

For Friends - Part 18

Book:

Discourses of Maulana Maseehullah Khan Sahib (RA)

Chapter No.:

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib (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 Sharwání family of landed nobility, and being linked to Sayyid Hussain Ghaurí (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 rather to study Dín, which he studied initially in his home town and, thereafter, completed his studies in Deoband. Hadhrat (RA) became bay'at to Hadhrat Ashraf Alí Thánwí (RA), from whom Hadhrat (RA) received his Khiláfat. This was in the same year that Hadhrat (RA) qualified from Deoband. Hadhrat Ashraf Alí Thánwí (RA) stationed Hadhrat (RA) in Jalálábád, where Hadhrat (RA) established the madrasah, Miftáhul-Ulúm. Accommodation was arranged in the khánqáh where sálikín stayed for their self-rectification.

Hadhrat (RA) passed away in Jalálábád in the early hours of Friday, the 17th Jamádu'l-Ulá 1413 H. (14th November 1992). His qabar is situated in the local qabrástán.

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FOREWORD

Alhamdulillah, Once again, solely through the fadhil of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of my Sheikh (RA) - also, not forgetting the valued du'ás of our readers - this eighteenth discourse is ready.

A doctor friend was puzzled with regard to a statement made by our Sheikh (RA) to a sálik, who had related that Hadhratjí (RA) had said: "See to your own isláh and do not concern yourself with others." With the problems that the Muslims are facing nowadays, the doctor wanted to know what is one to make of this advice?

On face value, it appears that the advice appears to inculcate a selfish and self-centred attitude. However, the explanation is quite simple. Using the hospital setup as an example, we recognise that advice given to different individuals will be suitable for that particular individual: The patient admitted for a serious illness, will be told to worry about himself and not others in the ward. On the other hand, the junior houseman will be told to worry only about those few patients entrusted into his care, and not about the other patients. Higher up, the registrar will be told to see to all the patients allocated to him and not to those entrusted to the other registrars. The consultant, with greater

responsibility, will be told to see to the welfare of all the patients in the ward. The head of the unit will be told to see to all the patients in all the wards in his unit.

In a similar manner, the Sheikh will advise the sálik according to his status. It does not mean that the sálik does not have to worry about others - enjoining right and forbidding wrong is also part of Dín - but it means that he will only be able to fulfil the rights of others if his isláh is made, otherwise these rights will be fulfilled in an imperfect or incomplete manner. It can be seen that only if every individual performs the tasks entrusted to him or her in the correct manner, will society be able to function properly. When this individual is faced with the situation of fulfilling the rights that others have on him, he or she will be able to do this in the way that the Sharí'ah wants. This person will have the necessary qualities to tackle whatever challenges come before him or her.

If the patient in the ward is restored to health, he or she can go back into society and carry on with the duties he or she has. For the patient to be able to do this, the patient has to concentrate on regaining his or her own full health first. If each patient, instead of seeing to himself, goes about the ward trying to help the other patients, one can see that there will be complete chaos! Alláh Ta'álá states, "O you who believe! It is incumbent on your part that you look after your own souls...." S.5 Á.105

This topic was discussed in some detail in Booklet Number Thirteen, under the sub-heading of "Aman and Bid-amaní". To quote a few lines: "Bid-amaní - anarchy and chaos - is spread throughout the world. The reason is that bid-amaní is rampant within you. Let me repeat: This bid-amaní, this chaos and anarchy, is widespread throughout the world and this is the external manifestation of the chaos and anarchy that is rampant within you. When this bid-amaní disappears from within all of you, then bid-amaní will also disappear from the world..."

From this brief explanation, it is hoped that the reader will be able to have a better perspective when reading these majális. The reader will also be able to pick up the fact that the topics discussed are such that the advices contained in them will apply not only to an individual in one category, but to different individuals at their levels. The discerning reader will note that the advices will be such that the beginner - the mubtadí - will gain something, as well as the accomplished - the muntahí.

It will also become clear that direct contact with one's sheikh is absolutely essential. Constant communications with him and following his prescription, will save the sálik from many errors that he may fall into by merely reading a discourse or listening to one.

One should not conclude that the sheikh is not concerned about the problems facing the ummat - he is more concerned than any of us could be, just like the head of the unit in a hospital will be concerned about all patients, the health of the community from whence the patients come, and the national and international health implications of the diseases that he comes across. He realises that the health of the community is dependant on the health of the individual, and that individual is lying in the bed in the ward. Similarly, the sheikh-e-kámil bears in mind the whole ummat, present and future, and his concern is also for the whole ummat.

May Alláh Ta'álá give us all deep understanding and the taufíq to follow the teachings of our Sheikh (RA).

Dr.I.M.

[This majlis was conducted by Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib (RA) on the 8th Shawwál 1412, corresponding with the 13th April 1992,

in Jalálábád, India. It should be borne in mind that Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib (RA) passed away a few months thereafter, in November 1992.]

ENSLAVEMENT - GULÁMÍ & ABDIYAT

[Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib (RA) initially commented on his state of health.]

I am coughing greatly. At times, the coughing spells last a long time. No phlegm is expectorated. Only if I cough very hard, will the phlegm come out. Thereafter, I feel a little bit at ease. However, the body becomes virtually lifeless and it seems that even my life becomes lifeless, for a little while. My stomach and its contents pain because of the great amount of coughing and I have to manouevre myself into a more comfortable position.

There is no limit to my weakness. You may assess yourself: Four of the namázes I perform here. For the Ishá namáz I am unable to go to the masjid. I go in the morning (for the Fajr namáz). I feel the desire to go. Two people hold me and take me and two people hold me and bring me back.

Come nearer.

[There was a very lengthy pause. Hadhrat then continued.]

What shall I say? You have heard much and much is being spoken. What shall I say? You honoured people know a lot. Who from amongst you honoured people is not from the ahle-'Ilm? Everybody understands the simple, straightforward topics.

Núr of Ímán

Alláh Ta'álá has rendered ímán as núr, and He has also rendered Himself, by way of illustration, as Núr:

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

Alláh is the light of the heavens and the earth (24:35)

This is stated allegorically in order to make people, the creation, understand.

So, on the other hand, ímán has been rendered as núr:

اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ

Alláh is the Friend of the believers. He delivereth them from out of darkness into light. (2:257)

And, in the same áyet, kufr has been said to be darkness:

يُخْرِجُونَهُمْ مِنَ النُّورِ إِلَى الظُّلُمَاتِ

They (the false deities/ shayátín) take those [who disbelieve] out of light into darkness.

Also, in the Álime-Mítháq (The world where the covenant took place. The souls of the whole of mankind were in the presence of Allah Ta'ala when this pledge was taken by all the souls), Alláh Ta'álá had asked:

أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ

Am I not your Rabb? (7:172)

Alláh Ta'álá did not say, "A-lastu Bi-Iláhukum? - Am I not your Deity?" The difference between Iláh and Rabb is as follows:

Iláh refers to: One Who is worshiped. Rabb refers to: Master/ Lord: that Being Who possesses in His control the agencies, resources and means for the complete process of nurturing and rearing. He would be called the Master.

Those who were addressed thus, how did they respond? They replied, "Qálú, Balá." - "They said, 'We accept'". In other words, they submitted and accepted. Once, having accepted, it is now necessary to uphold that commitment.

When Alláh Ta'álá had placed this burdensome trust before the heavens and the earth and the mountains, they all refused to accept it. You could also have refused to accept it. But, since you have admitted and have accepted Him as your Rabb - and the meaning of Rabb being One Who is a complete Master/ Owner - then the person who has accepted this trust now becomes a complete slave. Is that not so? Think! Ponder! Meditate with a deep insight. Have not the entire creation become slaves in the Álime-Mítháq?

Seeing that the whole of mankind had accepted the status of slavery, implying, "You [O Rabb] are our complete and absolute Master, and we are your complete and absolute slaves," we now have to consider what tasks has the slave to carry out? Is it under "freedom" or "restraint"? Obviously a slave has no freedom and is all the time constrained to carry out the orders of the master.

