

Part 9

FOR FRIENDS: PART 9 (DISCOURSES OF HAZRAT MASEEHULLAH KHAN SAHEB(R.A.))

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1.FOREWORD

Through the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala, and the barkat of our sheikh(R.A.), this ninth booklet is ready.

The majlis that has been translated in this issue was conducted way back in 1983 while Hadhrat (r.a.) was visiting South Africa. However, the topics discussed are as relevant today as they were at that time. This is a remarkable feature of Hadhrat's (r.a.) majalis - they remain "evergreen". Not only are relevant topics brought to our notice but, together with the discussion, certain underlying principles are also discussed, so that these majalis remain appropriate for all times. The reader should not, therefore, merely "enjoy" reading the different qissas, but he/she should also try to understand the underlying principles that are being enunciated.

That is why Hadhrat (r.a.) time and again asks: "Do you understand?" "Is my voice reaching you?" "Can you hear?" etc. It is not that the words or the qissas are not being heard or understood. Hadhrat (r.a.) is actually drawing our attention to a specific point that is being made, an underlying principle that is being

enunciated, a subtle aspect that is being placed in perspective. We are expected to take special note and remember the point that is being driven home at this particular juncture in connection with that particular qissah.

May Allah Ta'ala grant us the taufiq arzani to continually benefit from Hadhrat's (r.a.) teachings. aAmin.
Dr. I.M.

[This is a translation of a majlis-e-khas held by Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Masihullah Khan sahib (r.a.) during his visit to South Africa. Approximate date: January 1983. Venue: Lenasia, Johannesburg.]

2.ADL, FADHL AND ZULM

It was being stated at Navlakhi sahib's place that with Allah Ta'ala there is only 'adl (justice) and fadhl (bounty/ mercy/ graciousness). The question of zulm (injustice/ oppression) does not arise at all, not even remotely.

Why? The reason is that zulm is the manifestation of an enormous imperfection or defect of the highest degree. Whereas it is a fundamental part of iman, accepted and affirmed, that Zate Bari Ta'ala is free and pure of all manner of faults, defects and weaknesses. Thus, there can be absolutely no question of zulm from Allah Ta'ala!

This much He has stated quite emphatically as well:

Verily... ("Inna" denotes an emphasis, denoting that "there is absolutely no doubt in the matter"...Allah does not cause even an atom of zulm. S.4 A.40

So, either there is 'adl or there is fadhl.

With the mu'min Zate Bari Ta'ala's dealings are based absolutely and completely on fadhl (bounty/ mercy/ graciousness). The question of mere 'adl (justice) does not arise at all.

Is my voice reaching you? Or should I speak still louder?

To repeat: With the mu'min-bandah Zate Bari Ta'ala's dealings are based absolutely and completely on fadhl. The question of mere 'adl does not arise at all. 'Adl is the manner in which Allah Ta'ala deals with the kuffar (non-Muslims). This state exists while we are in this world as well as when we will be in the akhirat (hereafter).

If any difficulty befalls a mu'min, whether the difficulty relates to his physical body (jan) or to his wealth (mal) or his honour (abru), it may appear externally to be a difficulty - from appearances it may look like an upset - in reality it is not a difficulty or upset, provided that he accepts the problem in the context of his iman and his connection with Allah Ta'ala

If an illness befalls the mu'min, it is His fadhl.

If some material loss occurs, that is also His fadhl.

If some incident occurs that causes dishonour or disgrace, that is also His fadhl!

3.PRESENT, PAST AND FUTURE

This needs some explanation. Take the case of a neglectful mu'min:

As for the present, he is enjoying his position. He continues to live in a state which is contrary to the wishes of Zate Bari Ta'ala, with no concern for the state he is in.

As for the past, he is unconcerned about that also: As for that period that has passed before the present moment, for whatever shortcomings he had, for whatever wrongs he had committed, he is unrepentant. He does not make taubah.

As for the future? He does not let his gaze fall there. He should have certain basic beliefs as far as the future is concerned, like the acceptance of Qiyamat, and the fear (khauf) that this belief should generate and, having developed this fear, that he should stop those actions which are contrary to the wishes of Allah Ta'ala, but he does not stop.

4.IMAN AND ISLAM

So, there is no doubt as far as his iman is concerned but there is a weakness as far as his Islam is concerned. The reason is that iman is connected to tasdiq (attestation), whereas Islam is connected to a'mal (deeds) and akhlaq (qualities in a personality). And Zate Bari Ta'ala has no desire that any mu'min should go into Dozig (Hell).

Do you understand? To repeat: Haq Ta'ala does not wish that any mu'min should go into Dozig.

But if any mu'min himself or herself desires to go into Dozig, what then? Then Allah Ta'ala will endorse his wish: Very well, you shall be sent there!

The mu'min's desire may not be verbal but he knows that there are certain actions and activities, certain statements and conversations, certain states and conditions, all of which Haq Ta'ala has shown quite clearly, will be a cause for him to go into Dozig. Despite this, he is not prepared to stop himself from these, then it is as if he is saying, "These calamities may throw me into Dozig but here and now I am going to enjoy myself!" So, he goes ahead and he gambles, he drinks alcohol, he commits zina, he steals, he deceives and he commits fraud!

These sinful activities are connected to "Islamiyat" and not "imaniyat". May Allah Ta'ala safeguard and maintain our iman, your iman, and the iman of all Muslims till our last breath. amin. Then there will be nothing but the uttermost victory, insha-Allah ta'ala.

To continue:

Allah Ta'ala has no desire to send any mu'min to Dozig (Hell). And how is it possible that he should wish to do so?

Once Raslullah's (sallallaahu alaihi wassallam) majlis-sharif was in progress. The Sahaba (r.a.) were sitting in attendance. A woman was approaching. (At that stage the complete set of regulations concerning the observation of purdah had not been revealed as yet.) The woman was carrying her suckling infant in her arms and the infant was being suckled on her breast as she walked. Rasulallah(sallallaahu alaihi wassallam) said, "Do you see that woman, how lovingly she is clutching her infant and feeding the infant on her breast? Do you observe?" The Sahaba (r.a.) replied, "O Raslullah!" (sallallaahu alaihi wassallam) "Yes, we do observe!"

5.DURUD SHARIF

Let us digress for a moment: If, during the course of a discourse (majlis) the honoured name of Rasulallah(sallallaahu alaihi wassallam) is taken, then it is fardh (compulsory) to recite durud sharif once. If the honoured name of Rasulallah(sallallaahu alaihi wassallam) is repeated and his name is mentioned time and again, then to recite durud sharif on every occasion is mustahab (meritorious). This applies even if it is not a majlis and an individual by himself takes the name of Rasulallah(sallallaahu alaihi wassallam). So, at least once one should recite durud sharif:

The durud sharif that this servant has just recited is the very one that Hadhratwala (Hadhrat Thanwi sahib(R.A.) used to recite, commenting, "This is the durud sharif I am in the habit of reciting." It made me extremely happy because I also used to read this durud sharif.

In the ma'mulats of the auliya-Allah, of the ahlullah, the wird, the zikr that is recited all the time finally settles down to the recitation of durud sharif. They have recited an excessive amount of zikr, yet finally they settle on reciting durud sharif.

What is the reason? I have to explain this by asking a question:

Dear sahib! If a person is wearing clothes that are filthy and, on top of it, the clothes are emitting a bad odour, will one place ittar on such clothes? Quite rightly, the answer is: No! Only after the clothes are washed and ironed very well and the person has made ghusl, as on Fridays and the day of Eid - or some shower and change their clothes daily - then only is ittar applied. So, first comes the cleansing and washing, then the application of ittar.

