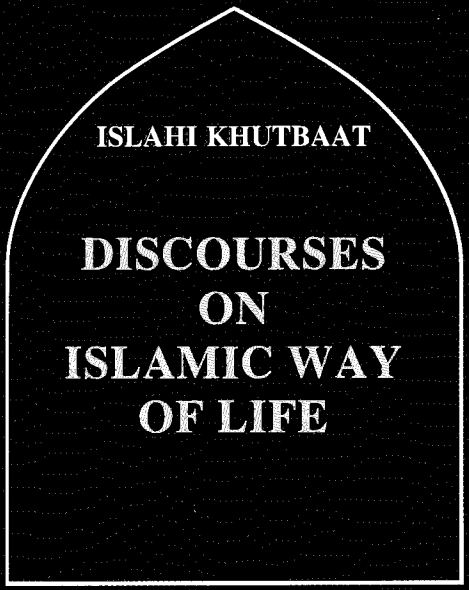
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OF



PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The English version of the Islahi Khutbat, has been published by Darul Isha'at Pakistan. This is solely because of the Favours of Allah on us and the prayers of our mentors.

This is the translation of the reformative speeches of Mufti Justice Mawlana Muhammad Taqi Usmani may Allah prolong his benefits over us. He has been given these lectures for about ten years every week at the Bait ul Mukarram Masjid, Karachi. Those who attend these lectures gain much knowledge theoretically and practically. I, too, attend these lectures and have been deriving much advantage. These lectures are being recorded on audio cassettes and books are published subsequently. These cassettes and books cater to those who understand the Urdu language.

We at Darul Isha'at desired that an increased number of people should benefit from these lectures. Allah helped us get these books translated into English and publish them and He also provided us the necessary means. *Al-Hamdu-lil-laah,* after six years of continuous effort a complete set of these books is available to the readers. Let our readers remember that these books have been translated from oral lectures of the honourable Mufti

Justice Mawlana Muhammad Taqi Usmani and not from his writings.

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Finally, I request my readers to remember me in their prayers as also my parents and family members. May Allah reward them.

KHALIL ASHRAF USMANI
S/O MOHAMMAD RAZI USMANI

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FOREWORD

To The English Edition by
Justice Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

On the advice of some of my elders I hold a weekly meeting in Jamia Masjid AlBaitul Mukaram attended by a large number of Muslim brothers and sisters. Rather than giving a formal lecture, my basic purpose intended to be achieved through these meetings is that we get together for some time to review our ways of life in the light of Islamic teachings and to deliberate what is going to happen to us after we leave this mundane world. When the Muslims having true Islamic orientation sit together for this purpose, each one of them benefit from the other to create a genuine concern about our coming life which is the real and eternal life as compared to the present one which may come to an end any time.

I this mutual meeting which is meant for self-correction I normally read a book of Hadith and explain it to the audience in the light of what I have learned from my elders with special reference to the current attitude prevailing in our society and touching upon the relevant practical issues, social evils and the major faults found in our practical life. My friend Maulana Abdulla Memon who regularly attended these meetings usually prepares the audio cassettes of these addresses which are widely circulated in the country and abroad. He has also transcribed some of these audio cassettes in an abridged form and after their compilation he has published them in separate

translated from oral lectures of the honourable Mufti Justice Mawlana Muhammad Taqi Usmani and not from his writings.

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KHALIL ASHRAF USMANI
S/O MOHAMMAD RAZI USMANI

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FOREWORD

To The English Edition by
Justice Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

On the advice of some of my elders I hold a weekly meeting in Jamia Masjid AlBaitul Mukaram attended by a large number of Muslim brothers and sisters. Rather than giving a formal lecture, my basic purpose intended to be achieved through these meetings is that we get together for some time to review our ways of life in the light of Islamic teachings and to deliberate what is going to happen to us after we leave this mundane world. When the Muslims having true Islamic orientation sit together for this purpose, each one of them benefit from the other to create a genuine concern about our coming life which is the real and eternal life as compared to the present one which may come to an end any time.

I this mutual meeting which is meant for self-correction I normally read a book of Hadith and explain it to the audience in the light of what I have learned from my elders with special reference to the current attitude prevailing in our society and touching upon the relevant practical issues, social evils and the major faults found in our practical life. My friend Maulana Abdulla Memon who regularly attended these meetings usually prepares the audio cassettes of these addresses which are widely circulated in the country and abroad. He has also transcribed some of these audio cassettes in an abridged form and after their compilation he has published them in separate

translated from oral lectures of the honourable Mufti Justice Mawlana Muhammad Taqi Usmani and not from his writings.

They may, therefore, find in them the style of the spoken words that the translator may have retained here and there.

We have endeavoured to match the get up of the books with their invaluable content and have paid due care in the use of paper, printing and binding. We hope that this set of books will be very useful to our readers in Europe and the United States. They will gain beneficial knowledge from these books and be prompted to put their knowledge into practice.

Insha Allah they will find a great change in their everyday life.

We have published many books in English and many more are under preparation. Do write to us for a full list of these books.

Finally, I request my readers to remember me in their prayers as also my parents and family members. May Allah reward them.

KHALIL ASHRAF USMANI
S/O MOHAMMAD RAZI USMANI

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FOREWORD

To The English Edition by
Justice Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

On the advice of some of my elders I hold a weekly meeting in Jamia Masjid AlBaitul Mukaram attended by a large number of Muslim brothers and sisters. Rather than giving a formal lecture, my basic purpose intended to be achieved through these meetings is that we get together for some time to review our ways of life in the light of Islamic teachings and to deliberate what is going to happen to us after we leave this mundane world. When the Muslims having true Islamic orientation sit together for this purpose, each one of them benefit from the other to create a genuine concern about our coming life which is the real and eternal life as compared to the present one which may come to an end any time.

I this mutual meeting which is meant for self-correction I normally read a book of Hadith and explain it to the audience in the light of what I have learned from my elders with special reference to the current attitude prevailing in our society and touching upon the relevant practical issues, social evils and the major faults found in our practical life. My friend Maulana Abdulla Memon who regularly attended these meetings usually prepares the audio cassettes of these addresses which are widely circulated in the country and abroad. He has also transcribed some of these audio cassettes in an abridged form and after their compilation he has published them in separate

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FOREWORD

To The English Edition by
Justice Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani

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complete set of these books is available to the readers. Let our readers remember that these books have been translated from oral lectures of the honourable Mufti Justice Mawlana Muhammad Taqi Usmani and not from his writings.

They may, therefore, find in them the style of the spoken words that the translator may have retained here and there.

We have endeavoured to match the get up of the books with their invaluable content and have paid due care in the use of paper, printing and binding. We hope that this set of books will be very useful to our readers in Europe and the United States. They will gain beneficial knowledge from these books and be prompted to put their knowledge into practice.

Insha Allah they will find a great change in their everyday life.

We have published many books in English and many more are under preparation. Do write to us for a full list of these books.

Finally, I request my readers to remember me in their prayers as also my parents and family members. May Allah reward them.

KHALIL ASHRAF USMANI
S/O MOHAMMAD RAZI USMANI

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FOREWORD

To The English Edition by
Justice Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

On the advice of some of my elders I hold a weekly meeting in Jamia Masjid AlBaitul Mukaram attended by a large number of Muslim brothers and sisters. Rather than giving a formal lecture, my basic purpose intended to be achieved through these meetings is that we get together for some time to review our ways of life in the light of Islamic teachings and to deliberate what is going to happen to us after we leave this mundane world. When the Muslims having true Islamic orientation sit together for this purpose, each one of them benefit from the other to create a genuine concern about our coming life which is the real and eternal life as compared to the present one which may come to an end any time.

I this mutual meeting which is meant for self-correction I normally read a book of Hadith and explain it to the audience in the light of what I have learned from my elders with special reference to the current attitude prevailing in our society and touching upon the relevant practical issues, social evils and the major faults found in our practical life. My friend Maulana Abdulla Memon who regularly attended these meetings usually prepares the audio cassettes of these addresses which are widely circulated in the country and abroad. He has also transcribed some of these audio cassettes in an abridged form and after their compilation he has published them in separate

translated from oral lectures of the honourable Mufti Justice Mawlana Muhammad Taqi Usmani and not from his writings.

They may, therefore, find in them the style of the spoken words that the translator may have retained here and there.

We have endeavoured to match the get up of the books with their invaluable content and have paid due care in the use of paper, printing and binding. We hope that this set of books will be very useful to our readers in Europe and the United States. They will gain beneficial knowledge from these books and be prompted to put their knowledge into practice.

Insha Allah they will find a great change in their everyday life.

We have published many books in English and many more are under preparation. Do write to us for a full list of these books.

Finally, I request my readers to remember me in their prayers as also my parents and family members. May Allah reward them.

KHALIL ASHRAF USMANI
S/O MOHAMMAD RAZI USMANI

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FOREWORD

To The English Edition by
Justice Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

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FOREWORD

To The English Edition by
Justice Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani

بِسْمِ اللّٰہِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

On the advice of some of my elders I hold a weekly meeting in Jamia Masjid AlBaitul Mukaram attended by a large number of Muslim brothers and sisters. Rather than giving a formal lecture, my basic purpose intended to be achieved through these meetings is that we get together for some time to review our ways of life in the light of Islamic teachings and to deliberate what is going to happen to us after we leave this mundane world. When the Muslims having true Islamic orientation sit together for this purpose, each one of them benefit from the other to create a genuine concern about our coming life which is the real and eternal life as compared to the present one which may come to an end any time.

I this mutual meeting which is meant for self-correction I normally read a book of Hadith and explain it to the audience in the light of what I have learned from my elders with special reference to the current attitude prevailing in our society and touching upon the relevant practical issues, social evils and the major faults found in our practical life. My friend Maulana Abdulla Memon who regularly attended these meetings usually prepares the audio cassettes of these addresses which are widely circulated in the country and abroad. He has also transcribed some of these audio cassettes in an abridged form and after their compilation he has published them in separate

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FOREWORD

To The English Edition by
Justice Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani

بِسْمِ اللّٰہِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

On the advice of some of my elders I hold a weekly meeting in Jamia Masjid AlBaitul Mukaram attended by a large number of Muslim brothers and sisters. Rather than giving a formal lecture, my basic purpose intended to be achieved through these meetings is that we get together for some time to review our ways of life in the light of Islamic teachings and to deliberate what is going to happen to us after we leave this mundane world. When the Muslims having true Islamic orientation sit together for this purpose, each one of them benefit from the other to create a genuine concern about our coming life which is the real and eternal life as compared to the present one which may come to an end any time.

I this mutual meeting which is meant for self-correction I normally read a book of Hadith and explain it to the audience in the light of what I have learned from my elders with special reference to the current attitude prevailing in our society and touching upon the relevant practical issues, social evils and the major faults found in our practical life. My friend Maulana Abdulla Memon who regularly attended these meetings usually prepares the audio cassettes of these addresses which are widely circulated in the country and abroad. He has also transcribed some of these audio cassettes in an abridged form and after their compilation he has published them in separate volumes under the title of "Islahi Khutbaat". Nine volumes of

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FOREWORD

To The English Edition by
Justice Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

On the advice of some of my elders I hold a weekly meeting in Jamia Masjid AlBaitul Mukaram attended by a large number of Muslim brothers and sisters. Rather than giving a formal lecture, my basic purpose intended to be achieved through these meetings is that we get together for some time to review our ways of life in the light of Islamic teachings and to deliberate what is going to happen to us after we leave this mundane world. When the Muslims having true Islamic orientation sit together for this purpose, each one of them benefit from the other to create a genuine concern about our coming life which is the real and eternal life as compared to the present one which may come to an end any time.

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this compilations have already come out in Urdu by the grace of Allah which were widely circulated, read and benefited from.

Since long some of my friends were suggesting that these addresses be rendered into English as well so that they may be useful for the English readership. I was reluctant to act upon the suggestion because, as told earlier, these addresses were not formal lectures on a particular subject. They were in fact discussions, on different aspects of our lives, undertaken with frankness rather than formalism. They some time lack the sequence usually expected from a well considered writing. Therefore, I do not know how far their translation will be as meaningful and effective as it was proved to be in the original Urdu language. However, my nephew, Mr. Khalil Ashraf Usmani, the proprietor of Darul Ishaat, requested Mr. Iqbal Ansari and Mr. Rafiq Abdur Rehman to translate these Khutbaat into English. Both of these gentlemen undertook the task and the outcome of their noble effort is appearing before the readers. I had advised them not to be too strict in literal translation and to render the basic idea in their own style. I had no opportunity to go through the manuscript of their translation but had an occasion to have a cursory look on some passages. To the best of my assessment the translation I have seen is correct and conveying. I hope that it will help readers to understand the basic theme of these Khutbaat. May Allah grant the best reward to the translators and publisher of this book and make it beneficial for the readers. I would again remind the readers that it is not a book properly authored by me. It is the compilation of my extempore discussions therefore, I extend my apology if some readers find the sequence of thoughts somehow disturbed in some places. However, the readers should concentrate on the message given and not on the style adopted.

Muhammad Taqi Usmani

FOREWORD

To The Urdu Edition by
Justice Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ وَكَفٰى وَسَلَامٌ عَلٰى عِبَادِهِ الَّذِيْنَ اصْطَفٰى

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

All Praise belongs to Allah Who is Sufficient. And, peace be on His chosen servant.

For many years now, I have been delivering talks on religious subjects in compliance with the advice of my elders every Friday after 'Asr prayer.

People of different walks of life attend these meetings, and there are women too. By the Grace of Allah, I derive much benefit myself from these talks and my listeners too feel a sense of advantage. May Allah cause the series of talks a means of reformation for all of us. *Aameen!*

My close colleague, Maulana Abdullah Memon, has been recording these talks for some time and distributing the cassettes. I have been told by my friends that these cassettes have been much beneficial to the general body of Muslims.

The number of cassettes has now exceeded two hundred and fifty. Maulana Abdullah Memon has reduced some of these cassettes to writing and brought them out in the form of small booklets which are now compiled together in book-form under the name of Islahi Khutbaat (Discourses on Islamic Way of life)

I have revised some of the speeches and the Maulana has done a very useful work by annotating quotations of the

Ahadith in my speeches with proper references to their source. This work has proved very useful.

In reading this book, my readers must remember that it is not a formal composition but a collection of speeches made at different times penned down from recording. Therefore, they will sense the style of an oral dialogue in these articles. The benefit that accrues to any Muslim from these articles is merely a blessing of Allah for which he must be thankful to Him. But, if there is a slip in these articles or something superfluous, then that is a lapse on my part I must say, however, that my aim in delivering these talks was not simply to speak out but-before everything else- I had my reformation in mind, and then that my listeners may be drawn towards their own reformation.

Do not let the written word please you
Or the working of fate worry you!
I have by your memory alone
What of the text and what of its meaning

May Allah through His Grace and Favour let these writings be a means of our reformation, and a treasure for the Hereafter. May He reward well the compiler and publisher of these articles. *Aameen.*

Muhammad Taqi Usmani.
12 Rabi-ul- Awwal 1414 A.H

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Mohammad Asif 310-New Meena Bazar Jama Masjid Dehli India

FIRST EDITION
2009

PRINTED AT
ILMI GRAPHICS

PUBLISHER
DARUL - ISHAAT URDU BAZAR KARACHI-1 PAKISTAN.
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CAUSES OF DISUNITY AND THE REMEDY-I[1]

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ نَحْمَدُهٗ وَنَسْتَعِيْنُهٗ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهٗ وَنُؤْمِنُ بِهٖ وَنَتَوَكَّلُ عَلَيْهِ وَنَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنْ شُرُوْرِ اَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ اَعْمَالِنَا مَنْ يَّهْدِهِ اللّٰهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهٗ وَمَنْ يُّضْلِلْهُ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهٗ وَاَشْهَدُ اَنْ لَّا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهٗ لَا شَرِيْكَ لَهٗ وَاَشْهَدُ اَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا وَنَبِيَّنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهٗ وَرَسُوْلُهٗ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالٰى عَلَيْهِ وَعَلٰى اٰلِهٖ وَاَصْحَابِهٖ وَبَارَكَ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيْمًا كَثِيْرًا اَمَّا بَعْدُ!

اَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ الرَّجِيْمِ O

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ O

عن أبى الدرداء رضى الله تعالىٰ عنه عن النبى صلى الله عليه و سلم قال ألا أخبركم بافضل من درجة الصيام و الصلوة و الصدقة قالوا بلى قال اصلاح ذات البين و فساد ذات البين هى الحالقة۔

(ابو داود كتاب الادب، باب ما فى اصلاح ذات البين)

Wiseman of the ummah

The above Hadith is reported by Sayyidina Abu a d-Darda رضى الله عنه. He was a high ranking Companion and *Wali* (friend) of Allah. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had described him as حكيم هذه الامة (the wise man of this *Ummah*). Allah had granted him wisdom.

Question creates interest

He reported that once the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked his *sahabah* رضى الله عنهم, "Shall I not disclose to you something that is

[1] Venue: Jami' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi.

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FIRST EDITION
2009

PRINTED AT
ILMI GRAPHICS

PUBLISHER
DARUL - ISHAAT URDU BAZAR KARACHI-1 PAKISTAN.
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Venue : Da'wa Academy International
Islamic University,
Islamabad

Date: : Sunday, the 25th. August, 1992
After 'Asr Prayers

LIMITS OF REASON

بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم۔ الحمد الله رب العالمين والصلوٰة
والسلام على رسوله الكريم وعلى آله واصحابه اجمعين اما بعد۔

This is not the first occasion for me to attend the various training courses of this Academy. I have had the opportunity to address some of the training courses held from time to time even before. On this occasion I have been called upon to talk to your assembly on the topic of Islamisation of laws, which is a very lengthy topic and comprehensive. However, in the short time I have at my disposal, I wish to invite your attention to only one aspect of the Islamisation of Laws.

The term "Fundamentalism,"
has become a word of Abuse

It is generally demanded by the Muslim population that our law, our living, our politics, rather every aspect of

life should be moulded on the pattern of Islam. A question naturally arises as to why and on what grounds life should be so re-shaped and re-formed. This question arises only because, to day, we are living in a society in which secular and purely worldly trends of thinking and understanding have overpowered the hearts and minds of the world. It has been accepted universally as a maxim that the best and the most successful system of running the government of a country is the secular system. In a society so riddled with the dazzling charms of the secular system, it looks rather unnatural and strange to demand that "in our country we should mould every aspect of our life and activity into the Islamic pattern , including its laws, life-style and politics" or in other words, we should adopt that life-style which was in vogue fourteen centuries ago. Such a demand and call in this contemporary world sounds quite strange and this is dubbed, sarcastically, as "Fundamentalism." This term, i.e. "Fundamentalism" has been branded and introduced in the world as a repulsive term of abuse. In their sight everyone is a fundamentalist who demands that the affairs of the government should be settled in the light of the laws of Religion (Islam). Such a person is defamed with the title of "Fundamental", even though in its real import this is not a bad term. This term "Fundamentalist" only means one who adopts and abides by the basic principles of life. It is very sad that now-a-days the word has been given the meaning of an abuse.

Why Islamisation?

A question arises as to why we want to adopt the Islamic way of life and want to mould the laws of the country into the Islamic pattern when the Islamic teachings go back to a period fourteen centuries back or

even more than that.

Allah has granted us Intellect.

In this connection a relevant question arises. How should secular state or a state not based on any religious principles conduct its affairs? This question is replied to by saying that we do possess intellect, we have also the facilities of observation and experience which may help us decide as to what are our needs and the demands of life in the present conditions of the world by meeting which we can make the wheels of government revolve peacefully and safely. We may indeed have to effect changes and amendments in the system of government, as and when needed. Thus can we follow the path of peace and prosperity.

Is intellect the last standard?

In a secular system of government Intellect, Observation and Experience have been taken as the final standard to rely upon. We have now to find out how efficient is really this standard. Can this standard be so effective and efficient as to guide humanity till the Day of Judgment? Can this so-called standard based on intellect, observation and experience alone, prove sufficient and effective for human life?

Sources of Knowledge

In order to find out an answer to this question we must realize the truth that no system of life can work successfully, unless it has at its back a treasure of knowledge to propel it onwards. It should also be noted at this stage that Almighty Allah has bestowed on man certain sources of knowledge, each source possessing a

specific jurisdiction but beyond this jurisdiction it becomes in-effective.

The Jurisdiction of the Five Senses

It may be mentioned, as an example, that the first of these sources for acquiring knowledge are the five senses, viz., the eyes, the ears, the nose, the tongue, etc. Man is able to acquire knowledge about many things by using his eyesight, by tasting things with the tongue, by smelling things with the nose, by hearing words with the ears and by touching objects with his hands. However, each of these sources of knowledge which fall within the jurisdiction of observation has a limit of its own beyond which it can do nothing. For example, the eye can see but it cannot hear; the ear can hear but it cannot see; the nose can smell but it cannot see. If there is a man who desires to use each of these organs for a function for which it has not been created by Allah, that man shall be taken by the world to be a fool, for being ignorant of the functions of these organs.

The second source of knowledge is the Intellect

As already mentioned, the working limits of these five senses reach a boundary which they cannot cross. At this stage, neither of these senses is effective. This is the stage at which, knowledge of things cannot be acquired through observation. To meet this challenge, Almighty Allah has bestowed upon us another source of knowledge and that is the Intellect which helps man to acquire knowledge where the Five Senses become ineffective and helpless. For example, there is a table lying before me. I can know its colour by seeing it with the eyes. I can know by touching it with my hands that it is made of hard wood

and is covered with Formica. Yet, none of these senses helps me to know how this table came into existence, because the process of its manufacture did not take place before me. I such a situation my Intellect guides me by suggesting to me that such a finely finished object cannot come into existence by itself. Some expert artisan has made this beautiful table and he is the expert carpenter. It is my Intellect that has taught me that the table was made by carpenter. It is thus proved that my Intellect came to my help when my Five senses left me helpless.

The Jurisdiction of the Intellect

It should however, be noted that just as the Jurisdiction of the Five senses is limited in the same way the jurisdiction of the Intellect is also limited. The Intellect, too helps man to a certain limit, then leaves him helpless, as if cannot go beyond the limit of its jurisdiction in providing guidance to man.

The third source of knowledge is Divine Revelation

Almighty Allah has granted man another source of knowledge to help and guide him where his Intellect leaves him helpless. That source is Divine Revelation, meaning provision of knowledge to man by Allah through heavenly revelation. This source of knowledge starts from the place where the jurisdiction of the Intellect fails. Thus to try to use the Intellect in the presence of Divine Revelation is just like trying to see things by the ears instead of by the eyes and so on so forth. It does not mean that the Intellect is a useless faculty. No, it is highly serviceable, rather indispensable to man but within its jurisdiction and not beyond that.

The difference between Islam and Secualrism

The difference between Islamic and secular system of life lies that in the secular system the process of knowledge comes to an end after reaching the limits of the first two sources, viz. the Five senses and the Intellect as there is no third source of knowledge available to propel the secular system onwards. As against this, Islam claims that there exists another source of knowledge for you and that is the Divine Revelation.

The need for Divine Revelation

We have not to see how far this claim of Islam holds good in our contemporary world that the Intellect cannot guide man to acquire knowledge and guidance without any limit and in all circumstances, but the world stands in need of Prophets and Messengers of Allah and Revealed Books.

The Intellect is a Deceptive Faculty

In these times great emphasis is being laid on the Intellectual Faculty (or Rationalism) and it is said that every decision should be taken after considering the pros and cons of every problem in the light of Rationalism. However, this Rationalism does not possess a set formula or fixed principles to provide universal truths, acceptable to all men, to serve as an infallible standard to judge what is right and what is wrong, what is to be adopted and what is to be rejected. If we leave this decision to the dictates of Intellect we are liable to commit devastating faults. Just turn the pages of history to find out for yourself how grievously and fatally the faculty of Intellect has misguided humanity into destruction and deluge. I cite below a few instances from the pages of history.

To marry one's own sister is not against Intellect

About eight hundred years ago a sect sprang up in the Islamic World under the name of the 'Batini' or the "Qaramitia" sect. Ubaiduallah Bin Hasan Qirwani was one of its renowned leaders. He wrote an interesting letter to his followers about how they should lead their lives. He writes:

The People have in their households a beautiful and well-behaved girl in the person of a sister who is well acquainted with the temperament and psychology of her brother, but this fool gives her hand in marriage to a stranger, without knowing whether or not the couple would pull on with each other peacefully and willingly. As for himself, be brings a wife who is much inferior to his sister in beauty, behaviour, adaptability and considerateness.

I fail to understand why one should hand over the wealth of one's own household to a stranger and bring to one's own household a girl who cannot provide her mate with the desired peace and comfort. This is a sheer folly. This is against wisdom. I therefore, advise my followers to shun this folly and preserve the wealth of their household in its original place.(Al-farq lil-haghdadie, p.297 and Bayanul-ma-za hib al-Batinya, lil Dalimi p.81)

The Sister and Sexual satisfaction

At another place the same Ubaidullah Bin Hasan Qirwani conveys the following message to his followers on the basis of wisdom:

"When a sister can prepare food for her brother to satisfy his hunger, wash his clothes, arrange his bedding and provide him with other comforts why can she not satisfy his sexual urge also? This is indeed against

Wisdom"(Ibid)

Impossible to repudiate this argument with the help of the Intellect

However, vehemently you may curse this man, you will not be able to repudiate his arguments till the Day of Judgment with pure intellect that is devoid of Divine Revelation.

This is not immoral from the Intellectual point of view

If a man says that this is grossly immoral, grievously disgustful, this may be repudiated by saying that this feeling of immorality and disgust is the result of the prevailing social trends and customs. You have been born and are living in a society where this is considered as something very repulsive and hateful, otherwise in the eyes of the intellect this is not at all disgustful.

Preservation of genealogy offers no intellectual argument

If you say that this practice vitiates the genealogical line, this may be repudiated by saying that there is no harm in this. The idea of preserving the genealogical lineage is not based on any intellectual principle.

This too is a part of the Human urge

If you say in reply to this argument that this is harmful medically, because research has established that the system of Incest (sexual relations between close relation) is medically harmful.

Are you aware that books are being published today in the Western world that Incest is a part of the natural

human urge; and it is not correct to say that it is harmful medically. Not only is this an echo of the same slogan which Ubaidullah bin Hasan Qairwani had raised eight hundred years ago, but it is now being actually practiced in the western countries.

The result of freedom from Divine Revelation

Why is all this happening? It is because we are trying to use the Intellect in matters which lie beyond its jurisdiction and in which the Divine Revelation alone can provide guidance. One result of releasing the Intellect from the grip of the Divine Revelation may be seen in the fact that the British Parliament has passed the law of legalizing homosexuality under the thump of clappings.

And now this vice has become a regular science. Once I happened to visit a library in New York. I found there a separate section devoted to literature on the subject, "Gay style of life". A large number of books have been published on this subject and many associations are working for this under the auspices of persons holding high positions. The then Mayor of New York was also a Gay.

The Deception of the Intellect

In one of the past issues of the famous American Magazine, "The Times", there was a report that about one thousand of the American soldiers engaged in the last Gulf war were discharged on the charge of being homosexual. A great hue and cry was raised against this action demanding their reinstatement. The argument of the protesters was that it was only the satisfaction of a human urge. On the basis of this Human Urge, most heinous vices are being declared lawful, because according to them intellectually there is absolutely no objection to such acts.

This relates to the human society but the vice has penetrated into the animal kingdom as well.

Another Deception of the Intellect

Today ways and means are being searched for in order to check the spread of the nuclear weapons the devastating effects of which are well known all over the world. In an article included in the Encyclopaedia Britannica on the topic of Atom Bomb, it is stated that experiment of the Atom Bomb was made in two places in the world, viz. Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan. Defending the devastations wrought by the Bomb, the article has mentioned first of all that the explosions of the Atom Bomb in these two places were made to save about ten million human lives. It has been argued that if this explosion had not taken place, there was a possibility of the continuance of these nuclear wars resulting in the death of about ten million human lives. Thus the Atom Bomb has been introduced to the world as a saviour and not as a destroyer of life. This justification of a universally accursed crime has also been offered on the basis of the so-called Intellect.

What is intended to impress by this example is that it is always possible to find some justification and excuse through the misconception and misuse of the Intellect even for the worst vices and misdeeds.

The entire world is cursing today the cult of Fascism and the names of its two Champions, Hitler and Mussolini have become words of abuse in the political world. Only go through their philosophy of Fascism to see how logically and cleverly they have presented it to the world in the garb of something quite feasible and reasonable. Why is it so? It is indeed the misplacement and misuse of

the Intellect that misguided them. Thus, there is no vice and crime in the world for which some justification cannot be found because of the misuse and misplacement of this faculty.

An exmaple of the Jurisdiction of the Intellect

The well know historian and philosopher, Allama Ibn-e-Khaldoon has written that the Intellect which Almighty Allah has bestowed upon man is indeed very useful and valuable but this is subject to the condition that it is utilised within its jurisdiction. It may be compared to the delicate scale which is used to weigh gold. If anyone uses it to weigh a large block of stone it will break. Now if any person says that the scale is useless, as it could not weight the block of stone, that person will be declared to be a fool. The truth is that the scale was used for something which did not fall within its jurisdiction, so it broke. (Introduction of Ibn Khaldoon, p-440)

The difference between Islam and Secularism

The basic difference between Islam and secularism is that Islam recommends the use of the Intellect strictly within its jurisdiction and not beyond that. If it is pressed into service beyond that not only will it not work but it will also begin to furnish wrong answers. If you operate a computer to tell you something which has not been fed into it, not will it will not work but it will give wrong and misleading results. In the same way, this computer of the human intellect will give either no reply or misleading reply about something which has not been fed into it and that something is indeed the information that is preserved in the Divine Revelation. It will be absurd to utilise the Intellect and expect from it information which can be

obtained only from the Divine Revelation. That is why Almighty Allah sent to this world from time to time His Prophets and Messengers with Divine Scriptures, the last of them being the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ who came to this world with the last of the Revealed Books, the Holy Qur'an. There is a verse in the Holy Qur'an, saying:

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتٰبَ بِالْحَقِّ لِتَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ

We have indeed revealed to you the Book with the truth, so that you may judge between mankind (4:105)

This Revealed Book, the Qur'an, will tell you what is true and what is false, what is right and what is wrong, what is good and what is bad - things which you cannot know from your Intellect.

The hopeless condition of the Organisation that advocates Freedom of Thought

There is a renowned International Organisation known as "Amnesty International", with its Head Office in Paris - France. Sometime ago a research scholar of this organisation visited Pakistan for carrying out a survey. He also called on me for an interview. He began his interview by saying that it was the aim of his organisation to work for the freedom of thought and to secure the freedom of many people who are suffering from torture in prisons on the charge of their freedom of thought and we want to liberate them. This, he said, is an issue about which there is no dispute. He told me that he had been sent to Pakistan to collect the opinions of different classes of people in this country. He wanted to question me also on this subject.

The Survey being carried out today

I inquired from him about the purpose of the survey. He told me that he wanted to collect the opinions of different circles of people in Pakistan on this topic. The following dialogue took place between us:

I: When did you arrive at Karachi?

He: Just this morning.

I: When do you intend to go back?

He: I am leaving for Islamabad the next morning.(This meeting was held at night).

I: How long will you stay in Islamabad?

He: Only one day.

I: You are going to carry out a survey of the opinion of various circles of people in Pakistan after which you shall draw up a report to submit to your Organisation. Will your stay in two or three cities of Pakistan for two or three days be sufficient for your purpose?

He: It is obvious that three days are not sufficient to know the opinions of all sections of the people. I have however, met peoples of different schools of thought. I have come to see you for the same purpose. Kindly favour me with your guidance.

I: How many persons have you met in Karachi?

He: I have met three persons and you are the fourth.

I: You will draw up a report purporting to represent Karachi on the basis of the ideas if these four men only. I doubt about the seriousness of your survey report. Serious research work is not undertaken in this way. I am, therefore, unable to reply to your questions. He attributed his inability to interview more people for

shortage of time. Still he insisted on my replies to some of his questions. I told him that I was unable to cooperate with him for such an incomplete survey. On the other hand, I asked him permission to put to him a few questions about the basic concept of his Organisation.

He: In fact I had visited you to put to you a few questions, but if you do not want to entertain my questions you are welcome to put some questions about my Organisation, if you so desire.

Is the Theory of Freedom of thought Absolute?

I said to him: You say that the organisation that has deputed you on this work is a champion of Freedom of thought. This Freedom of thought is indeed very good, but do you believe that it is totally Absolute in its import? Is it without any restrictions to keep it within some limits? He replied that he failed to understand my intention. I explained to him my intention by saying: Is the conception of Freedom of thought so Absolute that man should express himself before others and preach to others and exhort them to follow whatever occurs to him ? For example, I feel inclined to think that the capitalists have amassed great wealth, so the poor classes should have the freedom to commit dacoity and rob the capitalists of their wealth and there should be none to stop them from this? I should also propagate this thought of mine among the common people, because the capitalists have amassed this wealth by sucking the blood of the poorer classes. Now tell me if you would support this type of Freedom of thought.

You have no fixed standard or yardstick to determine this Freedom of thought

In reply he told me that he would not support such unbridled Freedom of thought. I told him that when the conception of Freedom of thought is not absolute, then should you not like that some restrictions should be placed on it? He replied in the affirmative, adding by way of an example, that the Freedom of thought should not allow the commission of violence and tyranny to others. I said: This is your view. Others should also have freedom to personal views about the imposition of restriction on the Freedom of thought according to their views. There is no reason why only your views about the restrictions on the Freedom of Thought should be accepted and those of others rejected. The whole issue boils to this question: What should be these restrictions and who should finally approve or disapprove them? I request you to let me know some universally acceptable standard or yardstick for the adoption of the desirable restrictions.

His answer to this question was: We have never given serious thought to this issue. I said: It is a pity that you belong to such a renowned International Organisation and have come out to carry out a survey on the topic of Freedom of thought, but you have not yet decided as to what should be the limits, scope and jurisdiction of this so-called freedom. This programme of yours cannot be successful without a clear-cut decision on this vital issue. I requested him to furnish me an answer to this question from the literature available with him or after consulting others.

Mankind has no standard (yardstick) other than the Divine Revelation

The gentleman promised to convey to his Organisation my views and furnish to me the relevant literature on the subject. He then took leave of me and thanked me coolly. I have been waiting for his literature or replies to my question to this day. I feel quite sure that he can furnish to me neither replies to my questions nor any universally acceptable literature on this topic till the Day of Judgment. This is because every person will fix a standard of his own choice. There is no one in this world who can propose a standard which is universally applicable. I can assert this without fear of any repudiation that there is no standard or criterion other than the criterion of the Divine Revelations which alone can impose necessary and eternal limits on these ambiguous thoughts and conceptions. Man has no guidance other than the Divine guidance.

It is only the Faith that can serve as a Standard

Just consider the theme of philosophy which studies the relation between law and morality. There is a school of thought which maintains that the law has nothing to do with morality and conception of what is good and what is bad is meaningless. The words, "Should, should not and ought",, etc, are the creation of man's own desire. So, whatever a society adopts is right for it. We have no criterion to decide what is good and what is bad. There is a well known text book on the subject of Jurisprudence in which the following sentence occurs at the end of the discussion on this subject.

> Mankind has one thing which can serve as a criterion or standard to determine these things

> and that is Religion, but Religion belongs to man's Belief which has no place in the secular system of life. That is why we cannot adopt it as a basis.

We have no argument against this evil

There is another example. I have already mentioned that when the Bill of Homosexuality was passed in the British Parliament there was a thump to express clapping joy. Before its passage the Bill was vehemently opposed and it was entrusted to a committee to study and decide whether or not it should be passed. The report of this committee was published and its summary is available in Fridman's famous book, The Legal Theory. According to this summary the committee concluded its report with the following observation:

> There is no doubt that this is not good. We have, however, decided that the law should not interfere with the private life of man. As such, in the light of this principle we have no argument against this evil as long as we differentiate between sin and crime. This Bill can be opposed only when we regard sin and crime as being one and the same. There is, therefore, no justification to stop the passage of this Bill.

When we demand the Islamization of the law we, mean to say that the secular system recognises as source of knowledge only the eyes, the ears, the nose, the tongue, etc. and the intellect. We propose that going one step further, it should also adopt the Divine Revelation as a source of knowledge and guidance.

I fail to understand the Reason for this Order

It is an act of folly to reject an injunction on the Divine Revelation (i.e. the Qur'an) on the ground that one is unable to understand the reason behind that injunction, when it becomes clear that the Divine Revelation starts from the place which lies beyond the jurisdiction of the human intellect and understanding. If the human reason could be of help at such a stage, there should have been no need of Revelation. If man could grasp the ins and outs of this injunction through the faculty of his Reason, it was hardly necessary for Almighty Allah to send down Revelations through His Prophet ﷺ

Science and Technology in the Qur'an and the Ahadith

This also furnishes reply to another question which often arises among the educated classes. They say that this is the age of science and technology. The entire world has advanced in this field, but our Qur'an and the Ahadith do not give us any formula in this field, so that we might learn how to manufacture the Atom and Hydrogen Bombs. For this reason some people are suffering from an inferiority complex, while the world is reaching the moon and the planet Mars, the Divine Revelation and the Traditions are silent on this point.

Science and Technology are Experimental subjects

The question can be answered by saying that these subjects lie within the jurisdiction of the human intellect. These are experimental sciences, in which personal efforts and experiments are needed. Almighty Allah has left this branch of knowledge to the human research and

experiment. The more a man devotes his energies, research and experiment to this technical work, the more will he go ahead in this field. The Qur'an has been, in fact, revealed for the guidance of humanity in matters which lie beyond the jurisdiction of the human intellect and which the faculty of intellect cannot grasp. Thus, it is the Divine Revelation (Qur'an) that has come to our help in understanding such spiritual and celestial issues.

Thus, the entire philosophy of Islamization of Laws consists in the proposition that we should mould our lives on the Laws of Islam.

The Islamic Laws possess Elasticity

Even after having discussed the truth in the foregoing pages, a question still arises as to how, in this ever-changing world, we can revert to a life-style which is fourteen centuries old. How can we apply to the contemporary conditions of life in the twentieth and twenty first centuries. These centuries old principles of our life-styles and its needs are ever-changing? This confusion arises from our ignorance of the Islamic Laws. It should be carefully noted that Islam has divided its laws into three parts.

1. Fixed Laws that are based on the final injunctions of the Qur'an and the Sunnah (Traditions and practices of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. These are irrevocable laws incapable of being subjected to any change irrespective of the changes which the world may undergo till the Doomsday.

2. Laws which are capable of being revised and amended through the juristic process of *Ijtihad* (Independent judgment) and *Istimbat* (Deduction.). They are not based on irrevocable fixed Laws. They do contain

the elasticity of the Islamic Laws.

3. These are laws about which the Qur'an as well as the Sunnah are silent and contain no directions. Why is it so? This aspect of the law has been left to the discretion of our intellect and for the jurists to consider and decide. The scope of this part of the law is so wide that in every age and by his effort and independent judgment, man can fill this vacuum to meet the ever-changing needs of the world.

The Injunctions in the first category are incapable of any change till the Day of Judgment

The second category of the laws are capable of being changed and amended through the processes of *Ijtihad* and *Istimbat* to meet the ever-changing needs of the times. The laws in the first category can however, undergo no change in any circumstances till the Doomsday. This is because they are based on the nature, sensibility and temperament of man. The human life-style may change, in fact, it is under a continuous process of change, but human nature and temperament cannot change. So these laws, too, cannot be changed.

The *Shari'ah* (Islamic Laws), however, allow us to effect changes in the other categories of the laws within the limits imposed by the Islamic Shari'ah.

Where does Ijtihad start from?

Ijtihad starts from the point where the Fixed law based on the evidence of the Qur'an and the Sunnah, (i.e. the injunctions in the first category) are not available. In places where these Fixed Laws are available it is going beyond one's jurisdiction to apply one's own intellect to take decisions against these Fixed Laws. Such a practice

leads to the distortion/corruption of Religion, of which I quote below an example.

The meat of swine, i.e. pork should be lawful

In the Holy Qur'an the eating of pork has been declared to be strictly forbidden. This prohibition is based on an injunction of Divine Revelation. To question on the basis of the intellect as to why pork has been prohibited and made unlawful is an example of using the intellect beyond its jurisdiction. That is why some misguided Intellectuals have gone to the extent of saying: In the days of yore, pigs were very dirty and were raised in very disgusting environments, eating filth and faeces. Nowadays they are bred in highly hygienic farms in very healthy environments. So the injunction which prohibits eating of prok should be repealed. This is using the Intellect beyond its jurisdiction where it is refusing to operate.

What is the differece between Usury and Trade?

Similarly, when usury and interest have been prohibited in the Holy Qur'an, they have become unlawful for all times, whether or not the Intellect is able to grasp the wisdom of this injunction. While quoting the argument of the unbelievers, the Qur'an has said:

إِنَّمَا الْبَيْعُ مِثْلُ الرِّبٰوا

"Trade is just like Usury. Man earns profit from Trading (sale and purchase) and from usury also." (2: 275)

Without explaining the difference between trade and usury, the Qur'an gave the following reply to the unbelievers:

وَاَحَلَّ اللّٰهُ الْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ الرِّبٰوا ؕ

Allah has allowed trading and prohibited usury. (Ibid).

Now you have no business to object to this Divine Command, because when Allah has allowed trading, it is lawful; and when He has forbidden usury, it is unlawful. To raise objections to this Divine Command is nothing but using the Intellect beyond its Jurisdiction.

An Event

It is a famous event that once an Indian musician went on the Hajj Pilgrimage. After performing the pilgrimage, while he was going to Madina Munawwarah, he had to pass the nights at the various night stops. When this musician stopped at a place to pass the night, by chance an Arab musician also came there. He was a Bedouin and an untrained musician and did not know how to play on the usual musical instruments. His performance was hopeless and repulsive. When the Indian musician listened to Bedouin performance he said: Now I understand why the Holy Prophet ﷺ declared singing and musical performance to be unlawful, because he listened only to the hopeless performance of the Bedouins. If he had listened to my performance, he would not have declared music unlawful.

The intention in relating this event is to point out that now-a-days mis-directed and wrong thinking are being dubbed as *Ijtihad*. This is an example of using personal desires within the domain of the *Shari'ah*.

The *Ijtihad* of present-day thinkers

There is among us a so-called 'thinker'. I mention him here as a 'thinker' because he is regarded as such in his circle:

وَالسَّارِقُ وَالسَّارِقَةُ فَاقْطَعُوْٓا اَيْدِيَهُمَا

As for the thief, both male and female, cut off their hands (5:38)

Explaining this verse of the Holy Qur'an, this so-called thinker has said: The word "thief" stands for the capitalists who have established huge industries, the word "hands" stands for industries and "cut off" stands for nationalization of their industries. According to this, the verse means that all the industries of the capitalists should be nationalised to close the door of theft.

Note: Thus, according to his "great thinker", Allah has let free the thieves, robbers, dacoits and plunderers to continue their crimes without fear of punishment.

Dr Muhammad Iqbal's opinion about the *Ijtihad* (Independent opinion) of this kind

ز اجتہادے عالمانے کم نظر
اقتداء با رفتگاں محفوظ تر

To follow in the footsteps of the past learned men are safer than following the *Ijtihad* of such short-sighted men of today.

The cry for *Tajdeed* (Renovation)

Dr. Iqbal has said:

لیکن یہ ڈر ہے کہ یہ آوازۂ تجدید
مشرق میں ہے تقلید فرنگی کا بہانہ

The hue and cry being raised for introducing renovation and changes may, it is feared, be only a plea to impose on the East the Western trend of thought and civilisation.

It may be mentioned that only the use of the term "Islamisation" as a common slogan will not help at all, unless the philosophy of Islamisation is fully grasped and understood.

خرد نے کہہ بھی دیا لا الہ تو کیا حاصل
دل و نگاہ مسلماں نہیں تو کچھ بھی نہیں

It is no good if a man pronounces the words "Laa ilaaha ... ' by dint of his intellect, unless he becomes a Muslim by his heart and soul, and purity of sight.

Accordingly, the first step towards Islamisation is that we should, with full confidence and belief, full courage, without any favour or fear and apology, be ready to declare openly that if there is any way open to humanity to prosperity and success it is Islamisation and Islamisation alone and nothing else.

May Almighty Allah help us to understand this truth rightly and work to implement this. ***Aameen.***

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد للہ رب العالمین

Venue : Jame'masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal
Karachi

Date : Friday, the 24th January 1992
After 'Asr Prayers

After the event of the celestial ascension *Mi'raj* the Holy Prophet ﷺ lived in this world for eighteen years. It is, however, nowhere proved that he issued any particular injunctions during these eighteen years about the night of the *Mi'raj,* nor did he make arrangements to celebrate this event, nor did he mention that keeping vigil on this night would earn more recompense and virtue as in the Night of Power. It is also not proved that during his time the people took care to keep vigil during this night.

THE MONTH OF RAJAB

Removal of Some misunderstandings

الحمدلله و كفى وسلام على عباده الذين اصطفى اما بعد!

Many misunderstandings are current among the people about the month of Rajab. It is necessary to understand the true facts about this.

The Practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ on sighting the Rajab moon.

What is proved about this month on the basis of authentic Ahadith from the Holy Prophet ﷺ is that on sighting the Rajab moon he used to recite the following *Du'a* (supplication):

اللهم بارك لنافى رجب و شعبان و بلغنا رمضان

This means: O Allah grant us blessings in the months of Rajab and Sha'ban and take us to the month of Ramadhan.

In other words, extend the days of our life that we may overtake the month of Ramadhan during our lifetime. Thus the believers anxiously waited for the arrival of the sacred month of Ramadhan. This *Du'a* is proved from the Holy Prophet ﷺ on the basis of authentic Hadith, so it is an act of Sunnah. If anyone did not recite this *Du'a* in the beginning, he should do so now.

There is no place in the *Shari'ah* for the many customs that have become vogue among the people, during this month.

No proof is available for the virtues of the night of *Mi'raj*

It has been widely circulated about the night of 27th Rajab that it is the night of *Mi'raj* which should be passed like the night of Power. They believe that the virtues of the night of *Mi'raj* are more or less like those of the night of Power. I have seen a board with a writing thereon mentioning that the night of *Mi'raj* is more virtuous than the night of Power. For this night people have invented certain forms of prayer to be offered with specific recitations and styles. It should be well understood that all these are baseless practices having no place in the Islamic *Shari'ah.*

There is difference of opinion about the exact date of the Night of *Mi'raj*

First of all it is not certain that the 27th of Rajab is the night in which the Holy Prophet ﷺ performed the celestial ascension. There are various narrations on this point. According to some of these the Holy Prophet ﷺ performed *Mi'raj* in the month of Rabi'ul-awwal and according to some others in the month of Rajab. Still

some other narrations mention other months. So there is no certainty about the exact date of the night of *Mi'raj.*

Why was the date of *Mi'raj* not preserved?

You may think for yourself that if the night of *Mi'raj* had been a special night with special injunctions about it like the night of Power, the month and date of its occurrence must have been preserved. As this was not done, it is not right to specify with any certainty the 27th of Rajab as the night of *Mi'raj.*

It was a splendid night.

Whatever the date of its occurrence, it cannot be denied that it was a splendid night in which Almighty Allah conferred on the Holy Prophet ﷺ the unique honour of inviting him to His Elevated Court. Indeed, very splendid was that night about whose magnificence no Muslim can feel the slightest doubt.

The night of *Mi'raj* occurred eighteen times during the Prophet's ﷺ life.

The event of *Mi'raj* took place in the fifth year of his Prophethood. This means that after this unique event, the Holy Prophet ﷺ lived in this world for 18 years. During this long period of 18 years there is no evidence that he ever issued any special injunctions about the night of *Mi'raj* or made arrangements for its celebration or advised the Muslims to keep vigil on this night in devotion carries more reward. There is no evidence of any such injunction of the Holy Prophet ﷺ nor did he himself do anything to celebrate this night nor did he even ask the Noble Companions to do so, nor did the Companions arrange in this night any celebration on their own account.