So, when one has accepted that one is a slave - when one has verbally acknowledged oneself to be a slave, saying, "Whatever You tell me I will carry out; whatever You instruct, I will execute" - one has taken on this responsibility and this is now a promise. Should now one break one's promise or should one fulfil one's promise? It is obvious that, after committing oneself, one should fulfil one's promise.

A Khalífah

Now we should ponder on this. It is for this reason that Alláh Ta'álá has sent His Messenger - His Deputy - to this world to remind us of what happened in the Álime-Mítháq. And this reminder was a continuous process, from the time of Hadhrat Ádam (AS) right through to Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), and also through to those who are deputies in the true sense of the word. Khalífah means a deputy (ná'ib).

At the outset, the person who is the Khalífah should possess those qualities which are possessed by the one whose Khalífah he is. Further, he should then possess those qualities that will enable him to guide others. In other words, he should firstly be "ráh-bín" and secondly, "ráh-bar" - he should possess these two honourable qualities: be one who travels along the path initially, and then be one to show others the path. Then only will he be termed a Khalífah.

Difference Between the Duties of a Slave and an Employee

So, having made a pledge, this person is now a slave. This means that the person states, "Whatever You instruct, I will carry out." This is inherent in the acceptance of the premise stated above. It is also obvious that a slave does not have just one task. Have you understood the sequences of this argument? To repeat: does a slave have only one category of work? No, never! A slave has to carry out whatever task the master commands him to do.

Therefore, it is apparent that insán (mankind) occupies the position of enslavement, whereas the other creation - that of angels - occupies the position of employment. The angels are not like slaves: whatever specific task is shown to them, that they will carry out. It is a special favour, and their muhabbat, that other tasks are given to them in order to make them happy.

The angels had spoken out, "You have created insán and have stated insán to be Khalífah." Because of their spiritual and truthful insight, they commented, "They will do such-and-such deeds." Alláh Ta'álá said, "Yes, but you do not know what I know. What you are saying is the very basis for making insán a Khalífah, for this insán will enforce on himself the execution of My orders." The comments that the angels had made were not objections or complaints, but the comments were made "muhabbatan" - out of affection. In other words, they were presenting themselves for additional tasks. Alláh Ta'álá said, "You will not be able to carry out these tasks."

So, the angels are created in the position of employees. Some are placed in charge of rains, others over the winds, others on cultivated land, others over mountains, others are porters of the Arsh, others are made scribes, and so forth, and so forth.

But insán is not an employee - he is a slave. And a slave has not just one specified task to perform: Whatever the branches that pertain to his life, whatever the tasks related to these branches, all these tasks are now his responsibility. "Alastu-birabbikum "did not entail merely bringing of ímán. Having said, "Balá!"one is now stating one's acceptance and, having accepted, one has accepted Divinity as well, implying, "Whatever You instruct that I will carry out, as I am merely a slave." One's external 'íbádat is manifestation of this Divinity. All these implications are included, is that not so?

True Meaning of 'Íbádat

Now, whatever task that is performed according to the orders of Bári Ta'álá will be in the confines of 'íbádat. In essence, this insán mu'min who came with ímán from the 'Álame-Mítháq, now, whatever he is ordered to do and he does so, walking under the canopy of these orders, he will be involved in 'íbádat

during that period and not "worldly" activity. Since he is involved in tasks of 'ibádat, then it is apparent that the whole and complete life of a mu'min, even when it pertains to a mundane thing like sleeping, falls in the category of 'ibádat. And when he departs even for one second from these orders, he is not in 'ibádat. Do you understand? Having said, "Qálú balá!", one has now bought difficulties. One has brought these on oneself, for you could have refused when the offer was presented.

Therefore, the mu'min bandah is in 'ibádat all the time, provided that he is doing his work subservient to the orders of Bári Ta'álá. This work may be in the categories of the cultivation of fields, or trading, or employment, or manufacturing and industry, or it may be business partnerships, or pertaining to the legal profession, or financial institutions, or mutual transactions, or marriages, or giving birth, or rearing of children, or whether it pertains to dealing with compassion and empathy with others, or in serving the community during the time that it necessitates - all these will fall in the category of 'ibádat. This now forms the criterion, referred to as the Laws of the Sharí'ah, and not Laws of Takwín. The Laws of Takwín have been entrusted to the angels (but may, at times, be entrusted to insán as well). However, here we are referring to the Laws of the Sharí'ah.

Seeking 'Ilm Is Fardh

Now, it becomes fardh (compulsory) for every mu'min Muslim to learn the laws of the Sharí'ah to the extent of his or her needs; and it becomes fardhe-kifáyah to establish a group of mu'minín that will have an all-comprehensive knowledge of the Sharí'ah. If such a group is not established, then all the mu'minín will have sinned.

This is like the situation of Janázah namáz: If nobody from the local community has read the namáz, then the whole community will have sinned;

and if just a few have read the namáz, then the obligation will be deemed to have been fulfilled on behalf of the whole community.

To continue: It is necessary and fardh for a group from amongst the Muslims to be in existence, this group having a full and comprehensive knowledge of the laws of the Sharí'ah and the orders of Alláh Ta'álá. This group will have no other duties. If this group involves itself in any other tasks, this other work will be defective and its original work will also be defective, because how can two tasks be performed simultaneously? This is, thus, distribution of duties.

Two Tasks Cannot Be Performed Simultaneously

Evidence of this is present in this worldly life in connection with employment in the government sector. Let me relate an incident that happened yesterday. A person, a Muslim, is for a long time a government employee in the lower echelons of the revenue department. A very good man, a good worker and a very honest man. He relates a most interesting situation concerning himself. He said, "I am requesting a mashwarah (opinion) from you." I replied, "What mashwarah do you want?" He said, "It is not good to stay put in one job, especially these days, where times are very uncertain. So, I wish to study tibb (hakímí medicine)." I replied, "How are you going to study tibb? It requires a lot of time. It also requires gaining entrance to a madrasah. How are you then going to work in the revenue department?" He said, "I have asked some people at the tibb college. They say such books are available which I can study while sitting at home. Whatever problems I come across, I can ask the tutors to solve. I can also write examinations from time to time. I will be able to complete the course in four years." I said, "It is a very good idea. If it can be done in this way, then do it." He also said, "I am getting frustrated with my employment. Such laws are coming into force which our Islám forbids. But I am persevering." I said, "Do not leave until you have found some alternate means of livelihood. This is the saying of our buzurgs. Otherwise you will bring

on calamities. Your idea is excellent. Go ahead and study." He said, "That is fine. You have given permission. However, I have to ask the Collectorsáhib as well." I asked, "What need is there to ask the Collector sáhib?" He explained, "I am a government employee, and a government employee is not allowed to do any other work. If the government employee wishes to do business, he has to do it in the name of his son. He will not be allowed to trade in his own name. Should they discover his ruse, he will be suspended from duties and dismissed."

So you can see the rules of the government: A government employee cannot do any other work in his private capacity. There will be defect in either this work or the other. Do you see the point in this illustration?

In the same manner, the 'álim, who has gained expertise in the laws of the Dín, has to remain with it. It is not correct for him to involve himself in any other work or take up any other work. And this is based on his studies - on the kitábs of law, from Qudúrí till the final Hidáyah, after which comes the all-comprehensive Dorah Sharíf. So this mudarris, if he wishes to attain and maintain his expertise, with dalá'il (proofs) and incontrovertible argument, theoretical and narrative (aqlí aur naqlí), he has no permission to involve himself in any other work. Why? The reason is that there will either be harm on this side or on the other side. Can a kitáb be learnt without proper thought and contemplation? Of course not. So, that mudarris who really wants to become like this, will have to follow what has been stated above. And if one does not want to be like that, then he can do as he pleases.

However, it is fardh-e-kifáyah to have a group like this. Do not harass them into doing other work. This is na-já'iz.

