His wife approached. Through half-open eyes he saw that she had a knife in her hand. She tip-toed nearer and bent to cut the hair from the underside of his beard. He, on the other hand, having been told that his throat was to be slit that night, was now convinced that she was wielding a knife to slit his throat, and grabbed her hand. Snatching that very knife out of her hand, he slit her throat. It is obvious that an incident like this cannot be concealed. The police were informed and he was arrested for her murder. He was found guilty and sentenced to be hanged. The whole story thus came out. Just before he was hanged, somebody asked him, "Why did you do it?" He replied, "This was the result of my own foolishness and immaturity. I did not accept the advice of one who had my welfare at heart. When I wished to buy

this slave, the previous owner warned me that he was a tale-bearer and that one day I would surely suffer some harm from him. But I did not listen. I fell for his tale-bearing. My wife is also gone, my home is destroyed and my life is also ending."

My beloved friends! Whatever narration concerning oneself, whosoever narrates it, it is not permissible to accept it as truth. To be cautious thereafter, is another matter. There should be a full investigation first. There is a specific mas'alah regarding this: without proper investigation - without definite evidence - to act according to hearsay is not permissible.

To continue: Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said that the person in the one grave was one who did not safeguard himself from drops of urine splashing on him and the person in the other grave was one who was a tale-bearer. "I have planted these green twigs on both their graves. The twigs will make tasbeeh of Allah as long as they remain. And the effect of the tasbeeh will be that the punishment of the dweller will be lightened. The same with the other grave: as long as the twig makes tasbeeh, the punishment of the dweller in that grave will also be lightened." And it is not impossible that one day the punishment can end as well. Just assess for yourself the concern Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had.

Flowers on graves

From this I do not wish that it should be implied that from this that is proved that if all flowers and plants on a grave will continuously be making the tasbeeh of Allah Ta'ala, whereas there is no proof for this. Also, the implication of having plants growing on the graves of people, and especially of the Awliya-Allah, is that we consider them to be sinners and that they are undergoing punishment. This is the mas'alah of the Shari'at, and when the Shari'at has stated something then it means that this is the order of Allah Ta'ala and

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). That order (amr) that is not attained by qiyaas, but is contrary to reason, which is referred to as amr-istihsaani, shall be kept as it is and as it was according to the circumstances and the situation upon which it was stated. It will be not be changed. This is the mas'alah.

Take this example: Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was leading the salaah. One Sahaabi (RA) after making wudhu, tripped and fell as he was returning. The other Sahaabah (RA) burst out laughing while they were in salaah. After completion of the salaah, Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "Those of you who laughed out loud while in salaah, your wudhu is broken and your salaah is invalidated. Repeat your wudhu and your salaah." This is contrary to "reason" and is an amr-istihsaani. No impurity was excreted. There was merely the act of laughing. How can one's wudhu break? And once the order was given that the wudhu was broken, it is obvious that the salaah cannot be valid in the absence of wudhu. This particular order where the wudhu is broken, is called amr-istihsaani. That is why it is said that that salaah in which there is ruku' and sajdah, if one were to laugh out loudly, the wudhu would break, whereas that salaah which has neither ruku' nor sajdah, this wudhu will not break. It is a different matter that the salaah will become invalid. This is amr-istihsaani. It cannot change and cannot be applied to other situations: If a person is merely sitting, not making salaah, and he laughs out loudly, his wudhu does not break.

We were discussing istinja and Rasulallah's (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) statements. Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) also showed the method of performing istinja, and said that thereafter one should then use a mud-clot (dhela) to wipe oneself dry. We consider this to be a minor matter and have mostly discarded this practice.

You are aware the non-Muslim groups are obsessed with research. Numerous Ph.D's are undertaken on various research projects. One such research project was undertaken by an English doctor: he wondered why the Nabi of

the Muslims, Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), gave the order to wipe with a mud-clot after making istinjaa. We, as Muslims, are in no need of such research. All we need to know is that Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) gave such an instruction at such a time. We have merely to obey. Why? We are in no need of any such philosophy and reasons. Our relationship is not such that we will obey only if we were to understand the reason behind the instruction. Wanting to know the reason behind an instruction and then only to obey is a sign of stupidity; it is a condition of having no faith and confidence (be-i'timaadi) - may Allah Ta'ala save us from this! This attitude is one that can lead us to kufr. To undertake academic research is something else, but research is not needed for carrying out actions: our Imaan dictates this is the order of Allah Ta'ala and that of Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

Medical benefit of using mud-clods

To continue: We had heard related to us by Hadhratwala, Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA). Hadhratwala mentioned that he came across the article where this doctor wrote that for years he was doing research on why this instruction was given that one should wipe oneself with a mud-clot after having made istinjaa. Then, one day, the following conclusions struck him: Urine is acidic. The residual drops of urine will, therefore, show an acidic effect on the urethra. The antidote to an acid is an alkali. Acid, because of its harshness, if drops of urine remain behind, this urine can have an adverse effect on the urethra. And the Nabi, Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), where he had prescribed for his Ummat deeds that are of benefit and also to save the Ummat from harm in the hereafter, he had also prescribed deeds to save the Ummat from worldly harms. This, then, is a bodily harm, where there is a danger of developing some illness. The urine has acidity in it and has the potential to cause harm, and the antidote is an alkaline, so that the mud-clot draws out the drops of urine and its alkalinity neutralises the acidity, preventing the development of any illnesses. The order that Rasulallah

(Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) gave to use the mud-clot, thus, provides this worldly benefit.

One can thus gauge from this that whatever is harmful, Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has instructed us to abstain from it, and whatever is beneficial, we have been instructed to carry out. Every thing has been narrated.

To continue with our topic: Among the instructions given to us is that, when we have promised somebody and given one's word to somebody, concerning time, be punctual in keeping to the time, unless some special, valid obstacle presents itself. This punctuality as far as time is concerned, is a mas'alah of our teachings, of our Shariat, of our Islam. It is not necessary for us to lessons from observing the punctuality of others, that other nationalities are very punctual. We have seen, during the time of British rule, that when a person had made an appointment with some ra'is (one of the nobility) for a specific time, and he would arrive just two minutes early for an appointment, this person would look at his watch and would not enter the premises to say that he had come. He would look at his watch and would wait two minutes outside. At exactly the appointed time would he would announce his arrival. So exact was the punctuality.

Our akaabir, the ahlullah, as well, were very meticulous about being punctual.

So, this is a promise - it is a commitment - and we have been ordered to fulfil our promises:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَوْفُوا بِالْعُقُودِ

O ye who believe! If you have made a promise to anybody, fulfil that promise.
(5:1)

وَأَوْفُوا بِالْعَهْدِ إِنَّ الْعَهْدَ كَانَ مَسْئُولًا

And remember that you will be taken to account for the promises you make.(17:34)

Promises of the heart

We have this concept that promises are those that we make verbally, and these are called promises and these are the promises we have to fulfil. No, not at all! Even if we have made any promises in our hearts to anybody, to bring benefit or ease and comfort to anybody, these also have to be fulfilled. If we had made the promise in our hearts, but have not voiced it, then this promise has also to be fulfilled. This promise made in the heart is making a promise to Allah Ta'ala. It is necessary to fulfil this promise. If one does not fulfil this promise, there is a real danger of suffering some worldly harm!

It is accepted that as far as the ahlullah are concerned, when some resolve sets into their hearts, provided that it is not contrary to the Shari'at and there is some "alarm bell" (khatak) that rings in their heart, instilled from Allah Ta'ala, it becomes a responsibility that they fulfil that resolve. If they do not fulfil that resolve - if they take no notice of that khatak - they do suffer some worldly harm, even though they may not suffer in the hereafter, for punishment in the hereafter is for sins only and not for matters that are not sins.

Do not ignore the 'khatak' in the heart: a qissah

Hadhratwala, Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA), mentioned an incident:

A particular pir from elsewhere came to visit a particular locality. It is a natural desire to visit a person according to the status that he enjoys. When the local buzurg, who was a resident in that locality, heard of the arrival of this other person, he felt the desire to meet the visitor. When he stood up to proceed to

meet him, the thought came into his heart, "Do not go." So he sat down again. Then he thought, "This is only a wehm - an unsubstantiated doubt - that I am having. I should go." He stood up to go. Again the thought came to him, "Do not go." He sat down again. After a little while he thought to himself for the third time, "No, really, I should go and visit him. This is only my wehm. I have heard that he is a pious person." He stood up to go. Again the thought came to him, "Do not go!", and he sat down. At the fourth instance he ignored the warning and proceeded towards the door. He had hardly taken two steps when his foot slipped and he twisted his ankle and fell down!