6.ISTIGFAR (REPENTANCE)

In a like manner, other tasbihs (specific zikrs) may be recited, well and good. The tasbih of istigfar (repentance) is one such tasbih that is recited regularly. This tasbih cleanses the dirt - i.e. sins - within. One should never be neglectful of this tasbih.

Allah Ta'ala made even the mala'ekah (angels) recite istigfar once. This transpired as follows: When Allah Ta'ala was about to create Hadhrat Adam (A.S.) the mala'ekah were perturbed and said, "O Allah! You wish to create Man, whereas he will shed blood..."

They said, "Wilt Thou place therein one who will do harm therein and will shed blood, while we, we hymn Thy praise

and sanctify Thee?" S.2 A.30

That is to say, "We are Your servants. If You have any other work, we are ever prepared to serve You. Show us any other task and we will carry it out." Allah Ta'ala replied, Surely I know what ye know not.

Allah Ta'ala knew the wisdom of His action. The mala'ekah were suddenly made aware that they had erred in raising a query and they immediately felt contrite at their indiscretion, at their rashness. They pleaded to be forgiven.

"Very well. You have not committed any sin - you have not acted contrary to any Order of Mine. However, you had made certain statements, thereby being involved in an indiscretion, of which you are now aware and of which you are now contrite. This is a very high, a very elevated angelic quality. Go and perform wudhu(ablution)."

The first instance that any creation performed wudhu was on this occasion when the mala'ekah were ordered to perform wudhu. This information forms part of ancient historical relevance and a lot of importance is laid on historically relevant events. The mala'ekah went ahead and performed wudhu. Allah Ta'ala then ordered them, "Recite istigfar, as follows:

I glorify You, O Allah! And recite Your praises. I testify that there is no god besides You. I seek Your forgiveness, and I turn to You in repentance.

O Rabb! Forgive and have mercy, for Thou art best of all who show mercy.

This should be read at least once. The reason for reciting istigfar is that even our ibadat (worship) is not free of shortcomings. Thus, insan musalman should not be negligent at any time as far as istigfar is concerned. Even after making salaam at the completion of namaz (salat/ prayer) he should still recite istigfar.

To continue: Rasulallah(sallallaahu alaihi wassallam) had drawn the attention of the Sahaba (r.a.) to the woman lovingly clutching her infant to her breast and feeding it. Did she not love her child? The Sahaba (r.a.) replied, "Yes, O Rasulallah(sallallaahu alaihi wassallam)! She is showing extreme love for her child." Rasulallah(sallallaahu alaihi wassallam) then said, "To a much, much, much greater extent does Zate Bari Ta'ala love a mu'min!"

That Zat (Being) that has instilled such a great degree of love for the infant into the heart of the mother, to what a greater degree will He not have love for the mu'min, who is His "child"? This being so one may ask: Does a loving father ever cause harm to come to his child knowingly? Even if he were to hit his child, is it his purpose that the child should be wilfully harmed? Of course not! It will be for the child's tarbiyet - for his character- training. So, the father's hitting his child for the sake of the child's tarbiyet - is it a mercy (rahmat) or is it tyranny (zulm)?

We are all agreed that it is a rahmat and not zulm, it is showing bounteousness and kindness (meherbani and fadhl), and not enmity (dushmani).

This is sufficient proof to show that it is unimaginable that Zate Bari Ta'ala, whose name is also "Mu'min" (this being one name from the Names and Attributes that He has) will cause any harm to his mu'min- bandah. With him He does not deal with 'adl even, but His dealings are based purely on fadhl.

Therefore, should any incident occur at any time contrary to one's temperament - and such incidents fall into three categories:

- a) life and health (jan),
- b) wealth (mal), and
- c) honour (abru);

and one has iman within oneself, then one should never but never bring negative thoughts to mind concerning Zate Bari Ta'ala: one should never perceive it as zulm - then what would remain of one's iman? No. One should not even perceive it as 'adl. How should one perceive it? One should perceive it as fadhl.

And, hadhrat, when this concept is firmly embedded in the heart that this mu'min is being treated with fadhl, then the mu'min, irrespective of how great a sinner he may be, will never feel crushed. Yes, he may develop some grief in his heart as a natural, instinctive reaction, but he will not become demoralised. No. He will immediately turn his attention in the direction indicated. This is the shan of a mu'min - this is his noble and dignified status.

So, for a short while he will experience some grief. And grief he must experience. If he were not to experience any grief then on what occasion will he make sabr (develop patience/ steadfastness), and how will he attain the maqam (stage/ rank) of sabr?

7. THE MAQAM OF SABR

The maqam of sabr has three aspects to it:

1. To make sabr at the time of having to perform ibadat. For example: One's mood was such that one had no desire to perform namaz. However, one's temperament (tabiyet) was kept in check and namaz was performed. Whatever burden the tabiyet (temperament) felt, whatever distaste he may have experienced, were completely ignored and namaz was performed.

This is termed sabr-alat-ta'at.

2. To make sabr when the tabiyet (temperament) inclines towards sin. For example: A pretty face passes by, the eyes become corrupt but immediately sensibility prevails and he scolds himself, "What! Is Allah Ta'ala not watching you?"

Have you no shame? Do you have no khauf

(fear) of Allah Ta'ala, that you will be standing in front of Him on the Day of Qiyamat? What answer will you give then?" With this awareness, he immediately, angrily recites, "Laa howla..."¹ and opposes the immoral inclination of the nafs. He has not given in to the nafs.

This is sabr at the time of impending sin. His tabiyet (temperament) was inclining towards sin, was being attracted towards sin. He opposed his nafs, and the nafs found it vexing and unpleasant, but he kept full control over his tabiyet. He maintained an even temperament - mustaqil mizaj!

This is termed sabr-anil-ma'siyet.

3. There is a third category as well: This is to make sabr when faced with some difficulty.

For example: Some incident has occurred contrary to one's tabiyet, causing difficulty, harm or grief, in connection with one's jan, mal or abru (life, wealth or honour). For instance, a child passes away, or one's money or goods have been stolen, or one's honour has been besmirched.

When this happens the tabiyet is upset - it feels burdened, as if a heavy load has been placed on it. However, immediately the understanding is there: "This is not from my side - I did not request this difficulty. This is from that Zat (Being) that has created me. There is some wisdom in it. There must be some good in it for me. It is to save me from some future harm. If my child were to have survived I do not know how he would have behaved towards me - would he have brought me

comfort and happiness, or brought me grief? Would he have brought me honour, or disgrace? If my daughter would have lived, I do not know if she would have been a cause for my dishonour, or what could have happened!"

A qissah (incident/ episode) appears in the Qur'an sharif:

8. QISSAH OF HADHRAT MUSA AND HADHRAT KHIDR (A.S.)

After being ferried across a river in a boat - and not being charged a fee either - Hadhrat Khidr (a.s.) damaged the boat by making a hole in it. Quite shocked, Hadhrat Musa (a.s.) questioned Hadhrat Khidr (a.s.), "What have you done?" Hadhrat Khidr (a.s.) replied, "I had told you from earlier on that you will not be able to stay with me. My actions are such that they will appear to you to be contrary to the shariat."

Hadhrat Khidr (a.s.) was allocated to do certain duties - he carried out those duties which Allah Ta'ala had ordered him to carry out independently. This is termed "takwiniyet".