'Ilm and Tablígh

By way of example - it is necessary to state this directly -: those who go out in jamá'at and request others to go out in jamá'at, to go out for a chillah, will be told: "The work that you are doing, carry on with it. Do it with full concentration. Do it with sidq and ikhlás within the bounds of the Sharí'ah. Do it with excellence. This requires 'Ilm. Without correct knowledge, can a person do tablígh? Never. One does not know what will be said from where. And there is need for details (tafsíl). If the details are not known, the creation will fall into difficulties. The rights of the creation (huqúqul-ibád) will be discarded. The rights of those connected with one, will be discarded. There will be shortcomings. There will be shortcomings in those commands that are necessary and compulsory with regard to the financial obligations on oneself. There will now be problems because the details (tafsíl) are not known.

So, carry on with the work that you are doing. However, do not harass those who are involved in the tasks of ta'lím and tadrís (learning and teaching). Also, do not harass that tálibul-'Ilm who is engrossed in attaining the 'Ilm of the laws (qánún) with clear proofs (dalá'il aur baráhín). Otherwise, you will turn his heart's attention away in a different direction and he will be deprived of this ('Ilm). That is why do not harass him. These are laws of the Sharí'ah.

As for that student whose studies are superficial, a student who has enrolled at the madrasah but he his heart is not in studying, his situation is different. Being here, he is freed of his household duties. At home, his father would order him to give water to the buffalo (bhens), to give it some fodder; to bring back some millet from the field. So, being at the madrasah, he is freed from these duties. Here he receives prepared food, a room that is ready, and arrangements for lighting. If he has stated that he is poor, he is even given an allowance. However, his studying is very superficial. He is not suited to become an expert. Never mind becoming expert, he is not suited to even teach! If he is a háfijí or a molvísáhib, he will get to be an imám somewhere. This is fine. However, he will not be able to teach "Mizáne-Munsh'ab". He will not be able to teach even "Taysarul-Mubtadí", which is considered to be a

simple kitáb. It takes a proper 'álim to be able to teach "Taysarul-Mubtadí" (these are some very basic and simple text books prescribed for beginners). A shaky molvísáhib will not be able to teach it. This topic is mentioned merely incidentally.

To continue: It is obvious and it has been proven that by replying, "Balá" to the questioned posed, "Alastu-birabbikum?" one has accepted oneself to be a slave. And a slave does not have one specified duty. Whatever task he is given to do, he carries out. This may be related to 'íbádat in itself, like namáz, rozah, zakát and hajj. Namáz is for everybody, but not zakát. Rozah is for everybody but not hajj.

Zakát is not a duty on all mu'minín. There are some conditions attached: there is the pre-requisite of having wealth. Namáz and rozah are bodily functions. There is no need of wealth. All those who are sane, báligh and healthy are under obligation. It is necessary to learn the relevant masá'il to the extent of necessity. When a person has some wealth, he has to learn the masá'il regarding zakát, fitrah qurbání, etc. to the extent of necessity. When a wife enters the scene, the husband has to learn the laws regarding support and maintenance of the wife. When he has children, he has to learn the laws with regard to their upbringing. Thus, whatever secondary aspects the individual's lifestyle now takes on, so also it will be his responsibility to learn the laws relevant to these secondary aspects.

Protection of Islám

Also, in order to prove the truthfulness of Islám to our antagonists, it is necessary to have full and comprehensive 'ilm, theoretical and narrative. Additionally, it is necessary to present illustrations, with references from the very books of the antagonists, during discussions and debates. For example, it will be said to them, "Whatever Alláh Ta'álá states in the Qur'án Sharíf is

nothing new. You check in your Taurah or your Bible or your scriptures. In these you will find that the final messenger who will be sent will be Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam); that it will be necessary to believe in him and it will be necessary to become a Muslim. Whoever does not do so, will not be entitled to be called a believer." The relevant references will be provided to them, with the comment, "Check it out. It is in your book."

In debates as well, it will be necessary to present the relevant references in their scriptures. On their criticisms of the many wives of Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), it will pointed out to them, "That person whom you consider to be a prophet, whom you call Autár (this is a prominent figure in the Hindu religion), how many wives did he have? As for our prophet, Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), who had the strength of a thousand men, you have the audacity to criticise him for having nine wives? You do not have such a mouth that is worthy of criticising our Prophet." This reply has silenced the critic. This is being given to you as an illustration.

What type of 'álim is it who can do this? It is one who has all-encompassing 'Ilm. It is not the task of each and everyone to study with such depth. Not everyone holds within him the capabilities for this.

The Tasks of the Slave

To continue: A slave does not have one specified duty. He is not only required to make 'íbádat but business dealings also form part of his duties. He needs to ask himself: "Do I do business alone or do I do it in partnership with another?" If done in partnership, what are the laws with regard to Shirákat and Mushárikat, etc.? There are four types of partnerships. One has to acquaint oneself with the relevant laws. Another situation: If one becomes a wakíl (representative), the laws with regard to this should be learnt. Does the kitáb "Hidáyah" not contain chapters on wikálat, on hadhánat, on kifálat, on

shahádat (these are technical terms used to categorise different types of business dealings and related matters. Details appear in the book - Al-Hidayah, which is a prescribed textbook in the Darul Uloom), etc.? These are all laws.

Thus, the whole life of a mu'min is that of enslavement. Take another detail: Passing urine is also a task. How should one do this? How should one sit? Where should one sit? If one is in wild terrain and one has the urge to pass urine, where should one sit? How should one sit? How does one prevent droplets of urine splashing on one? Is this not one type of restriction also, or is it freedom? So, we are taught also how to urinate.

When the Sahábah (RA) arrived in the presence of the Christian king, he asked them, "We have heard that your Prophet teaches you how to urinate and defecate?" They replied, "Yes! We were like animals before, not knowing how to urinate and defecate. We were like animals, but now we have been transformed into human beings. Yes, our Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) also teaches how to urinate." The Sahábah (RA) held the honour of the Laws of Islám in their hearts. They were not ashamed. "Yes, before, we were like animals, urinating and defecating like animals, but we have been taught how to do these as human beings."

The Christian king then asked, "He taught you how to eat as well?" They replied, "Yes! Previously, we ate like animals - eating while standing and while strolling around, and also eating indiscriminately. Now we have been taught how to eat like human beings."

This is the lifestyle of enslavement. The Sahábah (RA) were saying that they were taught how to pass urine and pass stools, that they were taught how to eat and drink. Previously, they did not know how to perform these tasks like human beings, but carried them out like animals.

The Christian king further questioned them, "We have heard that you were also taught how to live with one another?" They replied, "Yes! Previously we were like wolves and carnivorous animals, ready at all times to devour one another. Now, we have been transformed into human beings: we have been told how to live with one another; we have been taught not to cause any grief, neither to ourselves nor to others, whether internal (bátiní) or external (záhirí), whether it relates to wealth (málí), physical body (jismání) or inner feelings (qalbí). Previously, we were not human beings, but we were like wild animals, like wolves and tigers."

Is my voice reaching you? Yes?

The Muslim of today should recognise himself. O mu'min, you had promised to be a slave. To what extent have you fulfilled that promise? In appearance you are a human being, but look at your condition. Are you not a wolf? Are you not a tiger? Are you not an ox, an animal, that you eat in a standing position?

You urinate any old how, sitting as you wish or standing and urinating, so that droplets splash back on you, not being ill either. O mu'min, recognise yourself! What degree of a slave are you? Believing in your Master, by making 'ibádat only, you can never be called a kámil mu'min. You have wandered away from enslavement. It is possible that your activity is like that of an angel, but you have not been sent as an angel. You have been sent as someone else - that of being a slave, whose duties entail not just one specific task. Judge yourself on this. Otherwise, there were numerous angels present. What need was there for you? Your need - the manner in which you were created - which you acknowledged, was to be in enslavement. Live in this world in this manner. For the duration of the period that you were not sent forth into this world, you were in the situation of the angels. In other words, you were in a state of musháhadah-Haqq (visualising Alláh Ta'álá). At the Rúhání level, you were in musháhadah of Alláh Ta'álá. You were then made slaves and sent to this world and a variety of tasks entailing enslavement and bondsman ship were entrusted to you.

