

Part 6

FOR FRIENDS: PART 6 (DISCOURSES OF HAZRAT MASEEHUL KHAN SAHEB(R.A.))

- 1.Foreword
- 2.Ibadat
- 3.Sleeping
- 4.Eating
- 5.Mixing With Others
- 6.Speaking
- 7.Purpose of Man's Creation
- 8.Three Categories of Insan
- 9.'Ilm, Ibadat and Qabuliyet
- 10.Ibadat and Sleep
- 11.Ibadat and Misconceptions
- 12.Ibadat and Health
- 13.Ibadat and Abdiyet
- 14.Understanding Usuls
- 15.Telling The Truth and Telling Lies
- 16.Effect of Sohbat
- 17.Breaking Promises is Breaking Tenets & Hearts
- 18.Mas'alah of Suluk
- 19.Mas'alah of Hadhir-Nazir
- 20.Corollaries - i. Importance of having a Muslih
- ii. Milan
- 21.The Focus of One's Gaze
- 22.Jihad
- 23.'Ilm and Kitabs
- 24.Imam Ghazali's (R.A.) Experience
- 25.Ta'lim of the Sheikh: From Qal to Hal
- 26.Nazar-e-bid
- 27.Ibadat and Enjoying Life
- 28.In Conclusion
- 29.A lesson in speaking
- 30.Wasiyet

1. FOREWORD

Allhamdu-lillah, Through the fadhl (bounty) of Allah Ta'ala and the barkat (blessings) of our sheikh, Masihul Ummat Hadhrat Maulana Muhammed Masihullah Khan sahib (r.a.), this sixth booklet is now being published.

The sadness of Hadhratji (r.a.) passing away has been felt by all who had come to know him either directly, or indirectly through those who were connected to him and through his illuminating teachings. The loss felt, as has been pointed out by many others, is the loss of separation. This is apart from the inner twinge of regret at not having

taken full advantage of his sohbat (company) while he was still with us.

The following words of Hadhratji (r.a.) take on a very real meaning at this moment in time: "Your sheikh will not always be with you, but his teachings will be with you." May Allah Ta'ala give us all the tawfiq to act according to his precious teachings.

The passing away of the masha'ekh of Tasawwuf does not cause the principles of suluk to alter. Hadhratji (r.a.) took special care to explain these principles in his discourses. These principles still operate. Yes, a sheikh-e- kamil may modify a principle in its expressivity during his life-time, depending on varying circumstances, but the basic principle will still remain operative.

A classic example is the principle of eating less. This is one of the four principles involved in mujahadah jismani. This principle is still applicable. However, we have been advised NOT to follow the extremely strict discipline that Imam Ghazali (r.a.) advocates in his kitab "Tabhli gh-ud-Din". The principle remains, but its application is modified.

We are highly indebted to Hadhratji (r.a.) for setting out not only the principles of Tasawwuf, but also other invaluable principles of practical value in our daily lives. Hadhratji's (r.a.) teachings remain with us as vivid splashes of light in an ever increasingly dark world. May we all continue to benefit consistently and continuously from these teachings.
Dr.I.M.

[This is a translation of a majlis-e-khas held by Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Masihullah Khan Sahib (r.a.), in Jalalabad, India, on the 4th October, 1989, corresponding to the 4th Rabi-al-Awwal, 1410].

2. IBADAT - WORSHIP

Of the 24 hours of our day and night, setting aside 6 to 7 hours for sleep, the rest of the time is solely for ibadat! To repeat: setting aside 6 to 7 hours for sleep from the 24 hours of our day and night, the remainder of the time is solely for ibadat!

Those of you sitting at the back, can you hear? You are not sitting there mindlessly? Of course not.

3. SLEEPING

Do you understand? To set aside 6 to 7 hours for sleep from the 24 hours of one's day and night, is absolutely necessary. Yes, it may occasionally happen that one does not manage to sleep a full 6 to 7 hours, but one should never make a habit of sleeping less than 6 to 7 hours per 24 hours. I repeat: Never but never make it a habit to sleep less than 6 to 7 hours.

It may happen during travels or when one is ill, that one does not sleep well - these unavoidable, excusable situations are a different matter. Occasionally one may sleep less due to special circumstances and this is not contrary to the rule we have set forth: One should not make it a habit to sleep less than 6 to 7 hours per 24 hours, but should try to sleep the full 6 to 7 hours.

4. EATING

When it comes to eating, one's routine should be to eat a stomach-full. Taking into account that each person's level of hunger is different, nevertheless, one should have the habit of eating sufficient to fill one's stomach. Again, it may occasionally happen that one eats less than this, but nevertheless, one should never but never make it a habit to continually eat less than a full stomach. To eat less occasionally due to special circumstances is not contrary to the rule laid down: One should have the habit of eating sufficient to fill one's stomach.

5. MIXING WITH OTHERS

However, when it comes to mixing with others, do not associate with others to one's "stomach-full"! (This is a different mode of putting the concept to you!) Do not mix with others to one's fill. Meet others to the extent of necessity, but not more.

This meeting of others to the extent of necessity is also included in ibadat; just as the habit of eating to one's fill is ibadat; just as the habit of sleeping to one's fill, 6 to 7 hours, is also ibadat.

Have you understood these concepts? If so, let us go further.

6. SPEAKING

When it comes to speaking, do not speak with others to one's "stomach-full". Speak with others only to the extent of necessity. Necessary speech is also included in ibadat.

O little ones, do you understand? On the one hand you are told: Eat to your fill; sleep to your fill (6 - 7 hours). And now, on the other hand, you are told: Do not meet others to your fill; and do not speak to your fill. To the contrary, meet others only to the extent of necessity and speak only to the extent of necessity. All these four activities - to eat to one's fill, to sleep to one's fill (6 - 7 hours), not to meet to one's fill and not to speak to one's fill - if performed within their limits, as explained, all attain the status of ibadat.

7. PURPOSE OF MAN'S CREATION

This is the purpose for which Man was created. This coming into existence of Man (Insan), this "manufacturing" of Insan, is for this purpose only, that he should make the ibadat of Allah Ta'ala.

And I have not created the Jinn and Mankind but that they should worship Me. (S.51; A.56)

This is the object and purpose why Insan has been created. And if Insan deviates from this objective, then he has fallen from his status as Insan - in appearance he is alive, but he is actually dead!

What does this mean? It means that he is now of no use. Having deviated from his objective, instead of being useful and successful, he is now useless and a failure. To put it another way: When an object has been created for a specific purpose and it does not fulfil that purpose, then it is useless and a failure.

For example: Take this pen in my hand. It has been made for the purpose of writing and not for eating. Clear and simple. If it cannot write, then it is not fulfilling the object for which it has been manufactured. It then becomes useless and redundant. It is a failure. Will you take extra care to keep it safely in your pocket or with your other writing materials? Of course not. You will throw it in the rubbish bin.

Do you understand this example?

