

For Friends - Part 19

Book:

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

Chapter No.:

21

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Masihullah Khan Sahib (RA) was born in Sarai Barlah in the district of Aligarh in the year 1329 or 1330 Hijri (1911/1912 CE). 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 hometown and, thereafter, completing his studies in Deoband. Hadhrat (RA) became bay'at to Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib Thanwi (RA), from whom Hadhrat (RA) received his Khilafat. This was in the same year that Hadhrat (RA) qualified from Deoband.

Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi Sahib (RA) stationed Hadhrat (RA) in Jalalabad, where Hadhrat (RA) established a madrasah, Miftahul-Ulum, and a khanqah. Salikin who came to Jalalabad for their self-rectification would stay in the khanqah. Hadhrat (RA) passed away in Jalalabad in the early hours of Friday, on the 17th Jamadul-Ula 1413 Hijri. (14th November 1992).

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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

FOREWORD

Alhamdulillah, with the fadhli of Allah Ta'ala and the barkat of our Sheikh (RA) and the du'as of our well-wishers, this booklet, For Friends Number Nineteen, is being presented to you.

This majlis has been translated from the tape obtained from Hassim's Tape Library. This majlis was conducted in 1983 at the residence of Haji Ebrahim (Bhai) Dadabhay in Roshnee, South Africa. Brother Hassim Bulbulia (RA) used to record our Hadhrat's (RA) majalis and distribute the tapes through the tape library that he had established. (Refer to page 57.)

This was our Hadhrat's (RA) last visit to South Africa. His first visit to South Africa was in 1971. How did Hadhrat (RA) come to visit South Africa? This is a

bit of a long story, which will be narrated very briefly over here.

Maulana Ismail Kathrada Sahib, who, at the moment, is running a madrasah in Vryheid, provided the following information: He - Maulana Ismail Kathrada Sahib - had been studying in Verulum under the tutelage of Hadhrat Munshi Sahib (who went to stay in Inanda later). After completing his hifz, Maulana Ismail Kathrada Sahib, upon recommendation by Maulana Omarjee (RA), was sent by his parents to Deoband Darul-Ulum in 1957 to become an 'alim.

One day in the year 1962, while at the station in Deoband, he was told that there was a very pious person, the principal of the madrasah in Jalalabad at the station as well. It turned out that Hadhratji (RA) - meaning Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Masihullah Khan Sahib - was waiting to purchase a ticket to go to Saharanpur. Seeing that the queue was rather long, Maulana Kathrada Sahib offered to stand in the queue and buy a ticket for Hadhratji (RA). This he did. Hadhratji (RA) invited him to come to visit him in Jalalabad. Maulana Kathrada Sahib was still studying at Deoband and could not go at that time.

However, Maulana Kathrada Sahib was planning to go to a place called Hazarah, near Peshawar in Pakistan, for tarawih. He had been there previously at the request of his parents, whose ustadhs hailed from there. On the way to Hazarah he stopped in Jalalabad to meet Hadhratji (RA). While there he discussed with Hadhratji (RA) his plans for further studies and Hadhratji (RA) suggested that he come to Jalalabad to complete his studies. Maulana Kathrada Sahib did just that in 1963.

His parents and family members were most upset. In the first place, they were not happy that he had gone to a place like Deoband, and going to Jalalabad appeared to them to be even worse. Maulana Kathrada Sahib wrote a long letter to them to explain what Jalalabad was and who Hadhratji (RA) was. His parents took the letter to Maulana Kathrada Sahib's ustadh, Hadhrat Munshi Sahib, who read the letter and reassured his parents concerning Jalalabad and Hadhratji (RA). Later Hadhrat Munshi Sahib himself came to Jalalabad and became bay'at to Hadhratji (RA). In this way, others came to know of

Hadhratji (RA).

Efforts then commenced by Hadhrat Munshi Sahib and the family members of Maulana Ismail Kathrada Sahib to bring Hadhratji (RA) to South Africa.

Hadhratji (RA) was in England at the time. Problems were encountered in obtaining a visa because of the laws of the apartheid government in South Africa. However, through the good services of Haji Ebrahim Abramjee Sahib of Laudium, a visa was finally obtained. Thus, Hadhratji (RA) made his first trip to South Africa in 1971.

Hadhratji (RA) came to South Africa again in the years 1975/6, 1978/9 1981/2 and 1983. Thereafter, many people invited him back, but due to other commitments and ill health, he was unable to come. Allah Ta'ala willed that more work be taken from him by him remaining in Jalalabad and people from all over coming to meet him there.

Dr.I.M.

[This is a translation of a majlis conducted by Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Masihullah Khan Sahib (RA) in Roshnee, South Africa, at the residence of Ebrahim (Bhai) Dadabhay Sahib in the year 1983.]

Blessings of the Quran Sharif

...Bismillah is to be found here. In fact, there is need for Bismillah at every time and on every occasion and is necessary initially and in the very beginning. There is greatness in the Kalam of Allah Ta'ala, that being the Qur'an Sharif. Allahu-akbar! And with what does it start? It starts with Bismillah - Bismilla-hir-Rahman-nirrahim. Then comes "Al-hamdu-lillah".

On what is hamd (praise) recited? It is on ne'mats (blessings). When is hamd recited? When we show gratitude to Allah Ta'ala. We will say "Al-hamdulillah". Furthermore, there is no greater blessing than the Kalam of Allah Ta'ala, the Qur'an Sharif.

The whole basis of life, the whole of life's functioning, with its peace, with its comforts, with its luxuries, with its happiness, with its cheer, in this world as

well as the hereafter - which is our original home from which we had been sent, i.e. Jannat - the basis of all aspects of our lives in this dunya and the akhirat, is the Qur'an Sharif, the Kalam of Allah Ta'ala.

The Qur'an Sharif contains in it the teachings of the Taurah, it has the teachings of the Injil in it, it has the teachings of the Zabur in it, it has in it the kitab and scriptures revealed to Hadhrat Ibrahim (AS), it has in it the scriptures revealed to Hadhrat Musa (AS), which are in addition to the Taurah. That is not to say that all the teachings from these scriptures are in the Qur'an Sharif. Those which have been abrogated are not included. These were subject matters meant for those times, and these were laws meant for those respective times. However, those teachings and laws that were meant to be still applicable, are all to be found in the Qur'an Sharif. Those laws that were revealed by wahi in the Qur'an Sharif by Allah Ta'ala and which He did not want to preserve, were abrogated.

مَا نَنْسَخُ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِّمَّهَا أَوْ مِثْلَهَا أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

Such of Our revelations as We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We bring (in place) one better or the like thereof. Knowest thou not that Allah is able to do all things? S.2 A.106

"That wahi which We had revealed previously, were appropriate at those times. We have removed these, We have removed them from the chest, and We have replaced them through wahi with something better and We have established them till the day of Qiyamat."

Differences in status

It shows that there is a difference between one type of wahi and another. In the same way there is a difference between one Rasul and another.

تِلْكَ الرُّسُلُ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ

Of those Messengers, some of whom We have caused to excel others S.2 A.253

This indicates that not every Rasul is equal to another Rasul. Similarly, the wahi that was revealed to whichever Rasul is not equal to another wahi. In the former case, both are Rasuls and in the latter case, both are the Kalam of

Allah Ta'ala, but they are not all equal.

This being the case, then taking a group other than the Rasuls, that is, the Sahabah (RA), they are also not all equal. Their statements also are not equal.

Let us go a step further down and take the group that come after the Sahabah (RA), these being the Auliya: they are also not all equal to one another. Their statements are also not equal.

Let us go a step further down still and take the group of general mu'minin: they are also not all equal and their statements are also not all equal. This being the case, then their actions are also not all equal.

Dunya likened to carrion

Let us go still lower. The lowest section after akhirat is dunya. Dunya has two meanings. The one means "lowest of the low" - disgraced to the utmost degree. This humiliated condition of dunya is likened to the carcass of a dead animal.

الدنيا جيفة و طالبوها كلاب

Allah Ta'ala states that the dunya is like a carcass. Do not become one desirous of it. Allah Ta'ala has likened a person desirous of dunya to a dog. (The initial part of this statement appears in the Hadith Sharif and the latter part of it has been attributed to Hadrat Ali (RA))

Therefore, a Muslim should never refer to himself as a dunyadar. It is unbecoming of him, with his own tongue, to say that he is a dunyadar. The reason is that a dunyadar has been likened to a dog by Allah Ta'ala, so how can he call himself a dog? But you will find that people coming for du'a and one tells them, "You make du'a yourself. One who is afflicted himself knows the anguish he is going through." The reply given is, "We are the dogs of this world. Please make du'a for us." So, if they themselves refer to themselves as dogs, so why should there be an objection if the buzurg, whose qissah has been related, calls him a dog?

The story, related to us by Hadhratwala (RA) [Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi (RA)] goes as follows:

A buzurg had a female dog. She gave birth to puppies. As I had mentioned just now, while we were walking, that it is permissible to keep dogs for hunting, for shepherding goats and cattle, and for protection of one's fields or house. The condition is that they should stay out of the house. The reason being that, where there are dogs, the angels of mercy do not come. So it is not correct to keep dogs in the house - one is chasing away mercy (of Allah Ta'ala) by doing so. Similarly, that house that has pictures (of animate objects) in it, the angels of mercy do not enter such a house. The angels of mercy have an aversion for dogs or pictures of animate objects.

Munasabat leads to bonding

Now, Hadhrat Jibra'il (AS) used to come to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) with wahi, as we know. Besides these occasions, he also used to come on other occasions to meet Rasulullah (RA). There developed a friendship between the two. There was a tremendous amount of munasabat (congeniality) between the two, unmatched to the munasabat with the other angels.

Wherever there is congeniality between temperaments, friendship develops. One will find grass-cutters will have friendship with fellow grass-cutters, wrestlers with fellow wrestlers, cinema-goers with cinema-goers, drinkers with fellow drinkers. This is because of munasabat.

So also, the Allahwala will develop friendship with the Allahwala, to the degree of wanting to be an Allahwala in the person's temperament. Pay attention to this and let me repeat: The degree of friendship with the Allahwala will be to the degree of the desire in the heart to be an Allahwala - to that degree will there be friendship with the Allahwala. Some will have a small desire, others a greater desire and others still, a tremendous desire. So, some will meet the Allahwala only occasionally. Others will want to be with them all the time. The desire in them is so much that they wander around searching all the time for the Allahwala, and upon finding them, they will cling on to them and will not leave them. This is so because they have developed a deep bond with the Allahwala - they have developed munasabat with the Allahwala.

This bonding is seen in our tablighi brothers. Those who are doing the work of tabligh and have done so consistently for a long period, have developed such a bond with the effort of tabligh that they will be involved with the work of tabligh all the time, being with others involved in the work of tabligh and sitting with them. When they sit anywhere, their conversation will also revolve around tabligh. They will not speak on any other topics. Also, when they deliver a bayan at an ijtima' they will speak on tabligh according to their own methodology and will not discuss any other aspects of tabligh.

Whereas it is acknowledged that Din is a combination of two items: ma'mur-biha and manhi-anha. In other words, the first is to bring into practice that we have been ordered to do - ma'mur-biha - and secondly, those actions which we have been ordered to abstain from - manhi-anha. These are the two aspects: one to carry out and one to abstain from. The combination of these two is called Din. Do you understand?

The Kalimah Sharif & ma'mur-biha and manhi-anha

How does one know this? (By the taufiq of Allah Ta'ala this comes to mind.)

We know this from the Kalimah Sharif. It is from the Kalimah Sharif that one can deduce that Din has two categories, one is ma'mur-biha and the other is manhi-anha.

How do we deduce this? There is not need to go to great lengths or to overwork the mind. The problem is that we have discarded taking work from our intelligence in the proper manner. So, how can correct ideas come into one's mind? How can correct concepts enter?

Take the whole of Din, all those volumes of kitabs that have been written full of all the ahkam (laws of Din), all of them are explanations of La-ilaha-illallah, exegeses of La-ilaha-illallah, both of ma'mur-biha and manhi-anha. The commentary of it, of La-ilaha-illallah, is Muhammadur-Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). That is why Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is called "Shareh-Islam" (Commentator of Islam) and "Share'-Islam" (one who detailed the Shari'at of Islam) and not "Bani-Islam" (founder of Islam). Who founded Islam? Islam was not founded or formulated by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi

Wasallam) but by Allah Ta'ala. When some say that Islam was founded by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), it is said metaphorically and not in reality. In reality it is Allah Ta'ala who laid the foundations of Islam. The terms Shareh and Share' mean, one who shows the road and one who portrays something in all its aspects, to the minutest detail respectively. That is why Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is called "Shareh-Islam" and "Share'-Islam". Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had no right to create the laws of Islam. He had the duty of explaining the laws, according to what Allah Ta'ala wanted.

ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بَيَانَهُ

Then lo! Upon Us (restesth) the explanation thereof. S.75 A.19

What is this "bayanah"? It is to fully explain something, to open it up. Allah Ta'ala is saying, "We will cause our Kalam, which has appeared in a concise form, very briefly, in the form of laws, to be expounded openly and fully through your lips."