As Hadhrat Musa (a.s.) and Hadhrat Khidr (a.s.) proceeded farther it so happened that they came across a child who was playing amongst other children. Hadhrat Khidr (a.s.) went and grabbed him by the neck and killed him. This episode is narrated in the Qur'an sharif in Surah Kahf (The Cave. Surah 18. A 60-82). Hadhrat Musa (a.s.) was even more shocked than previously, "You have taken the life of this innocent, sinless child! What have you done?" Hadhrat Khidr (a.s.) replied, "I had told you from earlier on that you and I are incompatible. You had said that you will bear patiently with me. I had said that you should not say anything, but this is the second time that you have spoken." Hadhrat Musa (a.s.) said, "Everything in three's. Grant me one more opportunity." They proceeded farther and came to a settlement. They came across a house with a wall leaning precariously, about to collapse. Hadhrat Khidr (a.s.) placed his back against the wall and pushed it straight again. Hadhrat Musa (a.s.) blurted out, "What have you done? We came to this place absolutely famished, with no food with us to eat. The people of this settlement should have invited us for meals, seeing we are visitors."

Even if one person had invited them, the responsibility on the whole community would have been lifted - the fardhe-kifayah would have been fulfilled.

"However, they never even came to ask. And then you went to repair the wall, free-of-charge! If you wanted to fix the wall, you should have asked for a fee for your service." Hadhrat Khidr (a.s.) said, "You had requested three opportunities, which you have received. It is now time for us to part ways. But before we part, let me relate the reasons underlying my actions: Firstly, my making a hole in the boat: The king who resides up-river from that place is a big tyrant. Whenever he and his men set out on the river they capture and confiscate any sound and sea-worthy vessel they can lay their hands on. The owner would have lost his boat. By my making a hole in the boat the king would have seen that it is damaged and the owner would be saved from the tyranny of the king. After the king has passed the owner would repair the boat."

(There are many masa'el [rulings] involved here. However, I will not discuss them now as it will take up too much time.)

"Secondly, you felt that an innocent child had been killed. Yes? Well, this very child, as time goes on, would have been the cause for his pious parents to become kafir (non-Muslim). I had been commanded to end his life in order to protect the iman of his parents. Their love for him was so intense that they could have become kafir. Thirdly, the wall: The reason for my repairing it is the following: The owner, father of two young children, had buried a treasure under the wall before he had departed from this world. In his lifetime the father was a pious and saintly person, dindar and an Allah-wala. The wall was about to collapse. Had it collapsed, the wealth belonging to the orphaned minor (na-baligh) children would have been exposed. The inhabitants of this place would have gathered and carried away whatever wealth each one could lay his hands on. I was commanded to repair the wall to prevent this so that the wealth will go to the rightful owners, the two orphaned brothers, when they become grown-ups. Now tell me, are there still objections? But what I have shown is that you and I are incompatible."

Do you understand?

Now, this making a hole in the boat, the killing of the child and the repairing of the wall - were these not acts of mercy? However, Hadhrat Musa (a.s.) is a Rasul and it is his duty to indicate what the shariat states, to give orders according to it and act according to it himself. The affairs of takwin were not in his hands. Therefore, any difficulty that comes to pass, either physically, or concerning wealth, or honour (jan, mal or abru) - affecting either oneself or one's relatives or friends - then all of these are fadhil from Haq Ta'ala, rahmat from Haq Ta'ala.

Once you have understood the above then you would be able to understand the following:

When the time for obedience (ta'at) and for ibadat arrives and the person's tabiyet (temperament) develops an aversion to these and he wishes to avoid these but, instead, he ignores his feelings completely and he takes courage in both hands and carries out that act of obedience (ta'at) and ibadat, he will attain three hundred darjas (elevation in spiritual status). The thawab (reward) for that ibadat he will receive but, in addition, he will also attain three hundred darjas. These darjas are heavenly elevations. These three hundred darjas are attained on ta'at and ibadat.

What if, on the other hand, some act pertaining to sin presents itself and one stops oneself in time? As mentioned previously, his lustful gaze settles on some pretty, beautiful face and he has an inclination to stare with evil intent, with corrupt thoughts, but he immediately, forcefully stops himself. He feels ashamed. A sense of haya (modesty) engulfs him, khauf (fear) of Allah Ta'ala overwhelms him. He restrains himself. This person will attain six hundred darjas! Just think - on performing ibadat he attains three hundred darjas, but on abstaining from sin he attains six hundred darjas!

Why? The reason is that the degree of force and toil required to perform ibadat is not as great as the degree of force and toil required to curtail the desires and perversity of the nafs.

Now, (Allah forbid!) take it that somebody encounters events contrary to his tabiyet (temperament) - there is loss of health or loss of wealth or loss of honour. He did not wish these difficulties on himself but these difficulties came on a gair-ikhtiyari (involitional) basis. But he now makes sabr - he swallows the bitter-aloe tasting draught of sabr as if it was sweet- tasting sharbat. He undergoes emotional suffering - heartache and grief have to be experienced, otherwise what is there to make sabr on? And how will one attain the maqam (stage/ rank) of sabr? Bear in mind that the maqam of sabr in ibadat has the value of three hundred darjas; the maqam of sabr at abstaining from sin has the value of six hundred darjas; and the maqam of sabr at the time of difficulty - when some loss occurs with regard to

life, wealth or honour (jan, mal or abru) and one keeps silent and tranquil and one neither brings any complaint to one's lips nor does one harbour any ill-feelings in the heart - then the value to such sabr is nine hundred darjas!

Just imagine! Nine hundred darjas! This is in addition to receiving whatever thawab (reward) that is due to him on being confronted with these difficulties, provided that he dies with iman. Is this not fadhil and rahmat?

9. QISSAH BY IMAM GHAZALI (R.A.)

Imam Ghazali (r.a.) has written a qissah:

You may have heard of people residing in remote rural areas and whose means of earning consist of going to the towns and habitations, buying grain, etc., and then selling these elsewhere. Their permanent places of residence remain these out-of-the-way wildernesses.

Imam Ghazali (r.a.) writes a qissah of one such group of people who lived in a few houses in some wilderness. Each household possessed a dog, a cock and a donkey. The donkey was there to transport trading goods from one area to another to sell these goods there. The dog was there to protect the household from thieves, etc. The cock would crow early in the morning and the people in the house would come to know that it was nearly dawn and they would rouse from sleep. Each house in the area had these three animals.

There was a buzurg (pious, saintly person) also living in one of the houses with his wife. He also possessed these three animals. One day a wolf came and killed the donkey.

The wife commented drily to her husband, "You see that? The donkey is dead! Now, how are you going to go about to earn a living? Others will go out to do their buying and selling, and enjoy themselves! But your donkey is dead!" The husband merely said, "Alhamdulillah!" This enraged the wife even more. After all, is she not a woman? "Wah! The donkey is gone and with it our livelihood and all you can say is, 'Alhamdulillah!'" The husband calmly repeated, "Alhamdulillah!"

The next day when the buzurg came home he found that the dog had suddenly died. His wife confronted him, remarking sarcastically, "Say again 'Alhamdulillah!' - the dog has died! The houses of the others will be protected, but your house will be looted! Yes, say it, say 'Alhamdulillah'" The husband was unperturbed by her sarcasm. He calmly said, "Alhamdulillah!"

On the third day a fox came and carried the cock away. The wife said, "See what good your 'Alhamdulillah!' has brought you - the cock is gone! Now you can sleep till late in the mornings! Everybody else will be getting up early and will be setting out for their work, and earning good profits in their trading - while you will be still fast asleep! Yes, the cock is also dead." The husband merely said, "Alhamdulillah!" She carried on but each time he would respond by saying simply "Alhamdulillah!"

On the fourth day they really got up late, seeing that the cock was not there to wake them up by its crowing. The wife started again, "I had warned you that this would happen! All you could do was say 'Alhamdulillah!'. Everybody has gone to work by now and you got up only now." The husband was his normal cool and calm self, and he consoled his wife, "Dear wife! It is nothing to be upset about. Alhamdulillah!"