What it means is that the taufiq for making taubah has ended. Taubah has been made into a sport. The remorse that is now shown is just customary. The reasoned, Shar'í remorse, concurrent with the awe and respect of Alláh Ta'álá, is not present. There is no credence to this type of remorse. Otherwise, why is there transgression time and again? It is apparent that the remorse that is shown is not the remorse that is a reasoned and Shar'í remorse, accompanied with the awe and esteem of Alláh Ta'álá.

A káfir also shows remorse. Children also become ashamed. But these are not the same as true remorse. There is no credibility to this type of remorse. True remorse is to have regret for committing evil deeds, to be thoroughly ashamed. Then, how could the evil be repeated?

This is an illness. Just as a person suffers from a physical illness, this illness is the illness of sinfulness. This illness is catastrophic. At the time of death, the physical ailment will come to an end, but this illness of sinfulness does not end but accompanies the person. Its effects will be carried over to the other world.

Do you understand?

The Importance of Taqwá

That is why Alláh Ta'álá says, "O mu'minín! I am emphasizing to you time and again!" Concerning what? Concerning taqwá. "Adopt taqwá!" your actions, internal or external, individual or collective, let these be with taqwá. This is the essence and crux. The details have been given previously, and this is the synopsis of the laws of Alláh Ta'álá. In other words, complete and perfect obedience, the methodology being: having correct beliefs and performing good deeds, external and internal.

Therefore, to repeat: what is the crux and essence of all this? It is taqwá. Therefore, Alláh Ta'álá is saying, "O mu'minín! I am alerting you, and time and again, I am alerting you, so that freedom does not enter into you, for this

freedom is a difficulty - it is something harmful. It is My compassion, My mercy and My favour, that is alerting you:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا تَقَوُّوا اللَّهَ

O you believers, fear Alláh!

Alláh Ta'álá is making a promise to the mu'min bondsman, the Sáhib-e-taqwá, and Alláh Ta'álá is One Who fulfils His promises, especially when we note that He has told us to keep to our promises. Not fulfilling a promise is a defect, and Alláh Ta'álá is free of all defects.

Alláh Ta'álá's Promise to the Sáhib-e-Taqwá

What promise has He made? Alláh Ta'álá states that He promises:

وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا

That person who adopts taqwá, Alláh will find for him a place of exit. (65:2)

Exit from where? Exit from that difficulty that he is involved in. A "difficulty" is actually that which is "harmful". So, Alláh Ta'álá is saying, "I shall create and establish those means and methods whereby you will be able to come out of that harmful situation." The promise has been made. What harmful place has not been specified, thus it means any type of harmful situation. So, what type of harm?

Let us see: There are two realms - this world and the hereafter. There are two possibilities: either harm or benefit. In this world also there can be harm or benefit, and in the hereafter as well, there can be harm or benefit. If one is present then the other is absent. Two opposites can not co-exist. For example: If illness goes, then it is replaced by health. One may be superficial

and the other strong. For example: illness disappears and health returns, but strength is also necessary. So, harms have their different degrees and benefits also have their different degrees.

To continue: Is there any individual who does not want to remove himself from harm? Also, is there any individual who does not desire to gain benefit? There can be no such persons. So, seeing the means are available to come out of harm, and to attain benefit, is it intelligent not to adopt these means? Of course not! Therefore, when the means for removing the harms are adopted, the harms will be shed and the benefit, which is the original state, will be evident. However, strength will not have been attained. Do you understand this point?

Alláh Ta'álá is speaking of the harm that comes to you. What are the details concerning these harms? These are related to this world or the hereafter. For example: One is overtaken by poverty - this is a cause of harm. One falls ill - this is a cause of harm. One is humiliated by others - this is a cause of harm. And so forth. Alláh Ta'álá states further, "For those who are faced by these harms, I will create and establish means and methods to remove these harms so that you may find your way out of these harms."

You are not feeling sleepy? Some feel sleepy while resting on flowers but not on thorns. Let there be a musical show, then sleep does not come, but when one is sitting at virtuous places, then sleep comes instantaneously! Understanding comes when one is fully awake, when the constriction in one's temperament is gone. Just listening with one's ears is meaningless. This is mentioned just incidentally.

So, do you understand the points made by this servant? This is a commentary of this áyet that is being given. You must have studied the commentary of Jalálain or a translation of the Qur'án Sharíf? Have you studied it in this manner? Have you understood it in this way? Has it been taught in this way?

Alláh Ta'álá is saying, "This is My promise: I will create and establish the means and methodology in this world - for this is a world where means have to be used (álam-e-asbáb) - for the removal of harms, and for benefit to come in their place." For strength to come into these benefits, there will be other methods, but, at least, he has come out of his predicaments. This is Alláh Ta'álá's promise for the mu'min muttaqí, to remove the harms that befall him.

Protection from Sins

Also, there is another realm. There, too, there is harm and benefit. The causes of harm and benefit of that realm occur in this world. The harm of that realm is to contravene the laws of the Sharí'ah, which means the commission of sins. So, contravening the Laws is zulm (oppression) and zulm is a harm, so that sinning - contravening the Laws - is also a harm. And this harm is much greater. "Therefore, when you mu'minín adopt taqwá, I shall create the means, methods and resources within you to protect yourselves from those things that cause harm, i.e. sins. I shall create within your heart such a thing which will enable you to escape from sinning, which is much worse than the worst of worldly harms that can befall one. You will also remain protected from these harms. If that harm were to occasionally befall you, the quality of that taqwá within you will be so molded that you will become so utterly remorseful that you will repeatedly confess your sin to Me. I shall then remove the harm of that sin!"

Do you see? The promise has been fulfilled, whether the harm is a worldly harm - which is gair-ikhtiyárí - or whether it is a harm related to the hereafter - which is ikhtiyárí. You have been given the choice and power - ikhtiyár. However, such a thing will be created in your ikhtiyár, in your irádah (resolve) that you will not have the resolve to act contrary to the Sharí'ah. Should such a resolve arise, you will immediately be warned and cautioned. If you do get

involved, you will not be at ease without counteracting it and compensating for it. From My side, there will be forgiveness."

However, to whom has Záte Bári Ta'álá made this promise? He has made it to the muttaqí mu'min. "Worldly harm, if it comes, I will repel, and harm to your hereafter, which comprises sins, I will also repel from you. This I will do by creating a methodology in your heart." This is the promise that has been made by Haqq Ta'álá to the muttaqí mu'min.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ

Verily, Alláh does not go against His promise. (3:9)

Then Záte Bári Ta'álá will cause this bandah to tread on the path of taqwá till death.

What do you understand? You have come and seated yourself over here. Let me repeat: What is Haqq Ta'álá saying? "I shall maintain you as a muttaqí till death, seeing that you mu'minín have adopted taqwá with ikhlás and sidq. I shall keep you as such - that is My promise. Should you slip up by chance, I shall not let you stay down. Should you transgress, then that procedure will take place whereby there will be a retraction and compensation. So, till death will I keep you as a muttaqí. You, O mu'minín, will return to Me as muttaqí because you were sent to the earth with taqwá. So, having returned with taqwá, here is Jannat waiting for you! This is your home. There is no censure here, no reprimand, no punishment and no torment. Yes, I will question you slightly out of muhabbat, to bring some happiness to your heart."

Do you understand? Do you understand the promise made by Záte Bári Ta'álá to this slave who lived in a state of bondage and in a state of being mu'min muttaqí? And Alláh Ta'álá will not go against His promise.