Importance of sincerity of intention

Another qissah:

There is a qissah of an individual who was travelling in the countryside at a time when there was a severe drought and famine. He saw a large mound of sand in the distance and thought, "O Allah! If this mound of sand could turn into grain, I would distribute it among all the poor." This was a thought in his heart and became a promise of his. Allah Ta'ala instructed the Nabi of the time to inform this person that the sand will remain as it is, but the sincerity of his intention (ikhlaas) was noted by Allah Ta'ala, and he would receive the reward in his Book of Good Deeds of having distributed that much grain to the poor!

Not honouring a promise

Another qissah:

Another person made this resolve, "O Allah! Were I to receive a bag of money I would give the money away in charity!" Allah Ta'ala sent him a bag of money. The thought now came to him, "If I were to give this away in charity,

what would I do if I am in need?" His intention changed and became perverted. He did not distribute the money. You must have heard that there may be delay (dher) with Allah Ta'ala, but not darkness (indhher). Shortly thereafter, this person developed toothache. He went for treatment but to no avail. The pain increased. His teeth started falling out one by one. The pain and agony increased. He finally went out to the wilderness and lay down in complete despair. A Voice told him, "You had made a promise of distributing some money. I sent you a bag of money, but you turned back on your promise. Unless and until you do not give the money away, all your teeth will fall out."

Just ponder: On the one hand there was this person without possessing any grain and the sand remaining as it was, but Allah Ta'ala knew the sincerity of his intention, he was rewarded according to his intention. On the other hand, this person was given what he asked for, but his intention became corrupt and suffered its consequences, because he had not kept to the promise he had made.

From Allah Ta'ala there is delay but not injustice: Adl and Fadhl

As I was saying, by Allah Ta'ala there is dher (delay) - this is due to some wisdom, some tact on His part - but there is no indher (darkness / injustice). Otherwise, taking those kings who do not rule with justice, if Allah Ta'ala were to be unjust as well, what difference would there be between the worldly kings and the King of kings?

There are two attributes of Allah Ta'ala to consider: One is Adl (Justice) and Fadhl (Grace). Remember very well, never ask Allah Ta'ala for Adl, but always ask for Fadhl. Should Allah Ta'ala decide to deal with us with Adl, dear friends, having placed one foot on the ground one will not remain alive long enough to place one's second foot on the ground! We should always but always ask from

Allah Ta'ala His Fadhl, not for Adl. Just ponder: can any sinner ever address Allah Ta'ala and say, "O Allah! Deal with me with Adl."? No, he cannot. However, what is the demand of Adl? It is that, when one has acted contrary to His orders, one should not ask to be punished. Who wants to be punished? No. One should never request Adl. Never mind sinning, even after having made 'ibaadat one should not say, "O Allah! I have made this 'ibaadat - deal with me with Adl." The type of 'ibaadat we perform our Rabb knows very well. If we were to be dealt with Adl, we would not be entitled to any reward. Any reward is purely His Fadhl. We should make du'a for Fadhl. He has already stated from before that for every good deed (néki), He will reward us tenfold. Therefore, the reward for performing the five daily salaahes is as having performed fifty salaahes. We are only too well aware of the quality of our salaahes. Nevertheless, we place our hope in His Fadhl, as has been mentioned.

These are topics that come to mind. As the topics come to mind, I mention them. I do not think out the topics beforehand. What is achieved by such planning? One plans one thing and something entirely different happens. One buzurg was asked, "How did you come to recognise Allah Ta'ala?" He replied, "I recognised Him by the fact that I resolve something and it does not materialise - I resolve something and it does not materialise - I resolve something and it does not materialise - I resolve something and it does not materialise.... From this I came to realise that there is another Being whose resolve overpowers mine."

Similarly, another was asked, "How would you define Aql (Intelligence)? " He replied, "Aql is that which recognises Allah Ta'ala." He was then asked, "Who is Allah Ta'ala?" He replied, "Allah Ta'ala is He who cannot be encompassed by Aql."

So, one should always ask for Fadhl. How can one ask for Adl? Even after 'ibaadat, ask for Fadhl. It is only through His Fadhl that He accepts our 'ibaadat. That is why our Dada pir, Haji Imdadullah Sahib (RA), used to say

deprecatingly, with regard to the salaah that they had performed, "O Hadhrat, what is my salaah? My salaah is nothing." This is showing contempt to salaah. This should NOT to be said. One should rather say, "Alhamdulillah! I have performed salaah with the tawfeeq of Allah Ta'ala, and I have hope that, through His Fadhl, it will be accepted."

These are words, though spoken by my tongue, but are the statements of my Sheikh (RA). What I have heard from him I am relaying to you.

Rahaaish aasaash zibaaish and numaaish

You will have noted that people have glass cabinets - even people over here possess them. There is no harm in having them, if Allah Ta'ala has blessed one with wealth. I do not wish to discuss this matter now, as I have already discussed it somewhere else. There is no objection to having these cabinets, bearing in mind a few guidelines: Briefly, there are four categories: Rahaaish, aasaash, zebaaish and numaaish. I hope our mothers and sisters are also listening attentively! I have been informed that there are womenfolk who are also listening.

Firstly, there is Rahaaish: this means, to have a place to stay, where one can see to one's needs, where there is shade from the sun, protection from the rain and cold. Such a place is called a house - a place to stay and where one's basics needs are seen to. To attain this much is fardh and waajib (compulsory). Then we have aasaash: possessing those items whereby one can live in comfort. The house may be built but, as yet, there are no features providing comfort. If Allah Ta'ala has blessed one with wealth, one should add on features providing comfort: some paintwork; windows providing proper ventilation; rooms big enough to be comfortable; proper lighting; etc. - features providing comfort. This category is mustahab, whereas the first category was waajib. The third category is that of zebaaish or zeenat: beauty/ elegance/

adornment. This category is mubah - that is, it is jaa'iz (permissible). It is neither waajib nor mustahab. If Allah Ta'ala has blessed one with wealth, and one undertakes to make the inside of one's home beautiful and elegant, then it is permissible. A person may have elegant carpets on the floor, beautiful frames on the walls, valuable objects in glass cabinets, etc. This will fall in the category of zebaaish and zeenat.

Women and beautification

For womenfolk to beautify themselves for their husbands, whether it is facial beauty, or beauty of their hair or their clothes, so that their husbands are happy with them, that their hearts are more attracted to them and are more drawn to them, is not merely mubah, it is higher category than even mustahab. Zeenat and zebaaish of this type is not only mustahab but it is waajib for her, that her husband's heart remains attached to her and that his eyes do not drift to others and his feelings do not incline towards others. This is waajib for the wife: she should be neat and tidy, her hair properly combed, she should apply surmah, and wear attractive clothes. However, we see our womenfolk adorning themselves and making themselves attractive when they go out to weddings, but the moment they come home they remove these clothes. These sisters who then claim that they are staying with zebaaish and zeenat - forgive me, but what they have said, and are saying, is not zebaaish, but falls into a fourth category, and that is of numaaish, which is haraam. This fourth category of numaaish, to display to others, is haraam. In addition, if the clothes worn are contrary to the Islamic teachings, and are an imitation of non-Muslims, what is termed as tashabbah of non-Muslims, following their fashions, then this act in itself will also be haraam. What happens is that today she is wearing a particular outfit which she saw displayed in the shops on their mannequins. After a few days this outfit is taken off and another outfit is worn, another fashionable outfit from America or elsewhere which she saw displayed on another mannequin in the shops. The first outfit may have cost

five hundred rupees and the second outfit also costs several hundred rupees. This involves another evil - destroying one's wealth (idhaa'ate-maal). One may dress well but simple, but one should not imitate other nations. Imitation of other nations - tashabbah - is haraam. Whether it is a male or a female who imitates other nations, in both cases it is haraam. There is a very severe emphasis on its avoidance.

Beards of men and tresses of women

A Hadith Shareef comes to mind:

Among the varied jamaa'at (groups) of malaa'ikah who recite the tasbeeh, there is a tasbeeh of one group of malaa'ikah which is truly amazing. The tasbeeh that this jamaa'at of malaa'ikah recite is:

سبحان من زين الرجال بالحي و زين النساء بالذوائب

We recite the tasbeeh of that pure Allah Who adorned males by way of their beards and of that pure Allah Who adorned women by way of their tresses.

What we are discussing is zeenat: The tasbeeh is of that zeenat. It is not to be assumed that the beard is only for adornment (zeenat). The zeenat refers to the tasbeeh. Having a beard infers that there is zeenat in it, however, it is fardh to keep beard. It is of the sha'aair (symbols) of Islam. When it is said that it is merely a sunnat, is plain deception. Performing a circumcision is also referred to as sunnat. It can also be said that the Azaan is sunnat. When the thought is expressed that it is merely a sunnat, then these are not befitting words to be uttered by any Muslim. Can any person claiming to be an aashiq of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) say, "It is merely a sunnat."? What an unseemly sentence! These are of the sha'aair of Islam that men should keep beards and that women should have tresses - the longer the tresses, with beautification and grooming, to that extent it lends to the beauty and

adornment of women. There was that age, when women used to have an altercation with one another, one would threaten the other, "Let my husband come home and see if I do not cause your tresses to be cut off!" This was said in extreme anger. When there was a fight between the menfolk, were one of the men to catch hold of the other's beard, this was the end! Everything else could be tolerated, but for somebody else to lay a hand on one's beard was intolerable. It was a grievous insult, damaging enough for the person to give an ultimatum, "Today it is either me or you!"