So, in a similar way, if this human being does not fulfil the object for which he has been created, he is useless and redundant. Throw him also in the rubbish bin! This Insan has deviated from the purpose for which he has been created. So, being useless, having left off his objective, cast him also into the rubbish bin!

Yes, he may still have some little use as yet. So let him be. Let us not be hasty. He may not have the enthusiasm, the vim and vigour he should have, but he may not be completely dead. He may be of some use, so let him be.

Take the example of this pen again: It may not write. However, there may be a remedy available - the fountain pen may be filled with ink again, or the ball- pen may be fitted with a refill. Then it will be of use again, provided that the pen is capable of accepting that ink or refill. So, let us not be hasty in throwing it away. It may still be of some use.

8. THREE CATEGORIES OF INSAN

This Insan, therefore, has three possibilities:

- (a) He is completely useless;
- (b) He is neither completely useless nor is he of full use;
- (c) He is of full use.

Let us take each category in turn.

(a) That Insan who is completely useless, one who has deviated completely from the purpose for which he has been created, who does not have the capacity within him to fulfil the object for which he has been created, is the gair-Mu'min (non-Muslim).

(b) In the second category is that person who is partially fulfilling his objective, but not fully so. Let him be as yet. He has the potential within him to accept Haq. Therefore, he is not without hope. There is a glimmer of hope, because one sees that, at times, he does accept the Haq and he does practice according to the Haq. There is promise in him. He is to be valued - he has the potential for qabىliat (acceptance). Yet, this much is quite obvious that an object is a failure and is useless in proportion to the degree it fails to achieve the basic objective and purpose for

which it has been created.

(c) In this third category is that Insan who steadily, correctly and fully fulfils the purpose for which he has been created. This Insan attains the desired qurb (closeness) and the desired qabuliat, and he has attained firmness and also a great value.

So, Insan has different levels of attainment.

Coming back to Insan's original purpose: We had said that, besides setting aside 6 to 7 hours for sleep regularly, whatever time that Insan has, is solely for ibadat. Whatever he does during the remaining 17 to 18 hours must never be free of ibadat. Whatever work he does, must be done solely with the niyyet (intention) of ibadat.

9. ILM, IBADAT AND QABULIAT

This brings us to the next point: ibadat can never be ibadat until and unless one does not have the 'ilm (Dini knowledge) of performing that ibadat.

It logically follows that the ibadat of gaining 'ilm takes priority over the ibadat of performing deeds and actions. It now becomes incumbent to attain that amount of necessary 'ilm to be able to perform deeds correctly. This acquisition of 'ilm then also becomes ibadat.

How does one acquire this 'ilm? Through study! It is not absolutely necessary to study the prescribed Arabic kitabs. If one does not know Arabic, fair enough. Study authoritative and authentic kitabs in Urdu. This is acceptable. Let us go a step further: If one is unable to acquire 'ilm through the written word (i.e. by studying kitabs), then acquire the necessary 'ilm through the spoken word. Acquire 'ilm through listening, and by asking questions.

The objective is to acquire correct 'ilm, whether it is through the written word or through the spoken word. Whatever the method adopted, it is obvious that acquiring correct 'ilm takes precedence over ibadate-amali - the ibadat of performing deeds. Any ibadat performed without correct 'ilm, will obviously also be incorrect; and incorrect ibadat is not qabul (accepted). The objective is to perform that ibadat that is qabul (accepted). Qabuliat (acceptance) is dependent on performing one's ibadat correctly, which, in turn, is dependent on correct 'ilm. It follows that ibadat based on incorrect 'ilm will not be qabul. Such ibadat will have no credence. And the purpose for which Insan has been created is ibadat - ibadat that is qabul.

So, 17 to 18 hours of our 24 hours is for the purpose of ibadat. Whatever one does during this time, one should do it with the niyyet (intention) of ibadat. This means that whatever work one has to tackle, one should first say to oneself, "This task that I am about to do, has to be done within the confines of the shariah. What are the shari' laws in respect of this task?"

The tasks may vary. Some have to farm. Others are in employment. Others are in trade and commerce. Others are artisans. Others have to teach, others have to study and so forth. So, the farming that the farmer does, also becomes ibadat. But when? When he farms according to the 'ilm that Allah Ta'ala and His Rasul (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) have passed on. The farmer has to adhere to the laws of Allah Ta'ala:- What type of land is it? Whose land is it? His or somebody else's? If somebody else's, does he have the owner's permission or is he farming without his permission? Is the owner happy or displeased? Has the land been grabbed and usurped or has the owner given permission without duress? If everything is according to the shariah thus far, the next phase of farming is planting the seeds. How have the seeds been bought? What are the laws of buying and selling? Etc. If this farming is done according to the shariah from beginning to end, then it is ibadat. The moment the farmer deviates from the shariah, it ceases to be ibadat. The farmer has deviated from the purpose of his creation.

In this way, one should analyse all other tasks which one may be involved in during those 17 to 18 hours. E.g. In trade and commerce: What should one deal in? How should one buy? How should one sell? The necessary 'ilm has to be attained. This business then becomes ibadat if it follows the laws of the shariah. The moment the business deviates from the shariah it ceases to be ibadat. And, seeing that the purpose for which Insan has been created is ibadat, this Insan has deviated from this objective. In outward appearance this person may be said to be an admi (human being) but, in reality, he has ceased to be an admi.

Do you understand the principle?

So, one now knows that all tasks performed in those 17 to 18 hours, if performed according to the laws of Allah

Ta'ala, taking care to act according to His wishes and to gain His pleasure, then all these tasks will be ibadat. And if one deviates from His laws, then one will have shifted away from ibadat and away from the purpose for which one has been created, in proportion to the degree of non-compliance.

Depending on the degree of deviation the individual may then be a complete admi (i.e. a civilised human being) or a deficient one or a very deficient one or not an admi at all (even though he may have the outward appearance of an admi).

10. IBADAT AND SLEEP

What about the 6 to 7 hours set aside for sleep? This period is meant for sleep. Is anybody stopping you from sleeping 6 to 7 hours? On face value the period spent sleeping appears wasted and does not appear to be ibadat. However, this sleep is a means of regaining bodily vigour, of refreshing the body and mind, of bringing cheer and joy into the heart, of attaining tranquillity within oneself, so that the remaining 17 to 18 hours may be utilised for ibadat. This act of sleeping, for the sake of ibadat, is also then ibadat! This sleeping is like gold - very precious and valuable - because it is for the sake of ibadat, which is in itself very precious. In this way, even one's sleep is not free of ibadat. Do you understand?

11. IBADAT AND MISCONCEPTIONS

We have the misconception that ibadat is the name given to the performance of namaz (prayers) or the keeping of rozas (fasts) or the recitation of tasbihs (a set of zikrs) or of tilawat (recitation) of the Quran sharif only. If a person considers only these to be ibadat, to the exclusion of everything else, he has put himself into a tizzy, into confusion. He is like a fool who has hit himself on the head with a sledgehammer, so that he becomes dizzy, falls down and becomes concussed. So, when a person has the above misconception, he concentrates only on these few a'mal (deeds), and puts aside all other ibadat. This neglect is such that, in his immaturity, he eventually also leaves off all that ibadat which he had been thinking as the only ibadat one had to perform.