There is no greater Fool than he.....

After the sad demise of the Holy Prophet ﷺ his Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم lived in the world after him for about one hundred years. During the entire period of this one century there is no proof of even a single incident in which the Noble Companion رضی اللہ عنہم took care to celebrate the night of the 27th Rajab. It is an innovation *(Bid'at)* to declare something as part of religion, as an act of *Sunnah* or to treat it as Sunnah which neither the Holy Prophet ﷺ nor the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم ever did. There is not a greater fool than he who says: Never mind, I shall do that; because I know more (God forbid) than the Holy Prophet ﷺ which night carries greater virtue, or I have greater enthusiasm for devotion and that I shall do what the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم did not do.

To be cleverer than a Baniya is madness.

My father, Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi' رحمۃ اللہ علیہ used to relate a proverb of the Hindi language which is widely popular in India. It runs:

He is mad who claims to be cleverer than the village Hindu shop keeper.

It means that he is really a mad man who claims that he is cleverer than the Hindu shop-keeper of the village in trading affairs. This is a common proverb that there is none cleverer than the village Hindu shop-keeper (Baniya).

Who has greater knowledge of *Deen* than the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم ?

So far as *Deen* (faith) is concerned, it is a fact that the Companions, then the Tabi'een, then the Taba' Tabi'een knew and followed *Deen* (faith) more thoroughly

and sincerely than all others, He is really a madman who claims to know more of *Deen,* to have greater enthusiasm for it or to be more worshipful than these reverend personalities of Islam.

It is a *Bid'ah* to devote to special forms of worship on this night.

It is therefore, *Bid'ah* to arrange for special forms of worship in this night. Worship and devotion are good; there is no harm if one keeps vigil for the purpose of worship in this night and in other nights but no special emphasis should be laid on worship on this particular night because this night of the 27th Rajab has no distinction over other nights.

Fasting on the 27th of Rajab is not proved

Some people fast on the 27th of Rajab and believe that fasting on this day has the same virtues as the fasting on the days of *'Aashoorah and the 'Arfah.* There is one or two weak narratives about this but none is proved by authentic evidences.

Hazrat Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ, the Great stopped this *Bid'ah*

Some persons started fasting on the 27th of Rajab during the Caliphate of Hazrat 'Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ. When he came to know that some persons take special care to fast on the 27th of Rajab, he went out to stop this *Bid'at,* as he could not tolerate the slightest deviation from the true path of the Faith. He approached everyone suspected of fasting and asked him to eat something before him to ensure that the man was not fasting. He did this to impress upon the people that the fasting on that day had no special

virtue and was a *Bid'ah*. Fasting on this day was just like fasting on any other day. He took this care and trouble to eradicate from among the people the practice of *Bid'ah,* so that they may not add to or take from *Deen* anything of their own free will.

What harm is there in keeping night vigil?

Some people ask: What sin did we commit if we kept night vigil to worship and fasted during the day? Did we commit theft, drink wine or commit dacoity? We only devoted ourselves to worship during he night and fasted during the day. What harm is there?

***Deen* (Faith) is the name of obedient following (of injunctions)**

Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ told the people that Almighty Allah did not prescribe fasting on that date and the real vice lies in self-invented practices. I have explained many times that essence of the *Deen* (Faith) consists in the obedience to the injunctions of the *Shari'ah.* Allah demands absolute obedience. Prayer, Fasting etc., are worships only when Allah commands His servants to perform these acts of worship. It is also worship and devotion when Allah commands to shun them. It will be going against *Deen* if one does something as worship of his own free will which Allah has not prescribed. The essence of *Deen* is obedient following of *Deen.* If Allah lets people know this truth, then the practices of *Bid'ah* shall be uprooted

He is committing Excesses in *Deen*

Now if anyone gives special importance to fasting on this date he is wilfully committing an excess in the matter of *Deen* and is thus inventing a fake *Deen* of his

own. To fast on this date from this point of view is not lawful. There is, however, no objection to fasting on this date by a man who fasts as he does usually on other days. It is however, a *Bid'ah* to fast on the 27th of Rajab under the mistaken impression that it is more virtuous; it is an act of *Sunnah* (which it is certainly not) and that it is desirable and it carries greater and better reward.

The Reality of the Self-Invented custom of the *Koonda*

The night of *Mi'raj* has an importance in being the night on which the Holy Prophet ﷺ performed his celestial journey. A custom made more important and binding in our days is that of the *Koonda* so much so that if a person does not observe this baseless custom he is looked down upon as though he were not a Muslim. He must observe this custom, notwithstanding that he may be missing his prayers, fasts, and may be committing sins. The person who does not observe this custom or advises others against this is cursed and hated. God knows how this irreligious and disgustful custom sprang up. It is traceable neither in the Qur'an nor in the Traditions, nor among the companions, their immediate and next followers, nor among the Muslim saints and Ulama. Its advocates say that it must be observed even if the obligatory and essential duties of *Deen* are being ignored. It may be attributed, like many other *Bid'at*, to the pleasures of eating and drinking and extracting fees from the ignorant public. In observing the custom of the *Koonda* and such other customs there is show, gaiety, exchange of nicely cooked dishes and merry-making. As these are joyous customs, full of fun, Satan has engaged the people in

them and seduced them from other compulsory duties.

This Ummah is lost in Nonsense.

These nonsensical customs and activities have involved the Muslim Ummah in frivolities:

حقیقت روایات میں کھو گئی
یہ امت خرافات میں کھو گئی

The truth is lost in false stories and this (Muslim) Ummah is lost in nonsense and frivolities.

Such useless, rather harmful, practices and activities are regarded to be binding. It is necessary to train and instruct the unwary public in these matters. Most people have fallen victim to such nonsense only owing to their ignorance and not to any hostile tendencies towards religion. They think that just like the occasions of the Eid Festivals, this too may be a festivity allowed in the Qur'an and the Traditions, as so many people observe it. It is necessary, therefore, to teach such persons with love and sympathy the true spirit of religion and by avoiding attendance in such baseless and harmful practices.

SUMMARY

What has been explained above may be summarised by saying that the month of Rajab is an introduction to the holy month of Ramadhan. It is therefore, necessary to keep yourself prepared in advance for this month. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has prayed for His Ummah and drawn attention to the blessings of Ramadhan three months before its advent so that they should be able to amend

their usual programme of life, in order to devote to piety and righteousness in this sacred month to the best of their capacity. May Almighty Allah have mercy on us and help us to understand and follow the path of Islam. ***Aameen.***

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد للّٰہ رب العالمین

BE QUICK IN DOING GOOD

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه و نستغفره و نؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له واشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له واشهدان سيدنا وسندنا ونبينا ومولانا محمداً عبده ورسوله....صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيراً كثيراً

اما بعد:

فا عوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم. بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

وَسَارِعُوْٓا اِلٰى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمٰوٰتُ وَالْاَرْضُ اُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِيْنَ (سورة ال عمران: ١٣٣)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم و صدق رسوله النبى الكريم و نحن

It is a desirable and commendable act to vie with one another in doing good. It is, however bad to vie with one another in worldly matters, viz., earning money, achieving respect, fame, status and position. Do not sit idle, waiting for opportunities, but try to do a good turn as soon as an urge springs in your heart to do that good turn. Do not delay or defer it till tomorrow.

علىٰ ذالك من الشّٰهدين والشكرين والحمد لله رب العالمين

All praise to Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the mischief of ourselves and the vices of our deeds. There is none to lead him astray whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no God but Allah alone and that He has no partner. I also bear witness that our Master, our Authority, and our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah bestow upon him, his household and his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم, His mercy and blessings in abundance.

Rush to the forgiveness of your Lord and a Paradise as wide as the heavens and the earth. Prepared for the righteous. (3:133)

I believe in Allah. Our Great Master All has spoken the truth and His kind Prophet has also spoken the truth. We testify to this and we are grateful. All praise to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

Rush towards good deeds.

Allamah Nuwawi رحمۃاللہ علیہ has framed a chapter, the Chapter of rushing towards good deeds. This means that man should reflect upon his reality, Allah's greatness, His Omnipotence and His extensive wisdom, His quality of providing sustenance (to His creation). As a result of such reflection his heart shall incline towards the worship of Almighty Allah. He will then feel disposed spontaneously

realise in his heart that he owes something to that Master who has created this entire Universe, granted him blessings and showered on him His mercy. What then should he do when such thoughts arise in his heart?

Allamah Nuwawi رحمۃاللہ علیہ has framed this chapter to furnish an answer to this question whenever an urge arises to worship Allah and to do some good deed, it is the duty of a believer on such occasions to do that good deed without delay. The word *Mubadarah* means doing something promptly without hesitation and without deferring it to some future time.

Go in for Competition in Doing Good Deeds.

First of all Allamah Nuwawi رحمۃاللہ علیہ has cited this verse of the Holy Qur'an:

Addressing entire humanity Almighty, Allah says in this verse:

وَسَارِعُوْٓا اِلٰى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمٰوٰتُ وَالْاَرْضُ ۙ اُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِيْنَ (سورۃ ال عمران: ۱۳۳)

Rush to wards the forgiveness of your Lord and (His) Paradise whose width is equal to the width of the heavens and the earth, rather more which has been prepared for the righteous.

The word *Musara'at* means to do something as early as possible, and try to go ahead of others in this race. There is another verse:

فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ ۭ (سورۃ بقرۃ: ۱۴۸)

Go in for a competition in doing good deeds.

When an urge arises in your heart for doing some good turn do not defer it till another time.

Satan's Strategy

It is because Satan uses a separate strategy for every individual among the unbelievers and the believers. Satan will never inspire the heart of a believer that he should not do good deed, cleverly showing that good deed to be "bad deed". He knows very well that a believer cannot be beguiled to consider a good deed to be a bad deed, He whispers to the believer that these are indeed very good deeds but, "Better begin it", he suggests, "from tomorrow". Thus the good deed may be postponed from day to day and ultimately be forgotten altogether. So plausible is Satan's strategy.'

Benefit by Your Precious Lifetime.

Thus does revolve the wheel of time. None knows what is his decreed age. The Qur'an admonishes not to defer things for future time. If an urge arises to do some good deed do it at once, because the next day you may forget the urge or who knows one will live or not live the next day. Even if one lives, the urge may disappear in the rush of so many pressing vicissitudes of life. In case the urge remains, the circumstances favourable for execution may not be there.

The urge to do Good is, as if it were, Allah's guest

The urge to do good may be considered to be a guest sent of Allah that must be welcomed with honour. The honour lies in prompt execution of the urge. If the urge is to offer some optional prayer and you ignore it by arguing that it is neither obligatory nor essential, then you dishonour the divine guest that Allah had sent to reform you. If you show this cold attitude to the guest, it may

never visit you again. Although the golden rule is to attend to all business with promptitude yet if an urge arises in you for some particular good deed it is highly appreciable to put that urge into practice quickly.

Do Not Wait For an Opportunity to Arrive

An urge arises in the heart of anyone for self-improvement before the expiry of life which is passing so fast, yet he thinks that he shall execute this urge after completing this task and that task. The precious moments of life thus lost in this dilly-dallying will never come back.

The Best Trick of Working

My respected father Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi' رحمة الله عليه used to say that a work which is deferred till the arrival of a suitable opportunity gets deferred for ever never to be undertaken again. According to him if two items are in hand and a third item suddenly arises, then insert this third item also between the two items under process and this third item will also get completed together with the other two. On the other hand if you decide to take up the third item after completing the earlier two items, the third item will remain undone. The habit of chalking out programmes to do one thing now and another one afterwards is a way of postponing things never to be done. This is satan's way of seduction.

It is not undesirable to compete with one another in good Deeds

The advice to hasten doing good deeds is based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah. That is why Allamah Nuwawi has framed a separate chapter for this topic: The chapter of rushing towards doing good deeds. On this occasion

Allamah Nuwawi رحمة الله عليه has used two words *"Mubadarat"* meaning rushing / hastening and *"Musabaqat"* meaning competing, racing or trying to get ahead of another person. This competition is desirable and commendable in the matter of good deeds, but it is condemnable and undesirable in worldly matters such as in acquiring worldly gains, status etc. The Qur'an itself has commanded:

فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ ط (سورة بقرة: ١٤٨)

vie with one another in the matter of doing good deeds.

Therefore, try to excel a man whom you find engaged in worship, devotion, avoiding sins etc.

Competition is not lawful in worldly matters.

To day, we are on just the opposite track. Our entire existence has been devoted to competition in earning more and more money, constructing a more magnificent building, purchasing a better car and collecting costlier luxuries of life than such and such fellow. In this mad competition, the thought to make distinction between lawful (حلال) and unlawful (حرام) has disappeared. It is, however, a fact that it is impossible to win this competition with lawful money, so the competitors are taking resort to use ill gotten money. Forgetting the difference between lawful and unlawful money, all are vying with one another in undesirable activities and earning worldly gains and have lagged behind in competing with one another in desirable and worthier objects of life. What a pity!

Hazrat 'Umar رضی الله عنه competes with Hazrat Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه on the occasion of the *Tabook* expedition

Just look at the deeds of the sacred companions رضی الله عنهم on the occasion of the Tabook military expedition. It was a very hard expedition, perhaps the hardest of all other expeditions. The season was extremely hot, as if the land was emitting fire. A tortuous desert journey of about 1200 Kilometers lay before them; the date crop was about to mature and ripen on which depended their livelihood for the entire year. Every Muslim was being called upon to take part in the battle of *Tabook* at a time when there was a great shortage of conveyance and monetary resources. Standing in his mosque the Holy Prophet ﷺ declared that conveyance, camels and money were badly needed to finance the impending battle. The Muslims were asked to contribute to this campaign to the best of their capacities. He guaranteed paradise for the donors and every Muslim readily responded to the call. How could they remain behind in such a critical occasion? Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی الله عنه divided all the resources of his house in two parts. Reserving one part to meet the needs of his household he called upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ along with the other half. He thought that he might perhaps surpass Hazrat Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه on that occasion. This is an example of the term.

مسابقة الى الخيرات

(the burning desire to compete with someone in doing good).

He never entertained the desire to surpass Hazrat Usman Ghani رضی الله عنه or Hazrat Abdur Rahman bin 'Auf رضی الله عنه in their worldly wealth and resources. Instead the desire did arise to outdo Hazrat Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه on this critical occasion.

Soon after, Hazrat Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ also came to the Holy Prophet ﷺ and placed before him whatever he had with him. The following dialogue took place between the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the two companions رضی اللہ عنہم:

Holy Prophet ﷺ :

O Umar رضی اللہ عنہ! What have you left behind?

Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ:

O Prophet ﷺ of Allah! I have left behind one half of my possessions for my family and I have brought the other half for the Holy War.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ then prayed for Umar رضی اللہ عنہ calling upon Allah to bless him in his possessions.

Then he ﷺ turned to Hazrat Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ:

Holy Prophet ﷺ:

What have you left behind in your house?

Hazrat Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ:

O Prophet ﷺ of Allah! I have left behind in the house the names of Allah and His Messenger and I have brought here everything that was available in the house.

Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ the great said that on that day he came to know that he could never surpass Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ even if he strived to do so the whole of his life. (*Abu Daud*, the Book of Zakat. Hadith no 1678).

An exemplary Bargain.

Once Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ requested Hazrat Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ to settle with him a bargain for which he would feel highly obliged. Hazrat Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ inquired as to what that bargain was. Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ said in reply: Kindly take from me all the good deeds I have done in my life in exchange for the virtue of that sacred night which you passed with the Holy Prophet ﷺ in the cave of Saur, as the virtue of that night is heavier

than all the good deeds of my life.

In short, if we consider carefully the lives of the Holy Companions رضی اللہ عنہم we shall never find in anyone of them a desire to compete with his fellow companions رضی اللہ عنہم in the matter of worldly possessions, viz., money, house, means of conveyance, etc. However, we do find among them competition in doing good deeds and making their lives righteous. As regards our own behaviour to day, it is just the opposite. We are busy whole day in competing among ourselves in the matter of worldly wealth and resources, but we never think of surpassing one another in righteous deeds.

An Infallible Prescription For Us.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has given us a wonderful piece of advice which is an infallible prescription for us: He has advised the Ummah, saying; In the matter of worldly resources always look at those who are at a lower level than you. Keep their company and have an eye on their conditions of life. In matters relating to religion, keep the company of those who are superior to you, and at a higher level than you. This is because when you see people inferior to you in worldly resources, you will value the good things with which Allah has favoured you, which others do not possess. This will create in you a sense of contentment and gratitude, and the love of acquiring worldly goods will be uprooted. On the other hand, when in matters concerning religion you cast your eyes on those who are superior to you and have gone ahead of you, you will realise your inferiority and think of getting rid of it by trying to catching up with your superiors. (Tirmidhi Shareef, Book on Qiyamah, ch. 58, Hadith *No:* 2512)

How did Hazrat Abdullah Bin Mubarak رحمةالله عليه receive comfort and contentment?

Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubrarak رحمةالله عليه is a renowned *Muhaddis, Faqih* as well as a *sufi* who has given the following account of his life:

"I spent the early part of my life with the wealthy people (he was himself wealthy). I passed my days from morning till evening with the rich, but as long as I lived with the wealthy, I did not find a more gloomy person than myself. Wherever I happened to go I saw that these wealthy men possessed better houses, better means of conveyance and better garments than my own. This produced in my heart jealousy against these favoured men. Later on, I adopted the company of men in poorer classes. As a result, I found comfort and peace of mind, because I saw that I was more well-off than these men. My food, my garment my house, my conveyance, in fact everything I possessed was better than theirs. Praise be to Allah that this change of company brought me peace, comfort and contentment."

Contentment would never have been attained, but for this (advice)

This is a blessing of acting upon the advice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Anyone may experience this formula for himself. It is impossible to attain contentment in this world as long as a man has an eye on those who are placed in a better position than he.

He will always be obsessed by the thought of an inferiority complex and jealousy as mentioned by the Holy Prophet ﷺ :

لو كان لابن ادم واديامن ذهب احب ان يكون له واديان (صحيح بخارى، كتاب الرقاق، باب مايقى من فتنة المال، حديث نمبر ٦٤٣٩)

(Sahih Bukhari, Hadith No: 6439)

If man gets a valley of gold, he will like to have two valleys. If he gets this, he will desire to have three and so on. In this greed he will spend his entire life without attaining contentment.

Peace and Prosperity cannot be purchased with money

What a nice point my respected father Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi' رحمةالله عليه used to mention which needs to be carefully remembered. "Peace and Prosperity", said he, "are one thing and the means of peace and prosperity another. The means of peace and prosperity cannot necessarily procure real peace and prosperity which are a gift of Allah. Can large amounts of hoarded money be eaten to satisfy hunger, be put on like a garment to remove nakedness, or can be worn to protect the body from heat; or can you purchase peace and prosperity, even by collecting around you all the means needed. Note carefully that the presence of all these means cannot guarantee the attainment of peace and prosperity. A rich man possesses all these means; He has an air-conditioned room, furnished with ultra-modern furniture and appliances; there are many servants to attend on him but he cannot sleep without taking sleeping pills. Did the means of comfort bring comfort? As against this, there is a man who lives under a roof of iron sheets and lies down on the floor with one of his arms under his head. Yet he falls into deep sleep and gets up in the morning having enjoyed about an eight hours' peaceful sleep. Now decide for yourself: Did this poor labourer get peace and prosperity or the millionaire in possession of untold means of peace and comfort?

Note carefully that if you become obsessed with the idea of acquiring the worldly means of comfort and of

surpassing others in this race, you may be able to collect all these means, yet with all these you cannot necessarily attain peace, comfort and contentment.

What is the use of that wealth on account of which the children cannot see their father's face?

In my father's time there was a very big mill-owner who owned mills not only in Pakistan but also in various foreign countries. One day my father asked him incidentally: How many children have you? He replied: One son is in Singapore, another son is in another country, in short, all are carrying on business in foreign countries. My father said: You might be meeting your children from time to time on their visits? He told my father that he could not see one of his sons for fifteen years. Look here! Father and son have not seen each other's face for fifteen years! What is the good of such wealth which stands in the way of father and son to see each other for such long periods? All this hustle and bustle is for acquiring means of peace and comfort but peace and comfort are missing. Remember, peace and comfort cannot be purchased with money.

Everything cannot be purchased with money

It is not very long that a man was proceeding for *Umrah* in *Ramadhan,* and a very wealthy man was also going for *Ummrah* at the same time. The first man advised the second wealthy man to make advance arrangements for lodging and fooding and other necessaries, so that 'you may not have to face difficulties.' The latter, being proud of his wealth, replied; Never mind. I have enough money by the grace of Allah. All kinds of comforts and necessaries including fooding and lodging can be purchased with money. I am in a position to spend 20

Riyals where only 10 Riyals would suffice. After ten days the same wealthy man was seen sitting at the gate of the sacred *Haram* with his head down cast. On being asked he said: I got up at *sihr* time but there was no food available in the hotel and I had to go without it. Just note that Almighty Allah taught this wealthy man that with money in his pocket he had to fast without taking the *sihr*-food.

The way to get peace and contentment.

This money, these means and luxuries of life and these riches which you are collecting are not, in themselves, a source of ease and comfort. Comforts cannot be purchased with money which are only a divine gift, you can never attain peace, unless you believe that you are getting along with your life with whatever Allah grants you with lawful means. How many men there are who possess unlimited monetary resources but they are not able to enjoy a moment's peace. They have no rest, no sleep and no hunger. This is all due to the race for worldly gains. That is why the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has very kindly advised not to look at a man placed in a better and higher position than you. Look at one who is at a lower level than you to realise how much more Allah has given you than this man. Such thinking will bring you tranquillity and contentment. As for the faith, you have been advised to look at one who is at a higher level than you. This will urge you to surpass him in righteousness. The anxiety to earn worldly benefits is pinching and painful, as it disturbs sleep and kills hunger. On the other hand, the anxiety for the faith is very comforting and soothing. A man who is fortunate enough to be inflicted with this anxiety will pass his entire life in peace, comfort and contentment. But the condition of these hankering after the gains of the world is just the opposite. In

their case the wheel of existence is revolving in the other direction.

May Allah reform our thinking and feelings and set our hearts right and help us to walk on the path which His Messenger ﷺ has shown us. Consider the following Ahadith on this topic:

The age of trials is about to overtake us

This first Hadith has been narrated from Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ

ان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال:

بادروا بالا عمال الصالحة فتكون فتن كقطع الليل المظلم

يصبح الرجل مومنا ويمسى كافراً ويمسى مومنا ويصبح كافراً

بيع دينه بعرض من الدنيا (صحيح مسلم، كتاب الايمان باب الحث على

البادرة بالا عمال قبل تظاهر الفتن، حديث نمبر ١٨٦)

(Sahih Muslim-Hadith no: 186)

This means that the people should be prompt in doing good deeds. They should value the time at their disposal. This is because horrible ordeals are about to crop up - ordeals like sections of a dark night. When the dark night sets in and a part of it has passed the remaining part is also a part of the same night in which the darkness deepens until the third part is still darker. In such a situation if a man thinks that it is the *Maghrib* time which is not so dark and he will do his work when there is more light with the advance of the night, that man is a fool, because the darkness will increase with the advance of the night.

That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ has advised that the time to come is still darker. Every ordeal shall be followed by an ordeal more severe than the previous one. It is like

the parts of the pitch dark night. The Holy Prophet ﷺ further said that the ordeal would be so devastating that a believer in the morning would turn an unbeliever in the evening and vice versa. Thus, the faith will be changing in short intervals. This will happen because a man will become fascinated so much by the worldly gains that he will sell his faith for small amounts of money. For changing his faith he will be offered charming returns in kind and money. Since he was used to postpone his work and avoid serious thought about his ultimate gains he will readily succumb to the temptation of this immediate gains and accept in exchange for his faith and the ultimate loss in the Hereafter. May Allah protect us all from the vices of such times.

To think that one is still in the prime of youth is Satan's deception

If you want to do some good deeds like a Muslim, what are you waiting for? Do whatever you want to do promptly. We should all look into our conduct to see if we are acting upon the injunctions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. We are in the habit of deferring work by deceiving ourselves that life is long and there is ample time to work for the Hereafter. The Holy Prophet ﷺ, being wise and well aware of the secrets and trends of our nature and Satan's seduction, has exhorted us to do good deeds without losing time and putting off things till tomorrow, because we do not know what ordeals the future has in store for us and where it shall lead us. May Allah protect us all. ***Aameen***

Seduce and cajole your souls to work.

My *Pir* (spiritual guide) *Dr. Abdul Hai* رحمہ اللہ علیہ used to advise us to cajole and seduce our souls to work.

Relating his own story, he told us that he was regular in his *Tahajjud* (mid night) prayers. During his old age and weakness one night when he got up at the *Tahajjud* time, he felt weak and depressed. He thought that the *Tahajjud* prayer was neither obligatory nor compulsory, there was no harm in missing it one night. Yet as the *Tahajjud* time is very auspicious and blessed in which Almighty Allah has promised to accept calls of those who call Him at this time, Doctor Sahib decided to make his supplications *(Du'a)*. When he got up and was going to start his *Du'a* he felt inclined to purify himself and perform the ablution. After doing all this he returned to his bed and started his *Du'a* but at the same time he seduced his soul to go to the place fixed for *Du'a*. Thus he beguiled his soul some how to go to the prayer carpet and then he formed the *Niyat* (intention) to offer two *Rak'ats* of the *Tahajjud* prayer.

Then doctor *Sahib* explained that our *Self* has some times to be beguiled to action. Just as your soul tries to divert you from good deeds, you should also try to seduce it to good deeds by clever tricks and cajoles. It is hoped that in this way Almighty Allah will grant you consistency in doing good deeds.

If you receive a message
from the head of the state !

Doctor *Sahib* once said that it was his regular programme to spend two hours after the *Fajr* prayer in reciting the Qur'an, remembrance, counting over the rosary *(Tasbeeh)* etc. One day he felt inclined to miss this programme on account of weakness and dejection. On this occasion he asked himself this question: Suppose the Head of the state invites you to receive a prize; will you turn down his invitation because of this weakness and

dejection? His 'Self' replied: No, the weakness will vanish at once and you will hasten to the Head of state to receive the prize. Thereafter, addressing himself he said: This too is the time to be present before Almighty Allah and to receive a prize from Him. Thus arguing I forgot weakness and laziness and busied myself with my daily usual programmes. Satan and this human 'self' are busy in beguiling man. You should also try to beguile them and take care to act upon your set programme of good deeds.

The genuine claimant to Paradise.

The third Hadith has been narrated by Hazrat Jabir عليه السلام. He says: It is the battle of Uhud between the Muslims and the unbelievers. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is the commander of the Muslims. The unbelievers are larger in number, better equipped and armed than the Muslims. The battle is very furious in all respects. At such a critical time, a Bedouin was eating dates. He asked the Holy Prophet ﷺ about the fate of him if killed in the battle. He replied that the fate of the martyr would be direct entry into Paradise. Hazrat Jabir عليه السلام relates that when the man heard the glad tidings he threw away the dates and plunged himself into the war and fought until he attained martyrdom. He did not like to waste a single minute in earning this honour by completing his meal of the dates. He got admission into Paradise, by the Grace of Allah, by seizing the opportunity when it arrived, without giving way to any hesitation or slackness.

Reaction of the Holy Prophet ﷺ
on hearing the Prayer-call *(Azan)*

Once a Companion رضى الله عنه put this question to Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضى الله عنها the mother of the believers: O mother of the believers! We see what the Holy Prophet ﷺ does and we

hear what he says when he is outdoor among us, but kindly tell us what he does indoors among his family. (The companion might have thought that the Prophet ﷺ of Allah might be offering prayers and be busy with remembrance of Allah, etc.) In reply to this question Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا said: while in the house with us, he helps us in the household affairs and listens to our problems, and intimately mixes with us in a jolly and pleasant mood. However, when, he hears the prayer-call, he atonce leaves us as if he does not know us:

In the fourth Hadith Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated:

جاء رجل الى النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال:
يا رسول الله! اى الصدقه اعظم اجرا؟ قال: ان تصدق وانت
صحيح "شحيح" تخشى الفقر وتأ مل الغنى ولا تمهل حتى اذا
بلغت الحلقوم قلت: لفلان كذا ولفلان كذا وقد كان لفلان

(صحيح بخارى، كتاب الوصايا، باب الصدقة عندالموت)

The Best Charity

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ says: A man called upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ and asked: Which item of charity is the best in reward? He said: That charity is the best which you give when you are in good health and at a time when there is love in your heart for wealth, you are afraid of poverty and are thinking about becoming rich and that wealth is not something to be squandered in this way, you are also feeling pain in spending money and that after giving money in charity you may become poor and face uncertain situations later on. The money spent in such a situation will be of great value and reward. Thereafter he said that if an urge arises for

charity, it should be fulfilled at once.

There is a religious ruling (Injunction) that if a man draws up a will during his illness regarding the distribution of his wealth and dies in that illness, his Will, will be valid only to the one-third of the amount willed, the rest two-thirds will be shared by the legal heirs. It should be noted that the rights of the heirs become due for execution before death during the illness.

If a man plans that he will invest towards, the end of his life his money in some charitable work of perennial reward and recompense, he should know that such charity is charity under compulsion. Charity carrying perennial reward is that which is given during the period of good health when the giver himself needs the money, has love for it and is trying to save it for his own needs.

A Will is valid only up to one-third of the property left.

It should be noted that some people desire to make a Will to finance some charitable work for permanent reward, so that the investor may continue to receive its reward even after his death. If a person makes a Will in his lifetime, while he is hale and hearty, that so much amount should be given to this or that needy person or invested in such and such charitable work after his death, this Will shall be valid only up to one-third of his legacy and not more than that. That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ has kindly advised that a muslim should give money in charity as soon as the urge for charity arises in his heart.

Set aside a portion of your income for charity.

I have already mentioned a tried method of doing this. If it is followed, man is enabled to practise charity, or

else we have become used to postponing charitable work. Decide to set aside a convenient portion of your periodical income to be spent on charity in the name of Allah. When the income accrues to you, deduct and keep aside that portion in a separate envelope from period to period. That envelope will remind you to spend in charity the amount thus saved. Spend the amount on some right cause. This attracts blessings for this work otherwise man is always hesitating whether to spend it or not on charity. The presence of the envelope with the savings in it will be a reminder and man will not fall victim to hesitation and neglect.

Almighty Allah does not mind the number (or the quantity)

Remember that Allah attaches importance to the emotion and sincerity of a good deed and does not mind the number or the quantity of the thing spent on charity. A man with an income of one hundred Rupees spends one rupee and another man with an income of one lakh (1,00,000/=) spends one thousand Rupees on charity in the way of Allah. Both are equal and maybe the giver of Re 1/= may surpass the giver of Rs 1000/= because of his sincerity. So, do not mind the number or the quantity, but only mind the intention for earning excellence in the sight of Allah and His pleasure. So you must spend some portion of your income in the way of Allah.

My respected late father's routine practice

My respected late father, Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi' Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to set aside in a separate envelope for charitable purposes 20 p.c. of the income which he earned by his work and 10 p.c. of the income

which accrued to as gifts and grants, etc. He followed this practice throughout his lifetime meticulously and with extreme care and regularity, even though some times this caused him inconvenience in obtaining small change, etc. I never saw the envelope empty during the whole of my life. The envelope itself used to remind the owner to spend the savings in the way of Allah. As a result of such schemes, Almighty Allah promotes charity.

Everyone should give alms according to his capacity

Once a gentleman complained that he had nothing to spend in charity. I asked him if he had one rupee he could easily set aside from it, one paisa. The ratio between this one paisa and one rupee is the same as the ratio between one thousand paisa and one lakh rupees. So do not look at the amount, but work to fulfil the urge for charity as soon as it arises.

This is an infallible prescription for self-reform. Just save yourself from the tactics of deferring action indefinitely. If you act upon this advice, Almighty shall open before you, through its blessings, wide roads for spending money on charitable works.

May Allah help us all to follow valuable advice.

What are you waiting for?

عن ابی هریرة رضی الله تعالیٰ عنه ان رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم قال: بادروا بالا عمال سبعا هل تنتظرون الا فقرا منسیا او غنی مطغیا او مرضا مفسدا او غرما مفندا، اوموتا مجهزا او الد جال فشر غائب ینتظر او الساعة، فالساعة ادهی وامر اوکما قال صلی الله علیه وسلم

This has been narrated from Hazrat Abu Hurairah

رضی اللہ عنہ It deals with the subject of hastening towards doing good, He has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

بادرو ابالا عمال سبعا

Make haste to do good deeds before the arrival of seven things, as after their arrival the opportunity to do good will not be available. Thereafter he mentioned these things one by one.

Are you waiting for poverty:

هَلْ تَنْظُرُوْنَ اِلَّا فَقْراً مُّنْسِيًّا

Are you waiting for doing good such poverty as will make you forget things? Presently you are well-to-do, have money and are not short in the means of sustenance and are leading a comfortable and easy life yet in such favourable circumstances you are deferring the doing of good deeds. Are you waiting for a time when the time of your wealth, prosperity and contentment changes into that of adversity as a result of which you will forget other matters.? Do you hope to do good in the period of your hardship? If you are under the wrong impression that presently you should enjoy life and you will do good deeds at some later time, then mind carefully the Prophet's admonition. He has said that during the period of financial difficulties the possibility of doing good becomes remote. That is a time when man forgets doing even very important acts. You should try to do good during the period of your prosperity, before you are face to face with financial difficulty and poverty. He further said:

Are you waiting for affluence?

اَوْ غِنًى مُطْغِيًا

Are you waiting for such affluence as makes man rebellious? In other words, if you are under the misconception that presently your resources are not up to the mark and you should, therefore, wait till they increase, when you can do good deeds to your satisfaction. But remember that if you become richer and richer and are surrounded by wealth on all sides, it is likely that this abundance of prosperity may make you rebellious and disobedient because a carefree and luxurious life generally makes man oblivious of Allah and His commands. So if you want to do anything good do it just now.

Are you waiting for illness?

اَوْمَرَضًا مُفْسِدًا

Are you waiting for some illness to befall you that may damage your health. Presently you are enjoying good health with strength and vitality and it is easy for you to do good deeds if you so desire. Are you then deferring the doing of good deeds till your health is lost - God forbid and various ailments assail you. When you are not able to do good deeds in good health, how can you do this during helplessness and disability? so do what you feel inclined to do before ailment falls on you.

Are you waiting for old age?

اَوْ غَرَمًا مُفَنِّدًا

Are you waiting for disabling old age under the proud impression that presently you are in the prime of your youth, rather too young and inexperienced to think of serious work. You feel that you should pass these early days of your life, in comfort and enjoyment, and defer doing serious work to some later stage of life. The Holy Prophet ﷺ asks: Are you waiting for old age? In this age sometime man becomes mentally and physically decrepit

and even if he desires to do some good turn he is unable to do that. In this age man has neither teeth, nor intestine in his stomach. If he shuns sins that is no credit when he has no capacity to commit sins. So one should try to do good before reaching this abject old age. It is a prophetic quality in a man to shun sin and take to righteousness when he is young and energetic and has the natural urge to commit sins. The persian saint poet Shaikh S'adi has said in a couplet:

در جوانی توبه کردن شیوهٔ پیغمبری است
وقت پیری گرگ ظالم میشود پرهیز گار

A ferocious and cruel wolf becomes pious and harmless. The turning away from sin in youth is a Prophetic way.

The cruel wolf has not become pious because of some moral urge in him or fear of God, he has become too weak and helpless to harm anyone. As pointed out above to keep away from sins during youth is the way and character of the Prophets.

Take the example of Hazrat Yousuf عليه السلام. He is in the prime of youth, in full health and strength and enjoying all means and resources of life. He is being invited to sin but he utters these words:

مَعَاذَ اللهِ اِنَّهٗ رَبِّیْٓ اَحْسَنَ مَثْوَایَ (سورۃ یوسف: ۲۳)

I seek refuge with Allah, He is my Lord, He has treated me honourably. (12:23)

This indeed, is the way of the Prophets that man should turn away from sins and do good deeds during his youth. Man becomes helpless in his old age and can do nothing and can commit no sins. That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ asks : Do you think that you will do good and start praying and remembering Allah during your old age? When the Hajj falls due people defer it till the advanced

age, but they do not know how long they shall live, what is the interval of respite and whether they are going to reach the old age at all, and whether the conditions at that time are favourable or not. Please whatever you want to do, do it at once.

Are you waiting for death?

او موتا مجھزا

Are you waiting for that death which will overtake you all of a sudden? At the moment you are deferring good deeds in the hope that you can do them in the future. Do you not know that sometimes death gives ultimatum and warning about its arrival and often it arrives without any ultimatum or fore-warning. Specially nowadays fatal accidents have become very common and frequent. No one knows what is going to happen the next moment. However, Allah generally gives advance notice.

A dialogue with the Angel of death

There is a story, real or fictitious but full of moral, current among the people that once a man met the Angel of Death, Hazrat 'Izrael عليه السلام and addressed him thus: You follow a strange way that you call on persons suddenly and without any prior notice. The procedure followed in the world is that before punishing a criminal, first a notice is served on him that such and such action will be taken against him at such and such time. So he should be prepared for that. The Angel replied: I do issue notices in as large numbers as none else can issue in the world but none cares about these notices. What can I do? Do you not know that attacks on men with fever, headaches their affliction with old age white hair and birth

of grand sons and daughters are all forms of notices from my side. I have thus been issuing notices continuously but the people do not notice them. All these ailments are notices and warnings from Almighty Allah calling attention that the time of death is coming soon. Allah says in the Qur'an:

اَوَلَمْ نُعَمِّرْكُمْ مَايَتَذَكَّرُفِيْهِ مَنْ تَذَكَّرَ وَجَاءَكُمُ النَّذِيْرُ

This means:

I shall ask you in the Hereafter: Did I not grant you a lifetime long enough in which a man could take advice if he wanted to do so? And the warner also had come to you.

Who was this warner? Some interpreters have said that the warner is the Holy Prophet ﷺ because it is he who warned that after death people will have to appear before Almighty Allah. Some interpreters have said that a warner means the white hair of the head or the beard to remind men of approaching death. Still some others said that it is the grand son who reminds the grand-father of imminent death. An Arab poet has expressed the same idea in a couplets:

اذا الرجال ولدت اولادها
وبليت من كبر اجسادها
وجعلت اسقامها تعتادها
تلك زروع قدنا حصادها

When the sons of men bear their sons and their bodies become old because of old age and diseases afflict them one after another, it should be understood that these are crops the time of whose harvesting has arrived. Anyway, these are notices issued from time to time from

Almighty Allah. It is Allah's practice to send these notices, yet sometimes death overtakes men all of a sudden without prior notice. That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ has asked: Are you waiting for death that may overtake suddenly without any notice. None knows how many moments are left in one's life. Why are they waiting for the last moment? Then He said:

Are you waiting for the *Dajjal* (Antichrist)?

اَوِالدَّجَّال

Are you waiting for the Dajjal and are you thinking that the time is not yet ripe for doing good deeds? Will the Dajjal's time be ripe for good deeds? Will you be able to do good during those tumultuous days? God knows what will happen at that time; what urges and motives for misconduct and straying may crop up at that time. Are you waiting for such a time (فَشَرُّ غَائِبٍ يُنتظَرُ) (*Dajjal* is the worst of all hidden objects to be awaited). Do whatever good you can do before his appearance. He said last of all:

Are you waiting for the Doomsday ?

اَوِ السَّاعَةَ، فَالسَّاعَةُ اَدْهٰى وَاَمَرُّ

If you are waiting for the Doomsday, then the Doomsday will be so calamitous that man will have no escape from that calamity. Then do good before it arrives.

The gist of the entire Hadith is that you should not defer any act for the morrow. Instead. When you feel an urge for and an interest in doing a good turn do it immediately without any hesitation.s

May Almighty Allah help us all to follow this advice.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

To day the practice of "Recommendation" has become a curse. No work can be completed today without unlawful Recommendation. It is because the people have forgotten the injunctions and demands of the *Shari'ah*. If Recommendation is made with due regard to these injunctions, it will be lawful and not otherwise.

RECOMMENDATION IN ISLAM

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه و نستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوز بالله من شرورانفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهدان لا اله الاالله وحده لا شريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا و سندنا و نبينا و مولانا محمد اعبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه و على اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا

اما بعد:

عن ابى موسى الا شعرى رضى الله تعالىٰ عنه قال كان النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم اذا اتى طالب حاجة اقبل على جلساء فقال اشفعوا توجروا (صحيح بخارى كتاب الزكوة باب التحريض على الصدقة والشفاعة فيها حديث نمبر ١٤٣٢)

All praise is to Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the mischief of souls and the vices

of our deeds. There is none to lead him astray whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no God but Allah alone Who has no partner. I also bear witness that our sire, our authority, and our Prophet and our master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah bestow upon him, his household and his noble Companions His mercy and blessings and salutations in abundance.(Sahih Bukhari - Hadith No: 1432)

Recommend for a needy Person.

Hazrat Abu Musa Ash'ari رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that when a needy person called upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ and requested him to meet his need, he would turn to the gathering and ask them to recommend the man to him for meeting his need, so that they might receive reward for their recommendation made by them to the Messenger of Allah. He further told them that his decision in the matter would be according to Allah's will, yet those who recommend the needy person to him for help would receive reward from Allah. Thus he asked them to make recommendations.

Recommendation is a source of gain and reward.

The intention of this Hadith is to point out that it is a matter of great gain and reward to recommend a Muslim to another Muslim to get the need of the needy person fulfilled. It is to urge that a Muslim should always remain occupied in doing good to another Muslim and he should do his best in meeting his brother's need. If he finds it

useful, he should make recommendation for him to someone. For this act of recommendation he shall receive reward from Allah. Legal and lawful recommendation is a righteous act deserving recompense. It has always been the practice of saintly men to make recommendations for needy persons for the sake of their own reward and not to lay any obligation on the needy person.

The story of a saint who made recommendation for someone.

Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has related in his sermons the story of a saint, A man called upon that saint and complained that he had a problem which was not being settled and it was the concern of such and such person. He told the saint that his recommendation might prove helpful. The saint said to the man that the person concerned was a bitter opponent of the saint and instead of being useful his recommendation might prove harmful. The man insisted upon obtaining the saint's recommendation and argued that the saint's personality and influence were such that even his enemy could not reject his recommendation. Being so pressed, the saint handed over to the needy person a recommendatory letter. On receipt of the letter, the person concerned was agitated with anger and hatred against the saint and threw away the letter with abusive remarks. The needy person came back to the saint and related to him the sad story. The saint then promised the man to pray to God to solve his problem.

After making a recommendation for someone do not put him under an obligation

We come to know from this story that recommendation is a righteous act that carries great

recompense, provided the intention is to benefit someone for the sake of reward from Allah and not for the sake of placing obligations upon anyone. A recommendation made with this pious intention is indeed an act of great reward and blessing.

Directions for making Recommendation.

There are, however, some prescribed rules for making recommendations. It has to be decided when recommendation is lawful and when it is unlawful, what does recommendation mean and what results it should yield and how it should be made. It is necessary to understand these rules. Recommendation which is an act of righteousness deserving reward may turn into a sinful act and spread mischief and disturbance in the society on account of the ignorance of these rules.

To make recommendation for a job for an unfit fellow

The first point to note is that recommendation should always he made for a legal and lawful purpose. Recommendation is not lawful in any circumstance for an unlawful act. It is unlawful to make recommendation in favour of a person about whom you are well aware that he is not fit for the job for which he is seeking your recommendation.

Recommendation is a kind of witness

Just as recommendation is a means of meeting someone's need, it is also a witness. When you make recommendation in favour of someone, you are really giving witness that in your opinion the man recommended is fit for the job he is seeking. In witness it is necessary to ensure that

it is not against the truth. If you recommend in favour of a person, although he is unfit and undeserving, then such recommendation is unlawful and is calculated to yield punishment instead of reward. If an unfit man is given a job on the strength of your recommendation but, being unfit and unqualified, he causes harm to the public or otherwise commits some mischief. In such a case a part of the punishment for the mischief and the crime will also fall on you, because you are instrumental to the promotion or appointment of an unfit person. Think again that to make recommendations in a false and unlawful matters is not at all lawful.

To recommend an examinee to the examiner

Some times in the past answer-books were given to me for checking and valuating them in the M.A examination in the subject of Islamic studies and I accepted them for doing the needful. No sooner did the people know they began to call on me with a list of Roll numbers recommending them for special concession. What is strange, is that apparently these persons were honest, reliable and of good standing and character.

A strange case of Recommendation

Once it so happened that one day a man, appearing to be highly learned and responsible, called on me with a list of roll numbers. I told him that it was wrong and unlawful on his part to have come with a recommendation and that marks would be awarded according to the dictates of justice and the right of every candidate. In reply he at once recited this verse of the Qur'an:

وَمَنْ يَّشْفَعْ شَفَاعَةً حَسَنَةً يَكُنْ لَّهٗ نَصِيْبٌ مِّنْهَا (سورة النساء: ٨٥)

Satan of a *Molvi* (religious man) is also a *Molvi*

My father Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say that the satan of a *Molvi* is also a *Molvi*. The satan of an ordinary man seduces his victim in various ways, but the Satan who seduces a *Molvi* by becoming himself like a *Molvi*. This learned man justified his conduct by quoting a verse from the Holy Qur'an meaning that he who makes a good recommendation receives a share of the reward. Try to understand well that a recommendation of this type is not at all lawful.

Do not prejudice the mind of the Judge with recommendation

A judge is hearing a case in his court to pass a judgement thereon and evidences are being produced from both the parties. If any one recommends to the Judge to pass his judgment in favour of a particular person, such recommendation is not at all lawful. It is also not lawful to recommend an examinee to the examiner. This is because the recommendation may prejudice the mind of the examiner. The Judge is sitting on the seat of justice to pronounce a just judgement in the case to decide as to which party is right

To make recommendation to the Judge of a court

The *Shari'ah* has taken great care to impress on a Judge not to hear one party in the absence of the other party. When the hearing is in progress both the parties must be present in the court. The Judge should not allow one party to present his case to him,in privacy, the other party remaining totally in dark about this. If the facts of the case secretly disclosed, to the judge by one party

become implanted on the judge's mind he cannot do full justice to the case. When the case has once been filed in the court, all doors to recommendation must be closed.

My reaction to Recommendation

I too receive from time to time a few suits for decision, and persons concerned with these suits see me to request that I should be sympathetic with them. I pay no attention to them and tell them frankly that it is not lawful for me to hear anything from them unless the other party is also present there. I therefore advise them to say, whatever they have to say, in the court in the presence of the other party, so that the other party may challenge if any lie is told against him. On this the person tries to impress upon that he is not saying anything unlawful. I tell him that I do not know whether what he is saying is lawful or unlawful. The other party should also be present to explain his stand and justify his case. Then alone a fair Judgement could be passed. It is not at all lawful to prejudice the Judge in privacy in that way.

It is also not lawful in anyway, on such occasions, to quote the Quranic verse من يشفع شفاعة حسنة يكن له نصيب منها . As the implementation of the Islamic laws has long since been absent from this country, the people have forgotten these problems. That is why recommendations are sometimes received from learned men.

So the whole issue boils to this: Recommendation should be made only in such cases in which it is lawful.

Recommendation in unlawful cases is a sin

Recommendation should be made only in such cases as are lawful in the *shara'*. To seek recommendation in unlawful cases is not lawful in any circumstances. For

example, a friend of yours is working as an officer some where who has power to do something. Taking undue advantage from him you get an unfit person appointed to a post. This is not lawful but it is a forbidden act. That is why while the Holy Qur'an commends lawful recommendation as a source of reward, at the same time, it condemns unlawful recommendation as a sin:

وَمَنْ يَّشْفَعْ شَفَاعَةً سَيِّئَةً يَّكُنْ لَّهٗ كِفْلٌ مِّنْهَا (سورة النساء: ٨٥)

He who makes an unlawful recommendation will have to share the sin involved therein. (4:85)

Recommendation is nothing but a device to call attention.