Therefore, what Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has said is also "Qur'an", the difference being that the words of Allah Ta'ala being revealed in the form of the kitab, the Qur'an Sharif, are made tilawat of, whereas the "Qur'an" of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is not made tilawat of. The wahi that forms the Qur'an Sharif is referred to as matlu', whereas the words uttered by Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) are gair-matlu' and referred to as Hadith Sharif. This is an explanation of the Qur'an Sharif. No tilawat is made of the Hadith Sharif. And the basis of all this is La-ilaha-illallah.

Nafi-ithbat - Negation & Affirmation

As I was saying, there are two categories to Din, namely ma'mur-biha and manhi-anha, which are derived from La-ilaha-illallah. La-ilaha is negation (nafi). Illallah is affirmation (ithbat). La-ilaha means that there is no deity, no objective, no purpose, no loved one and, in reality, no existence. In reality, none even existing. We may appear to be existing as we can see one another walking and speaking, but did we exist before?

هَلْ أُنِىٰ عَلَى الْإِنْسَانِ حِينَ مَنَ الدَّهْرِ لَمْ يَكُن شَيْئًا مَّذْكُورًا

Hath there come upon man (ever) any period of time in which he was a thing unremembered? S.76 A.1

Man had such a phase that he was not even mentioned - he was non-existent. Subsequently, Allah Ta'ala brought into existence man by creating him.

Finally, man will cease to exist in the dunya.

So, not existing in the dunya in the beginning and then, in the end, also passing into non-existence, then how can one say that he is existing? When the two terminals are non-existent - the beginning and the end - then what type of existence is the intermediate phase? So, in reality, man has no existence. Then, the only existence, in reality, is that of Allah Ta'ala. Have you now understood the meaning of La-ilaha?

It does not mean that there is absolutely no entity worthy of worship at all. The literal and initial portion is that there is none worthy of worship. If there is none in existence except Him then, it follows, that only He is worthy of worship. The question arises: Why should He be worshipped? The answer is that the One Who is worthy of worship should have all the qualities for the needs of the creation to the highest degree of perfection, to the extent that there is just no possibility at all of any deficiency arising in them. These qualities are in Him. If you take 'ilm (knowledge), He has this quality to that degree; if you take qudrat (power), it is to that degree; if you take iradah (resolve), it is to that degree; to be able to create a formulary for the kingdom He rules without any fear, he has this as well to that degree; to cause harm, it is to that degree; to cause benefit, it is to that degree; to grant honour, it is to that degree; to cause disgrace, it is to that degree. So, honour is in His hands and disgrace is in His hands; wealth is in His hands and poverty is in His hands; illness is in His hands and good health is in His hands; complete and full power is in His hands; complete and perfect 'ilm is in His hands; enforcement of any and all actions is in His hands. These are qualities not found in anything else to that degree. He is the One to provide wind, to provide water, to provide rizq, and so forth. One who has all these qualities has all the right to be worshipped. Anybody who does not have these qualities has no right to be worshipped. La-ilaha has negated everything else.

This is why, if a person just keeps on repeating La-ilaha and remains firm on this and does not add illallah, he has become a kafir! The reason is that he has negated everything - that there is none worthy of worship and that there is none as one's objective - and thereby negated even Allah Ta'ala! So, after the nafi there must be added the ithbat. First is the non-existence of everything else and then the existence of Allah Ta'ala. One has negated the right of worship from the whole creation and then affirmed the worship of Allah Ta'ala in absolute terms. After that comes affirmation - ithbat, that is illallah.

So, la-ilaha has nafi in it and illallah has ithbat in it. So, la-ilaha has manfi in it and illallah has muthbat in it, and manhi-anha is manfi and ma'mur-biha is muthbat. Do you understand the point made? So, la-ilaha denotes manhi-anha and illallah denotes ma'mur-biha. The combination of the two - manhi-anha and ma'mur-biha is Din. Possibly this is the first time you have heard it explained in this manner, by the taufiq of Allah Ta'ala.

To explain it again: La-ilaha is negating (nafi) and illallah is affirming (ithbat). So, la-ilaha will include all that is manhi-anha and illallah will include all that is ma'mur-biha. Din is comprised of two categories, manhi-anha and ma'mur-biha - that which we have to abstain from and that which we have to carry out respectively. When both manhi-anha and ma'mur-biha are lectured on and when both these are acted on, then this will be considered to be acting on the perfection of Din. If only one category is taken up and the other category left out, how can this be called perfection in Din?

Importance of parhez

That was the first point. Another point: Both, according to common knowledge and according to the statements of the hakims and doctors, there is one important aspect to consider. Let me illustrate it: You will find a friend telling his friend, out of concern for his welfare, "What is this that I see you running to the doctor every now and then, forever drinking medicines?" The friend replies, "Why, what is wrong with that?" His friend advises, "Dear brother, you should go on a parhez as well. Abstain from eating those items that are harmful to you. I know that you are very fond of tea, but tea for you, at

present, with the ailments you have, is harmful." Parhez - dietary restriction - is the important aspect of treating a patient. Even doctors agree on it.

Is that not so? [This was addressed to a person sitting in the majlis.] He is not speaking. Did you not have breakfast? Did anybody see whether he was sitting at the dastarkhan at breakfast time? Nobody was looking. Good. One should not be looking at people when they are eating.

Etiquettes of Eating

Let me digress. This is a majlis, so whatever topic crops up, well and good. Whoever it applies to will benefit.

This we heard from Hadhratwala (RA): Hadhrat Mu'awiyah (RA) is a Sahabi and is one of the more prominent ones, is that not so? People have created doubts for no reason about his status. He had some guests whom he was feeding. Among the guests was an Arabi. The peasant bedouins staying in the surrounds of Madinah Tayyibah were called "Arabi". He was also there, eating with the other guests. It so happened that, by chance, Hadhrat Mu'awiyah's (RA) gaze fell on him. Being a peasant, he was eating in his own fashion, placing big pieces of roti in his mouth. We would break a roti into eight pieces. He was breaking them into only two large pieces and eating them. Hadhrat Mu'awiyah (RA) told him, "You are eating such big pieces? It is not good to eat such large pieces." The bedouin retorted, "It is not befitting that honourable people should sit and eat at your dastarkhan. You are keeping a watch on our mouths?"

Firstly, the etiquette is that one should not watch another person eating. Have you now come to know the mas'alah? Some have the habit of staring at others to see how they are eating. People look at others to see how they are eating. This is incorrect.

Secondly, one should also take into consideration the following situation: a person is sitting and eating and there is nobody sitting with him. You do not have an informal and open relationship with him. Do not go and sit next to him to eat, the reason being that he is now going to feel shy and he will not eat properly because of your presence. He feels uncomfortable because the

relationship between him and you is not a relaxed one. One should not go and sit there, but many just go and sit. Many dindar people are unaware of this mas'alah.

These are masa'il of the dastarkhan. Masa'il are of different categories: individual (infradi), collective (ijtima'i) and grouped (jamati).

Thirdly, if a person is involved in some 'ilmi work, for example he is reading a kitab, then another person should not unnecessarily go and sit next to him. If there is some need, then he should approach the person and tell him that he has something to discuss with him. Otherwise, he should not go and sit near him. If he does, it will disturb this person and cause an interference in his reading of the kitab. Similarly, if a person is busy writing a letter, he should not look to see what he is writing. Looking at him writing will cause a certain anxiety in the writer, and he will not say anything either. If he has some work he should approach him, state his work and go away. Similarly, one should not go and sit next to a person who is eating. If there is some urgent work, one should approach the person and tell him so. These are masa'il, infradi, ijtima'i and jamati

To continue the qissah concerning the bedouin guest of Hadhrat Mu'awiyah (RA): He had retorted, "It is not befitting that honourable people should sit and eat at your dastarkhan. You are keeping a watch on our mouths?" He stopped eating and stood up to leave. Hadhrat Mu'awiyah (RA) apologised profusely and begged him to sit and finish his meal, but the bedouin did not accept his apology and he left.

Taqwa and Ibadat

Let us now go back to the previous topic of parhez, manhi-anha and ma'mur-biha. Even the doctor will tell the patient to abstain from those foods which are harmful. Medication will come afterwards. As for sequence, parhez comes first and medication afterwards. Parhez means to leave aside, to stop. From here we can see that taqwa comes first and ibadat comes afterwards.

What do we call ibadat? What does it mean, both in common usage and as far as the Shari'at is concerned? Take an example: if a person is making just his

five-times namaz, would he be called a great abid? Nobody will say so. Now, take somebody who is making his five-times namaz, together with the nafl that go with them and, in addition, he is performing other nafl namazes like Ishraq, Chast, the nafl before zawal, Awwabin and Tahajjud. Not only that, but he stays awake half the night in ibadat.

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُرْمَلُ () فَمِ اللَّيْلَ إِنَّا قَلِيلًا ()

O thou covered in thy sheet! Keep vigil the night long...S.73 A.1

[Hadhratji stopped speaking at this point and greeted a certain Maulana who had just entered then and who had sat down at the back. Hadhratji honoured him by asking him to come and sit near to him, saying that a white-bearded person is honoured by the black-bearded person, indicating to those sitting in front to make place for him. Hadhratji then digressed from the topic he had been discussing in consideration of the visitor, before going back to the theme he had been discussing. Speaking more to the visitor, but for the attention of all present, Hadhratji said:]

Qualities to seek in companionship

Hadhratwala (RA) used to say, "Let there be merely two people with one, but let them be people of understanding. If there are a hundred people with one, but if they are not people of understanding, then what joy is there?" If one has only one wife, but she is a person of understanding, recognises and accommodates the temperament of her husband, Jannat is made for him! On the other hand, a person has four wives, but they are a burden, it is now dozing for him! The husband will feed all of them, yet...

Hadhratwala (RA) used to say, "I am also insan, I am also human. Who does not wish to have solace in his heart? Look at Hadhrat Adam (AS). He was in Jannat and he was in the mushahadah (view of) of Allah Ta'ala." Being in Jannat and his heart being in mushahadah of Allah Ta'ala, his heart would not have been unoccupied. This was a time before he came to live on earth.

Therefore he was free of any cares and worries that would trouble anybody staying here. There was complete sukun in Jannat - tranquillity and peace of mind. Yet, what did he feel? He felt that he was alone and needed

companionship. From this, it is apparent that this feeling is an innate human desire, and that the foundation of this desire stems from there. This desire arose despite being in a place like Jannat and being in a state of mushahadah Haqq.

So, Hadhratwala (RA) used to say, "I am also insan, I am also human. I also desire that one or two should be with me. However, they should be ham-maslak and ham-mazaq - of the same school of thinking and the same tastes. If my maslak is of one type and the maslak of the others is different, there will be misery. If my mazaq is of one type and the mazaq of the others is different, again there will be misery."

Etiquettes of a gathering

What does one do when a person sits with a stony face? His face looks as if the world's problems are on his shoulders. One becomes anxious when one is with such a person. What does one say to him? How does one converse with him? When one speaks to him he does not understand. When something humorous is said, there appears no smile on his face. One does not feel like speaking then.

These are some incidental points that have come in-between. These are some principles of etiquettes of a gathering. If, in a gathering the speaker, during the course of the talk, says something which is of a humorous nature where smiles should appear on the faces of the listeners - not outright loud laughter - and the smiles are not evident, immediately the speaker's heart becomes constrained. The speaker's spirits are dampened. His buoyancy is gone. This is because of the mute attitude of the listener. He sits like an idol. Who can speak to an idol?

Another point: If the speaker is a sahibe-zauq (cultured, refined) - he may not think much of himself but others consider him to be a person of esteem - and a smile does appear on the face of the listener, the sahibe-zauq will be able to make out if the smile is not genuine, he will still become constrained because the listener's hypocrisy will be exposed. The listener may be sitting there, but he is not sitting happily, with proper faith and confidence (i'timad and i'tiqad).

He looks here and there. Sometimes he speaks with this person and then that person. Sometimes he teases this person and then that person. He is sitting, but out of politeness, not for his batini benefit. He is not concerned. He is not interested in progressing. He does not want his temperament to incline towards goodness. Why? The reason is that the 'ilm that he has attained, the deeds he is doing and the concepts he has formed in his mind, he considers these three to be sufficient and correct and he does not consider it to be good for him to go out of this framework. So, whatever he is doing, he is merely deceiving himself and fooling others.

The sahibe-zauq will detect this. Why does the sahibe-zauq not say anything? His temperament is one of kindness, that is why he does not say anything. But, the person will understand even though he is not told anything. By way of example: "Goolam Hoosain understands even though he is not told anything directly." This is said out of muhabbat and whosoever's name comes to the lips is mentioned by way of example only.

You must have studied the kitabs of grammar. The name "Zaid" comes in frequently to illustrate different aspects of grammar. So, listen to this qissah: A simple-minded student came to study at a madrasah. Explaining the noun, verb and object in Arabic grammar, the ustadh said in Arabic, "Zaid hit Amer." The student asked, "Why did Zaid hit Amer?" He was simple in his thinking. The ustadh tried to explain, "Zaid did not hit Amer. This is said as an illustration to understand the grammar." The student said, "I do not want to study such kitabs in which lies are stated." He had wilayati 'ilm (an extreme type of honesty in the pursuit of 'ilm.) He did not study. Possibly Allah Ta'ala wanted to take some other work from him.

A qissah

Just listen to this humorous incident.