Do you understand, o ye students? Knocking oneself on the head will cause such dizziness that that ibadat which one considered as the only ibadat, also gets omitted. Why? Because one now feels dizzy all the time! How can one perform namaz, because one is now dizzy! How can one keep rozas, because one is now dizzy! How can one recite one's tasbihs, because one is now dizzy! How can one make one's tilawat, because one is now dizzy! Because of performing all those super-obligatory (nafl) namazes, reciting tasbihats and making tilawat all the time, staying up night after night, one has now stopped everything, including those very practices which one had considered were the only acts of ibadat. It has happened!

When this basic ibadat goes, what chance is there that he will be of use in any other ibadat?

12. IBADAT AND HEALTH

His health suffers like that of someone stung by a wasp. He is burning feverishly inside. His limbs have no strength. His mind is weakened. His digestive system is all upset. Similar problems may arise with advancing age, but this is gair- ikhtiyari - one has no choice over the matter. As a person gets older, weakening of the body and mind are unavoidable processes of ageing. On the other hand, deliberately bringing on these problems on oneself is ikhtiyari. Why have you brought it on yourself? Why have you considered only these practices to be ibadat, so much so that, night after night, you stay awake and continue throughout the day as well? So that, besides nafl namazes, tasbihats, tilawat and fasting, you are doing no other work?

This Insan, this Musalman, has not understood the purpose for which he has been created. He has deviated from the objective for which he has been created. He has considered only these few practices to be ibadat.

Generally speaking, this is the concept of ibadat in everybody's mind. When a person is farming, does anybody refer to him as making ibadat? When a person is in employment does anybody consider him to be making ibadat? Whatever task a person is involved in at any particular time, does anybody consider it to be ibadat? In his mind, only that person involved with namaz, rozas, tasbihats and tilawat is considered to be in ibadat, and anybody doing any other work is not so considered, with the result that those in farming, in employment, etc., will now be looked on with contempt! He will consider himself to be better and superior: "Am I not making so many nafl namazes, staying up night after night? Am I not keeping extra rozas, besides those of Ramadhan?"

13. IBADAT AND ABDIYET

In his own eyes he feels he is good and he looks with contempt at the non- namazi. Not for a moment does he realise that the ibadat that he is performing with this attitude can never be considered to be ibadat.

Why is this so?

The reason is this: ibadat has a shan - a special quality and dignity: Performing continuous ibadat brings within a person the quality of abdiyety - the special quality and effect of abdiyety is that a person develops the quality of ijz (humility and lowliness); and the effect of ijz is this, that one does not look with contempt at others; and if this last point is not present, how can that ibadat be considered to be real ibadat?

Do you understand? Some of you have come from nearby areas, others from far-off places and others still from very far-off places. So, it is important that you understand these concepts.

14.UNDERSTANDING USULS

Try and understand the principles (usىls) underlying one's way of living. The branching categories and ramifications are numerous. To attempt to learn all the details is difficult, so try to catch on to the basic principles. O ye students! Try to comprehend the basic principles and, thereafter, measure all the ramifications of one's entire life against these standards. This task is so much easier.

That is why some Sahaba(R.A.), after coming to Rasulallah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) and spending some time with him, at the time of departing for home, used to request from him , "O Rasulallah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam)! The laws are many. To remember them all fully is going to be very difficult. Can you not show us one or two basics which we may utilise, taking them into consideration and judging ourselves thereby?" Accordingly Rasulallah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) used to advise them. To some he gave one or two rules; to others three or four; and to others even more, depending on the individual making the request. Bear in mind also that the Arabs were such that they kept faithfully to their promises. This was an outstanding quality to be seen in the Arabs, that they did not go back on their promises.

The following incident illustrates what I have just said: One Sahabi (r.a.), who had stayed a few days with Rasulallah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam), was about to depart for home. He came to Rasulallah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) and said: "O Rasulallah(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam), the laws are many, the branches and off-shoots are many, the a'mal to perform are many. Can you not show me one such item which I can remember on all occasions?" Rasulallah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) said: "As you wish. Remember the following: Do not tell lies!"

15.TELLING THE TRUTH AND TELLING LIES

This instruction appears in the Hadith sharif as well:

Truthfulness leads to salvation and lies lead to destruction.

This saying encompasses everything.

For example: A person is in business, but he lies to his customers and cheats them. He justifies himself by saying, "It is impossible to do business without a bit of cheating. If one were to tell the truth, my business would not prosper." On the other hand, you will find somebody else who is firm. His attitude is: "Whether I succeed or fail in business is irrelevant. The basis of my existence is ibadat and this business venture is also an ibadat. It is, therefore, compulsory for me to speak the truth and not tell lies." He, therefore, sticks to the truth. When serving a customer, he explains: "This item is very old. It won't last long, so don't buy it. If you are thinking of using it for a few days only, then, fine. Take it. However, my advice is to buy one of these - this one is faulty, but that one is in perfect order. The faulty one costs so much, the good one costs so much." He speaks the truth, and points out the defects in the items he sells. The customer feels unhappy at such forthrightness and leaves the shop to go buy somewhere else.

This shopkeeper has apparently lost out because of his honesty. At the end of the day he has hardly any sales. The other shopkeepers, on the contrary, are very busy and appear very successful. However, the customers are not fools and are busy assessing their purchases. "What's this! The other shopkeeper told me it would last a lifetime, but here it's broken already. He was obviously lying to me. But, I see my friend has had no problems with his goods. And he buys from that new shop where the owner points out all the faults in his goods. He is not foolish, just truthful. He is not concerned merely with making a sale. He is no cheat, like the others."

The end result is:

Truthfulness leads to success (finally), whereas lies (finally) lead to destruction.

After a while the first shopkeeper's business picks up very well and the other shopkeepers find their businesses slowing down.

Another example: Take the situation where an ustad (teacher) is teaching several students. As the students progress in their studies, their understanding also deepens. When full justice is not done to a topic, they will catch on immediately. "He dealt with the topic very superficially. The ustad has not gone fully in-depth into the subject in the manner he should have. He is pulling the wool over our eyes."

Another example: Take the situation of a person in employment. The worker sees carefully and fully to the work and responsibilities given to him, working with complete honesty and truthfulness. He arrives punctually and leaves only when it is time for him to leave. During his working day, he performs his tasks with full dedication. Such a worker will attract the attention of his superiors and will earn promotion after promotion. This person has worked with honour and dignity and not with deceit:

Do you understand? Many just read the text in the kitabs and do not look at the explanatory footnotes. In this way one will not fully understand the meaning of the text.

16.EFFECT OF SOHBAT

To continue: The Sahabi (r.a.) was told by Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam): "Do not tell lies!" With this parting advice ringing in his ears, the Sahabi (r.a.) left.

Before coming to Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam), this person had a number of bad habits. However, now being in a state of iman, and being in the presence of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam), he has gained the status of a Sahabi, and his internal condition had altered.