Removing Hirs And Tamá'

That leaves the second aspect, for which He has also made a promise:

وَيَرْزُقُهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ

And He (Alláh Ta'álá) will provide for him (the mu'min muttaqí) whence he never expected. (65:3)

Now, this second aspect has also come in, concerning the stomach: Fill it. But subject to the laws and rules specified by Alláh Ta'álá. Let there be no hirs-o-tamá' (greed and avarice). Are hirs-o-tamá' not harmful qualities? They are, and very harmful! The person afflicted with these qualities has no peace of mind. He cannot achieve repose. All the time he is spurred on: "Do this! Do that! Do it this way! No, do it that way! That person has accumulated in that manner - let me do the same! Let me also accumulate!" There is no thought given to what is já'iz or what is ná-já'iz. There is no concern of what belongs to him or what belongs to others. Hirs-o-tamá' spurns him on to become like this.

It is like taking strychnine: Is strychnine not a poison? By ingesting it, a person will definitely create difficulties for himself and harm himself internally.

Therefore, O mu'min muttaqí, these qualities within you that cause harm, will be removed from you in such a manner that your thoughts will not even stray in that direction. In their stead will come a quality of benefit, which is qaná'at (contentment).

Have you understood the point, or not yet? You have taken a tasbíh and seated yourself, and even earned the name of "Tasbíhwálá"! What I have explained is the actual, detailed and proven "tasbíh"!

Hirs-o-tamá' (greed and avarice) are harmful qualities and qaná'at (contentment) is a beneficial quality. Haqq Ta'álá is saying, "O mu'min muttaqí, I will create within you such a methodology that the harmful qualities

of hirs-o-tamá' will be removed and the beneficial quality of qaná'at will replace these. If you are a mu'min muttaqí, then your gaze will not go to the means. If your gaze does fall on the means, it will only be from the aspect of usage and not with the concept that the means will bring success to your tasks. I have created the means. Are the means pointless? Should your gaze turn in the direction of the means, it will be only by way of utilisation, which is My command, that its utilisation is also 'íbádat, provided there is no hirs-o-tamá' and there is qaná'at.

However, the greater the amount of means used, proportionately the difficulties will increase. If there is no qaná'at, then there will be no sleep either. This person will not be able to eat with freedom and peace of mind. He will not have a life of ease and comfort. It will be just the opposite: He will be running around like a headless chicken!

To repeat what Alláh Ta'álá has said:

وَيَرْزُقُهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ

And He (Alláh Ta'álá) will provide for him (the mu'min muttaqí) whence he never expected. (65:3)

"O mu'min muttaqí, in attaining your rizq, I will create within you the methodology of removing another harmful quality and replace it with a beneficial quality. This is My promise to you. My methodology will encompass both your spiritual rizq (bátiní) and your physical rizq (bataní). I shall establish such methods, such avenues, such forms that will make you receive bátiní rizq as well as bataní rizq from far and wide places.

Bátiní Rizq

"From the aspect of 'ibádat, I shall instil in your heart that you sit in such places where the rizq of My muhabbat (love) will keep on increasing - and not decreasing, for decreasing is harmful - and which will keep on providing assistance in My muhabbat. This is beneficial." So much so, that Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had also said,

اللهم ارزقني حبك و حب من ينفعني حبه عندك

O Alláh! Grant me Your love and the love of those whose love will benefit me by You.

"I shall instill in your heart such qualities that will save you from harms - like being in wrong places, and, instead, being in places that will assist in My muhabbat - qualities that will be of benefit to your batní rizq and your batiní rizq."

Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has rendered "rizq" as "muhabbat", and muhabbat is a batiní quality. You can see, rizq has been attained, rizq being of two types: batní and batiní. In the latter category as well, you will be given such methods that will never occur to you. You will wonder, "How did I manage to perform this íbádat?" The answer from Alláh Ta'álá is, "I caused you to do it - do it this way!" The weakness in you has been replaced with strength. Why has this been done? The reason is that you are a mu'min muttaqí, a sáhibe-taqwá. Therefore, weakness has gone and strength has come, together with courage and valour. This is the promise of Alláh Ta'álá manifesting itself: Min hytho lá yahtasib.

Just look at the Sahábah (RA): What was their condition before they became Sahábah (RA)? Their condition was pitiful: they were a disgraced people, living in dire poverty. However, when they became mu'min - mu'min muttaqí in the proper meaning - then how did the unseen favours and unseen assistance from Alláh Ta'álá not pour down on them! All types of blessings and assistance, both batní and batiní, were showered on them. Numerous

examples are there as evidence. As long as the mu'min remained this way, the promises of Alláh Ta'álá were also fulfilled in this manner. When the mu'min changed, then changes also came:

Alláh Ta'álá states:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ

Alláh does not change the condition of a nation as long as they do not change what is within themselves.)13:11(

This is sufficient proof of what I have said. Did changes not appear afterwards? Alláh Ta'álá is virtually saying, "Being a mu'min, when he brought in changes in his taqwá, he was expressing a desire for changes to come from My side as well. So, I brought about the changes!" The reason for saying this is that changes do not come without a cause. To substitute good with evil for no valid reason is zulm (oppression). Zulm is a defective characteristic and Alláh Ta'álá is free of any defects, and, therefore, free of zulm.

We, who are living in this world in this age, should ponder over our condition. Where Alláh Ta'álá has, on numerous occasions, alerted us: "Ittaqulláh! Ittaqulláh! Ittaqulláh! Ittaqulláh!" are we an exemplifications of this or not? If not, then what are we portraying? Will the promise of blessings from Alláh Ta'álá remain in place or not? We have, therefore, caused a change to occur by the way we act and behave.

Muráqabah-e-Maut & Muhásabah A'mál

Do you see? Záte Bárí Ta'álá has repeatedly directed the mu'min, because of the demands of his ímán, towards taqwá. "Adopt taqwá! What is the reason for not adopting taqwá? You are mu'minín. Just as you have conviction on My Being and Attributes, similarly, you have conviction on the hereafter and on

the reckoning that will take place. Therefore, taqwá should come into you through the demands of your conviction. Taqwá should not be departing. You should not be acting contrary to taqwá .

"O mu'min! Why are you not pondering on the scene of the plains of resurrection and reckoning in the hereafter? These plains are inviting you towards taqwá, that the reckoning will take place after death. So, why are you forgetful of death? Why are you not engaged in pondering over death (muráqabah-e-maut)? Why are you not taking stock of your deeds (muhásabah)? O mu'min! You should be continuously taking stock of your actions and, at the same time, thinking about death and about the day of reckoning in the hereafter. I have commanded you to engage in muráqabah-e-maut and muhásabah-e-a'mál. When this is done, then taqwá will come into you. This is what I have been explaining to you and I have also presented the method for attaining this, that you should continuously be thinking of attaining perfection (kamál) in your taqwá. That is why I am saying:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

O ye who believe! Fear Alláh! And let every person look to that which it sendeth forth for the morrow (i.e. Qiyámat). And fear Alláh! Verily, Alláh is informed of what ye do!)59:18(.

The phrase "let every person look to that which it sendeth forth for the morrow (i.e. Qiyámat)" is explicit on the instruction for engaging in muráqabah. This is proof of meditation on death (muráqabah-e-maut).

Tasawwuf, in its entirety, is the very Sharí'ah - internally and externally.

A Qissah

Hadhratwálá (RA) mentioned a qissah:

There was an age when the Muslims, and even kings, had tremendous faith and confidence in the buzurgs and had the habit of visiting them regularly. A particularly king had this habit as well and he used to regularly visit a certain buzurg who used to live in the jungle.

This particularly buzurg had the routine of taking a particular tablet at a specific time daily. It so happened that the king also came to visit daily at this particular time. One day the thought struck him, "This buzurg is taking this tablet daily but there appears to be nothing else to eat or drink besides the tablet. I wonder why he takes this tablet?" The buzurg became aware of his thinking through kashf. He gave the king one tablet, saying, "You take and drink this tablet." The king became extremely happy and went home and drank the tablet.

Now, this tablet was one that was extremely invigourating and stimulating, so the king became extremely steamed up. He had to let off steam. He visited all his wives, and then visited all his laundís (female slaves), but his urges were still not satisfied. He thought to himself, "Ohoho! This is my condition by taking merely one tablet! Oho! And what about the buzurg? Living in the jungle, he has one daily! He is maintaining his buzurgí and also fulfilling his passions! Damsels must be visiting him!"