Our Pathan brothers from the nobility, the ra'is, used to say that, finally, one Pathan student, after much difficulty, became an alim. He was a good alim, one of the senior ones, but for some reason or other, he went astray. Some obstinacy developed in him. (In other words, there were no 'alims amongst

them and this one hope of the Pathan clan came crashing down!)
Now, one must remember, swords are the toys with which Pathans play and amuse themselves. Take this incident, on a more serious note, that Hadhratwala (RA) related to us. Of course, all what I am relating comes from him. There was in Lucknow a Pathan who did not perform namaz at all. He had passed middle-age. Somebody advised him, "Khansahib, at this stage your legs are dangling in the grave. Start performing your namaz now." Khansahib asked, "Why? Whatever for? What will I receive?" His friend replied, "You will receive Jannat." Khansahib said, "Wah! Jannat is in our hands. One slash over here and another slash over there and one has attained Jannat. What is there to it?"

This is exactly what happened. Near Lucknow, the Hindus attacked a village of the Muslims. The Muslims were few and the Hindus were many. How long could they withstand the attack? The Khansahib from Lucknow, mentioned above, went to a Molvisahib and told him, "The Hindus have attacked the Muslims in a village. If I go to assist the Muslims, and it could happen that I am killed, will I be a shahid? I am asking because, if I go to assist the Muslims and I get killed, but I am not counted as a shahid, then what is the benefit? I would have attained nothing. I would have given my life for no reason."

He was a person of understanding. He went to enquire. Such "ignorance" is praiseworthy. Nowadays, nobody asks even. Unlike before, people involve themselves in politics and they do not enquire about anything. There is a local saying, "It does not matter. Let him go the scaffold - God will deal kindly with him!" Similarly, the cry is, "Confront them. Fight them." It does not matter what the results are. This is mentioned just incidentally.

To continue: The Maulana said to the Khansahib, "If you were to be killed, you will be a shahid." Satisfied, he went home, had a bath, changed his clothes, took his sword and lance and went to the village which was under attack. He fought valiantly on the side of the Muslims and killed many. But for how long? Finally this Khansahib became shahid.

Hadhratwala (RA) said, "What the Khansahib had said he had demonstrated practically." He did not negate his action but said, "What the Khansahib had

said he had demonstrated practically, that one slash over here and another over there and one has attained Jannat."

The Sharwan-Sayyid lineage of Hadhratji (RA)

[The Maulana Sahib who had come a bit late and was now sitting near Hadhratji, asked, "Where did the title Sharwani' originate from?" Hadhratji replied:]

Sharwan is a town in Kabul in Afghanistan. The label of Khan-Sharwani that is attached to us came about as follows: Our forefathers were of the Sadat (Sayyids - the progeny of Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and came from Arabia. When they came, some had wives, others did not. In those days journeying was by foot. They reached Kabul, in Afghanistan, and stayed there for a very long time. The nation of Pathans used to honour the Sayyids tremendously, irrespective of the person's qualities. The mere fact of him being a Sayyid was sufficient to honour him. Also, it comes in the kitabs that, if there is any doubt about a person being a Sayyid, respect and honour him even more! Why? If somebody is a Sayyid from the lineage of both parents, the mother and the father, then you yourself will respect them. However, if somebody claims to be a Sayyid and there has arisen a doubt for no reason whatsoever, then you should respect him even more.

So, the Pathans used to respect and honour the Sayyids a tremendous amount. The people of Kabul welcomed them with open arms. Among them were young unmarried men as well. When they married, they did so locally, seeing that they had been there for some time.

In time to come, when they left Afghanistan, their lineage was traced to the nearest relatives, these being the father and grandfather. This normally happens. One does not go back to the generations before that, the great-grandfather and others before him. Seeing that the immediate family came from Sharwan, the family came to be known as Sharwani.

Very interestingly, once, when I was in Pakistan right in the north, on the border of Afghanistan, one evening I was taking a walk. My host was with me. While walking, my eyes fell on a milestone. These are stones along the road

to indicate the distance to various places, as we see here in India as well. This milestone had written on it "Sharwan". I asked my host, "How does the name Sharwan appear here?" He explained that this was the road to Kabul and the sign indicated the direction to Sharwan in Kabul.

When the family came to India, seeing that they had come from Kabul in Afghanistan, which was famous as being the land of the Pathans, the family came to be known as Pathan, but we are Sayyid. We are Sayyid from the paternal side and Pathan from the maternal side. The maternal Pathan side was remembered when the family came to India, but the paternal Sayyid side was forgotten. So, that is our ancestral history, both Sayyid and Pathan, but Sayyid in reality, because in the Shari'at, lineage is based on the paternal lineage and not the maternal lineage.

Who is an abid?

Let us go back to our previous theme. We were discussing being an abid. Somebody who is performing just his five-times namazes will not be called an abid. An abid will be that person who performs additional nafl ibadat in addition to the five namazes - that is, nafl namaz, nafl tilawat, nafl fasting, nafl zikr. He stays awake at night in ibadat, performing his Tahajjud namaz. He also performs the namazes of Ishraq, Chast, Zawal and Awwabin. Whenever you see him he has the Qur'an Sharif open in front of him, busy with tilawat. Come the days of the 13th, 14th and 15th of the month, the Ayyame-Bis, he is fasting. He also keeps the nafl fasts of Muharram, Shaban and Zil-Hajj. It is as if he is a "qa'imul-layl" and "sa'imud-dahr" (one who stays up the whole night in ibadat and fasts everyday). He will be called an abid.

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَرْمَلُ ()

"O thou covered in a sheet/ blanket!"

(Mudath-thir refers to clothes, and appears elsewhere.) Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) was feeling grieved at something and this ayet was revealed on that occasion. By this form of address Allah Ta'ala is saying, The manner in which you are being addressed is to indicate goodness towards you, that this manner of My addressing you is to bring to you sukun, a connection, a

heartfelt attachment, tranquillity and focussing of your attention towards Me. "Where have you lied down, immersed in your grief? How can you lie down in grief just because of what somebody had said? Stand up." It was night time. Analysing this surah, Surah Muzammil Sharif, we can see that it has Tasawwuf in it through and through, from the very beginning to the end.

Remedy for grief

We can deduce that when a Muslim is grieved, that some sadness has affected him - which is bound to happen now and then, sometimes light, at other times heavy, sometimes big and at other times small - he should not focus his attention in that direction, or else his grief will increase. Yes, if he has the passion to deliberately increase his grief, then nobody has any cure for such a person. He is like that person who has a taste for eating poison and is munching away at some strychnine, and you are trying to help him and you try snatching the poison away from him, but he repulses you. Such incidents have occurred.

A qissah

What I am going to relate to you is a known incident which happened in front of me. There was a youth who, for some reason or other, found it difficult living in his community. He had a harsh temperament. He used to quarrel and hurl abuse and fight with each and everybody. Yet, he came from a good home, a noble family. He developed an illness of his eyes. It became so severe that the fear came into him, "I will become blind!" He then started having more fears (waswasah). "If I were to become blind, considering my atrocious behaviour with my family members and others, who will care for a blind person like me? My life will be devastated. Neither will my family care for my comfort because of my loose tongue and misbehaviour, nor will members of the community care for me, because I was abusive to them." So, he found it burdensome to live.

He went to his brother, who owned a firearm. "May I borrow your gun? I am thinking of going hunting. Load the cartridge and give it to me." The brother

did so and handed it over to him, knowing that he was a keen hunter. He brought the gun home. His mother saw the gun in his hand and asked him, "What is the gun for?" His wife also saw him with the gun and she also asked, "What is the gun for?" He did not reply, but went with the gun straight into his room. Both his mother and wife got worried. Something was not right. They went after him but he had locked the door. They both pleaded with him to open the door and let them in so that they could take the gun from him, but he was set firm on his plan.

His behaviour was like that of Shaitan, who had set his mind on disobeying Allah Ta'ala, even though Allah Ta'ala had tried to make him understand. Allah Ta'ala had addressed Shaitan directly, without any intermediary, yet he refused to understand.

This boy's mother and his wife kept on pleading with him, trying to make him understand and see reason. However, when somebody has resolved firmly on a course of action, then even if Allah Ta'ala were to explain to him, he will not understand. How will he understand the explanations of ordinary people like us? So, he did not listen to either his mother or his wife.

When in the room, he took the gun and placed the barrel over his heart and pulled the trigger with his thumb, shooting himself through the heart. He died on the spot.

Why have I mentioned this? In order to explain that nobody is free of grief befalling him or her. Big or small, light or heavy, grief comes to everybody. One should now not sit with it. One should rather put it aside, shift one's gaze away from it, and get busy with some task. Haqq Ta'ala is prescribing this treatment. It is Allah Ta'ala who is treating the Nabi. Nobody else is capable of doing this.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had lied down in grief. What Allah Ta'ala is saying I am going to express in my own words: "Oonh! What are you lying down for? Come, come! Up you get! Make Allah, Allah. Come with us. Today we are going to the garden for a walk and cheer ourselves up. Come, there is a very amazing person who is here with us today." This is what a friend tries to do, be sympathetic and cheer him up.

Important rules with regard to nafl ibadat

So, when Allah Ta'ala stated, "Qumel-layl", it encompasses the whole night. Allah Ta'ala then modified it. Even if it is not the whole night, then a small portion of the night -"illa-qalil". Then this was explained even further as half the night: "nesfahu". Even if this cannot be managed, very well, less than this. In this way, decreasing it gradually to a very small amount - "awinqus minhu qalila". On the other hand, if you feel like it, if your heart desires it and if you are not too tired, then more than this - "aw zid alayhi". In other words, freedom to choose has been given. Through Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) we are being being addressed, that those who are abids have been given a choice. Besides performing what is fardh, wajib and sunnate-mu'atqadah, a choice has been given. Look at your health. Look at the free time you have. Look at the ease (sahulat) you have. Having looked at these, do not sit back contented merely by the performance of what is fardh ibadat, whether it is namaz, rozah, zakat or hajj. After the category of aqa'id (iman), these four ibadats are well-known.

Now, zakat is not compulsory on everybody. Hajj is not compulsory on everybody. However, namaz and rozah is compulsory on every baligh and sane Muslim. There is no getting out of these. However, when it comes to nafl, Allah Ta'ala has given us a choice.

Where have you sat back complacent, after having performed your five-times namazes? Move forward. Progress. Do not sit back contented with merely your five-times namazes. When it comes to progress as far as the material, perishable dunya is concerned, you have so much passion and you just want to progress more and more. Even your friends will tell you to move ahead, to go forward.

Material progress and Dini progress

Something comes to mind: The poor Maulanas are criticised, not only now but for some time past, and it is said, "Whenever the 'Ulema speak, they only speak on moving forward with regard to namaz, rozah, zikr and so forth. They never speak about worldly progress. No alim ever speaks about material

progress." Our response is that even Allah Ta'ala encourages worldly progress, so how can an alim forbid it? "So, why is this subject not mentioned?" The answer to this is that the alim will speak on those subjects which are neglected. He will discuss those topics of the Din where there is negligence. As for those areas where there is self-generated enthusiasm, what need is there to speak to a person in such situations? Not only is he self-motivated, but there are his wife, his friends, his relatives and others in the community to encourage him as well. They will tell him, "You have made a large amount of profit from this venture, why not start another venture?" He starts another venture and makes even more profit. He is then encouraged some more by his friends and relatives. So, why should the alim also fall in line? We do not know what would happen then! So, the criticism levelled at the 'Ulema, that they do not encourage worldly progress, is unfounded. It would be justified only if the people were negligent concerning worldly progress. To speak on this topic now would be completely superfluous. And it is forbidden to speak on superfluous matters. So, why speak on this topic?

The Ulema' are Na'ib-e-Rasul (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)

Let me continue where I had left off: In the beginning of the ayet quoted above, Allah Ta'ala is addressing us by addressing Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). "Stand up! One does not sleep through the entire night." O ye students! O ye 'Ulema! Listen carefully! One does not sleep through the entire night. The 'Ulema are, after all, the Na'ib-e-Rasul (represent Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), is that not so? But nowadays, as we hear people say, we are Na'ib-e-Rasul of dirham and dinar. And what was said about the Na'ib-e-Rasul over there? The Ambiya do not leave behind dirham and dinar, but they leave behind 'ilm in their inheritance. So, that person who has taken up complete 'ilm has taken up his whole share of the inheritance. It is not befitting for the 'Ulema to attach themselves in any aspect towards dirham and dinar, i.e towards material progress, towards money. You call yourselves Na'ib-e-Rasul and you extol the virtues of 'ilm, but you have become complacent with what you have studied of 'ilme-Rasul, that - instead of being

engrossed in increasing this knowledge more and more, having learnt something, you should be learning something more - you have involved yourselves in earning dirham and dinar just like the dunyadars (materialists). You will then not be called Na'ib-e-Rasul.

A Na'ib-e-Rasul will be that person who will be pursuing the four categories after aqa'id, that is, in the perfection of ibadat, in the correction of mu'amulat, in the refinement of mu'asharat and the embellishment of akhlaq. Such a person will be called a Na'ib-e-Rasul. As for his material life, he will have complete qana'at (contentment) with what is halal tayyib. If he is absolutely strong of heart and the wife and children are also strong-hearted, then he has permission to leave even those means which are available for attaining wealth. This person will be called a tarikad-dunya.