The husband got up, made his preparations - wudhu, namaz, etc. - and then headed for the door. He opened the door, stepped out and...stopped dead in his tracks! "That is most unusual - the neighbour's front door is open. And what is that? His dog is lying dead outside!" As he entered their gate to investigate there was no evidence of the cock. When he entered the house he found that all those dwelling in the house were lying dead! All the members of the household had been slain!

As he wandered from house to house, he came across the same scene - the dogs and cocks either killed or missing, and none of the inhabitants alive! The husband went back to his house and told the wife, "See here! Alhamdulillah! Come with me and have a look!" He took her to all the houses to witness the tragedies. "Are the dogs alive? Are the cocks alive? Are any of the people alive?" he asked her. "Hai! What happened?" she asked.

He explained to her, "This is why I said Alhamdulillah! At our gate there was no dog. In our yard there was neither a cock nor a donkey. The thieves must have come at night to all the houses, saw signs of these animals and knew that the houses were inhabited. At each place they killed the animals, entered the houses and killed those in the houses and took away all their wealth. They must have come to our house as well but there was no dog, no cock and no donkey, as at the other houses. Obviously, they thought that our house was deserted. What was to be

gained from coming inside?"

This qissah appears in Imam Ghazali's (r.a.) writings.

Do you understand?

So, the dog dying, the cock dying and the donkey dying - were these calamities or were they acts of rahmat? Obviously, these were acts of mercy. Kash! Would it not be wonderful if we mu'minin being mu'min, should understand such affairs from Allah Ta'ala to be acts of fadhil for us!

So, whatever events occur contrary to one's tabiyet will cause grief - grief that is temporary. Such grief will occur and should occur, otherwise how will one attain the maqam of sabr?

10.SABR AND SHUKR

Do you understand? Perhaps my voice is not reaching you. You are not falling asleep by any chance? No? Very good! Alhamdulillah!

There are only two possible situations one can encounter while existing in this world:

Events that occur are either agreeable and in harmony with one's tabiyet; or the opposite - events are contrary and in disharmony with one's tabiyet. There is no third possibility.

In the first instance the tabiyet desires a certain event to occur in a certain way and it happens that way.

In the second instance the tabiyet desires a certain event to occur in a certain way and the opposite happens.

So, events occur in accordance to one's tabiyet, or contrary to it. When events take place in accordance to one's tabiyet, this is an occasion for shukr (gratitude). When one makes shukr Allah Ta'ala states:

If ye give thanks, I will grant you more. S.14 A.7

Also, concerning shukr, Zate Bari Ta'ala states at another place in the Qur'an sharif, something very beautiful, something brimming with muhabbat:

What will Allah Ta'ala gain (do) by punishing you. Become mu'min bandas (bondsmen) and continue making shukr. S.4 A.147

By punishing you will Allah Ta'ala's honour and dignity increase? Allah Ta'ala will remain as He is. What a beautiful statement!

So, if any event takes place in accordance with one's tabiyet say, "Alhamdulillah!" Make shukr. And if any event takes place contrary to one's tabiyet, make sabr - the virtues and stages of which have been outlined above.

Verily, Allah is with those who make sabr. S.2 A.153

When any occurrence takes place contrary to one's tabiyet one should display the quality of sabr. Thereafter one should perform ibadat:

O ye who believe! Seek help by making sabr and salaah. S.2 A.153

It is apparent that what takes precedence is correcting one's batin (inner self) and that the performance of zahiri good deeds (amelus-salihah) comes afterwards.

Do you understand?

If a person has not attained the akhlaq-fadhilah (praiseworthy qualities) - amongst which sabr enjoys a very high position - then, hadhrat, even this person's ibadat will not be performed properly and carefully. Even if he were to make ibadat, there would be no constancy - that ibadat would be performed sometimes and sometimes he would leave it. Because of an imperfection in his akhlaq (character), this would be the effect.

Do you understand? Are these topics not of use? Having understood these, does your tabiyet not feel lighter? These topics should settle firmly in the heart for future reference.

So, the mu'min insan can never be free of these two qualities - sabr and shukr. And remember, in every situation Allah Ta'ala deals with His mu'min bandah with fadhil upon fadhil. The question of mere 'adl (justice) does not arise at all.

11.TAQWA AND TAWADHU

That is why it is necessary to be diligent and take care of two features: one is taqwa, and the other is tawadhu.

Taqwa is the following: One does not do anything contrary to the orders of Allah Ta'ala.

O you who believe! Be fearful of (and take the necessary precautions and save yourselves from) contravening the Orders of Allah Ta'ala.

Tawadhu is the following: At no time should you harbour any contempt in your heart for anybody.

Just see the tawadhu and abdiyeh of Rasulullah(sallallahu alaihi wassallam). Allahu- akbar! The quality of his humility, his humbleness, his self-effacement is legendary.

12.NUR AND FAIZ

Rasulullah(sallallahu alaihi wassallam) is nur upon nur! In reality, Rasulullah(sallallahu alaihi wassallam) was nur (spiritual light) from his very inception. It was for our ta'lim (teaching and training) and to act as an example and a model for us that Rasulullah(sallallahu alaihi wassallam) was sent.

By the tawfiq of Allah Ta'ala a thought has come to mind - listen carefully:

Rasulullah(sallallahu alaihi wassallam) is undoubtedly nur. However, there is more to it than that. Actually Zate Bari Ta'ala desired that through Rasulullah(sallallahu alaihi wassallam) we should attain some faiz (spiritual bounty) - faiz-e-'ilmi and faiz amali (in knowledge and deeds). However, faiz cannot be attained without some physical component being attached to that metaphysical nur. Nur does not express itself in words. Just like the sun and the moon: despite emitting light, they do not utter words. Thus, Zate Bari Ta'ala sent that nur which he had created, into this world, clothing it with a physical body - a body that was the best, more beautiful and handsome than any other creation - and that this embodiment of nur should transmit to us faiz- e-'ilmi and faiz-e-amali.

This is our aqidah (belief). To repeat: Zate Bari Ta'ala clothed that nur which He had created, with a physical body in order that we may attain faiz-e-'ilmi and faiz-e-amali through the person of Rasulullah(sallallahu alaihi wassallam). Thus, do we not subscribe to this concept that Rasulullah(sallallahu alaihi wassallam) is nur? Has anybody denied it? We subscribe to it with a great deal of charm and beauty.

Once that nur had been blessed with a physical body, it is quite obvious that all those matters pertaining to a physical body will also apply to Rasulullah(sallallahu alaihi wassallam): The need to eat and drink; a family life; occurrences of happy events and also sad events; physical tiredness; illness; etc. All these pertain to a physical body and all these were experienced by Rasulullah(sallallahu alaihi wassallam). Rasulullah(sallallahu alaihi wassallam) fell ill; he grieved at times; tears were seen falling from his eyes; he married as well; he had children; etc.

Such faiz cannot become manifest by pure nur on its own. If it were possible, then the mala'ekah (angels) were sufficient as they are created from and exist as nur, and it would not have been necessary to create the ambiya (A.S.) in human form. Yes, the mala'ekah would have sufficed. However, we are unable to attain faiz from the mala'ekah. For example: If the mala'ekah were to order us, "Keep continuous rozas!" we would never have been able to carry out this order. We would have complained, "We are unable to." "Whyever not?" "Because we suffer from hunger," we would have replied. "Hunger? Hunger? What is this 'hunger' that you speak about?" How do the mala'ekah know what hunger is? They have never experienced hunger.