It is very important and the people know it as a part of their belief that one should not make an unlawful recommendation. Apart from this there is another aspect of the issue which people generally do not think and do not understand the reality of recommendation. In reality it is a way only of calling the attention of the person to whom the recommendation is being made. You are calling his attention to a point and doing something about it, of which, you think he may not be aware. It is not to exercise pressure on him to do the work involved. Everyone has a method and principle to follow according to his own choice and conscience. If you want him to do some thing by bringing pressure on him, that is not recommendation; It is mere coercion. It is not lawful to coerce any Muslim in anything. People generally do not consider this important point.

They procure the recommendation of an influential personality which the person concerned cannot dare ignore. This is exercising pressure through a weighty personality. It is not recommendation at all. It is only a sinful act.

This is exercising Pressure

Once a man came to me to make a recommendation and wanted first of all to be assured that I would not reject his recommendation. In this way he wanted to bind me that I should not turn down his recommendation. I asked him to tell me the job he wanted me to do for him, to see if it was lawful or unlawful and if it was within my power to do that. Again, this is not recommendation; this is mere coercion which is not lawful.

The directions of Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib رحمة الله عليه about Recommendation

May Almighty Allah have mercy on him that he was granted right understanding of Religion and he explained very terse and baffling religious issues and issued warnings from time to time in his speeches. He has warned that recommendation should not be made so as to pressurise the person whose help is sought. Such recommendation is not lawful. The intention by recommendation is to draw someone's attention to someone's need, saying that the person is deserving and it would be a good deed to help him and not that this and that must be done whether it is lawful or unlawful, otherwise I shall feel offended. This is no recommendation. This is mere coercion.

It is not right to appeal for donations in a gathering

Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib رحمة الله عليه has expressed the same opinion about collecting donations. In such a situation a man who does not feel inclined to contribute anything offers something only to save his face in the gathering, in imitation of others. As he did not donate the

money by a spontaneous urge it was not lawful. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said:

لایحل مال امراء مسلم الا بطیب نفس منه

That is, the money of no Muslim is lawful unless he gives it of his own sweet will.

(Majmauz-zawaid p. 172, vol. 4)

If anyone has, by the word of mouth, permitted anyone to take his money but did not part with it whole - heartedly, the money is not lawful. To raise money in this way is, therefore, strictly forbidden.

The manager of a Madrassah collecting donations himself

Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib رحمةالله علیه has said that some times the seeker of donation takes with him some great maulana (learned theologian) or the Manager of a Madrassah for the collection of donations. This exercise will pressurise the public and the man approached will feel compelled by the personality of the Maulana to offer something willingly or unwillingly. Such donation is unlawful.

What should be the wordings of the recommendation?

It should be well borne in mind that the style of seeking recommendation should not be coercive. That is why, Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib رحمةالله علیه would write these words: I think that this man is fit for the job. Kindly do the needful for him, if this lies within your power and if it also suits your principles and expediency. My own respected father رحمةالله علیه used to make recommendations in these very words.

I too, had to make recommendations in writing three

or four times. I wrote the same sentences of recommendation as I had heard from my respected father or read in the sermons of Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib رحمةالله علیه, viz, : Kindly help this man in his need if it is within your power and if it also suits your principles and expediency. The recommendation written in these words displeased the person for whom the recommendation was made because of the conditions stipulated therein, instead of giving direct advice to do the needful.

The Recommendation should include the interests of both parties

On one hand the recommendation should not cross the lawful limits and on the other hand it should also not exercise undue pressure on the person addressed, so as not to place him in an awkward situation, whether to ignore the recommendation and displease the person who has made it or to please him by breaking his own principles and doing something against his conscience. A recommendation creating such a situation is against the accepted principles of making a recommendation.

The practice of making recommendation is a curse in the society

The people have forgotten the golden principles and etiquettes of recommendation and thus it has now become a curse. To day even a lawful deed cannot be done without resorting to unlawful recommendation. The people have ignored the rules of the *Shari'ah.* Recommendation can be lawful only when the prescribed limits are not crossed nor are the rules laid down for it violated.

Recommendation is only a sort of advice

Recommendation is an act of advice and not a way of coercion. Nowadays people do not understand the meaning of advices. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said about advice:

اَلْمُسْتَشَارُ مُؤْتَمَنٌ

(Abu Daud, Hadith no: 5128)

The man who is consulted in some matter is a trustee. According to his honesty and trustworthiness the consultant must render his most considered and honest advice to the seeker of his advices. This is the privilege of giving advice. It is not a binding on the seeker of advice to accept the advice given. He has every right to reject it. This is implied in the meaning of advice. It is just inviting someone's attention to a matter. You have seen in the Hadith cited earlier how he advised that recommendation should be made to him, although he may or may not accept the recommendation and that he would take a decision according to Allah's will. This shows that a recommendation is not condemned, if it is not accepted for implementation. Nowadays a person feels offended if his recommendation is not accepted. This attitude is, however, not right. The intention was that one should participate in helping another person through his recommendation. Whether that intention is actually fulfilled is not a necessary part of recommendation. If the intention is not fulfilled and the seeker of advice does not accept the advice tendered, it should not be a cause of displeasure, as recommendation is only an advice and both situations are possible in an advice.

The events concerning Hazrat Burairah رضی اللہ عنہ and Hazrat Mughis رضی اللہ عنہ

Let us now see how the Holy Prophet ﷺ has explained the reality of advice. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has mentioned in full details even the minutest point relating to human life in this world. Now consider who can offer better and more useful and practicable advice about the affairs of this world, rather the vast universe than the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Just take an example. Hazrat Burairah رضی اللہ عنہ was a maid servant of Hazrat 'Ayesha رضی اللہ عنہا. Previously she was with some other person who married her to Hazrat Mughis رضی اللہ عنہ According to the rules of *Shari'ah,* master can marry his maid servant to anyone without obtaining her permission, as she is her master's property. Thus her master married her to a Hazrat Mughis رضی اللہ عنہ without obtaining her permission. Hazrat Mughis رضی اللہ عنہ was black and had not an attractive personality, whereas Hazrat Burairah رضی اللہ عنہ was an attractive and beautiful lady. Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا purchased her, then set her free.

A slave-girl has the right to cancel her marriage

According to the *Shari'ah,* if a married slave-girl becomes a free woman, she has the right to continue her matrimonial relation with her husband or sever it, and marry some other man of her choice.

The advice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

When Hazrat Burairah رضی اللہ عنہ became a free woman she was also allowed freedom to maintain or break her marriage with Hazrat Mughis رضی اللہ عنہ. When asked about it, she at once decided against Hazrat Mughis رضی اللہ عنہ and severed the marriage tie with him. On the other hand, this breach of relations proved a great torture to Hazrat Mughis

رضی اللہ عنہ as he was in deep love with his wife. Hazrat ibn ʿAbbas رضی اللہ عنہ has described the pitiable condition of Hazrat Mughis رضی اللہ عنہ roaming about in the streets of Madina with tearful eyes and entreating Hazrat Burairah رضی اللہ عنہ to revise her decision and join with him again. Hazrat Burairah رضی اللہ عنہ however, remained adamant in her denial. Hazrat Mughis رضی اللہ عنہ, then referred the matter to the Holy Prophet ﷺ and begged him for help in this ordeal. The Holy Prophet ﷺ called for Hazrat Burairah رضی اللہ عنہ and said to her:

لو راجعتيه فانه ابوولدك (ابن ماجد كتاب الطلاق، باب خيار الامة اذااعتقت، حديث نمبر ۲۰۸۵)

(Ibn Majah. Hadith no: 2085)

It will be good if you recast your decision, because, he (Mughis) is the father of your child and is in great distress. Hazrat Burairah رضی اللہ عنہ atonce put this question: O Prophet ﷺ of Allah. Is this a suggestion of yours that I should revise my decision, your command or only an advice? If it is your command I am ready to yield to it and re-marry him. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said: انما اشفع I am only making a recommendation. It is not my command. Upon this Hazrat Burairah رضی اللہ عنہ said to the Holy Prophet ﷺ: O Prophet ﷺ of Allah! If this is only an advice from you, then I am free to accept or reject it. As such, I decide that I should not, go to him again. Hazrat Burairah رضی اللہ عنہ , therefore, did not go to him again and remained aloof.

A lady turned down the Prophet's advice

Look here! The Holy Prophet ﷺ is granting an option to a woman who had until recently been a slave woman and attained freedom through the kindness of the Prophet's wife, Hazrat ʿAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا. Hazrat Burairah رضی اللہ عنہ exercised this option by turning down the Prophet's

advice and the latter did not show the slightest displeasure at woman's behaviour. By this incident the Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught the *Ummah* the principle that recommendation or advice is nothing but an act of calling the attention of the man to whom the recommendation is made. It is not an act of applying coercion in any way.

Why did the Holy Prophet ﷺ offer advice?

A question arises as to why the Holy Prophet ﷺ made a recommendation when he knew that Hazrat Burairah رضی اللہ عنہ had herself dissolved the marriage and was not willing to live with her ex-husband.

He made this recommendation for the reason that he knew that Hazrat Mughis رضی اللہ عنہ had no defect in him except his physical appearance and colour. If she had accepted the advice to re-marry him she would have become entitled to great reward, because in that way she would have fulfilled the wish of a servant of Allah. However, when she did not accept the recommendation, the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not express the least displeasure.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ taught the *Ummah* a lesson

He taught a lesson to the entire *Ummah,* including those to rise till the day of judgement, that an act of advice should never be misunderstood as an act of coercion or as an act being imposed as a binding duty. As already stated, recommendation is only an advice and a means of inviting attention. The man to whom this recommendation is being made has his full discretion to accept or reject the recommendation.

Why is recommendation a cause of displeasure?

Today recommendation and advice have become a cause of displeasure for us. If anyone's advice or suggestion is not accepted the person offering the advice takes it ill, feels offended and harbours malice on this account. Bear it well in mind that recommendation means nothing of the kind. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has advised that there is reward in making recommendation in favour of someone in a lawful cause and if the recommendation is not accepted, it should never be a cause of unpleasantness and ill-will against the person who does not accept the recommendation. Recommendation will be righteous deed deserving recompense, if it is made taking into account all these considerations.

SUMMARY

The whole issue may be summarised as:

Firstly, recommendation should be made only in such cases in which it is lawful to make recommendation.

Secondly, recommendation should not be made in cases where recommendation is unlawful, e.g. legal suits subjudice in Courts or checking of examination answer books.

Thirdly, recommendation should be in the form of offering an advice and not in the form of coercion.

Fourthly, if the recommendation or the advice is not accepted, it should not give rise to ill-will and malice, nor create corruption and antagonism.

Recommendation free from such defects will, God willing, attract divine mercy and reward.

May Almighty Allah enable us to understand and act upon these principles. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد الله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal
Karachi

Date : Friday, the 28th February 1992
After 'Asr Prayers

THE FASTING:

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه و نستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه و نعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله لا هادى له ونشهدان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له ونشهدان سيدنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعلى عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد:

فا عوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم، بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِیْٓ اُنْزِلَ فِیْهِ الْقُرْاٰنُ هُدًی لِّلنَّاسِ وَ بَیِّنٰتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدٰی وَالْفُرْقَانِ ۚ فَمَنْ شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْیَصُمْهُ ؕ. (سورة بقره: ١٨٥)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم، وصدق رسوله النبى الكريم ونحن على ذالك من الشاهدين والشا كرين والحمد لله رب العالمين

All praise to Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the mischief of our souls and the vices of our deeds. There is none to lead him astray whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no God but Allah alone and that He has no partner. I also bear witness that our Master, our Authority, and our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah bestow upon him, his household and his Companions His mercy blessings and salutations in great abundance.

The month of Ramadhan in which was revealed the Qur'an, is a guidance for mankind and clear proofs of the guidance and the Criterion (of right and wrong). So whosoever of you finds it should fast during it. (2:185)

A month of Blessings

Only a few days are left for the blessed month of Ramadhn to begin. There is no Muslim who is not aware of the greatness and blessings of this Holy Month. Allah Almighty has evolved this month for His worship. None knows what mercies He sends down to His servants in this month! We can never imagine the volume of these mercies.

There are some deeds to be done in this month which every Muslim knows well and which he does not doubt. For example, he knows that fasting during this month is an obligatory duty and praise be to Allah that the Muslims are enabled to fast in this month. They also know

that the *Taraweeh* prayer is *Sunnah* and they join this prayer for the sake of its blessings. At this time I want to call attention to another aspect of it.

People generally think that the Holy Month of Ramadhan has been specified for fasting and offering the *Taraweeh* prayer during its nights, and that is all. There is no denying the fact that these two forms of worships have great importance during this month, but the matter does not end here. The Holy month of Ramadhan, in fact, demands from us more than that. Almighty Allah has said in the Qur'an:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ (سورة الذاريات:٥٦)

And I did not create Jinn and mankind but to worship Me. (Az-Zariyat: 56)

In this verse Almighty Allah has said that the basic object of man's creation is that he should worship Allah.

Were the Angels not sufficient for this duty?

Some people, particularly those of modern outlook, feel that if the object of man's creation was only Allah's worship, then what was the need of creating man, as the angels have already been discharging this duty most efficiently. They are busy ceaselessly in glorifying and sanctifying Allah. That is why when Almighty Allah decided to create Hazrat Adam عليه السلام and informed the Angels of His decision about man's creation, the angels at once reacted to this, saying: Are you going to create man who will commit corruption and shed blood on the earth, while we are busy worshipping, glorifying and sanctifying you. In the same way even today some people are objecting to man's creation, if the only object of his creation is nothing but worship. The angels have already been discharging this duty.

This is no credit of the Angels

The angels are no doubt worshipping Almighty Allah, but their worship is totally of a different type from that which has been entrusted to man. This is because the angels, by their very nature, cannot defy nor abandon their worship, even if they ever try to do so. Allah has deprived them of the ability to commit sins. Neither do they feel hungry nor thirsty nor do they feel any urge for lustfulness. Not even the slightest thought of sin arises in their hearts, not to say anything of their actually committing or desiring to commit sins: That is why, Almighty Allah has not allowed any reward for their worship. So, if the angels are not committing sins this is no credit of theirs. When there is no credit, the reward of paradise, too, cannot be granted to them.

There is no credit of a blind man in protecting his eyes from vicious glances

For example, there is a blind man who has never in his life seen a film nor the Television, nor did he even cast a lustful glance on a strange woman. Now consider, what credit can go to him for refraining from these sins, when being totally blind, he has no power to commit these visual sins. On the other hand, there is another man who has sharp eyesight, yet he saves his eyes from falling on forbidden scenes despite the fact that he has an urge for that, simply for the fear of Allah. Both are refraining from sin, yet there is a world of difference between the two. The blind person has no credit because he is unable to commit sin but the man with sound and sharp eyesight deserves credit because he shuns sin despite being able to commit it.

This type of worship is not within the power of the Angels

It is no credit of the angels if they do not take food from morning to evening, because they do not feel hungry, so no reward can accrue to them for abstaining from food. As for man, he has been born with all these needs. He cannot do without food and drink, even if he attains the highest rank of Prophethood. Thus, the unbelievers raised this objection to the Prophet ﷺ

مَالِ هٰذَا الرَّسُوْلِ يَاْكُلُ الطَّعَامَ وَيَمْشِيْ فِى الْاَسْوَاقِ(سورة الفرقان:٧)

This means: What kind of a messenger is he that he eats food and walks in the markets.

(al-Furqan:7)

The Prophets also, like all other human beings, feel hunger and are required to satisfy this natural feeling. If a man is hungry but does not satisfy his hunger by eating food in response to Allah's command, as he had to do during the month of Ramadhan this is indeed a credit for him. That is why Allah said to the Angels that He was going to create a creature (man) who will feel hungry and thirsty, will have sexual urge and desire to commit sin, yet he will abstain from sins by remembering Allah's Commands. This action on his part of keeping himself away from sin and this devotion and worship will have credit and value in the sight of Allah. Allah has prepared for his reward and compensation a Paradise vast and spacious like the earth and the heavens. This is because this man feels an urge to commit sins and satisfy thereby his lust, yet he suppresses his desire for sins out of fear from Allah and respect for His greatness. As such devotion and righteousness are not possible for the Angels so it became necessary to create man.

The credit of Hazrat Yusuf عليه السلام

There is no Muslim who is not aware of the ordeal which Prophet Yusuf (Joseph) عليه السلام was ordained to face to resist the seduction of Zulekha (Queen of Egypt). According to the Qur'an Zulekha invited Prophet Yusuf عليه السلام to sin and the urge to commit sin arose in the hearts of both. The common people regard it as a short coming of Hazrat Yusuf, عليه السلام yet the Qur'an tells that despite the urge of sin he abstained from sin in submission to Allah's Command and out of fear of Him. There would have been no credit at all in Hazrat Yusuf's act of saving himself from Zulekha's seduction and in abstaining from sin, if he had been devoid of the urge, and capacity, for sin. The real credit lies in that a man resists all temptations and urges for sin in spite of the fact that he has full power and favourable circumstances to commit the sin.

Notwithstanding all these temptations and natural urges Hazrat Yusuf عليه السلام yielded to Allah's Will and said:"معاذ الله" Chapter 12 (Yusuf) verse no: 24 meaning: "I seek Allah's protection.

This indeed is the kind of worship for which Allah created man.

We have made a bargain for our souls

When the aim of man's creation is only worship, this demands that after coming to this world man should do nothing except worship the whole day and he should not be allowed to do anything else. In another place the Holy Qur'an has said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ اشْتَرَىٰ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُم بِأَنَّ لَهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ(سورة التوبه: ١١١)

This means that Almighty Allah has purchased from the believers their souls and their wealth,

the price being Paradise in the Hereafter. (9:111)

Thus when our souls have been sold, they are not our property; they have been sold for a price fixed for payment. This being the case of our lives; if Allah had ordered us to do nothing but devote ourselves all day and night in prostration before Him, His remembrance and abstain from earning money, eating and drinking, this order would not have been unjust, because the very aim of creation is worship and worship alone.

One should sacrifice One's life for such a buyer

What a Generous buyer, Allah has purchased our lives and properties for a very generous price that is paradise, yet He is so Generous that instead of taking possession of this purchased property, He has entrusted it to our care and custody with permission to appropriate it to our advantage in the struggle of life with the only condition to pray to Allah five times and to shun certain things and acts. This is an example of great mercy and kindness of Allah.

Revert in this month to the basic objective of life

Anyway, what is the result of making other actions of life lawful? Allah knew full well that the man by engaging himself in worldly affairs negligence would gradually seize him, making his heart oblivious of the basic aim of life. To remedy this negligence and oblivion, Allah has appointed certain periods of the year for devotion and spiritual overhauling, the month of Ramadhan being one of these periods. Having devoted the eleven months of the year to worldly affairs like trade, cultivation, service, etc, the hearts become affected with slackness and forgetfulness with regard to the main object

of life viz. Allah's worship. Almighty Allah, therefore, appointed this one month of Ramadhan to work for the Hereafter to gain Paradise through fasting and devotion for which you have been sent to the world. Thus, let man devote himself in this month to the worship of Allah to efface, through repentance the effects of the sins committed during the eleven months of the year, to wash off the impurities and the negligence that may have found access to the hearts. It is for this duty of purification that this month has been appointed.

The meaning of Ramadhan

The correct pronunciation of the fasting month is Ramadhan رمضان with زبر sign on the letter م (meem). The real meaning of the word Ramadhan is 'scorching and burning'. The month was given this name because when the question of finding a suitable name was considered, the time was very hot and the sun was very scorching. The people, therefore, named it Ramadhan.

Get your sins pardoned

The learned theologians say that the name of Ramadhan has been given to this month, because by His mercy and kindness Almighty Allah scorches and burns the sins of His servants for which He has appointed this month: By devoting yourselves to the affairs of the world for the eleven months of the year you have committed some sins and negligence has crept into your hearts. Now is the opportunity to present yourselves before Allah and get your sins pardoned and your hearts cleaned of the layers of lethargy and negligence, to begin a new round of life. The Qur'an says:

يَآ أَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْ كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُوْنَ (سورة البقرة:١٨٣)

O You who believe! Fasting has been prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become righteous.(al-baqarah:183)

Thus the real objective of the Holy month of Ramadhan is to secure forgiveness of the sins committed during the year and clean the heart of the neglectfulness stuck to it and also to create righteousness in the hearts. When a machine has been operating for sometime it has to be serviced, repaired and cleaned. In the same way Allah has appointed the sacred month of Ramadhan for servicing and overhauling the human machine that is man. In this month man should give a new shape to his life.

Let this month be free from other engagements

Matters do not end simply by fasting and offering the *Taraweeh* Prayer. The month demands that man should make himself free from other worldly engagements, because they have been busy with these worldly affairs during the eleven months. This is the month to revert to the basic aim of man's creation. It is, therefore, necessary to devote to Allah's worship the whole month or the most possible part of it. For this man should prepare himself in advance and chalk out a programme for it.

The correct way of welcoming Ramadhan

Nowadays a new custom has sprung up in the Islamic world which originated in the Arab countries, particularly Egypt and Syria and spread in other countries

including our own homeland of Pakistan. This consists in holding gatherings before the commencement of Ramadhan under the name of "gathering to welcome Ramadhan". In these gatherings the Qur'an is recited and speeches are delivered, letting the audience know that "We are welcoming Ramadhan". This keen interest in welcoming Ramadhan is indeed very nice and commendable, yet when it is exaggerated then after sometime it turns into *Bid'ah* (innovation). The real way of welcoming Ramadhan is to amend and change one's daily routine so as to be able to devote the major part of one's time to the worship of Allah. This has to be arranged before the start of Ramadhan. If one is not able to devote the whole of one's time to worship in Ramadhan, one should decide which of his activities he can totally give up and defer or reduce to the possible minimum for the sake of this month. This is the right way of welcoming Ramadhan by following which one can secure the true spirit of Ramadhan and its blessings and inner spiritual illuminations; otherwise this Holy month shall come and pass away without any true benefit from it.

A step beyond Fasting and *Taraaweeh*

When you have freed yourself from other usual engagements for the sake of Ramadhan, then plan as to how you shall utilise this spare time. So far as fasting and *Taraaweeh* prayers are concerned, the people are well aware of their importance and rituals. There is another aspect to which attention needs be invited.

A man who has the slightest vestiges of belief in his heart, feels the honour and sanctity of Ramadhan. This urges him to devote himself more and more to Allah's worship and to offer more of optional prayers. It is a

common experience that those who do not visit the mosques even for the five time prayers during the other months of the year take part in the daily lengthy *Taraweeh* prayers during Ramadhan. This is nothing but a blessing of this month that people devote themselves to prayer, rehearsals of the sacred names of Allah and the recitation of the Holy Qur'an.

Pass one month in this way

There is, however, one item more important than all these optional prayers, rehearsals and the recitation of the Holy Qur'an, etc., to which attention is generally paid. All of us should avoid committing sins in this month by protecting our eyes, ears, tongues from seeing, hearing, and tasting forbidden things and shunning altogether disobedience to Allah. If you have passed this blessed month sinlessly, you deserve congratulation and this month will prove a blessing for you. We remain involved in sins during the eleven months of the year; let us keep ourselves away from sins in the ensuing month of Allah by avoiding disobedience to Him telling lies, backbiting and casting lustful glances on forbidden sights. So do not misuse your ears during this month, nor take bribe, nor deal in interest. Shun these sins at least during this sacred month.

What kind of Fasting is it?

You are fasting in the month of Ramadhan no doubt with great interest and enthusiasm, but have you understood the meaning of fasting? Fasting means avoiding food, drink and satisfaction of (lawful) sensual desires, even though these three things are lawful during non fasting days and hours. During the fasting hours you are giving up these lawful things and acts, but how is it

that one indulges during this month in acts which have been forbidden for all times, e.g., telling lies, backbiting, casting sinful eyes. It is a pity that all these sins are being committed freely during fasting and just to pass the time fasting men are enjoying dirty film shows. What kind of fasting is it that you have given up what is lawful but are indulging in what is unlawful in all circumstances? There is a Hadith of the Prophet ﷺ to this effect: Allah says that He has nothing to do with a fasting person who gives up food and drink but tells lies during fasting. What credit does such a person take from abandoning food and drink when he does not give up telling lies?

The reward for Fasting goes waste

It is true that the fasting accompanied by sins is valid according to the rules of the *Shari'ah.* If a religious ruling is obtained on such fasting the Mufti will declare it valid and it is not necessary to offer a compensatory fast. Despite this, the reward earned by such fasting goes waste, because the man who is fasting did not acquire the spirit of fasting.

The aim of Fasting is to light the candle of *Taqwa* (righteousness)

I have recited the following verse of the Holy Qur'an:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُوْنَ (سورة البقرة: ١٨٣)

This means: O you who believe: Fasting has been prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become righteous. (2:183)

Now we have to see how righteousness is generated.

Fasting is a step-ladder to Righteousness

Some men of religious learning have said that fasting generates *Taqwa* (righteousness) by crushing the animal instinct in man. If a man remains hungry his animal devices and urges will be crushed. This in turn will suppress the urge to commit sins.

Our Maulana Hazrat Ashraf Ali Sahib رحمة الله عليه has said: It is not a question of crushing the animal instincts. The truth is that if a man observes the fasts with its proper etiquettes and discipline, this will itself become a grand step-ladder to righteousness. What is the meaning of *Taqwa*? It means refraining from sin by visualizing in one's mind the greatness and grandeurs of Almighty Allah. That is, man should think that he is a servant of Allah and Allah has His eyes on him, and that he has to give an account of his deeds before Allah. This indeed is *Taqwa* when a man gives up sins with this background. Allah has said:

وَاَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهٖ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوٰى (سورة النازعات: ٤٠)

This means: And for him who fears to stand before his Lord and restrains his soul from lust...(An naazi'aat: 40)

This verse clearly brings out the meaning of *Taqwa.*

My Master is Watching me

Fasting is, therefore, the best discipline and training for acquiring *Taqwa.* However, sinful and wrongdoing may a man be, after having observed the fast, he goes through many hardships. It is a very hot summer day; he feels very thirsty; he is all alone, the door is closed with a latch; there is a refrigerator in the room with ice-cold water. The soul within the body is urging the thirsty

fasting man to take a few draughts of this soothing water to quench his thirst when there is none to see this and curse him for breaking the fast and the people around him will still take him to be a fasting man. Notwithstanding this he does not break his fast for the only reason that he firmly believes that his Master and creator Allah for whose pleasure he is fasting is watching him.

I Alone shall recompense him for his fasting.

That is why Allah has said:

الصوم لی وانا اجزی به

(Tirmidhi Book of fasting, Hadith no: 764)

This means: Allah says that the fast has been observed for My sake and I shall recompense for it.

About other deeds Allah has said that He shall compensate for them ten-fold, seventy-fold, one hundred-fold, so much so that the compensation for charity is seven hundred times, but about fasting Allah has said: I shall personally recompense for it, because the servant has observed fast for Me alone. Inspite of severe thirst and inspite of all facilities available to quench the thirst, there being none to watch him, the servant of Allah did not drink water because he believed that one day he will be brought before Allah to give an account for his deeds. This feeling and belief is *Taqwa*. Thus fasting is a form of *Taqwa* and also a step - ladder to achieve *Taqwa*. Allah has, therefore, said that He has prescribed fasting to provide a practical training to practise *Taqwa*.

This Training Course shall not be completed otherwise.

When you are receiving this practical training through fasting, you should improve it and take it farther and farther. During the fasting days you refrained from food and drink only for fear of Allah although you badly needed food and drink. you should follow the same course in your other transactions of life. When you feel tempted to disobey Allah and violate His commands for some worldly gains, the fear of Allah should deter you from disobeying Allah. Thus during the month of Ramadhan you are undergoing a training course and the discipline learnt during this course should control your activities during your ordinary walks of life, otherwise the training will go waste.

As if you have installed an Air-Conditioner of fasting but. . . .

Prevention is as necessary as medical treatment. Allah prescribed fasting for you to generate in you *Taqwa*, but *Taqwa* will be generated only when you refrain from sins and disobeying Allah. This is just as the Air-conditioner cannot make the room cool unless the windows and doors etc. are kept closed. Exactly similar is the Air-Conditioner of Fasting which will bring you the cool air of *Taqwa* only when the windows and doors of sins and evil deeds are kept closed. What benefit can you get from fasting which is not protected from sins, wrongs and vices?

The real objective is "Obeying Commands"

The wisdom of crushing the animal instincts during Ramadhan by fasting is a secondary objective. The primary objective of Fasting is the obeying of the commands of

Allah and His Prophet ﷺ when you take food in obedience to Allah's command it is *Deen* (faith) and when you refrain from taking food in obedience to Allah's command it is also *Deen* (faith). Almighty Allah has given us a wonderful programme for fasting. He has prescribed fasting during the entire day for which He has commanded to break the fast promptly at sunset which is *Mustahab* (desirable); but undue delay in breaking the fast is an undesirable act. This shows that the real spirit of fasting is obedience to Allah.

You disobeyed My Command

It is very bad to be greedy for anything in the ordinary circumstances of life, but when Allah commands His servants to be greedy, then greed becomes enjoyable and desirable. A poet has expressed this idea as under:

چوں طمع خواہد زمن سلطان دیں
خاک بہ فرق قناعت بعد ازیں

When the Sultan of *Deen* Himself demands that I should be greedy for anything, then the quality of contentment becomes condemnable and undesirable. This brings out the wisdom in the command for hastening in breaking the fast. If one puts into one's mouth before sunset even a particle of food, the command declares it to be a sin, such as deserves to be expatiated with penalty. For example, the sun sets at seven p.m. If one puts into one's mouth a single grain at six past fifty-nine minutes apparently there should be no deficiency in the fasting. But according to the injunction of the *Shari'ah* this intentional breaking of the fast earlier only by one minute entails a penalty of sixty days continuous fasting. The reason for it is really not the eating of a grain only one minute before the prescribed hour but it is a penalty for violating the divine command. So it is

disobedience that is at the bottom of the punishment.

Hasten in Breaking the Fas.

No sooner does the sun set, than the command is to break the fast, as undue delay is a sin. Why is it so? The same dis-obedience!

To delay in taking *sihri*,
(the pre-dawn meal) is better.

The command about *Sihri* is that it is better to take it at the latest within the prescribed time. To hasten it is against the *Sunnah*. Some people take *Sihri* at mid night and go to sleep. This habit is totally against the *Sunnah*. It was the practice of the noble companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to be eating sihri till the last minutes of the appointed time. The reason for this is that not only is it permitted but it is also commanded to do so. In following this practice lies the obedience to Allah and His Messenger. To effect any change in the programme of fasting drawn up by Allah is not allowed. So the formula is to do something when Allah and His Prophet ﷺ command it to be done and to refrain from it when they command that it should be stopped. Hakeemul Ummah Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say that it is against obedience and submission not to eat or eat less when Almighty Allah commands His servants to eat to their fill. Neither is eating important nor abstinence is important; what is really important is obedience and submission to Allah's command and will. So avoid effecting any change in the programmes prescribed by Allah and His Prophet ﷺ.

Try to pass one month without committing sins.

If you are fasting, you must take care to save yourself from sins. This includes protecting the eyes, the ears and the tongues from misuse. The blessed saint once advised a very unique and effective way of shunning sins. He advised to seduce our souls by inducing them to abstain from sins during the month of Ramadhan with freedom to do whatever they wished to do in the rest of the year. This scheme, says the saint, is sure to put the person concerned on the right path during the rest of the year, rather the whole life. Let every man take a stock of his condition and resolve firmly that during this holy month, avoiding totally the misuse of his eyes, ears and tongue. What sense is there that a man is fasting and yet is engaged in forbidden sensual enjoyments.

The Importance of lawful means of sustenance during this month.

Another matter which our holy saint emphasizes in the arrangement for lawful income and sustenance during the month of Ramadhan. Let it not happen that you are fasting for Allah and breaking the fast with unlawful items of food, or food procured out of bribe, interest money or otherwise forbidden sources of income. So take special care to protect yourself and your family from forbidden income at least during this month and pray to Allah to help you in this matter.

Shun forbidden sources of income.

There is a group of men whose basic source of income is, thank God, lawful and not unlawful, except that on account of carelessness some unlawful items find way to their income. It is not difficult for such men to abstain from

unlawful money if they pay a little attention and take care to keep away from unlawful income. Allah has declared that this is a month of patience and perseverance, consolation, mutual sympathy and fellow-feeling. Yet instead of all these virtues the business community begins to fleece the general public with relentless profiteering. They begin to hoard their merchandise to raise the price during Ramadhan. They should refrain from such un-Islamic rather, inhuman practices and dirty tricks at least during this sacred month.

What to do if the entire income comes from unlawful sources?

There is a group of men whose income comes from entirely unlawful sources. For example, they are serving in organizations like banks and insurance companies, etc. what should such men do in this month? Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه has suggested a way out for every man. If possible he should take leave in the month of Ramadhan and do something to procure lawful income to meet the expenses of this month. If this too is not possible, he should borrow money from someone for this purpose with a firm resolution to maintain his family in this month only with lawful money. He can do at least this much.

It is easy to avoid sins.

I want to point out that people pay much attention to optional and other forms of prayers and worship during Ramadhan but they hardly take care to protect themselves from sins, although Almighty Allah has provided facilities during this month for men to keep themselves away from sins if they so desire. In this month Satan is imprisoned and put under chains and fetters, with the result that the door of satan's seduction is closed. So it becomes easy to

abstain from sins.

Refrain from anger during Ramadhan.

The third problem closely connected with Ramadhan is to protect oneself from anger. There is a hadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ saying: This is the month of sympathy and cooperation with one another. Everyone should, therefore, avoid anger and the sins and crimes that are commutted during fits of anger, e.g., quarrels, fighting, exchange of hot words and abusing one another during the month are very common. In a hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has gone to the extent of saying:

وان جهل على احد كم جاهل وهو صائم. فليقل انى صائم

(Tirmidhi, chapter on Saum, Hadith no: 764)

That is, if anyone behaves with you indecently and rudely, tell him that you are fasting and I am not prepared to fall out with you and fight with you neither with my tongue nor with my fist. So avoid anger. These are all basic items of dealing.

Indulge more in optional worship during Ramadhan

So far as optional worship is concerned all Muslims know that fasting and *Traweeh* prayer are very necessary. There is a special affinity between the recitation of the Holy Qur'an and the month of Ramadhan. That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to recite the Holy Qur'an completely to Angel Gibreel عليه السلام in the month of Ramadhan. The Muslims should therefore, devote themselves in this month to the recitation of the Qur'an to the best of their capacity. They should also be remembering Allah with

their tongues while sitting, walking and during all their movements. In addition to this they should also likewise rehearse the third Kalimah:

سبحان الله والحمد لله ولا اله الا الله والله اكبر

They should also rehearse the sacred *Darud* and the *Istighfar* with the same regularity and continuity. Take part in optional forms of worship as best as you can. In other days of the year man does not get opportunity to offer the *Tahajjud* Prayer, but in the month of Ramadhan this opportunity is available. During Ramadhan a man has to get up for taking *Sihri* food. He should get up a bit earlier and make it his routine to offer the Tahajjud prayer before taking *Sihri*. He should also offer his prayers with the *Jama'at* (congregation) and with rapt attention, concentration and submission to Allah. It is necessary to discharge all these duties during this month, which form the distinctive activities of the month of Ramadhan. Yet it may be stated again by way of emphasis that the most important of all things is the anxiety to save oneself from sins in this holy month.

May Almighty Allah help us in doing all good deeds and enable us to benefit from the lights and blessings of this sacred month. ***Aameen!***

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمدلله رب العلمين

Venue : Jame'Masjid Orlando,
Florida, USA
Date : Friday, the 22nd April, 1992

The modern culture and civilisation have a queer philosophy. If a woman is preparing food in her house for her husband and children, this is retrogression outmodedness. If the same woman becomes an, air hostess and serves the passengers becoming a target for their covetous glances, this is called freedom and modernism. If a woman stays in her house and manages the household affairs for her parents, sisters and brothers, this is called captivity and disgrace. On the other hand if she takes the job of a sales-girl in a shop and attracts the customers with her bewitching smiles and serves humbly her officers in an office is freedom and an honour. This is all condemnable.

FREEDOM OF WOMAN A DELUSION

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه و نستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه و نعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهدان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له ونشهدان سيدنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله

اما بعد:

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم. بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

وَقَرْنَ فِيْ بُيُوْتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُوْلٰى (سورة الاحزاب:٣٣)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم وصدق رسوله النبى الكريم ونحن علىٰ ذالك من الشاهدين والشاكرين والحمد لله رب العالمين

All praise is to Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the mischief of our souls and the vices of our deeds. There is none to lead him astray whom Allah guides and there is none to

guide him whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no God but Allah alone and that He has no partner. I also bear witness that our Sire, and our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. Stay in your houses and do not make a dazzling display (of your charms) as that of the days of Ignorance of old. (Al-Ahzab : 33)

Today's Topic.

My respected brothers and sisters:

The topic of taday's discussion is "The importance of *purdah* (veil). It is proposed to consider what are the injunctions of the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* about *purdah* for women folk and what is their importance.

Before embarking upon a detailed discussion of this topic, I invite your attention to an important point which consists in this question: Why is *Purdah* necessary for women and what are the injunctions of the *Shari'ah* about it? It is not possible to grasp this point thoroughly unless one understands the basic aim of women's creation and their appearance in this world.

You may inquire about the aim of women's creation from their Creator (Allah).

In a spate of western propaganda it is said everywhere that Islam has stifled women under *Purdah* and has imprisoned them within the four walls. The reason of all this propaganda is that the propagandists do not know the basic aim of women's creation. The truth is that it is Allah who has created this universe and its main inmates men and women both. If there is anyone who does not believe in this bare truth, then it is difficult to guide him on the right trend

of thought. If, on the other hand he believes that Allah and Allah alone is the creator of all things on this earth, including men and women, he can very well ask Allah for an answer as to why He created men and women.

Men and Women are two different sexes.

A great hue and cry is being raised now-a-days that women should also work side by side with men. In the zeal of their ceaseless propaganda, they have failed to reflect that if men and women were created for doing the same kind of work why was it necessary to create them with different physical characteristics and bodily constitutions. Who can deny the fact that men and women have different bodily systems, habits, sentiments, susceptibilities and mental trends. Allah has created each sex with different constitutions. To declare that there is no difference between men and women is self-deception and revolt against nature, because it is disbelieving our eyes and our senses. The difference between the physical constitution and sentimental trends of each cannot be effaced by artificial means, i.e., by putting on the same dress, having the same hair-style. The fact remains that the difference between men and women is too palpable to be denied and too real and true to be ignored.

The means to put a question to Allah are His Prophets.

As already pointed out it is the Creator Himself who can tell for what purpose He created men and women and one can approach the creator for an answer through His Prophets, the last of them being Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Two branches of Human life

It appears, without any shadow of doubt, from the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Prophet ﷺ that human life stands divided into two branches, viz., the indoor affairs and the outdoor affairs. Each branch is complimentary to the other. It is not possible to lead a balanced and moderate life without taking into account, and meeting the requirements of both the branches of life. It is equally important and necessary to plan and procure the indoor as well as the outdoor demands of life. Man's life can be stabilized and regulated with the help of these two branches. If one branch is ignored or preferred to the other, life will get shattered, disorganized and unbalanced.

Distribution of duties between men and women

Allah has distributed the duties between two sexes in such a way that men have been made responsible for outdoor duties, e.g. earning livelihood and looking after political and social affairs and women have been made responsible for all indoor duties. If an intelligent survey is made of the natural peculiarities of man's creation it will have to be admitted that there can be no better arrangement of the distribution of duties between men and women. None can deny that in physical constitution man is stronger than woman. Outdoor work demands more strength and endurance which has been bestowed upon man. Outdoor duties demanding physical and muscular strength can be discharged efficiently only by man power and not by woman power. As regards indoor duties which are easier and which require less physical strength have been rightly entrusted to women.

A woman should take charge of household duties

The Qur'anic verse which was quoted in the beginning contains a divine command addressed direct to the sacred wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and indirectly to the entire community of Muslim women. The command is:

وَقَرْنَ فِيْ بُيُوْتِكُنَّ

That is: (O wives of the Prophet ﷺ!) stay in your houses.

This does not mean to say that women should not go out of their houses, except in emergent conditions. The verse points out to a basic truth to the effect that women should stay in their houses and look after all indoor household affairs.

Distribution of duties between Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ and Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا

Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ and Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا had distributed their duties in such a way that Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ performed the outdoor duties and Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا looked after the indoor affairs, such as sweeping the house, grinding grain for flour, bringing water and cooking food.

What was the temptation in driving women out of the house?

In the present-day society a clean social living has no value, immorality and shamelessness are considered the final objective instead of modesty and chastity. In such an atmosphere not only will *purdah,* modesty and distribution of duties between man and woman be considered to be unnecessary but they will be considered

as an stumbling block. Thus when in the West a storm raged of getting rid of all moral values, man considered women's stay in the house to be a double calamity. On one hand, his sensuous tendency urged him to enjoy a woman at every step without accepting any responsibility for her and on the other hand he regarded the maintenance of his legal wife as a burden for him. The clever solution which he found out for both these calamities was given the innocent name of "the movement for women's Emancipation". The woman was befooled by teaching that she had so far been a captive within the four walls of her house. Now has come the time of her freedom. She should get out of this confinement and take part in every task of life side by side with man. She should take equal part in the struggle of life including political and governmental responsibilities of which she had so far been deprived and that international honours and dignified offices were waiting for her.

Being charmed by these bewitching slogans the poor woman came out of her house. By means of full-throated propaganda and all forms of publicity campaigns she was duped into the belief that she had today been liberated from centuries' old slavery and that her ordeals have come to an end today. Under cover of these enchanting slogans she was dragged to the roads, made clerks in offices, was appointed as private secretary to strange men. She was "honoured" with the posts of steno-typist sales girls, model girls. By disgracing each of her limbs in the open markets, the customers were invited to patronise particular trade centers and shops. That woman whom nature had granted honour, grace, dignity of character, modesty and chastity, now became a show-piece for commercial firms and a source of recreation for men to relieve them of their tiredness.

Woman has been entrusted today with every kind of menial work.

While claiming women's emancipation, it was promised that after bestowing upon her freedom the doors to the chambers of politics and government are being opened for her. Now just consider how many women have been appointed in the Western world as Presidents, Prime ministers, ministers, Judges or other high posts. If statistics are collected, the number of such fortunate women will be only a few in one lakh. After allotting some respectable posts to a few women, the rest, their number running into millions, have been dragged mercilessly on to the roads. This is the most painful aspect of the fraud of women's emancipation. If you go to Europe and America you shall see that all menial and third-grade work has been entrusted to women, as waitresses in restaurants, maid-servants in hotels to clean travellers' rooms, change their bed sheets and serve as room attendants. Men are seldom seen doing this work. It is exclusively women who are working as sales-girls, in shops and as receptionists at the gates of offices. It is generally the weaker sex that is working as waitresses, clerks etc., after having been liberated from the four walls of their houses. What a pity!

A Queer Philosophy of the modern Civilisation

A strange philosophy has been imposed on the minds of people with the power of propaganda that it is a matter of confinement and disgrace for a woman to discharge household duties in her house for the sake of her husband parents, brothers and sisters and her children. On the other hand if the same woman cooks food for strange persons, serves them as a waitress or hostess in hotels,

ships, attracts customers in shops with her smiles and serves her officers in offices with humble submission, then all this means freedom and honour for her. How sad!

It is the greatest irony of fate that even after discharging disgraceful and hard duties for earning a living, the woman has not been relieved of the duties of her household affairs which still lie on her weak shoulders. In Europe and America the majority of women, after their outdoor duties have on arriving home, to perform the duties of cooking food, washing utensils and doing sanitary work in their houses.

Is this half population Idle?

In support of the action of driving women out of their house for outdoor work a routine argument is put forward that we cannot let half of our population remain idle in a period of nation -building and development.

This argument is submitted with such gusto as if by providing employment to all labourers, they have reached the final limit of employment at least to the extent of the male population. Now we have reached, so to say, a stage in which not only is every one employed, but vast vacancies are waiting for the available manpower in the country.

Such things are being said in a country in which highly qualified males are roaming about on the roads in search of jobs. If a post of a peon or driver falls vacant tens of graduates apply for such jobs and similarly tens of M.As and Ph.Ds. apply for clerical posts when vacancies arise. First try to provide employment for the half male population in the work of nation-building and development, before thinking whether or not the half population consisting of the females is idle.

The Family system has been totally shattered today.

Almighty Allah created a woman to look after her household affairs, to manage them and stabilize the family system. As soon as she went out of the house, it had to be locked because both the parents are out on their jobs the children in their schools or nursaries. The family system is thus totally shattered. Woman was created to remain in the house to look after its affairs and to bring up the children in her affectional lap. The mother's lap is the first training school for her child. It is there that the child learns the principles of morality, character and living. This parental care and love are not available to children of to-day in the Western countries and the family system has been totally shattered. The husband and wife are working in different places in an atmosphere of free society and they have no contact with each other during their working hours. Sometimes this mode of working serves to weaken their relations as husband and wife, giving rise to unlawful contacts with strangers. Ultimately this leads to divorce, in turn, and destruction of the home.

Gorbachev's Opinion about women.

If I had said these things myself, one would have charged me with partiality. The last President of the earst-while USSR Mr. Mikhael Gorbachev, wrote a book a few years' ago entitled "Prostrika". This book has become famous all over the world and is available in Printed Form. Mr Gorbachev has provided in his book a chapter on "Status of Women". In this chapter he has written in clear words:

"The woman in our Western society was driven out of the home. As a result of her expulsion from the home we gained some economic benefits in the form of some

increase in production, because men and women are both working. Despite this increase in production its inevitable result was that our family system was shattered. The loss sustained by this destruction of the family system is more than the gains obtained from increase in production. I am, therefore, going to launch in my country a campaign in the name of Prostrika: The basic objective of this campaign is to think how we can bring back to her home the women who has gone out of her home. We have to think about this, otherwise the entire nation will be destroyed. Mikhael Gorbachev has written these words in his book which is easily available in the market, and which can be seen by anybody.

Money in itself is nothing.

The basic cause of the destruction of the family system is that we failed to understand the object of women's creation. Allah created women to establish and maintain intact the household management and the family system. The gist of all the efforts of today's economic and social planning converges on the largest monetary gains. But look! Can this money by itself provide any benefit? If you are hungry and have money with you, can you satisfy your hunger by eating this money? Money in itself is nothing unless you purchase with it the necessaries of life to meet your real needs.

Today's profitable business.

In the near past the details of a survey were published in a magazine which studied as to which is the most profitable business in the world. The survey has reported that the most profitable business in today's world is that of a "model girl". A model girl submits herself for

different naked poses being taken of her body for advertising purposes and for this the girl charges 25 million dollars as her wages for only one day. This woman today has become a merchandise for sale to be used by the capitalist according to his desire. This is because after going out of her house the woman has lost her respect, dignity and status.

An instructive story of a Jew.

It is related from a saint that once upon a time there lived a very rich Jew. In those olden days people used to deposit their money in underground cells. This Jew had amassed in this cell heaps of gold, silver and other valuables. Once the Jew entered his underground cell to inspect his treasure secretly, without informing the guard appointed for this purpose of this secret programme. He did this to see if the guard was misappropriating the treasure. The door to this cell was such that it could be closed from inside but could not be opened from inside. The Jew entered the cell and closed the door from inside without thinking how he could open it, as the door could be opened only from outside. The guard at the door thought that the cell was closed and safe. He had no idea at all that the owner of the treasure was inside the cell. After having inspected the treasure, when the owner came to the door, he found no way out and remained imprisoned there. After sometime he felt hungry and thirsty, but there was no food and no water, although there was gold and silver in abundance. During the night he wanted to sleep, but there was no bedding, although there was gold and silver. The result was that he remained alive there as long as he could do without food and water, then he died helplessly in the cell. The gold and silver heaped there could be of no avail.