This does happen, even nowadays. Just recently I received a letter from a person in Delhi, a V.I.P. over there. He wrote: "Hadhrat, staying with you my condition became so good, so good, that I thought that this state of mine will, insha-Allah Ta'ala, be firmly grounded forever. How to describe it? Every moment I felt a special aura and my namaz was full of khushu' and khudhu'." Concerning gussah (anger/rage), he wrote, "I had already made a vow in my heart - and this I had mentioned to Hadhrat at the time - that I had spat gussah out of my system and, in future, at home and outside I will, insha- Allah Ta'ala , not allow gussah to go beyond bounds."

What he wrote next is also worthy of note:

"However, after only a few days of reaching home I find a decline setting in, a weakness creeping in."

17.BREAKING PROMISES IS BREAKING TENETS AND BREAKING HEARTS.

Coming back to the Sahabi (r.a.): Before spending time with Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) he had three bad habits: he used to steal; he used to drink alcohol; and he used to commit zina (fornicate).

Habits die hard. Back in his home environment, the urge to steal arose in him again. He was now greatly upset and in a quandary. "What's happening? I have just spent some time with Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam), sat with him, listened to him, and now?" He was in deep thought, debating with himself: "This is very bad! If I were to steal, and presented myself again to Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) and he were to ask: 'You did not steal, did you?' What then?"

Of course, Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) used to receive Divine revelation (wahi), either wahi matlu' (Quran sharif) or wahi gair-matlu' (Hadith sharif).

"If I had stolen and I were to say 'No, I did not steal', then it would be an outright lie. And Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) had told me not to lie. And I had promised him I would not. There I promised one thing and here I turn back on my word! This is being unfaithful. This is breaking a promise, and also breaking a tenet of the Din. If, on the other hand, I were to speak the truth and confess, 'Yes, I did steal,' then it would be letting Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) down and hurting him even more!"

Is my voice reaching you? You are not falling asleep by any chance?

Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) heart would definitely break. He would most definitely be grieved. I would imagine the following train of thoughts going through his mind: "He made the request, thereupon I advised him and now look at his condition. And he even stayed here!" So, breaking that promise is not just breaking one's word, but it is also breaking a tenet of Din and breaking the heart of not just anybody but that heart which is more precious than the hearts of all the kings put together! The Sahabi (r.a.) thought, "What type of Insaniet is this? What type of admiyet is this? What type of ibadat is this of mine?"

Just now I had mentioned that the Arab was renowned for keeping to his promise. This was a natural trait of his character. Also, the Sahabi (r.a.) had heard the Qur'anic ayet:
O ye Believers! Fulfil your promises. (S.5 A.1)

Allah Ta'ala is well aware of your doings. So, fulfil your promises.

The nett result of these three - the innate temperament to keep a promise, the order of Allah Ta'ala and the instruction of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) - was that the Sahabi (r.a.) told himself, "How can I steal?" His stealing came to an end!

Again I ask: Is my voice reaching you? You are not going to stay with your sheikh all the time! Did not the Sahabi (r.a.) stay with Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) for a while and then return home? To sit here is to listen attentively and to create a place in your heart for these talks. This is the concept behind coming here. And, having stayed here in this manner, to return home and live accordingly. Otherwise, it is being unfaithful.

To continue: The Sahabi's (r.a.) stealing came to an end. Then came the hour when he used to drink. Just as we have set times for breakfast, lunch, tea and supper, so he had a set time for his drinking. At the approach of meal-times one looks forward to eating. It does not necessarily mean that one is absolutely famished and craving for food. No. It is just that one is conditioned to eat at a certain time and when the time approaches the urge to eat arises, this being an indication that one is hungry.

So, when the hour approached for the Sahabi (r.a.) to drink, according to his old habit the urge to drink welled up strongly in him. This inclination to drink, this strong desire to drink, upset him and threw him into consternation. Still fresh in his mind was the awareness of having been with Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam). The internal conflict, the arguments and counter-arguments again raged through him. "How can I follow this urge? If I were to drink and presented myself before Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam), and Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) were to ask, 'Did you drink alcohol, or did you not?' what will be my answer? If I deny drinking, it will be a blatant lie. If I were to tell the truth and admit to drinking, with what face would I do it?"
Having done what one has been told not to do, any sensible person will definitely feel ashamed to admit to it openly. What rashness would it be! What defiance!

"Break my promise? Break a tenet of Din? Break the heart of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam)? I will not! I will not drink!" In this way he stopped drinking. His age-old habit was broken.

Then came the time for his third bad habit: in the days of Jahiliyah (Ignorance - i.e the pre-Islamic era), he used to commit zina. The urge to commit zina welled up in him with force. Again the shock, the consternation. Still fresh in his mind was the awareness of having been with Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam). Again the internal debating. "This is even more shameless than stealing and drinking," he told himself. "After committing this indecent act, if I were to present myself before Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) and he were to ask...? If I were to say, 'I did not,' it would be a blatant lie. What did I promise? I will not lie. So, besides breaking a promise, I will also be breaking a tenet of Din. If, on the other hand, I do not lie and brazenly say, 'Yes, I did,' with what face will I say it? How will I be able to bring these words to my lips? Where will I hide my face? What of the grief to Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam)? How can I be so callous as to break his heart? A curse be upon me! It is better for me to die!"

This was the inner turmoil in him. Finally, sense prevailed and he left off zina. In this way he cast off all three evil habits. The basis for this achievement was Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) stating to him just one working principle, coupled with an astute appraisal of his temperament.

Yes, the person has to be of that calibre, that when he says, "Very well," he sticks firmly to his promise. The fact that he himself had made the request in the first place and the instruction he had received was from none other than the august personality of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam), grounded the resolve he had made even more firmly. Yes, the calibre of the person should be such that, having stayed with Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) and listened to him, the capacity to accept Haq should blossom within him to such an extent that even being away from Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) the capacity for acceptance should still remain.

Do you understand?

18.MAS'ALAH OF SULUK

What we are saying is that the principle should enter the mind in the form of 'ilm, and then become ensnared in the heart in such a way that being absent from one's sheikh is the same as being present. This being so, then you will understand the mas'alah of suluk that is enunciated. What is that? It is the following:
Have the same consideration for your sheikh, whether present or absent.

This principle has been adequately elucidated above, through the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala and the barkat of my sheikh.

19.MAS'ALAH OF HADHIR-NAZIR

Our aqa'id (beliefs), based on our iman, are that only Allah Ta'ala is Hadhir- Nazir (Omnipresent). As you can see, the sheikh is not considered to be omnipresent. The attitude to the sheikh, as explained in the principle of suluk just outlined, forms the basis for attaining the reality of the concept of Allah Ta'ala being Hadhir-Nazir. At that stage when one has not as yet developed the desired relationship with one's sheikh, the concept of Allah Ta'ala being Hadhir-Nazir is only at the level of academic conviction ('ilme yaqin). After building a relationship with one's sheikh on the principle that one should have the same consideration for him whether present or absent, this relationship becomes a reflection of the relationship one should have with Allah Ta'ala based on the aqidah of Allah Ta'ala being Hadhir-Nazir.