Another example: They would have instructed us, "Stay awake the whole night in ibadat!" We would have said, "We cannot stay awake the whole night." "Why can you not?" "We get tired," we would have replied. "Tired? Tired? What is 'tired'?" The mala'ekah have never experienced tiredness.

A human being will experience these physical conditions. So, Rasulullah(sallallahu alaihi wassallam), being embodied, felt the effects of all those conditions which a physical body is affected by.

13.JINN

Take the Jinn. They have the power to adopt different physical forms. Whatever form a Jinn adopts, that Jinn will then manifest the effects of the particular form it has adopted. Now, even amongst the Jinn one finds that they have different social classes - upper classes of Jinn and lower classes of Jinn. Those Jinn from a low class will adopt the form of a low class of animal when they wish to adopt a physical form. Whereas those Jinn who belong to the upper classes will not adopt the forms of the lower classes of animal like the cat, the mouse, the snake, etc. They will adopt the form of the more "noble" or "royal" animals. Jinn are capable of changing their forms because of their original refined nature.

A human being as well, were he to refine the physical constituents of his body by means of riyadhat (spiritual exercises) to a level of extreme exquisiteness he may, if he so wishes, at any given moment change the form of his body from its original to another. The original human figure may then even be visible as several other human figures. However, the laws of the shariat will still be incumbent on the original elemental human figure, even though there may be other separate figures visible.

14.CHANGING FORMS: A QISSAH

This is possible that one figure transforms itself into a separate figure. Hadhratwala (r.a.) related the following qissah:

A buzurg went to make wudhu. The namaz had already started. The buzurg was a bit slow in making his wudhu. By the time the namaz had ended he had not finished making his wudhu. The imam-sahib, who was an alim, had taken note of this. He addressed the buzurg, "Janab, if you had been quick with your wudhu and had joined the jama't (congregation) in namaz, what a good thing would it not have been! As it is, you have missed your namaz with jama't." The buzurg replied, "But do you not see? I am making namaz!" Now, when the imam-sahib turned to look at the saff he saw, quite true, the figure of the buzurg making namaz! The imam-sahib, however, was an alim. He addressed the buzurg, "Janab, forgive me, but this figure making namaz is your projected image (jissam mithali), it is not your original body (jissam unsuri), and the namaz that is fardh is fardh on your original body, the one created from sand." The buzurg, realising his error, admitted to it. "I have erred. Please forgive me. I make taubah. I shall not do so again in future."

Do you see how important it is to have 'ilm (Dini knowledge)? Otherwise, as happened to the buzurg, one can fall into error.

Coming back to the point made earlier: The body can change its form. A human being, by undertaking certain special spiritual exercises (riyadhat) - mind you, not by mujahadah (striving) but by riyadhat - can develop a certain refinement and exquisiteness, which will then manifest in certain extraordinary characteristics. Such as with Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.).

15.SHAH HADHRAT ABDUL QUDDUS (R.A.) AND THE JOGI

Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) was not born in Gangoh, but hailed originally from a settlement in the district of Ambalah. In the age in which he lived the Hindu Jogis held tremendous sway and power over the populace. These Jogis undertook tremendous self-disciplinary exercises which resulted in the human body exhibiting some amazing characteristics. Now, Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) came to know (while still in Ambalah) of a certain Hindu Jogi. The Jogi lived in the district of Saharanpur in the village of Gangoh and he was leading the Muslims astray through a display of the amazing feats that he commanded..

Hadhrat Maulana Thanwi (r.a.). related this qissah to us. Why? So that we may safeguard our iman and avoid being led astray by those who want to lead us astray.

Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) came to Gangoh. He enquired from the people as to the whereabouts of this Jogi. The people told him that the Jogi did not stay in the village, but lived somewhere away from there, in the wilderness. Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) went to the area he was directed to and came upon a small bungalow made of brick and mud. Trying to find the entrance, he went around all four sides but found no door! The structure had four walls but no door was to be seen!

Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) noticed a person sitting nearby. He went up to him and asked, "Are you the Jogi residing here?" This person replied, "No. I am merely his disciple." Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) asked, "Then, where is your guru?" The disciple replied, "He is in that bungalow." Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) asked in amazement, "In that bungalow? But I have just been right around it but I do not see any sign of a door on any of the four sides! From where does he enter and where does he leave from?" The disciple replied, "Do you see that wall? It has a small skylight towards the top. He enters and leaves through that." Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) said, "Ofo! He actually goes in through that small hole and goes out from it as well? Very well. We will do the same."

With a nimble leap Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) reached the small skylight, went through it and alighted in the room inside. Truly, the Jogi was in the room, but he was in such deep meditation that he was not aware of the visitor having entered. Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) sat on one side and waited.

When the Jogi finally came out of his meditation then only did he become aware of another person sitting in his room - a stranger and, from his appearance, not belonging to his, the Jogi's, religion. "Who are you?" he asked. "From my appearance, who do I look like?" "You appear to be a Muslim." "I am a Muslim," replied Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.). The Jogi asked, "How did you enter?" "In the same way that you entered." "Through that niche in the wall?" "Through the very same!"

The Jogi realised that this was no ordinary person but somebody of a high status. He came straight to the point: "Janab, I understand very well your challenge. But let me put it to you that until you do not find out and adopt our ways and you do not make me your teacher in this, you will never reach the stage of kamal (perfection)." Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) asked, "May I ask, what is the highest point of perfection that you have reached?" The Jogi replied, "The highest point of perfection is this that while I sit here I can transform myself into a pool of water." Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) said, "Very well. Prove it to me."

The Jogi, while sitting, suddenly turned into a pool of water. Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) went over, took some of the Jogi's clothes and dipped these in the pool of water. These clothes he kept on one side. The Jogi transformed himself back to his original physical body.

Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) said, "Truly, we have seen how you transformed yourself into water. Very well, we shall also transform ourselves into water. However, the request I have is that you should dip some of my clothes in the water and keep them on one side." The Jogi said, "I'll do that."

Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) also, while sitting, transformed himself into a pool of water. The Jogi took some of Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi's (r.a.) clothes, dipped them in the pool of water and set them aside. Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) reverted back to his original physical body. The contest appeared to be equal. But was it?

Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) addressed the Jogi: "Let us evaluate. You entered through the niche in the wall and so did I." "Agreed" "You then showed me the highest feat you were capable of - transforming yourself into a pool of water. I also did the same." "Agreed." "May I ask, did you wet my clothes in the pool of water as I had requested?" "Yes, I did." "Where have you placed them?" "They are over here." Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) then said, "I did the same with your clothes and these are your clothes which I have kept on one side. Now, first smell your clothes dipped in your water and then you smell my clothes dipped in my water, and then you give your verdict."

The Jogi did as instructed and went ahead and smelled both sets of clothing. He then said - remember that he had been through a process of self-discipline, consequently telling lies was inconceivable - "I have smelled both sets of clothes. From my clothes I perceive a malodour being emitted. And from your clothes I perceive a sweet fragrance being emitted." Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) said, "Well, then make your judgment."

The Jogi said, "I have already made my judgment. It was my belief that you would not achieve perfection (kamal) until you had not acquired what I possess. But, it is just the opposite: for me to attain perfection I have to acquire what you possess. Therefore, please enter me into your religion." Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) told him, "Recite the Kalimah Tayyibah:

There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah, and Muhammed (sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) is the Messenger (Rasul) of Allah.

The Jogi recited the Kalimah Tayyibah with a sincere heart and brought iman. Most of his disciples did the same. This is the manner in which iman spread in the early times.

To continue: I was saying that when nur is clothed in a physical human body, the physical body will show the traits of a human body. We consider Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) to be nur-run-ala-nur (light upon light). The view that is held that we do not consider Rasulullah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) to be nur, is false.

Brothers, do you understand, or not yet?