This money is not in itself, of any use and gain to man, unless it is used to purchase the necessaries of life, and the monetary and the economic systems are planned and run on the right lines.

Money will increase in its count only.

The contemporary world says that if we drive the women out of their houses, we will get workers who in turn will raise production, and increase in wealth. To some extent it is correct that the wealth will increase only in count, but your family system will be totally shattered, resulting in closing the door to national progress. How tremendous is this loss?

What is the objective of earning money?

In the Qur'anic verse: وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ (stay in your houses), Allah has pointed out that He has created women to render the most important service of establishing and stabilizing the family system and managing the affairs of her household. There is absolutely no sense in the attitude that the entire attention is being laid to outdoor work at the cost of the safety of the household and the family system. Is it not a fact that man earns money for the purpose of making his household restful and comfortable? If this is not achieved and the peace of the home has been sacrificed at the altar of money, this hard-earned money is useless, whatever its quantity. It is absolutely worthless.

The child needs its mother's care and affection.

Allah has created women to take over the duties of bringing up and training the children on the right lines and putting them on the right trend of thought. That is why Allah has put in the heart of the mother more love for the

child than in that of the father, although the child belongs to both, when the child feels some discomfort he will at once call its mother and not its father, wherever she may be, because the child knows well that it is its mother who can remove its discomfort. The child is brought up in the shadow of this affectionate relation. It is not possible for a father to breed and bring up his child without the assistance of the mother. Actual experiment will support this statement. Nowadays people submit their children to nurseries for their upbringing. Remember that no nursery can provide the child with a mother's care and affection. The child does not stand in need of an institution like a poultry farm, but instead, the child needs the mother's care and love to ensure the provision of this care, love and affection, it is imperative that the mother should take charge of the management of the household. If a women is not doing this, she is rebelling against nature. The result of this rebellion against nature is the same which is before our eyes today.

The basis of great achievements is the "Home"

Allah has said in His Book, the Qur'an, fourteen centuries ago وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ (Stay in your houses). The "Home" alone is your world, your Hereafter and your life. O Women! Do not think that as man is doing great deeds outdoors, you too can do the same by going outdoors. You should think that the "home" is the foundation of all great deeds. If you breed and bring up your children in the right way sow the seeds of Iman (faith) in their hearts and generate Taqwa in them, then this achievement of yours will be much greater than the so-called great deeds done by man by going outdoors, because you have brought up and trained a child on the path of *Deen.*

The anti-propaganda and blind following of the West have begun to eradicate gradually the care of the women in our society for the religious training of their children. In such a situation those women who confined within their homes also sometimes begin to think that the people are right in saying that they have been confined within the four walls of their houses and those women who have gone out of these four walls are perhaps more advanced and progressive than they themselves. At any rate, bear in mind that the services which these 'confined' women are rendering within the bounds of their houses have no substitute and those valuable services cannot be rendered by going outdoors to work in market places and shops.

Contentment and comfort lie in *Purdah*.

Women should never think that the *Purdah* is a source of inconvenience to them. To be under *Purdah* is a part of women's nature. The very meaning of the word *'Aurat* which is the Arabic equivalent of the word women is something which requires to be kept concealed. This is women's nature and if nature is distorted, then there is no remedy for its reform. The contentment and comfort to be received in living within *Purdah* cannot be received from a life without *Purdah* in which women are exposed to public gaze. The protection of the *Purdah* system is therefore, an assential part of modesty and chastity.

The condition of women's hair on their heads.

It seems that the eyes of the Holy Prophet ﷺ were seeing clearly todays conditions of life. He is reported to have said in a Hadith: In the days close to the Day of Judgment there will be women the hair on whose heads will be like the humps of camels. He made this prophesy

at a time when none could think of such a hair-style. Now see for yourselves that women are now dressing their hair like the humps of camels.

They are naked, although they are putting on clothes.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is also reported to have said that although they will be wearing clothes, yet they will not fulfil the condition of concealing the body. This is because the clothes will be either so thin or of tight - fitting that all the contours of the body will become apparent and visible and all this is the result of disappearance of modesty and shame. It could not be imagined in the past that women would ever wear such clothes, because then they had the sense of modesty. It could not be imagined in the past that women would ever wear such clothes, because then, they had in their hearts sense of modesty and shame. She had a natural aptitude not to wear such clothes. Women are nowadays putting on clothes from which their breast, neck, arms all appear to be naked. What kind of clothes are these that instead of concealing the body, they are making certain limbs of the body more prominent.

A flood of mixed social gatherings.

During marriage celebrations, senses of shamelessness are seen even in those families that claim to be religious-minded and whose members sit in the first row in the mosque to offer prayers. Just visit a marriage ceremony of their family and see what is happening there. There was a time when none could imagine that there would be a mixed gathering of men and women in marriage parties. Now there is a flood of such gatherings in which women participate, well embellished with

make-up and attractive precious garments and ornaments with no regard for *purdah*, modesty and shame.

Why should there be no disorder?

Not only this but video films are being made of these parties so that those who could not enjoy these scenes because of their absence could be enabled to enjoy them later on with the projection of these films. All these sins are being committed, yet those concerned are looked upon as pious and religious. They do not show the slightest abhorence for such activities, nor does in their hearts arise any motive to discard these open vices. Now think! Should this open atrocity not beget disturbance disorder restlessness and lawlessness in the society, as we now see everywhere? Everyone's life, property, peace and honour is at stake. After all, it is Allah's great mercy and it is a blessing due to the Holy Prophet ﷺ that punishment is not being inflicted upon us to destroy us all. Our deeds do deserve such punishment- God forbid.

We are pushing our children down into the abyss of Hell.

All this is the result of the carelessness and negligence and the insensibility of the elders that they take no exception to the behaviour of their children to control them. Their children are hastening towards Hell and there is none to hold them back. They do not realize at all that they are pushing their children down into the abyss of Hell. When asked to check their children they take no notice on one plea or another and surrender themselves totally to their younger generation.

Matters have not yet gone out of control.

Matters have not yet gone out of control. Even now if the heads and controllers of the households resolve firmly against certain deeds namely, that they will not allow mixed gatherings in their houses; there will be no celebrations without *Purdah* among the females, nor will they allow the making of video films, the onslaught of lewdness and shamelessness can be held in check. Fear the time when a well wisher shall try to remedy this situation but he will not succeed. If not all, at least those families who think that they are religious-minded and followers of Islam should firmly resolve that they shall not allow these mixed and out of *Purdah* gatherings.

Boycott such Gatherings.

Our elders did not teach us to resort to boycott, but sometimes situations do arise when decisions of non-cooperation and boycott have to be taken by men to have their demand accepted. If you do not participate in a mixed gathering people will complain against you. You are advised to take no notice of their complaint when they take no notice of your advice to shun sin. If you are a *Purdah* observing lady and they want to invite you to a marriage ceremony why do they not make arrangements for *Purdah*. If they have no consideration for your preference and choice reject their invitation outright as attendene in such gathering is not a binding. This flood of lewdness and shamelessness cannot be stopped, unless the women take a firm resolution to stop it. Think as to how long you will be yielding to them in flouting the injunctions of Islam and let this flood go unchecked.

How long will you go on cooperating with the worldly people?

Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Idrees Sahib Kandehlawi رحمة الله عليه was a great saint of his time. In those days in the drawing rooms people used to sit on carpeted floors and the same sitting arrangement was in the drawing room of this pious saint. The women of his household suggested to the Maulana to replace this old fashioned sitting system by sofa set seats. The Maulana did not approve of the idea and preferred the same old-fashioned arrangement which, he said, was comfortable for him. The women argued with the Maulana to adopt the changed fashion of the time for the sake of his visitors. To this arguments the Maulana gave a unique reply. He said: What good turn did anyone listen to my advice and improve the way of his life? If they did not have any regard for me why should I have any regard for them?

Do not mind the people of the world if they do not care for your advice.

Why do you have regard for those who do not have regard for your *Purdah* system and your other religious ways of life.

If a woman without *Purdah* comes to the sitting arrangement made for the exclusive use of female guests and does not appear before the male guests, there is no harm for her. On the other hand if a *Purdah* observing women clad in her-veil appears among the male gathering, it is regarded as something highly objectionable. If you attend a party of mixed gathering only because the host shall be displeased with your absence, then is it not your right also to express your displeasure on being invited to a mixed gathering? Bear in mind that unless such retaliatory attitude

is put to practice, this flood of lewdness and shamelessness cannot be stopped.

Expel these men.

Even parties where separate sitting arrangements are made for men and women, men encroach upon the tents reserved for women and try to be free with the female guests and the advantage of separate arrangement is lost. Why do women on such occasions not stage a protest against the male intruders and demand their expulsion?

Dacoity is being committed against *Deen*, yet there is complete silence

It is a common occurrence on occasions of marriage celebrations that causes of complaints among the guests and the hosts concerning want of due attention and regard, etc. leading to bitterness. If you do not make complaints and protest on such occasions, there is no objection but it is highly objectionable for you to be silent when your *Deen* is being flouted and dishonoured. The *Deen* calls upon you to stand up and protest vehemently against the violation of the religious injunctions and orders. The growing onslaught on religion cannot be stopped unless a joint campaign is launched against this onslaught.

Be ready to face divine vengeance

This flood of shamelessness cannot be eliminated unless those who claim to have some regard for religion resolve to do their best to eradicate this social evil. If you do not get up to wage a war against this evil, then be prepared to face divine vengeance which is sure to come sooner or later.

Create your own Social Circle.

My respected father Hazrat Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to give very useful advice worthy to preserve. He said: You complain against the existing social conditions and the surroundings. You should create a congenial social circle of your own. by gathering round you those who think and feel alike with you. Your society and the society of those who think differently from you are quite different from each other. So try to form a circle of your own friends and keep away from those who are against you.

The Result of free mixing.

One evil in a woman's going out of *Purdah* is the breaking of the family system. The other aspect is that Almighty Allah has created an attractive magnet among the sexes for each other. This is a natural instinct which cannot be denied. When there is free mixing of men and women this natural instinct must be aroused at sometime and lead to commission of sin. You are living in a society where there is free mixing of men and women and you are also seeing with your own eyes the heinous outcome of this aspect. Against having unlawful sexual intercourse, there is no check in the present society; there is no law and no social check against this sin. Despite this the number of rapes committed in this country is greater than elsewhere. Only the other day I read in the papers that in America a rape case takes place after every 46 seconds. Now consider what is the reason for committing rape in a country in which the door to adultery by mutual consent always remains wide open?

What is the source to satisfy sexual urge?

The reason is that man has transgressed his natural limits. As long as a man satisfies his sexual urge within his

natural limits, he will be able to satisfy this urge with full satisfaction. On the other hand when he crosses his natural limits to satisfy this urge, he will turn into ravenous hunger and an insatiable thirst for adultery. On reaching this stage man's greed for adultery grows more and more.

Therefore, the custom of mixed gathering and free contact between the two sexes cannot result in anything other than what you are seeing with your own eyes today. This indeed is due to the violation of Allah's command contained in this verse.

وَقَرْنَ فِيْ بُيُوْتِكُنَّ

That is, stay in your houses.

By ignoring this command women have taken just the opposite course.

There is permission to go out of the house under emergencies.

A question does arise. Being a human being a women too has some needs for which she may have to go out of her house. She may wish to go out to meet her relatives or to satisfy some of her personal needs, or at times to take part in some recreation.

It must be understood that the command "stay in your house"does not mean that women should be locked up in their houses. She has permission to go out, with certain conditions, in times of need. In normal conditions a girl lies on the shoulders of her parents and after marriage this responsibility is transferred to her husband. In abnormal conditions in which a women has neither parents nor her husband, in such a situation a women has permission to go out of her house She is also allowed to go out for lawful recreation. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have taken Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضى الله عنها out of the house.

Has ʿAyesha رضی اللہ عنہا also been invited?

It occurs in a Hadith that once a companion رضی اللہ عنہ invited the Holy Prophet ﷺ to a feast. The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked: اعائشة معی؟. Is ʿAyesha also invited with me? It was a time of informality, so the companion رضی اللہ عنہ replied to the prophet's query in the negative. Then the Holy Prophet ﷺ also refused to accept the invitation by saying: اذا فلا meaning that he cannot accept the invitation without ʿAyesha رضی اللہ عنہا. After some time the same companion رضی اللہ عنہ again invited the Holy Prophet ﷺ to a feast. At this time also the Holy Prophet ﷺ inquired if ʿAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا was also invited. The companion again replied to the Prophet's query in the negative. The Holy Prophet ﷺ refused the invitation. After some time the companion رضی اللہ عنہ again invited the Holy Prophet ﷺ and requested him to accept the invitation. The Holy Prophet ﷺ again put to the companion the same question: اعائشة معی؟ (Is ʿAyesha رضی اللہ عنہا also invited with me?). This time the companion رضی اللہ عنہ replied to the Prophets question in the affirmative saying: نعم! یا رسول اللہ! (Yes O Prophet ﷺ of Allah). The Prophet ﷺ accepted the invitation saying: اذا فنعم! (Then yes). (Muslim, Hadith no: 2037).

The Reason for the Prophet's insistence.

The reason is not mentioned in the narrative, but some *'Ulama* (learned men) have observed that generally its was not the practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to insist on to taking with him Hazrat ʿAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا also when some one invited him to a feast, and he used to accept the invitation without any condition. It seems, as some *Ulama* say, that perhaps that particular companion رضی اللہ عنہ bore some grudge towards Hazrat ʿAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا and the Prophet ﷺ wanted to remove this grudge of the Companion رضی اللہ عنہ. That is why he repeatedly put the

condition of taking Hazrat ʿAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا with him

A wife also needs lawful recreation.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ was invited to a feast at a place outside Madina. He ﷺ set off with Hazrat ʿAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا and on the way they found an open plain where no stranger was present. At that time the Holy Prophet ﷺ ran a race with Hazrat ʿAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا. This racing was a lawful recreation and the Holy Prophet ﷺ provided it for Hazrat Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا. Islam allows this kind of recreation with the condition that it should be within *Purdah* and away from the eyes of strangers. (Abu Daood. Hadith no: 2578).

It is not lawful to go out with adornment and show.

The *Shariʿah* has allowed women to go out of their homes in times of need on the condition of due *Purdah* and with strict care not be shown openly the charms of their bodies. The Qurʿan has therefore said further:

وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَىٰ

This verse means that if it ever becomes necessary to go out of the house, do not go with adornment and show your charms as women in the days of Ignorance used to do. Never use decoration to attract the peoples attention. You should go out under *Purdah,* concealing your bodies in loose garments. The *Burqaʿ* (veil) is widely used now but during the time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ cloth - sheets were used which covered the whole body from head to feet. In short, women are allowed to go out in times of need, but the order of *Purdah* has been given to forestall the evils that may result from going out without *Purdah.*

Was the Order for *Purdah* only for the sacred wives رضی اللہ عنہن of the Holy Prophet ﷺ ?

Some people say that the order of *Purdah* in the Qur'an related exclusively to the sacred wives رضی اللہ عنہن of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and it was not for general application. They base this argument of theirs on this verse. This stand is wrong traditionally and rationally both ways. On the one hand, this verse contains many injunctions of the *Shari'ah*, one being.

وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَىٰ

(Do not go out with adornment and make-up like women in the days of Ignorance).

Is this injunction applicable only to the sacred wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and not also to other women of the *Ummah*? Are they free to indulge in decoration and show like the women of the days of Ignorance? It is quite obvious that the order applies to all women. Next comes another command وَأَقِمْنَ الصَّلَاةَ (Establishe the prayer), Does this command regarding prayer not apply to other women? Thereafter another command follows: وَآتِينَ الزَّكَاةَ (Pay the obligatory charity). Is this command also applicable only to the sacred wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and not also to other women? Still another command follows:وَأَطِعْنَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ (And obey Allah and His Messenger). Is this command also not applicable to women other than the wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ ? The context of the entire verse clearly shows that the commands are of general application, although the verse has been addressed direct to the wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and indirectly through them to all women of the *Ummah*.

They were pious ladies.

The *Purdah* system was intended for stopping the evils arising among the society on account of non-observance of the *Purdah*. One may ask, if evil and disorder should arise only when the sacred wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ go out of their houses. God forbid, this is impossible, because women pious and righteous like them have not been born on the surface of the earth. The fact is that by addressing these commands to the sacrad wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ all other women are also being addressed in particular, because they are more susceptible to error and straying.

The Command of *Purdah* applies to all ladies.

Further there is another verse in which all women of the Muslim *Ummah* have been addressed:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِأَزْوَاجِكَ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَاءِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلَابِيبِهِنَّ (سورة النور)

This means: (O Prophet ﷺ!) say to your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks close round them. (33:59)

There can be no clearer command than this. The word جلابیب *(Jalaa beeb)* is the plural of *"Jilbaab"* which means a sheet which a women draws over her body in such a way that her entire body is covered with it. Moreover, the Qur'anic order is not restricted only to the covering of the body with the jilbaab, but the word ﴿يدنين﴾ *(Yudneen)* has been used to mean that the *Jilbaab* should be drawn over in front so as to screen the face. What command can be clearer than this?

The Command of *Purdah* during the state of Ihram.

You know that on the occasion of the Hajj Pilgrimage, it is not lawful for a woman during the Ihram to apply cloth to her face. Men cannot cover their heads nor can women cover their faces. When the Hajj season came and the Holy Prophet ﷺ set off for Hajj with his sacred wives, the question arose that on one hand there is the order of *Purdah* and on the other hand is the order that during Ihram cloth should not touch faces. Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا has said: When we were performing the Hajj journey on camels we used to turn aside our face-covers when there was no stranger to gaze at us and we had fixed a wooden frame on our forehead, so that when some strangers or a caravan appeared we would turn back the face-covers on that wooden frame to ensure that the covers do not touch our faces nor is the order for *Purdah* violated. This shows that the sacred wives did not forsake the *Purdah* even during the state of Ihram.(Abu Dawud, Hadith no: 1833).

A lady's strict observance of *Purdah*.

It occurs in a narrative of Abu Dawud that a woman's son had gone with the Holy Prophet ﷺ to take part in a *ghazwa* (Holy War). After the battle all returned home except this woman's son. In such a state of anxiety and restlessness she ran to the Holy Prophet ﷺ to inquire after her son. She was told by the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم that her son was martyred in the battle. On hearing the news about her son's death she was stunned with grief. Yet she bore the sad news with patience and courage. On this occasion someone put her this question: O lady! you have called upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ in a state of such distress

and grief, yet you are putting the face-cover on your face and you did not give up the *purdah* even at such a critical moment. The brave women replied:

ان ارزأ ابنی لم ارزأ حیائی

My son has indeed passed away but my modesty and shamefullness did not pass away.

Even in such a critical moment the order of *Purdah* was strictly obeyed by this Sahabiah رضی اللہ عنہ (Abu Dawud, Hadith no: 2488).

Do not mind the taunts of the Westerners.

Almighty Allah issued the order of *Purdah* in the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Prophet ﷺ taught us its details in the Ahadith and the sacred wives of the Prophet ﷺ and his sacred female companions gave practical demonstration by actually obeying the order.

Now the people of the West have launched a propaganda campaign against the Muslims that they are treating their women with cruelty, by confining them within the four walls of the house and keeping them under *Purdah* and have thus turned them into cartoons. Should we ignore the commands of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ in deference to the jokes of the West and its propaganda? Remember that you must create confidence in your hearts that the ways of life taught by the Prophet ﷺ of Allah are true and right. We should not mind if anyone ridicules and taunts on that account. Such jokes and taunts are nothing new for the Muslims. These taunts were levelled also against the Prophets of Allah who came to the world to guide humanity. They and their followers were ridiculed as backward, old-fashioned and retrogrades, who wanted to deprive the people of the comforts and pleasures of life.

The Prophets endured all these taunts and troubles. You being the inheritors of the Prophets must take over from them these taunts and jokes like all other legacies from them. If you have faith in Allah and His Prophet ﷺ you must endure these jokes and taunts with patience and Jovially.

You will be third-grade citizens even then.

Under pressure of these jokes and taunts if you agree to yield to the wishes and suggestions of the West, even then you will remain third-grade citizens. If you give up at their bidding the *Purdah* system and let your women go out, as the West desires for outdoor work and activities, do you think that they will accept you as their equals and bestow upon you the same rights and respect which they themselves enjoy? No, never; even then you will be considered as backward, fundamentalists and old-fashioned retrogrades. After all you will be treated as a third grade citizens.

Tomorrow it will be our turn to ridicule them

If you ignore their jokes and taunts and decide firmly to walk on the path shown and followed by the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his sacred wives, then a day will surely come when you will laugh at and ridicule them.

The Qur'an says:

فَالْيَوْمَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا مِنَ الْكُفَّارِ يَضْحَكُوْنَ ۝ عَلَى الْاَرَآئِكِ ۙ يَنْظُرُوْنَ

But on this day, the believers will laugh at the unbelievers: On thrones (of dignity) they will command (a sight) (of all things). (83: 34-35)

The unbelievers used to laugh at and redicule the Muslims, specially when they saw a Muslim passing by them. This verse describes how in the Hereafter the

believers shall laugh at and ridicule the unbelievers and will be looking at them while sitting on sofas, God willing. After all, life in this world is very short. How long will the unbelievers make fun of the Muslims. They will know the truth when they pass away from this transitory world. The only way of success and honour left for us is to stick to our way of life and conduct, as given by Allah and His Prophet ﷺ which alone is the guaranteed way of success and salvation.

Honour lies in Islam

He who firmly resolves to carry out the injunctions of the Shari'ah is the man to receive honour and regard from the world. In fact, honour lies in embracing and following Islam and not in renouncing it. Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ has said:

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ قَدْ اَعَزَّنَا بِالْاِسْلَامِ

Allah has honoured us with Islam. If we renounce Islam Allah will disgrace us.

He lost his beard as well as the opportunity of employment

An elder of mine told me a true story which is highly admonitory, which runs thus. A friend of his was living in London and was in search of a job. He had a beard on his face and went to appear at an interview. The man who was interviewing him told him that he could be considered for appointment only if he shaved off his beard. He left the place in disappointment and for a few days tried his luck at other places, but in vain. At long last he decided to get rid of his beard. After having his beard shaved off, he went to the same place where he had been rejected on account of his beard. The officer asked the

reason of his visit. In reply he said that earlier he had been rejected on account of his beard which he has shaved of. Then the following dialogue took place between the two:

Officer: Are you a Muslim?

Candidate: Yes.

Officer: Did you consider your beard to be necessary or unnecessary?

Candidate: I considered it to be necessary. That is why I had kept it.

Officer: You had kept your beard in obedience to Allah's command and now you have removed it at my bidding. It means that you are not faithful to Allah and one who is not faithful to his Allah cannot be faithful to his officer. Therefore, now we are unable to provide you employment. خَسِرَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةَ He lost the beard and the opportunity for a job both.

It is not only the beard, it is a common experience that if anyone violates any of Allah's commands only because the people will make fun of him, he most often suffers loss in this world and also in the Hereafter. One should be on his guard against such conduct.

The Face should also be kept under *Purdah*

The order of *Purdah* implies that the entire body, including the hair, should be covered from head to feet with a sheet, a *Burqa* or a loose gown. The face is also subject to *Purdah,* so it should be covered. While explaining the meaning of the verse:

﴿ يُدْنِيْنَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلَابِيْبِهِنَّ ﴾

Hazrat Abdullah bin Mas'ood رضی اللہ عنہ, has said that in his days the women used to wrap a cloth-sheet round their bodies, including the face, except the eyes, and this is the

correct way of *Purdah.* Allah has, however, allowed that at times of very pressing needs only the face and the hands up to the wrists may be bared. But for this relaxation in very special circumstances, the real *purdah* according to Allah's command is as mentioned above.

Purdah on the intellect of men.

What has been stated above is in a nut shell the command of *Purdah.* It is a fact that *Purdah* is inevitable to protect the chastity and piety of a woman. It is the duty of men to press their woman to observe *Purdah* and likewise it is binding on women to observe *Purdah.* What is most regretable is that some times women want to observe *Purdah* but their men stand in their way and force them to go without *Purdah.* Late Akbar of Allahabad has very beautifully depicted men's attitude in two couplets :

بے پردہ کل جو نظر آئیں چند بیبیاں
اکبر زمین میں غیرت قومی سے گڑ گیا

پوچھا جو ان سے پردہ تمہارا وہ کیا ہوا
کہنے لگیں کہ عقل پہ مردوں کے پڑ گیا

The other day I saw a few ladies without *Purdah*

Akbar was overwhelmed with a feeling of national shame

When I asked them what happened to your *Purdah*

They said that their *Purdah* fell on the intellect of their men

As mentioned in these couplets, the intellectual

faculty of men has been totally paralysed and they are opposing the *Purdah* system.

May Allah save us all from wrong thinking and enable us to mould our lives on the pattern given by Allah and His Prophet ﷺ and live accordingly. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame'masjid Baitul-Mukarram,
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.

Date : Friday, 2nd August, 1991
After 'Asr Prayers

DEEN (Religion) is not the name of a particular act or the completion of one's daily routines. *Deen* is the name of obedience to Allah. *Deen* is the name of acting upon what He commands. *Deen* is the name of adopting what He wills. *Deen* is the name of total submission to His will.

DEEN (RELIGION) A COMPLETE SUBMISSION

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه و نستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه و نعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهدان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له ونشهدان سيدنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعلى عليه وعله اله اصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد:

عن ابى موسى الا شعرى رضى الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم اذا مرض العبد او سافر كتب له مثل ما كان يعمل مقيما صحيحا (صحيح بخارى كتاب الجهاد باب يكتب للمسافر مثل ماكان يعمل فى الاقامة، حديث نمبر ٢٩٩٦)

All praise is to Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the mischief of our souls and from the vices of our

deeds. There is none to lead him astray whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no God but Allah alone and that He has no partner. I also bear witness that our Master, our Authority, and our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah bestow upon him, his household and his Companions, His mercy blessings and salutations in great abundance.

(Bukhari. Hadith no: 6992)

Good deeds are recorded during the sickness and journey of a man

Hazrat Abu Musa Ash'ari رضی اللہ عنہ is one of the most eminent Companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and one of the Jurists among them, He is one of those who migrated twice, once to Habashah and lastly to Madinah. He has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: When a servant of Allah falls sick or goes out on a journey, Allah records in his register of deeds the reward of all those deeds which he could not do during his sickness or journey. How encouraging is this saying of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that one should not feel disappointed for the deeds one is prevented from doing them on account of sickness or journey, because Allah, by His mercy, is crediting to the man's account the recompense of his missed deeds.

Prayer in not excused under any circumstances

The concession mentioned above relates only to the optional prayers and duties. Those items of worship which are obligatory فرض must be performed with the concessions or reduction allowed by the *Shari'ah* therein. For example

take the case of prayers صلوٰۃ. It is not exempted, how seriously ill a man may be. Almighty Allah has, of course, allowed certain concessions that prayer may be offered sitting if the person cannot offer it standing, or lying down, if he is not able to offer it while sitting. If one cannot perform *Wudhu* (ablution) one may perform *Tayammum,* or if the clothes are not pure one may offer prayer in the impure clothes. Prayer is, however, not excused in any circumstances, as long as man is alive. If anyone faints or becomes unconscious and misses six prayers in this condition, these six, prayers are excused, but not otherwise and as long as he is in his senses and alive.

One should not worry during sickness

Sometimes during sickness a man is compelled to pray sitting instead of standing or lying instead of sitting. Some men feel dejected on account of this inability and unnecessarily torture their minds. As already mentioned, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has provided solace and encouragement that if you give up these deeds on account of sickness, Allah by His mercy, records the reward of these deeds which man used to do during the days of his normal health.

Give up your own choice.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said in a Hadith:

"ان اللہ یحب ان توتی رخصه کما یحب ان توتی عزائمه"

(مجمع الزوائد، جلد ۳ صفحه ۱۶۲)

(Majma-uz-zwaid, vol. 3, p. 162)

Just as Allah likes action on His determined command in the same way He likes action on allowed concessions on occasions of sickness and inability. Therefore, do not care for your own choice, because only

that course of action is desirable which Allah also desires:

It is *Sunnah* to take the easier course

Some people are hardship-loving by their very nature and want to undertake difficult jobs. In fact, they are always looking for difficult tasks under a misconception that thereby they can earn more reward. This, however is not the practice of the *Sunnah*. The practice of the *Sunnah* is mentioned in this Hadith:

"ما خير رسول الله ﷺ بين امرين قط الا اخذ ايسر هما" صحيح بخاری،

كتاب الادب،حديث نمبر ٦١٢٦

(Sahih Bukhari, Kitabul-Adab, Hadith no: 6126)

This means that when the Holy Prophet ﷺ had to choose between two alternatives, he always chose the easier one.

Was this practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ due to ease-loving or indolence? Never! Such ideas cannot be entertained about the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The reason for this practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is that in choosing the easier alternative there is more devotion and ease. In this practice there is no display of bravery before Allah. It is rather a display of weakness, humbleness and slavery before Omnipotent Allah. Choosing the difficult alternative may be taken as a show of arrogance.

***Deen* (Religion) is the name of compliance**

Deen is not the name of any special practice or action, nor the name of completing one's routine programme or following the dictates of one's own habits. *Deen* is the name of obeying the injunctions prescribed therein by Allah and His Prophet ﷺ. It is the name of giving up one's own preferences and wishes in preferences

to Allah's commands. It is the name of total submission to His will. It is not a matter of regret if one is praying while sitting instead of standing during sickness or some other disability. You should feel sure that the easier course taken by you under some duress is appreciated by Allah. On this occasion you should forget your preference of praying in the normal way. It is no devotion and submission at all to insist upon one's own choice.

Do not show your bravery to Allah

When it is the will of Allah that His servant should groan under pain he must groan. Once a saint visited another ailing saint. The latter was suffering from much pain and distress but instead of groaning, he was rehearsing "Allah, Allah" and *"Al-Hamdu lillah* (Praise be to Allah). The visitor saint said to the ailing saint: O brother! your rehearsing *"Al-hamdu lillaah"* is highly appreciable but this is the time for praying to Allah for the grant of recovery from the ailment. Uttering *"Al-hamdu-lillaah"* during this suffering is a show of bravery before Allah, as if you are saying to Allah: You have made me sick but I am too brave to express pain by groans. Such conduct is not the expression of servitude before Allah. Expression of servitude before Allah is to display submission and humbleness. Call upon Allah as a helpless and humble slave, when He so desires, just as Hazrat Ayyub عليه السلام had done:

اَنِّیْ مَسَّنِیَ الضُّرُّ وَاَنْتَ اَرْحَمُ الرّٰحِمِیْنَ (سورۃ الانبیاء: ۸۳)

This means: (O Allah!) Distress has fallen on me and You are the Most Merciful of those that are merciful.(21:83)

So when some distress has fallen on man and Allah wills that he should express his distress by groaning, then

pleasure lies in these groans; and this is the real spirit of devotion. To resist pain and distress to an undue degree is also against the spirit of sincere devotion.

The Highest Status of man.

Remember that the highest status of man is the status of being a servant (of Allah). How many attributes has Almighty Allah mentioned in the Holy Qur'an for the Holy Prophet ﷺ :

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ شَاهِدًا وَّمُبَشِّرًا وَّنَذِيرًا ۝ وَّدَاعِيًا إِلَى اللهِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَسِرَاجًا مُّنِيرًا

(سورة الأحزاب : ٤٥، ٤٦)

That is, I have sent you as a witness, a bearer of glad tidings, a warner, a caller to Allah with His permission and illuminating candle. (33: 45-46)

How grand these are, yet on the occasion of the (Ascension), when Allah called the Holy Prophet ﷺ to Him. He remembered him by the simple attribute of servant).

"سُبْحَانَ الَّذِيْ أَسْرٰى بِعَبْدِهٖ" (سورة بنی اسرائیل :

Glorified is He who carried His servant... (17:1)

Here Allah did not use the attributes of "witness", giver of glad tidings and illuminating candle etc. Instead, He has used the attribute of servant just to tell that servitude is the highest status of man. The highest status of man before Allah is that of servitude, humbleness and help-lessness.

Do you desire to crush the pride of the beloved?

Muhammad Zaki Kaifi was my elder brother رحمة الله عليه. Who was a very good poet. Once he composed a line whose correct meaning the people could not understand. He has expressed the same meaning very beautifully in the following couplet.

اس قدر بھی ضبط غم اچھا نہیں
توڑنا ہے حسن کا پندار کیا

(کیفیات :زکی کیفی ص ۱۴۱)

(Kafiyat Zaki. p. 141)

Someone has inflicted you with a grief and you endure that so completely that even the cry of 'Ah,' Oh, does not escape from your mouth. Do you want by this endurance to crush the pride of him who inflicted you with that grief? Do you want to display before him your bravery? This is not the duty of a servant. A servant's duty is to call upon Allah to relieve him of the distress which Allah has inflicted on him. If Allah has sent down on you some grief, you are required to express that grief within the limits prescribed by the *Shari'ah,* as did our Holy Prophet ﷺ on the death of his son:

إِنَّا بِفِرَاقِكَ يَا إِبْرٰهِيْمُ لَمَحْزُوْنُوْنَ

"O Ibrahim! We are grieved at your departure".

(Sahih Bukhari Book on Funerals Hadith no: 1303)

To sum up, the servant should be pleased with the condition in which Allah wants to keep him. If Allah wants you to offer the prayer while lying down, do that without hesitation. This mode of praying will bring you the same reward as praying in the normal standing posture.

The Fasting Days of Ramadhan will come back

Our Dr. Muhammad Abdul Hayi Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to relate an incident related to him by Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanavi رحمة الله عليه . A man had to give up his fasting during Ramadhan because of his sickness for which he felt very much aggrieved and dejected. The saint told the man: There is no cause for grief. Think for whom you were

fasting. If you are fasting only for your pleasure and satisfaction, then you may lament for the loss. However, if you had been fasting for Allah's pleasure then, Allah has Himself allowed to give up fasting during Ramadhan because of sickness. Thus the object has been attained in either way. There is a Hadith to this effect:

ليس من البر الصيام فى السفر (صحيح بخارى، كتاب الصوم، باب قول النبى ﷺ : ليس من البر الصوم فى السفر، حديث نمبر ١٩٤٦)

(Sahih Bukhari, Book of Siyam... Hadith no: 1946)

It is no righteousness to fast during a journey when fasting becomes very hard and unbearable. When you compensate these missed days of fasting in other ordinary days, you will receive all the blessings, spiritual gains and rewards which you would have received by fasting during Ramadhan. For such a sick person the Ramadhan days will come back. It is not at all necessary to feel sorry if fasting is being missed on account of some Shara'i handicap, viz., sickness, journey, during the natural handicap in the case of women. In such a situation Allah's pleasure lies in giving up fasting. You will receive the same reward and blessings without fasting which others are receiving by fasting. All the benefits of the Ramadhan fasting will revert to you when you compensate for your missed fasting during other convenient days.

Allah resides in broken hearts

A man who has to give up fasting during sickness or journey feels dejected and aggrieved and broken hearted. Allah is pleased with a man's state of dejection and grief, whether it is due to some shock, sorrow, anxiety, Allah's fear or the fear of the Hereafter, etc. A heart so broken becomes the target of Allah's mercy and bounty.

According to a divine narrative Allah has said:

انا عندالمنكسرة قلوبهم من اجلى(اتحاف: ٦/٢٩٠)

I am with those whose hearts are broken for my sake. (At-haf 6/290)

(Although the Muhaddiseen, have described this Hadith as baseless; yet the meaning contained in it is correct).

The heart of a man frequently receives shocks in various ways, e.g. anxieties, troubles, accidents and casualities, etc. thus the heart is being broken, but why? Just to make it a target for Allah's mercy and bounty. consider this couplet of Dr. Iqbal:

نہ چا چا کے تو رکھ اسے تیرا آئینہ ہے وہ آئینہ
جو شکستہ ہو تو عزیزتر ہے نگاہِ آئینہ ساز میں

(اقبال)

The heart is like a mirror. Do not prevent it from being broken. Its breakage is dearer in the sight of its maker (i.e. Allah), than its safety. Almighty Allah being indeed the maker.

Our Dr. Hazrat Muhammad Abdul Hayi Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to recite a couplet of poetry. He used to say that when Almighty Allah breaks the heart of any of His servants He desires to lift him to greater heights. These shocks, anxieties and sorrows which come to men are forced exertions in the path of *Deen* (faith) by which men progress by leaps and bounds to higher degrees and this is not possible in normal circumstances. He frequently recited this couplet:

یہ کہہ کے کاسہ ساز نے پیالہ پٹک دیا
اب اور کچھ بنائیں گے اس کو بگاڑ کے

The potter threw down the pot to break it saying that

after breaking it he would re-shape it (in a better form).

Thus, when this heart is broken, it becomes the receptacle of Allah's mercies and divine reflections. He also used to recite another couplet:

بتان ماہ وش اجڑی ہوئی منزل میں رہتے ہیں
جسے برباد کرتے ہیں اسی کے دل میں رہتے ہیں

The moon-like beloved ones take up their residence in deserted houses. They reside in the heart of those whom they ruin.

The divine lights penetrate into broken hearts, so do not be afraid of these occasions of sorrows and shocks. If you truly and firmly believe in Allah then this broken heart, these rising sighs and these tears will take you to greater heights of spiritual achievements:

وادی عشق بسے دور و دراز است ولے
طے شود جادہ صد سالہ بہ آہے گاہے

(اقبال)

The valley of love is too far off, but some time a hundred years' long journey is covered with one sigh, in the twinkling of an eye. Man should not therefore, get dejected and disappointed with these shocks, anxieties and worries.

Deen is nothing but submission and contentment

May Almighty Allah make us understand well that *Deen* is not the name of fulfilling our wishes and usual habits. *Deen* is the name of the habit of doing without hesitation what we are being commanded to do. The real success lies in the attainment of Allah's pleasure; it lies neither in prayer, nor fasting nor in any other deed.

عشق تسلیم و رضا کے ماسوا کچھ بھی نہیں
وہ وفا سے خوش نہ ہوں تو پھر وفا کچھ بھی نہیں

(کیفیات۔زکی کیفی ۲۰۳)

Love is nothing but submission and loyalty. If the beloved is not pleased with loyalty, then loyalty too has no value. (Kafiyat Zaki Kaifi- p. 203)

That deed is good and worth doing and tasteful with which Allah is pleased.

نہ تو ہے ہجر ہی اچھا نہ وصال اچھا ہے
یار جس حال میں رکھے وہی حال اچھا ہے

(غالب)

Neither separation is good, nor union is good;
Good is the condition in which my beloved wants to keep me. (Ghalib)

If Allah impresses upon our hearts this truth, then the paths to the understanding of *Deen* will open before us.

Missing routine acts on account of nursing a patient

It has already been explained in the foregoing pages that if some routine acts are missed during sickness, the same reward and blessings are recorded in favour of the sick person which used to be recorded when he actually did those acts during the days of his good health. The learned men of religion have said that this concession is also available to a person for whom it has become binding to attend on a sick person and nurse him. For example, a son is occupied in nursing his ailing father on account of which he is able neither to offer his optional prayers, nor to recite the Qur'an nor complete his routine rehearsals. All these occupations are being missed because the son is busy with

nursing his father day and night. Despite this, the reward of his regular deeds are being credited to his account as usual.

Keep an eye on the needs of the time

Our respected Dr. Muhammad Abdul Hayi Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to give very useful advice: It is true that little hints received from the elders prove helpful in reforming the life. Keep an eye on the needs of the times He used to say: Do not look to what you feel interested in doing, but try to find out, and act up to, the demands of the times. This is what Allah wants you to do. For example, you had chalked out a programme for offering *Tahajjud,* reciting so many Parts of the Qur'an and so on. However, when the time arrives for these actions, your wife falls sick and you are compelled to postpone your programmes in order to do other things in attending on your sick wife. You feel disturbed on account of these sudden changed factors. As stated, it is your duty to respond to the demands of the time which is to help and nurse your ailing wife, although this may seem some what repulsive to you. Now Allah's pleasure lies in your looking after your wife's health and by so doing you shall receive all the rewards which you would have received in following your set programme of deeds. Indeed this is our *Deen.*

It is not *Deen* to satisfy one's wishes

Our Hazrat Maulana Maseehullah Khan Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say that it is not *Deen* (Faith) to satisfy ones own desires; *Deen* is to obey Allah and Allah's Prophet ﷺ. It is not at all *Deen* to hanker after a certain personal choice, e.g. the wish to study religious courses and become a theologian, whether one is qualified or not for that line of study. Some member of the family, father,

mother or any other person is seriously ill and there is none to look after him and the son is intent upon going to school. This is not *Deen.* In such a situation *Deen* is to devote one's services exclusively to nurse the sick in the family.

The desire to become a Mufti
(A Doctor in the Religious Science)

For example, one desires earnestly to specialise in the religious studies and become a Mufti. Many students in the Darul-Uloom, express this desire. When asked about the desire of their fathers about their choice they say that their parents are not agreeable to such programme of study. Now look! They want to qualify themselves as Muftis against the will of their fathers. This is not *Deen*; it is only the satisfaction of their desire.

The Desire to preach religion *(Tabligh)*

Another example may be given of a person who wants to go out for Tabligh for a period of forty days *(Chilla).* In the ordinary circumstances this is a very praiseworthy, useful and righteous work, but not when someone in the family is sick and requires an attendant. Going out for a a 40 days *(Chilla)* in such a situation is not *Deen;* it is merely the desire to satisfy one's own choice. The demand of the time is that the sick should be looked after, properly nursed and given medical treatment. All this is not worldly work; it is pure *Deen.*

The desire to go to the Mosque for Prayer

Hazrat Maulana Masihullah Khan Sahib رحمة الله عليه once set an example in his assembly. He said: A man is living with his wife all alone in a deserted place in a

forest. The husband felt a longing to offer prayer in the mosque in the nearby township. The wife does not like the programme of her husband, because she would feel afraid and helpless if left alone in that forest. She, therefore, requests her husband to pray in the house; but the husband does not care for his wife and goes out for prayer in a distant mosque, leaving behind his wife all alone. This is not at all *Deen*. The demand of the time was that the husband should have prayed in his house for the sake of his wife.

This advice holds good in a case where the couple are living all alone in a deserted place. If they are living in a populated village or town, then it is all right to go to the mosque for prayer.

Someone is desirous to go out for taking part in *Jihad,* another to join a *Tablighi* tour, still there is another who wants to become a Maulana or a Mufti, unmindful of the many obligatory duties that lie on him. It is not at all *Deen* to ignore these demands of the time and insist on satisfying one's own desires.

The advice to get oneself attached to a Shaikh (spiritual guide) is for this very purpose. The Shaikh tells his disciples what the demands of the times are. This never means that I am advising against becoming a Mufti or going on a *Chilla* (period of 40 days) for *Tabligh* or proceeding on *Jihad.* The intention is to say that all these are highly valuable duties, but each in its proper time. A man has to find out what the time demands of him. It is not *Deen* to determine a course of action of one's own choice and follow it ignoring other important considerations, particularly the advice of the Shaikh, if any, one may have chosen for guidance.

The auspicious and fortunate among the wives is one whom her husband loves

My respected father Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to mention frequently a proverb of the Hindi language. Its meaning is brought out in the following example. A young damsel is being lavishly decorated with best matrimonial robes and ornaments to make her an attractive bride. As a bride she looks so beautiful and charming that everyone is praising her appearance, garments and make-up, yet she remains dumb found. Someone asked the reason for her silence she quietly says: The praise of these persons is of no use to me. What really matters is the praise and appreciation of my prospective husband for whose sake I have been decorated. If unfortunately my would-be husband does not like and appreciate me, the praise and appreciation of these guests are meaningless.

My servant is displeased with both the Worlds only for My sake

After relating this story, my respected father went on saying: If you are doing anything, you must think if the person for whom you are doing the work appreciates that work. The people are praising you as a Mufti, a great learned man and Maulana or a Muballigh having spent a long time in *Tabligh,* or someone calls you a great Mujahid. These expressions of praise and appreciation mean nothing unless the deeds or the titles are appreciated by the personality for the sake of whom these are being done and intended. This idea is beautifully expressed in the following couplet of Zafar Ali Khan Sahib:

توحید تو یہ ہے کہ خدا حشر میں کہہ دے
یہ بندہ دو عالم سے خفا میرے لئے ہے
(ظفر علی خان)

The true belief in *Tauheed* (oneness of Allah) is that in recognition of which Allah shall declare on the Day of Resurrection that this servant of mine is displeased with the two worlds only for my sake.

All this discussion suggests that if the aim of every deed is to please Allah, then man should always be on the look out as to what is being demanded of him on the moment.

Give up Remembrance at the time of *Azan* (Prayer Call)

A man is busy with remembrance of Allah, but no sooner does he hears the words of the *Azan* than he responds to the command of stopping his remembrance. This command requires that on hearing the *Azan* one should reply to the words of the Azan and stop all other things, as listening to the *Azan* and responding to its words are the most imperative and pressing engagement.

All good lies in the obedience to My Command

Almighty Allah has appointed *Hajj* as a wonderful and unique form of worship. If you closely look into the various rituals of the *Hajj* you will find that Almighty Allah has allowed flagrant violations of His own commands on this occasion. Just see that the reward for offering one time prayer in the Masjid Haram is equal to that of one lakh prayers offered elsewhere. But on the 8 th of Zilhijjah the command is issued to leave Masjid Haram

and camp at Mina. There is neither the Haram nor the Ka'bah, nor Wuqoof, nor any work, like the *Rami* and the *Jamarat*. The command was given to ignore the reward of one lakh prayers and offer instead, five prayers in the forest of Mina. Why all this? Just to tell the believers that neither this Ka'bah has any value nor the Haram nor the Masjid Haram, but it is my command that has value. If you pray in the Masjid Haram you will get the reward for one lakh prayers. When Allah commands to leave the Masjid Haram, if someone still insists on staying and praying in this mosque, then not only will he not get the reward for one lakh prayers but the man will also be committing a sin of violating Allah's command.

Namaz (Prayer) is not an end in itself

Great emphasis has been laid in the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* on offering *Namaz* (prayer) in its prescribed time. The Qur'an says:

اِنَّ الصَّلٰوةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ كِتَاباً مَّوْقُوْتاً (سورۃ النساء ۱۰۳)

That is prayer on fixed times has been enjoined on the believers. (An-Nisa : 103)

It has been made binding upon the believers to offer prayers on the fixed times and not earlier or later. As for the *Maghrib* prayer stress has been laid that it should be offered as early as possible on the arrival of the fixed time: Despite this if anyone offers this prayer with haste on the plain of the *Arafah* during the *Hajj* days this *Namaz* will not be valid. The Holy Prophet ﷺ was coming out of the plain of *Arafah* at the *Maghrib* time and Hazrat Bilal رضی اللہ عنہ was reminding him of salat by saying: *Assalaat,* O Prophet ﷺ of Allah; *Assalaat,* O Prophet ﷺ of Allah. The Holy Prophet ﷺ was replying to Bilal: *Assalaat* is ahead

of you. This was only to teach that there was nothing in the time fixed for the *Maghrib* prayer itself, and all that is important lies in obeying Allah's command. When the order was to offer the *Maghrib* prayer early, the reward lay in early praying. When it was ordered that the *Maghrib* prayer should be delayed and offered later on along with the *Isha* prayer, then it became obligatory to obey this order during the *Hajj* days. Allah has Himself allowed violation of His own orders from step to step. Thus He ordered advanced offering of the Asr prayer and delayed offering of the Maghrib prayer and every action was almost turned up side down from the normal course. It is only to teach that prayer, fasting or any other form of worship is not important in itself; what is important is obedience to Allah's commands and seeking His pleasure and that is all.

Why hurry in breaking the Fast?