Did not the Sahabi's (r.a.) thoughts run along these lines: "If I presented myself to Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) and he were to ask, then?" Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) was absent at that moment, but the concept is there: Being absent, yet it is as if he were present. On every occasion, being absent it was as if he were present. The effect was that all three evil habits were abandoned.

20.COROLLARIES

What has been enunciated is the principle of suluk. From it, a number of points become apparent.

FIRSTLY: Importance Of Having A Muslih

A Musalman Mu'min should, as far as possible, not be without a sheikh. It is not necessary to become bay't. However, one should sift out and carefully select one such person for one's islah. One should relate to him all one's activities and whatever he advises, one should follow diligently. This Musalman's Islam will progress tranquilly at all times from the viewpoint of ibadat. This means that, besides the 6 to 7 hours set aside for sleep, the rest of his time will progress as ibadat. All his evil activities, all his shameless ways, will fall away one by one and he will move steadily in the direction of ibadat.

When he had stopped drinking alcohol, he had now stepped towards ibadat. Is that not so? In other words, leaving off sin is ibadat! Abandoning alcohol is ibadat, abandoning stealing is ibadat, and abandoning zina is ibadat! When an act is evil, abandoning that act is ibadat! Therefore, a person seeking his islah (self-rectification) has to keep his sheikh - his muslih - informed of his activities. By following his advice he will be progressing along the road of ibadat. The Sahabi (r.a.) had presented himself to Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) for his islah. His frame of mind was such that the company of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) had a certain effect on him, so that whenever a situation arose where there was an inclination to do wrong, the effect of his stay with Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) manifested itself and stopped him from that wrong.

This is the first point: A Musalman Mu'min should designate one person as his muslih (guide and reformer), having selected him with great care and having the correct faith and confidence in him (i'tiqad-o-i'timad). This in itself is an ibadat, because this appointment of a person as one's muslih is a means to another ibadat, the ibadat of leaving bad and evil ways and coming towards goodness.

The objective is muhabbat (love) of Allah Ta'ala. Muhabbat for one's sheikh is an aid and assistance to attain the muhabbat amali (the practical love) of Allah Ta'ala, which is ibadat. Therefore, the former also becomes ibadat. Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) has specifically requested from Allah Ta'ala. What is that? O Allah! Grant me the rizq of Your muhabbat, and (this is my request to You), grant me the rizq of the muhabbat of that person also whose muhabbat for You is an aid and assistance in attaining Your muhabbat.

The muhabbat one has for one's sheikh exceeds the muhabbat one has for everyone else living on earth. This muhabbat is thus a powerful force in attaining the muhabbat of Allah Ta'ala.

You will now come to realise how important and how necessary it is to appoint someone as one's muslih and sheikh, and with what care this should be done.

All this has been established just from one mas'alah (rule) - the Sahabi (r.a.) coming to Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) and departing with tremendous firmness and strength, which he would not have attained had he not come.

SECONDLY: Milan

The second point that can be established is as follows: After leaving the company of one's sheikh and returning home where one mixes with friends and relatives, being far away now, a decline sets in and one's previous condition tends to reappear. The internal strength developed in the company of one's sheikh tends to show some weakness. This manifests itself as milan - an inclination towards bad or evil. This was seen in the Sahabi (r.a.) as well. However, his stay with Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam) was such and his calibre was such that he ignored this milan - the inclination towards evil.

Do you understand?

This milan, this inclination towards evil, this attraction towards haram, this drawing towards what is forbidden, in itself does not fall into the category of being "mamnu" (forbidden). One is not accountable for this inner inclination. It does happen that one reaches a stage that such urges do not arise at all, but there is no law that says that they will never arise.

It follows that - Allah forbid! - if it happens to a salek, that he is inadvertently drawn to what is haram (forbidden), he should not panic. He should not feel grieved. He should not lose hope. He should never but never consider all his struggles along the path of sulىk, all his mujahadah and riyadhat (striving and spiritual exercises), to be useless.

If the salek has not stayed with a muhaqqiq and has not tried to learn from the lessons expounded, he will be terrified. He will then consider his efforts to have been of no use. He will tell himself, "What have I achieved? Nothing! I am back to square one." He will be filled with regret. "My whole life has been wasted!" It should not happen - Allah forbid! - that he now starts sinning openly!

However, that salek who has sat with a sheikh, a muhaqqiq, one who discussed different aspects of sulىk, one who enunciated the principles of sulىk, the masa'il (laws) of Tasawwuf, together with an in-depth analysis of the batin, such a salek will understand. Such a salek is not one who sat with head bent down in muraqabah (meditation) in a halqah, (circle/ gathering) merely for the tawajjuh (spiritual focus) of the sheikh to fall on him; but the salek I am speaking of is one who listened attentively to the discourses of the sheikh and imbibed the lessons therein. He will immediately understand. He will tell himself, "This is merely an inclination, a milan, an instinctive urge. Such urges will come and go. Why should I pay any attention? Why trouble myself? Pooh! La howla wa la qىwata."

This "Pooh!" that is directed at this milan is said in a tone of utter contempt. He is contemptuous of his own nafs (carnal self), that it should come up with such urges. This "Pooh!" is another way of saying: "Why should I take notice of such despicable urges from my nafs?" This "Pooh!" results in even greater firmness within himself. When this process is adopted every time there is milan and the milan is ignored with a contemptuous "Pooh!", then, insha-Allah Ta'ala, a stage will come when there will be no milan whatsoever - the inclinations will stop!

21.EFFORT AND RESULTS: THE FOCUS OF ONE'S GAZE IS ALLAH TA'ALA

This stage will be attained by the tawfiq of Allah Ta'ala, and not through your own efforts. I repeat: not through your

efforts, but through the tawfiq of Allah Ta'ala. The moment you consider attainment of this stage to be solely a personal achievement. Allah Ta'ala will put you to the test! "Oh! Is that your attitude? We shall soon put you to trial."

Allahu-akbar! Dear brother! What will happen if the gaze of Allah Ta'ala moves away from a person? Because this person had his gaze fixed at all times and on all occasions on Allah Ta'ala, he in turn earned the special attention of Allah Ta'ala. This was a special favour of Allah Ta'ala being showered on the servant.

If somebody who is small attracts the special attention of an elder, then subhanallah! If this person is indifferent to this favour, then it is a sign of lack of appreciation and is also ingratitude. He should not be surprised if he does not remain in the elder's good books and lands up in his bad books and be put to the test.

Never should one attribute to oneself any good that has resulted from one's efforts. Any inclination towards good, any performance of good deeds, any laudable quality becoming established within oneself, any good attribute becoming second nature, should never but never be considered to be the results of one's own efforts, but one's gaze should be fixed on Haq.

When Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) himself has stated thus, how can his Musalman ummat be excluded? Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) requested from Allah Ta'ala:
O Allah! This endeavour is from me ...