The point to be emphasised is this that our hadharat akabir - those pious elders who lived before us - have always considered the feats acquired through riyadhat to be mere sport. As a result they have always remained safe and protected.

In our silsilah, which flows in its latter part through Hadhrat Haji Imdadullah sahib (r.a.), the greatest of precautions have been taken in the matter of ittiba'-e-sunnat - following the sunnat. Become absolute dust - annihilate yourself - and let the utmost degree of humility come into you.

16. THE HUMILITY OF RASULULLAH (SALLALLAAHU ALAIYHI WASSALLAM)

Just see how Rasulallah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) very occasionally used to take water in his cupped hand from the very pond in which the Sahaba (r.a.) used to make wudhu and drink it. Knowing very well that all sorts of hands and feet were washed in the pond, yet Rasulallah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) used to drink the water. Some Sahaba (r.a.) enquired from Rasulallah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam), "O Rasulallah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam)! Why do you do this? We see that you very occasionally drink water from this pond. What is the reason for this?" Rasulallah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) replied, "Many hands of the mu'minin have been dipped in it. It would not be remarkable that there would be an increase in my nur-e-iman by my drinking with cupped hands from it!" Can you gauge the degree of humility and humbleness of Rasulallah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam)?

In yesterday's majlis or in the one held the day before, I narrated the incident where a person had approached Rasulallah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) and said, "You have beaten me!" Rasulallah (sallallahu alaiyhi wasallam) responded, "You beat me (in requital)!" Do you see the humility? Rasulallah(sallallaahu alaiyhi wassallam) did not query, "When did I hit you? What was the occasion? What was the reason? Where were you standing? Etc." No! No! It was a Muslim making a certain statement, so he must be speaking the truth. Why would a Muslim tell a lie? iman and lies do not go together, cannot co-exist, so why would he tell lies?

Our pious predecessors have also given us the ta'lim that among the bandah (bondsmen) there should be absolutely no violation of the rights of another bandah. Take full and complete precautions against this happening. And ittiba'-e-sunnat (complete obedience to the sunnat) - always consider this. That is why our pious predecessors abstained from listening to qawali.

17. SAMA

Now that this topic has come to my lips listen carefully. Are you listening? Yes? Very good. Keep on paying attention and ponder! Shukr that an excellent topic has cropped up!

To continue: Ittiba'-e-sunnat. This is why our hadharat did not direct their attention towards qawali. When referring to qawali, what qawali am I speaking about? I am referring to what was originally known as "sama". It is only recently that the word "qawali" has been used, quite erroneously, in referring to sama'. There are major differences between the two. The qawal (singer) of these days is a "galla-phar" (one who shrieks). He has no concept of the art and science of music.

18. MIANJI NUR-MUHAMMED (R.A.) AND QAWALI

A qawal of that time approached our par-dada pir (fourth generation upwards in the silsilah), Mianji Nur-Muhammed Jinjani (r.a.) - whose khalifah was Haji Imdadullah (r.a.) mentioned previously - and put the request to him, "Hadhrat, it is my heart's desire that you should listen to me. You are also in the Chistiyah-Sabariyah silsilah, and some of the ahlullah belonging to the Chistiyah have listened to sama'. It is my heart's desire that you listen to some renderings by myself." Our par-dada pir, Mianji Nur-Muhammed (r.a.) replied, "Bhai, what can I do? My heart also wishes to listen. The fact is that people occasionally ask me to be the imam and, therefore, I have to refuse." Do you see the level of taqwa, the depth of it?

19. RULES GOVERNING SAMA' (QAWALI)

What was the sama' of those times - what is nowadays confused with present-day qawali? Listen very carefully now.

The sama' of those days had very stringent conditions. What were these? As follows:

1. The one rendering the sama' should also be a "sahibe-hal".
2. The content of what he renders, the poetry, should be within the limits of the shariat.
3. The one rendering the sama' should not be a female and should not be a youth at the prepubertal age, one without a beard (i.e. neither imrat nor amrad).

4. No musical instruments should be used - no tabla, no sarangi, no harmonium, no guitar.
5. If there is clapping of the hands, this should NOT be in accordance with the rules of music (rhythm, cadence, etc.)

Is my voice reaching you? Are you giving this proper thought? These were the stringent conditions applied by those listening to sama'!

Applying these strict conditions, two of our predecessors have listened to sama' somewhat. One was Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) and the other was Hadhrat Nizamuddin Sultanji Dehelvi (r.a.).

20.SAMA' & SHAH HADHRAT ABDUL QUDDUS GANGOHI (R.A.)

What was the condition of Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.)? He suffered from a condition called "hiddate-jismani" (fieriness in the body). The severity of this heat was such that in the cold winter months an earthenware pot was left outside overnight so that he could bath daily with the icy-cold water in the early part of the morning to keep his body cool. This condition was such that if he did not listen to sama', his skin would peel from parts of his body and blood would ooze out. Listening to sama' was remedial - it was treatment for his hiddate-jismani.

We know that at times something that may be ordinarily na-ja'ez (impermissible) may be used as a remedy because of special circumstances. And if the "substance" is ja'ez (permissible), then?

Once, a muhtassib appeared in Gangoh. It was a period of monarchical rule and the muhtassib was a person appointed by the Royal Court to see that nobody is involved in activities contrary to the shariat. On his rounds the muhtassib visited Gangoh as well. He came to know that sama' was taking place at Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus' (r.a.) place. He lost no time in getting there. "Janab, I have here a whip in my hand," he said. Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) said, "What are you trying to say?" "Put a halt to the sama'!" the muhtassib ordered. "Very well." Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) ended the sama' and did not arrange any more sessions.

21.HAL (ECSTASY / RAPTURE)

Shortly thereafter, while Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) was up for tahajjud, a voice reached him reciting the following:

" See the trick played by the river, The leaf sinks and the stone floats."

A leaf, being light, should float and a stone, being heavy, should sink. An old woman grinding some corn or wheat on her millstone in the early hours of the morning, was reciting this couplet. On hearing the couplet Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) went into a hal (state of ecstasy/ rapture). What was there about this couplet that it had this effect on him? On the face of it there was nothing. (I shall explain a bit later, insha-Allah Ta'ala, then you will understand.) Yet Shah sahib went into a state of ecstasy. The point is this, hadhrat, that he did not require to listen to qawali for him to go into a hal!

On another occasion, listening to the swishing sound of the door as it swung open and close, he again went into a hal. What was it? It was the swishing that sounded to him as if the doors were reciting "Allahu-Allah! Allahu-Allah!"

An incident concerning another buzurg comes to mind:

This buzurg was sitting with his khadim-e-khas (special attendant) on the first floor balcony. In the flat below lived another family. Downstairs the father set out to go to the bazar. His child said, "Abba, I am also coming with you." The father forbade the child to come but, a child being a child, the little one refused to listen and insisted on coming - the nagging obstinacy of a child!

The following saying is well known:

Balak-hit - the obstinacy of a child;

Terha-hit - the obstinacy of anything crooked;

Raj-hit - the obstinacy of sovereignty.

The father gave in to the persistence of the child and picked him up. "Fine then, come along." The mother scolded the child, "You have no mercy on your aged father that you finally forced him to pick you up and take you along!" The child replied, "Amma! Besides him who else do I have? If not in his arms, in whose arms?" On the balcony above, the buzurg heard the child's reply and immediately went into a state of ecstasy (hal).

Was this hal the result of some tabla or sarangi? Was this hal the result of some poetic recital? No! This was the result of the condition of the heart!

This is what it is to be of the salikin, to be of the zakirin, to be of the muhibbin! This is not to hear some na't, and tear one's kurtah in a fit of passion... so that one may get a new kurtah! This is not an exaggeration - I am relating something that has happened.