Command has been given that a fasting man should, on the arrival of the fast-breaking time, hurry in breaking the fast and it has been declared a repulsive act to delay in fast breaking without justification. Why is it so? It was worthy of reward to be hungry and thirsty during fasting till the fixed time. When the permission for eating and drinking at the end of the fast has been given, it is a sin to violate this order by delaying the fast breaking, in so doing violation of Allah's order is involved.

Why delay in taking *Sihri* (the pre-dawn food)?

It has been declared preferable to take *Sihri* rather delayed within the prescribed time. It is against the *Sunnah* to take *Sihri* very early and then to go to sleep. *Sihri* should be taken just when the prescribed time is about to expire.

Why so? It is because if a person takes *Sihri* much earlier and goes to bed then he extends the fasting period by his own free will and goes out of the discipline of obedience. The intention of mentioning all these points is to emphasize the formula that all good lies in obeying Allah. A servant is always bound to obey the orders of his Master.'

A servant is not free in his own will

Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Hasan Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say that there is a servant or employee who is allotted a job, to sweep the house, and he is not responsible to do any work other than his allotted job. Again there is a servant employed to work eight hours only. After completing eight hours, he is off. There is another category of the slave who has neither an allotted duty nor specified hours of work. He is duty bound to obey his master and do whatever he is ordered to do and as long as his master desires. If his master asks him to work as a judge he will work as a judge and if the master asks him to work as a cleaner of lavatories he will do that work as well. Thus he has free will neither in the matter of his duty nor the length of time. Yet there is another status beyond that of a servant and that is the or the slave. This little or slave is used with reference to the real Master Allah. The difference between the two becomes quite clear. The ordinary servant does not worship his master but the slave worships his master. He has no will of his own. He is subject to the will of his Master who is Allah. This position of the slave represents the spirit of *Deen*.

Tell me why are you doing this work?

I have drawn up a time table for my day's work and fixed a period of time for each of my duties, e.g. writing

books, taking classes for teaching, and so on. After studying some books and collecting my thoughts I take up the pen to write, suddenly someone calls on me, bids *Assalamu ʿalaikum* and extends his hand for a hand-shake. In such a situation, as is very natural, I feel very much distracted and the mental plan set up so studiously is totally shattered. This continues every day from morning till evening. This results in great mental torture and disappointment on account of the failure of the entire day's timetable. May Allah bless Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hayi Sahib رحمة الله عليه that he came to my rescue at such an irritating moment. He asked, after all what is the aim of all these activities like writing books teaching students and *Fatawa* writing etc? He said:

If these activities are intended for projecting you as a great writer, a great teacher or *Fatawa* writer that a grand biography may be written of you, then indeed the unexpected visit of the person is an undesirable intrusion in your work. As such, you may feel sorry for your loss in time and work and the ultimate result. You should consider what is the use of all these activities. Is it the earning of fame and public applause? If so, then, all your efforts and labour are totally lost and gone to the winds, as your work has no value in the sight of Allah. On the other hand, if you are working for the pleasure of Allah, then it does not matter whether you are able to work according to your timetable or you are prevented from that. If Allah is pleased with your set programme of working then this is welcome and desirable. If Allah is pleased with your conduct during the upsetting of your working programme, then this, disturbing situation, is preferable. You should respond to the demand of the time which in the present situation is to satisfy and cooperate with the persons who call upon you for some purpose. He too has a claim on you which you should meet. You should

bear in mind that the attention paid to this man to meet his need is now more valuable and praiseworthy in the sight of Allah than the undisturbed completion of your timetable. You have to keep a watchful eye on the demand of the time and try to respond to that demand. This is *Deen* and it means that you should forget yourself and surrender yourself totally to the pleasure of Allah. In everything you want to do, look for Allah's pleasure and then adapt yourself accordingly. You should not care for your own plans and programmes, because they are always subject to failure during sickness, journeys and other disturbing factors of the times. Take care of Allah's will and pleasure and, in turn, Allah's protective vigilance will take care of your problems and programmes.

Hazrat Owais Qarni رحمة الله عليه

Hazrat Owais Qarni رحمة الله عليه had not the good fortune of seeing the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Is there any Muslim who does not long for a vision of the Prophet ﷺ when such a vision is possible, particularly person is living in the Prophet's time? This was Hazrat Owais Qarni رحمة الله عليه whom the Prophet ﷺ desired to serve his mother instead of trying to see him . Hazrat Owais preferred to continue to serve his old mother depriving himself of the honour of visiting the Holy Prophet ﷺ. What was the result? The unique rank of Hazrat Owais Qarni was that the Companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ who had been honoured with the companionship of the Prophet ﷺ used to call upon Hazrat Qarni for blessings and intercession to Allah. There is a Hadith to the effect that the Holy Prophet ﷺ once told Hazrat Umar Farooq رضى الله عنه that an *Ummati* of his lived in Qarn who in obedience to the order of Allah and the Prophet ﷺ preferred the blessing of serving his

mother to the honour of meeting the Prophet ﷺ If there had been a disobedient person he would have set off to meet the Holy Prophet ﷺ, leaving behind his mother, unattended and uncared for, just to satisfy his own self-will. Hazrat Owais Qarni was a true and obedient believer who realised that what Allah and His Prophet ﷺ desired was worthy of attention and action and his own preference had no value in these special circumstances.

(Sahih Muslim, Fazail Hazrat Owais Qarni Hadith no: 2542)

This is the root of all *Bid'aah* (Innovations)

All these *bid'aah* prevailing in the world may be eradicated if the truth is realised fully that our own choice means nothing in the presence of Allah's choice. What does *Bid'ah* mean? It means devising our own ways and means to serve and please Allah. for example, we have established the festival of 12th Rabiul-Awwal of our own free will in support of which there is evidence and authority neither from Allah, nor from His Prophet ﷺ, nor did the noble Companions ever celebrate such a festival. We have derived this festival without any authority, only to serve our own interests. Likewise, we have invented the *Teeja* (3rd days) and *Chehlam* (40th day) gatherings to commemorate the death of our men without consulting the injunctions of the *Shari'ah*. This is nothing but the grievous sin of *Bid'ah* about which it has been said:

كل محدث بدعة وكل بد عة ضلالة (سنن نسائی، كتاب صلاة العيدين باب كيف الخطبة، حديث نمبر ۱۵۷۸)

(Nisai, chapter on salat-ul-Eedain, Hadith no: 1578)

That is, every *Bid'at* (innovation) is an act of going astray from the right path. *Teeja* (third day after death) looks to be a very good deed in which the Qur'an is

recited and food is distributed among the people. What sin is there in this? The sin involved in this is that all this is being done without Allah's permission and against the course taught by the Holy Prophet ﷺ That is why the apparently nice deed is not acceptable to Allah.

میرے محبوب میری ایسی وفا سے توبہ
جو ترے دل کی کدورت کا سبب بن جائے

(کیفیات۔زکی کیفی ص ۷۸)

(Kaifiyyat Zaki Kaifi p. 78)

That is this is, an act which looks to be loyalty, but that is disgustful to my beloved. So I seek refuge from this act. This is *Bid'ah* from which you should keep yourself away. Try to do what Allah and His Prophet ﷺ want you to do and there ends the matter. Do not create a new *Deen* of your own.

Entrust your case to Allah

What a beautiful point Maulana Roomi رحمة الله عليه has mentioned!

چونکہ بر میخت ببند و بستہ باش
چوں کشاید چابک و برجستہ باش

If the beloved throws you aside after binding your hands and feet, remain in this condition, but jump and be playful when he removes your bondage.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ, has also said alike that, you should not feel afraid of sickness. Allah has allowed certain concessions and relaxations during sickness and He is pleased with His servant when he avails himself of these concessions. It is necessary that you should take proper care to benefit from this facility provided by the Shari'ah. May Allah enable us to understand this point. ***Aameen.***

The importance of thanksgiving and its method

The last Hadith of this chapter is as follows:

عن انس رضی اللہ عنہ قال قال رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم ان اللہ لیرضی عن العبدان یا کل الاکلة فیحمدہ علیھا او یشرب الشربة فیحمدہ علیھا۔(صحیح مسلم، کتاب الذکر والدعاء، باب استحباب حمد اللہ تعالیٰ بعد الاکل والشرب، حدیث نمبر ۲۸۳٤)

(Saheeh Muslim, chapter on thanksgiving an eating, drinking, Hadith no: 2734)

Hazrat Anas رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: Allah is pleased with that servant who eats a morsel of food and thanks Allah for that and drinks a draught of water and again thanks Allah for that.

This means to say that Allah is highly pleased with that servant who thanks Allah for every favour and bounty received from Him.

I have stated repeatedly that thanksgiving is a most important form of worship. It is not possible for weak persons, as we are, to undergo hard Mujahidat and difficult spiritual exercises which the saints underwent in the past. Dr. Abdul Hayi Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ advised us to act upon a very easy formula to attain spiritual excellence. That formula is the forming of the habit of thanking Allah on every bounty and fovour He is granting us every moment, like eating, drinking, enjoying some comfort, some nice scene and thousands of other blessings. Form the habit of saying *(Alhamdulillah-* praise be to Allah); *(Allahuma lakal-hamdu wa la-kash- shukr* - O Allah to you is praise and thanks). This habit is an infallible treatment for spiritual maladies like, pride, jealousy greed, malice, etc. This is the experiment of our saints and it is based on firm and final Shara'i injunction.

The effective weapon of Satan is the generation of ingratitude

When Almighty condemned accursed satan and turned him out of His Court, Satan requested Allah to allow him respite for the whole life time. Almighty Allah accepted his request. Then Satan said that he would misguide Allah's servants, whom he would approach from all sides and would lead them astray from the right path. At last he said:

وَلَا تَجِدُ اَكْثَرَهُمْ شٰكِرِيْنَ (سورۃ الاعراف:۱۷)

That is: you shall not find most of them grateful. (7:17)

The counter - measure against Satan -- Thanksgiving

Hazrat Thanwi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has said on this topic as follows:

The satan's basic weapon of leading astray the servants of Allah is to generate and spread ingratitude. If this vice finds access to the people, it may generate many other vices. This vice may be counteracted by promoting the virtue of thanksgiving. The more one thanks Allah the safer one shall become from Satan's attack. Therefore, the most effective way of escaping from spiritual diseases is to form the habit of rendering thanks to Allah at all times of the day rising. Sitting and lying, by rehearsing the words. This will, God willing, counteract effectively Satan's attacks.

Always drink cold water

Hazrat Al-hajj Imdadullah Sahib, Muhajir Makki رحمۃ اللہ علیہ used to advise his disciple in this way: Mian Ashraf Ali, always drink cold water so that every vein and hair on your body may feel grateful to Allah. The Holy Prophet ﷺ

has said that one of the three things most desirable for him is cold water. It is not established from any source that care was taken to bring any item of food for the Holy Prophet ﷺ from some other place but special arrangements were made to obtain water for him from a well named *Ghars* situated at a distance of about three miles from Madinah Munawwarah. The Haji Sahib has pointed out the secret of drinking cold water by saying that when it is drunk in a state of thirst every pore and hair of the body turns grateful to Allah.

A Recollection of the blessings enjoyed during the day and thanksgiving for them before sleeping

Before falling into sleep on your bed at night you should recollect in your mind the blessings enjoyed and pay thanks to Allah for each one by one, e.g., the house is safe and secure, the food was nice, the bedding is comfortable and you are in good health, and the children are also hale and hearty; for each blessing say: اللهم لك الحمد ولك الشكر make it your habit to repeat these words continuously.

Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hayi Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to relate a story about his maternal grandfather. Dr. Sahib says, once he visited the house of his maternal grandfather he saw that the latter, before falling into sleep, was rehearsing these words اللهم لك الحمد ولك الشكر and that he was doing this in a strange state of ecstasy. On being asked about this act he replied, saying: At this time I try to recollect all the blessings of Allah that I enjoyed during the day and I utter these words of thanks for each and every blessing. Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه has said that since that moment he too included this practice in his daily routines and repeated it before going to bed.

An easy way of Thanksgiving

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught us each and every act of righteousness for which we cannot thank him ﷺ enough. Shaikh S'adi, the famous poet saint of Shiraz, Iran, has said that for every breathe two thanks are due. If you breathe in but are not able to breathe out or breath out but are not able to breathe in, death is sure. Thus two thanks are due on every breathe which we take. It is therefore, not possible for man to render thanks for the untold number of breathes of his life."وَاِنْ تَعُدُّوْا نِعْمَةَ اللهِ لَا تُحْصُوْهَا" (If you try to count the blessings of Allah you cannot count them) The Holy Prophet ﷺ has therefore, taught his *Ummah* a method of rendering thanks which every Muslim should learn and follow:

"اللهم لك الحمد حمدا دائما مع دوامك، وخالدامع خلودك، ولك الحمد حمدا لا منتهٰى له دون مشيتك، ولك الحمد حمد الا يريد قائله الا رضاك" (كنزالعمال، ض ٢ ص ٢٢٣، حديث نمبر ٣٨٥٧)

(Kunzul-umaal vol.II P. 223 Hadith No: 3857)

This means: O Allah thanks are due to you, everlasting thanks to last with your lasting; to remain eternal with your eternity; thanks which have no end, without your will; praise is for you such that the man praising has no wish but your pleasure.

In another Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said:

اللهم لك الحمد زنة عرشك ومداد كلماتك وعدد خلقك ورضا نفسك۔(ابو داؤد، كتاب الصلاة، باب التسبيح بالخفى)

(Abu Dawud, Book of Salah chapter on silent Tasbeeh)

This means: O Allah! praise is for you equal to the weight of your 'Arsh and the ink used in writing your words and the number of your

creatures and the pleasure of your self.

It is mentioned in the Holy Quran that if someone wants to write words of Allah, he cannot do that even if the water of the seven oceans are used as writing ink; I thank you equal to the number your creation which covers Jinn, men, animals and all animate and inanimate objects. In the end He ﷺ said: I thank you as much as may please you. Men should, therefore, rehearse these words daily at the time of going to bed:

اللهم لك الحمد مليا عند طرفة كل عين۔ و تنفس نفس (کنزالعمال، ج ۲ ص ۲۲۳، حدیث نمبر ۳۸۵۷)

(Kanzul Ummal, vol. II, p. 223 Hadith no: 3857)

O Allah! All praise be for you during the twinkling of every eye and the breathing of every breath.

The chapter is closed with the sincere advice that the sacred words taught by the Holy Prophet ﷺ for rendering thanks to Allah should be learnt and remembered and should be uttered every day at the time of going to bed. ***Aameen!***

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين۔

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram,
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.
Date : Friday, 18th October, 1991
After 'Asr Prayers

The greatest evil of *Bid'ah* (Innovation) is that man himself begins to play the role of the inventor of religion, although Allah Alone is the Inventor of religion. The *Bid'ati* (Innovator) claims inwardly that whatever he says is religion; and that he knows religion -- God forbid - more than Allah and His Prophet ﷺ and that he is more religious than the noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. What the *Bid'ati* says and does is no religion. It is only the fulfilment of his desires.

BID'AH (INNOVATION), A HEINOUS SIN

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه و نستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه، و نعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهدان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له ونشهدان سيدنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله

اما بعد:

عن جابر رضى الله تعالى عنه قال كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم اذا خطب احمرت عيناه و علا صوته واشتد غضبه حتى كانه منذر جيش يقول صبحكم ومساكم، ويقول: بعثت انا والساعة كهاتين ويقرن بين اصبعيه السبابة والوسطى ويقول

امابعد :

فان خيرالحديث كتاب الله و خيرالهدى هدى محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم وشرالا مورمحدثا تها وكل بدعة ضلالة ثم يقول انا اولى بكل مومن من نفسه من ترك مالا فلا هله ومن ترك دينا اوضيا عا فالى وعلى

(صحیح مسلم، کتاب الجمعة، باب تخفیف الصلاة والخطبة. حدیث نمبر ۸۶۷)

All praise is to Allah. We praise Him and seek His help, and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the mischief of our souls and from the vices of our deeds. There is none to lead him astray whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom Allah lets go astray. We bear witness that there is no God but Allah alone and that He has no partner. We also bear witness that our sire, our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger.

(Sahih Muslim, Hadith no: 867)

The meanings of the words Jabir (جابر) and Jabbar (جبار).

This Hadith is narrated from Hazrat Jabir bin Abdullah رضی اللہ عنہ who had a special status with the Holy Prophet ﷺ resided in Madinah and his name was Jabir. Some people doubt that the word Jabir means a tyrant, Why then was this name given to a companion? The same doubt arises about Allah's exalted name Jabbar (جبار). The word (جبار) means in the Urdu language a very great tyrant, so people generally doubt as to how this name was used for Almighty Allah.

These doubts are now being resolved. The word Jabbar is interpreted in the Urdu and the Arabic language differently. While in Urdu the word means a tyrant, in Arabic it means the setter of bones. As such, the word has not a bad meaning. Bone-setter is rather a nice meaning of the word Jabir. Likewise the word Jabbar is superlative degree of the word Jabir, meaning a most expert

bone-setter. Thus Allah's name Jabbar does not mean a tyrant or the inflictor of punishments. It only means that Almighty Allah is one who joins together broken things.

The Setter of Broken bones is only one

That is why in one of the many *Adʕiah* (supplications) which the Holy Prophet ﷺ taught his *Ummah*, Almighty Allah has been called by the following words:

"یا جابر العظم الکسیر" (الحزب الاعظم ملا علی قاری، ص۲۲۳)

O, Setter of broken bones. (Alhizbul Azam, Mulla Ali Qari, p. 223)

Allah has been called by this name, because it is a unanimously agreed opinion of all the physicians, surgeons and bone specialists that there is no medicine and no treatment for joining together broken bones. All that man can do is to place the broken parts together in position and after this there is no medicine, whatsoever, to be applied to the broken pieces. The personality who alone does the setting of the bones is Allah. It is in this sense that Allah is called Jabbar, and not as the people commonly misunderstand the meaning of this word.

The meaning of the word *Qah-haar*

The word *Qah-haar* (قہار) is also one of the ninety-nine names of Almighty Allah. In Urdu the word is wrongly taken to mean a Great Oppressor and inflictor of torture and distress on the people. The word *Qah-haar* included in the sacred names of Allah is the Arabic word *Qah-haar* which means All-Powerful, Omnipotent, i.e. the One that over powers and controls everything.

None of the names of Almighty Allah implies 'Punishment'

None of the names included in the list of the names of Allah implies punishment. All the names imply mercy or omnipotence etc. This is an evidence that the basic attribute of Allah connotes mercy, kindness, etc. He is Merciful and Kind to His servants. It is, however, different when His servants exceed the limits in sin and wrongdoing, and Allah's wrath and vengeance descend on them. His punishment is also a truth, as mentioned in many Quranic verses. But the word Punishment is not clearly mentioned among the "Beautiful Names" of Allah.

The state of the Holy Prophet ﷺ during delivering a sermon

Hazrat Jabir رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that:

كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم اذا خطب احمرت عيناه وعلا صوته واشتد غضبه

When the Holy Prophet ﷺ delivered his sermons among the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم, his eyes often used to become red and his voice rise high.

The reason of this was that the words of his sermon emanated from the core of his heart and it was his desire that his words should penetrate into the depths of the hearts of the audience, so that they may understand and act upon the advice given.

The Prophet's style of preaching *(Deen)*

حتى كانه منذر جيش يقول صبحكم ومساكم۔

At times it seemed as if the Prophet ﷺ was warning his audience against the imminent attack of an army approaching them very soon in the morning or the evening.

He thus exhorted them to be prepared to confront this army.

The army mentioned in the Hadith is a symbol for the Day of Judgement and the Day when man will have to appear in the presence of Allah to account for his deeds and to face Hell as a punishment for his sins. He ﷺ used to warn them that the dreadful day might overtake them at any moment so they should remain alert.

You might have heard that when the Holy Prophet ﷺ invited his people to Islam on the Safa hills for the first time, he assembled all the tribes of Makkah and called them, each by their names and put this question to them: Will you testify to or deny my statement if I tell you that a large army is waiting for you at the back of this hill and wants to attack you? All of them replied with one voice, saying: O Muhammad ﷺ, we shall testify your statement because you never told a lie in your life and you are renowned as truthful and trustworthy. Thereafter, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: I inform you that a very grievous torment from Allah is waiting for you in the Hereafter. If you want to be safe from that torment, then believe in the oneness of Allah. (Sahih Bukhari kitab tafseer chapter 'Anzir' Ashirataka Hadith no: 4770)

The Familiar topic of the Arabs

This style of expression is most often found in the addresses of the Holy Prophet ﷺ: I am going to warn you against a very large army of the enemy that is ready to attack you. The Arabs were familiar with this expression of warning because they frequently fought against one another and remained engaged in attacking one another. They considered that man who informed them that an enemy was lying in wait for them and wanted to attack them was their well-wisher. The Holy Prophet ﷺ adopted the same familiar style in his address

in which he invited his clans-men to Islam.

The Prophet's Mission and the approaching Day of Resurrection

He ﷺ further said :

بعثت انا والساعة كهاتين ويقرن بين اصبعيه السبابة والوسطى۔

I and the Day of Resurrection have been sent down like this: Raising up his index and middle fingers he said: Just as there is little space between these two fingers, in the same way there is not much space of time between me and the Day of Resurrection, and that Day is very close at hand.

When the Prophets عليه السلام sent among the past nations warned their people against the Day of Resurection, they mentioned to them the coming of the last Prophet ﷺ as a very prominent sign of the Day of Resurrection:

(اخرجه ابن ابى حاتم عن الحسن رضى الله عنه قوله: ــ فقد جاء اشراطها" قال: محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم عن اشراطها. تفسير الدر المنثور للسيوطى(آيت: فهل ينظرون الا الساعة ص ٦ ص ٥٠)

Ibn Abi Hatim brought it out from Hasan رضى الله عنه who said: Its signs have come and the coming of Muhammad ﷺ is one of its signs. Are they then waiting only for the Hour? Verse of Quran.

(Tafsir Darul-Mansur, Sayuti, vol. 6, p. 50)

The Resolution of a Difficulty

The people often feel perplexed that the Day of Resurrection has not arrived even fourteen centuries have passed since the arrival of the Holy Prophet.ﷺ This may be explained by saying that the period of 1400 or even 2000 or 3000 years is nothing as compared with the age of the universe. That is why the Prophet ﷺ said that the Day

of Resurrection is very close to us.

Every man's death is his Day of Resurrection

However, far off the Day of Resurrection of the universe, as a whole, may be but the Day of Resurrection of every individual is undoubtedly very near at hand, because:

من مات فقد قامت قيامته (رواه الديلمى عن انس مرفوعا بلفظه: اذامات احد كم فقد قامت قيامته، المقاصد الحسنة للسخاوى. ص ٤٢٨)

Narrated by Dailmi from Anas رضى الله عنه, traceable with his words: (When anyone of you dies, in so far as he is concerned. the Day of Resurrection has arrived. Sakhavi p.428)

Thus, the day of a man's death is for him the Day of his Resurrection. The intentions of the Prophet's warning is to exhort every one to prepare himself in advance for rendering an account of his deeds so that he may save himself from the punishment of the grave as well as of the Hereafter.

The Best speech and the Best Life

فان خير الحديث كتاب الله وخير الهدى هدى محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم

The best speech of all the speeches in this world is the Book of Allah. No speech and no book can be conceived better, truer, purer and loftier in all respects than the Book of Allah that is the Qur'an. Similarly no life-style can be conceived pure and better than that of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Mind well that the Prophet ﷺ is himself making this claim that his way of living is the best of all. It was necessary for him ﷺ to make this claim, because it was the very purpose of his mission that Allah sent him to this world to serve as a beautiful model for his *Ummah.* It is, therefore, impressed upon all to follow the Holy Prophet ﷺ in all walks of life, rising, sitting, eating, drinking, sleeping, waking, dealing

with other fellow-men and with Almighty Allah Himself. His ﷺ is indeed the best life-style.

Bid'ah (innovation) is the worst form of sin

The Prophet ﷺ then indicated such acts and deeds as may lead man to straying from the straight path.

شرالا مور محدثا تها و كل بدعة ضلالة

The worst and most hated deeds on the surface of this world are those which imply openly or secretly fresh additions to the *Deen* (Faith). The word "Worst" has been used in the Hadith, because *Bid'ah* is even worse than the sins committed openly. A man with the slightest trace of *Eeman* in his heart is sure to feel disgusted with the sins, evils and vices that are committed openly. A man is addicted to drinking wine, to lewdness, telling lies, backbiting, etc. If you ask him about these sins, he will admit that they are indeed bad, but he is unfortunately involved in them. When a man admits that a sin is sin there is every possibility that Allah shall help him to turn away from those sins.

As for *Bid'ah* (Innovation) which has been newly introduced to Religion is peculiar that in reality it is a sin, but the person who is committing it thinks that he is doing a very good deed. With such mistaken belief he is ready to argue with anyone who objects to his baseless innovation and often he begins to fight with the person raising the objection. When a person does not regard a sin as sin but regards it as a virtue worth cultivating he becomes confirmed in the sin. That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ has called it the "worst of all acts". As already pointed out Innovation is introducing in *Deen* (Faith) some practice or rite which is contrary to the pratice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

and his sacred Companions رضی الله عنهم. The Prophet ﷺ has also said that a man who practises Innovation has definitely deviated from the right path of *Deen*.

Bid'ah is divergence from Belief

Deficiency may be of two types. There is a person who is deficient or slack in his duties. He is negligent and is committing sins and excesses. There is another person who is deficient or slack in his belief. He belives sin to be a virtue and infidelity to be faith. It is easy to remedy and eradicate deficiency and slckness in doing or not doing something, it is expected that the person will reform himself and turn away from sins at one time or another. Deficiency in the matter of belief in which a man takes sin for virtue and infidelity for belief is a hard nut to crack. That is why Innovation has been declared to be the worst sin from which the Companions رضی الله عنهم kept themselves away to the best of their ability.

The worst evil of *Bid'ah*

The worst evil of *Bid'ah* is that man himself plays the role of the inventor of *Deen* (Faith), although it is Allah alone who is the Inventor of *Deen*. As against this truth, the Innovator thinks that it is he who is framing the rules and practices of *Deen*. His greatest apostasy lies in his heretical conception that he is more religious - God forbid - than the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the Noble Companions رضی الله عنهم. This is not the way of acting upon the laws of the *Shari'ah*; it is merely the act of following ones own selfish desires. A great sin and straying away, indeed!

Bid'ah results in loss in this world as well as loss in the Hereafter

Among the Hindus there are devotees who practice strange self-mortifying spiritual and physical excercises to please their gods. These practices are terrifying to see. Some Hindu Sadhu (Saint) has been standing for years with his hands up. Another one has imprisoned his breath inside his lungs and is able to hold his breath for hours together. They practise similar other torturous physical feats. If you ask them the reason for all this they will reply that they are doing this to please their gods. Are their deeds of any value, although apparently they are doing all this with good intention? The answer is "Certainly not", because what they are doing is not in conformity with the ways taught by Allah and His Prophet ﷺ. They have devised these gymnastical exercises with their own mind and understanding. Such acts are not acceptable. Allah has said about such deeds:

وَقَدِمْنَآ إِلَىٰ مَا عَمِلُوْا مِنْ عَمَلٍ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ هَبَآءً مَّنْثُوْرًا۔(سورة الفرقان: ٢٣)

This verse means: We throw away their deeds like scattered dust. (al-Furqan: 23)

The deeds of these Sadhus go to the wind, condemned and valueless. In another place Allah has expressed the same idea in a very appealing and sympathetic style.

قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِالْاَخْسَرِيْنَ اَعْمَالًا ۝ اَلَّذِيْنَ ضَلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِي الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُوْنَ اَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُوْنَ صُنْعًا ۝ (سورة الكهف: ١٠٣-١٠٤)

In this verse Almighty Allah is addressing the Holy Prophet ﷺ and asking him to tell the people: Should we inform you the worst with regard to their deeds? They are those whose efforts go waste in the world and yet they think that they are doing good deeds. (18:103-104).

It should be understood that the sinners or the unbelievers enjoyed themselves in the world, though they ruined their Hereafter. As for the *Bid'ati,* he is taking pains in the world and enduring hardships and at the same time he is ruining his Hereafter because he has invented and adopted forms of worship which Allah and His Prophet ﷺ did not prescribe for him.

That is why *Bid'ah* has been described as the worst of all deeds, a man takes pains in worship without gaining anything from that worship.

Deen (Faith) is the name of compliance

May Almighty Allah impress firmly on our hearts that *Deen* is really the act of complying with the injunctions of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ. It is not at all *Deen* to forge something from one's own will. Two words are used in the Arabic language in this behalf. The one is اتباع *(Ittibaa')*, meaning to comply with the Injunctions of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ the other word is ابتداع *(Ibtidaa')* meaning the invention of something from ones own choice and will and complying with that. When Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ was appointed Caliph his first address as Caliph contained the following words:

انی متبع ولست بمبتدع(طبقات ابن سعد، جلد ثالث ص ١٨٣)

(Tabaqat Ibn Sa'd Vol. III, p.183)

I am a follower or complier; I am not a *Bid'ati* (Innova-tor). He wanted to tell the people thereby that he would not forge or fabricate anything from his own choice, but would follow the commands of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ.

Thus, *Deen* is the name of compliance with the

injunctions received from Allah and His Prophet ﷺ and what people invent themselves has no value at all.

A Wonderful Event

Once the Holy Prophet ﷺ went out of his house at *Tahajjud* time in the night and passed by the house of Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ and saw that he was reciting the Holy Qur'an in his *Tahajjud* prayer with great submissiveness and attention in very low voice. Going further and passing by the house of Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ He ﷺ saw that Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ was reciting the Qur'an loudly which could be heard from outside. After observing all this, the Holy Prophet ﷺ came back.

Afterwards He ﷺ sent for Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ and Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ both. First, He ﷺ said to Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ. At the *Tahajjud* time during the night I passed by your house and found you reciting the Holy Qur'an in a very low voice what was the matter? In reply to this Hazrat Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ uttered a very beautiful phrase:

اسمعت من ناجیت

I recited the Qur'an in low voice because I was reciting it to Him whom I was addressing and emploring and He is All Hearing.

Thereafter, the Holy Prophet ﷺ asked Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ why he was reciting the Qur'an loudly. Hazrat Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ replied:

انی اوقظ الوسنان واطرد الشیطان

I recited the Qur'an loudly to awaken those who were sleeping and to drive out Satan.

Now Consider! The reply given by each was correct

in the particular trend of thought of each person. On hearing their replies the Holy Prophet ﷺ addressed both of them and said:

O Abu Bakr, you chose to recite the Qur'an in low voice. And O Farooq, you preferred to recite the Qur'an loudly. Each of you decided to recite the Qur'an according to his own choice and will, therefore, this is not appreciable. Allah has commanded to follow the medium way in reciting. The medium way is more blessed and commendable. (Abu Dawud, Kitabus-salaat .. Hadith no: 1329).

The details of this event bring out that Allah does not approve of the practice of devising ways of worship according to one's own choice and will. He approves only the ways shown by Himself and His Prophet ﷺ. This is more acceptable and profitable.

In short, the real spirit of *Deen* is in following the ways and practices prescribed and approved by Allah and His Prophet ﷺ, Man should not himself try to invent his own ways and forms of worhsip.

The Account of a saint who used to offer prayers with his eyes closed

Hazrat Haji Imdadullah Sahib Muhajir Makki رحمۃاللہ علیہ has reported an event which Hazrat Thanwi رحمۃاللہ علیہ has narrated in his sermons. The event runs as follows.

In the near past there was a saint who used to pray with his eyes closed. The jurists say that it is repulsive to pray with one's eyes closed, but it is allowed to pray with closed eyes for one who is not able to pray with due attention and concentration with open eyes. That saint was renowned among the people for the quality and superiority of his prayers on account of his attention and sincerity with which he prayed and his full compliance with the

Sunnah, yet he used to pray with his eyes closed.

The saint was also a man of *Kashf* (i.e. endowed with spiritual insight). Once this saint requested Allah to show him the result of his prayers, whether they were accepted or rejected. Allah granted his request and brought before him a very charming and beautiful woman. All the limbs of her body were made in due proportion and fitness, but she had no eyes. The saint was amazed to see such a beautiful woman having no eyes. When he inquired about the secret he was informed that, as he prayed with closed eyes, the reality and value of his prayers were shown in the form of a blind woman.

The Injunction about praying with closed eyes

Then Haji Imdadullah Sahib Muhajir Makki رحمة الله عليه related the event of praying with closed eyes and Hazrat Thanwi Sahib رحمة الله عليه offered his comments on it. Allah and His Prophet ﷺ have taught the *Sunnah* way of praying with open eyes fixed on the place of prostration. Praying with closed eyes is also allowed but it does not posses the advantage and the light of praying with open eyes. The Holy Prophet ﷺ never prayed with closed eyes during his entire lifetime. The Noble Companions رضى الله عنهم too, did not ever pray with closed eyes. That is why the prayer with closed eyes is devoid of the spiritual light available in the other way of praying:

لم يكن من هديه صلى الله عليه وسلم تغميض عينيه فى الصلاة

(زاد المعاد لابن قيم ض ١ ص ٧٥)

(Zadul Ma'aad by Ibn Qayyim vol. 1, p. 75)

Evil suggestions and thoughts assailing during *Namaz* (prayer)

It is thought that prayer may be offered with closed eyes simply to dispel evil suggestions and confusing thoughts. It may be noted that if these evil suggestions and thoughts come unintentionally without any fault of the *Namazi,* Allah does not condemn and take notice of this. The prayer which is offered according to *Sunnah* with open eyes but with disturbed concentration is much better than the one offered with closed eyes for the sake of concentration, because the former is according to the Holy Prophet's ﷺ way of praying *(Sunnah),* but the latter is not so.

The entire issue is based on the question of compliance with the injuncjtions of the *Shari'ah* and not on following one's own invented ways. If you have devised methods of praying of your own choice and desire this is condemned and rejected by Allah because "كل بدعة ضلالة" every Innovation is a deviation from the right path and a perversity.

The correct Definition and Explanation of *Bid'ah*

Some people argue that when every new thing is a deviation and wrong, then what about the use of the fans, the tube lights, the cars and so many other invented appliances in general use in the world to day which did not exist during the prophet's days? Note carefully that *Bid'ah* is that invented act or system which is made a part of *Deen.* for example, you create a system of your own to send reward and blessings to the dead like the customs of *Teeja* (after three days), *Daswan* (after ten days) and *Chelam,* etc., which have not been prescribed by the *Shari'ah.*

Send food to the bereaved family.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has exhorted the Muslims to send food to the bereaved family. When Hazrat Ja'far bin Abi Talib رضی اللہ عنہ was martyred in the battle of Mootah the Holy Prophet ﷺ said to his family:

اصنعو الِآل ابی جعفر طعاما فانه قد اتا هم امر شغلهم (ابو داؤد، کتاب الجنائز، باب صنعة الطعام لاهل المیت، حدیث نمبر ۳۱۳۲)

(Abu Dawod. food for the dead, etc. Hadith no: 3132)

That is send food to Ja'far's family, because they are in grief and bereavement. Thus the Holy Prophet ﷺ has preached help to a beareaved family, because they are afflicted in with a sudden shock.

Just the opposite way is being followed today

The opposite system followed these days is that the bereaved family should provide food to the visitors and erect tents and invite them to a feast. If all this is not arranged the bereaved family will stand condemned and insulted among its relatives. More than this, if all this is not provided then even the deceased person is remembered with contempt and taunt.

It is believed, as if the deceased will not be granted salvation in the Hereafter if a feast is not arranged in his house. The feast arranged for this purpose is out of the legacy of the deceased, which is to be shared by all the heirs including the majors as well as the minors. It is unlawful in the *Shari'ah* to misappropriate the share of the minors. All this is a flagrant violation of the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and he who does not commit this violation is condemned.

To add something new as a part of *Deen* is *Bid'ah*

If anyone adds something new to the *Deen* as a necessary part of it, then the addition is Innovation. It may be noted that the invention and introduction of something new for a purpose other than *Deen* is not Innovation. So, it is not at all *Bid'ah* to use the electric fan for breeze, the electric bulbs for light, the car for journey and so on and so forth. Allah has given general permission to invent machines and appliances to make life easy and comfortable. You cannot declare something as *Mustahab* (desirable) which is not *Mustahab* or something as *Sunnah* which is not *Sunnah* or something as compulsory which is not compulsory. If such additions are made to *Deen* this will be Innovation and *Haram* (forbidden)

Hazrat 'Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ fleeing from *Bid'ah*

The Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم of the Holy Prophet ﷺ shunned Innovation to the best of their ability. Hazrat 'Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ once went to a mosque for praying. The *Azan* had been called but the *Jama'at* (congregation) had not yet started. In the mean-time the *Muazzin* called out "الصلاة جامعة" (The prayer is about to begin so hurry up). Probably he also repeated the words "حی علی الصلاة" come to the prayer) on hearing these words Hazrat 'Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ once said to his companions.

اخرج بنامن عند هذا المبتدع (سنن ترمذی، ابواب الصلاة، باب ماجاء فی التثویب فی الفجر. حدیث نمبر ۱۹۸)

(Sunan-e-Tirmidhi, chapter on salat Hadith no: 198)

That is: Take us away from this *Bid'ati,* the *Azan,* as prescribed by Allah and His Prophet ﷺ, has been called out. This second call is

against the sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

The Day of Resurrection and *Bid'ah* both deserve to be dreaded

By means of this Hadith while the Holy Prophet ﷺ warned his *Ummah* against an army which is about to wage a battle in the morning or the evening, he ﷺ also spoke these words to warn them against errors and heresies expected to confront them in the future: The worst things are those which men have forged of their own free will and made them a part of the *Deen* although Allah and His Prophet ﷺ did not impose those things as *Deen.* So avoid them otherwise they will drive you to deviation from the true *Deen.*

Who is our best well-wisher?

The Holy Prophet ﷺ next spoke the following words:

انا اولى بكل مؤمن من نفسه

I am nearer and dearer to every believer than his own soul.

In other words man himself cannot be a better well-wisher of himself than the Holy Prophet ﷺ, just as the parents who bear all sorts of worries and troubles for the welfare and comfort of their children. The Prophet ﷺ emphasised that whatever he said was in the interest of his *Ummah* and not in his own interest. He ﷺ feared lest the *Ummah* may make itself liable to Hell, by deviating from the straight path. The Holy Prophet ﷺ next said:

من ترك مالا فلا هله، ومن ترك دينا اوضيا عا فالى وعلى۔

This means: I am your well-wisher in the Hereafter. As regards in this world, if anyone has died leaving behind him some wealth as heritage, it belongs to the members of

his family, which they should distribute among them according to the rules of the *Shari'ah.* If one has left some loan against him which cannot be discharged out of the heritage left by him or has left behind children and there is none to look after and support them bring them to me. I should support them for their entire lifetime. The Prophet ﷺ said all this to tell that he is your well-wisher; he does not covet your wealth. He said in the above mentioned Hadith: I want to save you from Hell towards which you are hurrying headlong. So, for God's sake, you should refrain from these sins and *Bid'ah* and remain safe from Hell.

فانا اخذ بحجز كم عن النار وانتم تقتحمون فيها (صحيح بخارى، كتاب الرقاق، باب الانتها عن المعاصى، حديث نمبر ٦٤٨٣)

(Sahih Bukahri ... Hadith no: 6483)

What revolutionised the lives of the noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم

It was the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that revolutionized the lives of the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم which raised them to very high positions of honour, dignity and authority. Every word that escaped from the mouth of the Holy Prophet ﷺ penetrated direct into their hearts and changed the entire course of their lives. Nowadays the preachers of *Deen* are delivering speeches nights and days to large gatherings without bringing about any change in the lives of their audience. This is mostly due to the fact that the preachers themselves do not follow the advice and good teachings of *Deen* which they are projecting before their listeners. Their hearts are devoid of the sincerity and true sympathy and fervour of the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ of Allah that revolutionised the lives of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم. May Allah grant us sincerity and

effective speech to reach the hearts of the people. *Aameen.*

What is *Bid'ah*?

Some people maintain that *Bid'ah* is of two kinds-*Bid'ah Hasanah* (good *Bid'ah*) and *Bid'ah* Saiy-yiah (bad *Bid'ah*). They mean to say that there are some actions that are *Bid'ah,* but they have some good aspects in them and that there is no harm in doing actions which fall within the catogory of *Bid'ah-e-Hasanah* (good *Bid'ah*).

The Literal meaning of *Bid'ah*

Note carefully that there is no good or bad *Bid'ah* and all that is called *Bid'ah* is bad. In fact, *Bid'ah* has two shades of meanings. The d ictionary meaning of *Bid'ah* is something quite new. So, in the light of its literal meaning you can call every new thing Innovation, e.g. the electric fan, electricity, Railway trains, aeroplanes, etc.all these and such other objects are new to us which did not exist in the past and in the early days of the Muslims.

All new things are not called Innovation in the terminology of the *Shari'ah.* Innovation in the *Shari'ah* is the practice of inventing new ways of worship or customs and rites and declare them as *Mustahab* (desirable), compulsory, or an act of *Sunnah,* which the Holy Prophet ﷺ nor the Sahabah (Companious) declared as *Sunnah.* All such acts and practices are Innovation. According to this terminology Innovation is sin and bad and there is none among this category of things and acts that can be termed as good Innovation.

It is not lawful to restrict the freedom granted by the *Shari'ah*

There are certain things and acts which Allah has declared permissible. There are also certain things and acts which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has allowed as *Sunnah* and deserving of reward, but no procedure has been laid down for doing those things or acts, which have been left to the option and convenience of the people.

The method of conveying *sawab* (reward) to the dead

It is an act of great virtue and credit to convey *Sawab* to the soul of a dead person. This brings to the doer twofold *sawab*, viz., the one for the actual conveying of the *Sawab* to the dead and the other for showing sympathy with a Muslim soul. The *Shari'ah* has not prescribed any specific form for this act that the *Sawab* should be earned and conveyed only by reciting the Holy Qur'an, or by giving alms or by offering optional prayers, or by rehearsal of the sacred names of Allah. Any convenient form may be adopted. The *sawab* of any righteous deed like the publication of a book, delivering religious sermons, etc. In short *Sawab* accruing from any good and righteous deed can be transferred to the soul of the dead. For this purpose no particular days or hours have been fixed by the Islamic *Shari'ah.* This may be done on any convenient day after the death of the person without any restriction as to the first, the second or the third day. There is no harm or sin in conveying *Sawab* to the departed soul in any convenient way permitted by the *Shari'ah.*

One may convey the *Sawab* of Publishing a book

For example, I write a book for the benefit of the general Muslim public, the intention being to propagate Islam. After completing the book I pray to Allah to convey the *Sawab* of the book to the soul of a certian person. This method of *Sawab* is quite all right, although neither the Holy Prophet ﷺ nor the Noble Companions رضی الله عنهم ever conveyed to anyone this Kind of *Sawab,* because they never wrote books. The Holy Prophet ﷺ however, has mentioned the excellence of conveying *Sawab* to the dead. Thus, my action of conveying the *Sawab* of writing a book is not an Innovation. If I claim that the way of conveying *Sawab* by publishing a book is better than other ways and it is based on *sunnat,* then this claim of mine will become an Innovation. This is because I am inserting on my own discretion something in *Deen* which is not a part of *Deen.*

It is *Bid'ah* to specify the third day after death for conveying *Sawab*

There is no harm and sin in conveying *Sawab,* on the first, the second or the third day or any other day after death according to one's convenience, It is quite lawful. However, if there is a man who claims that the third day has been appointed specifically for conveying *Sawab,* or it is much better, or a *Sunnah* way of conveying *Sawab,* or the person who does not convey *Sawab* on the third day will become a target of the blames and curses of the ignorant, then this action will become an Innovation because the man has appointed for this purpose a particular day of his own sweet will.

To observe optional Fasting on Fridays has been forbidden

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has attached great importance and superiority to Fridays. Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه has narrated.

قل ما كان يفطر يوم الجمعة (ترمذی، كتاب الصوم، باب ماجاء فی صوم يوم الجمعة، حديث نمبر ٧٤٢)

(Tirmidhi, book of fasting ..... Hadith no: 742)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ hardly missed fasting on Fridays, because this is an auspicious day and most fitting for righteous deeds like fasting. Observing the Prophet's practice, the people also began to fast on Fridays and reserved this day for fasting as the Jews have reserved Saturday for fasting, because they believe that fasting on Saturdays has special importance and significance. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ saw this he stopped the Noble Companions رضی الله عنهم from fasting on Fridays. He did so lest the people should appoint a day for fasting which Allah did not appoint for that. The Holy Prophet ﷺ did not himself specify Fridays for fasting nor did he want his *Ummah* to do that. (Tirmidhi, Kitabus salah .... Hadith no: 742)

What are *Teeja* (the third day) *Daswan* (the Tenth day) and the *Chehlam* (the fortieth day)?

I have said that the customs of *Teeja, Daswan* and *Chehlam* are not lawful, because people have specified these days for conveying *Sawab* to the soul of the dead of their own free will and without authority. If a man does not specify a particular day for conveying *Sawab* but only by chance does so on any of these days, there is no sin in it. It is suggested that people should better avoid these specified days for conveying *Sawab,* so as not to resemble those who are involved in this Innovation.

Translator's addition:

The translator was present on the occasion of a burial when it was announced that Recitation of the Qur'an for conveying *sawab* (i.e. *Teeja*) would be held as usual on the third day but the head of the breaved family objected to this and anounced that Qur'an Khani would be held the very next day. He argued very convincingly that if the soul of the departed was in need of help why should it be delayed till the third day, why should it not be sent to the needy soul as early as possible?

The *Bid'ah* of Kissing the thumbs

When you hear the sound of prayer-call *(Azan)* coming out of the mosque, at the words "اشهدان محمدارسول الله" *(Ashadu anna muhammadar rasoolullaah)* you suddenly feel in your heart a current of love for the Holy Prophet ﷺ and in such a state of ecstasy you kiss your thumbs and then touch your eyes with them. This action is, in itself, not an Innovation because you did it out of love and respect for the Prophet ﷺ and for this spontaneous, expression of love you deserve reward, However, a man who advises the entire population that they should all kiss their thumbs when they hear the words "اشهدان محمدارسول الله" in the Azan, because this is *Mustahab* or an act of *Sunnah* and he who does not do so lacks in love and sincerity for the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This act, which was otherwise, lawful will now become an Innovation. There is a very minute difference between the two ways of looking at and doing the same act. If this Lawful act is done in right earnest without making it an essential duty, it is not an Innovation. It, however, becomes an Innovation if it is done in the behalf that it is binding and is an act of *Sunnah* and he who does not do it is condemnable.

When is it *Bid'ah* to say (يا رسول الله) (O, Prophet ﷺ of Allah).

Sitting in an assembly a man hears the name of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and he feels spontaneously that the Prophet ﷺ of Allah is present there and he calls out الصلوة والسلام يا رسول الله (O Prophet of Allah, salat and salam be on you) without being prompted by the belief that the Prophet ﷺ is Present and seeing, then there is no sin in this innocent behaviour. This is just as a man may visualise someone in his mind and begins to talk to him in a state of ecstasy.

On the other hand, if someone utters these words in the belief that the Prophet ﷺof Allah is present, on the spot and is seeing every thing then this act turns into the grievous sin of shirk (polytheistic), because the attribute of omnipresence exclusively belongs to Allah. If the man who does not utter these words with this polytheism belief, yet he thinks that it is an act of *Sunnah,* then the act of calling "الصلوٰة والسلام عليك يا رسول الله" (O Prophet ﷺof Allah salat and salam be on you), becomes an innovation and straying from the straight path.

A fine difference between actions

Thus, a very fine difference between beliefs and actions may turn a lawful thing or act into an unlawful, Innovation. If you look closely into the innovation prevailing in the society today that most of them were lawful and permissible but when they were adopted as obligatory duties or acts of *Sunnah* they became Innovation.

When is it an act of *Bid'ah* to embrace one another on Eid Days?