Despite having such thoughts about the buzurg, the king did not stop visiting the buzurg. The buzurg again perceived what he was thinking through kashf.

Suddenly, the buzurg's mood became very serious. He addressed the king very sombrely, "It seems that there are only forty days left before your death! My advice is that you hand over the reigns of your kingdom to your son - make him the crown prince. And prepare for the hereafter!"

The king became terrified. The words of the buzurg were like the hiss of a snake as it prepares to attack. He forgot about the tablet as the spectre of death rose in front of him. As he was about to leave to commence his

preparations, the buzurg handed him forty tablets, saying, "Take one everyday so that you do not become weak."

The king departed. He made his son the heir apparent to the throne and entrusted the running of the affairs of the kingdom to him. As for himself, he devoted his entire time to 'ibádat. Sticking to the buzurg's instructions, he took his one tablet daily. He was thus nourishing himself with both rizq batiní and rizq jismání. Forty days passed in this manner. However, the awaited death did not come! He waited a few days more but still death did not overtake him.

He decided to visit the buzurg again and complained to him, "Hadrat! What have you done? My kingdom has slipped out of my hands, and here I am, still alive!" The buzurg replied calmly, "Your kingdom has not disappeared - it is with your son. Whenever you wish, you take it back and take up the reigns of rule again. It has not gone anywhere. But, what I am interested in knowing is whether you have been taking the tablets given to you or not?" The king replied, "Huzúr, if I had not taken them, I would have been like a dead person without death coming to me." The buzurg spoke again, "So, you took your tablets daily? Tell me then, how many wives did you go to everyday and how many of your laundís did you go to everyday?" The king replied, "Huzúr, death was staring me in the face, where could I go to them? With death standing in front of me, my thoughts did not even go in that direction!"

Now, listen carefully to what the buzurg had to say! He said, "You were given respite for forty days, whereas I do not have respite for the space of one breath even. If I breathe in, I am not certain whether I would be given an opportunity to breathe out again; and if I breathe out, I am not certain whether I would be given an opportunity to breathe in again! I do not have respite even for the duration of even one breath!" The king was full of regret for his unfounded suspicions, "Huzúr, I humbly ask for your forgiveness. You have answered the doubts I had."

Hadhratwálá (RA) mentioned this qissah for the lessons it contained. The king was faced with the spectre of death: When would it come? How would it come? In his concern, he forgot completely about his wives and his laundí's. Do you see the effect of muráqabah-e-maut?

Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has said,

أكثرُوا ذكرَ هَازِمِ اللذاتِ أَيِ الموتِ

Increase your remembrance of that which terminates desires, that is death.

This is encompassed in the statement of Alláh Ta'álá:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

O ye who believe! Fear Alláh! And let every person look to that which it sendeth forth for the morrow (i.e. Qiyámat). And fear Alláh! Verily, Alláh is informed of what ye do!)59:18(.

The essence of this is the following:

موتوا قبل أن تموتوا

Die before your death.

This means that those aspects that are associated with your nafs (carnal desires) should be forged such that they are utilised according to the orders of Záte Bárí Ta'álá, This is because you are His slave. Should you discard the commands of Alláh Ta'álá until the time of your death, then you are not His slave. You have reversed the roles. You are not His slave.

Marital Relations

Therefore, approach your wives subjecting yourselves to the commands of Alláh Ta'álá. Did the Sahábah (RA) not approach their wives? Was death not in front of them? Did the Nabí (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) not approach his wives? Was he not absorbed all the time in a state of musháhadah-Haqq? Approaching your wives is also 'ibádat. Otherwise, why would Alláh Ta'álá have created the means for this? Of course, it should not be done outside the boundary of the commands of Alláh Ta'álá - this would be contrary to the demands of taqwá. If it is done within the bounds of commands of Alláh Ta'álá, then this is taqwá. This is abdiyat, this is enslavement. Does this answer any doubts any of you may be entertaining?

Do you want to exceed the Nabí (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)? Do you want to live exceeding the Sahábah (RA) in taqwá? Were they not muttaqí? Their taqwá was such that, in comparison, your taqwá is insignificant. Yet, they carried out their duties appropriate to the situation and subject to the orders of Alláh Ta'álá. They lived as bondsmen of Alláh Ta'álá, manifesting their abdiyat all the time. But, are you trying to live with greater taqwá and greater musháhadah than the Nabí (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)? Did he not have children? And, are children born without the agency of a wife? Has this answered your questions and removed your doubts?

Coming back to our original theme: it is apparent that when the question was posed, "Alastu-birabbikum?" in the 'Álame-Mitháq, Alláh Ta'álá did not order us to accept this obvious fact, but we, on our own, accepted it. Having accepted it, we have declared our abdiyat and enslavement, and there is no specific and set duties of a slave: he has to carry out all those tasks that Záte Bárí Ta'álá entrusts to him, whenever he is ordered to do so. To be continuously involved in this, is enslavement.

Ta'lím and Debating

Among the tasks that he has to perform, is the task of ta'lim (learning and teaching). This task has first priority. It is this task that Alláh Ta'álá set Hadhrat Ádam (AS) to work on right at the start, that is, the task related to 'Ilm:

وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا

And He taught Ádam all the names.)2:31(

Alláh Ta'álá taught Hadhrat Ádam (AS) the names of everything (with their attributes and effects). Therefore, the first task of this slave, after coming into this world, is to attain 'Ilm to the extent of necessity. For practical purposes, it is sufficient to learn 'Ilm to the extent of one's needs. However, from the aspect of expertise, there should a group, from within the community of Muslims, who should equip themselves with 'Ilm , not for the purpose of practising on, but in order to provide proof of the truth of Islám in the face of the enemies of Islám.

That is why the mu'minín are victorious in every situation from the aspect of establishing the truth of Islám in debates and academic discussions. If the mu'min has taqwá, then he is victorious in this world as well. If not, then he is victorious at times and defeated at times, but on the day of Qiyámat he will be fully victorious. In actual fact, complete victory is for the mu'minín.

أَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

You will overcome them if you are (indeed) believers.)3:139(

Therefore, the Sahábah (RA) were victorious in their debates as well, as long as they adopted taqwá in the correct meaning of the word. For example, they were challenged by the kuffár, who tried to mock them by asking, "Your Nabí taught you to pass urine and pass stool as well? He taught you to stand, sit and lie down as well? He taught you to eat and drink as well? He taught you

how to live with one another as well? He taught you how to behave in your locality as well as when on a journey?" The Sahábah (RA) replied calmly, "Yes! Before, we were like animals, leading lives of animals. Our Nabí (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) taught us to be human beings in the correct sense. He taught us - and teaches us - everything. It is Alláh Ta'álá Who teaches through His Messenger."

Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has said,

علمني ربي فأحسن تعليمي و أدبني ربي فأحسن تأديبي

"My Rabb taught me and He gave me a beautiful education. My Rabb refined me and gave me a beautiful character."

On another occasion, Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has requested,

اللهم نفعني بما علمتني و علمني ما ينفعني

"O Alláh! Grant me benefit from what You teach me, and teach me that which benefits me."

So, what is the first duty on entering into enslavement? It is to attain 'Ilm to the degree of necessity. The Hadíth Sharíf states,

طلب علم فريضة على كل مسلم

Seeking of 'Ilm is compulsory on every Muslim.

It has become compulsory (fardh) on every Muslim male and female to attain 'Ilm to the extent of necessity, whether one learns through the medium of Arabic, Fársí or Urdú, using authentic kitábs, or whether one learns by asking the ulema' or by listening carefully whilst sitting in majális. The point is that it not incumbent that one has to study through kitábs. A method is being shown.

What kitábs did the Sahábah (RA) have? Yes, they had one kitáb, the Qur'án Sharíf, which was taught to them by the Nabí of the final era, Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). There were no other kitábs. The Qur'án Sharíf had certain principles laid down in it and Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) used to elucidate on these, which we call Hadíth Sharíf. There were no other kitábs. At a later period, kitábs came into existence. So, it does not matter whether one learns from kitábs, or by querying verbally or by sitting and listening, but we have to learn. We are responsible and accountable.