The beard is of the sha'aair of Islam - it is fardh to keep one. Not to keep a beard is a matter of sin. However, not to keep a beard and then to make insulting comments about the beard and say, "What, have you put up a 'sign-board'?" A statement also heard is that a beard is kept by goats. The person making this statement does not realise that this comment reaches back to include the Ambiyaa (AS)! I tell my brothers, when such comments are directed at them, that they should not feel upset, because they are being praised by such comments. These critics have acknowledged your elevated status. Do you not know that not every shop has a 'sign-board', but only big and important firms will have 'sign-boards'! In other words, what they are saying is that, because of your kaamil Imaan and because of you being a good Muslim, that beard of yours is evidence of you being a kaamil, deen-daar Muslim. That is what the 'sign-board' signifies. They may mean something else by their comments, but they are, in actual fact, praising you.

Imitating others: a qissah concerning transposition of bodies

I am reminded of a qissah:

This is a historical incident that Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA) related to us. It was the time of Haj. Normally, before or after Haj, people go to the qabrastaan (cemetery) - Jannatul Ma'alaah in Makkah and Jannatul Baqi in

Madina - to recite faatihah. As a group passed a certain grave, their gazes fell on the body inside and they saw, to their utter amazement, what appeared to be the body of a young Christian girl! As we are all aware, no non-Muslim is allowed entrance into the Haramain, sacred cities of Makkah Mu'azzamah and Madina Munawwarah. How could a Christian girl be present here? What an amazing thing to happen! One of the onlookers said, "But a certain man - a proper practising Muslim performing his salaah at the proper times, with a proper beard and so forth - was buried in this grave! Where is his body? In his lifetime, was there any action of his that is responsible for this strange occurrence? Let us enquire at his home." Some people went to the house where this man, whose body was supposed to be in the grave, used to live to enquire from his wife. They asked her as to the kind of person her late husband was and what was his character like. She replied, "He was a very good man. He was regular and punctual in his salaah, he kept a proper beard - he had all good qualities in him. Why are you asking?" They urged her, "Think carefully. Was there anything he may have done that was... er... not entirely Islamic?" The widow paused to think. After some thought, she spoke, "One thing comes to mind. It is this: When my husband was in need of ghusl after janaabat [a bath after marital intercourse, as required by the Shari'at], yes, he definitely did perform ghusl, however he used to comment, 'There is this good thing about the Christian religion that it is not necessary to perform the ghusl of janaabat.'"

What this implies is that the teachings of another religion has been given pre-eminence and virtue in direct opposition to the Islamic fardhiyat (compulsory 'ibaadat) of the ghusl of janaabat. This amounts to a criticism and objection of the command of Allah Ta'ala, that it would have better if this command was not there. As a habit he did perform the ghusl, but, in his heart, he found the command distasteful and he wished that it would have been better if this command was not there.

Ponder! He was performing the ghusl, but from his lips were issuing words belittling and condemning the Shari'at, and he considered that he was a mu'min, but Imaan had departed from him. Some words of kufr are uttered by people, and out of welfare and compassion for our brothers, it is necessary to point this out to them. They are unaware which words, if uttered, will lead to kufr. It is, therefore, necessary that these topics come to the ears of our brothers and sisters. Topics bringing tears to the eyes have been, and continue to be, discussed. Topics producing mirth and humour have also been, and continue to be, discussed. Historical topics are also discussed. But these are not as beneficial as discussing the topics of illnesses and the cures of these illnesses. Unfortunately, our inclinations and attentions are not on the latter.

To continue: One of those who were present at the grave had an amazing tale to tell. He said, "I recognise this girl in this grave, who appears to be a Christian. I am her ustaadh (teacher). I used to teach her in Paris. She accepted Islam in front of me - she read the shahaadah at my hands. She passed away in Paris and was buried there. It was thereafter, with the season of Haj coming, that I came for Haj. This is that very girl!" Just see: This girl, living in Paris as a Christian her whole life, then accepted Islam, passed away there and was buried there, came to lie in a grave in Makkah Mu'azzamah; while this man, a resident of Makkah Mu'azzamah, regular with his salaah and saum (fasting), a good Muslim in appearance, buried in the sacred precincts of Makkah Mu'azzamah, was not to be found where he was buried. A collection was made and funds were made available to send the ustaadh to Paris where he spoke to the parents of the girl and sought permission to have the body buried in Paris to be exhumed. When the coffin was opened, the body of that Muslim person who was buried in Makkah Mu'azzamah, was found to be lying in the coffin! Allah Ta'ala had caused the body of the girl to be transposed from there, as if to say that this Daarul-Kufr was not a worthy place for her to lie and that the Daarul-Islam of Makkah Mu'azzamah was a more appropriate place for her. As for the body that was in the sacred

precincts of Daarul-Islam, it was as if Allah Ta'ala had said that this is not a place for kufr, and his body was transposed to a land of kufr.

One should ponder. One should be careful what words issue from our lips. When the month of Ramadhan approaches wherein we fast, there are many who do not fast. Well, they are responsible for their actions, but, when asked if they are fasting, for them to say, "Why should one fast? Fasting is for those who do not have food at home." They do not realise that these are words of kufr.

As I was saying - and, hopefully, you would have listened attentively - a few aspects have been mentioned concerning Rahaaish, aasaa'ish, zebaaish and numaaish. We have been forbidden to imitate non-Muslims in those aspects specific to them, whether the tashabbah relates to opinions and statements, or the tashabbah relates to actions and deeds, or whether the tashabbah relates to clothing and dressing, or even to the extent of tashabbah related to methodologies which are specific to non-Muslims. That is why the fuqahaa (jurists) written in connection with utensils made of brass - I have not seen them being used here, but they are used back home to make bread, etc. - that it is not permissible for Muslims to use them; but should they wish to make use of brass utensils, then they should be plated with copper to differentiate them from the brass utensils used by non-Muslims. One can see that in connection with a utensil, which is an item apart from one's body, the Shari'at states that it needs to be differentiated from that of non-Muslims, then with regard to the clothes that are worn on one's body and are attached to the body, how much more the emphasis will there not be on avoiding tashabbah with non-Muslims. Going a step further, take one's face, which forms part of one's body, how much greater caution should one not exercise in avoiding tashabbah with the non-Muslims.

Pardah

The absence of pardah is a feature of non-Muslim lifestyles. The Islamic teaching is that of adopting pardah - not of neglecting pardah (be-pardagi). By seeing others, by staying among them and by associating with them, the effects have manifested themselves and we have stopped observing pardah. We have adopted the ways of non-Muslims, this being tashabbah of them. Worse still, we do not consider this to be a defect within us. It is a general rule that when a wrong action is commonly practised and one's temperament repeats that action frequently, one ceases to recognise it being wrong.

Bribery is wrong and was considered to be such by everybody, but by employees indulging in bribery as a common practice, it being evil has gone out of the minds of people and, instead, they are proud of it and will enquire from one another, "How much do you earn?" The reply will be, "I earn 'X' amount a month."

Friends! When an evil becomes common and widespread, no matter how recriminative it may be, the evil of it goes out of people's minds. It is then considered to be goodness. Neglecting pardah (be-pardagi) was the supreme degree of insult and humiliation. Be-pardagi is a feature of the non-Muslims. By associating with them, staying among them, imitating them, the evil of be-pardagi has disappeared from our minds and we see the results of this on front of us. To put a halt to this evil has now become very difficult.

The fact is that there is the statement of Allah Ta'ala in the Qur'in Shareef:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لَأَزُودَاجِكُمْ وَبَنَاتِكُمْ وَنِسَاءَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلَابِيبِهِنَّ

O Nabi (i.e. Rasulullah, Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), say to your wives, to your daughters, to the womenfolk of the Believers, if they perchance were to leave their homes, they should cover themselves with their sheets from their heads till the bottom. (33:59)

Jalaab - this is a sheet that is thrown over the head and allowed to hang right down to the feet. This includes covering the head, face, chest, legs and feet.