After the Eid prayer two Muslim brothers embrace each other out of love, fraternity and joy and this act is

not at all unlawful. Similarly, when you get up from an assembly and embrace someone this too is not at all unlawful, nor a sin. On the other hand, there is a man who believes that it is an act of *Sunnah* to embrace one another after the Eid prayer and it is also a part of the prayer and the Eid will not materialise unless the custom of embracing is followed, then the practice of embracing will become a *Bid'ah.* This is because neither the Holy Prophet ﷺ declared it as *Sunnah* nor did the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم ever followed it. If one embraces another person out of a natural urge, without considering it binding and a compulsory act of *Deen,* it will not be a an Innovation. Anyway, it should be borne in mind that if any permissible and otherwise a good act is declared as binding or an act of *Sunnah* then it turns into an innovation and in turn, into a sin.

Is it a *Bid'ah* to read the *Tablighi* course?

Once a man came to me and told me that people object to the people of the *Tablighi* parties that they read the *Tablighi* course, because none read *Tablighi* courses during the days of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم including the four Orthodox Caliphs. Thus, they claim that this pracitce is also a *Bid'ah.* What I have stated in detail in the foregoing pages makes it quite clear that to propagate subjects of learning and *Deen* (Faith) is always lawful. For example, we see that members of the *Tablighi* party and others assemble after the *'Asr'* Prayer on every Friday and discuss topics relating to religion and its preaching. Now if one says that this practice is also an Innovation because the practice of holding meetings after *'Asr* on Fridays and preaching *Deen* was not seen in the days of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Bear well in mind that this practice is not an Innovation, because it is always lawful to spread learning and preach *Deen.* On the other hand, if anyone claims, that holding such *Tablighee* meetings only in a particular mosque (e.g. Baitul-Mukarram) and only on Fridays and not on any other day is an act of *Sunnah,* then *Tablighi* work which we are doing will become an Innovation May Almighty Allah save us from this.

People read and listen to the *Tablighi* course and chapters on religious subjects. This is an act of great virtue and recompense. If someone claims that, it is binding to read only this *Tablighi* course, and it is not an act of sunnah to read any other book on the subject of *Deen,* then in this way the reading and listening to the *Tablighi* Course will become an Innovation. Thus, to confine any desirable and permissible deed to a particular time or manner is innovation.

To appoint a particular proceedure for delivering speeches on the Prophet's life

To deliver speeches on the Prophet's life and deeds is a righteous deed of great value and reward. The precious moments, in which the biography of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is studied and projected to others, are the pick of human life.

In reality the most precious times are those during which the pious life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is mentioned. Notwithstanding this truth if a particular, procedure, day or assembly is specially appointed for this auspicious and blessed act, then the act will become an Innovation.

The recitation of the sacred *Darood* may also become a *Bid'ah*

Take an easy example. After reciting the التحيات *(At-taheeyyat)* at the end of the second or the fourth *Rak'ats* of prayers we have been ordered to recite the sacred *Darood:*

اللهم صلِّ على محمد وعلىٰ آل محمد كما صليت علىٰ ابراهيم

و علىٰ آل ابراهيم انك حميد مجيد

The Holy Prophet ﷺ taught us this sacred *Darood* and it is lawful and an act of sunnah to recite it. If anyone recites some other *Darood* like this:

اللهم صلِّ علىٰ محمد النبى الامى وعلىٰ آله وصحبه وبارك وسلم

it is also lawful and there is no sin in it. Now if anyone advises not to recite the first *Darood* but to recite the second *Darood* which is the act of *Sunnah,* then in this situation the recitation of *Darood,* which is an act of great virtue, will become a *Bid'ah.*

No Power on earth can declare it an act of *Sunnah*

Try to understand that it is absolutely wrong to classify Innovation in two categories of 'Good' and 'bad' Innovation. There is no 'good' Innovation, but every *Bid'ah* is bad and a sin. No power on earth can declare it as obligatory, *Sunnah* or *Mustahab* (desirable) what has not been declared as such by the Holy Prophet ﷺ the Noble Companions رضى الله عنهم including the four orthodox Caliphs. If anyone thinks on these lines, he will fall into error and go astray. This will mean that the Noble Companions رضى الله عنهم did not understand *Deen* as we do.

A wonderful proverb

My respected father رحمة الله عليه used to relate to us a proverb of the Hindi language.

The Baniyas among the Hindus are a caste who are very competent businessmen; in fact they are born traders. This proverb concerns them and means that one is foolish who claims that he is cleverer than the Baniyaa in trading affairs and business. Experience proves that in the Indian sub-continent there is no class more expert and cleverer in the sphere of business activities. My respected father related this proverb as an analogy to prove that the Noble Companions رضى الله عنهم were experts in the matter of *Deen.* He is a fool and idiot who claims that he is cleverer than they in the matter of *Deen* and that he is competent to declare as binding and obligatory which the companions ignored. A great idiot and fool is such a fellow indeed.

SUMMARY

To sum up, there are some new additions which no one considers to be part of *Deen* (Faith), e.g. the electric fan, the electric light, Railway trains, the aeroplanes etc. They are not Innovation, because, no one thinks that these facilities are unnecessary and inevitable for the practice of *Deen.* We are free to practise such rites and acts of *Deen* according to our choice and convenience for which Allah and His Prophet ﷺ have not imposed on us any particular line of action or procedure to follow. If we prescribe for such items some particular ways and rites of our own will and choice, then this will become an act of Innovation. If we keep this principle in our minds we shall not suffer from any doubts or misgivings in this behalf.

May Allah protect us from the evils of and grant us right understanding of *Deen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين۔

Venue : Jame'Masjid Baitul-Mukarram,
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.

Date : Friday, 29th May, 1992
After 'Asr Prayers

When the relation of wife and husband is established by uttering, the two sacred words of offer and acceptance during the Nikah ceremony, the girl (now a bride) honours the implications of these two words so solemnly that she leaves her parents, brothers and sisters, her hearth and home, her family and the entire clan, and becomes, as it were, a purchased maid of her husband. She has thus become bound to pass her lifetime with a stranger, in a strange house and a strange environment. Will you not take notice of all this sacrifice on the part of that girl who is now your wife and at your exclusive disposal? How would you have felt if the matter had been the reverse; if, after the marriage, you had been asked to leave your family and your parents? What a trying predicament it would have been for you! So have regard for this sacrifice of her and behave with her amicably and fairly.

THE RIGHTS OF A WIFE IN ISLAM

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه، ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيدنا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا

اما بعد!

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم، بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم.

وَعَاشِرُوْهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ ج (سورة النساء: ١٩)

قال الله تعالى :

وَلَنْ تَسْتَطِيْعُوْٓا اَنْ تَعْدِلُوْا بَيْنَ النِّسَآءِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتُمْ فَلَا تَمِيْلُوْا كُلَّ الْمَيْلِ فَتَذَرُوْهَا كَالْمُعَلَّقَةِ ط وَاِنْ تُصْلِحُوْا وَتَتَّقُوْا فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ غَفُوْرًا رَّحِيْمًا. (سورة النساء ١٢٩)

وعن ابى هريرة رضى الله تعالىٰ عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم استو صوا بالنساء خيرا فان المرأة خلقت من ضلع وان اعوج مافى الضلع اعلاه فان ذهبت تقيمه كسرته وان تركته لم يزل اعوج فاستوصوا بالنساء. (صحيح بخارى كتاب النكاح باب المداراة مع النساء-حديث نمبر ٥١٨٤)

All praise to Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the mischief of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is none to lead him astray whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no God but Allah alone and that He has no partner. I also bear witness that our master, our authority, and our Prophet and our master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah bestow upon him, his household and his Companions. His mercy and blessings in abundance.

And Almighty Allah said: But consort with them in kindness. (4:19)

You will not be able to deal equally between (your) wives, however, much you may wish to

do so. But turn not altogether away (from one), leaving her in suspense, If you do good and be righteous, then surely Allah is ever Forgiving, Merciful.(4:129)

Importance of the rights of the servants (of Allah)

Allamah Nuwawi رحمة الله عليه is commencing a discussion of the rights of the servants (of Allah) in the light of these verses and the traditions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ I have already mentioned repeatedly that "the Rights of the servants are a very important branch of religion. Its importance lies in the fact that "the Rights of Allah" may be pardoned by repentance. If God forbid-some negligence ever occurs in the matter of Allah's rights, it is very easy to remedy this negligence by means of repentance and seeking Allah's pardon with a feelings of remorse and regret. The negligence can thus be remedied. As for the rights of the servants, if they are violated, they are not pardoned by repentance and feelings of remorse and regret and by seeking pardon, unless the usurped rights are restored to the right-holders or the latter willingly forgoe their rights in his favour. Therefore the matter of rights of people is a matter of serious consideration.

Negligence in the matter of the Rights

Serious indeed is the subject of the rights of the servants of Allah, yet equally serious is the negligence of people towards this subject in our society. There are only a few aspects of worship that we have taken as *Deen* (Faith), e.g, Prayer, Fasting, *Hajj, Zakat,* Remembrance, Recitation of the Holy Qur'an, the recital of some sacred names or words. We regard these items as *Deen* but we have excluded from *Deen* the Rights of the servants; similarly we have also ex-

cluded from *Deen* the rights concerning social living. One who is negligent in the discharge of these rights does not feel that he is committing any serious offence.

Backbiting is a violation of People's rights

Take a simple example. If a Muslim is addicted (God forbid) to drinking wine he will be looked down upon by every Muslim who has even the least touch with the faith and the drunkard himself will feel ashamed that he is committing a sin. On the other hand a person who is addicted to backbiting is not hated in the society like the drunkard, nor does the backbiter himself feels that he is a sinner or criminal, although both the sins are equally heinous and base. But no, backbiting is more vicious sin than drinking wine; firstly, because it comes within the definition of the rights of the servants and secondly, because Almighty Allah has used for it in the Holy Qur'an a very horrid similitude the like of which He has not for any other sin. He has thus said in surah Al-Hujarat, verse no 12:

> And do not spy: nor backbite one another. Would one of you love to eat the flesh of his dead brother; you would then abhor that. (49:12)

Thus a backbiter has been compared to one who eats the flesh of his dead brother. So vicious is this sin! Yet it has become common in the society. There is hardly an assembly where this sin is not committed. What is worse, it is not condemned at all as if the faith has nothing to do with this sin.

***'Ihsan* is desirable at all times**

Hazrat Dr. Muhammad Abdul Hai رحمةالله عليه may Allah exalt his status, is my spiritual Guide (Shaikh or Pir). One day he related the following incident:

A man called on me and told me with a gusto of pleasure and pride that thank God, he had attained the rank of "*Ihsan*". "*Ihsan*" is a very exalted status, as is mentioned in a tradition:

ان تعبد الله كانك تراه فان لم تكن تراه فانه يراك (صحيح البخارى، كتاب الايمان، باب سؤال جبريل حديث نمبر ٥٠)

(Sahih Bukhari. the book of belief-chapter Inquiry in Hadith Jibrael tradition no: 50).

This means that you should worship Almighty Allah, as you are seeing Allah and if this be not possible worship Him with the belief that He is seeing you. This is the rank of "*Ihsan*". That gentleman told the respected Doctor Sahib that he had attained the rank of "*Ihsan*" Hazrat Doctor Sahib congratulated him on the attainment, as it was a great blessing of Allah and put to him this question: Do you realise the blessing of "*Ihsan*" only during the prayers or do you realise it also during your dealings with your wife and children that Almighty Allah is seeing you? He replied: What the Tradition says is that while pray one should feel that one is seeing Allah, or Allah is seeing him. I thought that "*Ihsan*" is related with worship only and not with other activities of life Hazrat Doctor Sahib said to him: That is why I put this question to you, because it is generally misunderstood that "*Ihsan*" is required during prayers, remembrance or recitation only, although it is required at all times and in all stages and walks of life. If you are sitting in a shop doing some business, "*Ihsan*" is required there also. You should realise in your heart that Almighty Allah is seeing you. "*Ihsan*" is also required when you are dealing with your subordinates. You should feel that Allah is seeing you even when you are dealing with your wife, children friends and neighbours. This is really what "*Ihsan*" means. It is not confined only to prayers and worship.

That woman shall enter Hell

It should be borne in mind very well that the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ cover every branch of life. It is narrated that once the people inquired from the Holy Prophet ﷺ about a woman: O Prophet ﷺ of Allah, there is a woman who remains engaged with worship all day and night. She is mostly busy with optional prayers, remembrance of Allah and recitation of the Holy Qur'an, she is always seen engaged in these acts of devotion. What do you think about the fate of this woman? The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked that Companion رضی اللہ عنہ about her dealings with the neighbours. The Companion رضی اللہ عنہ replied that she did not behave well with the neighbours. The women of the neighbourhood are not pleased with her. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said: She will enter the Hell.(Bukahri p-48, tradition no: 911, chapter Does not trouble his neighbour)

That woman shall enter Paradise

At another time a question was put to the Holy Prophet ﷺ about a woman who did not observe many items of optional worship and remained contented only with the obligatory and essential duties and sometimes she performed the *Sunnah Muwakkadah* (the confirmed *sunnah*) prayer She did not observe the optional prayers, rememberance, recitation, etc. more than this. Her dealings with the neighbours and others were however, amicable. The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied: She will enter the Paradise.

Who is a Pauper?

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has explained in these traditions that if anyone observes optional prayers it is very good, but if he does not do so he will not be asked in the Hereafter why he did not observe such and such optional forms of worship. This is because the very word Nafl (optional)

means that if anyone performs this optional worship, he will receive reward, and if he does not do so, there is no sin on him. On the other hand the rights of the servants (of Allah) are something about which the people will be questioned on the Day of Judgement. The entry into Paradise or Hell depends on the nature of replies given to these questions.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has explained in a Tradition as to who is a pauper; he is reported to have said: A person will bring with him on the Day of Judgement lots of good deeds; but in the world he usurped someone's rights, spoke ill of someone, injured someone's feelings and hurt someones heart. The result of all this will be that he will have to pay to others all the good deeds he brought with him and will have to take upon himself the sins of others while he has no good deeds left with him to compensate his creditors. The matter of the rights of the servants (of Allah) is thus a very important matter in the *Shari'ah.* (Tirmidhi, chapter on Accounts taking and ransom Tradition no: 2533).

The Rights of people are three-fourths of *DEEN*

It has already been pointed out that if the "Islamic Jurisprudence" which deals with the injunctions of the *Shari'ah* is divided into four equal parts, only one part will be found to deal with matters relating to worship, and the remaining three parts will be found to contain injunctions with regard to matters that are related to people and their life. You may know the name of '*Hidayah*' which is a renowned book of Hanafi jurisprudence in four volumes. The first volume deals with forms of worship in which problems concerning *Purity* (*Taharat*), *Prayer* (*Salat*), *Fasting, Zakat and Hajj* have been discussed. The remaining three volumes are concerned with the subjects dealing with people and their rights, social living and the rights of the servants (of Allah). It can be easily inferred from

this that the subject of the rights of the servants represents one-fourth of *Deen* (Faith). Therefore, a very important chapter is now commencing. May Almighty Allah help us, by His mercy, to read and listen to it with a firm mind, to act upon the injunctions. May He also help us to discharge the rights of the servants (of Allah) according to His pleasure and will.

The miserable condition of women before Islam.

The first Chapter which Allamah Nuwawi رحمة الله عليه has included is the "Chapter of counsels about women", meaning those counsels which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has given about the rights of women. The reason for allotting this subject in the first chapter of the book is that the greatest shortcoming and negligence are committed in the matter of women's rights. During the Days of Ignorance, before the advent of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, women were treated like cattle, devoid of humanity, deprived of all rights, whatsoever. In those days of darkness the people did not recognise any rights due to women who were tolerated in the houses no better than pet animals like goats and sheep; but the conditions totally changed after the advent of Islam and under the sacred teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Amicable behaviour with women

At that time the world was unaware of heavenly guidance. It was the Holy Prophet ﷺ who for the first time made the world alive to the rights due to women whereunder they should be accorded nice treatment.

At the very out set Allamah Nuwawi رحمة الله عليه has cited a verse of the Holy Qur'an that is very comprehensive on this subject:

وَعَاشِرُوْهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ ج

But consort with them in kindness (4:19)

Almighty Allah has addressed all Muslims, commanding them to behave, and consort with women in kindness; associate with them in life with goodwill and sympathy and never give them trouble. This is a general guidance. This verse is, as it were, the heading and the text of this chapter. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has explained this verse by his words and practice. He ﷺ gave such importance to the need of showing misbehaviour to women that he is reported to have said in a Tradition:

خیارکم خیارکم لنساء هم وانا خیار کم لنسائی

Meaning: The best of you are those who behave well with their women and I am best of you in behaving well with my women. (Tirmidhi - chapter on right of a women over her husband, Tradition no: 1172)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ attached so much importance to the protection of the rights of women and ensuring good behaviour with them that he has explained this matter in many Traditions. The first Tradition on this subject is one narrated by Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه wherein the Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said:

استو صوا بالنساء خیرا

I advise you to wish well for the women. You should accept this advice of mine.

The Holy Qur'an enunciates only the principles

Before proceeding ahead it is better to advise that the Holy Qur'an generally gives the basic principles, without going into the minute details of the issue. This procedure is followed even in describing the injunctions about the prayer which is such an important pillar of *Deen* (Faith) to the estab-

lishment of which reference has been made in the Qur'an at seventy three places. Yet the Holy Qur'an does not furnish any details about how prayer (*salat*) is offered, how many *Rak'at* should one offer and other injunctions validating or invalidating the *salah*. The Qur'an itself has not detailed these factors but left it for the Holy Prophet ﷺ who taught the companions these details both by his words and practice. The same is the case with *Zakat* which has also been mentioned in the Qur'an almost at the same number of places.The Qur'an, however, does not clarify the prescribed value on which *Zakat* becomes due for payment, nor it speaks of possessions on which it is leviable. Like the prayer these details about *Zakat* were also left for the Holy Prophet ﷺ to explain. Thus it becomes clear that generally the Qur'an mentions only the basic principles and does not go into minute details.

Domestic life is the Foundation of the entire civilisation

The relationship between man and woman and among the members of the family are so important that the Qur'an has described in clear terms its minutest details and has spoken in details relating to this important topic. Thereafter the Holy Prophet ﷺ has explained fully those points. The edifice of the entire human civilisation stands on the relations between man and woman and on the domestic life of man. If the relationship between man and woman is sound, smooth and one discharges the rights of the other, then the affairs of the household shall run smoothly and the children shall be brought up on the right lines and this ensures the betterment of society on which stands the edifice of the social living as a whole. On the other hand, if the household affairs are mismanaged and there are differences and disagreements between husband and wife the children are affected

adversely and you may very well imagine about the standard and character of the nation manifested by such spoilt and ill mannered children. The rules and regulations governing this aspect of the society are called family laws or household regulations. In view of their importance, the Holy Qur'an has dealt them in details:

Is the woman born of crooked Rib?

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has set a nice example for this – an example that is unique in its effect and import. Some have explained it by saying that first of all Allah created Hazrat Adam عليه السلام then He created Hazrat Hawwa عليه السلام (Eve) from his rib. Some learned men have said by way of explanation that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has compared a woman to a rib which is crooked to see but its beauty and health consist in its crookedness. If anyone tries to remove its crookedness by straightening it, it will break and cease to be a rib. To restore to its previous state, it will have to be made crooked then joined together with plaster. The same idea has been beautifully expressed in a Tradition:

ان ذهبت تقيمها كسرتها

That is, if you want to straighten it, you will only break it.

وان استمتعت بها استمتعت بها وفيها عوج

And if you want to enjoy it you may enjoy it despite its crookedness.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has, thus set a wise example that its crookedness is its beauty and health which will be destroyed by straightening it.

It is not a defect of woman

Some people use this saying against women as being their defect in a woman. In other words, they say that since a woman has been created from a crooked rib, so is she crooked in her conduct and character, by her nature. This is, however, not the meaning of the Tradition of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

The deviousness of women is natural

It needs to be borne in mind that Almighty Allah has created man and woman, each with different tendencies and attributes. On account of this difference between the nature and temperament of the two, man thinks about a woman that she is opposed to his masculine nature and sentimentality, although this natural tendency of a woman against a man's natural bent and tendency is not a defect. It is the natural requirement of her nature that she should reflect in her character some innocent crookedness. That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: If you find in a woman something which is against your natural tendency on account of which you think that she is crooked, do not condemn her on this account; rather ignore it by thinking that it is the natural demand of her nature. If you want to straighten her she will break; if you want to benefit by her you can do so despite her crookedness.

"Negligence" is a part of beauty in a woman

Today the times have changed; as a result the values have also changed. A defect in a man is more often looked upon as a point of virtue and beauty in a woman. If we go through the Holy Qur'an carefully we shall see what, is generally considered a defect in a man is considered a point of beauty in a woman. For example, it is a defect in man to be

ignorant and negligent, on account of which he is unaware of what is happening in the world. A man has been entrusted with the affairs of the world. To discharge these he needs learning and awareness. If he is devoid of these qualities and abilities, he is faulty and defective to this extent. As for a woman, negligence has been considered by the Qur'an as an item of beauty for her. Allah has said:

إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَرْمُوْنَ الْمُحْصَنٰتِ الْغٰفِلٰتِ الْمُؤْمِنٰتِ (سورة النور:٢٣)

Surely, as for those who slander virtuous, negligent believing women..... (24:23)

The word "negligent" meaning that they are unaware of what is happening around them in the world. The Qur'an has considered here "negligence" or "unawareness" as an attribute of beauty. It is obvious from this that if a woman is ignorant of the affairs of the world, duties, excepted, this is not a defect but an attribute of beauty as described by the Qur'an.

Do not try to straighten her bent by force

Thus we see a defect in man is not considered a defect in woman and what is not a defect in man is sometimes looked upon as a defect in woman. A man is, therefore, not allowed to be harsh to a woman and misbehave with her if he finds her behaving in her womanly way. The very meaning of her comparison with a rib is that, by nature, she should be different in temperament from you. So now do not try to straighten her by force.

The root cause of the entire conflict

The above is based on a Tradition of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Who can claim to know more about the nature of man and women than the Prophet of Allah? He diagnosed the root cause of all the conflicts between man and woman.

Man insists that a woman should he exactly like himself in all her behaviours. This is not possible as she has been created different from him.

Be conscious of her good habits

In another tradition of this chapter Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated;

عن ابی هريرة رضی الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلی الله عليه وسلم:

لا يفرك مؤمن مؤمنةً ان كره منها خلقا رضی منها آخر (صحيح مسلم، كتاب الرضاع، باب الوصية بالنساء)

(Sahih Muslim-Book of suckling chapter consel about women)

In this Tradition the Holy Prophet ﷺ has mentioned a wonderful principle that a believing man should not hate a believing woman altogether. In other words, the man should not condémn her totally on the false plea that she is no good. If she has some undesirable triats in her conduct she must have in her some desirable traits also.

The first principle which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught is that when two persons live together, some habit of the one is pleasant and some other habit unpleasant to the other. If the woman has some unpleasant habit in her, then do not condemn her on account of that habit altogether, rather look for and remember her pleasant habits and thank Almighty Allah for them. If you follow this practice it is quite possible that the hatred in your heart for the dark side of her conduct and character may gradually lose its severity and importance.

Man, in fact, is ungrateful. If he finds any defects in her he totally changes his opinion about the person concerned and forgets about his good qualities. In view of those few faults and defects, he is always critical about him and misbehaves with him. Such attitude is unreasonable.

Everything has virtues and vices in it

There is nothing in the world which is all virtue and all vice. Almighty Allah has, by His wisdom, endowed everything of His creation with virtue and vice. You are sure to find some good qualities in every person, may he be an infidel, an idolater or even worse.

An English proverb

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said; A word of wisdom is a lost property of a believer. He must pick it up wherever he finds it. So there is no harm in picking up a word of wisdom even from an English Proverb.

The proverb said that even a watch which has gone out of order speaks the truth at least twice every day. Suppose that the watch stopped at 12 hrs., 5 mts,. As the time 12-5 occurs twice during the 24 hours, the dead watch shall tell the correct time twice at 12-5 hrs, although it will remain silent at other times.

The moral we draw from this English proverb is that if one is in search of goodness with hope and sincerity one can surely find this goodness even from the most condemned and throw-away objects.

There is nothing bad in the workshop of Nature

My father Mufti Muhammad Shafi' Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ used to recite frequently the following Urdu couplet of the late Dr. Muhammad Iqbal:

نہیں ہے چیز نکمی کوئی زمانے میں
کوئی برا نہیں قدرت کے کارخانے میں

There is nothing useless in the earth
There is nothing bad in the workshop of nature.

Whatever Almighty has created has created it with His wisdom and by His will. If you reflect on it you will surely find in Allah's creation point of Wisdom and benefit. Instead man looks for faults and short comings only and ignores the good points and bright sides of things. Thus he becomes pessimistic and commits transgression and injustice.

Always look for the good qualities of women

Almighty Allah has said in His Book :

فَاِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوْهُنَّ فَعَسٰٓى اَنْ تَكْرَهُوْا شَيْئًا وَّيَجْعَلَ اللّٰهُ فِيْهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيْرًا

For if you hate them, it may happen that you hate a thing wherein Allah has placed much good. (4:19)

If for some reason you do not like those women whom you have married, yet it is just possible that Almighty Allah may have endowed them with much goodness and blessings. Hence this command that you should look only for the good qualities of women, so that you may receive solace and comfort from them and thus the doors of mistrust and misbehaviour may not be opened.

Educative story of A saint

Hazrat Maulana Shah Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has related the story of a saint who had a very ill mannered and aggressive wife. She always found faults with her hushand. Whenever the saint entered his house the wife started quarrelling with him. Someone asked him why he did not get rid of those daily wrangles and squabbles by resorting to divorce. The saint replied: it is very easy for me to divorce her but there is one reason for not doing so. Despite all her defects, she has one very good quality which prevents me from parting with her; and that is the quality of loyalty with which Almighty Allah has adorned her. Supposing I am ar-

rested and imprisoned for some crime, for a term of fifty years, she will not move even an inch from the corner to which I confine her, and she will never cast a glance at anyone else. This quality of loyalty is invaluable.

Mirza Mazhar Jan-e-Jan'an and his over-sensitiveness

Hazrat Mirza Mazhar jan-e-Jan an رحمة الله عليه was a renowned saint of the Indian sub-continent. He was so touchy and over-sensitive in his temperament that if anyone put the glass on the pitcher in a tilting position or if he saw his bedding creased he would feel headache, unfortunately he had to deal with an ill-mannered wife. She was always murmuring something against her husband. Strange are indeed the ways whereby Allah tests His servants and raises their ranks. The wife of this pious saint was an ordeal for him which he tolerated with patience throughout his lifetime and expected that Allah may pardon his sins as a recompense for this ordeal.

The women of our society are Nymphs of Paradise

Hakimul Ummat, Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه used to say that the women of the Indo-Pakistan are like nymphs, because they are endowed with the qualities of faith and loyalty. Although these qualities are slowly fading under the impact of the modern Western civilisation and culture, yet the spirit of loyalty is so deep-rooted in them that they are always ready to sacrifice their lives for their husbands in all circumstances, and they can never cast their glances on anyone other than their husbands. In fact the saint, referred to above demonstrated obedience to the injunction implied in the following Tradition.

ان كره منها خلقًا ر ضى آخر

If one habit of the woman is unpleasant, there must be some pleasant habit in her which should be taken into consideration and good treatment should be meted out to the woman on account of this one pleasant habit in her.

People generally look at the dark side in the conduct and character of their women and lose sight of the bright side in them. This tendency is the root cause of the bitterness prevailing in our society.

It is immorality to beat one's wife

The third Tradition of this chapter is as under:

عن عبدا لله بن زمعة رضى الله عنه أنه سمع النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم يخطب ثم ذكر النساء فوعظ فيهن فقال:

"العبد احد كم فيجلد امرأته جلد العبد فلعله يضاجعها من اخريومه"

(Sahih Bukhari the book of marriage - It is hateful to beat women tradition no: 5204).

Once the Holy Prophet ﷺ delivered a sermon in which he mentioned many important topics of Islamic behaviour. The following is the point which he ﷺ touched on the subject under discussion: He said: It is very bad that one of you beats his wife as a master beats his slave and on the other hand he uses the same wife to satisfy his sexual desire. Then how immoral and shameless it is that one should beat one's wife so severely!

Three steps of reforming a wife

As I have already stated, the Holy Qur'an has taken great care to mention in detail concerning husband-wife relations:

The differences and disagreements between husband

and wife start when the husband feels offended at some action or habit of the wife. The Qur'an advises that in such a situation the husband should look for some lovely and pleasant quality in the character and dealings of his wife. If the husband fails to discover in his wife any such good points and feels that correction and reform are needed, then the Holy Qur'an has prescribed the following course to reform and rectify it.

وَالّٰتِيْ تَخَافُوْنَ نُشُوْزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوْهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوْهُنَّ فِى الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوْهُنَّ (سورة النساء ٣٤)

As for those (women) from whom you fear disobedience, admonish them and banish them to beds apart (from yours) and beat them. (4:34)

First of all you should advise them in a lenient and polite manner and with love to give up their bad habits and reform themselves. This is the first step of reform. If they respond favourably to admonition and accept your advice, do not go further and treat the chapter closed. If this does not help and they insist upon their misconduct then the second step is to separate your bed and give up sleeping with them on the same bed. If they have sense, they will surely reform themselves and act upon advice. (Details of separating the bed will follow shortly).

Physical punishment to a wife

If the second step of the reform also fails then it will be necessary to resort to the third step, which is to inflict on the wife some physical punishment; but what kind of physical punishment and to what extent? The Holy Prophet ﷺ answered these questions in his sermon on the occasion of his Farewell *Hdjj* (حجة الوداع) in which he said: (واضربو هن ضرباغير مبرح) (beat them very lightly so as not to injure them). To sum

uxdsw3p, effort should be made so as to settle matters without the expedient of this punishment. If it is found unavoidable, it is permitted only with the condition that it should be very light, the intention being only to enforce discipline and not to inflict pain and injury. It is not lawful beating one's wife in a way that should leave a mark on the body. (A Tradition on this subject follows).

The behaviour of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

When the Holy Prophet ﷺ passed away from this world he left behind nine sacred wives رضی اللہ عنہما. These wives were not angels sent down from the heaven; they were members of this world and society. Sometimes, bitterness occurred among them as is usual and natural among co-wives. Sometimes such problems also arose as usually arise between husbands and wives. Hazrat Ayesha رضی اللہ عنہا has narrated: Not only did the Holy Prophet ﷺ ever raise his hands on any of his wives, but it was also his habit to enter the house with a smiling face.

The Prophet's *Sunnah* (practice)

It is the *Sunnah* (practice) of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that men should not raise their hands at women (to beat them). The permissibility of punishing physically is restricted only to abnormal and unavoidable situations. In fact beating women is not the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ; his *Sunnah* is what Hazrat 'Ayesha رضی اللہ عنہا has narrated.

A miracle of Dr. Abdul Hai رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai رحمۃ اللہ علیہ my spiritual guide sometimes related to us, by way of a lesson, that a period of fifty-five years had passed of his marriage, he never talked to his wife during these fifty five years in an angry

tone. The walking of a man on the surface of the water and his flying in the air is taken as a miracle. It is more surprising that one should not talk to his wife even in an adverse tone for as long as fifty five years.

And his respectable wife says that her husband, Dr. Sahib, never asked her to bring to him a glass of water. She, however, served him as best as possible of her own sweet will and as a blessed and virtuous duty.

Tariqat is nothing but public service

Hazrat Dr. Sahib used to say: I consider myself to be a servant whom Allah has sent to this world for service. This is my belief and with this belief I want to serve others and depart from this world. I am duty bound to serve all my friends, acquaintances, associates and pupils. I was not sent to this world as a master to be served by others. He considered the position of a servant of people to be an elevated rank. He then recited the famous persian couplet:

زتسبیح و سجادہ و دلق نیست
طریقت بجز خدمت خلق نیست

Tariqat (spiritual way) is nothing but public service. It does not consist in the robes and the prayer-rag and the saintly garments (signs of godliness).

Tariqat in fact, stands for public service. Dr. Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ used to say: When I understood that I am a servant and not a master, how can a servant order others to do this and that? He spent his entire life by doing his personal work without the assistance of anyone else. This is a practical example of how the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ should be followed. As for ourselves we do follow the *Sunnah* in rituals only. It is necessary to follow the *sunnah* in

dealings with others social living and in every mode of leading our private life.

Verbal claim is not enough

Living according to the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is highly rewarding. Through such living man can smoothen his worldly life as well as his life in the Hereafter. But this success cannot be attained only by making empty claims.

وكل يدعى حبا ليلى وليلى لا تقر لهم بذاك

This means that everyone claims to love Laila, but Laila herself does not acknowledge their claim).

This is achieved only by means of sincere work and devotion. By his character, conduct and practice man should ensure that he does not cause the least harm even to the person with whom he happens to be on unfriendly terms.

In short, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has illustrated, by his own practice, the THIRD STEP of reforming an errant wife. Throughout his lifetime he never raised his hands on any one of his sacred wives. However he was sometimes irritated by their behaviour, but he never reacted to it. Those who beat their wives are declared the worst men by the Prophet ﷺ.

عن عمرو بن الأَحْوص الجشمى رضى الله عنه انه سمع النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم فى حجة الوداع يقول بعد ان حمد الله تعالى واثنى عليه وذكره ووعظ ثم قال:

"الاواستو صوا بالنساء خيرا فانما هن عوان عندكم ليس تملكون منهن شيئاً غير ذلك الا ان ياتين بفاحشة مبينة..... الخ" (ترمذى، كتاب التفسير، باب ومن سورة التوبة، حديث نمبر ٣٠٨٧)

(Tirmidhi book of Tafsir, chapter Surah Taubah Tradition no: 3087).

Prophetic Address in the Farewel Pilgrimage

In the above Tradition an extract has been given from the Farewel address of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. In this address he ﷺ addressed the assembly of the companions in clear words that after that year he might not see them at that place. So in this address he included all those points that he feared that the *Ummah* might deviate from the right path, and thus he wanted to leave behind for the guidance of the *Ummah* a perfect code of life to be followed. In this address he ﷺ tried to block all the possible paths of deviation and error.

The address is quite lengthy but different parts of this address have been stated on different places. This is also a part of it in which the various aspects of relationship of man and woman has been discussed. Special stress has been laid on the need that men should acknowledge the rights of women and honour them. You may realise the importance of these rights from the fact that he delivered that sermon on the occasion of the Last Pilgrimage when he ﷺ indirectly informed people that the next year he may not get an opportunity to address the people. Thus the mutual rights of men and women are one of the topics which he selected for discussing towards the close of his life on account of their importance. He wanted his *Ummah* to honour and follow the injunctions in all circumstances.

Mutual relations between husband and wife

This shows the importance of husband-wife relations in human life and how the law-maker the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself felt this importance. If the husband and wife do not discharge each other's rights properly and, instead, usurp these mutual rights, not only will this result in the violation of each other's rights, but it will also adversely affect both

the families as well as the children whose proper upkeep, development, mental and moral growth will be affected. As the family is the foundation of the entire civilisation, with its ruination civilisation is itself ruined. That is why the Prophet ﷺ has laid great stress on the importance of mutual relation between husband and wife.

Women are in your confinement

Hazrat Umr bin al-Ahwas al-Jashim رحمةالله عليه has narrated that in the Farewel sermon the Holy Prophet ﷺ praised Almighty Allah, offered consels and delivered a speech and then said: Beware! I advise you to do good to women. Accept this advice. This is the sentence which occurred in the previous Tradition. His next sentence was :

فانما هن عوان عندكم

because those women live with you confined in your houses.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has mentioned an attribute of women that if man reflects over this attribute only, he can never think of misbehaving with them.

A Lesson from an Ignorant Girl

Our dear Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمةالله عليه used to tell his disciples to learn a lesson from an ignorant, uneducated girl who surrenders herself to a stranger after uttering at the time of the Nikah only two words of acceptance. She honours these two words so solemnly and completely that she leaves her mother, father, brothers and sisters and the entire family and becomes inseparably tied to and confined with her husband. An ignorant girl honours these two words so truly and sincerely that she surrenders herself to one person, her husband but you could not honour

your pledge of these two words by surrendering yourself to Almighty Allah. This girl is much better than you. She honoured so completely her pledge of *Nikah,* but you did not honour your pledge of the two words of the article of Faith.

Sacrifices of the woman for your sake

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in this Tradition, "How tremendous sacrifice the woman has undergone for your sake. If the matter was just the reverse and it were said to you, you would have to leave your family, your parents, after your marriage what an awkward situation it would be for you. As for the woman she has become confined to a strange surrounding, a strange house and a strange person and that, too, for the whole of her life. That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ said in his tradition: Will you not mind this sacrifice? Do take heed of this and treat her well and with love.

You have no claim upon them

Thereafter the Holy Prophet ﷺ has spoken a very serious sentence of far-reaching consequences. When the meaning of this sentence is explained to men they get annoyed. That sentence is:

ليس تملكون منهن شيئا غير ذٰلك

This means that according to the laws of the *Shari'ah* the only demand you can make of them is that they should live with you in your house. You have no other claim upon them

Cooking is not the duty of a wife

From this Tradition the Jurists have deduced a ruling of delicate nature and which makes men annoyed. The ruling lays down that according to the *Shari'ah* it is not the re-

sponsibility of a woman to cook food for the household. For this purpose the Jurists have divided women into two classes. Women of one class are those who do household work, including cooking food in their parent's houses. The other class consists of women who do not cook food in their father's house where cooks are employed for this work. If after marriage a woman of the latter class goes to her husband's house she is not at all responsible to cook food, religiously, legally, morally or otherwise. On the other hand, that wife may ask her husband to hire a cook for her as man is obliged to provide her with food along with other necessaries of life. The Jurists write:

يأتها بطعام مهيئًا

It is the responsibility of the husband to provide his wife with cooked food.

The wife cannot be forced to cook food neither by force, nor by the law, because the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in clear words:

ليس تملكون منهن شيئا غير ذٰلك

This means: You have a right to keep them in your house which it is not lawful for them to leave without your permission.

With this exception the laws of the *Shari'ah* have imposed no responsibility on them.

However, If she belongs to the first category the one who used to cook food in her parents' house she too is not legally responsible to cook food i.e. she cannot be compelled by law to cook food. However, the responsibility falls on her only morally. In such a case the husband is responsible only to provide the food materials. Even then it is not her responsibility to cook food for the husband and the children. A wife in this class cannot ask her husband

to provide her with cooked food. However, if she refuses to cook food for her husband and the children, the court cannot force her to do it. The respected Jurists have explained these problems at great length.

Serving the In-laws is not obligatory

There is another fact worthy of notice about which much negligence is observed among the people. When a wife is not responsible to cook food for her husband and his children, then she is more appropriately not responsible to cook food for the parents of the husband and his brothers and sisters. A custom has gained currency in our society that the parents of the son think that their right over the daughter-in-law has a priority over the right of the son. Therefore she is bound to serve them, no matter if she serves her husband or not. Such a misleading conception gives rise to quarrels and disputes among the daughter-in-law and other members of the family. The negative results of this conception are obvious to require any comments.

To serve In-Laws is a virtue for a woman

Bear in mind well that it is the responsibility of the son to serve his parents. It is, however, a matter of blessing and virtue for the daughter-in-law if she serves the parents of her husband willingly, as a righteous deed and source of reward for her in the Hereafter. The son does not have any right to force his wife to serve his parents in case she does not feel inclined to serve them of her own sweet will. It is also not lawful for the parents to force their daughter-in-law to serve them. As already mentioned, if the daughter-in-law voluntarily decides to serve her in-laws for the sake of recompense in the Hereafter she is welcome to do so. This will create happy and pleasant at-

mosphere in the household.

Appreciate the services of a daughter-in-law

If a daughter-in-law is serving his father and mother-in-law, she is doing favour out of her moral character because she is giving this service to them only of her free will and she is not in any way liable for such services. Her in-laws should, therefore, appreciate this voluntary service from her. They should try to requite her for this and encourage her. Ignorance of these rights and liabilities create various problems in social life which play havoc to the solidarity and welfare of families through quarrels and disputes. All these troubles are taking place simply because the people have banished from their minds the limits of these mutual rights and liabilities which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has fixed in his Traditions.

A Surprising Incident

Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه one day related a very wonderful event. He said that among his acquaintances, there was a couple who used to visit his assembly and receive spiritual training and instructions from him. One day both of them invited him to a dinner at their house. It was the habit of respected Dr. Sahib to utter at the end of the feast a few words of praise in favour of the lady who cooked the food just to encourage and please her. The lady who had prepared the food came and stood behind the curtain and greeted him. After replying to the greeting Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه uttered a few words of praise and appreciation about the quality and taste of the food and the art of cooking. Dr. Sahib heard the woman sobbing from behind the screen. It was disturbing. Was there anything in Dr. Sahib's words that pinched her? On being asked to state the cause of

her grief and sobbing, she said, "I have been living with my husband for the last forty two years, but during this long period of association I never heard from him a word of appreciation about my cooking. When I heard these words from you sir, I could not control myself from sobbing".

The respected Dr. Sahib used to relate this story in his assemblies off and on to emphasize that such callousness can never be expected from a husband who is able to realize that it is a great favour on the part of his wife that she is serving him so selflessly and faithfully of her own sweet will and is doing all this service for which she has not been made legally responsible by the *Shari'ah*. A man who thinks that his wife is a maid servant and has to serve him at any cost, has no need to drop a word of praise and appreciation if she is an expert cook and sincere worker.

The Husband should serve his parents himself

A question arises as to who should serve the parents when they are old, weak, or otherwise helpless on account of sickness when there is none in the house except their son and his wife? Even in such a situation the daughter-in-law is not bound, according to the *Shari'ah* to serve her in-laws. It is, however, a matter of blessings and virtue for her if she serves them of her own free will with the belief to please Allah and to receive reward in the Hereafter. The son should, however, realise that it is his responsibility to help and serve his parents personally or by employing a servant for this purpose. If the wife is looking his old parents the husband must appreciate this service and be thankful to her.

Husband's permission for going out

But here is another requirement to note in order to understand the true position. After knowing only one side of

a case and being ignorant of the other side people begin to take undue advantage. It has already been explained in detail that it is not obligatory for a wife to cook food, according to the laws of the *Shari'ah*. In his Tradition the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that "women remain confined to your houses like captives". It means that it is not lawful for them, to go out of the house without the permission of their husbands. Just as the jurists have explained in detail the issue of cooking food, in the same way they have also explained in detail that women cannot leave the house for meeting kinsmen, even their parents without the permission of their husbands. If the parents visit the house of their son-in-law to meet their daughter, the husband cannot prevent them from seeing her. The jurists have prescribed limits for such casual visits. The parents may visit their daughter only once a week and go back after seeing her. This is their daughter's right which a husband cannot deny, yet she cannot go out of the house without her husband's permission. Thus Almighty Allah has, in His mercy, created a balance between the rights and responsibilities of husband and wife. On the one hand the wife is not legally bound to cook food and, on the other hand, she is legally bound not to go out of the house without her husband's permission.

Mutual Co-operation is vital for smooth life

Whatever has been stated above is only the legal side of the matter; but the beauty of mutual behaviour with each other is that each should try to please the other. Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ and Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا had distributed the duties of the household between them in such a way that Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ did all the outdoor wok, while Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا performed the indoor work. This is exactly the *Sunnah* (practice) of the Holy Prophet ﷺ which should be

followed. Husband and wife should not always involve themselves in the implications of the law. The best way is that both should behave with each other open-heartedly. The division of work between husband and wife on outdoor and indoor basis is a natural division to enable them both to keep the vehicle of life going smoothly.

If she commits the immodesty

اِلَّا اَنْ يَأْتِيْنَ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُبَيِّنَةٍ فَاِنْ فَعَلْنَ فَاهْجُرُوْهُنَّ فِى الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوْهُنَّ ضَرْبًا غَيْرَ مُبَرِّحٍ فَاِنْ اَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوْا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيْلًا (ترمذی باب تفسیر القرآن فی تفسیر سورۃ التوبہ)

If these women commit open lewdness, that lewdness cannot be tolerated in any case. In such a situation they should be dealt with according to the injunction laid down by the Holy Qur'an. First of all they should be admonished, then, if they insist on their sin, let their bed be separated. If they still do not accept the admonition and continue in their lewdness, then it is permitted to inflict them with light beating which should not cause any injury. If they refrain from the lewdness and mend their ways, then one should not find fault with them, but they should be let off, without further pinching them.

اَلَا وحقُّهن عليكم ان تحسنو ا اليهن فى كسوتهن وطعامهن (ترمذی باب تفسیر القرآن فی تفسیر سورۃ التوبہ)

> Beware! These women have rights over you that you behave with them well. Be generous in discharging your obligations in the matter of providing them with clothes, food and their other needs.

This does not mean that you should meet only their basic needs; you are expected to be generous and liberal in supplying their lawful needs.

Pocket money for a wife

Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمةالله عليه has dealt in his guiding sermons with some topics with special emphasis. I intend to reproduce two or three of these in this discourse, as they are generally overlooked by the people. Firstly, the liabilities about a wife does not mean that she should be provided only with food and clothes. It is also a part of this cost that she should be paid a suitable amount as pocket expenses in addition to the cost of living, making her free to spend this additional amount as she likes. There are persons who arrange for food and clothes but do not care for pocket expenses. Hazrat Thanawi رحمةالله عليه has said that payment of some amount as pocket money is also necessary, because there are many items when a person feels ashamed to disclose to other that she needs a certain thing. The wife should, therefore, must have some extra amount as pocket money so that she may not seek other means to satisfy her needs. Hazrat Thanawi رحمةالله عليه has warned that those who do not provide pocket money to their wives are blamable.

Being generous for Family

Another point to note is that one should be generous and liberal in spending money on the needs of the household. One must not limit expenses to basic needs. One should provide money with a generous hand so that the expenses of the household may be met with ease and freedom according to the financial means of the house-keeper. Some people complain that, on the one hand, there is stress that one should not be extravagant and at the same time there are instructions not to be miser in spending money on the household. A question now arises as to what is the line of demarcation between the two. What is extravagance and what is not extravagance?

Simple or comfortable accommodation both are lawful

To remove this confusion Hazrat Thanawi رحمةالله عليه has said: that accomodations are of two kinds, a place which is just enough to accommodate the members of the family. It may be an ordinary hut, it is possible for a man to live some how even in such structures. This is lawful in the first degree. The second kind is that the house should provide living accommodation as well as a reasonable degree of comforts. For example, the house should be concrete-built, equipped with fans and electric lights. If a person provides this service in his house in order to make life easy and comfortable, this cannot be regarded as extravagance.

Decoration is also lawful

In the third degree, along with means of comfort a house should also have some decoration. For example, a man has a concrete built house with plastered walls, electricity and fans, but it has no paint on it. Even an unpainted house like this is fit for living, but without white-washing and proper painting it lacks in decoration. If the house owner gets the house colour washed and painted for the sake of decoration this too is lawful in the laws of the *Shari'ah.*

In short to live in an ordinary house is lawful, it is also lawful to live in a house provided with certain comforts and amenities as well as some decoration. Decoration here means some additional improvement made in the house, like painting, etc, which is pleasing to the eyes and cheering to the heart. There is no harm in this and is permissible in the *Shari ah.*

Show off is not lawful

Then follows the fourth degree which is mere "Show off". The house-owner is doing something which aims neither at comfort, nor at decoration; the aim is to show his riches. Thereby he wants to impose his superiority on others and to show that he is a big thing. All this comes within the definition of "Show off" which is not lawful in the laws of the *Shari'ah*. It is also extravagance.

The limits of extravagance

These four categories also apply to food and clothes, and in all other things of life. A man wears costly clothes in order to receive comfort, to please himself and the members of his household and his acquaintances, friends and visitors, there is no harm. On the other hand there is a person who wears valuable clothes with the intention that he may be considered a rich and wealthy man, a man of exalted position in society, then this is mere exhibition and show and therefore it is prohibited. Hazrat Thanawi رحمةالله عليه has therefore drawn a clear line of demarcation between the two extremes. If money is spent on something for the sake of meeting a necessity, providing comfort or for decoration for his own pleasure and satisfaction, it is not extravagance.