The difference between a tarikad-dunya and a matrukud-dunya

There are two categories here. One is that person who is a tarikad-dunya, as explained above. The other category is that person who is a matrukud-dunya. There are no virtues attached to being a matrukud-dunya. What is a matrukud-dunya? He is that person who, on a gair-ikhtiyari basis - that is, not out of choice - has no wealth at all. Nothing comes his way. He has nothing. He has not had to let go of anything, but wealth has left him. The tarikad-dunya, on the other hand, is that person who, despite having the means of accumulating wealth, has abstained from doing so with his heart. He does not utilise those means of earning that he has at his disposal.

From here we can see that those mu'min Muslims among the general populace who castigate such 'Ulema and say, "They sit with folded arms doing nothing to earn a living. They have their eyes on the earnings of others," become sinners of the highest degree. They have earned sins by such statements. Remember, they are not asking you for anything. They do not come begging to your door; they are not obstructing you in any way. Why are you upset? Why are you being critical? It is your right not to give.

An illustration

Why? For this reason: Take the following illustration: You have an employee. You are paying him ten rupees everyday. Now, on this one day you have a visitor. Your worker has prepared an excellent meal. The visitor enjoys the meal tremendously. He has noticed that the worker has cooked the meal. The visitor asks the worker, "How much wages do you get?" He tells him. "What about board and lodging?" "That is free." The visitor then makes him an offer, "Very well. I will give you double the amount. I will give you twenty rupees daily. You come and work for me."

See what type of friend he has. The visitor comes to his friend's house and wants to take the worker away by offering double the amount he is earning. What is the worker's response? He says, "I am very disappointed at what you are saying. Is this the type of friendship that you have? What a horrid suggestion you have made! I have been working here for a very long time. He has looked after me all these years. Even though you are offering me twenty rupees daily, I am not a 'nimak-haram'. I have eaten the salt here. I have spent a long time here eating his salt. The ten rupees I earn here are better than the twenty that you offer. I will not go with you." Have you understood his point?

If you have, then one other point by way of caution: Now, it so happens that somebody else comes to know of what happened. He tells the worker, "I heard that a visitor to the house offered you twenty rupees and you refused the offer. You are a very foolish person. This was progress for you. Double what you are earning is progress. Where will you get such an offer? You are very stupid." The worker replies, "You keep this progress. I am not one for it. This backwardness' with contentment is sufficient for me. It is not in my nature to be disloyal." Do you understand the point?

In a similar manner, the Allahwala is saying, "I also know how to progress. If I were to set my mind in that direction, I will progress more than you. However, the task that He - Allah Ta'ala - has set out for me, I am involved in executing that task. And He has taken responsibility for my rizq. Why should I do farming? Why should I be involved in trade? Why should I seek employment?

I will not do so. If He gives, I will eat. If He withholds, I will not eat." This person has a strong heart - qawiyu-qalb. That person who is a true abid - he is a wali in the context of the shari'ah - he will not pay any attention in that direction.

He will eat if provided with food, and not eat if the food is withheld. He is one with qawiyu-qalb - a strong heart. The mas'alah is for such a person.

He may be strong-hearted, but his family may not be so. Therefore, in consideration of the family, he may do something or other. But if the family is also strong-hearted, then he will not do anything.

Our pious predecessors

Take the family of Shah Waliyullah Sahib (RA) - himself and Shah Abdul Aziz Sahib Shah Abdul Qader Sahib and others in that lineage: Can anybody prove that they did any farming? Were they involved in any trade? None whatsoever. The following episode we heard from Hadhratwala (RA). When the British rule was established, the people in the top echelons of the British government came to meet Shah Abdul Qader Sahib. Whenever somebody gains some fame in an area, the eyes of the rulers fall on such a person as well. They fear such people also. When these British came, there were others also sitting there - students, attendants and others - they sent a message informing him of their coming and seeking permission to meet him.

Others have taken our teachings

This is very much part of our teachings: When going to meet somebody, inform him first. When you enter, make salam and ask permission to come in. When permission is given, then enter. These are our teachings but we have discarded them. The English study a lot and they have studied our kitabs. Whatever was of worldly benefit to them from studying our kitabs - the ayat of the Qur'an Sharif, the teachings in Hadith Sharif - they have taken for themselves. Whatever they considered was good from the material aspect they took for themselves. They have utilised the best from our teachings. We, on the other hand, think that these are their teachings. This is our error. We

are the ones who have discarded these teachings. We have discarded them to such a degree that in our minds we have ceased to recognise them as our own teachings! These teachings have become so foreign to us that when we see them practising on these we think that these are their teachings. Indeed not. These are not the teachings of the English but our teachings.

To continue: The British governor and his entourage entered after obtaining permission. They sat down. They did not understand Urdu. Nevertheless, they sat down. (There are some people of good temperaments: they hear nothing - the sound comes to the ears but they understand nothing. Nevertheless, they find delight in sitting there.) The gaze of the English is on materialism only, not on spiritual matters. Just as one finds people worshipping the sun, these are worshippers of materialism. They hold no value to spiritual matters.

They saw that Shah Abdul Qader Sahib was dressed well. They also noticed that the place was well furnished. On the other hand, they saw no activity that could be a source of income. They asked Shah Sahib, "From where do you eat?" Shah Sahib did not give any reply. He kept silent.

The British visitors sat for a while and then got up to leave. As they were about to leave, the governor brought out a satchel and took out some rupees from it. In those days the currency consisted of silver coins. He kept these in his palm and presented them to Shah Sahib and said, in his language, "My heart desires that you accept this as a gift." Shah Sahib immediately took the coins from his palm and said, "This is how we eat!"

By this statement Shah Sahib was actually conveying the following message: "Despite the fact that you are not a co-religionist of mine, that you are not related to me, that I am not your ustadh and that you are not my student, that I am not your pir and that you are not my murid, yet, despite all this, you are giving me a monetary gift. And I have not asked you. This is how I eat, that Allah Ta'ala had instilled it in your heart to give me. You gave the money and I took it."

So, what is the reason for doing other work when he was involved in the task allocated to him by Allah Ta'ala? Allah Ta'ala Himself will make the arrangements. Therefore, what need is there to go out and earn? Do you

understand?

Take another illustration from the legal aspect: A person is in government employment. He may be a simple clerk. We will not consider the higher positions of commissioner and so forth. This government official, the clerk, now wants to go into business. The law is that he cannot do so in his own name. If he were to do so, and the government comes to find out, he will be dismissed. Fired! The government will say, "When you are working for us, and you are being paid by us, why do you go and do some other work? If you do some other work, then there will be negligence of the work we have given you."

So, the rule is that if a government employee, after having being given certain tasks to perform by the government, goes into some personal venture which the government does not approve of, he will be dismissed immediately.

Similarly, if a person is involved in the tasks given to him by Allah Ta'ala, how can he do some other work? Do you understand? So, those ahlullah who are not involved in farming, trade, employment and other means of worldly earnings, cannot be criticised. Just as you had praised the employee who refused the offer of twenty rupees and was contented with ten rupees and called him a man of valour, you are now calling those 'Ulema who are turning away from worldly allure, to dedicate themselves to the tasks allocated to them by Allah Ta'ala, as weak-kneed and spineless! The loyal employee is called a man of courage and the loyal 'Ulema are labelled as cowards! Why do you not call them brave and courageous?

Do you understand? I have given you two worldly illustrations, one of a government employee and the other of an ordinary employee. That is why it cannot be shown, with certain exceptions, that those whose status as true walis has been proved according to the laws of the shari'ah and the rights of the sharah, that they were involved in farming, trade or employment. Yet, they ate better than those that eat well. A good example is Hadhrat Shah Abdul Qadir Jilani (RA): Did he work for anybody?

Take also Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (RA). (We heard this from Hadhratwala RA): In Saharanpur there is a fort belonging to some nawabs, famously known as "The Fort". One of the nawabs from there sent a

message to the father of Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (RA) that he needed somebody to teach his children. Would he not ask his son to accept this position? Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (RA) had just qualified as an alim. His father requested him to accept this position. He initially declined, but then accepted. He went to Saharanpur and taught there for a few months. However, he felt unsettled. His heart was not in doing this and he returned home. This happened soon after qualifying. He did not incline towards becoming a mudarris anywhere. For the rest of his life he did not carry out any farming, trade or employment. Yet, he ate better than those who eat well, and he dressed better than those who dress well.

Take also our Hadhratwala (RA). He was a mudarris for a while in Kanpur: His ustadh, Maulana Yaqub Nanotwi (RA) was a very affectionate ustadh and he had sent him there to become head of department (sadr mudarris) at the age of twenty. When he left there, he came to stay in Thanah Bhowan where he remained for the rest of his life. This was according to the instruction of Haji Imdadullah (RA), who had told him, "When your heart feels disquieted in Kanpur and you leave there, do not attach yourself to any other place. Go and sit in the khanqah in Thanah Bowan, tawakkullan-alallah." Despite being in debt, Hadhratwala (RA) left. Initially, there were tests and trials, so much so that he had nothing. When visitors came, they were served whatever was available and husband and wife went to bed hungry. When Allah Ta'ala saw him succeeding in making sabr, the roads that opened were such that even kings have not been blessed with. He attained a very elevated stage. Allahu-Akbar! Once, so much came that Hadhratwala (RA) got frightened. "What must I do with all this?" he stated anxiously. They had no children and they were only two, husband and wife. So, he gave away one thousand rupees (of that time) to Deoband and one thousand rupees to Mazaharul-Ulum in Saharanpur. This he did out of fear of possessing so much.

Hadhratwala's (RA) father possessed big tracks of land, which he left behind on his demise. However, Hadhratwala (RA) took no benefit from these. He took no portion of the inheritance of the lands of his father. As for the debt his father had with regard to the unpaid mehr, he paid out from the share that was

due to him, but he took nothing for himself personally from the inheritance of his father. Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (RA) had written to him, "If you take from the inheritance, it is according to fatwa, and if you do not take, it is according to taqwa." Hadhratwala (RA) never took. And he lived with ease and comfort.

In fact, he lived so well that whenever anybody sent a money-order as a gift to him and wrote a note saying, "Hadhrat, make du'a that Allah Ta'ala grants barkat and that I have sufficiency in my earnings," he would return the money-order with a note to say, "We do not sell du'as here."

As I have said, if a government employee is not allowed to do any other work in his own capacity - he may do so in the name of his wife or children - similar is the situation of these personages.

Going back to the theme of ibadat: an abid is not one who performs merely his five times fardh namazes. An abid is one who performs, besides the five times fardh namazes, an abundance of nafl ibadat. In what manner? With taqwa.

Why? Because taqwa comes first and ibadat comes afterwards. The medical example is that parhez comes first and the medication comes afterwards. If a person is taking his medication but is not making parhez, then of what benefit is it? He would be better off if he does not take medication but observes parhez. Do you understand the point?

Once you have understood the point made, then know that the person who has a passion for ibadat, has been given a choice by Allah Ta'ala. There is no choice with regard to what are faraidh, which have set laws. So, what is the choice? Look at your ease and look at your strength, then make ibadat according to these. Therefore, the Qur'an Sharif ayet states that stand up in ibadat at night. If you are unable to do so for the whole night, then half the night. If unable to do so for half the night, then less than this. And if one is able to, even more than this. We have been given a choice. We have also been given a lesson in this. You will find that this surah, Surah Muzammil, is Tasawwuf from beginning to end. The abid and the zakir have been given a choice - either do so much or, if unable to, then so much, but at least so much.

Reciting the Qur'an Sharif

The ayet continues: Recite the Qur'an Sharif in the correct manner - with tartil - either in your nafl namaz or out of namaz, while sitting. This time - the time of Tahajjud - is a pleasant and tranquil time of the night. A refreshing breeze is blowing. Get up and recite the Qur'an Sharif, recite it with tartil - that is, recite it by pronouncing the words clearly and fully. The sound of your voice should reach your own ears. There is no need to raise your voice or shout or read very loudly that the eyes of those who are sleeping in the house open. What have they done to you that you read so loudly as to disturb the sleep of these poor people? So, recite in the manner described.

Ulema' should set the example

A lesson has been give to the 'Ulema. This is what we had spoken on before, that the 'Ulema are the representatives of the Rasul. Every alim, beating his chest, proclaims himself to be the na'ib of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Standing in the mehrab, or whilst sitting on the mimbar, he expounds the virtues of 'ilm most forcefully and then he sleeps through the night! There is ease and he has the time, he has the opportunity, he has the youth, he is not tired from the day's work, he has the health, he is not ill, but he sleeps throughout the whole night after 'Isha! Or he sits around talking after 'Isha. Sitting around and talking is going to cause him to be late. Never mind getting up at night for ibadat, but his namaz with jama'at is also missed. Even if he does not sit around talking and goes to sleep immediately after 'Isha, he sleeps so deeply that his Fajr namaz with jama'at is missed. And what does he call himself? A Na'ib-e-Rasul! And he lectures on the virtues of 'ilm, that the virtues are such-and-such.

Remember that Allah Ta'ala is listening as well as watching.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ

Lo! Allah is Hearer, Knower. S.31 A.28

Allah Ta'ala is listening to what you say and He sees what you are doing.

Where the word "alim" is used, it means that He knows the conditions of your hearts. Where the word "sami" is used, it means that He listens to your talks,

how you carry tales about others. Where the word "basir" is used, it means that He sees your actions, how you lie around.