An incident from days gone by

Let me mention an incident that occurred in the days gone by in Jalalabad, indicating the high degree of modesty and sense of shame in that era. In those days women used to travel in dolis. These were sedan chairs which had a canopy and were covered on all four sides. There was a very small window-type opening on the sides. Even if they had to travel short distances, they made use of the doli. After the partition of the subcontinent (into India and Pakistan) the use of the doli has ceased. A wedding was taking place locally. A certain lady was travelling to the house where the bride was. While travelling, she placed her face at the window - which she should not have done - and peeped outside. Nearby, there was a Khan sahib who observed her action. He quickly went into his house, took out his rifle, loaded it, came out and shot the lady as she was still peeping from the little window. She died on the spot. The carriers, unaware of what had happened, stopped at the house where the woman was proceeding to, and placed the chair on the ground. But who could come out? The woman was dead. A girl from the house came to receive her, but nobody climbed out. The carriers called out for the woman to alight, but there was no response. Finally, they lifted up the curtains, only to see her lying dead, shot through the head. There was a big commotion. Who shot her? The carriers recalled hearing a shot being fired but could not say from where it originated. When an investigation commenced, the Khan sahib himself came forward and declared, "I shot her. If she had no intention of observing pardah, why did she sit in a doli? If she decided to sit in a doli, then why did she expose herself by peeping out? My ghairat (sense of honour) could not tolerate this situation. My ghairat impelled me to take the measure I did. Today exposes herself after choosing to sit in pardah in a doli

and tomorrow she will be walking in the street without pardah!" This incident took place a very long time ago.

I have to emphasise that the above incident is not part of Din.

What we were discussing is that which is resolved in the heart, is a promise made to Allah Ta'ala. If one acts contrary to this, it is dishonouring a promise. There will be accountability by Allah Ta'ala. The discussion then went on to the topic of tashabbah.

Nisbat

One other matter comes to mind. O, if we could only take a lesson from it! These Ahkaame-Ilaahi (Orders of Allah Ta'ala) denote nisbat (having a relationship) with Allah Ta'ala. They denote nisbat with Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). The whole issue of nisbat is very wonderful and amazing. The nisbat of Madina Tayyibah is with Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). The nisbat of Baitullaah Shareef is with Allah Ta'ala. Just see how much honour and respect is there for the city of Madina Tayyibah. Just see how much honour and respect there is for the city of Makkah Mu'azzamah and of the Baitullaah Shareef . Therefore, how much more respect and honour should one not hold in one's heart to the orders related to these? How much displeasure will there not be on acting contrary to these orders! One person, having travelled through various countries, arrived at the time of Haj and went to Madina Tayyibah. He bought some dahi (yoghurt), and, having eaten some, remarked, "I have been to such-and-such a place. The dahi of that place is better than the dahi of this place." When he went to sleep at night, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said to him, "Seeing that you prefer the dahi of that other place you may as well leave here and go there!" When Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) cannot tolerate even an adverse comment made

about an item of food in his locality, how would he tolerate the actions of those who act contrary to his given orders?

There is a clear cut injunction:

خالفوا المشركين واعفوا اللحى وقصّوا الشّوارب

Act contrary to (the actions) of the mushrikin - lengthen your beards and shorten your moustaches.

As to the length of the beard, it is not unlimited. We should not be in imitation of the Yahud or the Sikhs. This would again amount to tashabbah. The emphasis is on opposing the mushrikin.

To continue: The talk was on Allah Ta'ala's Fadhl and Adl. These are two important attributes. We should never ask for Adl but always ask for Fadhl. If we were to be dealt with Adl, our life would not be sustainable for even one moment: having taken one step, we would not live long enough to take another step forward. On the topic of Fadhl I remembered a qissah concerning Hadhrat Shibli (RA), that he had made wudhu and was proceeding to the masjid to perform salaah. This should be our effort also, that we should make wudhu at home and perform all our five salaahes in the House of Allah Ta'ala. It is conceded that in this age many homes may not have water, so there is no problem in making wudhu at the masjid. So, having made wudhu at home, Shibli (RA) was proceeding to the masjid when a Voice called out, "Shibli! You are proceeding with those feet to Our House?" Shibli (RA) turned back. The Voice called out again, "Shibli! Why have you turned your back on Our House? Why have you turned your face away?" Shibli (RA) stood still. The Voice called out again, "Shibli! How can you make sabr from coming to Us that you have stood still?" Shibli (RA) cried out, "I am not allowed to proceed; I am not allowed to return; I am not allowed to stand." The Voice called out again, "Very well, Shibli, you may come with those feet of yours towards Us." What a manifestation of muhabbat (love and affection)!

It is His Fadhl that He has allowed us to perform salaah. Haji Imdadullah Sahib (RA) said many times that to state deprecatingly, "What is our salaah? It is nothing!" is an insulting statement. Do not say this. However, every each and salaah should be performed with diligence and care. Say to yourself, "I have presented myself in the Court of Allah Ta'ala. How should I stand? How should I make my intention and fold my hands? How should I pronounce the words with clarity? Where should I place my gaze?" Yet, we acknowledge that who can perform his 'ibaadat at the level which the Honour and Dignity of Allah Ta'ala demands? But, simultaneously, depart from the masjid with this yaqeen (conviction) that the salaah has been accepted.

Imitation fruit - a lesson to be learnt

The example we can provide is as follows: We were saying that people have glass cabinets in their houses and then we went on the topic of zeenat, that it was permissible. Coming back: In these glass cabinets are to be found various ornaments, but there should be no figurines and pictures of animate objects. One may also find, among the ornaments, a bowl or basket of artificial fruit - there may be melons, bananas, grapes, pears and apples, etc. The first time that a simple person like myself came across this situation, the thought came mind that the host has already kept some fruit ready for us; some bananas, grapes and some apples. Have these being kept to eat? But, after enquiring, I was informed, "These bananas, grapes and apples in front of you are not for eating." "Then what are they for?" "Hadhrat, this is some artwork. A certain person has fashioned these into the form of fruit from clay, painted them in the colours of real fruit and baked them in an oven to give this presentation." I was amazed. It was so cleverly done as to appear like real fruit - real bananas, grapes, apples and melons, yet made of clay. Also amazing is the fact that the original, real fruit would cost just a few cents or rupees, yet, these artificial fruits, because of the clever craftsmanship, cost ten times or more than the real fruit! Instead of you giving fifty cents you gave five

rupees for each fruit. What type of person are you? You pay fifty cents for the original and five rupees for the artificial fruit that cannot be eaten but is a mere copy of the real fruit? You are so happy that you are prepared to reward the craftsman ten times the cost of the original, and you are proudly displaying the fruit in your glass cabinet, then why would that Allah Ta'ala not accept that saum and salaah, even though they may not be like the original saum and salaah made by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), but are attempts at replicating the same? Definitely He will! One should leave the masjid with this yaqeen that definitely He will. Our Dada pir, Haji Imdadullah Sahib (RA) also said, "Having completed one salaah and one now performs the next salaah, have the yaqeen that the previous salaah was accepted. If a king calls one of his citizens to his royal court and he is displeased with him will he invite him again? Definitely not! In a similar manner, if Allah Ta'ala has blessed one with tawfeeq of making 'ibaadat in His Royal Court, and then blesses you with the tawfeeq to perform make 'ibaadat in His Royal Court once again, it implies that the first ibadat was accepted."

The mas'alah of tashabbah has again been proved in a wonderful and amazing manner from the above explanation. Friends, there is great acceptance (qabuliyat) in imitating the pious. Similarly, there is great repugnance in imitating the evil. Another word had come to my lips, but I did not use it.

We hear people commenting sarcastically, "Does Din rest on the way you dress?" Yes. Din does rest on the way you dress! Wear Islamic clothes and then see! When somebody wears a kurtah extending to below the knees, people lift their eyebrows. One person over here told me - I had been told this before and I have heard it again today - that when a person wearing white Islamic clothes and a topi, and has a beard, the indigenous people will greet them with respect and will say that this is a Musalman. And when a person is not dressed in this manner but has a coat and trousers, despite being a Muslim, the response is not the same, and when he is asked, "Who is this

person and who is that person?" the reply given is that this person is an Indian, while the other person is a Muslim. Even the indigenous people differentiate on the basis of clothes and appearance. This is the Fadhl of Allah Ta'ala.