This is not Extravagance

Once it so happened that I was coming back to Karachi from some other city, and it was the hot summer season. I requested someone to have my seat booked in an airconditioned coach and I gave him the required amount of money. Another man who was sitting nearby at once objected to this because in his opinion I was committing extravagance by sitting in an airconditioned coach. Many people are under the wrong impression that to travel in a higher class is extravagance. Bear in mind that if travelling in an upper class is for comfort, e.g., to save oneself from heat in the summer season, and the man can afford it. It is neither extravagance nor a sin. If one travels in an upper class simply to show that he is rich, then it is extravagance and it is unlawful.

The husband should therefore, keep in mind these degrees in meeting the cost of living of his wife with generosity and liberality. Capacity differs from man to man, Maulana Maseehullah Khan Sahib once observed: There is a man who is all alone in this world, without relatives, without friends and without acquaintances. For such a man a bed, a dish and a jug are sufficient to pass his life. If he collects more articles, it will mean a show and will be reckoned as extravagance in his case. There is a man who receives guests, has a large circle of acquaintances and friends, and has many relatives. The standard of his needs and extent of requirements will be quite different. If such a man has in his house at times even one hundred sets of pots and beddings, not a single piece of this will be counted as extravagance, because all these are necessities of life. The standard of life differs from man to man.

Where to search Allah

Hazrat Ibrahim bin Adham رحمةالله عليه was once a great Ruler but he renounced the world in search of Allah. There are some people who seek from his life arguments to prove their stand. The story runs as follows: One night Hazrat Ibrahim bin Adahm رحمةالله عليه saw a man walking about on the roof of the palace. Hazrat Ibrahim bin Adham رحمةالله عليه caught him and asked him what he was doing on the roof of the palace. The man replied: I have come here to search my lost camel. Hazrat Ibrahim bin Adham رحمةالله عليه said: Stupid fellow! Are you searching your camel on the roof at this hour

of night? How can you find the camel here? The man asked with some surprise: Can I not find the camel here? Hazrat Ibrahim bin Adham رحمةالله عليه answered: certainly not! How can you find the camel on the roof of the palace? The man then retorted: If the camel cannot be found in this palace and the man who is searching the camel in this palace is a fool, how can you find Allah while staying in this palace? If I am a fool you are a greater fool than me. This answer of the stranger shocked the heart of Hazrat Adham رحمةالله عليه. He atonce relinquished his kingdom and took his way to the jungle. He took with him only a bowl and a pillow, so that he might eat food and drink water from the bowl and use the pillow while lying down on the ground. After walking some distance he saw a man drinking water from the river with his palms cupped together. He saw that he could also drink water in that way, so he threw away the bowl and resumed his journey. After walking some distance he saw that a man was sleeping on the ground with his hand placed under the head to serve for a pillow. He felt that he could very well do without the pillow so he threw it away, too.

Emotions should not be followed

After listening to this story some people may misunderstand that keeping a bowl and a pillow is also extravagance. May Allah exalt the rank of Hazrat Thanawi رحمةالله عليه who has at his credit of separating right from wrong and wheat from chaff. He رحمةالله عليه has advised that none should compare himself with those of Hazrat Ibrahim bin Adahm رحمةالله عليه. Firstly, because the change that had come over him was due to an ecstatic state of rapture. A man in this condition should not be followed, because the man so overwhelmed goes out of himself and loses his normal consistency of thought and feeling. We are not, therefore, to follow in

the footsteps of Hazrat Ibrahim bin Adham رحمةالله عليه because he was not at his normal when he decided to leave the palace. Besides such renunciation of worldly relation is not permissible in Islam generally. It would mean that Allah cannot be found in palaces.

Moderate way in spending money

The requirements of one man is different from that of other. The standard of spending also differs from man to man. The standards of a man with low income, and of a man with a moderate income or a man with a high income are different from one another. The liberality in spending of each person should, therefore be proportionate to his income. It should not happen that the husband is a man of moderate means and his wife is asking for items of comforts and luxuries which she sees in the houses of rich men that her husband cannot afford. Demand for such articles of luxury is not lawful. The husband should however, try to meet the demands of his wife as far as possible within his means and should not be niggardly towards his wife.

The rights of the wives over husbands?

عن معاوية بن حيدة رضى الله عنه قال قلت يا رسول الله ماحق زوجة احدنا عليه؟ قال ان تطعمها اذا طعمت وتكسوها ذاكسيت ولا تضرب الوجه ولا تقبح ولا تهجر الافى البيت (ابو داؤد، كتاب النكاح، باب حق المرأة على زوجها، حديث نمبر ٢١٤٢)

(Abu Dawud. the Book of Marriage-chapter on the Right of the wife over her husband, Tradition no: 2142)

Hazrat Mu'awiyah bin-Hidah رضى الله عنه has narrated that he asked the Holy Prophet ﷺ: O Prophet ﷺ of Allah what are the rights of our wives over us?

The Holy Prophet ﷺ said: when you take food, feed her also and when you wear clothes, provide her also with clothes to wear. Do not beat her on the face, nor curse her. Do not part with her but only within the (bounds of the) house.

Leave sleeping with her as punishment

As has already been explained, if you ever observe in the wife some lewdness, try first to admonish her. If she does not mind your admonition, then leave her bedding, and sleep on a separate bed. Leaving the bed does not imply that you should go out of the house; you should separate your bedding while remaining in the house. You may, however, change the room by way of a psychological punishment and as a sort of protest, and thus keep yourself aloof from her for some days.

A proper way of separation

The learned jurists have explained the meaning of this Tradition also by advising that on such occasions her bed may be separated, but the talking terms should not be terminated totally. The separation should not be so strict as not to offer salutations to each other from time to time and not to return the greeting if one bids it, nor to avoid answering important questions. A separation of this kind is not lawful.

Wife's permission for a long period journey

While explaining this Tradition the learned Jurists have gone to the extent of saying that it is not lawful for the husband to leave the house for more than four months without the permission and pleasure of his wife. As such, Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ had promulgated this order throughout his empire that the freedom-fighters who take part in

Jihad should not remain away from their homes for more than four months. The jurists have, therefore, deduced that if anyone is going on a journey for a period not exceeding four months, it is not necessary for him to obtain his wife's permission. If the journey takes longer than four months, it is essential for him to obtain his wife's permission, no matter how desirable that journey may be. This ruling is applicable to the journey for the *Hajj* (Pilgrimages). If the pilgrim returns from the journey within four months no permission from his wife is necessary, but if he prolongs his stay in the Holy city beyond four months the wife's permission must be taken. This ruling is also applicable to journeys undertaken for *Tabligh, Da'wah* and *Jihad*. If the wife's permission is necessary for such blessed journeys then her permission will all the more be necessary for a journey undertaken for the sake of employment, business, etc. If journeys exceeding four months are taken without the wife's permission it will be a violation of her rights and, therefore, unlawful in the laws of the *Shari'ah*.

Who are the Best People?

وعن ابی هریرة رضی الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم اکمل المؤمنین ایمانا احسنهم خلقا وخیارکم خیار کم لا هله. (ترمذی، کتاب الرضاع، باب ماجاء فی حق المرأة علی زوجها، حدیث نمبر ۱۱۶۲)

(Tirmidhi Book of Suckling, Chapter on the rights of a wife over her husband tradition no: 1162)

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: The most accomplished of the believers in respect of *Iman* (Faith) is one who is the best of them in conduct and character. The more refined a man is in behaviour and character, the more accom-

plished he is in *Iman* (Faith). Perfect Iman, therefore, demands that a man should behave and deal with others politely. The best of you are those who are the best in their behaviour and dealings with their wives and women.

The meaning of "Good Character" in the modern age

We see that in our days the meanings of things have greatly changed and the values of all things have been reversed. Hazrat Maulana Qari Muhammad Tayyib Sahib رحمة الله عليه of Deoband used to say: As compared with the past everything has turned upside-down in the present age. For example, in the olden days there was darkness beneath the lamp and now there is darkness above the bulb. Today values have changed and so has changed the import of everything, so much so that even the meaning of character has undergone a total change. Today only some outer acts and expressions of modern etiquettes are regarded as tokens of good character. For example, it is regarded sign of good character to meet someone with a smiling face or to utter formal pleasing words. I am very glad to see you, it is pleasing to meet you, etc. while the heat of enmity, jealousy and hatred is burning in the hearts. Today this way of behaviours has been named good behaviour and character. It has been recognised as an art, how to deal with others so as to make them impressed with our personalities. Books are being written today on the art of winning over sympathies of others. All energies are being utilised to achieve this aim: Do all that is possible to get others attracted by your superficial personality. This is called "character". Bear in mind well that all this formal show has nothing to do with high morality which the Holy Prophet

ﷺ has enjoined upon his followers. This is a mere hypocrisy, ostentation, a trick to attract others to one's own personality. This is nothing but love for honour, fame and regard and this desire, in itself, is a disease and immorality. This has nothing to do with Islamic concept of morality.

Morality is a quality of the Heart

Morals are in fact a particular state of the heart which find expression in the movements of the limbs and the organs. The heart should be filled with the feeling of welfare for the creation of Allah and love for them, irrespective of what they are, friends foes, believers or unbelievers. One should remain alive to the fact that every being on the earth is a creation of His Master, Allah. This originates a kind of love for all in one's heart. This conception, in turn, generates good actions and deeds, and then man does good to others. Now the smile shining on ones face on account of this feeling is not artificial, nor is it displayed to arrest public attention; it rather springs up from the heart as a result of heart-felt longing and emotion. Thus, there is a world of difference between the morals taught by the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the artificial and superficial show of morals in modern society.

How to acquire High Morals?

Only reading books or listening to lectures is not enough to attaint the standard of the desired degree of morals. For this purpose it is imperative to seek the company of some spiritual reformer and guide. The order of *Tasaw-wuf* (Mysticism) and the system of becoming a disciple of a spiritual Guide (*Piri-Muridi*) has been handed down from the past men of Allah. It aims at inculcating in high morals and eliminating the germs of immorality from a man. Anyway,

the most accomplished in the realm of *Iman* (Faith) are those individuals who posses high morals, whose hearts generate right motives and these right motives are reflected in their acts and deeds. May Allah admit us all into the company of these perfect personalities *Aameen*!

Do not beat the Maids of Allah

وعن اياس بن عبد الله بن ابى ذباب رضى الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله وسلم لا تضربوا اماء الله فجاء عمرا لى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال ذئرن النساء على ازواجهن..... الخ (ابوداؤد، كتاب النكاح باب فى ضرب النساء، حديث نمبر ٢١٤٦)

(Abu Dawud, Book of Marriage, chapter on beating women Tradition no: 2146)

Hazrat Iyas bin Abdullah رضى الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ, while delivering a sermon said: Do not beat the maids of Allah, because beating women is not desirable. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ prohibits something, the act becomes totally unlawful for one who heard the prohibition direct from the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Now it is not lawful for him in any circumstances to beat women.

Two kinds of Holy Traditions

It may be noted carefully that there is a category of Traditions which we hear from someone or read in the books. They reach us through a long chain of authorities: giving us the names of the reporters in ascending order carrying to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The Traditions of this category are called *Zanni* because they reach us through a channel of reporters. It is obligatory to act upon the injunctions contained in such Traditions; and deviating from this is a sin. Traditions which the Companions رضى الله عنهم heard direct from the Holy Prophet ﷺ are not *Zanni* (conjectural), but are *Qat-i* (confirmed). If any one denies such Traditions, not only will he be a sinner, but he will also become an unbeliever. According to the juristic ruling the denier of an order of the Holy Prophet ﷺ at once turns to be an infidel.

Sometimes we entertain the foolish desire in our hearts to have lived at the blessed time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, to reap the virtues and blessings of that blessed time. We should remember that whatever Almighty Allah does, He does it in His infinite wisdom and it is He who has raised us in this later age. If He had raised us in the time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, who knows what would have happened to us. There is no guarantee that we would not have fallen into the dare ditch of ignorance.? May Allah save us. The question of *Iman* in those days was a very delicate issue. A slight turn from the right path could change the destiny of man.

The devotion with which the sacred Companions رضى الله عنهم of the Holy Prophet ﷺ rallied round him ﷺ was exclusively their distinction. It was due to this that they reached the unique rank. Allah alone knows what would have been the fate of our selfish far-seeing and ease-loving persons as we are. It is indeed a great favour of Almighty Allah that He saved us from ruin and raised us up in an age in which we enjoy many facilities. We are in an age in which we have *Zanni* Traditions. If anyone denies it he will only be a sinner and not an unbeliever. As regards the sacred Companions, رضى الله عنهم if anyone of them heard some Tradition from the Holy Prophet ﷺ and denied it he would instantly become an unbeliever. May Allah save us from such a fate.

The Audacity of the women

When the Holy Prophet ﷺ ordered the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم not to beat their women, this punishment was totally suspended. It was not possible for the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم to continue an act which the Holy Prophet ﷺ had forbidden them to do. Thus when the Practice of beating women ceased then after some time Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ called on the Holy Prophet ﷺ and said:

ذئرن النساء علی ازواجھن

O Prophet of Allah ﷺ, these women have now become lions (i.e. fearless and bold) with their husbands, because you have stopped us from beating them. Now none beats his wife, nor does he ever threaten her with that. That is why they have become fearless, are violating their husbands' rights, and are misbehaving with them. So what are we to do now?

فرخص فی ضربھن

Then the Holy Prophet ﷺ permitted them to beat their wives, if they violate their rights and when beating was unavoidable. Only a few days after the restoration of the order of beating, the women began to approach the Holy Prophet ﷺ and complained to him ﷺ that their husbands were taking undue advantage from the permission of beating and were beating them severely.

They are not good men

فقال رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم لقد اطاف بآل محمد نساء کثیر

یشکون ازواجھن لیس اولئك بخیارکم

Mentioning his own name, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: Many women are repeatedly viiting the house of Muhammad ﷺ complaining against their husbands' misbehaviour with them that they severely beat them. You should note it very carefully that those who resort to this beating are not good men.

It is not the work of good believers to beat their wives. The Holy Prophet ﷺ made it quite clear to the gathering that permission was given to beat their wives as the last alternative only in unavoidable circumstances and subject to the condition that the beating should be light, so as not to cause injury and leave its mark on the body. Despite this, it is the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and also his sincere desire that no man should raise his hand to beat a woman. The mothers of the believers have narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ never raised his hands at any woman. Therefore, this is what the *sunnah* demands.

The Best thing in the world is a "virtuous Woman"

وعن عبد اللہ بن عمرو بن العاص رضی اللہ عنہما ان رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم قال الدنیا متاع وخیرمتاعھا المرأۃ الصالحۃ (صحیح مسلم کتاب الرضاع باب خیر متاع الدنیا المراۃ الصالحۃ حدیث نمبر ۱۷۶۸)

(Sahih Muslim. Book of suckling. chapter-the best object of the world. a virtuous woman)

Hazrat Abdullah bin Amr bin Al'Aas رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: This world as a whole is an enjoyment, profit and advantage.

The Almighty Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

هُوَالَّذِیْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَّافِی الْاَرْضِ جَمِیْعًا (سورۃ البقرہ: ۲۹)

It is Allah who has created whatever there is in the world for your benefit, enjoyment and for meeting your needs. (Al-Baqarah: 29)

The best of all these objects is a virtuous woman

created for your service and enjoyment. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in another Tradition:

حُبب اِلیَّ من دنیا کم النساء والطیب وجعلت قرة عینی فی الصلاة

(کنز العمال، حدیث نمبر ۱۸۹۱۳)

(Kanzul-Umwal, Tradition no: 18913)

Of all the things of your earth there are three things that are dearest to me: (Here note the Phrase "Your earth" as he ﷺ said about his approach this world in these works) viz., a woman, scent, and the coolness of my eyes lies in the prayer.

Thus the foremost among the blessing of the world are these things. In another place he ﷺ said:

مالی للدنیا ما انا والدنیا الاکراکب استظل تحت شجرة ثم راح وترکها (ترمذی، کتاب الزهد، حدیث نمبر ۳۳۷۸)

(Tirmidhi, the Book of Abstinence, Tradition no: 2378)

What have I to do with the world? I am like a rider who takes rest for a short time under the shade of a tree, then he sets off, leaving behind that tree.

Seek refuge from a bad woman

In short one of the three desirable gifts is a virtuous woman, because the Holy Prophet ﷺ has sought refuge from bad woman.

اللهم انی اعوذبك عن امرأة تشیبنی قبل المشیب واعوذبك من ولد یکون علیَّ وبالا

O Allah! I seek refuge from that woman who will make me old before I attain the old age. I also seek refuge from a child who proves to be a trial in the Hereafter. May Allah save us from them. ***Aamen***!

So if you are in search of a woman for yourself or

for one of your children, try to find out one who is religious, virtuous and righteous. If God-forbid she is not righteous, then she may prove a distress. If a man is lucky enough to get a virtuous wife, he should value her, and should never degrade her. To value her means that you should fulfil her rights and behave with her nicely.

May Almighty Allah assist us in acting upon these injunctions.*Aameen*!

واخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمین

And we close with the call that all praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

Venue : Jame'Masjid Baitul-Mukarram,
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.

Date : Friday, 26th June, 1992
After 'Asr Prayers

As Almighty Allah has appointed man a Supervisor of the family, His decision will have to be accepted and acted upon. But you (i.e. women) are at liberty to express your opinion and offer your advice. On the other hand I have ordered man to seek your pleasure, as far as possible and the right to take the final decisions will be his. If the wife wants that she should have the right to take decisions in all matters and man should not pose as Incharge and this status should belong to her, then this is absolutely against nature, wisdom and the dictates of justice. The result of such dispensation will be nothing but destruction of the household.

The Rights of a Husband and His Status

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent the Merciful

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه،
ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا
مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده
لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا
عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك
وسلم تسليما كثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم، بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

اَلرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُوْنَ عَلَى النِّسَآءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللّٰهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلٰى بَعْضٍ وَّبِمَآ اَنْفَقُوْا مِنْ اَمْوَالِهِمْ ؕ فَالصّٰلِحٰتُ قٰنِتٰتٌ حٰفِظٰتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللّٰهُ ؕ

(سورة النساء: ٣٤)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم و صدق رسوله النبى الكريم و نحن علىٰ ذالك من الشٰهدين والشٰكرين والحمد لله رب العالمين

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the mischief of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is none to lead him astray whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no God but Allah alone and that He has no partner. I also bear witness that our master, our authority, and our Prophet and our master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah bestow upon him, his household and his Companions رضى الله عنهم. His mercy and blessings in abundance.

Men are the incharge of women because Allah has made some to excel the other and because they (men) spend of their moneys (for the support of women). So virtuous women are obedient, guarding in absence which Allah has guarded. (4:34)

I believe in Allah. Allah our Great Master has told the truth and His kind Prophet and Messenger has (also) told the truth and we are witnesses to that.

The previous discourse dealt with the rights of a wife

which are due to her by her husband. It contained directions how a husband should behave with his wife. The fact is that the *Shari'ah* which is a law appointed by

Almighty Allah is not partial to anyone but it takes into consideration both sides. and guarantees the good and welfare of both in this world as well as in the Hereafter. Just as the fulfilment of the rights of the wife has been made binding on the husband, in the same way Almighty Allah and His Messenger ﷺ have mentioned the rights of the husband, wife has been made responsible to discharge. The Holy Qur'an and the Traditions both lay great emphasis and stress on the fulfillment of both categories of these rights.

Today every person is demanding his rights

The *Shari'ah* has directed every person to discharge his bounded duties. It has not encouraged any one to demand only his rights. We see that the present day world is a world of struggle for rights. Everyone is demanding his rights through agitation. demonstrations, and by going on strikes. In fact, all possible efforts are being made everywhere in the world and associations have been established for this one-sided objective of attaining Rights, e.g. "The Association for the Protection of Rights of.....". There is no association to ensure the fulfilment of duties and liabilities. None cares to think whether or not he is discharging the duties entrusted to him. The workers and the capitalists both are demanding their rights, but none of them ever thinks how he should discharge his duties and obligations. Husband and wife both are crying for their rights and making frantic efforts to that end. A battle, as it were, is raging on this account. Yet none is seen inclined to consider for a while whether or not he is himself discharging his own duties and liabilities.

Everyone should discharge his duties

The essence of the teachings of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ is that every person should pay attention to the duties entrusted to him and do his best to discharge them. If people begin to discharge their duties the rights of others will automatically get discharged and settled amicably. If a labourer discharges his duties and liabilities will naturally result in the satisfaction of the rights of the capitalist and the employer. Similarly, if the capitalists and the employers discharge their duties the rights of the labourer will be fulfilled. Again, if the husband and the wife discharge their duties to each other their mutual rights will be discharged automatically. What the *Shari'ah* demands of its followers is that everyone should realize his responsibilities and seek to discharge them with sincerity and faithfully.

Mind your own business

Values have changed in a very strange way. Whenever a leader rises to lead others he totally forgets himself and does not search his own heart and actions to discover that he too, may have faults and shortcomings which he should rectify. The Holy Qur'an says:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا عَلَيْكُمْ اَنْفُسَكُمْ ۚ لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَنْ ضَلَّ اِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ ۭ (سورة المائدة: ١٠٥)

> O you who believe ! Take charge of your own souls. He who errs cannot injure you if you are rightly guided. (5:105)

The direction contained in this verse advises you to take care of your own selves to find out what duties lie on you, what Almighty Allah and His Prophet ﷺ demand from you, what you owe to the *Shari'ah,* concerning honesty, trust and morality. Discharge your part of obligations and li-

abilities. As for those who are in error and are not discharging their duties, you will not suffer for their misconduct and failure, if you are rightly discharging your own duties.

The style of the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

You may be aware that during the days of the Holy Prophet ﷺ government officials used to call upon the public to collect *Zakat* (obligatory tax) from them. In those days possessions consisted mainly of cattle including camels, goats, cows, etc. While deputing his officers on this work the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to furnish them with a letter containing instructions as to how they were to discharge their duties. The letter also contained this direction:

"لا جلب ولا جنب في زكوٰة ولا توخذ زكاتهم الافي دورهم" (ابو داؤد كتاب الزكوة، باب اين تصدق الاموال حديث نمبر ١٥٩١)

(Abu Dawood, Book of *Zakat*, chapter - Tasadduqul-Awamal Tradition no: 1591)

This means that the collectors were to collect the amounts of *Zakat* personally at the doors of the people. They should not sit at some place to trouble the people taking their *Zakat* to the collectors. He ﷺ used to advise them as under:

"المعتدى في الصدقة كما نعها" (ابو داؤد كتاب الزكوة، باب زكاة السائمة، حديث نمبر ١٥٨٥)

(Abu Dawood, chapter *Zakat* Tradition no: 1585)

This means that a man who is not honest in collecting the *Zakat,* i.e. he is collecting more amount or quantity (of the animals, etc.) than was due, is committing a sin equal to the sin of the one who is not paying his *Zakat.* This the collectors of *Zakat* are being warned not to wrong the payers by receiving from them even a penny more than the due amount, because if they did they would

be called to account on the Day of Judgment. On the other hand, the payers of *Zakat* were addressed thus:

اذاجاء كم المصدق فلا يفارقكم الاعن رضى (ترمذى، كتاب الزكوة، باب ماجاء في رضى المصدق، حديث نمبر ٦٤٧)

(Tirmidhi. Book of *zakat* chapter - Tradition no: 647)

The collectors of *Zakat* will visit you. Take care that they do not leave you displeased. You should please them and should not do them anything to make them displeased, because they are in fact my emissaries and representatives. To displease them would be to displease me ﷺ.

Thus, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has reminded each one of his responsibilities and duties. He ﷺ did not incite the payers of *Zakat* to make an agitation against the collectors of *Zakat* that they might not usurp their rights, nor were they advised to form an association which usually becomes a source of contention between the two.

The *Shari'ah* has laid great emphasis on discharging duties honestly because everyone is accountable for every action before Almighty Allah. He should, therefore, prepare himself for giving an account in the Hereafter. The entire philosophy of religion consists in this principle and not that everyone should be demanding his rights from others and should at the same time be unmindful of his own obligations and responsibilities.

How to Regulate one's life

In the matter of mutual relations between husband and wife Almighty Allah and His messenger ﷺ have adopted the same method that they have informed each side of his/her duties which each one should strive to discharge. Life may be compared to a vehicle the two wheels of which are husband and wife. To let this vehicle of life run smoothly it is necessary that each of its wheels, husband and wife, should discharge his/her duties faithfully and be considerate towards the rights of the other, and think her or his rights more than their duties. Such feeling shall bring about stability in life. This aspect is so important and Allah and His Prophet ﷺ are so particular and concerned about the stability and smoothness of human life that the Qur'an and the Traditions are full of injunctions about the duties and responsibilities imposed on man and woman. There is nothing more displeasing to Allah and his Messenger ﷺ than the discord between husband and wife.

Satan's Court

According to a Tradition the Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said: This Iblis or Satan sometimes places his throne on the surface of the ocean and holds his court there. At that time all his disciples and followers assemble in his court. They are asked to submit their progress report and every disciple submits his report to Satan for his perusal. One disciple submits that he saw a man going to the mosque but he involved him in some work that detained him from the prayer. Satan pleased to hear this but not too much. Another disciple relates a similar story of stopping a Namazi from some worship and Satan is pleased with this too. Such submissions continue until a disciple told Satan that a pair of husband and wife was leading a very happy life with love and co-operation, but he through some schemes, sowed the seed of distrust and conflict between them and they parted with each other. When Satan hears this of creating hate and enmity between couple who were living together in peace and contentment he stands up from his throne with joy and embraces the disciple and acknowledges him as his true representative, because he had performed a feat which none else had done .(Sa-

hih Muslim. Book of attributes of the hypocrites. Tradition no: 3813).

Now you can see how hateful and condemnable in the sight of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ are the mutual quarrels, hatred and separation between husband and wife by divorce, etc.! And again how pleasing and blissful the same detestable acts are to Satan! That is why Allah Almighty and His Prophet ﷺ have mentioned in details in the Qur'an and the Traditions rights and obligations of man and woman. If men obey these injunctions, they can reform and rectify their worldly lives as well as their Hereafter.

Man is Incharge over woman

As such Imam Nuwa-wi رحمة الله عليه has framed another chapter under the title "The rights of husband over wife." The Imam has cited under this chapter Qur'anic verses and Traditions and has opened the chapter with the verse:

اَلرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُوْنَ عَلَى النِّسَآءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللّٰهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلٰى بَعْضٍ (سورة النساء: ٣٤)

Men are incharge of women, because Allah has made one of them to excel the other. (4:34)

In other words men are watchmen and look after women. Some have also translated this verse to mean that men are rulers over women. The dictionary meaning of the word "*Qaw-waam*" is a person who is responsible to do or manage some work. Thus, men are incharge over women; they manage their affairs and are their rulers. Here a guiding principle has been provided. Without such a principle man may go on doing wrong in all their affairs misled by a mis-conception. Thus, while describing men's rights the *Shari'ah* has advised women at the very outset about the basic principle that men are protectors and administrators of women's affairs in their lives.

The Propaganda of the contemporary world

In today's world great emphasis is being laid and agitations are launched in support of equality of women with men and their emancipation from man's upper hand. In such an atmosphere people feel ashamed to admit that the *Shari'ah* has made men incharge of women because today full-fledged propaganda is going on that men have imposed their superiority over women. They have been imprisoned under men's hand as helpless subjects and have been declared inferior to men.

While on a Journey choose one of you as a Leader

Man and woman are indeed the two wheels of the vehicle of life. They have both to make the journey of life together. In this journey of life it is very essential that for the sake of management and guidance one of the two should be made leader to manage the whole journey. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said in a Tradition:

> Whenever two men are on a journey together let one of them make the other his leader, irrespective of that the journey is long or short. It is not right for them to undertake a journey without a leader, so that all the policies and the management of the journey in progress may be subject to the decisions of the leader. Without a responsible leader there may be disorder and confusion.
>
> (Abu Dawood. Book of *Jihad*. chapter about appointing a leader. Tradition no: 2608)

When so much emphasis has been laid on appointing a leader on a short journey, why should this emphasis of appointing a leader not apply to this long journey of life which has to be undertaken together, to avoid mismanagement and to ensure a safe and smooth journey ? Thus, it is

imperative to appoint a leader to establish this order.

Who should be the Leader of the journey of life ?

Only two alternatives are open: either the man should be appointed as leader in the journey of life, or the woman should be appointed as leader in the journey of life and the man made her sub-ordinate: there is no third alternative. Now man and woman have been created with distinct physical features. Man is stronger and distinctly more capable of facing the hardship of life than a woman who has been created with tender features. It is, therefore, man alone and not woman, who can discharge rightly and efficiently the duties of this leadership. Instead of relying on one's own wisdom one should better ask Almighty Allah, the Creator as to which of the two should be appointed the leader of the journey. No human judgment, however, wisely made on this issue, can be accepted, except Almighty Allah's infallible judgment. Allah has commanded that man is.. "Incharge, the ruler and manager". If man accepts this divine judgment it will ensure prosperity and success. On the other hand, if man rejects and disobeys this judgment and rebels against it, he is going to ruin his life. In fact, the divine punishment is in progress. Look at the fate of the transgressors!

The conception of a Leader in Islam

Try to grasp the meaning of the word which Almighty Allah has used in His command. He has not used the word *Amir* (leader), *Hakim* (Ruler) or *Badshah* (King). He has used, instead the word *Qaw-waam* (Incharge) which means a person who is responsible for some work and to be responsible means that he will decide upon the overall policy of life. To be a *Qaw-waam* never means that the husband is the master and the wife is his slave girl or maid servant. The relation between

husband and wife is that of a leader and follower, ruler and subject. However, it is not the concept of *Amir* in Islam that sitting on a throne he should be governing his subjects. On the contrary the concept of *Amir* in Islam is that which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has stated:

"سَيِّدُ الْقَوْمِ خَادِمُهُمْ"

The leader of the people is their servant. (Kanzul Umwal Tradition no: 17517)

What an *Amir* (leader) shoud be like ?

My hon'ble father Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi' Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to relate an incident which is reproduced below in his own words:

Once we were going from Deoband (India) on a journey to some other place. My teacher Hazrat Maulana 'Izaz Ali Sahib رحمة الله عليه who was known in Deoband as "Shaikhul Adab" was also accompanying us in the journey. When we reached the Railway Station there was yet some time for the arrival of the train. Maulana 'Izaz Ali Sahib رحمة الله عليه said: It is in a Tradition that when you go on a journey, appoint someone your leader, so we too should appoint someone our leader. He being our teacher and we his pupils, I said: We already have an *Amir* with us. Hazrat Maulana asked : Who is he? I replied: You being our teacher and we your pupils, you are the *Amir*. Maulana said: All right, but you will have to obey every order of the *Amir*, because an *Amir* means that he should be obeyed. I said: When we have appointed you our *Amir*, We shall, God willing, obey you in all matters. The Maulana was satisfied. When the train arrived, the Maulana took up some luggage of the companions on his head and some in his hands and moved towards the train. At this, we exclaimed: What are you doing Sir? Let us carry the lug-

gage. The Maulana replied: No when you have appointed me an *Amir*, you will have to obey me. Let me carry this luggage. Thus he loaded the entire luggage into the compartment. Apart from this, during the entire journey; when there was some hard job, Maulana himself did it and when we objected, he would at once say: Look here ! You have appointed me an *Amir* and you will have to obey your *Amir's* orders. So, obey my orders. It turned out to be very hard on us to appoint him an *Amir*. This indeed is the concept of *Amir* in Islam.

An *Amir* (leader) is he who serves others

Today when we conceive in our minds an *Amir*, we conceive him as a King and a Lord who does not tolerate even to talk to his subjects and subordinates. On the other hand, the concept of an *Amir*, according to the Qur'an and the Traditions is that of a person who is a servant and is ready to serve others. The concept of *Amir* is not that he has been appointed a King to issue his commands to others to obey him as his servants and slaves. If an *Amir* issues some command his command will be valid and binding, yet its objective will be their service and to ensure their comfort and welfare only and not a show and exercise of authority.

Husband and wife are friends

Hakimul Ummat Hazrat Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has said: Men are particular in preserving in their minds the Qur'anic verse, "اَلرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُوْنَ عَلَى النِّسَآءِ" meaning that men are incharge and rulers over women. On the basis of this divine command they are domineering upon women and harbouring in their minds the notion that a woman should in all circumstances be obedient and the relation between the two sexes should be that of master and servant; this is indeed

horrible! Almighty Allah has revealed in the Qur'an another verse also which these men do not remember. The verse runs thus:

وَمِنْ اٰيٰتِهٖٓ اَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِّنْ اَنْفُسِكُمْ اَزْوَاجًا لِّتَسْكُنُوْٓا اِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَّوَدَّةً وَّرَحْمَةً ط (سورة الروم ٢١)

And it is of His signs that He created for you wives from your own species (i.e. women) so that you may get comfort from them, and He created between you (husband and wife) love and mercy. (30:21)

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has said that man is indeed incharge over woman but at the same time the two are on friendly terms with each other. From the administrative point of view man is incharge or a ruler but internally husband and wife are friends. They are not as master and maid servants with each other. They are just like two friends going on a journey and one makes the other a leader of the journey. The husband is, therefore, an *Amir* (Leader), because he is responsible to take decisions on affairs arising during the journey of the entire lifetime. This does not permit him to treat his wife as a maidservant and slave girl. This friendship between husband and wife entails some discipline and demands. Within these discipline and demands there are also some tender emotions of coquetry closeness which do not negate their status as being a controller and the controlled.

Such awe is not needed

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has said that there are some persons in our society who are under the impression that they are ruler over their wives, they should be so awe-inspiring that their wives should shudder with fear when

their names are mentioned and should not be able to have conversation with freedom. A class fellow of Maulana once said to him with great pride that when he returned home after many months, his wife and children did not have courage enough to approach him and talk to him. Maulana Sahib asked him: Do you turn into a ravenous animal like a lion or a tiger that your wife or children fear to go near you when you enter your home? He replied: No, this is not the matter, but this is because I am incharge and they should be overawed in my presence. It should be well understood that being incharge never means that wife and children should feel afraid to go near the head of the family and talk to him. There should also be a relation of friendship between them. Read in the following pages what kind of relationship it should be:

The *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

Once the Holy Prophet ﷺ said to Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی الله عنها: I become aware of both the occasions when you are pleased and when you are displeased with me. Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی الله عنها asked: O Prophet ﷺ of Allah, how do you come to know this? The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied: When you are pleased with me you swear by the name of the Lord of Muhammad" and when you are displeased with me you swear by the name of the "Lord of Ibrahim", without pronouncing my name at that time. In reply to this Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی الله عنها said:

اِنِّیْ لَا اَهْجُرُ اِلَّااسْمَكَ

O Prophet ﷺ of Allah I omit only your name, I do not omit any other feeling. (Sahih Bukhari book of Etiquettes, chapter "It is not lawful to leave the sinner" Tradition no: 6-78)

Now think a while who is being displeased and with

whom? Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی الله عنها is displeased with the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This shows that Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی الله عنها sometimes used to say something by way of complacency which gave the impression that she had some ill-will and displeasure in her heart - a mater which the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not take to be against his authoritative 'Inchargeship'. On the other hand he ﷺ told her in a very pleasant mood that he could know the occasions of 'Ayeshah's' رضی الله عنها displeasure.

A wife's self esteem

When the charge of a heinous slander was levied against the Mother of the believers, Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی الله عنها may Allah forgive us, it shocked her as a bolt from the blue; so distressing it was! The Holy Prophet ﷺ himself was shocked with deep grief that such an undesirable rumour had spread among the people. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said to Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی الله عنها:

O 'Ayeshah, look here! You need not be so sad. If you are innocent, Allah will surely disclose your innocence. On the other hand, if you have committed - God forbid - Some fault or sin, then turn to Allah in repentance. He shall pardon you.

Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی الله عنها felt it too shocking for her that the Holy Prophet ﷺ should have spoken these words: If you are innocent Allah will surely disclose your innocence. On the other hand, if you have committed some fault or sin, then turn to Allah in repentance. This shows that there was some slight suspicion in his ﷺ heart about the possibility of this sin. On account of a very great shock which she had from this speech she lay down and in this very state the verses exonerating her were revealed. Hazrat Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه was also present on that occasion. The Holy Prophet ﷺ was also overjoyed to listen to those verses. Hazrat Abu

Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ also was very happy and he said that God willing, the entire calumny would come to an end. He said to Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا: Receive the glad tidings that Almighty Allah has revealed verses to exonerate you. Get up, stand up before the Holy Prophet ﷺ and salute him. Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا was lying on her bed, listened to the verse of exonerating and said, while still lying: It is Allah's mercy that He has revealed my innocence. I, therefore, want to thank none, but Allah, because you (both) had allowed a suspicion to enter your hearts about a possibility of my having committed a sin. (Sahih Bukhari, the Book of Tafasir of Surah An-Noor, chapter Lau laa... Tradition no: 750).

Apparently Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا avoided standing before the Holy Prophet ﷺ, but the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not take it ill because this was matter of feminine self-esteem which emanated from Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا.

It should be noted that this practice of self-esteem is a natural demand of love and friendship. Thus, the relation between husband and wife is not only that of authority and subordination but also of friendship and love. Friendship rightly demands that the play of such feminine coquetry should be tolerated with masculine patience and generosity. It is, however, quite a different matter that in very extreme cases of misconduct the Holy Prophet ﷺ expressed his anger. He ﷺ has, however, always tolerated such behaviours.

It is an act of *Sunnah* to please the wife

This is how the Holy Prophet ﷺ allowed the demand of friendship. The Holy Prophet ﷺ enjoyed a very elevated rank and status with Almighty Allah with his close contact, and the unique privilege of conversation with Him. Yet he ﷺ at all times tried to please his sacred wives, sought to keep them heartily happy and satisfied, and behaved with

them most amicably. An example of this amicability on his part was that one night he related to Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا the story of eleven women of Yaman. He told her how these women decided among them that they would disclose to one another the true conducts and characters of their husbands. They depicted the true conditions of their husbands in the most eloquent, chaste and lucid language. He ﷺ related this story for the sake of Hazrat 'Ayeshah's رضی اللہ عنہا pleasure. (Shamail Tirmidhi, chapter on the prophet's night-talk).

Bantering with wife is a *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

One day the Holy Prophet ﷺ was staying at the house of Hazrat Sawdah رضی اللہ عنہا as it was her turn Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا prepared a sweet dish for the Holy Prophet ﷺ and brought it to Hazrat Sawdah's house and placed the dish before the Prophet ﷺ. She asked Hazrat Sawdah رضی اللہ عنہا sitting in front, to take some from the dish. Hazrat Sawdah was annoyed at it. Because it was her turn. Hazrat Sawdah رضی اللہ عنہا refused to take the sweet. Thereupon Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا insisted upon Hazrat Sawdah رضی اللہ عنہا to eat the sweet or otherwise she threatened that she would smear Sawdah's face with it. Hazrat Sawdah رضی اللہ عنہا again refused to eat it. Then Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا took a small amount of the sweet and rubbed it on Hazrat Sawdah's رضی اللہ عنہا face. Hazrat Sawdah رضی اللہ عنہا complained to the Holy Prophet ﷺ against this behaviour of Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

وَجَزٰٓؤُا سَيِّئَةٍ سَيِّئَةٌ مِّثْلُهَا

The reward of an ill is an ill the like thereof. (42.40)

In other words if anyone misbehaves with you, you may also misbehave with him in retaliation. The Holy

Prophet ﷺ, therefore, asked Hazrat Sawdah رضی اللہ عنہا to take her revenge from Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا by rubbing the sweet on her face. Hazrat Sawdah رضی اللہ عنہا did this. Now both the wives رضی اللہ عنہما had the sweet on their faces. All this happened before the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

In the meantime there was a knock at the door. On inquiry it came to knowledge that Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ was there (probably the *Hijab* (veil) had not been enforced by that time). On hearing this the Holy Prophet ﷺ asked the two wives to wash their faces, because Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ had arrived there. They, therefore, washed their faces.(Majmauz-zawaid-Haishmi, vol. iv p.316)

The Prophet ﷺ who was constantly in communion with Allah, was continuously in conversation with Him and revelation was descending down; it was indeed a personality that enjoyed the privilege of presence before Allah which none else enjoyed on the surface of the earth. Despite all this, the Holy Prophet ﷺ cared so much for the happiness and pleasure of his sacred wives رضی اللہ عنہ.

The Station of the "Presence" before Allah

We all utter the word "Presence", but do not know what is its real impart. If anyone ever had the taste of this 'Presence', then only he could realize what it is. Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai رحمۃ اللہ علیہ a spiritual leader in Pakistan used to say that sometimes the idea of "Presence" (before Allah) so thoroughly overtakes some servants of Allah that they cannot lie down or sleep with their legs stretched. That is because they are constantly absorbed in a feeling that they are in the presence of their Creator, Allah, and indeed how can one lie down with his legs stretched before an elder and far superior to him? He can never do so. Thus how can a person who enjoys such an exalted and rare status of

"Presence" afford to joke with his wife. It is only a Messenger of Allah who can enjoy this unique privilege. Nevertheless, as Almighty Allah has conferred on man the status of an "incharge" or a ruler over women, his decisions will have to be obeyed. It is, however, open to women to offer their opinions; and Allah has indeed enjoined upon men to please their wives as far as possible. If a house-lady does not keep this in view and wants to impose her decision on her husband in all affairs and become a ruler in place of her husband, then this is against nature, the *Shari'ah* wisdom and justice. The result of such an attitude on the part of housewives can lead to a total ruin of the household.

The Responsibilities of women

Allma Nuwa-wi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has further stated, quoting a verse of The Holy Qur'an:

فَالصّٰلِحٰتُ قٰنِتٰتٌ حٰفِظٰتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللّٰهُ ط

So virtuous women are obedient, guarding in secret what Allah has guarded. (4:34)

In the explanation of this verse the Allamah has said that it is the duty of virtuous women to be obedient (*Qaa-ni-tah*) to Allah, obedient to their husbands in the matter of the rights which are due by them to their husbands and to guard the houses of their husbands in their absence. Almighty Allah has mentioned it among the essential attributes of women. He has entrusted to them the duty of guarding the houses of their husbands when the latter are away from their houses. Guarding the houses means firstly to guard their own honour and chastity and guard the money and properties of their husbands, because, the duties of guarding these value rests on wives. This is confirmed in a Tradition:

المرأة راعية في بيت زوجها (صحيح بخاری، کتاب الجمعة، باب الجمعة فی القری والمدن رقم ۸۹۳)

(Sahih Bukhari. the Book of Friday chapter. Tradition no: 893)

A wife is the protector of the house of her husband, i.e. it is her responsibility to protect the money and property of her husband.

Under most circumstances it is not binding on a wife to prepare food, but she has been made responsible to protect the money and property of her husband in such a way that they may not be squandered. The Holy Qur'an has appointed this act of guarding as her essential responsibility:

The life cannot be based on the Laws only

It has been explained that preparation of food does not fall within the responsibilities of a wife. But this is a matter of legal technicality. It is, however, not possible to lead meaningful life under the duress of dry laws. Just as wife is not responsible legally to prepare food, in the same way a husband is not responsible legally to provide medical treatment to his wife if she falls ill. It is also not the legal responsibility of the husband to take his wife to the house of her parents to see them, nor is it necessary to welcome to his house the parents of the wife when they visit their daughter. The jurists have gone to the extent of ruling that the wife's parents can see their daughter only once in a week, see her from a distance only and then go back. The husband is not responsible to welcome them into the house and offer them seats to sit and see their daughter. If life is confined within the thorns of the law, the household of both will be doomed. The wheels of life will run smoothly only when both pass their lives according to the Traditions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and follow in the footsteps of the sacred wives of the Prophet ﷺ.

Wife should take care of her husband's possessions

Hazrat Maulana Thanawi has stated in his sermons that it is among the duties of a wife to take care of the money of her husband that it may not be wasted and squandered lavishly. If a wife is careless in this matter then she frustrates the requirements of her legal obligations.

The Angels curse such a wife

عن ابی هريرة رضی الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلی الله عليه وسلم اذا دعا الرجل امرأته الی فراشه فابت ان تجئ لعنتها الملائكة حتی تصبح (صحيح بخاری کتاب النكاح باب اذاباتت امرأة مهاجرة فراش زوجها حديث نمبر ۵۱۹۳)

(Sahih Bukhari, Book of Nikah, chapter women remaining away.... Tradition no: 5193

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: When a husband calls his wife to his bed for intercourse but she does not obey the call or behaves with her husband in such a way that the husband is displeased, then the Angels curse such a woman the whole night till dawn.

Cursing means that the woman will not receive Allah's mercy that night. This is because in spite of so many rights which the wife enjoys from the side of the husband, she fails to safeguard the chastity of the husband so as to prevent him from falling into some undesirable desires. The basic object of marriage is to provide safeguard against lewdness. If the wife fails to provide this safeguard the Angles must curse her.

Another Tradition

اذا باتت المراة مهاجرة فراش زوجها لعنتها الملائكة حتى تصبح

(حوالہ بالا، حدیث نمبر ۵۱۹۴)

(Preceding reference to Tradition no: 5194)

If a woman passes the night away from the bed of her husband, the Angels curse her until dawn.

Now just consider how a small matter has been mentioned in the Tradition that if the wife fails in satisfying her husband's call for intercourse or to disappoint him in any other way, then she is cursed the whole night. Similarly if a wife leaves her husband's house without his permission, then the Angels of Allah curse her until her return. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has explained all these matters one by one in all details, because negligence in these matters may lead grave consequences.

No optional fasting without husband's permission

وعن ابی هریرة رضی الله عنه ان رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم قال لایحل للمرأة ان تصوم وزوجها شاهد الا باذنه ولا تاذن فی بیته الا باذنه (صحیح بخاری کتاب النکاح باب لاتاذن المرأة فی بیت زوجها حدیث نمبر ۵۱۹۵)

(Sahih Bukhari, Book of Nikah, Tradition no: 5195)

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه has narrated that Holy Prophet ﷺ said: It is not lawful for a wife to observe optional fast in the presence of her husband except with his permission. Great virtues have been mentioned in the Traditions for optional forms of worship, but a wife cannot observe them without the permission of her husband, because this may be a source of inconvenience to him. However, it is not like a good husband to prevent his wife from optional worship, unless it is unavoidable. He should be

liberal in according permission as far as possible. Undue strictness in this matter leads to tension and bitterness. Husband and wife both should adopt a flexible attitude in this matter. However, if the husband does not permit his wife to observe optional fasts, she should not insist on it and obey her husband because obedience to the husband has preference to the optional fasting.

This shows that Allah and His Prophet ﷺ prefer husband's obedience over all optional forms of worship. So the virtuous reward which a wife will earn by obeying her husband will be much more than that from the optional fasting. The wife should not misunderstand that she has been deprived of the virtue of fasting. She should think that she wanted to observe fasts only to earn reward of the Hereafter and to please Allah. On the other hand Allah has said that He shall not be pleased with a wife unless the husband of that wife is pleased with her. Thus, a wife can earn the same reward by eating and drinking which she could earn by observing the fasts, only if she pleases her husband.

Reward for doing Household work

Sometimes we are led to think that the husband and wife relation is only a worldly affair and a source of satisfying a sensual appetite. This is not correct. It is purely religious matter. If a wife is able to understand that Almighty Allah has imposed on her a duty and the aim of this husband-wife relation is to please the husband and through his pleasure to please Almighty Allah, then this entire affair becomes a source of virtuous reward. The housewives are busy doing household work the whole day from morning till evening. If they do all this with the intention of pleasing their husbands then all this work is recorded in their accounts as worship, whether the work consists of cooking

food looking after the house, brining up the children, minding the comforts and needs of the husband or pleasing the husband with an amicable and warming style of conversation. All these actions are rewarded in the Hereafter with divine favours, only when these are done with pure and sincere intention.