These virtues appear to be for the enemies! Shabash! Congratulations! Live long! May you have long life. [These statements are made as a reprimand, using sarcasm. - Translator]

وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ

... while you yourselves forget (to practise it)? S.2 A.44

No! These virtues are foremost for you, and then for others. Just see the Hadith Sharif on the numerous virtues of Tahajjud. Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has given priority, importance and elevation to it over other nafl. These have been taught as well in all the kitabs of Hadith. All the ten kitabs of Hadith that are taught have these in them. Yet, with great difficulty the five times namazes are performed!

In the true meaning of the word, it is the 'Ulema who are the true walis, provided that they do the work of a wali and do not involve themselves in other types of work.

So, besides the category of aqa'id, which is connected to iman, we should check ourselves on the other four categories: what is the quality of our ibadat? What type of dealings (mu'amalat) are we engaged in? What are our lifestyles (mu'asharat) like - are they pure, and what are our characters (akhlaq) like? When all these are judged to be correct in the pans of the scale and on the standards laid down, then that person will be an alim-e-Rabbani and an alim-e-Haqqani. If he has studied in-depth, recognising the reality behind the teachings, and, if he has developed yaqin (conviction) with it, then he will act on this knowledge and he will become an alim-e-Rabbani as well. So, becoming an alim-e-Haqqani comes first and to become an alim-e-Rabbani goes with it. Such a person will be an abid.

Nafl ibadat - further explanation

It is to such a person that Allah Ta'ala is referring when He states, "O abid, I am desirous of your good health. Sound health takes priority over nafl ibadat. If you have made nafl ibadat in such a manner that it has affected your health,

then you have done wrong. You will be called to account for it: Why did you perform nafl ibadat in such a manner, to such an extent that your health has suffered, so that you did not remain capable of performing your fardh ibadat correctly and with the tranquillity demanded of it? I will call you to account on this. I did give you a choice and I did tell you that mere laziness will not be an excuse for leaving out nafl. However, if you have valid Shar'i excuses - illness affecting you, physical weakness overtaking you, being unduly tired because of working, or being on a journey - and you leave out what is nafl, fine, you have permission. At the same time, being in these situations, in carrying out your schedule of ibadat, neither is illness a barrier, nor will the illness get worse, nor is tiredness a barrier, nor is weakness a barrier, nor is the journey a barrier, then it is a matter of courage to carry on. You will not be called to account for not carrying out what is nafl. However, you being an abid, and you, O abid, have muhabbat for Me, and the demands of muhabbat are that, unless there are some very special circumstances which present themselves, you will persist."

The demands of muhabbat are such that the abid, even in the face of not being commanded to do something by the Mehubub, and even being told not to do that particular thing - this prohibition not being a command, that if you do it you will be punished, but it being a suggestion made for the welfare of the abid - the abid will still carry out that task. Do you understand?

The wisdom behind two opposing advices

On what basis is this stated? The proof is in a Hadith Sharif: A Sahabi (RA) came and said, "O Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)! I intend going on a journey. Should I fast or should I not fast?" Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) replied, "Is it a good thing to fast whilst on a journey?" The reply was given in such a tone as to discourage him from fasting. He did not fast. At another time another Sahabi (RA) came to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and asked, "O Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam)! I intend going on a journey. Should I fast or not?" Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) replied, "Why should you not fast?" This time the tone was such

that he should fast. On the previous occasion the tone was such that the Sahabi (RA) should not keep.

This appears to be confusing. Both men were intending the same type of activity. The one is told not to fast and the other is told to fast. In other words, one is instructed not to carry out an injunction and the other is told to carry out an injunction. Has the mas'alah been established?

Now, the reason for the differing answers: the first person was an old person, physically weak, going on a journey. He was told that it was not a good thing to fast, so that he does not fast. The second person was a young person and he was told that there was no reason why he should not fast, so that he should fast. Do you now understand?

When the Shari'at has considered us on every occasion and every circumstance, then why do we, on our own, come up with lame excuses? We fail to realise that these lame excuses may fool the creation but will not work with Allah Ta'ala. These lame excuses are not acceptable.

One excuse is, "I am very tired." What makes you so tired? Were you ploughing the fields? Were you grinding a millstone? Were you hawking, trudging the whole day selling clothes from door to door? What have you really done? Why are you tired? You are young. Why did you not get up for Tahajjud? Why did you not sit up and go make wudhu? Why did you not perform your Tahajjud? Have you not read Surah Muzammil? You kept on sleeping?

These topics are mentioned because you are a talib - you are a seeker. You are showing your quest by your behaviour. That is why these matters are told to you. What is the reason for this illness of laziness? This is also an illness. So, when there are no valid excuses, then laziness should be discarded. Laziness and suluk do not go together. Talab (seeking) and laziness cannot co-exist. Talab and alertness can go together. Talab and courage can co-exist. Talab and laziness cannot co-exist Why this laziness then? How can you deceive yourself? How can you deceive your sheikh? How can you make lame excuses?

That is why Maulana Rumi has said:

You can present falsehood to the creation a truth,
But it can never happen that you can show falsehood as truth to the Creator.
He has given a warning.

We had originally said that Din has two parts: manhi-anha and ma'mur-biha. Manhi-anha is not to go near those actions from which you have been forbidden. Abstain from them. Ma'mur-biha - fulfil these tasks fully and completely. This is a command. A command can be in the category of wajib or it can be in the category of mustahab. What is wajib you have compulsorily to carry out. There is no question of omitting these. Namaz is in this category: you have to perform namaz, even it be by means of signs and the lifting of your head only, if you are so ill. If you are unable to stand, or even to sit, then lie down and perform your namaz by movements of the head, lifting it forward slightly for the ruku' and a bit more for the sajdah. Then, how can one make lame excuses?

Ishq - passionate love

Whether the order is in the category of wajib or mustahab, you have a greater responsibility, seeing that you are one of the muhabbin, with regard to whom Allah Ta'ala states:

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ

Those who believe are passionate in their love for Allah.

S.2 A.165

Allah Ta'ala is stating that the mu'min has passionate love for Allah Ta'ala. Does shiddat-muhabbat mean little or superficial muhabbat? No. Shiddat refers to an intense love, what is called ishq. From this we can see that the noble status of a mu'min is that he should live the life of an ashik of Allah Ta'ala. Is that not so? This is what Allah Ta'ala is saying: that person who is a mu'min should be very severe in his love for Allah Ta'ala. Allah Ta'ala is not using the word "shadid" but He uses the term "ashadd-e-muhabbat". "Ashadd-e-muhabbat" is in the superlative. That is, not just "intense" but "very intense". When muhabbat (love) increases very much then it is called ishq (passion). In the worldly situation (that is, where a man loves a woman) you find that this

person is then restless day and night because of his muhabbat. He finds it difficult to eat even a piece of roti. When he dreams, it is about her; when he speaks it is about her. Do you understand the point?

So, the mu'min should be an ashiqe-ilahi. Now, will an ashiq search for excuses? Will he say, with regard to an instruction, "Is it necessary to carry it out"? Will such a thought come into his mind? It will never enter his mind. On the contrary, the ashiq will try and see where his gaze falls. He will try and fathom what his features are implying. Take this worldly example: The facial expression of the mehabub indicates that he is thirsty. So, the ashiq will quickly bring some water, although he was not instructed to do so. "How did you know that I was thirsty?" He replies, "Your parched lips told me so." He is congratulated on his alertness.

The demands of ishq

So, the ashiq looks at the wishes of the mehabub. In the face of an instruction given to him, can he ignore it? Can he then ask, "Is this necessary or unnecessary? Is it necessary to obey your command or is it not necessary?" He claims to have muhabbat and yet asks for an explanation of an order given to him.

It is for this reason that Hadhratwala (RA) used to feel upset and expel people. One day a person came and asked something of Hadhratwala (RA), who replied, "Ofo, it is a sin! Dear brother, what you asking - what you want to do - is sinful." This person then asked, "Is it a minor sin or a major sin?" At this Hadhratwala (RA) became annoyed and said, "What you are implying is that if it is a minor sin, you will do it. Have you no shame? You have the gall to say that you will do it if it is a minor sin? Have you no honour? Get up from in front of me and be away from here!"

This was said because of the importance of the honour of the Din. This person was expelled from there.

How can there be such a question when there is ashadd-e-muhabbat? How can a person put forward such a question when he has ishq? If, on his own, he is ready to carry out the task, and if the task is an ordinary matter, the

mehbub himself will see that the person is prepared to carry out the task on him asking him, but he may not be able to do so because of physical weakness, so he himself will say, "Come, sit down. I am not that thirsty. Come, sit." He is now being considerate to him. He merely wanted to see if he was prepared to bring him some water to drink. However, when he saw that he was a frail person, he stopped him.

Hadhratwala (RA) had expelled the person mentioned above, from the khanqah. Now take another situation: Another person had made some error. Hadhratwala (RA) told him, "Leave the majlis!" This person stood up and started walking to the stairs leading out of the khanqah. Hadhratwala (RA) called out to him in a stern voice, "Where are you going in that direction? Why don't you sit in the masjid here?" The masjid is situated adjacent to the majliskhanah. So, on the one hand he is told to leave and, at the same time, he is prevented from leaving. Hadhratwala understood what type of person he was, and he understood what type of person the other one was who was actually expelled. The sheikh will himself be considerate. The reason is that the sheikh portrays the qualities of Allah Ta'ala. Allah Ta'ala Himself is considerate of you. If you do not take into consideration His thoughtfulness, then there will be nothing left.

Manhi-anha and ma'mur-biha - further elucidation

We were discussing manhi-anha and ma'mur-biha. We had said that manhi-anha comes first and that ma'mur-biha comes afterwards. The meaning of ma'mur-biha is that as far as huquqs (rights) are concerned, besides what is fardh, wajib and sunnate-mu'qqidah, the rest of the orders come afterwards. As for the manhi-anha: these may be related to taqwa at the lowest level or related to taqwa at the highest level. Both these levels of taqwa have to be achieved. However, you cannot attain the higher levels of taqwa of manhi-anha until, slowly, slowly, you have not attained the lowest levels of taqwa of manhi-anha.

The reason is that your temperament is one of freedom, of being unrestricted. Now that you have come here for your islah (self-rectification), firstly, be kind

enough to leave off now the minor sins, and attend to the major sins later on. Degree by degree, these also will be discarded, and so forth. And become like that peasant whose qissah I am about to relate.

A qissah

The peasant, when he became bay'at, Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi (RA), got him to make taubah of all his sins. At that time he had the habit of taking opium. He told Maulana Gangohi (RA), "But you did not make me make taubah from taking opium." Maulana asked him, "Do you take opium?" He replied, "Yes, I do." Maulana asked him, "Very well. How much do you take daily?" He mentioned the amount. Maulana then told him to take a little bit less every day. The peasant left.

After a few days he was back and presented Maulana with a gift. Maulana Gangohi (RA) was blind at that stage of his life. He accepted the gift. The peasant then said, "Molviji, you have taken the gift, but you did not ask me where I got it from." Maulana Gangohi (RA) said, "Very well. Tell me." The peasant said, "I used to take opium and you advised me to decrease the amounts daily. I thought to myself: My pir's purpose in doing this is to make me give it up. So, Molviji, I understood that my pir wanted me to give it up. What did I become bay'at for? I realised that my pirji was being considerate to me by getting me to decrease the amounts gradually. So, I went home and destroyed all the opium I had. I stopped taking opium. My nafs then told me, 'You have done an excellent thing by curing this illness! You can now save a lot of money.' I thought about it and I concluded that the illness of taking opium had gone, but the illness of miserliness has replaced it, that I will save some money now! So, I collected the money I would have spent daily on opium. This is the money that I have collected over these few days and brought as a gift for you." Maulana Gangohi (RA) congratulated him, "Ma-sha-Allah! You have shown great courage. You have worked with sagacity." Where will a person habituated to such a drug leave it?

Do you see the quality of the peasant? In contrast, over here, those of you who are learning 'ilm, who should have full yaqin, and have entered the silsilah

on top of it, and you have even made a firm promise at the time of becoming bay'at, but you are where you were. This is the result of being unrestricted. Allah Ta'ala is stating that He is showing consideration towards you. The purpose is that major sins should be discarded completely and that the process of stopping minor sins should commence. You have made taubah on major sins. So, do not commit major sins. What is the meaning of going near them?

If you have stopped doing what is mustahab, then today you will stop doing what is sunnat, tomorrow you will stop doing what is wajib and the following day you will stop doing what is fardh. This is the sequence of events.

So, manhi-anha and ma'mur-biha are two categories of the Din. When a person is performing both with perfection, then it will be said that he is involved in the work of Din. However, if a person takes on ma'mur-biha but pays no attention to what is manhi-anha, then how can a person become dindar by him just taking up one portion?

Nafi-ithbat - Negation & Affirmation - explained further

Right at the beginning I had said that taqwa comes first and ibadat comes afterwards, just like parhez comes first and medication comes afterwards. Both manhi-anha and ma'mur-biha are present in detail in the comprehensive and detailed Shari'at. I had also said that both these categories are to be found in the Kalimah Sharif. Both manhi-anha and ma'mur-biha are to be found in the Kalimah Sharif. In what way? In the following manner: La-ilaha is nafi (negation) and illallah is ithbat (affirmation). In the nafi that is in La-ilaha all items that are forbidden, have been included. In illallah is ithbat and includes all those items that we are ordered to do. So, La-ilaha has in it manhi-anha, and illallah has in it ma'mur-biha. Do you understand the points made?