Hadhrat Musa (AS) and the magicians

What can one do? Issues keep on returning. Leave aside what happens in dreams, but have you not heard? Hadhrat Musa (AS) was sent by Allah Ta'ala to Fir'oun. He had become very arrogant. Hadhrat Musa (AS) was ordered to invite him to Tauhid (the One-ness of Allah Ta'ala). However, dear friends, those who refuse to accept, will refuse to accept the Word of Allah Ta'ala; and those who refuse to accept the Word of Allah Ta'ala, and those who do not accept the Word of Allah Ta'ala, where will they accept of the Rasul also. Shaitan did not accept the Word of Allah Ta'ala; Abu Jahl did not accept the word of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Nimrod did not accept the word of Hadhrat Ibrahim (AS). And Fir'oun refused to accept the word of Hadhrat Musa (AS). Fir'oun had never suffered even a headache. He felt himself to be invincible and claimed godhead for himself. He was given respite for three hundred and fifty years, during which time he was not afflicted with even a headache. Fir'oun thought that he was god. How much time was he not given? As mentioned before, there is dher by Allah Ta'ala - a period of respite - but there is no indher (injustice). One should not abuse the respite given by Allah Ta'ala, as mentioned earlier in the qissah of the person who did not keep to his promise of giving charity after Allah Ta'ala gave the money. Fir'oun still refused to accept after the three hundred and fifty years were up. Instead, he summoned all the magicians in the land. It should be noted that in that age there were no magicians superior to the ones that Fir'oun had. When the magicians gathered, their leader told his disciples, "Go and find out the type of clothes Musa was wearing. Make for yourselves exactly the same type of clothes. If he is a magician then there is no fear that he will win, because

there are no magicians greater than us. And if he is a Nabi, as he claims to be, and he exhibits any miracle of his, the people will not realise that it is Musa, as you will all be dressed the same, and the people will not be influenced by him." The magicians did as they were told and dressed just like Hadhrat Musa (AS) was dressed. At the time that the challenge took place, Hadhrat Musa (AS) was asked by the magicians, "Will you commence or us?" He replied, "You begin." From here, it has been deduced that, as far as possible, avoid being a claimant, as one's case is stronger then. The magicians displayed their trickery. In response, Hadhrat Musa (AS) threw down his miraculous staff. As he knew what the potential in the staff was, he stood back. The staff miraculously turned into a huge snake, which then proceeded to swallow the smaller snakes which the magicians had produced. The smaller snakes were ingested and digested by the staff-turned-serpent. What a big stomach the serpent had! Seeing it was a miraculous serpent, this is to be expected. Here, let me relate to you a subtle point (latifah): After the staff-turned-serpent of Hadhrat Musa (AS) had swallowed the artificially created snakes of the magicians, the staff-turned-serpent turned around and proceeded in the direction of Fir'oun. Fir'oun's self-proclaimed godhead vanished in an instant. As the serpent came nearer, he backed off in terror and pleaded with Hadhrat Musa (AS), "Catch him! Grant me respite!" Hadhrat Musa (AS) had a fierce temperament and he refused to catch hold of the serpent. Wahi (revelation) came to Hadhrat Musa (AS) from Allah Ta'ala, "O Musa! We had granted Fir'oun respite for three hundred and fifty years, and he is asking you respite for just a little while, and you are not prepared to grant him this? Grant him respite." Hadhrat Musa (AS) granted him respite. He grabbed hold of the serpent and it turned into a staff again. However, it appears in the books of history that, previous to this incident, it was Fir'oun's habit to have a bowel action once every forty days, but subsequent to this episode when he saw the serpent coming for him, he had forty bowel actions in one day! This was his "godhead"! Friends, there is respite from Allah Ta'ala. There is imhaal (to be given respite) but not ihmaal (to be let off).

The magicians brought Imaan. This was the point I wished to make. The magicians accepted the invitation to tauhid. Hadhrat Musa (AS) was puzzled by one aspect. He asked Allah Ta'ala, "O Allah! You sent me to Fir'oun for his guidance. He did not accept the invitation to tauhid, but the magicians brought Imaan. Why so? This is something I do not understand." Friends, these are matters of the Unseen. These are issues concerning the secrets of Allah Ta'ala! No Nabi can fathom the secrets of Allah Ta'ala and no angel can fathom the secrets of Allah Ta'ala.

The mysteries and secrets of Allah Ta'ala

Another qissah has come to mind: Hadhrat Musa (AS) once requested, "O Allah! I wish to attain knowledge of Your secrets." Allah Ta'ala replied, "O Musa, do not make ask about My mysteries. You can never fathom them." However, Hadhrat Musa (AS) persisted with his request.

Take note at this point that, in our worldly affairs, when somebody important is pleaded to, and this person begs and persists in a request, the person to whom the requested is directed will give in to please the person. With Allah Ta'ala it is the same. The rule is that the Awliya-Allah are trained in the manner of the Ambiya (RA). This is the rule.

أولوية مستفاد من النبوة

Wilaayat that is attained - the Wilaayat that is of benefit - has been attained in the footsteps of the Ambiyaa (RA)

Some follow in the footsteps of Hadhrat Musa (AS). Others follow in the footsteps of Hadhrat Ibrahim (AS), and so forth.

When Hadhrat Musa (AS) persisted with his request, Allah Ta'ala acceded, and instructed him, "Go and station yourself at the mouth of a cave at a

particular place. You will be able to see wayfarers travelling along the path there but they will not be able to see you. From there you will be able to observe My mysteries in action." Hadhrat Musa (AS) went and stationed himself at the spot indicated by Allah Ta'ala. After a very short while a person on a horse arrived. The path was adjacent to a stream where wayfarers used to stop to refresh themselves. The weather was hot. The wayfarer alighted from his horse and, placing a satchel that he with him on the ground, refreshed himself with water from the stream, ate from his provisions, climbed back on his horse and departed. He forgot to pick up his satchel and take it with him! Take careful note of this point. Very shortly, another wayfarer passed by there. He saw the satchel, picked it up and walked away with it. Again, very shortly after this, a third wayfarer came that way, a poor wood cutter carrying a bundle of wood on his head. He stopped there, lay down his bundle, sat next to the stream and washed his hands and face. In the meantime, the first wayfarer on the horse thought of his satchel, remembered that he had left it at that particular spot by the stream, and returned to retrieve it. All the while Hadhrat Musa (AS) is observing closely to what was happening. The wayfarer on the horse returned and saw this person washing himself and then anxiously looked around for his satchel, but obviously, the satchel was nowhere to be found. He demanded from the woodcutter, "I forgot my satchel here just a short while ago. There is nobody else here besides you. Give me back my satchel!" This poor woodcutter denied all knowledge of the satchel, but the first wayfarer would not believe him and kept on insisting that he wanted his satchel back, "There is nobody else here besides you. You must have taken it!" The woodcutter kept on denying any knowledge of it. It was an age where people carried their weapons with them. The first wayfarer took out his sword and killed the woodcutter, turned his back on him, climbed on his horse and rode away.

Hadhrat Musa (AS) was struck with astonishment. Someone else took the satchel and this person, who did not take the satchel, busy washing his hands and face, is beheaded. What an amazing turn of events! Hadhrat Musa (AS) asked Allah Ta'ala, "O Allah! I do not understand at all!" Allah Ta'ala said, "I told you beforehand that you cannot fathom My mysteries. Have you observed My mysteries?" Hadhrat Musa (AS) said, "Allah, please explain to me." Allah Ta'ala explained, "The father of the rider on the horse - the one whose satchel was taken - had at one stage stolen a thousand dinar from the wealth of the second wayfarer. Therefore, the second wayfarer, who took the satchel, was compensated in that the satchel, containing a thousand dinar, was returned to him from the inheritance of the first wayfarer." As to the one who was beheaded, there also lies an amazing tale: "The wood cutter, who was beheaded, had murdered the father of the first wayfarer. The son of the murdered man was given the opportunity to avenge the murder of his father." Obviously, all three involved were not aware of the reasons for the events, but justice was finally meted out. "Musa, each had his right restored to him. Your mind cannot reach to such depths."

حق را باحق رسيد

The rights have been restored to those who have rights.

Hadhrat Musa (AS) said, "Yaa Allahmia! Nobody can unravel Your mysteries!" Have you seen? The unseen is known only by Allah Ta'ala. This is of His special attributes.

Is there anything more to say? Yes, something does come to mind. I hope that our sisters and mothers are listening carefully! When something happens that is contrary to one's temperament - something causing sadness, grief, despondency or some harm or somebody's demise - one tends to lose control of oneself. Then there is crying and wailing, clothes are shred, there is cessation of eating and drinking, and the thought is there that one does not know what treasures have slipped from our hands. One's gaze shifts away

from Allah Ta'ala. Some become completely depressed and do not leave their beds. Stop to think and ponder on the following qissah, also connected to Divine mysteries:

The mysteries behind the death of a kaafir and a mu'min

Two persons became very ill, one was a Yahud, a kaafir, and the other was a Muslim, a mu'min. The Yahudi kaafir had a desire, "I am close to death. I wish I could eat some fish!" The Muslim mu'min also had a wish, "I am dying. If I could just have some olive oil!" The one was anxious to have his wish of eating fish fulfilled and the other was anxious to have his wish of having some olive oil fulfilled. Allah Ta'ala summoned two malaa'ikah. To the one Allah Ta'ala gave the instruction, "There are no fish in his pond. Place a fish in the pond for the Yahud to eat." To the other malaa'ikah Allah Ta'ala gave the instruction, "The Muslim mu'min wishes to have some olive oil. There is bottle of olive oil on a shelf in his house. Take the bottle and destroy it with the olive oil so that he cannot have it.!"

Until the full account is not heard, one does not what kind of thoughts and doubts go through our minds. This is why one should listen to a lecture (bayaan) till the end. A bayaan is such that midway through one topic another and then another topic is discussed, with the speaker coming back to complete the incomplete topics which were only partially discussed.