To continue: The statement the child had made caused the buzurg to go into a state of ecstasy. The khadim-e-khas enquired of the buzurg, "Hadhrat! What happened that made you to go into a hal and made you twirl in ecstasy?" "Ofo! Did you not hear?" the buzurg asked. "Hear what?" "Did you not hear what the child said?" "I heard. The child merely said, 'Who is there for me besides him?'" "Yes! That is it! What flashed into my mind immediately was: La ilaha illallah! There is only Him! In the whole world there is no other deity, no other objective, no other existence, no other presence, no other object of love, besides Him! On hearing the child's words, that there is no one besides him, my vision went directly to La ilaha illallah!"

So, when making zikr of "La ilaha illallah" make it with the above concept. Then see how much delight and enjoyment you find in your zikr, then see what is produced in your heart!

Reciting it merely as a tasbih, you will get thawab (reward), you will attain darjas (elevation in spiritual rank). However, were you to make zikr with the perspective shown above, according to the rules of zikr, according to the manner in which the sheikh prescribes it, then see what happens! Just see - did the buzurg not experience a state of rapture?

We were speaking about Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.): When he heard the couplet recited by the woman busy grinding, he went into a state of rapture. He gave the order to summon the reciters of sama'. Mind you, he had stopped listening to sama' after the muhtassib's visit. When the reciters came somebody said, "Hadhrat, they are here. But one thing we do not understand: What made you go into a hal?" Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) replied, "When the old woman recited 'The leaf sinks and the stone floats' I was reminded of the ayet of Surah Qariah:

Then, as for him whose scales are heavy (with good works), he will live a pleasant life. But as for him whose scales are light, the bereft and Hungry One [i.e. the Fire] will be his mother. S.101 A.6-9

"Whosoever's weight will be heavy, will float away into Jannat. But whosoever's weight will be light, will sink into hell. That is where my gaze fell!" That was the reason for him going into a hal. Hadhrat, that Being that is entrenched in the heart, that Being comes to mind, no matter what statements others make! If ordinary folks like us were to read the books in which the tales of Lailah and Majnun appear, we will develop love in our hearts, a love that is carnal. Whereas, if such people like Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) and others were to read these very same books their ishq-e-ilahi (passionate love for Allah Ta'ala) increases.

To continue: The reciters having arrived, the sama' commenced. The muhtassib, who was staying over in Gangoh, got wind of it. He rushed over to put a stop to it as he had done previously. However, this time the mood of Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.), was different. The moment the muhtassib set his foot on the threshold he also went into a hal and trembling and panting, unable to control himself, he made his way to Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) with some difficulty. He said, "Hadhrat, make me bay't." "How can I?" Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) replied. "You are the muhtassib - your duty is to stop us. Last time you commanded us to stop, and we stopped." The muhtassib said, "Hadhrat, the situation today is different. I make taubah. Please make me bay't." Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) made him bay't.

There is a special moment for this, a specific time. Such as with Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (r.a.)...

22.TAWAJJUH

Before relating this episode, I wish to make some precautionary remarks:

Nowadays the masha'ekh have left off making tawajjuh. Conditions change and the strength and power that people of old had, is non-existent now.

Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (r.a.) was making tawajjuh in the direction of his murids who were sitting in front of him. It so happened that a dog passed by directly in front of Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (r.a.) at that particular moment. The dog proceeded a short distance and sat down, head bowed down. One by one all the dogs of the neighbourhood

appeared and they all sat down in front of this dog, all with their heads bowed down. The dog sat there for a while in this manner, with head bowed down. The other dogs sat there in a similar manner. Thereafter this dog got up and went away. The other dogs also got up and went away. The dogs had also gone into a hal! The mental power of Hadhrat Junaid Bagdadi (r.a.), the force of his tawajjuh, had an effect on the dogs as well! There is a special moment, a specific time, when this happens.

To continue: The muhtassib became bay't. This incident has been related in connection with Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi (r.a.) because he used to listen to a fair amount of sama', and the reason was that this was a remedy for the condition of "hiddat-jismani" that he suffered from. I had mentioned that his condition was such that he used to bath with ice-cold water in the mornings in the middle of winter. What sin did he commit?

23.SAMA & HADHRAT SULTANJI NIZAMUDDIN AULIYA (R.A.)

The other person who used to listen to a fair amount of sama' as well, was Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.). At the same time, however, he also laid down this law for his murids:

"If any of my murids were to listen to sama', he will cease to be my murid."

(This will be found in his malfuzat. Whoever wishes to, can go and check it out for himself.) It did happen. Once somebody came to report to him, "Hadhrat! One of your murids in such-and-such a place listens to sama'!" Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.) replied, "I have told my friends" - murids were referred to as yaron / doston (friends) - "that whosoever listens to sama' ceases to be my murid. If he is listening to sama' then he is no longer my murid." Yet, he himself used to listen. But he did not allow his murids to listen. Nobody could say to him that he himself listens. No. This was inappropriate.

Are you listening carefully?

In his time there was a buzurg by the name of Qazi Sanami sahib (r.a.). He was an alim and a qazi (judge). Qazi Sanami sahib (r.a.) lived in the same period as Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.). He advised Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin sahib, "Stop this act of bid'at! What you are doing is not correct!"

Remember that Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.) used to observe all the laws pertaining to sama'. There were no tablas, sarangis, etc., as I have already mentioned. So, technically, according to the shariat laws, Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.) was not involved in bid'at.

Something else comes to mind. Let me interrupt to relate this. (We had heard this from Hadhratwala(R.A.)

24.DIALOGUE WITH SHAH ABDURRUHIM SAHIB

Shah Abdurrahim sahib was a great alim and a buzurg. He once visited the mazar (mausoleum) of Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.). (Obviously, this incident took place long after Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya(R.A.)had passed away.) A ruhani (spiritual) dialogue, a communication between the souls of the two, commenced:

Shah Abdurrahim: Janab Sultanji sahib: This practice of yours of listening to sama', what is it and where did you dig it up from?

Hadhrat Sultanji: Why? What evil was there in it?

Shah Abdurrahim: What makes you feel that it was not sinful?

Hadhrat Sultanji: Let me pose a question: What does the Hadith sharif state with regard to poetry?

(Bear in mind that both were great alims.)

Shah Abdurrahim:For poetry that is good, it is good; and for that which is bad, it is evil.

Hadhrat Sultanji: What does the Hadith sharif state with regard to husne- saut - a good voice?

Shah Abdurrahim:For a voice that is good, it is good; and for one which is bad, it is evil.

Hadhrat Sultanji: Connecting the two, what do you deduce?

Shah Abdurrahim: Good poetry read with a good voice, is good; and bad poetry read with a bad voice, is bad.

Hadhrat Sultanji: Well, we did what was hasan. When did we do anything that was qabih..?

At this point in the conversation a strange phenomenon occurred: a splendidly decorated sedan-chair suddenly appeared on the scene and sitting on it was Shah Baha'uddin (r.a.) Naqshabandiyah. (In former times it was the custom for the masha'ekh to travel in these sedan-chairs.) Now, Shah Baha'uddin sahib was a very well known buzurg in the Naqshabandiyah silsilah, dating back quite some time. He had passed away a long time ago. In any case, the sedan-chair appeared on the scene and came to rest near the mazar of Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya

(r.a.) and Shah Baha'uddin sahib (r.a.) alighted from it.

Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.), who had been conversing with Shah Abdurrahim sahib (r.a.), suddenly

stopped and kept silent. After a short while Shah Baha'uddin sahib (r.a.) climbed back on to the sedan-chair and he, with the sedan-chair, vanished.