However, these are in concise forms, without details. Then come the detailed explanations, and these are contained in Muhammadur Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has given the details of La-ilaha and also of illallah - he has narrated in detail what is manhi-

anha and ma'mur-biha.

Now, all of you do me the favour, as far as manhi-anha is concerned, do not go into the details of whether it is makruh-tanzihi or makruh-tahrimi, or whether it is mushtabah or haram. Do not go into these details. Know that it is in the category of manhi-anha. Why do you want to go into the question of whether it is haram or whether it is makruh-tahrimi or whether it is makruh-tanzihi or whether it is mushtabah or whether it is khilafe-aula. Why not? The reason is that Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) had also explained what is mushtabah.

Abstain from that which is doubtful

الحلال بين و الحرام بين و بينهما أمور مشتبهات

This is the full Hadith Sharif that is read in Bukhari Sharif and taught from it. It means that what is obviously halal is clear. There is no need to query it.

Similarly, what is obviously haram is also clear. What is the need to ask about it or not to abstain from it? Between the two is what is doubtful - mushtabah.

From certain circumstances and signs it appears that it may be halal yet, from other circumstances and signs it appears to be haram. This is now doubtful - it is in the category of mushtabah.

Abstain from such doubtful items and, having left such doubtful items, cleanse your iman. This is the meaning of "istanzihu". Remove the grime and dirt from your iman. Make your iman pure, so that no dirt and grime remain.

Muhammadur-Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is the clear, full and detailed explanation and commentary of La-ilaha-illallah. Whoever does not comply with this but adopts only La-ilaha-illallah is astray - away from the straight path. Shaitan will be standing with him all the time. The ruses of the nafs will accompany him all the time. This person's iman will be defective and grossly deficient. Further, if he refutes it, then his iman has gone!

So, Kitabullah and the Hadith Sharif of Rasulallah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), taken together, comprise the complete Din. Do you understand?

The full shari'ah is the detailed explanation of La-ilaha-illallah, with manhi-

anha depicting La-ilaha and ma'mur-biha depicting illallah.

So, to take only one aspect, what kind of justice is it? It would be contrary to justice and contrary to taqwa. It would be contrary to parhez. There will be no special benefit derived. It is like taking medication but not abstaining from harmful foods - there will be no special benefit. If a person observes parhez and he does not take any medication, there will be some benefit. But if he makes parhez and takes the medication, then - subhanallah! - the benefit will be great.

Say that he observes ma'mur-biha and also abstains from manhi-anha. As for the ma'mur-biha, he does not leave out even what is mustahab and, as for the manhi-anha, he abstains from what is mushtabah as well. Such a person, observing the ma'mur-biha and abstaining from the manhi-anha as described, will be called a wali. He will be a wali of Allah Ta'ala. He will be a muttaqi.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ

O ye who believe! Observe your duty to Allah

By this Allah Ta'ala is virtually saying, "O ye believers! Having discarded kufir and shirk - these being major acts of parhez - and with the iman and taqwa that you have adopted, you have become mu'min, but see here, I am explaining to you that you have taken on a great burden on your head. After adopting this taqwa, certain laws of Allah Ta'ala are incumbent on you to follow. Now you have to be constantly in fear of contravening these laws. You have now become Mine." What a nice thing Allah Ta'ala is saying: "You have now become Mine. My name is Mu'min and your name is also mu'min. Your responsibility has increased. Therefore, I am telling you that you should honour the name you have - you should take your name into consideration. Therefore, as for the commands that this mu'min has to observe and which come from that Mu'min, take precautions not to contravene them. Be fearful. Be vigilant. Be safeguarded. It should not be that you are neglectful and your iman is snatched away."

This is what Allah Ta'ala is saying concerning taqwa, addressing the believers.

The ayet goes on:

حَقُّ نِقَاتِهِ

with right observance,

Have fear as is the haqq of being fearful - in a full manner. It should not be that some aspect of taqwa is adopted and some aspect is left off. It should not be that some portion of the Qur'an Sharif is taken and some portion is left off. This taqwa is deficient and may even be greatly defective at times.

وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ

and die not save as those who have surrendered (unto Him).

S.3 A.102

Until death. This right of taqwa has to be adopted till the time of death. What is of credence is what happens in the end. It must not be that in the beginning you enthusiastically adopt taqwa and leave it in the end. What is of value is what happens in the end and not what happened in the beginning.

It would have been a better situation where that you may not have had taqwa in the beginning, but ended with taqwa. In this situation the taqwa that developed afterwards would counteract and compensate the lack of taqwa in the beginning. What took place initially will not be taken into account and what happened in the end will be counted by Allah Ta'ala. The ending is taken into account. Therefore, until death.

Allah Ta'ala is saying, "Those anti-taqwa deeds that you had performed before adopting taqwa, do not even think of them, that I did such-and-such. Do not remember them. Have hope. I have already told you that, seeing that you have counter-acted and compensated for the deficiencies, that I will not hold you accountable for them. When there is no accountability by Me, then why is there regret for them? Why do you grieve? Why do you ponder over them? You are now deliberately hitting your foot with an axe. I have taken the axe from your hand, but you have snatched it back from me! Why do that?"

The grace and Muhabbat of Allah Ta'ala - a qissah

Let me relate a qissah concerning the muhabbat of Allah Ta'ala:

The bondsman mu'min of Allah Ta'ala made wudhu and proceeded to the masjid to perform namaz. This is what should be done - make wudhu at home and then proceed to the Court of Allah Ta'ala. Now, before this, the bandah

had committed some sin. Having made wudhu he was now proceeding to the masjid, to the Court of Allah Ta'ala to make salam to Allah Ta'ala.

The method of making salam to Allah Ta'ala is different for the different times - in the morning it is one way, just after noon it is another, later it is different, after sunset it is different, at night it is different and in the last portion of the night it is different. These are all methods for making salam.

So, this bandah was proceeding along and arrived at the door of the Court of Allah Ta'ala - that is, the door of the masjid. Remember that he had committed some sin prior to this and he had not made taubah. He was carrying this impurity of his sin together with some purity of his wudhu. However, at the entrance was standing an angel. This one is a different one from the Kiraman-Katibin - the C.I.D. - who are with us all the time and whom we should be conscious of.

So, this angel wanted to stop the bandah from entering. He said to Allah Ta'ala, "He is coming in with some impurity into Your Royal Court. How can I let him enter in this condition?" (What I am relating is the substance of a Hadith Sharif.) Allah Ta'ala told him, "Well, lift the impurity off him. He will then be pure (pak). Then he will be able to enter." The angel followed the instruction and lifted the impurity of his sin off him.

The bandah entered the masjid and performed namaz, after which he went outside. The angel asked Allah Ta'ala, "Shall I replace the impurity I had lifted off him?" Allah Ta'ala replied, "Seeing that I had instructed you to lift it off, how can the question of replacing it arise? Throw it away!"

What a great thing! How great is the karam (bounty) of Allah Ta'ala on the mu'min! Take this illustration: The child's feet were dirty and grimy. He should have taken some warm water and a brush and scrubbed them himself, but he did not do so. His mother then washed the child's feet with the warm water. Actually, it would have been better if he had washed them himself, but he was unconcerned. Similarly, in the above situation it is Allah Ta'ala Who is washing away the sins of the person going to the masjid to perform his namaz.

Is this not something to ponder over? Is it not being considerate? How much is Allah Ta'ala not desirous of the mu'min bandah! Excuse upon excuse! Excuse

upon excuse! Allah Ta'ala is removing the filth and grime. Allah Ta'ala is virtually saying, "When he comes to Me, he should not even see the face of Jahannam. Never mind going into Jahannam, he should not see even the face of Jahannam."

What is it that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), whom Allah Ta'ala has sent, said? He explained, "You are flying into the fire like flying insects rushing into a fire. In the same manner you are rushing into the fire of Jahannam, and I am trying to save you with both my hands, but you are forcefully overcoming me. What a sad state you are in!" This demonstrates Rasulullah's (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) affection and muhabbat.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is not only the ambassador and not one who merely brought a message, but he is one who sacrificed himself for the welfare of the Ummat. He stood up at night to beg for forgiveness for the Ummat. Yet you are overpowering him. Just look at his muhabbat, that of Rahmatul-alimin; and look also at the muhabbat of Arhamur-rahimin. Measure according to these two, Allah Ta'ala and our Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). As for us? We show no remorse. Never mind making ibadat in abundance, we cannot manage even the five fardh namazes.

A certain poet has put this very well. This poetry should be memorised and remembered all the time. The poetry is in Farsi. The translation of it is:

"Look at the karam (grace) and lutf (favour) of Allah Ta'ala,
That the bandah commits the sin but He feels ashamed!"

What a severe statement! In order to understand it, take the following illustration: When it is the child who commits an unseemly act, it is the father who feels ashamed. Is this not so? The guilty person is the child but it is the father who feels ashamed.

Allah Ta'ala has much greater affection for the mu'min bandah than a father for his son. So, when the bandah commits some unseemly act, Allah Ta'ala feels ashamed. The poet says, in the words of Allah Ta'ala, "Just look at My karam (benevolence). You are the one who has committed a sin, but I am the one who feels ashamed."

It is as if to say, "Having become one of Mine, is this your behaviour? Being

My son, is this what you are up to? You have besmirched the name of your family. Even if you cannot maintain a good reputation for My sake, at least do not create a slur on your name. How could you do it?"

Allah Ta'ala has explained it in our terminology that we would understand, "Just look at My karam, at My benevolence. You are the one who has committed a sin, but I am the one who feels ashamed. You should ponder over this yourselves, that if your child were to behave in an unseemly manner, what emotions would pass through you at that moment. So, you, being a mu'min - that is, metaphorically a son of Mine - were you to do something unseemly will I not be affected? Ponder."

"You are not my Lord..." - a qissah

On this, Hadhratwala placed in our ears the story of one person. This is also worthy of memorising. Just as I had said that the poetry mentioned earlier is worthy of being remembered, this is also worthy of being memorised and kept in mind all the time. Its awareness should be there all the time and brought forth immediately. What is the incident? It is the following:

There was a buzurg sitting on the steps of the Jami'ah Masjid in Delhi. He was saying loudly, "You are not my Lord and I am not your bondsman, so, why should I obey your commands?"

The people walking past him heard him and condemned him for his statement. "He has gone mad, completely mad," said some. Others said, "He has become a kafir - he has turned away from Islam." Others said, "This is shirk. He has become a mushrik." "He is a munafiq." Those passing by kept on making similar comments.

One person came and stood by him and listened attentively to him. After a while he addressed the buzurg and asked, "Mian, what are you saying and to whom are you speaking?" The buzurg laughed and said, "All of the people of Delhi who passed by here are idiots. As they passed by, some said one thing and others another. Mad, insane, kafir, munafiq, mushrik - each one had a comment to make. You have turned out to be intelligent. You decided to enquire before passing judgement. Listen! I am addressing my nafs. My nafs

has been vexing me for some time now. My nafs is telling me, 'Feed me some halva.' How shall I feed it halva, seeing I have no money? Shall I steal some? Shall I get some by defrauding the shopkeeper? Shall I go out and beg just to feed it halva? So, I am telling my nafs, 'You are not my Lord and I am not your bondsman, so, why should I obey your commands?'"

The real culprit is Nafs and not Shaitan

This qissah was related to us by Hadhratwala. What an amazing incident. Is that not so? Remember that the original culprit is not Shaitan. Shaitan only lends support. The original wrongdoer is nafs. The proof is there. Before Shaitan became Shaitan, was there a Shaitan to mislead him? Can you show me? So, how did Shaitan become corrupt? What was there? It was nafs!

فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا

And inspired it (with conscience of) what is wrong for it and (what is) right for it. S.91 A.8

Fujur (transgression) became dominant. It was lying hidden in the nafs. Shaitan had the fujur of kibr (arrogance), which is the root of kufr. Kibr is the root of kufr. Why did he not bring iman? It was because of kibr. Did he not know? Was he ignorant? Not at all. He was well aware. But Shaitan had developed kibr. He became proud of his 'ilm. He was boastful of his ibadat. He forgot who was giving the command to prostrate. He justified his action by saying, "Have I not seen that Adam was created from sand, whereas I was created from fire? How can I bow down to him?" Kibr manifested in his nafs. So, it is apparent the primary culprit is nafs and not Shaitan, who merely lends support. That is why the buzurg said that it was his nafs that demanded to eat halva. Is eating halva haram? Is it na-pak (impure)? Of course not. What sin would he have been committed by eating halva? None, whatsoever. On the other hand, is eating halva wajib? It is neither compulsory, nor sunnat, nor mustahab. It is eaten merely to fill one's stomach. So, seeing that the eating of halva has no status in the Shari'ah, where is it permissible to beg to obtain halva? Not at all. Do you understand the point made?

To beg is disgraceful

السؤال ذل

This is a Hadith Sharif: To ask (beg) is disgraceful.