To continue: Both the malaa'ikah met on the way to fulfil their tasks. The one asked the other, "Where are you going?" The first one said, "I have been ordered to go to a particular Yahud. He has a desire to eat some fish, and there are no fish in his pond, so I have to place one in it for him to eat. Where are you off to?" "I have been ordered to go to the house of a Muslim. He has a desire to partake of some olive oil. There is a bottle of olive oil on a shelf in his house. My instructions are to destroy the bottle and the olive oil so that he

cannot have it." The second malaa'ikah enquired from the first, "Did you ask Allah Ta'ala why?" The first one said, "Yes, I did. I said, 'O Allah! The Yahudi kaafir is dying and You are fulfilling his dying wish and heart's desire. There is no fish, yet You are seeing to his wish. What is the wisdom behind this?" "What was the reply?"

Our sisters and mothers should listen very carefully to this!

"Allah Ta'ala said, 'Whenever the Yahud had performed any goodness in the world, I had compensated him in the world with some khair.'"

Note that good deeds performed in this world fall into two categories: One is where the intention is to attain some qurb - that is, attain some thawaab, attain some reward, attain closeness to Allah Ta'ala, attain His pleasure, attain higher stages in Jannat. The other category is where the intention is solely to benefit the creation. One finds others give water to drink to the thirsty in hot weather, feed animals, give charity and assist people with problems out of a sense of compassion, and so forth.

"Allah Ta'ala continued, 'He is now on the point of dying. He has to his credit one good deed, for which he has still not been compensated. He has this strong desire to eat fish. I want his desire to be fulfilled so that he is compensated in this world for the good he has done. And, in the hereafter, he proceeds straight into Jahannam. That is why I have instructed you to feed him the fish.'"

Are you pondering over this?

The first malaa'ikah then asked the second one, "Did you enquire as to why you had to destroy the olive oil for the Muslim not to be able to partake of it?" "Yes, I did." "What did Allah Ta'ala say?" "Allah Ta'ala said, 'Whenever this mu'min Muslim bandah committed any sin, I afflicted him with some problem contrary to his temperament (tabiyat), some difficulty, some sadness and grief,

some problem. He made sabr (showed patience and fortitude), on account of which I washed away his sins."

Ponder over this. Allah Ta'ala is Arhamurrahmaan - The most merciful of all those who show mercy. Something comes to mind. Let me narrate it before I forget.

Marrying a second wife

A woman came to Hadhrat Junaid Baghdadi (RA). She asked him, "Hadhrat, my husband wants to marry a second wife - what do you have to say on this matter?" Hadhrat Junaid Baghdadi (RA) replied, "Dear sister, Allah Ta'ala states in the Qur'an Shareef,

فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً

"... and if ye fear that ye cannot do justice (to so many), then one only..." (4:3)

If a man wishes to marry a second time, having one wife already, and he can be fair and do justice, then there is permission to do so, and if he is unable to be fair and do justice then it is not permissible to marry a second wife. If he wants to marry a second wife, what is the problem? It is permissible." The woman responded, "Hadhrat, if the Shari'at were to have allowed me, I would have taken off my veil from my face and revealed my face to you, and then asked you, 'Being married to one as beautiful as I - would it be even remotely justified for him to let his gaze fall on anyone else?'" These words were hardly out of her mouth when Hadhrat Junaid Baghdadi (RA) fell unconscious in a spell of ecstasy. The woman went away. When Hadhrat Junaid Baghdadi (RA) regained his senses, his Khidim-e-Khas (special attendant/ close disciple) asked, "Hadhrat, what was the reason for you to have been engulfed in ecstasy?" Hadhrat Junaid Baghdadi (RA) replied, "The woman's words reminded me of the Hadith Shareef wherein Allah Ta'ala states that, 'O My

bondsmen, the veils of Nur (celestial effulgence) that lie between Me and you, if it was possible for you to see Me, I would have lifted these veils of Nur between Me and you, and I would have revealed Myself to you, and I would have asked you that, I being the (Majestic) Deity that I am, would you be justified in letting your gaze fall elsewhere?" Ponder over this.

From here one should understand the position that one wife has. In this age men are finding it difficult to fulfil the rights of one wife, how can anybody picture having a second marriage and additional children? You are not so young and strong, and neither is there the physical strength to fulfil the rights of two wives, when the rights of one are being fulfilled with difficulty, nor is there the wealth to treat both wives equally, nor is there the wealth to provide both with the same houses - to give to the other wife a house to the same value as the first one was given. The value of food and clothing given to the one has to be the same as the value of the food and clothes given to the other. The amount of hours and minutes spent at night with the one has to be equal to the hours and minutes spent with the other. If the time spent with one exceeds the time spent with the other the rights of the latter have been usurped - one has committed zulm (oppression).

There is something else to remember as well: The one wife to whom you are already married - whether you married her having seen her before or without seeing her - may speak some harsh words at times, may be obstinate at times and may address you in an unsuitable terms at times, but the second wife will definitely be worse than the first one! Do not have any hope that the second wife will be angelic. Why so? The reason is that women, as many as there be existing, even though they may be the wives of a kings, even though they may be the wives of the Awliya-Allah (friends of Allah Ta'ala / saints), they has been created from a crooked rib! You young people should remember this very well. Do not ever mention a second marriage. Also, do not ever take the name of talaq (divorce). She may ask for a talaq a thousand times - and she will definitely make this request - but do not do so.

The nature of women

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had already stated long ago:

..... تكفرن العشير ما رأيت من ناقصات عقل و دین أذهب لللب الرجل

You (women) show immense ingratitude to your husbands. You are deficient in intelligence and are so crafty that you chew up the intelligence of even the most clever and intelligent men!

Do you understand? Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had already mentioned this beforehand - he had foretold this. Have a proper understanding of this before getting married. And once you are married, stick to one! Live like a man.

Women have been told, "You show ingratitude." Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has also said that you may give your wife gold filling the world, but the day that you do something that upsets her, she will turn around and say, "Since the day I have come to this house, I have had no comfort! My mother and father gave me away without looking properly. My kismet (fate) is broken. Since I have come to this moribund house I have never been at ease. Give me talaq." Let her carry on using the word talaq. After all, she is a woman - she will speak irrationally. You, O Male, have been created simply from sand: Hadhrat Aadam (AS) was created from clay, whereas Hadhrat Hawwa (AS) was created from the crooked rib of Hadhrat Aadam (AS), and from the left side, at that! Mind you, not from the right side, but from the left side. So, there are two kinks in her creation. Now, it is possible to straighten everything - I have been to a steel plant and saw steel being melted and molded into ingots, so steel can be shaped and straightened - but, dear brother, if you think that you can straighten your wife, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has said it will not happen, but will break - that is, it will end in talaq. Do not ever try to

attempt to straighten her. Yes, if you see something her temperament will accept, explain to her. In essence, do not pay heed to her words. Make as if you are deaf. And when you are deaf then you are dumb as well - if you do not hear, how can you answer back?

A unique way of creating peace

Hadhratwala, Hadhrat Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA) told us a qissah:

A certain person's wife went to a buzurg with a complaint. "Hadhrat! My husband is causing me tremendous vexation with his scoldings." The buzurg immediately understood the situation. The husband says one thing and the wife says four things in retaliation. Her tongue never tires.

Just now we were sitting silently for quite some time and nobody spoke. You may have observed that, in the home situation, when the wife does not say anything, the husband will have nothing to say. Only if she says something will he respond to her. When several men get together they are able to remain silent for long periods, but let just two women come together, then there is no room for silence! Therefore, become deaf and dumb and the argument will not progress any further.

To continue: When the wife came with her complaint, the buzurg immediately understood the situation. He said, "Bring some water and I will recite something over it." She brought the water. He mumbled something and then said, "Take this water with you. When your husband starts saying things to you, take a gulp of the water from this bottle and sit down. Do not swallow it and do not spit it out. The arguments will cease." She took the water and left. Now, whenever the husband became a bit harsh in his speech, she would take a gulp of the water and sit down, neither swallowing the water nor spitting

it out. The husband now had nothing to respond to. After a few days both the husband and the wife had stopped the arguments.

The position of the husband

What is the position of your husband? He is a male after all. He is the head. He may not be making salaah and he may be immoral, but for you, the wife, he is your leader. It is incumbent on you to be considerate and have adab (respect) for him. It is a different matter if you do not show any respect to him, he ignores your disrespect and discourtesy. However, after marriage, the wife is not bound to serve the father or obey the commands of her father as much as she is bound to obey the orders of her husband.

Obedience to the husband: a qissah

Our sisters and mothers should listen attentively to the following incident which occurred in the time of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam):

The husband of a particular lady, when he was about to leave home, instructed his wife, "Do not set your foot outside the house until my return." There was pardah in that age, not as we see nowadays that husband himself walks hand in hand with his wife in public, making an exhibition of himself. Our experienced elders used to say, "Once you have allowed the feet of your wife to leave the threshold of your home, and you then wish her to stay confined to the house, you will not find her at home any longer." This is an observation that comes from experience, dear brothers. We have allowed her out, so the blame lies with us.