22. JIHAD

The term "jad wa jehd" means: toil and labour / endeavour and effort. From this root word many other words take their form:

Jihad - to fight in the Path of Allah Ta'ala;

Ijtihad -earnest effort/authoritative interpretation.

Mujtahid -juror.

Mujahid -one waging jihad.

The first enemy to make jihad against is one's nafs. A mujahid is, therefore, one who makes jihad against his nafs.

The nafs has to be crushed. This is what happens in jihad, that the nafs is trampled to dust.

When waging jihad, the most daring of big foes may be attacking one on the battlefield, one will be able to meet him fearlessly. On condition!

What is this condition? The condition is that one has already been waging a continuous war against a bigger and more daring foe, fighting strenuously, in a masterly and professional manner, bringing this foe into captivity. This foe being none other than one's warring, stubborn and rebellious nafs! Such a mujahid, who holds his nafs in captivity, need fear no foe on the battlefield, no matter how unassailable he may appear.

So, the foe, the enemy to tackle, is one's nafs. Why fear the nafs? Learn how to do battle with the nafs. Learn how to make mujahadah against the nafs in the correct manner, under the watchful eye of an ustad, (teacher) with his guidance, staying with him, with muhabbat for him in your heart. Then only will you achieve something.

As we were saying, Rasulullah's (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam)gaze was on Haq Ta'ala all the time. Even after making an effort, Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) pleads with Allah Ta'ala:

O Allah! This effort, this endeavour is from my side. However, my gaze is not on it - my dependence is on You.

That is why I have said: Do not look at your own efforts. Fix your gaze on Allah Ta'ala. If the milan disappears completely, this is the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala. We have mentioned the qissah of the Sahabi (r.a.) who stayed in the company of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) and then went back home. The urge to commit sin arose in him, but the awareness of his stay with Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) was dominant and the urge to sin was overcome. By the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala, the urge disappeared. Similarly, the effect of staying with one's sheikh is that an awareness of him prevails even in his absence. Thus, when this milan arises, this awareness causes one to ignore the urge.

This milan, this welling up of an urge to sin, is not evil as long as it remains an urge only and does not express itself in deeds. On the contrary, this milan is not a bad thing but is of benefit at that particular time. Take careful note of the words being used!

How so? The reason being that this milan, as long as it remains merely an urge, spurs one on to greater mujahadah - one's mujahadah becomes more powerful. The internal battle proceeds as follows: "Oho! The urge is there again. This is evidence of weakness. This attraction towards wrong and evil, towards what is forbidden and what is haram, is a sign of weakness. However, not to fear! I have come from such a place of strength, I will ignore all such urges and inclinations."

To repeat: It is not mamnu' for milan to arise - one is not accountable for urges that arise spontaneously within oneself. On the contrary, for some - for the talibe sadiq, for that person sincerely seeking his islah - this milan becomes the basis for becoming more firm and sound in the crushing of the nafs. The talibe sadiq progresses rapidly in sulىk and Tasawwuf to that stage where this milan ceases completely.

To understand this concept better, let us sit back for a while and take the following situation:

That person who has performed Haj - that mu'min who, through the demands of his iman and ihtisab (as is mentioned in Bukhari sharif, "imanan wa ihtisaban") has undertaken the journey to Baitullah to perform Haj as it should be performed - what is his state there? In the sanctity of the Haram sharif, in the awe-inspiring precincts of Baitullah, this mu'min is so overawed that his passions, his desires, are virtually non-existent. He has absolutely no milan. Women not observing purdah move all around him. Right in front of his eyes these women may greet one another, kissing each other's cheeks or foreheads or clutching one another to their bosoms, but this mu'min is in the shadow of Kabah sharif! Despite seeing all this, he has no milan. There is not even a trace of any desires rising in him.

Is my voice reaching you? Listen carefully now: If this is the effect on him of seeing Kabatullah before his very eyes, can you imagine what the effect will be on him, of having the thought of Allah Ta'ala just as vividly in his heart? If seeing Kabahtullah has extinguished his passions, "seeing" Allah Ta'ala will affect him even more so! This "seeing" Allah Ta'ala is a state that is attained when the tongue is busy with an abundance of zikr, with ru'ete-muraqabah-ihsan (the contemplation of Allah Ta'ala seeing one) and with the heart being involved with shagl-be-Haq, so that the concept of Allah Ta'ala being Hakhir-Nazir becomes a hal (state). If this is his state, then there is no question of milan troubling him.

So, the salek has been progressing, slowly, slowly, when suddenly the old urges come back. Frightened and panic-stricken he rushes to his sheikh. Soon the fear and panic are gone, for he has now heard from his sheikh that one is not accountable for this milan, as long as these urges do not express themselves in deeds. One is accountable for deeds. He has learnt how to deal with milan. He now scoffs at these urges, saying "Pooh!" in disparaging tones, paying no further attention to them. Using this technique each time and ignoring these urges soon, by the tawfiq of Allah Ta'ala - not by his own cleverness - the milan also ceases. His gaze is on Allah Ta'ala.

Just see, even the Sahabi (r.a.) had milan developing in him once he was away from the saintly court and company of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wassallam). Thereafter, him being absent was the same as being present. Being far away, yet he was near. Do you understand? Urges arising is not a sign of failure. Ignoring these urges is a sign of success.

These are problems faced by the salek. Some write to me, others inform me verbally, "When I was there with Hadhrat, my state was unique. But, on returning home, I detect a weakness creeping into me." That is why these topics are discussed with you. Who stays all his life with his sheikh? Nobody.

23. 'ILM AND KITaBS

Similarly, one may ask: Which student is going to sit all his life in the classroom? No student. Also, no student is going to carry around his kitabs with him all his life. No. The 'ilm that he had been grounded-in during his student days, the depth of that knowledge, the perfection of that knowledge, the mastery over that knowledge, these will remain with him all the time. Not the kitabs. If the capability and proficiency are with him, it is as if the kitabs are with him, even though the kitabs are in the library.

24. IMAM GHAZALI'S (R.A.) EXPERIENCE

That is why the experience of Imam Ghazali (r.a.) is a valuable lesson. Ayuhatullab! Listen carefully!

Having completed his studies, Imam Ghazali (r.a.) was en route back home. On the way the caravan in which he was travelling was waylaid by robbers. Together with his co-travellers, Imam Ghazali (r.a.) was dispossessed of all his goods. Amongst his possessions were the carefully written notes of the lectures delivered by his ustads. These

notes were also taken by the robbers. Imam Ghazali (r.a.) sought out the leader of the band of robbers and pleaded with him: "Your men have taken all my possessions except for the clothes I wear. You may keep the extra clothes and other valuables - I do not lament their loss. However, please ask your men to return the papers they have taken."

The leader of the band of robbers was amazed at this unusual request. This young man was not worried about clothes and valuables, but he was asking for some pieces of paper to be returned!

Very curious, he asked: "What papers are these?"

Imam Ghazali (r.a.) explained: "I am a student returning home after completing my studies. When my ustads used to lecture, I used to make notes. These are those very pages of 'ilm that I am requesting to be returned to me."