The hearts of the Sahabah (RA), were extremely strong. They abstained from such actions that were completely permissible, but refrained from them based on their external meanings. Take the following incident:

One Sahabi (RA) was riding on his horse. He had a small whip in his hand. The whip fell out of his hand to the ground. He climbed off his horse to pick up the whip. There was another Sahabi (RA) who was walking nearby, who saw his action and came up to him and said, "Hadhrat, why did you go to all the trouble of climbing off to pick up the whip? I was nearby. You should have asked me. It would not have been much of an effort on my part to walk over and pick up the whip and hand it to you." The first Sahabi (RA) replied, "Our Habib had forbidden us to ask. So, if I were to request you, then it would be asking, and asking is disgraceful. If I can do my own work myself, why should I ask others?"

This was their temperament.

The Hadith Sharif says that to ask is disgraceful. Therefore, just as it is haram to steal or defraud for the sake of eating halva, it is also haram to beg. There are special and dire circumstances, when three days have passed without having anything to eat and one's life is at stake, then Allah Ta'ala Himself has given permission. In this situation it would be permissible even to eat carrion. So, eating by begging in this situation would be permissible even more so. However, until this dire situation has not arisen, how can one ask? How can one beg? The Sahabi (RA) provided the example.

The buzurg explained, "Eating halva is not forbidden, but the manner of obtaining it is forbidden. So, should I listen to my nafs and go out to beg from others just to feed it halva? What a disgraceful thing to do! The mouth will have tasted something sweet, but I would have been humiliated by begging." The lesson to be remembered from this is that the enjoyment that leads to disgrace, that enjoyment should be refrained from, even though that

enjoyment is in the category of being mubah. Tasting bitterness after having tasted something sweet is to be avoided. Yes, to have something sweet after having eaten something bitter, is fine.

Physical illnesses and illnesses of the Nafs

Take an illustration: medicines, mostly, are traditionally bitter. They also emit an unpleasant odour. However, in order to cure an illness and attain good health, it is necessary to take that bitter medicine. In a similar manner, if something is prescribed, something that is burdensome and heavy, in order to cure the illnesses of the nafs, why should this remedy not be taken, as one would take bitter medicine to cure a physical illness?

There is an important difference between the two illnesses. If a person dies with a physical illness, there will be no consequences for him after death. However, the illnesses of the nafs are such that, if a person were to die while still afflicted with these illnesses, it is not the end of the problem, but he will experience the consequences after death. A person may suffer from a physical illness while in this world, but this physical suffering will come to an end at the time of death. On the other hand, a person may not feel the effects of illnesses of the nafs in this world - he may suffer no pains from them - but he will experience the effects after death if he were to die with them. So, which illnesses are more serious and more to be concerned about? Definitely, the illnesses of the nafs are more serious and not physical illnesses.

Yet, we see how much thought and effort is put into curing physical illnesses, but there is no concern about the illnesses of the nafs. A person will take bitter medicines, tolerating their malodour, to cure his physical illness, but he is unconcerned about curing the illnesses of his nafs, even though the medication here is not as bitter. The reason is that the person's temperament is one of freedom, and that is why he considers this medication to be bitter. As I was saying, the primary culprit is the nafs and not Shaitan. People blame Shaitan for nothing. That is why that buzurg, who was sitting on the steps of the Jamiah Masjid in Delhi, was saying, "You are not my Lord and I am not your bondsman, so why should I obey your command?" People who heard

him were shocked and made various comments. "What kind of a buzurg is he? Just listen to what he is saying!" However, when his statement was queried and the explanation was given and the situation explained, the people came to realise that there was no doubt about his being a buzurg. In fact, he was a great buzurg, opposing his nafs in its desire to eat halva.

Is this qissah not worth remembering? Our Sheikh, Hadhrat Thanwi (RA), related it to us.

So, memorise the poetry quoted above and keep it in mind, and keep the statement of this buzurg in front of you and, insha-Allah Ta'ala, if not all at once, but slowly and steadily, with the tawfiq of Allah Ta'ala, a time will come when you will be able to save yourselves from contravening the commands of Allah Ta'ala.

There are some with courage who, while sitting here and before getting up, will have resolved to act accordingly and will be saved. For such, one majlis is sufficient, with the tawfiq of Allah Ta'ala. The reason is that, while sitting here, they make an intention with sincerity. Assistance will come from there. How will this assistance come? In the following manner:

Reaching Allah Ta'ala - a qissah

We heard this from Hadhratwala. After all, we are from there! We had handed ourselves into his hand, the hand of the Sheikh, and sold ourselves into the hand of Allah Ta'ala. But the world is a place where means have to be adopted.

So, what did Hadhratwala relate to us? He used to explain by means of stories, incidents and examples and illustrations so that very complex and heavy material used to just flow into our hearts.

He said, "Salikin are involved in attaining wasil-bil-Haqq - a special bond with Allah Ta'ala. There is nothing special or difficult about this process. Carry on with the effort, carry on. You will reach there. How will you reach there? In the following manner." Hadhratwala (RA) then related the following qissah:

One buzurg was travelling somewhere. While travelling along he happened to pass by the bottom of the palace of the king. The king was sitting on top of the

parapet in his palace. His eyes fell on the buzurg. The king called down to the buzurg, "Miansahib! Come here!"

The buzurg said, "You are high up there and I am right down here at the bottom - how can I come up?" The king ordered a kamand to be lowered to him for him to be pulled up. A kamand was like a modern-day lift - a sort of rope with a harness or small platform that was used to lift people on to the parapet from below the wall of the palace or castle. The buzurg sat on it and was pulled up to where the king was. After salams and shaking of hands, the king had him seated. The king then started conversing with him. During the conversation, the king asked, "Mian, how did you reach Allah Ta'ala?" The buzurg replied, "In the same manner that I reached you!"

This is how Hadhratwala explained to us. What an amazing and deep concept was explained to us using a simple illustration.

The buzurg explained further, "In the same manner that I have reached you. I was just travelling along in the direction of Allah Ta'ala and, just as your gaze fell on me, Allah Ta'ala's gaze fell on me. Now, I was unable to reach Him even though I wanted to reach Him. So, how to reach him? His bounteous gaze fell on me and He said, 'Come to Me.' How could I reach Him? He then pulled me up to Him, just like you had me pulled up to you. My task was to make an effort, to walk along. This I did, making the effort to walk along. This was my duty. To reach the destination was not my duty. When He saw that this individual was walking towards Him and making an effort, and that, without support from Him and taking his hand, he will not manage, He took my hand and pulled me towards Him, just as you pulled me up to be with you."

Hadhratwala said, "O bondsmen of Allah, just see: it is a very easy matter. All you have to do is walk along. Leave aside the thought of whether you have reached or not reached your destination. But do as follows. Do what?

"To find or not to find, You are the Mukhtar;

You should keep on running."

That is, it is in His ikhtiyar (power and choice) for you to find or not to find. It is not your duty. Your task is to keep on going, keep on running. Keep yourself occupied with this concern, with taqwa. That is all. That is your task. As for

finding, this will happen, as is His promise. But you remove this from your gaze. Stop being in anticipation of it. Divert your gaze from this and do not be in anticipation of it. Rather, busy yourself in the zikr of Allah Ta'ala, with taqwa. The fruits you will attain. Why? Because it is His promise.

وَمَنْ أَرَادَ الْآخِرَةَ وَسَعَىٰ لَهَا سَعْيَهَا وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ سَعْيُهُمْ مَشْكُورًا

And whoso desireth the hereafter and striveth for it with the effort necessary, being a believer; for such, their effort findeth favour (with their Lord). 17. A.19
The mu'min has been pulled up. So, leave aside the issue of how or when. You carry on. You have muhabbat, so you should carry on. The fruits you will receive.

Allah Ta'ala Himself is saying, "Walk towards Me. I will seat you on My lap. This may be beyond your imagination, but you walk towards Me, with taqwa and zikr, then you will see that I will seat you in My lap." In the terminology of the Sufiyah: "Stumbling and falling, in joy and sadness, keep on coming, and just like your mother does not allow you to fall and she takes you into her lap, I will also seat you in My lap." This is what Allah Ta'ala has stated through the lips of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), "That bondsman who walks with sincerity of intention, one hand's breadth in My direction, observing the full Shari'at and following My orders, I will approach him two hands' breadth. That bondsman that comes towards Me one cubit's length, I will approach him in leaps and bounds. And that bondsman that comes towards Me in leaps and bounds, I will also run towards him. And that bondsman that runs towards Me, I will take him into My lap."

You will have seen how a mother will try to encourage her toddler to try and walk. By getting the child to walk on his own, the child will develop strength in his legs and develop the ability to stand on his own. She realises that if she were to carry him in her lap all the time, he will become handicapped and will not be able to walk at all. Similarly, Allah Ta'ala also wants one to walk on one's own and not always take support from others. When the child walks the mother will watch him closely and the moment she sees his legs starting to buckle, she will quickly rush to take the child into her lap so that the child does not fall.

Similarly with Allah Ta'ala, that He watches closely as the bondsman walks towards Him. The moment He sees him faltering He will lift him up so that he does not fall. Your duty is to keep on walking, with sincerity of intention, with taqwa and zikr. Wusul - wasil-bil-Haqq - to be connected to Allah Ta'ala - is His duty.

This is the reason the lesson of La-ilaha-illallah Muhammadur-Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is given. This is the summary of the whole Din. The whole of the Din is the commentary of this Kalimah. Both categories, manhi-anha and ma'mur-biha, should be acted on in such a manner that manhi-anha is attained first because it contains in it taqwa, and act on ma'mur-biha together with it. Even if what is mustahab is left out, there is no real harm done but, if taqwa is left out, there is grave damage. If medication is not taken, there is no great harm, but if there is bid-parhezi, then - may Allah save us - it should not be that it leads to demise of the patient.

Yet, what is our condition? We - those who do have some concern - take great care of performing what is mustahab, and we are punctual with our zikr of La-ilaha-illallah, but we have no concern for taqwa.

Hurting others and zikr are contradictory

For example: "Have my words not harmed anybody? Why did I speak in such a manner? Oho! I have hurt his feelings, and he has said so to me as well that his feelings are hurt. So, what type of zikr did my tongue make that it is now causing difficulty to the children of Allah Ta'ala. So, what result has been attained by this zikr that I am making? What result has been attained by this tasbih that I am reciting? What result has been attained by this Durud Sharif that I am reciting? I am causing taklif to the ummah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and I am causing harm to the bondsmen of Allah Ta'ala, and, with the same tongue, reciting Durud of Muhammadur-Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and I am making the zikr of La-ilaha-illallah. So, what type of tasbih am I reciting?"

Recite tasbih with the intention and the awareness of what you are reciting. Then you will see the effect of it.

If one ponders one will realise, as Allah Ta'ala himself states in the Qur'an Sharif, with great emphasis, that from the whole of creation, there is not a single creation that is not making the tasbih of Allah Ta'ala - the earth, the trees and every created thing is making the tasbih of Allah Ta'ala. If you are also making His tasbih, what great achievement is it when the effect of the tasbih that should come into you, has not manifested itself? The negation - nafi - of everything that was supposed to come with La-ilaha has not come. The effects of affirmation - ithbat - that was supposed to have been established within you by illallah, has not been established. But, never mind, carry on, carry on. It is better that you carry on than not make zikr at all. However, keep the objective in mind.

Why have you become complacent? Why do you sit back contented? What you should be doing is make progress, move ahead with this tasbih, with the above intention in mind. Allah Ta'ala Himself wants you to progress. But you are sitting back complacent, contented with the zikr you are making, satisfied with the Tahajjud you are performing, with the thought that there are no further lessons beyond these. However, you have left off still many lessons.

In quest of dunya and earning a living

I had digressed onto this topic when I was discussing talab (quest). Talab is of two types, one is of Din and one is of dunya. These are two spheres to bear in mind, dunya and akhirat. The one in quest of dunya has been called a dog by Allah Ta'ala. Dunya has been called carrion. The Hadith Sharif states:

ألدنيا جيفة و طالبوها كلاب

The dunya is caarion and the ones in quest of it are dogs.

The ones in quest of dunya are called dogs. In this statement it is apparent that it is not befitting the noble status of a mu'min to be in quest of dunya. Yes, we have to earn a living. Earning is necessary. But to be in quest in such a manner that there is no thought of halal and no thought of haram, no thought of purity and no thought of avoiding doubtful items? Why this unconcern? The answer is: it is because these are the demands of being in quest. This is the effect of pursuit that no thought is given as to how the objective is achieved.

People say, "Brother, as long as the objective is attained, it does not matter whether it is ja'iz or na-ja'iz, whether it is halal or haram." This is what being in quest demands.

So, Allah Ta'ala has, through the words of His Rasul (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) called dunya carrion and the one in quest of dunya a dog. The one involved in earning is not referred to as kasib but the act of earning has been referred to as fardh:

كسب الحلال فريضة بعد الفريضة

It is fardh, but after the other fara'idh. It has been made subservient to the Din. However, we have reversed the order. The subservient has been made the objective and the objective has been made subservient.

So, a mu'min should never bring it to his lips that he is a dunyadar. Just see what Allah Ta'ala has called a dunyadar. How can such words issue from your lips? Being a mu'min and dunyadar? This can never be!