As for that person who is immersed completely in studying the Shari'ah in order to attain expertise, it is not appropriate and worthy that he should involve himself in other work, otherwise there will be shortcomings in one of the two. Another reason is that this person is of royalty and he is engaged in royal work. For a person engaged in royal work, it is not fitting that he should be engaged in other work. This was explained in the example of the government employee who is barred from doing other work while in the employ of the government.

This was the practice of our akábirín that, despite the fact that another task may be very praiseworthy and beneficial, yet they would abstain from it if it were to interfere and cause a fault in their ta'límí tasks. So much so, our buzurg's, knowing very well the importance of sulúk and bai'at, yet they always forbade students from taking bai'at during the period of their studies. Hadhrat Mauláná Rashíd Ahmed Gangohí (RA) did not make bai'at of any student before the student completed his studies. The reason for this is that, if his attention is directed in a different direction, it is evident that harm will be caused to his studies.

There is a dire need for one such jamá'at which will serve 'Ilme-Dín exclusively. On this basis there should also be one such jamá'at which is engaged purely in the safeguarding of the Dín and teaching of the Dín. This group can only be the scholars of Dín - the ahle-'Ilm. It is for this reason that

those in the madrasah should keep themselves aloof from other activities. Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has said,

إنما بعثت معلما

I have come solely as a teacher.

Therefore, do not call on the ahle-'Ilm, who are engaged in this type of work, to be involved in another direction. Do not lure them with endearing talks to divert them from the lifestyle that they have to that of another lifestyle. They will slip and fall. You will become sinners. So, let them carry on with what they are doing, with full concentration and absorption, to become expert. This applies both to the student of Dín who is completely dedicated to his studies, and to the mudarris who is fully absorbed in teaching. Yes, the one who is only superficially carrying his task, may do as he pleases. Do you understand?

Summary of the Majlis and Du'á

This is a brief explanation being presented to you, of the methodology concerning the episode that took place in the 'Álame-Mitháq, when Alláh Ta'álá asked, "Alastu-birabbikum?" and the reply given, "Qálú balá!" O you who are tálibán-e-tazkiyah of your záhir and your bátin! You should be residing in such an engrossed manner, initially correcting your aqá'id, and also with a'mál-e-sálihah, both záhirah and bátinah, with silence of the tongue and tranquility of the heart, with adherence to the Hanafí school of jurisprudence, and with ikhlás and sidq.

May Alláh Ta'álá bless me and you with everlasting tauffiq, with ikhlás and sidq.

MALFÚZÁT OF HADHRAT MAULÁNÁ MUHAMMAD MASÍHULLÁH KHÁN SÁHIB (RA).

[These are extracts from the kitáb "Ma'árif Masíhul-Ummat", compiled by Mauláná Meherbán Alí Barotí Sáhib. This kitáb was compiled from notes he had made during his stay in Jalálábád]

1) There is no such deed (amal) which will be of benefit without 'Ilm: either that deed will not be correct or it may not be accepted (qabúl). However, the opposite, 'Ilm without amal may be of benefit to some degree. For example: 'Ilm of tauhíd will be a means of salvation from the fire.

2) (For a Muslim, as far as tauhíd is concerned,) to maintain one's ímán this much i'tiqád (faith and conviction) is sufficient that Alláh Ta'álá is independent and not in need of others (be-niyáz aur mustagní) and that Alláh Ta'álá did not create even a single atom without wisdom (hikmat).

3) Hadhratwálá (i.e Hadhrat Thánwí) (RA) used to say, "I have noted down the essence and crux of Tasawwuf in just two words: Ittilá' and ittibá'(reporting and back and following instructions). In other words, the muríd should keep on informing his condition absolutely correctly (to his sheikh); and he should carry out the methodology shown by the sheikh without any doubts or misgivings. If he has achieved these, then understand that the sálik is traveling along the Path of sulúk with the correct etiquettes of Taríqat. Such a person will traverse the journey very rapidly. However, if he goes contrary to this - he hides some condition of his, where he will be degraded; and reveals those conditions where he will earn praise so that his sheikh may be overawed by him and appear elevated in his eyes - goodness, how will such a person, who wants to impress his seniors with his own high status, ever succeed? Such a person is a mutakabbir of the highest order (i.e. he has the highest degree of arrogance), even though he may have the appearance of a sálik. In actual fact, he is a hálik (one who is destroyed). That is why the sálikín need to be cautious, and ask themselves, "Truly, are there shortcomings in me or not?" If there are shortcomings, they should concern themselves with removing these.

4) It is not permissible to place one's life in danger, except in a situation of jihád. For this reason, how can it be permissible to be so excessive in one's ma'málát (daily schedule of 'ibádat) so that one's health is affected? This excess and diminishing may be done in acts which are nawáfil. However, there is no room for excess and diminishing in those categories which the Sharí'ah has set down. or example: A person says, "I feel very elated today. Today I shall perform six rakats of saláh instead of four." On the other hand, he says, "Today I am feeling tired and weak. Come, I shall perform only two rakats instead of four." Can this be correct? Instead of earning thawáb, he will be punished.

5) One's qurb-e-Iláhí (closeness to Alláh Ta'álá) increases with nawáfil. Therefore, besides the specified nawáfil, one should carry out other nawáfil also, so that there may be an increase in one's qurb. The sálik should be concerned all the time on attaining qurb. He should find out which a'máls (deeds) bring about greater qurb, and he should adopt these. These may be the act of namáz, or rozah, or tasbíh and zikr, or sadaqah and charity. However, one should not overdo these to that extent that one's health suffers. One should do abundant a'mál, but stay within the boundaries. It is the view of the Sufís that one cannot attain success without thrashing the nafs. Dear friends! Just ponder: The seeker of dunyá (materialism) toils excessively in seeking wealth, to the extent that he forgets who he is, whereas dunyá is a perishable item. It is a contemptible and an ignoble item. And you, being a seeker of Mahbúbe-Haqíqí (Alláh Ta'álá) are negligent! What a shame on your condition!

6) There are two closely related words: one is basárat and the other is basírat. The first, basárat, refers to what is ordinarily called "sight", whereas the latter, basírat, refers to the "seeing" by the heart. Because basárat is connected to a physical quality, it can only view physical items. On the other hand, basírat, seeing it is connected to something that is metaphysical - the Rúh - it can visualise non-physical items. When basírat develops in a person, the person is

drawn towards zikr. Uneasy disappears and there is a diminishing of difficulties. The reason being that the person's gaze is now on Haqá'iq (Divine truths or realities).

7) In the opinion of the muhaqqaqín sages, a special striving (making mujáhadah) in attaining objectives (maqásid) is beneficial and a basis for reward (thawáb). However, making mujáhadah in the means to the objectives is merely undertaking and tolerating hardships. For example: Namáz is an objective. If a person were to bear heat and cold in order to perform his namáz, then he will definitely get thawáb. Say it is winter season and one is sitting covered warmly in a blanket. It is time for namáz but one does not feel like going to the masjid. However, taking into account the importance of namáz, the importance of namáz with jamá'at and the virtues of performing namáz in the masjid, one bears the hardship of going in the cold and one performs one's namáz in the masjid, this effort is termed mujáhadah, for which there will be a reward. On the other hand, take wudhú - this is not an objective in itself but a means to the objective. If one were to undertake difficulties in making wudhú for no valid reason, then this will not be termed mujáhadah. For example, it is winter and hot water is available, but this person makes wudhú with cold water; or there is water available, but this person walks one or two miles to fetch water. So, in these instances the appearance is that of mujáhadah and ordinary people can be deceived. In reality, this is not mujáhadah. There is no promise of reward in undertaking these difficulties.