The leader of the robbers said, "What you have just said fills me with great sorrow and regret. Young lad! Is your 'ilm on pieces of paper when it should have been in your heart? Papers can get lost. Papers can be destroyed by fire, become parched by the sun, get eaten by moths, become damaged with damp, etc., etc. You are dependent on papers? It fills me with great pity. Your 'ilm should be in your heart! Be that as it may, your papers will be returned." He summoned one of his men and ordered him, "Give back to this boy his papers." The notes were retrieved and returned to Imam Ghazali (r.a.).

Imam Ghazali (r.a.) was of noble character. He was, moreover, a dedicated student. The words of the gang-leader were like a knife piercing his heart. On reaching home, he lost no time in memorising all his notes!

Do you understand? 'ilm may be present on paper and in kitabs, but can you carry these around with you? However, if that 'ilm is learnt in a capable way, that it is present in the heart, in perfection and depth, then 'ilm is present though the kitabs are absent.

If later, as an ustad, he has to teach a lesson, the students are then wonder-struck at his capable presentations. "Subhanallah! With what ease has he not laid open the topic! How simple has he not made that complicated subject, with sufficient illustrating examples. Masha'Allah!"

25. TA'LIM OF THE SHEIKH: FROM QAL TO HAL

Coming back to the topic of Allah Ta'ala being Hadrir-Nazir: The ta'lim of abundance of zikr, of muraqabat and of azgal of shagl-be-Haq, are at that level where they become the means and methods of producing in the heart a hal, a state, of this i'tiqad of Allah Ta'ala being Hadrir-Nazir. That is why Maulana Rumi (r.a.) says:]

Leave your talk and become a man of the time - Annihilate yourself [become dust] in front of one who is kamil (perfect/ accomplished)...

Do not misunderstand: Fine, carry on... BUT what I am asking is: When is the Qal (talk) going to become hal (state)? Is Qal going to be merely on your lips, merely words? When is the Qal going to descend from your lips and become Hal in your heart? This Hal should be embedded in the heart. It has to become so grounded that it does not leave the heart, that it does not slip out. This is the meaning of (Hal).

So, such a person, having reached this state through mujahadah, through toil and effort, will not have his gaze turned on himself but will have his gaze fixed on Zate Haq Ta'ala. He does not look at his own endeavours. If he does, then he has failed and the very next thing that happens is that Allah Ta'ala puts him to the test. Allah Ta'ala is aware of the condition of one's heart. He will show one up very quickly.

26. NAZAR-E-BID

A simple walk through the city and its bazars is sufficient to test him:

Where are his eyes straying?

Eyes filled with greed and avarice (hirs and tama') latch onto various displays.

A desire for fame and prestige (jah) now sparkle in his eyes.

His eyes betray the jealousy (hasad) at the grandeur that others possess.

Those eyes of his have given him away, for they conceal nazar-e-bid - eyes with evil intent. This nazar-e-bid includes all of the above. We labour under the misconception that nazar-e-bid means to look lasciviously at some female or handsome young male. No! The term nazar-e-bid includes much more - it includes looking with eyes of greed and avarice, looking with eyes of jealousy, looking with a desire for fame and prestige, as well as looking with lust. The basic evil intent in the eyes is nazar-e-bid. The evil intent may manifest in different ways, only one of which is to look

at some female or handsome youth with lust. We have wrongly restricted this term to the last situation, but nazar- e-bid means looking with hirs or tama', with desire for jah, with hasad, or with lust.

So, the belief and conviction of our iman of Allah Ta'ala being Hadiyah-Nazir is still only at the level of Qal, at the level of ilme-yaqin, but not at the level of Hal And the objective is to reach the level of Hal. That is why it is said:

These important concepts are being laid before you for your attention.

Remember:

Neither from kitabs, nor from lectures, nor from wealth is the Din brought alive. Din is brought alive from the attention given by the buzurgs.

This is the reality (haqiqat) of a sheikh, that he expounds the haqa'iq (truths). The mas'alah of suluk that has been brought to your attention is:

Have the same consideration for your sheikh, whether present or absent.

This concept has been stated very well by Maulana Rumi (r.a.)... By the way, do not think that these verses of Maulana Rumi (r.a.) are a substitute for reciting Quran sharif. No. These verses are kalam-mubalagah àmez - using hyperbole to draw one's attention to and emphasise what is in the Quran sharif.

Make an orchard, a garden..Where? - In your heart... From what? - From Nur! Whose? - From Haq: Make an orchard, a garden in your chest of Nur from Haq.

Allah Ta'ala has also referred to Himself metaphorically as Nur (Spiritual Resplendence):

Allah is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth. (S.24; A.35)

Therefore, when Maulana Rumi (r.a.) refers to seeking Haq in one's chest, he is speaking colloquially, for Allah Ta'ala is not confined to space or time. Zate Haq is everywhere. The same idiom is used by Allah Ta'ala elsewhere in a Hadith-e-Qudsi:

I can never be accommodated at any place, except the heart of a mu'min.

This can only happen if that mu'min utilises the correct procedures for this to happen. Try it. Use the correct methods and then see!

27. IBADAT AND ENJOYING LIFE

Then you can start enjoying life! Then you will find delight in your family, delight in your employment, delight in your eating and drinking. In sleeping there will be delight, in waking there will be delight and in going about your chores there will be delight.

Why? Because in each activity you will discover the delight and pleasure of ibadat! And, the purpose, the objective for which Allah Ta'ala has created us is for His ibadat!

And I have not created the Jinn and Mankind but that they should worship Me. (S.51; A.56)

This is the theme with which we had commenced. So, except for the 6 to 7 hours reserved for sleep, the remaining 17 to 18 hours that Insan has, are fully and completely for the ibadat of Allah Ta'ala.

28. IN CONCLUSION

The theme this morning has been on objectives. It is only appropriate to state that the objective of this talk was to outline the purpose of the creation of Insan - that Insan has been created for ibadat. When Insan fulfils this objective and fills his 17 to 18 hours with ibadat, the 6 to 7 hours reserved for sleep also become ibadat, because those 6 - 7 hours are to refresh that Insan for ibadat during the remaining 17 - 18 hours. It follows that Insan's whole life, both waking and sleeping, is for ibadat.

Do you understand?

With the tawfiq of Allah Ta'ala, and fadhil and karam of Allah Ta'ala and the barkat of Hadhratwala, today's talk on "objectives" has been presented to you. May Allah Ta'ala cause, with aqle salim and aqle mustaqim, this concept of the creation of admi, to settle firmly in our hearts; and may He grant us the tawfiq to live our 24 hours in ibadat, which

is the purpose of our creation.

29.A LESSON IN SPEAKING

[Hadhratji (r.a.) used to say that a sheikh gives an all-round training. He even teaches one how to speak. Just prior to the above majlis, a visitor had come to meet Hadhratji (r.a.). The last part of this conversation is also recorded on tape and is being reproduced.]