I was speaking about the buzurg who had a female dog which gave birth to puppies. Do you remember? Many topics have been discussed in-between, but let me get back to the qissah. When the dog gave birth to the puppies the buzurg invited all the well-to-do, rich people to a meal to mark the occasion. Seeing that the buzurg had invited them they all accepted and came. Now, this buzurg had a friend who was also a buzurg. As I had previously mentioned, where there is congeniality of temperaments, there one will develop friendship and not at other places. Where the temperaments are similar, there you find people bonding with one another.

It was on the topic of bonding that I spoke about our Tablighi brothers. Their bonding is there all the time. Whenever they speak on a topic, the tabligh bonding will take place. Whenever there is a lecture, the bonding of tabligh will take place. Whenever they speak, they will be speaking in connection with tabligh. They will not speak on any other topic. Neither in their conversations nor in their lectures will they speak on other topics. Why? The reason is that their temperaments have become fully immersed, in depth, and fully grounded in tabligh. They will also not tolerate any other type of lecture. They will also not tolerate reading any other types of kitabs. This is how much they have

attached themselves to tabligh. If they read out a kitab, it will be the same one, concerning faza'il and not one of masa'il.

Faza'il and masa'il

Let me tell you what I heard in England. This I heard with my own ears while I was in England. There was an ijtima' in a town called Batley, near Dewsbury. There were huge tents erected there for the ijtima'. I also went to attend. It was on the third day that the jama'ats that had been tashkiled, were about to depart.

Towards the end Maulana Inamul Hassan Sahib gave a talk. Thereafter, the Maulana from Gujerat, Maulana Palunpuri Sahib, gave some advice as the jama'ats were about to make musafahah. "Read out faza'il and not masa'il." This I heard with my own ears. There were tablighi friends sitting near me. I turned to them and asked, "What is this that they should read out faza'il and not masa'il?" They explained, "The Tablighi jama'at is composed of people of various schools of thought. By reading out masa'il, there will be dissension. Masa'il differ, so there will be discordance." Agreed, there will be those belonging to the Hanafi Mazhab, the Shafi'i Mazhab, the Maududi group, and so forth. Each will have its own school of thinking. But how can there be differences in discussing masa'il, like the masa'il concerning namaz? Each group will follow its own masa'il. What controversy can there be in this? Yes, there can be problems when discussing masa'il relating to the ahle-bidat and other groups. However, what can be the problem with discussing the masa'il of wudhu, namaz, rozah, and hajj? Yes, there are differences in some masa'il - these do not discuss. There should be no problem in discussing the straightforward masa'il. Nobody will feel offended. What would be the problem in relating three or four mas'alas from the Behisti Zewar or Ta'limul-Islam or Rah-e-Najat?

What I am relating to you is what I heard with my own ears, that the fazai'il from the compilation of the fazai'il kitab should be read out and not masa'il. It was on this that I said that they have talab, inclination and engrossment to such a degree that they do not tolerate any lecture of any other type. They do

not tolerate the reading out of any other kitab as well. They have developed such an attachment to it in their temperaments that there is no room for anything else.

Let me carry on with our qissah: The one buzurg felt attached to the other buzurg. However, this other buzurg was not invited by the buzurg who had invited all the rich people to a meal. When the second buzurg realised that he had been left out, he complained to the first buzurg, "What is this? You invited all the others to a meal and you did not invite me? Did you forget me?" The first buzurg replied, "My dog had given birth to some puppies. To mark the occasion I invited the worldly dogs for the occasion. Whenever my wife gives birth, then I will invite you."

This qissah was related to us by Hadhratwala. He also added, "The buzurg did not look down on them." That is no sheikh who will even contemplate looking down on anybody, leave alone being actually contemptuous of anyone. That is extremely remote. If he should consider himself to be better than others or be contemptuous of others, such a person is not a wali of Allah Ta'ala. A wali is pure of such attitudes. In fact, he considers himself to be worse than everybody else. On occasions, he also confesses, "I take oath on Allah Ta'ala that I consider myself to be worse than a dog and a pig even." This humility is not just lip service, but is a true reflection of his inner self. It is not merely "qal" (verbal statement) but it is a "hal" (inner state). So, why should he call others dogs or cats? The reason is that the worldly people themselves, being Muslim, refer to themselves as such and say, "Aré-bhai, we are the dogs of the world." Because this statement came from their lips, the buzurg drove the point home to them in their terminology. He did not make the accusation from his side but he merely illustrated what they themselves had said that they are the dogs of the world.

No Muslim who is referred to as a worldly person is not, in actual fact, a worldly person. If he is not a worldly person, then how can he be called a dog? Thus, to call oneself a dog of the world, is strictly forbidden.

It is not permissible to belittle one's ibadat

As is the case with namaz: If anyone performing namaz says, "What is the worth of my namaz? It is merely a 'namaziah'," then he becomes a sinner. He has belittled namaz. It is lowering the status of namaz. He should rather say, "Alhamdulillah, with the tawfiq of Allah Ta'ala I have performed namaz. I have hope that Allah Ta'ala will accept my namaz."

A qissah

Hadhratwala mentioned a qissah: There was a person who used to go and meet an Afghani Pathan buzurg on occasions. Once, when he went to visit him there was another person accompanying him. At the time of making salam and introducing the newcomer, the first person mentioned, "Hadhrat, he is a hafiz as well." The buzurg said, "O, you are a hafiz?" The hafiji replied, "That is what people say." The buzurg said, "What? That is what people say? Are you not a hafiz? Ingratitude! Ingratitude! Why do you not say, 'Alhamdulillah, with the tawfiq of Allah Ta'ala, I am a hafiz'? Why do you not make shukr? Why say, 'This is what people say'? If somebody were to ask you, 'Can you see with your two eyes?' will you say, 'That is what people say'? Do you not know that you have two eyes?" This is how the buzurg tried to explain to him, that one should live by being a grateful bondsman of Allah Ta'ala.

Whatever "small" blessing one has, even though it may appear small in your eyes, is a greatest of great ne'mat from Allah Ta'ala. How can it be considered to be small? And when one is blessed with the great ne'mat of being a hafiz? Afterwards, whenever that particular hafiz visited the buzurg, he was greeted with the nickname of "Na-shukra" - one showing ingratitude.

One should live as a grateful bondsman of Allah Ta'ala. The namaz that has been performed, irrespective of how it is performed, yet it has been performed. Compare this with so many who have not performed namaz. So, in comparison with them?

Takabbur - and a warning

But for takabbur to develop, and to look at contempt at those not performing namaz? This is a most evil sin. He has developed humility and I have developed takabbur!

It is through the tawfiq of Allah Ta'ala, shukr-lillah - this should be one's attitude. One should not cast an eye of contempt on anybody. No matter how much a person has become debased - he is not performing namaz as far as ibadat is concerned, and his activities are licentious and you have seen him with your own eyes involved openly in haram and shameless activities - to think yourself better than him and to look down on him is a sin of the highest magnitude.

And one should be fearful. Why? The Hadith Sharif states that if you have looked with contempt at somebody and you have not quickly made taubah, your death will not come to you until you do not also land up the same as him. What right have you to look with contempt at anybody? Ponder.

Some ibadat is such that it is contaminated with a very subtle type of impurity that the ibadat is not qabul. It is so subtle that the person performing that ibadat is unable to detect it. And if he is unaware of it and it is present, then how can that ibadat be qabul? We are discussing islah - self-rectification - and the therapy for this illness. Is there any certainty of the ibadat being accepted? If not, then how can one look with contempt at others? How can one consider oneself to be better?

There is a treatment for this illness. It is sufficient to bear in mind the following possibility: "This mu'min may have some such quality in him that Allah Ta'ala loves; and that I may have some such quality in me that Allah Ta'ala is displeased with. Then, how can I look with contempt at him? What if he is qabul and I am not?" This is the remedy to prevent takabbur from developing and looking with contempt at others.

The difference between a lecture and a majlis

The masha'ikh are there to provide treatment. They are the ruhani physicians. In their lectures, where they relate various illnesses, quoting Qur'anic ayat and

Hadith Sharif, different qissas and so forth, they also relate the remedies to the various illnesses. The individual will see if he is affected by one or several of these illnesses. The majlis that is conducted is similar to a consultation in a physician's consulting room. Therefore, mention is made of various illnesses, which does not happen in formal lectures. A lecture is normally delivered on one subject. The lecture will be limited to one theme only. So, the benefit that is attained by attending a majlis is not attained by listening to a lecture.

That is why Hadhratwala advised towards the end, "Do not deliver lectures. No benefit will be attained from lectures now. When it is announced that a lecture will take place in the masjid, some people will sit down to listen. Some will sit out of politeness, in consideration of the one making the announcement or out of consideration for being a relative. Those who wish to walk away, do so also. Yes, those who come to sit in your majlis, they are fine. They have come with talab. Various topics are discussed in the majlis. Those attending suffer from varying types of illnesses. They have a variety of states afflicting them. So, the varying topics that are discussed will assist these people. A lecture will not bring about this benefit." That is why, in his wasiyat, Hadhratwala said, "Compared to my lectures, my malfuzat should be studied to a greater extent. There will be greater benefit in these." This was Hadhratwala's wasiyat.

Those coming to the majlis should be talibul-'ilm - seekers of knowledge. They should have an open mind, even though they may not have i'tiqad (confidence) in the sheikh. They should not have a rebellious attitude or have antagonism. The latter group will leave more corrupted. Allah Ta'ala knows everything. Allah Ta'ala will cause them to be corrupted even further. So, those coming with faith and confidence, or coming with an open mind even though they may not have i'tiqad, both will benefit on leaving here, each according to his potential. Some will benefit quickly and some after some delay.

For the talib, the words spoken here and falling into the right ears, even one majlis is sufficient. There is something that I had mentioned just now. The first is the bit of poetry I had recited, keep it in mind. Allah Ta'ala says, "Just see

My karam on you. You are contravening My orders and I am feeling ashamed."

Secondly, also keep in mind the statement of the buzurg as related by Hadhratwala: "Why should I obey your orders? You are not my Lord and I am not your bondsman."

For that person who has talab in him and has a temperament which has the capacity to understand, for such a fortunate person just one majlis is sufficient. While sitting here in the majlis, he makes taubah, and he leaves here with a firm resolution, it is apparent that he will traverse three days' manzils in one day. He has developed the enthusiasm - it is as if he is flying in a plane. May Allah Ta'ala grant us the tawfiq. Khuda hafiz.

A BRIEF NOTE ON BROTHER HASSIM BULBULIA (RA)

Brother Hassim was born on the 21st of August in the year 1946 in Fordsburg, Johannesburg, South Africa. He was the 6th child out of 8 children His early school education commenced in Vrededorp and continued at the Bree Street Primary School in Newtown and the Johannesburg Indian High School in Fordsburg.

His madrasah education, like that of his brothers and many others in those days, was very erratic. There was no punctuality in attendance and no great importance was attached to Dini education. Imam Gasant (RA) in Vrededorp was one of his ustadhs.

His father took him out of school when he completed Standard Six and he worked as a storeman for a firm in the centre of Johannesburg.

He lived a carefree life in his youth, making a name for himself as a bass guitarist in a music band, "The Hoochee Koochees," that became famous in the whole of South Africa,

It was brother Ebrahim Desai, who was active in the Tabligh Jama'at, who caused a turn-about in his life in the year 1968/1969. He and brother Hassim were friends from a young age Brother Ebrahim recalls how he was "a pain in

the neck" for brother Hassim with his persistence in giving him dawah. As a result of his coaxing, brother Hassim left the band and got involved in the effort of tabligh. His Dini knowledge, whatever little he had learnt, was very scanty, so he started studying Din again from the very basics. This he did under Qari Abdul Hamid Panoli Sahib in Kerk Street, where Qari Sahib stayed behind the masjid.

The next phase in his life started when Hafiz Salloo Sahib (RA) encouraged him to go to India to further his Islamic studies. In 1971 brother Hassim thus arrived in Jalalabad, India, where he started doing hifz. He decided to come back to South Africa in 1972 just before completing his hifz, in order to get married (1973), and settled in Cape Town, joining the family business, "Knobbs", in Cape Town. He completed his hifz in Cape Town.

In 1975 brother Hassim himself started teaching Din to the neighbours' children at his home, assisted by his father-in-law, Moosa Docrat. The number of children increased rapidly and the house became too small to accommodate them. Bigger premises were needed. A new school had just been built in Rylands in 1976, and the principal, Ismail Waja, was approached for use of the classes. He agreed on condition that permission be obtained from another Muslim group which had approached him first. Alhamdulillah, this permission was forthcoming. This was in 1976. The maktab then grew from strength to strength and other maktab were opened as well. At the moment of writing, there are now nine such maktab running with a total of approximately one thousand pupils.

At the same time, brother Hassim kept up with his tabligh activities, going to the old Rhodesia two or three times and going out locally. With the du'as of Hadhratji (RA), brother Hassim also started taping his majalis and the lectures of visiting 'ulama. He also taped the lectures delivered at ijtimas. As a side-line, he also sold topis and kurtas. His stall was noticeable at all ijtimas and jalsas. He left the family business to do business on his own as he felt that this would give him more time to do Dini work.

He influenced many people, his brother Yusuf in particular. He was instrumental in sending Yusuf to Jalalabad in 1974. The following year Yusuf

joined him in the running of the maktabas.

Brother Hassim passed away on the 11th July 2006, after a short illness. He is survived by five children, two sons and three daughters. May Allah Ta'ala fill his qabr with nur.