7) Some buzurgs appear to have undertaken great difficulties in carrying out tasks that are not objectives. However, these are not undertaken with the intention of thawáb. These difficulties are undertaken as a means of treating one's nafs. There is a story of one buzurg: His nafs desired to eat some halva (a sweetmeat). Initially, he forbade his nafs, saying "O nafs! I don't have money for halva, and to beg from others is disgraceful." When his nafs would not listen and persisted, he finally said, "Very well. Come, I shall feed you halva." A little way farther he came across a miller milling doing some milling

with an ox driving the milling stone. He approached the miller and asked, "Brother, if I were to grind your grain till this evening, instead of the ox, what will you pay me?" An amount was agreed on and he then did the work of the ox till the evening. With the money that he received, he bought some halvah and presented it to his nafs, "Here my son, have some halva." His nafs was contrite, "Please forgive me. I will not make this mistake again in future!"

[Note: When the nafs insisted on eating halva, which was a luxury item, for which he had no money, the buzurg decided to teach his nafs a lesson. He did this getting his nafs to toil and sweat in order to earn the necessary money for the halva. With the legitimately earned money, halva could now be bought. However, taking into account the hard labour and toil, and also the disgrace of having to toil like an ox, was not worth it just to satisfy a craving for a luxury item like halva.]

APPENDIX

AL-HIDÁYAH

Al-Hidáyah ("The Guidance") does not need an introduction to those following the Hanafí school of jurisprudence. It was compiled by Sheikhu'l Islám Burhánuddín Abul-Hasan Alí Ibne Abí-Bakr Al-Falghání, who was born in Marghinání, Transoxania (between Bukhara and Samarkand, present day Uzbekistan), in 511 A.H. He commenced writing the kitáb in 573 A.H and it took him thirteen years to compile it. He kept rozah everyday that he wrote the kitáb.

It is a kitáb of Hanafí fiqh of outstanding depth and is the standard kitáb to which all the Hanafí ulema' refer. As a basic textbook, it is taught in all the Dáru'l-Ulúms.

The point that the reader's attention is being drawn to is the fact that the English admitted that they would not have been able to administer the British

colonies, and especially the Asian ones, were it not for the fact that they had recourse to this kitáb, Al-Hidáyah. This was mentioned to us by our Sheikh, Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib (RA), during the course of a majlis. To substantiate this, a little bit of research revealed some very interesting facts.

In order to understand the role Al-Hidáyah, played in the administration of the British Empire, it is necessary first to understand the historical and political background of the colonial expansion of England.

Historical Background - The English East India Company

This company was given its charter by Queen Elizabeth I of England in the year 1600. It established "trading posts" in various Asian territories. Invariably, these colonial companies had military and naval forces to "protect" their interests. At that time there were other European colonial countries besides England - Spain, France, Holland and Portugal notably - vying with one another for the lucrative trade with the Asian countries in the East, with the result that there were many battles between them, on land and sea. The English East India Company finally won over the other countries, mainly the Dutch, but also the French and Portuguese, and transformed England's trade routes into a vast colonial empire over a period of one hundred and fifty years, becoming a mighty political and military force.

In 1689 it established administrative districts in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras in the Indian subcontinent.

Warren Hastings (1732-1818)

He was the son of an Anglican clergyman and was educated in Westminster, London. At the age of 18 he decided to go to India as a clerk for the English East India Company. He was a brilliant administrator and he rapidly shot

through the ranks of the company, serving on the administrative boards of Calcutta and Madras. In 1772 he was appointed to the most important post of the governorship of Bengal. In the following year, the English government curtailed the power of the Company, but appointed Warren Hastings as the first Governor General of India.

While in Bengal and afterwards, Warren Hastings introduced far-reaching administrative, financial and judicial reforms. This point is very important and it brings us to our subject, Al-Hidáyah.

Warren Hastings and Al-Hidáyah

We do not know much about Warren Hastings relationship with Muslims, but it is apparent that he was a very intelligent person and a keen observer and statesman. He must have been in close contact with Muslims and came to know of the importance of Islámic jurisprudence and of the kitáb, Al-Hidáyah. This much is evident from the fact that he enlisted the services of some scholars to translate the Al-Hidáyah into Persian from the Arabic.

Introductory Address

The introductory address of the translator who translated Al-Hidáyah from the Arabic into Persian gives us some insight into the great effort that was made to make this kitáb available to the English.

After praising Alláh Ta'álá and sending salutations on Rasúlulláh (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), his family and the Companions, he goes on to state,

"...it is impressed - that, from the day that the delightful region of Bengal was cheered by the rays of Government by the Nawab Governor General, Mr.

Warren Hastings, the whole of his wise and prudent attention was occupied and directed to this point - that the case and protection of the country, and the administration of public affairs, should be placed on such a footing, that the community being sheltered from the scorching heat of violence and tyranny, might find the gates closed against injustice and oppression; and that the range of sedition in those who deviate from the road of truth might be limited and shortened:- and since this hope must be fulfilled through the influence of the holy Law of the Prophet, and the injunctions and inhibitions of the chosen sect - this denizen of kingdom of humility and solitude, named Ghulam Yehee, was therefore instructed and empowered, together with Molla Taj-addeen, Meer Mohammed Hossein and Molla Shareeat Oolla, to translate from the Arabic language into the Persian idiom certain treaties upon the Law, but particularly that excellent work, the Hedaya...."

It is apparent that, besides the Al-Hidáyah, other works were also translated into Persian by the translator. There is no date attached to this introduction by the translator, but it is definitely done while Warren Hastings was Governor in Bengal, before he assumed the Governorship of the whole of India.

Dedication

It appears that the Persian translation was then used to do a translation into English. This was done by Charles Hamilton, who dedicated the English translation to Warren Hastings in the following terms:

"To Warren Hastings, Esq.

Late Governor General of Bengal

"Sir, - After the labour of several years, I am at last enabled to present you with a translation of the Hedaya.

"To you, Sir, I feel it incumbent on me to inscribe a word originally projected by yourself, and for some time carried on under your immediate patronage, - However humble the translator's abilities, and however imperfect the execution of these volumes may be, yet the design itself does honour to the wisdom and benevolence by which it was suggested; and if I might be allowed to express a hope upon the subject, it is, that its future beneficial effects, in facilitating the administration of Justice throughout our Asiatic territories and uniting us still more closely with Our Mussulman subjects, may reflect some additional lustre on your Administration, - I have the honour to be, with the utmost respect, and the most lively gratitude and esteem, Sir, your most obedient, and humble servant,

CHARLES HAMILTON."

It appears that this project was extremely successful. How much of the laws from Al-Hidáyah were put into practical application, is something that is open for some keen researcher to discover. However, what is very evident is that this translation became indispensable to the English in their administration of the Asian colonies.

Advertisement to the Second Edition

Proof of this is given in the "Advertisement to the Second Edition" by Standish Grove Grady, written for the legal profession. I quote:

"...I now present to the profession the Second Edition of the Hedaya. As this work has been made a textbook by the Council of Legal Education, for the examination of the students of the Inns of Court, who are qualifying themselves for the call to the English Bar, with a view to practicing in India..."

The emphasis is mine. From this, it is obvious that the translated version of Al-Hidáyah had become so important that, by the year 1980, when this second edition was printed, it had already become a textbook for lawyers to study in order to pass their examinations and practice law! Not only did Grady think it suitable for students only, but his vision was much wider. He ends his "Advertisement to the Second Edition" as follows:

"Although the present Edition has been published with a view of assisting the student to prosecute his studies, yet the hope is entertained that the Judge, as well as the Practitioner, will find it useful, particularly in those provinces where Mahomedan demands a great portion of the attention of the judiciai, as well as that of the practitioner. It is hoped, also, that it may be found useful in promoting the study of the law in the several Universities in India, it being advisable to assimilate the curriculum in both countries as much as possible.

2, Plowden Buildings, Temple. April 1870.

Standish Grove Grady."

[Quotations are from "The Hedaya, commentary on the Islamic Laws", translated by Charles Hamilton, published by Nusrat Ali Nasri, for Kitab Bhavan, New Delhi, India.1979]