[Addressing those in the majliskhana, Hadhratji (r.a.) said:] This visitor has come to meet me. When he came, I asked: "What is the purpose of coming here?" He replied: "To meet Hadhrat." I asked: "From where have you come?" He replied: "From Bengal." I said: "All the way from Bengal, to meet me? This causes me some astonishment and apprehension, that someone should come all the way from Bengal directly here merely to meet me." However, on further questioning, it turns out that he came from Bengal to Sulelabad, which is near here, and has decided to come here to meet me also.

From previous experiences I have come to realise that often people come to Thana Bhawan, or some other place nearby and then come here, but on questioning them they reply that they have come from Bombay, etc. One should always speak clearly and completely.

[Turning to the visitor, Hadhratji (r.a.) said:]

You should have said, "I am a resident of Bengal and came to visit a friend in Sulelabad. I had a desire to meet Hadhrat as well, and came here." Very well. It is a happy occasion to meet you as well. I have no objection to meeting visitors.

One may have heard from friends, or others, that such-and-such a person is a buzurg (a pious/ saintly person) and one desires to meet him. Whether he is a buzurg or not, is besides the point, as long as one's thinking (aqidat) is there. One's niyyet (intention) is important. There is a great reward in having a good intention. Allah Ta'ala knows one's niyyet. For every step you take, you get thawab (reward and blessings).

Verily, deeds depend on niyyets. Each individual will be rewarded according to his niyyet.

However, my amazement was at the fact that he should come from Bengal straight here merely to meet me. These comments are made for the lesson contained in them.

[Hadhratji made du'a for the visitor and made the necessary arrangements for his stay there.]

30.WASIYET

[The wasiyet that Hadhratji (r.a.) gave on 17/10/92 has already been published elsewhere. This wasiyet is being reproduced here as it contains advice of immeasurable value.]

[Hadhratji (r.a.) said:] I can hardly muster enough courage to stir my tongue, weakness having sapped my strength to this extent. It is with great difficulty that I speak. Even then, a few points need stating. Listen attentively.

**Take care to perform good deeds with istiqamat, always with good character and good speech. Also, take care to take it upon yourself to perform namaz, keep roza, and perform what is sunnah and mustahab, taking into account your health and ease of performance. In the same way zikr and tilawat should continue, taking into account opportunity and ease of performance.

**Take care to continue in your studying of kitabs. This is very necessary. Hadhratwala's (R.A.) "Shariat and Tariqat" and Imam Ghazali's (r.a.) Arabic "Tabligh-ad-Din" (the Urdu translation), one should make obligatory on oneself to read. Hadhratwala (R.A.) used to prescribe these kitabs to great, great ulema, with much emphasis.

**Also, Hadhratwala's(R.A.) commentary "Bayan-al-Qur'an" should be studied.

**Avoid all sinful deeds, to the extent of refraining from anything doubtful, as it appears in Bukhari sharif: What is halal is obvious, and what is haram is also obvious, and between the two is what is doubtful.

**You should be very desirous of attaining the akhlaq hamidah and you should remove the akhlaq razilah and develop a sense of distaste for the latter.

**The effect of this would be that you attain husne kalam (good speech) and husne khulq (good character) and that you maintain these states. The meaning of husne kalam is that words should be decent and cultured (polite/affable), spoken with a soft voice. The meaning of husne khulq is that one should have hilm, which, in our language, we call burdabari (tolerance/ forbearance). Whenever somebody says anything against your temperament, something which offends you, make light of it by using husne-kalam, with burdabari, according to the statement of Allah Ta'ala: And when they hear vanity they withdraw from it (S.28; A.55)

So, whenever you are in such a situation, put it off honourably. Do not sit at such a place, or involve yourself in that activity, which may be the reason for your being slandered, as it appears in the Hadith sharif. Abstain from places/occasions of slander.

You have not been told to save yourself from slander, but you are to save yourself from such places and such activities which may cause you to be a target of slander.

[After a pause, Hadhratji (r.a.) continued:]

**My guide and mentor, Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat, Mujaddide-Millat, (R.A.), used to say, "There are two words; one is 'Dhiyan', the other 'Dhun', to take note of. "Dhiyan' is that, at all times, sitting, standing, walking about, the thought of Allah Ta'ala should be in you. "Dhun' is that tazkiyah nafs (the purification of the nafs) should at all times be an obsession." These two words are most onerous. Continuously act on them.

**Do not involve yourself in the affairs of others. Keep yourself aloof from the affairs of others. (To intrude into the affairs of others) is contrary to the honour and dignity (shan) of mashikhiyet.

**Abundance of zikr should be recited in such a way that the tongue makes zikr with every breath and the heart is grateful to Allah Ta'ala (shakir) for the tawfiq for zikr and obedience.

**Keep dealings (mu'amalah) and transactions completely correct, clear and clean.

Enough! These are a few words, by way of wasiyet, which I wish to mention. Despite the fact that I do not have enough courage and strength to muster, then too, by the fadhil of Allah Ta'ala, this wasiyet has been made.

[The following morning, after the fajr namaz, Hadhratji (r.a.) repeated:]

**Good deeds should be performed continuously, with istiqamat, with husne- kalam and husne-khulq; with soft, polite words, as Bari Ta'ala has stated:

Tell My bondmen to speak that which is kindlier. (S.17; A.53)

With husne kalam and husne khulq, whenever any incident takes place, contrary to your temperament, offending you, pass it off with husne kalam, with soft words, with husne khulq. Bari Ta'ala has stated:

The good deed and the evil deed are not alike. Repel the evil deed with one which is better (S.41; A.34)

** Adopt hilm (forbearance) or let it pass in silence. Bari Ta'ala has stated:

And when they hear vanity they withdraw from it (S.28; A.55)

Husne khulq (good character) is a great thing. Huzur Akram(sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) had asked the Sahaba (R.A.): "Shall I show you that thing that is better than a person making ibadat the whole night and keeping rozas every day, for a full year?"

The Sahaba (R.A.) asked, "O Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam), what is that?"

Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) said, "Husne khulq. This is a much greater thing."

Then Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) asked, "Shall I show you something even better than that?"

The Sahaba (R.A.) pondered: "What could be better than that?" They then requested Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) to show them.

Rasulullah (sallallahu alaiyhi wassallam) said, "To have husne khulq with your wife - to treat her with softness."

This is because one continuously comes across such things contrary to one's temperament from one's wife. In the same way approach your relatives and friends, even your enemy, with husne khulq.

In conclusion: This is sufficient - Be punctual with and be drawn towards good deeds, with husne khulq and husne kalam. And refrain from evil deeds, with feelings of distaste for them. And let your tongue be zakir, and your heart be shakir.

Cleansing of the nafs and rectification of the nafs should be an obsession (dhun); and the dhiyan of Allah Ta'ala: What has been outlined is the whole summary, the essence, of Tasawwuf. This is sufficient. Continually act on it. These are the noble statements of my murshid Hakim-al-Ummat mujaddid-al- millat, Maulana Mohammed Ashraf Ali sahib Thanwi (R.A.)