So, this Sahaabi (RA) went away, leaving these instructions with his wife. The lady's father fell ill. He sent a message to her with somebody that he wished to

see her. She replied, "Ask Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) the mas'alah, that my husband had left these instructions, so should I go or not?" Rasulullah's (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) reply was that it was not jaa'iz (not permissible) for her to go. She did not go. Do you see her qualities? On the second day the message came, "Your father is now close to death. Now go and visit him." She gave the same reply as before, and Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) gave the same reply, "It was not permissible for her to leave the house as her husband had forbidden her. She was not set her foot outside." On the third day her father passed away. Somebody came to inform her, "Now that he has passed away, go and see him." She still gave the same reply. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "Even now it is not jaa'iz for her to leave the house. Her husband had forbidden her."

It is a different matter that the husband should allow his wife to visit her parents once a year, whether they call her at their expense or not at their expense. If Allah Ta'ala has given him the means, then he should do so at his own expense. Allow her to stay some days with them. The parents also should not refuse the husband's request to have her back. They may request, "Our hearts desire she should longer." However, if he insists that she should go back, then they should concede, "She is yours. Take her away." There should neither be refusal from the one side nor insistence from the other side. Yes, once a year let her meet her parents.

On the reply of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), she stayed at home and did not go. Her father was given ghusl and the kafan was wrapped around him, the Janazah salaah was performed and he was buried. When Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) returned home after the burial, wahi (Divine Revelation) came down, Hadhrat Jibra'il (AS) came and delivered a message. After he had left, Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) summoned a Sahaabi (RA) and told him, "Go and inform the lady who had been asking the mas'alah concerning leaving the house where her husband had forbidden her to leave the house, even though her father became ill and passed away, and I

had told her that it was not permissible to go out from the house - go and tell her that wahi has come from Allah Ta'ala, stating, 'Convey salaam to her and tell her that because she had acted on the Shari'at, that she acted on the instructions of her husband and did not go to see her father, on this basis I have forgiven her father.'" Say, for instance, she had gone to see her father, what would have happened? She would have shed a few more tears, but she would never have been blessed with the blessing she attained by acting on the Shari'at. By acting according to the Shari'at, by virtue of the nisbat that this order had with Allah Ta'ala and His Rasul (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), she attained the forgiveness of her father. This is something to ponder over.

On the topic of this forgiveness and the importance of pardah I wish to end off. There are women also listening in, and should not be left out. Men have ample opportunities to listen to discourses, but they do not have many occasions to listen to these discourses and this discourse is basically meant for them. So, this mas'alah is very important for them. Whether she observes pardah or not, she knows best, but at least, the importance of pardah becomes known. And the tawfeeq for taubah will follow and the womenfolk will come to know about the punishment for not observing pardah. They are unaware. However, after being made aware - should I tell you? - the effects of these topics coming to the ears of women, women have started adopting pardah.

Just a little while ago, along the way, one person informed me: an owner of a big cinema, having a massive income, left the cinema business, by the Fadhl of Allah Ta'ala - another example of the effect of such talks. Many women have started adopting pardah on their own. This is a sign of the sharaafat of being a saalik - the nobility and virtuous character of the true seeker of Haqq. Previously they were unaware. Now they have been informed. You have seen the effect of nisbat where a person listens to advice given.

Not covering the hair: a qissah

In the district of Saharanpur, there is a town called Manglor, a woman passed away and was buried. Her brother was among those who buried her. He was a government employee. After the burial, when they left he felt for some papers he had with him. He searched his pockets but could not find them. He went to search at home, but could not find them there. He then realised that the papers must have fallen out at the time he was bending down when burying his sister. The papers were some important official papers and not his own personal papers. He took some other persons with him and had the grave dug up again. He found the envelope with the papers in the grave, but what did he observe? He saw that the hair, which are normally divided into two sections, the section from the right side of the head being placed over the chest on the right side and the section from the left side of the head being placed over the left chest, had become somewhat tangled. His sister's hair from the right side were entwined around the big toe of the left foot and her hair from the left side were entwined around the big toe of the right big toe. It formed somewhat like a catapult. As a result her head was pulled up little from the ground and her feet were also pulled up slightly from the ground. He thought to himself, "She must be in considerable discomfort." He stretched his hand to loosen the hair from the toes and he suddenly felt a searing pain in his fingers as he touched the hair. The hair was so terribly hot that he burnt his fingers. He immediately withdrew his hand, quickly re-buried her and went home. He tried treating his hand, but no remedy could stop the searing pain. He went to a buzurg, who gave him some special water over which he had recited something, to dip his hand in. Whenever he kept his hand in this water he found relief. The moment he withdrew his hand from the water, the pain commenced again. The burning pain remained for some days. He asked the buzurg why this happened to him. The buzurg replied, "It would appear that your sister was not observing pardah with gair-marhams. She apparently left her hair uncovered in front of these gair-marhams. Allah Ta'ala serves out punishment according to the crime. Her punishment is through her very hair. The hair have been heated in the fire of Jahannam and entwined around her toes." Just compare the situation of the other lady from Paris, because of the

nisbat of acting according to the Shari'at, to that of this woman who did not bother about the Shari'at, and what the results were for both.

These topics came in when we were speaking about Hadhrat Musa (AS). I was saying that he was unaware of the mysteries of Allah Ta'ala. In the one incident each person received his just deserts.

حق را باحق رسيد

Without knowing it, the traveller on the horse avenged the death of his father, and the rightful owner of the money was restored his wealth. These are unfathomable mysteries. Similarly, in the other incident, the kaafir being granted his dying wish of eating fish, so that he may have no good to his credit anymore and enter Jahannam on dying. And the mu'min bandah being deprived the joy of having some olive oil, so that, by being deprived of this desire, he was compensated for the one sin for which he had not made taubah, so that he may enter Jannat directly on passing away.

Importance of taubah

Taubah is an act we should never dispense with. After having inadvertently committed a sin, we should make taubah immediately. Not only that, but even after having performed 'ibaadat we should also make taubah as completion of that 'ibaadat. In any case, when a mu'min bandah makes taubah Allah Ta'ala is very fond of him. Sin is a filth and impurity. How can He send anyone with the filth of sins on him, into Jannat? One can see that there are certain matters which even the malaa'ikah are not aware of, and even a Nabi is not aware of and they have to enquire from Allah Ta'ala.

Concluding the topic of tashabbah

We had digressed when we were discussing the qissah of Hadhrat Musa (AS) and the magicians. Hadhrat Musa (AS) asked Allah Ta'ala, "O Allah! There is something I do not understand: You sent me to Fir'oun for his guidance. He did not accept the invitation to tauhid, but the magicians, who came to challenge me, you gave them the tawfeeq to bring Imaan. They proclaimed, 'We bring Imaan on the Rabb of Musa (AS) and Harun (AS)'. Why so? You granted them the tawfeeq to bring Imaan but deprived Fir'oun of the tawfeeq of bringing Imaan."

What was the reply Allah Ta'ala gave? These are matters to ponder over. Our sisters and mothers should reflect on this - by coming here you have honoured me - and give it your consideration.

Allah Ta'ala said, "O Musa, what you say is correct: I did sent you for the guidance of Fir'oun, but he performed no such deed that entitled him to be granted the tawfeeq. However, as far as the magicians are concerned, they had assumed the same type of clothes that you did. When I saw that they had worn the same type of clothes as My Nabi, that they were imitating him in their dressing and appearance, I had a feeling of ghairat (blushfulness/ sense of honour) that they had imitated My Nabi, why should I deprive them? Why should I not grant them tawfeeq on this action of theirs? That is why I granted them the tawfeeq to bring Imaan and they brought Imaan."

Do you see? Have you understood the mas'alah of tashabbah? By imitating one who is pious, Allah Ta'ala granted the tawfeeq towards the piety of Imaan. On the other hand, despite making salaah, etc., see what happened to that person from Makkah Mu'azzamah? Merely on him saying that the ruling of the Christians with regard to the ghusl of janaabat was better than that of Islam, he passed away without Imaan. Remember very well that a person's Imaan does not slip away right up to the time of death. Imaan is snatched away before death. May Allah Ta'ala preserve our Imaan till the time of our last breath, with izzat (honour) and 'aafiyat (ease and comfort). What happens is that Imaan is snatched away long before. It is only manifested and revealed at

the time of death that the person is dying without Imaan. It is at the time of death that the person is shown to have died without Imaan, that he was a non-Muslim. Allahumma-faznaa - may Allah Ta'ala safeguard us and preserve our Imaan with izzat and 'aafiyat, till the time of death.