Shah Abdurrahim sahib (r.a.) commented to Hadhrat Sultanji sahib (r.a.): "Sultanji! This was the occasion for you to have put forward your stand with regard to listening to sama', together with all your proofs!" Hadhrat Sultanji sahib (r.a.) replied: "He is one of our elders and to have spoken like that in front of one of our elders is contrary to good manners. That is why I kept silent." The reason for Hadhrat Sultanji sahib (r.a.) saying this was that those in the Naqshabandiyah silsilah never listened to sama'!

Do you understand?

This episode has been mentioned incidentally. To continue where I had left off:

Qazi Sanami sahib (r.a.) had voiced his strong disapproval. When Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.) would not accept, Qazi Sanami sahib (r.a.) kept quiet. Time passed. A time came when Qazi Sanami sahib (r.a.) became ill. The illness became prolonged and his condition deteriorated. It became apparent to everybody in the city that Qazi Sanami sahib (r.a.) was not going to recover and that his death was imminent. He had taken a turn for the worst.

Hadhrat Sultanji sahib (r.a.) came to know of it as well. (Listen carefully! Just see the qualities of our elders, how the seniors of that era behaved towards those who were their adversaries.)

Hadhrat Sultanji sahib (r.a.) came to know as well that Qazi Sanami sahib's (r.a.) condition was deteriorating and had taken a turn for the worst. He promptly arrived at his home for 'iyadat (visiting a sick person). Who came? Hadhrat Sultanji sahib (r.a.). Arriving at the house of Qazi Sanami sahib (r.a.), he knocked on the door. The laundi (servant) came out and enquired, "Who is it?" Hadhrat Sultanji sahib (r.a.) replied, "I am Nizamuddin. I have come to visit Qazi Sanami sahib." The laundi went inside and informed Qazi Sanami sahib (r.a.), "It is Sultanji sahib, Hadhrat Nizamuddin sahib. He has come for your 'iyadat."

Qazi Sanami sahib (r.a.) said, "Go and inform him, that these are my final moments. At this crucial time when I am about to meet Haq Ta'ala, I have no wish to meet with such a bid'ati!"

[Pause]

25. "FEELINGS" - AN IMPORTANT PRINCIPLE IN SULUK

Another qissah comes to mind, so let me relate it:

A certain buzurg arrived in a locality. In this town there lived another buzurg as well. This buzurg came to know that a certain buzurg had come to his town from outside. He thought to himself, "A buzurg has come - I should go and meet him," and he got up. A feeling then came into his heart, "Do not go." So he sat down again.

Then he thought, "This is only a wehm - an unsubstantiated doubt - I am having. I should really go," and he stood up again. The feeling again came into his heart, "Don't go!" He sat down again. After a little while he thought to himself, "No, really, I should go and visit him." He got up. This feeling came again, "Don't go!" but this time he ignored it and started moving towards the door. He had hardly taken two steps when his foot slipped and he twisted his ankle!

This brings forth an important principle in suluk:

If a person is a real, genuine muttaqi, abstinent (parezghar), zakir ahlullah and he experiences a sudden feeling in his heart, then he should not act contrary to that feeling.

Should he act contrary to that feeling he will not be committing a sin as far as his akhirat is concerned but he will definitely suffer some worldly harm.

So, this buzurg, having ignored the feeling that came into his heart - "Don't go!" - suffered some harm: his ankle got sprained. Now he could not go. One or two days later a person from that locality came to visit this buzurg. This buzurg enquired from him, "Bhai, some buzurg had come to our town - is he still here or has he left?" This person replied, "Hadhrat, he has left already. However, he turned out to be a bid'ati!" This buzurg said, "Ofo! This is the reason why my ankle got sprained! I had intended to go and visit him and this is what happened!"

To continue with Qazi Sanami sahib's (r.a.) qissah:

Qazi Sanami sahib (r.a.) told the laundi to tell Hadhrat Sultanji sahib (r.a.), who was waiting at the entrance for permission to enter, "Go and tell him that these are my final moments... I have no wish to meet with such a bid'ati!"

Do you understand?

The laundi went and relayed the message, "Hadhrat says that he has no wish to meet with such a bid'ati." What was Hadhrat Sultanji sahib's (r.a.) reply to this rebuke? Ahaha! It is worth listening to! It is worth understanding! Nowadays many groups have arisen like a sudden storm, wayward in nature. People are getting enmeshed in their nets! Allah Ta'ala has placed these thoughts into my heart and I am relaying these to you. On hearing this rebuke, Hadhrat Sultanji sahib (r.a.) replied, "Go and tell Hadhrat that I am not an ill-mannered lout that I would present myself in his presence still as a bid'ati, but I have come here having made taubah from those very acts of bid'at!"

Do you see how the Great behave? Did he become obstinate? Did he start a fight? No! He was a true zakir! He was an ahlullah in the true sense of the word! Listen further:

The message was conveyed to Qazi Sanami sahib (r.a.). Qazi sahib unwound the turban which he was wearing on his head and handed it to the laundi and said, "I am aware of the high stage that Hadhrat Sultanji sahib has reached spiritually. He is not one that, stepping in here, his feet should touch the ground. Lay down this turban from the door to my bed and request him to enter, walking on my turban. That is his worth!"

Do you see? Qazi Sanami sahib (R.A.) knew his elevated status. The disagreement with him was a shari' issue. And the disagreement was on the basis of safeguarding the populace.

The laundi took the turban to the door and bent down to unroll it. Hadhrat Sultanji sahib (r.a.) asked, "What is this?" The laundi replied, "It is Hadhrat's order, 'Lay down this turban from Hadhrat Sultanji sahib's feet to my bed, so that Hadhrat Sultanji sahib can enter walking with his shoes on my turban.'" Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.) said, "How can this be? Hadhrat's turban is worthy of being placed on my head!"

Do you see the ways of the elders? Is my voice reaching you or not?

Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.) took the turban from the laundi's hands, placed it on his head, and presented himself at Qazi Sanami sahib's (r.a.) bedside, and said, "Hadhrat, how can you do such a thing?" Qazi Sanami sahib (r.a.) said, "No. No. I know who you are, what your status is."

Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.) returned the turban. The two conversed for a while, their voices a bit hushed. Qazi Sanami sahib's (r.a.) voice became weaker, his breathing a bit heavy. He said, "Hadhrat, these are my last moments. Hadhrat, make du'a that my khatimah is with iman." Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.) made du'a, "May Allah Ta'ala maintain your final moments with salamati and iman." He then said, "Hadhrat, permission to leave?" Qazi Sanami sahib (r.a.) said, "Very well."

Hadhrat Sultanji Nizamuddin Auliya (r.a.) wrote afterwards, "I had just reached the door and stepped out when the sound of the crying of the household people came from inside, that Hadhrat Qazi sahib had passed away!"

26.CONCLUSION

I cannot say why today these topics have cropped up, why they came forth from my lips. It surely is in the knowledge of Allah Ta'ala. These are issues which are essential to recognise and essential to know and essential to come into one's realm of 'ilm: what are the ways others have introduced and how our elders have taken the utmost care to safeguard themselves, protect themselves from going contrary to the sunnat.

Do you understand?

It is almost time for namaz. This faqir, this humble servant, is about to leave. Maybe at some other time, insha-Allah Ta'ala, Allah Ta'ala granting the tawfiq, I will make your khidmat. In the meantime learn and memorise a lesson given by Hadhratwala, Hadhrat Thanwi (r.a.). And what is that? Hadhratwala (r.a.) stressed the following:

Do not forsake your school of thought; And, do not interfere with that of others!

May Allah Ta'ala grant us the tawfiq to make amal on the sunnat - ittiba'-e- sunnat - in the correct meaning of the term with tawadhu and taqwa.