Tashabbah is not an insignificant mas'alah - it is a very grave matter. One should exercise the greatest caution in making any statements or dressing in a way that would be construed as tashabbah.

What can one say? Have you seen also the positive side of tashabbah as well? The magicians imitated Hadhrat Musa (AS) with an ulterior motive, yet the Allah Ta'ala's ghairat caused the magicians to be blessed with the tawfeeq of bringing Imaan? Ghairat is also an important quality.

Enter into Islam fully

After discussing all these subjects, the aayet which I had recited initially, has been left out. In connection with this aayet let me state that all these topics will be included in this aayet. This is not the occasion for going into more details. What has Allah Ta'ala stated in this aayet that was recited?

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي السَّلَامِ كَافَّةً وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُصُوفَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ

O ye with Imaan (men and women)! Enter ye into Islam...(2:208)

Imaan is the name given to aqaa'id (beliefs) - those few concepts that have to be affirmed in the heart. Islam is the name of the expression of the demands of that Imaan connected external actions and deeds. So, what Allah Ta'ala is saying is:

O ye with Imaan (whether ye be men or women)! Enter ye into Islam fully and completely.

This is what Allah Ta'ala is saying. The emphasis is, "fully and completely". We have explained the meaning and details of "fully and completely" for some time now. Let us now review the concept. It encompasses 'ibaadat, mu'amulaat, mu'aasharat and akhlaaq (worship, dealings and transactions, social behaviour and relationships, and character and manners), and it also encompasses the mas'alah of tashabbah - what is that tauhid demands. I have stated initially what is shirk (polytheism). When a wife will not tolerate sharing her husband with another and a husband will not tolerate sharing his wife with another, how can Allah Ta'ala tolerate partnerships with Him? There are two categories of shirk, one is shirk-e-jalli (major shirk), which is tantamount to kufr; and the other is shirk-e-khafi (minor shirk) from where the smell of kufr is exuding, contrary to the concept of tauhid.

This hasad (jealousy) is not appropriate for a Muslim, one with Imaan. It is the quality of Shaitan - he is the first to show this hasad against Hadhrat Adam (AS) and consequently became accursed. Hasad means objecting to the action of Allah Ta'ala: Why has He granted another such a big house? Why has He blessed him that he eats lavishly? Etc. This is not the occasion to go into details. A hint is sufficient for the intelligent.

To continue: Allah Ta'ala is saying, "O ye with Imaan (whether ye be men or women)! Enter ye into Islam fully and completely. It must not be that you believe in Rehman and your aqeedah is on Rehman, but in your actions you are in accord with the thinking of Shaitan. Do not walk in the footsteps of Shaitan; do not fall into the trap set by Shaitan. Is it an intelligent thing to do? Do you not know that Shaitan is your open enemy?"

Dealing with one's enemy

Does one believe what one's enemy tells one? Even if one's enemy were to say something that appears beneficial, for one's well-being, one should not

accept it. He is our enemy, even though he gives advice of goodness. Allah Ta'ala is stating that he is our open foe. If he is the enemy of your forefathers as well and you are making friends with him? What is the ghairat within you saying? Are you going to listen to the words of your enemy in contradiction to that of your forefathers? What type of intelligence is this? Do we all understand this? Whether the enemy is one's own or that of one's forefathers, one should not believe in what he says. And Shaitan is your enemy. He is the enemy of Rehman. Shaitan is the enemy of Allah Ta'ala, the Rasul of Allah and your enemy, so, how can you ever listen to him? He is your open enemy.

The full explanation of this aayat is rather long, and this is not the time to go into the details. However, when this concept has been understood from this aayat, then ponder over the topics that were discussed earlier on. Avoid falling into the traps of Shaitan. Oppose his plans. Some aspects of following him have been mentioned. Whether from the aspects of 'ibaadat, mu'amulaat, mu'aasharat or akhlaaq (worship, dealings and transactions, social behaviour and relationships, or character and manners), or the aspects of tashabbah, or pardah, or approaching others from amongst the creation with softness, or saving oneself from gussah (anger) or keenah (malice) - which are Shaitani characteristics - we should enter into Islam fully and completely.

Importance of Monday and Thursday

Listening and discussing is for the purpose of acting accordingly, for one to focus and ponder on one's shortcomings and weaknesses, and save oneself from these. At the minimum, when the days of Monday and Thursday arrive, one should picture in one's mind the following: "Today, our deeds will be presented to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). At least let this Monday/Thursday should pass without me committing any sins." Let these days, at least, pass by with the above thought in mind. Contemplating in this manner, Insha-Allah, these two days will pass without committing sins, and when one

keeps on contemplating repeatedly along these lines, a time will come when one will avoid being caught in the clutches of Shaitan, as Allah Ta'ala knows the talab (desire/ quest) that is in one. Allah Ta'ala is the One Who blesses with tawfeeq.

The discourse is approaching its end. Just to emphasise that we should not harbour such negative thoughts that we have a multitude of sins and if we make taubah today we will break the taubah tomorrow. Who can be certain whether the taubah will be maintained or not? Similarly, who can say whether sins will be committed again or not? Having made taubah, at that time the sins are forgiven. So, make taubah every night before sleeping. It may happen that one's Ruh (soul) departs during the night in one's sleep, and having made taubah before sleeping, one's sins have been forgiven. Also, make this resolve that if there are any rights to fulfil with regard to any person, one will make the effort to fulfil these rights. Allah Ta'ala is well aware of one's intention (niy'yet). Remember: Deeds are judged by their intentions. So, make a definite point of making taubah at night before sleeping, with remorse in one's heart. And respect the days of Monday and Thursday. And do not let the wiswasah of Shaitan enter one's mind that he did not make taubah and that he will not allow you to make taubah. And remember very well that, when the bandah makes taubah with a remorseful heart, the thought of remorse has just occurred, and he has not as yet lifted his hands to plead, Allah Ta'ala states, "I have accepted your taubah!" Four thousand years before Hadhrat Aadam (AS) was created, Allah Ta'ala had written on all four sides of the 'Arsh (Divine Throne):

وَأَنِّي لَغَفَّارٌ لِّمَن تَابَ

Definitely but definitely, I shall forgive that person who has made taubah to me.

Do not let the thought even come near you that what will happen if the taubah breaks. If this happens, make taubah again. And if, perchance, it breaks,

make taubah again. Maulana Rumi (RA) writes in his famous compilation, Al-Mathnawi, addressing those who are kaafir, sun-worshippers, fire-worshippers, idolaters:

باز آ باز آ ہر آنچه ہستی باز آ گر کافر و گبرو بت پر آستی باز آ

ابن درگہ نو امیدى نیست

Allah Ta'ala states, "Come away, come away, whatever you may have done, come away. Whether you are a kaafir, a sun-worshipper, a fire-worshipper, an idolater, come away. This is Our Royal Court. It is not one of hopelessness. Even if your taubah has broken a hundred times, then too, do not give up hope. Even now, if you make taubah, you will be forgiven.

Allah Ta'ala has desired that we should make taubah:

من تاب تاب الله عليه

When any bandah directs his attention towards Allah Ta'ala, He turns with mercy towards him. Allah Ta'ala is virtually saying, "Seeing he is turning his attention to Me with remorse, I turn My attention towards him with mercy." Hadhrat Musa (AS) had asked Allah Ta'ala, "Whose voice is loved by You?" Allah Ta'ala replied, "The voice of that person who, with remorse, makes taubah - his purified voice is loved by Me. He calls on Me once and I respond to him twice. He calls out, 'Yaa Rabbi,' (O my Lord and Cherisher), and I respond with, 'Labbaik, Labbaik, Yaa Abdi,' (I am present, I am present, O My bondsman. What is it that you desire?)." One should never keep oneself aloof from taubah. The Court of Allah Ta'ala is ever open. Allah Ta'ala states, "There should never be any degree of hopelessness as far as We are concerned. Entertaining the feeling of hopelessness is that of the kuffaar:

إِنَّهُ لَا يَيْئَسُ مِنْ رَوْحِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْكَافِرُونَ

Lo! None despaireth of the spirit of Allah save disbelieving folk. (12:87)

The mu'min is told - do not feel that there is no hope.

Therefore, at no stage should one be concerned as to what will happen if one's taubah breaks. Tell yourself firmly, "I shall make taubah again! I shall make taubah again!" As we were saying, Maulana Rumi (RA) states, relaying Allah Ta'ala's statement in these tones:

باز آ باز آ ہر آنچه ہستی باز آ گر کافر و گبرو بت پر آستی باز آ

این درگہ نو امیدى نیست

May Allah Ta'ala grant us the tawfeeq to tread along the path of His Orders, with ittiba' of the Sunnat. May Allah Ta'ala safeguard us from committing sins. If perchance - Allah Ta'ala forbid! - we should commit any sins, may He grant us th tawfeeq to make taubah.

و آخر دعوانا عن الحمد لله رب العالمين

خدا حافظ