Virtuous Reward for satisfying the sexual desire

There is a definite and clear Tradition on this subject. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that Almighty Allah grants recompense on the mutual contacts between husband and wife. The Holy Companions رضی الله عنهم asked: O Prophet ﷺ of Allah, man does this only to satisfy his sexual desire; how can it fetch him a reward? The Holy Prophet ﷺ said: Will not man commit a sin if he satisfies this desire with unlawful means? The Companions said. Yes, Prophet ﷺ of Allah. it will indeed be a sin. The Holy Prophet ﷺ then said: The husband and wife satisfy their sexual desires in a lawful way, by shunning the unlawful ways, in compliance with Allah's injunctions so they shall receive reward for this action as well. (Musnad Ibn Hambal. vol. 5. p. 169167)

Almighty Allah looks at both with Merciful Eye

There is a Tradition which Hazrat Maulana Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has quoted in many places in his writings and sermons, although I myself have not seen it. The Tradition mentions that if a husband on entering his house casts a glance of love on his wife and the wife also responds with similar glance on her husband Allah also looks at them with mercy. Therefore, the husband-wife relation is not only a worldly affair. They are source of happiness or distress in the Hereafter.

According to a Tradition in the Tirmidhi Hazrat ʿAyeshah رضی الله عنها has narrated: To compensate the fasts which I missed in the month of Ramadan on account of natural period I used to observe compensatory fasts generally during the month of next *Shaʿban*, i.e. after the lapse of eleven months. I followed this practice because the Holy Prophet ﷺ also observed fasts on most days in the month of *Shaʿban*. Fasting in the month of *Shaʿban* was better because the Holy Prophet ﷺ also used to fast in most of the days of *Shaʿban*. Although these were not optional fasts but obligatory fasts of Ramadan. Hazrat ʿAyeshah رضی الله عنها postponed these fasts for such a long time to avoid inconvenience to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. (Sahih Muslim. Book of Siyam, Chapter Qaza Ramadan in Shaʿban Tradition no: 11466).

A wife should not allow a stranger into the House

The next sentence of this Tradition is:

ولا تأذن فی بیته الابأذنه

It means that it is also an obligatory duty of the wife that she should allow none to enter her husband's house without his permission, nor should she allow a person to enter the house whom the husband does not like. It is strictly forbidden for a wife to allow anyone to enter the house at her own option. The same point has been emphasized in greater detail in another Tradition:

الاان لکم علی نسائکم حقًاولنسا ئکم علیکم حقًا فحقکم علیهن ان لا یوطین فرشکم من تکرهون ولا یأذن فی بیوتکم لمن تکرهون

(ترمذی کتاب الرضاع باب ماجاء فی حق المراة علی زوجها حدیث نمبر ۱۱۶۳)

(Tirmidhi. The Book of suckling. chapter about the wife's rights over her husband. Tradition no: 1163)

You should remember that you have some rights

over your wives and your wives have some rights over you, i.e., both have some rights over each other. It is necessary for each side to fulfil and protect the rights of the others. What are those rights? They are: O men your rights over your wives are that they should not allow those persons to use your bed whom you dislike, nor should they allow those persons to enter your houses whose entry you dislike. Here two rights have been mentioned:

(1) It is binding on the wife not to allow a person to enter the house whose entry the husband dislikes. This applies even to such person as may be close relatives of the wife. The parents are allowed to visit the house only to have a look at their daughter. The husband cannot stop them from this, but it is not lawful for them to stay in the house without the permission of the husband, because the Holy Prophet ﷺ has asked them in clear words not to allow the entry of undesirable persons whoever they may be.

(2) The Holy Prophet ﷺ has also advised that the wives should not allow those persons to use the bed of their husbands whom their husbands do not like. It includes sitting, lying down, and sleeping on the bed of the husband.

The Islam of Hazrat Umme Habeebah رضی اللہ عنہا

The mother of the believers, Hazrat Umme-Habeebah (RAA) is one of the sacred wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The history of the Holy Companions رضی اللہ عنہم is fraught with guidance. Hazrat Umme-e-Habeebah رضی اللہ عنہا is the daughter of Hazrat Abu Sufyan رضی اللہ عنہا who spent about twenty-one years in opposing the Holy Prophet ﷺ and took parts in battles against him ﷺ. He was one of the leaders of Makkah and embraced Islam on the occasion of the victory of Makkah and thus became a Companion. It is a manifestation of the omnipotence of Almighty Allah that Hazrat Umme-Habeebah رضی اللہ عنہا the daughter of such a great infidel leader, and her husband both embraced Islam, while her father was engaged in opposing and resisting the Muslims. The Islam of his daughter and son-in-law greatly displeased Abu Sufyan and he was not able to tolerate their conversion to Islam. He was, therefore, always taking all possible steps to torment them. At that time many Muslims, compelled by the cruel treatment of the unbelievers, had migrated to Abyssinia and Hazrat Umme-Habeebah and her husband were also among the Muslim migrants. They both lived there. Strange are the ways of Almighty Allah! After sometime Umme-Habeebah dreamt that the face of her husband had altogether changed and distorted. When she awoke she feared lest something untoward should happen to the faith and religion of her husband. After the lapse of a few days the meaning of that dream was revealed. Her husband used to visit a Christian on account of which he lost his Islamic faith and turned a Christian. This mishap struck Hazrat Umme-Habeebah as a bolt from the blue. For the sake of Islam she left her parents, her homeland and all her dear ones and settled in this foreign land, and the only sympathiser and helper, her husband, turned a Christian. It was like a doomsday for her. After sometime her husband died in this condition and she remained all alone with none to look after her.

Her marriage with the Holy Prophet ﷺ

The Holy Prophet ﷺ received the sad news in Madinah that her husband had become Christian and died as such and Hazrat Umme-Habeebah رضی اللہ عنہا was left all alone in a foreign land. In this state of her loneliness and helplessness the Holy Prophet ﷺ sent a message to the King of Abyssinia, Negus, to convey to Umme-Habeebah رضی اللہ عنہا the Prophet's proposal of marriage with her. The

message was conveyed to her through Negus.

Hazrat Umme-Habeebah رضی اللہ عنہا herself relates her story:

"One day I was sitting in the house alone when someone knocked at the door. When I opened the door I found a maid standing there. I asked her, "From where have you come?" She replied: "Negus the King of Abyssinia has sent me to you (This is the same Negus who had believed in the Holy Prophet ﷺ and embraced Islam) I again asked her, "Why has he sent you to me?" She replied, "He has sent me to you because Hazrat Muhammad, the Prophet ﷺ of Allah has sent through King a proposal of his marriage with you." Hazrat Umme-Habeebah رضی اللہ عنہا says that when the words of the proposal entered her ears she was struck with surprise as well as happiness to such an extent that she gave the maid in return for the glad news whatever she had with her at that time. Thereafter both were married, while Hazrat Habeebah رضی اللہ عنہا was in Abyssinia and the Holy Prophet ﷺ was in Madinah. After sometime the Holy Prophet ﷺ made necessary arrangements to bring her back to Madinah. (Al-Isabah fee Tameezis Sahabah, vol. 4, p. 298 Ramlah).

The Reasons for the Prophet's Multi-Marriages

It is a fact that the Holy Prophet ﷺ married many wives to which ignorant and evil-disposed people raise objections. It is, however, also a confirmed fact that at the back of every marriage lies some marvelous wisdom. Look at the wisdom at the back of this marriage. In what a pitiable condition Hazrat Umme-Habeebah رضی اللہ عنہا was living in Abyssinia, no one to help or look after her. If the Holy Prophet ﷺ had not sympathised with her what would have happened to her? After marrying her in this deplorable condition, he ﷺ called her back to Madinah.

Non-Muslims extol this

It is also a marvelous event and miracle of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that after the Prophet's marriage with Hazrat Umme-Habeebah رضی اللہ عنہا, when the news reached Hazrat Abu Sufyan in Makkah, and he was then an arch-enemy of Islam and of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and an infidel, the following words spontaneously escaped from his mouth:

This is a happy news, because Muhammad ﷺ is not among those men whose proposal can be turned down. It is indeed a matter of good luck that she has gone there.

Breach of Agreement

At Hudaibiyah a treaty of truce was signed between the Holy Prophet ﷺ and Abu Sufyan the full details of which are available in history books. Abu Sufyan and other infidels abided by the conditions of this treaty for one year only. Thereafter, they began to violate those conditions. In consequence the Holy Prophet ﷺ declared that he was no longer bound to abide by the treaty and as such he ﷺ could attack the Holy Makkah as and when he wished. When his enemies did not honour their covenant he ﷺ too was not bound to honour it. After this declaration Hazrat Abu Sufyan feared that the Holy Prophet ﷺ could attack the Holy Makkah at any time.

You are not fit for this Bed

Once Hazrat Sufyan was returning from Syria, the Muslims arrested him and his caravan. Hazrat Abu Sufyan, however, managed some how to enter the Holy city of Madinah secretly. He did this with the idea that his own daughter was in the house of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and would talk to him ﷺ and might thus secure his release: He, therefore, secretly entered the house of Hazrat

Umme-Habeebah رضی اللہ عنہا, his daughter welcomed him. When he entered the house the bedding of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was lying spread and Hazrat Abu Sufyan wanted to sit on it. Seeing this Hazrat Umme-Habeebah رضی اللہ عنہا quickly went ahead, rolled up the bedding and kept it aside. (Hazrat) Abu Sufyan was very much astonished at this action of his own daughter and said:

> Ramlah! Is this bedding not worthy of me or am I not worthy of this bedding?
> Hazrat Umme-Habeebah رضی اللہ عنہا replied:
> My dear father! The truth is that you are not worthy of this bedding. It is the bedding of Muhammad the Prophet of Allah ﷺ and I cannot allow in my life a *Mushrik* (Idolater) to sit on this bed.
> (Hazrat) Abu Sufyan رضی اللہ عنہا said in reply:
> Ramlah! I little knew that you would become so changed that you would not allow even your own father to sit on this bed.

This action of Hazrat Umme-Habeebah رضی اللہ عنہا that she did not allow even her own father to sit on the bed of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was in accordance with this Tradition: "لایوطن فرشکم من تکرھون" your wives should not allow such persons to use your bedding as you do not like. (Al-Isbah Tameez-Sahabah vol. IV. p. 298 Ramlah).

The wife should approach her husband willingly

The Holy Prophet ﷺ said: a husband calls his wife for his desire she must come to him even if she is in a kitchen.

وعن طلق بن علی رضی اللہ عنہ ان رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم
قال" اذا دعا الرجل زوجتہ لحاجتہ فلتأتہ وان کانت علی التنور"

(ترمذی کتاب الرضاع باب ماجاء فی حق الزوج علی امرأۃ حدیث نمبر ۱۱۶۰)

(Tirmidhi. Book of suckling - Haqqul Zauj 'alal-mirati Tradition no: 1160)

Hazrat Talaq bin Ali رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: When the husband calls his wife for his need, it is binding on the wife to go to him at once, even if she is busy at the oven (baking bread). That is she should not refuse to respond to the husband's call even in such critical moments.

Marriage is the Lawful way of satisfying sexual desire

Almighty Allah has created in every man and woman a natural desire of sexual satisfaction and He has prescribed for the satisfaction of this natural desire a lawful way and that way is the institution of marriage. Amicable relations between husband and wife are most important in the fulfilment of this natural demand. That is why through His many commands and injunctions Allah has opened all the lawful ways for the satisfaction of this natural instinct and desire, so that no man and no woman may ever think of taking resort to unlawful ways to satisfy this desire. Husband and wife must cooperate with each other in the satisfaction of this desire, so that none may be induced to look to someone else for this purpose in violation of Allah's commands.

Marriage is an easy matter

That is why Allah has made it very easy to establish a matrimonial relation. It requires only the presence of two (man and woman) and two witnesses is necessary. The man and the woman agree before the two witnesses to accept each other as wife and husband and that is all. The marriage stands finalised. It is not necessary even to recite the matri-

monial recitation – it is only a *Sunnah*. It is also not necessary that this simple rite should be performed by a Qazi (a professional official to solemnise marriage) or any other person. It is also a *Sunnah* if a third person, say a Qazi, does the job.

If before two witnesses one of the couple says: "I married you" and the other says, "I accepted the offer of marriage", the marriage stands solemnised. Neither it is necessary to go to mosque nor is it necessary to have a person as an intermediary. The lawful way of marriage in Islam has been made so simple!

A Blessed Marriage

It has also been ordained that the marriage ceremony and formalities must be very simple and easy. No observance of customs, no special conditions and no elaborate and pompous celebrations are necessary. According to a Tradition once a son or daughter comes of age the parents should arrange their marriage so that they may not feel the need of taking an unlawful course and the lawful course may become easy for them to follow. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Tradition:

ان اعظم النكاح بر كة أيسره مؤنةً

The best marriage is one which is very simple and easy.

The more a marriage ceremony is extended with various rites and pomp and show the lesser shall be the blessings in it.

The marriage of Hazrat ʿAbdur Rahman bin ʿAuf رضی اللہ عنہ

Hazrat ʿAbdur Rahman bin ʿAuf رضی اللہ عنہ is a companion of high dignity and one of the ten Promised of Paradise,

viz., those companions whom the Holy Prophet ﷺ had given in their lifetime the glad tidings of Paradise. Once when he came to the meeting of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, the prophet saw on his shirt a yellow stain. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ inquired from him about the coloured spot, he said:

O messenger of Allah ﷺ, I have married a woman and at the time of the marriage I had applied scent, and this is the stain of the scent. Then the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

بارك الله لك وعليك أوْلم ولو بشاةٍ (صحيح بخاری، كتاب البيوع، باب "فاذاقضيت الصلاة فانتشروا" حديث نمبر ۲۰٤۸)

(Sahih Bukhari, Book of purchases, Tradition no: 2048)

"May Allah grant you blessings in it. Arrange a matrimonial feast (*Walimah*), even it is with one goal only."

The point to be noted in this Tradition is that Hazrat ʿAbdur Rahman bin ʿAuf رضی اللہ عنہ is one of the ten Promised of Paradise and a most closely associated companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, yet not only he did not invite the Holy Prophet ﷺ, to the marriage ceremony, but he did not also even inform him ﷺ of the marriage. He informed the Holy Prophet ﷺ at the time of answering his ﷺ question about the coloured spot on his shirt. The Holy Prophet ﷺ did not complain to him that he ﷺ was not invited to the marriage. This is because the Islamic *Shari ʿah* has prescribed no conditions and restrictions for marriages.

We have made marriage a problem

Once Hazrat Jabir رضی اللہ عنہ called on the Holy Prophet ﷺ and told him: O Prophet ﷺ of Allah! I have married a woman. (Sahih Bukhari, Tradition no: 5079)

Hazrat Jabir رضی اللہ عنہ a was closely associated companion and he was frequently in his ﷺ company, yet he did

not invite the Prophet ﷺ to the marriage ceremony, because in the Prophet's time it was a general custom that no special formalities were observed on the occasion of marriage, as is done in these days. Preparations are made from months ahead and the entire family is engaged in various activities. Without these a marriage is considered to be impossible. With our meaningless, rather undesirable customs and useless formalities we have made marriage a difficult and expensive venture. The *Shari'ah* with its injunctions has made it simple and inexpensive. With the result that girls are sitting in their parents houses without marriage growing over age, because their guardians are not in a position to afford dowry, magnificent celebrations in stately marriage halls. In collecting money for this purpose the difference between lawful and unlawful is totally ignored. We have given up the *Sunnah* of marriage and have, instead, adopted the ways of the Hindus and the Christians. Large amounts of money are needed to arrange a marriage and they can hardly be procured through lawful means. Film shows are going on in the houses day and night on the TV which mostly excite evil passions and deform the morals of the youth. If you go out in the markets your eyes will hardly meet any scene of temperate nature. As a result of this curses of obscenity, nakedness, shamelessness are gaining currency in society. These un-Islamic customs and formalities have driven our society to the brink of ruin.

The Dowry is a curse on our Society

With regard to this evil the responsibility mainly devolves on those families that are well-fed well-to-do, rich and wealthy. The society cannot get rid of this curse unless the wealthy, the well-to-do and the rich people resolved to

take practical steps to perform marriages in their families with simplicity and do away with the useless and wrong customs. A poor man is compelled by the prevailing trends that he has to go through all these vicious and expensive formalities to maintain his apparent social position. If dowry is not provided the in-laws will taunt the girl her lifetime for lackness. Today dowry is considered as an essential part of marriage. The burden providing the couple with the household necessities which should fall on the shoulders of the bride-groom has now been thrown on the weak shoulder of the bride's father. As if the grief and shock of parting with his dear daughter for good was not enough to break the nerves of the girls' father that he is made to bear the liability of lack of rupees to provide furniture, etc. To furnish another's house. There is no justification for such things in the *Shari'ah*. It is all right if some father wants to give his daughter anything: he can do so quietly and with simplicity without making a demonstration of the gifts.

In the end it may be repeated that if the rich classes of the society do not launch a campaign to eradicate these evils first from their own circles and show the path of simplicity to the less privileged classes, this curse cannot be eradicated from our society. May Allah infuse the truth in our hearts by His mercy. *Aameen.*

The husband's dignity

وعن ابی هریرة رضی الله تعالی عنه عن النبی صلی الله علیه وسلم قال

"لو کنت آمُر احدا ان یسجدَ لاحد لَاَ مرت المرأة ان تسجد لزوجها"

(ترمذی کتاب الرضاع باب ماجاء فی حق الزوج علی المرأة حدیث نمبر ۱۱۵۹)

(Tirmidhi, Book of Suckling Chapter right of husband over wife, Tradition no: 1159)

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه has reported the

Holy Prophet ﷺ as saying: If it had been lawful for me to command a person to prostrate before a person I would have commanded a woman to prostrate before her husband. As it is unlawful for any person to bow down before any other person, I cannot give this command before anyone but Allah.

This is an attachment between two hearts

In the journey of life where men and women are journeying together Allah has appointed the man an Incharge and a guardian. Except for this rank, all other ranks are short lived and temporary. Today a man is incharge, ruler or king but this rule and kingship is for a limited and appointed time. Yesterday he was an incharge and ruler, today he is in a jail; yesterday he was a king but today he is not worth a penny. These positions of rulership and kingship are only transitory. What is in existence today will perish and vanish tomorrow. As against this the attachment between husband and wife is a lifelong attachment, a continuous companionship, inseparable even for a single moment. The authority which a man wields lingers till death or till the validity of the marriage. This special authority or rank is, therefore, quite different from the commonly known authorities. In other authorities the attachment between the ruler and the ruled, the King and the subjects is only a formal, conventional and legal attachment, but this is not the case with the attachment existing between husband and wife. It is a welding together of two hearts, a fusion of two hearts whose effects encompass the entire lifetime. That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: If I were to order anyone to prostrate before any person I would order a woman to bow down before her husband, because he is the leader of the wife's life-journey.

The most beloved personality

It is the *Sunnah* (practice) of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that he draws the attention of every person to his bounden duties. When he ﷺ addressed the husband he stated all the rights of the wife, one by one. Now when he is addressing the women her attention is being drawn to her duties and she is advised to note well that the most honourable and beloved personality for her on the surface of the earth after Almighty Allah and His Prophet ﷺ is her own husband, and that she cannot do full justice to the rights of and obedience to her husband unless she fully understands the truth. However, there is no denying the fact that the commands of Almighty Allah and His Prophet ﷺ have preference and priority over all other things. When the question of obeying commands of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ arises the commands to obey father, mother and husband are ignored. The status of the husband comes next to that of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ. So, try to please him, pay the dues of his rights and obey him.

Modern Civilisation has reversed Everything

Today all things have taken an apposite course. Hazrat Qari Muhammad Tayyib رحمة الله عليه of Deoband (India) used to say that in modern civilisation everything has been reversed, so much so that in olden times there used to be darkness below the lamp but now there is darkness over the electric bulb.

Attending to the household affairs may not be an obligatory duty for women in the Shari'ah but it is surely a *Sunnah* (practice) of Hazrat Fatimah رضى الله عنها who used to do all the work of her house herself and with her own hands. Apart from this a woman has also been commanded to obey her husband. As such, if a woman does

her household work cooks food for her husband and children, she is entitled to great rewards from Almighty Allah. But the concept of today's perverted civilisation is that a women's abiding within her house and performing the household duties is retrogression backwardness. What is happening today? A woman works as an air hostess serves food to four hundred passengers, stands before them with a tray decorated with drinks and food. She becomes the target of thirsty and greedy gazes of four hundred men. Each passenger on the aeroplane takes from her a different service, sometimes calling her for nothing but only for lustful enjoyment and armorous exchange of words. The meaning of all this in the lexicon of modern civilisation is freedom and emancipation of women. If the same woman provides the same services to her husband, children, brothers and sisters, it is termed as being out of fashion and regarded as opposed to advancement and progress.

If the same woman is working in a hotel as a waitress and serving customers day and night with food and drinks she is an emblem of emancipation of women. It is her freedom if she becomes a secretary or a stenographer of some officer, but if the same woman does the same work within the bounds of her house for her husband, children and parents, this is considered to be out dated style of life:

خرد کا نام جنوں رکھ دیا جنوں کا خرد
جو چاہے آپ کا حسن کرشمہ ساز کرے

You have named wisdom insanity; And named insanity wisdom,; Your wonder causing beauty is at liberty to do whatever it likes.

The Responsibility of a woman

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said that it is not obligatory for a woman to serve any individual of the

world. She is free from all burdens and all responsibilities, except that she should stay peacefully in her own house, obeying her husband, and bringing up her children with care and love. This is her bounden duty and thereby she would be building the nation and she would be its architect. This is the place of honour which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has granted to a woman. Now it is up to her to choose between the place of honour or the place of disgrace.

Woman entering Paradise directly

وعن ام سلمة رضى الله تعالىٰ عنها قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم " أيما امرأة ماتت و زوجها عنها راض دخلت الجنة " (ترمذى كتاب الرضاع باب ماجاء فى حق الزوج على المرأة حديث نمبر ١١٦١)

(Tirmidhi, the Book of suckling. chapter on the rights of a husband..... Tradition no: 1161)

Hazrat Umme Salmah رضى الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: If a woman dies in a state that her husband is pleased with her she will enter Paradise directly.

He is your Guest only for a few days

عن معاذ بن جبل رضى الله تعالى عنه: عن النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم قال "لا تؤذى امرأة زوجها فى الدنيا الا قالت زوجه من الحورالعين لا تؤذيه قاتلكِ الله! فانما هو عندك دخيل يوشك ان يفارقك الينا" (ترمذى كتاب الرضاع باب نمبر ١٩ حديث نمبر ١١٨٤)

(Tirmidhi Book of suckling chapter no: 19. Tradition no: 1174)

Hazrat Ma'az bin Jabal رضى الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: When a wife troubles her husband (because sometime a woman is ill natured and teases her husband), then his

wife whom Allah has ordained for him in paradise in the form of houries, address his worldly wife form Paradise as under:

Do not torture him, because he is a guest of yours for a few days and is expected to leave you and come to us soon.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has addressed the following words of admonition to ill-natured women:

You are doing no harm to your husbands by troubling them. You may harm them in this world as you like, but in the Hereafter Almighty Allah shall marry them with Houries of beautiful eyes who love their worldly husbands so dearly that they are pained to see even now that their worldly husbands are in trouble by their worldly wives.

The Greatest Trial for men

وعن اسامة بن زيد رضى الله عنه عن النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم قال

"ماتركت بعد فتنة هى اضرعلى الرجال من النساء" (صحيح بخارى كتاب النكاح باب مايتقى من شوم المرأة حديث نمبر ٥٠٩٦)

Sahih Bukhari, Book of Nikah. chapter on maa yat-taqi... Tradition no: 5096)

Hazrat Usamah bin Zaid رضى الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: I have not left behind for men a trial more harmful than the trial by women.

The trial by women is the hardest trial for men in this world. It will require a voluminous book to record how these women become a trial for men.

How is women a Trial ?

The Arabic word "*Fitnah*" means a trial. Allah has created women a trial for men in this world. But how is woman a trial? It is not possible to clarify this point thoroughly in a short time. She is a trial as she was to Hazrat Yousuf عليه السلام (Joseph) Allah has endowed man with the tendency of being attracted by a woman. Allah has given clear instructions about the unlawful and lawful channels of satisfying one's desires. To leave man free to choose between two ways is a trial, indeed. The second trial by means of a woman how he behaves with his wife. In other words, does he deal with her in the way which Allah and His Prophet ﷺ have shown him or does he deviate from that way and exploits her rights?

A woman becomes a trial when man is involved in her love that he ignores the demands of the *Shari'ah*. Is he satisfying her and meeting her demands without minding what is lawful and what is unlawful? Is he not providing his wife religious teaching and training? This is also a trial because, man is facing two contending problems. Love for the wife demands that he should not interfere with her in her actions, whereas it is the demand of *Shari'ah* that she should be compelled to keep within the limits of its laws. In short, there are trials at every step and a man cannot steer clear of these trials except with the help of Almighty Allah. A man should, therefore, try his best to discharge the rights of his wife and also pay attention to her training and education. While keeping in view her loss and gain, he should at the same time also shun all unlawful activities and temptations. As man cannot succeed in all these trying situations without Allah's help, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught us a supplication:

اللهم انى اعوذبك من فتنة النساء

O Allah! I take refuge in you from the trials of women.

This contains a hint that it is not possible to go through this trial and remain safe from its harms without Allah's specific help. It is, therefore, necessary to turn to Almighty Allah and pray with submission and sincerity

that He may protect us from falling into the pit of errors and sins and temptations. Everyone should make this supplication a part of his daily prayers.

Everyone is a Caretaker and Guardian

وعن ابن عمر رضى الله عنهما عن النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم قال

"كلكم راع وكلكم مسؤل عن رعيته" (صحيح بخارى كتاب الجمعة باب الجمعة فى القرى والمدن حديث نمبر ٨٩٣)

Sahih Bukhari. the book of Friday. chapter Friday prayer in villages.....Tradition no: 893)

This is a wonderful Tradition and is very comprehensive in its import and the Tradition has been addressed to everyone of us. Everyone will be questioned about the persons and things which have been placed under his charge. The Arabic word "*Ra'i*" means a guardian or a caretaker. It also means a herdsman, because he feeds the herds of goats and sheep. It also means a ruler and those over whom he rules are his "*Ra'yiyah*" subjects. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has, therefore, said that everyone is a guardian or caretaker and he will be asked on the Day of Judgment how he discharged his duties of caretaking and guarding, his subject.

The Ruler is the Guardian of his subjects

"والامير راع"

Every Ruler is the guardian of those placed under his care. He will be asked on the Day of Judgment: How did you look after them? The conception of a Ruler in Islam is not wearing the crown of Rulership, and keeping himself aloof from his subjects. The conception of a Ruler in Islam is to serve and take care of the subject. That is why Hazrat Umar Farooq رضى الله عنه has said: Even if a dog

dies hungry on the bank of the river Euphrates I think that on the Day of Judgment I shall be asked, "O Umar why a dog died hungry during your rule."

Caliphate a huge burden of responsibilities

When Hazrat Umar Farooq the Great رضى الله عنه was fatally wounded, the people requested him to nominate someone to succeed him as caliph after him. At that time they recommended to him his son for the Caliphate. Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضى الله عنه was undoubtedly a dignified Companion. None had any doubt about his learning, righteousness, and sincerity. When the people proposed to him the name of his son, Hazrat Umar Farooq the Great رضى الله عنه said: Do you want me to nominate after me as caliph a person who does not know how to divorce his wife? The incident is as follows:

During the days of the Holy Prophet ﷺ Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضى الله عنه divorced his wife during her menstruation period and he did not know that to divorce a woman in this condition was forbidden . The Holy Prophet ﷺ ordered him to revoke the divorce, and in obedience to the Prophet's order he did revoke the divorce. In rejecting the people's advice to nominate Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضى الله عنه as caliph after him. Hazrat Umar Farooq رضى الله عنه referred to this event of divorce.

The people again insisted on their proposal on the plea that Hazrat Abdullah's fault in the matter of divorce was due to his ignorance of the injunction about divorce and this did not disqualify him for the Caliphate. The reply which Hazrat Umar Farooq رضى الله عنه gave to the people is worth remembering. He told them:

It is quite enough that the noose of Caliphate fell around the neck of one of the sons of Khattab. Now I do not want to put this noose of Caliphate on the neck of any

other member of my clan. The reign and Caliphate are really a very heavy burden of responsibility. On the occasion of accountability in the Hereafter it will be a great boon for me if I am let off with no loss and no gain.

This is the conception of a Ruler and a Guardian in Islam. He further added:

Man is the Guardian and protector of his wife and children.

والرجل راع على اهل بيته

Man is Guardian and Protector of his household.

His wife, children and other members of which he is head are all included in the meaning of household. The head of the household will be questioned in the Hereafter about every member. He will be asked: This household was placed under your control How did you deal with your wife and children? In what manner did you look after them and how did you discharge their rights? Did you ever take care if they were following the path of religion or not to see if they were going in the direction of Hell? Did you ever pay attention to such vital matters? Man will be questioned about all these things on the Day of Resurrection as has been said in the Holy Qur'an:

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا قُوْۤا اَنْفُسَكُمْ وَاَهْلِيْكُمْ نَارًا (سورة التحريم:٦)

O believers save yourselves and your family from the Fire.... (66:6)

According to the injunction contained in this verse it is not enough that the believers should save only themselves from the punishment of the Fire of Hell by doing good deeds like praying, fasting, optional acts of devotion, remembrance of Allah, etc. while paying no attention to the activities of their children and other persons under

their charge and thus failing in their duty to save the latter also from the punishment of the Fire of Hell. Beware, that on the Day of Judgment you will be questioned why you did not discharge your duty. You will be punished for this neglect on your part. That is why it was said that man is a guardian over his household.

The woman is a Guardian over the household and the children

والمرأة راعية على بيت زوجها وولده

And the woman is a guardian over the house of her husband and his children.

Thus, the care of two things have been entrusted to the woman, the house of her husband and his children. She is required to guard the house, manage it efficiently in all its affairs, including the care and supervision of the children in matters relating to the world as well as to the faith. This is included in the duties of women. This Tradition has thus explained the duties of man and woman.

Follow the *Sunnah* of Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا

Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا is the leader of the women of Paradise. After marriage she went to Hazrat Ali's house. Hazrat Ali and Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا both decided between themselves that Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ would attend to outdoor work and Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا would discharge her duties within the house with great diligence and enthusiasm and she would also serve her husband with love and faith. The work she had to do required great labour and was hard for her. It was not an easy job as it is in our times that you switch on the electric stove and the food is ready. In those days the preparation of food involved grinding the barley on a hand mill, collecting

wood, and firing the oven for baking the bread. It was indeed a tedious job to do which Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا did willingly and without murmur. When, as a result of the battle of Khaibar, great spoils including slaves and maids fell into the hands of the Holy Prophet ﷺ he ﷺ began to distribute them among the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم . Someone advised Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا to approach the Holy Prophet ﷺ for a slave or a maid. Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا therefore, called on Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا and requested her to tell the Holy Prophet ﷺ that owing to grinding flour her palms were hard and knotty and while carrying the water bag the straps had left its mark on her breast. It would be a great relief to her if a slave or maid was given to her. After making this request Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا returned home.

When the Holy Prophet ﷺ came home, Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا conveyed to the Prophet ﷺ his daughter's problems and her request for a slave or maid. After all the Holy Prophet ﷺ was a father and Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا his dearest child. You may well imagine how he must have felt stirred in his heart, but he remained calm and sent for Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا and said to her: Fatimah you have asked me for a maid or a slave. I would not like to provide a maid or slave to Muhammad's daughter, unless every resident of Madinah had one.

Tasbeeh Fatimah - a Unique formula

The Holy Prophet ﷺ said: I, however, prescribe for you a remedy that will serve you better than a slave or a maid and it is this: On the night when going to your bed make it a regular practice to recite 33 times سبحان اللہ (*Sub-haa-nallah*), meaning Glorified is Allah, 33 times الحمدللہ (*Al-ham-du lil-laah*), meaning all praise be to Allah and 34 times اللہ اکبر (Al-laa-hu Akbar) meaning Allah is the

Greatest of all.

Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا was not an ordinary woman, she was the daughter of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. She felt contented with these divine words, and went back. That is why this *Zikr* is called "Tasbih-e-Fatimah."

The Holy Prophet ﷺ made her dear daughter a model for women to be followed by other wives. Whatever the legal position, the *sunnah* is that the wife should be a guardian of her husband's house and as a guardian she should work for her own self.

Mother is responsible for bringing up the children

The woman is not only the guardian of the husband's house but she is also the guardian of his children. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has placed on the shoulders of the housewife the responsibility of bringing up and serving and educating them. If the children are not being brought up on the right lines if they are not learning the Islamic etiquettes and ways of living, the mother will be questioned first and her husband will be questioned later. She will be asked: Why did the children being in your lap remained devoid of the Islamic conduct, character and etiquette of Islam. The Holy Prophet ﷺ, therefore, repeated the same sentence:

وکلکم راع وکلکم مسئول عن رعیتہ

Everyone of you is a caretaker and everyone will be questioned about the person and things placed under his charge. May Almighty Allah, by His mercy, help us in understanding these obligatory duties and in discharging them. *Aameen*!

واخر دعوانا ان الحمد للہ رب العالمین

And we close with the call that all praise to be Allah, the lord of the worlds.

Venue: Residence of Dr. Abdu Hai رحمة الله عليه
Date: Friday, 5th June, 1992
After ʿAsr Prayers

THE HAJJ AND SACRIFICE

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه، ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطٰن الرجيم، بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم.

وَالْفَجْرِ ۝ وَلَيَالٍ عَشْرٍ ۝ وَالشَّفْعِ وَالْوَتْرِ ۝ وَالَّيْلِ اِذَا يَسْرِ ۝ هَلْ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ قَسَمٌ لِّذِيْ حِجْرٍ ۝ (سورة الفجر: ٥:١)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم، وصدق رسوله النبي الكريم ونحن على ذالك من الشاهدين والشاكرين. والحمد لله رب العالمين

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness We believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and from the vices of our acts. There is none to let him go astray whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah the Only One. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our master, our authority, our Prophet, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah bestow upon him and his household and His companions His mercy and bless them and send peace on them in great abundance.

This place was once a Minaret of Light

It is after a very long time that I have received the honour of attending and addressing an assembly at this place (i.e. the house of Hazrat Dr. M. Abdul Hayi Sahib 'Arifi رحمة الله عليه. It seems to be a trying venture to open my lips to say something at this place. Previously we all used to assemble at this place as listeners and seekers of knowledge, and Almighty Allah had made this place a minaret of light for us. By the grace of Almighty Allah, we used to get opportunities at this place to hear and understand the realities and knowledge of the Faith from the late learned saint رحمة الله عليه. Today, however, I have been invited to speak here which seems to me a trying situation. It is a bounty from late Dr. M. Abdul Hayi Sahib رحمة الله عليه. Anything that

occurs to the heart or escapes from the tongue is nothing but an endless kindness from him. He repeatedly explained to people like us those precious points of *Deen* without waiting for any request from us and for which we had hardly any right. He implanted this knowledge in our hearts and poured them into our ears which will remain preserved with us for the whole of our lives. That is why, I am discharging this trying duty in compliance with an order of my respectable brother, Mr. Hasan Abbas. Let me tell you that in the past Hazrat Maulana M. Yusuf Ludhianwi Sahib, who is a competent authority, used to address regularly. On every Friday the audience assembled at his place. Maulana Ludhianwi being on his *Hajj* pilgrimage this year, brother Hasan Abbas insisted on me to say something to day in this meeting and I am here to speak before you in compliance with this order. May Allah enable me to speak before you with sincerity. May Allah help us all to listen to and act upon with sincerity, the points of *Deen* to be discussed here.

Due Order in worship

Allah Almighty has blessed these ten days with peculiar rewards. These days are from the first to the tenth, of the sacred month of Zilhijjah (the month of the *Hajj*). If we look closely we shall find that this chain of virtues and excellence starts from the blessed month of Ramazan.

Almighty Allah has maintained a wonderful order and arrangement among the various forms of worship. Thus, first of all He brings the month of Ramazan and from the next day following the end of Ramazan the preliminary activities of the worship connected with the *Hajj* are started. This is because the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that the *Hajj* is spread over three months. Shawwal, Zil-qa'dah and Zil-hijjah. Al-

though the main rituals of the *Hajj* are observed in the month of Zil-hijjah, yet it becomes lawful and desirable to put on the Ihram for the *Hajj* with effect from the month of Shawwal. Thus, it is lawful for an intending *Hajj* pilgrim to go out in *Ihram* from the first day of Shawwal. It is not lawful to put on the *Ihram* before this date. In the past a lot of time was needed to perform the *Hajj*. Sometimes the journey took three months. As such, intending pilgrims started preparations for the *Hajj* pilgrimage as soon as the month of Shawwal arrived. Thus, the worship of *Hajj* starts with the expiry of the month of Ramazan and is completed in the first ten days of Zilhijjah. The most important element of the *Hajj* is the "*Wuqoof-e-Arafah*" (stay on the plain of Arafah). This takes place an the 9th of Zilhijjah (and that is exactly the date today).

Qurbani (sacrifice of animals) is thanksgiving

Almighty Allah has helped us complete these splendid worships, the Holy month of Ramazan and the *Hajj* rituals. Then He has also prescribed for the Muslims as a compulsory duty to offer thanks to Allah by slaughtering animals in His name which is called *Qurbani*. This thanksgiving is performed on the 10th, 11th and 12th of the month (of Zil-hijjah). Almighty Allah appointed the Eidul-Fitr on the completion of the Fasting month of Ramazan and appointed the Eidul-Azha on the completion of the splendid worship of *Hajj*. He commanded the Muslims to celebrate the Eidul-Fitr by paying the *Sadaqah* (alms) of Eid-ul-Fitr and the Eidul-Azha by offering sacrifices (of animals).

Allah Swears by Ten Nights

The month of Zil-hijjah has commenced and it is the beginning of the ten days period. It is, therefore, quite appropriate to say something about these ten days of Zil-hijjah. This period of ten days, commencing from the first and ending on the tenth of Zil-hijjah, occupies a very prominent position among the twelve months of the year, so much so that Almighty Allah has sworn by these ten nights in the opening verses of the Surah Al-Fajr in part - 30 of the Holy Qur'an: والفجر وليال عشر (By the Dawn and the nights). It is not necessary for Almighty Allah to swear to confirm and ensure anything, but if Allah swears by anything, it is to emphacise the esteem and honour of that thing. A large group of the commentators of the Holy Qur'an are of the opinion that the ten nights by which Allah has sworn are these first ten nights of the month of Zil-hijjah. This indicates the esteem and grace of these nights.

The Supremacy of the Ten Days

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has himself mentioned in clear words in a Hadith the importance and superiority of these ten days. He ﷺ has also mentioned that Almighty Allah does appreciate acts of worship in these ten days more than other days of the year whether that worship is in the form of optional prayers, recital of the sacred names of Allah or some charitable deed.(Sahih Bukhari, the Book of Edain, chapter of deeds during the days of Tashreeq, Hadith no: 969).

He ﷺ has also said in a Hadith. If anyone observes fasts during these days, he is granted reward for one fasting equal to the reward for fast for a full one year. He ﷺ has also said that worship in one of these nights is equal to the worship performed during the ليلة القدر (the Night of value). Such a high degree of excellence has Allah bestowed upon

these ten days of Zil-hijjah!(Sunnan Tirmidhi. Book of Fasting. acts during the ten days. - Hadith no: 758).

Two special acts of worship during these days

How excellent are these days that Almighty Allah has chosen this period (of ten days) for acts of worship which cannot be done in other days of the year! An example, is the *Hajj*, which cannot be performed in any period of the year other than in these days. The other worship is the sacrifice of the animals for which Allah has fixed three days that is from 10th to 12th of this month. Contrary to it all other worships obligatory or optional are allowed to be performed throughout the year. If these two worships are performed in any period other than those appointed by Allah they will not be counted as worship and will go waste. Anyone performing the acts of *Hajj* in other days will not get any reward for them.

The other item of worship is the *Qurbani* for which Almighty Allah has appointed the 10th, 11th and the 12th of Zil-hijjah. The *Qurbani* cannot be offered during any period other than the period of these three days. It is possible to slaughter an animal and distribute the meat among the poor as an optional item of worship, but obligatory *Qurbani* cannot be offered in any period other than that of these three days. Thus Almighty Allah has specially favoured this period. That is why the learned theologians have written, in the light of this Hadith, that next to the sacred month of Ramazan, the days of excellence are these ten days of Zil-Hijjah during which the reward for worship is increased and Almighty Allah sends down His special mercy and blessings. The law-maker ﷺ has, however, prescribed some other special acts for these days which should better be mentioned here.

Cutting off Nails and Hair in these days

Immediately after the sighting of the Zil-hijjah moon a strange command is brought to our notice. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that it is not right for him who has to offer *Qurbani* to clip his nails and cut his hair after sighting the Zil-hijjah moon. As this order has been narrated from the Holy Prophet ﷺ, it has been declared as Mustahab (desirable). According to this order a man should not clip his nails, nor cut his hair, unless he has offered the *Qurbani*. (Ibn majah. Chapter on clipping nails.... Hadith no: 3187)

Try to attain some likeness to Pilgrims

Apparently it looks strange that after sighting the moon of Zil-hjja, clipping the nails and cutting the hair have been forbidden. The reason is not far to seek. Almighty Allah has appointed during these days the splendid worship of the *Hajj* and a very large number of the Muslims remain engaged, by the grace of Allah, in this worship at this time. It seems, as if, the House of Allah is charged with a magnetic power which is attracting to itself from all sides the sons of *Tawheed* (Muslims) and thousands of men are arriving there every moment from all corners of the world and are assembling round the House of Allah. Allah has granted these pilgrims the honour of performing the *Hajj*. These Pilgrims have been ordered that, when they are advancing towards the House of Allah, they should be dressed in *Ihram* which is the prescribed uniform of that sacred House. Again, the *Shari'ah* has imposed many restrictions on the pilgrims while in *Ihram*, e.g., they cannot put on stitched garment, nor apply scent nor cover their faces, etc., that they should not clip their nails nor cut their hair is also one of these restrictions. As for those who are not participating in the worship (*Hajj*) of the House of Allah, by visiting it, the Holy

Prophet ﷺ has, in order to enable such persons also to qualify for Allah's mercy, ordered that they should try to achieve some likeness to the pilgrims of the House of Allah by imitating them in leaving their nails unclipped and their hair uncut. This is a way to attain some similarity to those actually performing the *Hajj*.

Mercy of Allah is waiting to Descend

Our Dr. Hazrat M. Abdul Hayi Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say that Allah's mercy is always in search of an excuse to descend on His servants. When Allah has commanded us to attain some similarity to the *Hajj* Pilgrims, it only means that He wants to bestow on those who attain this similarity some part of the mercy and blessings which He showers on the *Hajj* Pilgrims, so that when the clouds of Allah's mercy rain on these servants of Allah on the plain of *Arafah,* a part of these clouds may overtake us also with its munificent showers. Thus, the attainment of this similarity, is a great blessing. Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه frequently recited this couplet of Hazrat Majzoob رحمة الله عليه:

تیرے محبوب کی یارب شباہت لیکر آیا ہوں
حقیقت اس کو تو کردے میں صورت لے کر آیا ہوں

Meaning: O my Lord! I have come to you with an assumed similarity to your beloved. I have brought the form only, kindly turn it into reality.

It is not at all unlikely that Almighty Allah may turn this form into reality by the blessing of His beloved Prophet ﷺ. It is hoped that you and we shall not be deprived, God willing, of the clouds of mercy that pour down there.

Awareness to Virtues is needed

It was the habit of our saint رحمة الله عليه to say from time to time: Will Almighty Allah deprive a man of these blessings and bounties of Arafah only because he has no money, or the circumstances are not favourable for him to undertake the journey? No, that is not so. Almighty Allah wants to include us all in His mercy, provided we pay a little attention and care, we develop a little similarity to the pilgrims of *Hajj*. We should at least adopt the form, if not the reality of the *Hajj*. There is every hope that Almighty Allah shall encompass us with His mercy and blessings.

Fasting on the Day of *Arafah*

As already mentioned, these ten days are so auspicious that a day of fasting on one of these days is equal, in the matter of reward, to fasting for the whole year; and one item of worship in one night of this period is equal to worship in the Night of Power (شب قدر). A Muslim must devote himself to worship and good deeds during these days to the best of his ability. The ninth of Zil-Hijjah is the Day of *Arafah* during which Allah has prescribed for the *Hajj* Pilgrims to stay on the plain of Arafat which is the most essential part of the *Hajj*. He has also prescribed for us optional fasting specially on the ninth day. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said about this fast: I have every hope from Almighty Allah that the fasting observed on the day of Arafah, by a Muslim will become, an expiation for his sins committed or to be committed during one year in the past and one year in the future. (Ibn Majah, book of Fasting - Arafah Day, Hadith no: 1734).

Only the Minor sins are forgiven

It is necessary to clarify here that some people who are not well-informed of religious subjects think on the basis of such Ahadith that when the sins committed during the past year and to be committed during the future year stand forgiven, as if they are on one year's leave and they are free to do whatever they please. It must be noted that the concessions so granted in the various Ahadith relate only to minor sins. For example, during ablution the sins committed by the limbs being washed are pardoned; one sin is pardoned at each step and his status is raised by one degree when a *Namazi* goes to the mosque for prayer; similarly it has been said about fasting during Ramazan that one year's sins of the man fasting are pardoned. Remember that the sins mentioned in all such Traditions are only the minor sins. As for major sins, according to the rules of the *Shari'ah* they are not forgiven except by repentance (توبہ). Almighty Allah has, however, the sole authority to pardon all sins whether minor or major unconditionally. Even after repentance only such sins are forgiven as are committed against the rights of Allah. Sins committed against the rights of the servants of Allah cannot be forgiven, unless the rights usurped or violated of a servant are compensated or condoned by the claimant. In short, all these Ahadith about the forgiveness of sins relate to minor sins only and not to major sins.

Takbeer-e-Tashreeq

The third practice during these days is the *Takbeer Tashriq* which commences from the Fajr prayer of the Day of *Arafah* and continues till the 'Asr prayer of the 13th of Zil-hijjah. It has been made compulsory to recite this *Takbeer* once after every *Farz* (obligatory) prayer. The *Takbeer*,

is as follows:

"الله اكبر الله اكبر لا اله الا الله والله اكبر الله اكبر ولله الحمد"

(Allahu Akbar, Allahu akbar, laa ilaaha il-lal-laahu wallahu akbar allaahu akbar wa lillaa-hil-hamd).

It is compulsory for men to recite these words in audible voice. It is against the *Sunnah* to recite these *Takabeer* in a low voice. (Musnif Ibn Abi Shaiba vol: 4 Page 171. Shami. vol: 2 Page 178).

We are fond of taking the opposite course

We have become fond of taking just the opposite course in every matter. When the *Shari'ah* orders something to be recited in a low voice, the people recite it loudly as they do while reciting a *Du'a* (supplication). The Qur'an says about *Du'a*:

اُدْعُوْا رَبَّكُمْ تَضَرُّعًا وَّخُفْيَةً ط (سورة الاعراف:٥٥)

That is, (Allah commands you) "to call upon your Lord humbly and secretly".

As such it is better in ordinary circumstances to call upon Allah secretly rather than loudly. However, this may be done loudly where it is proved to be a *sunnah* to pray loudly. The sacred Darood being a *Du'a*, it is better to recite it in a low tone. The people have, however, invented their own ways to recite this loudly. As against this, they recite the *Takbeer Tashreeq* in low tone which should be recited loudly after every *Farz* (obligatory) prayer:

A Demonstration of the Dignity of Islam

My late respected father رحمة الله عليه used to say that the very object of prescribing this *Takbeer Tashreeq* is to demonstrate the dignity of Islam. It is, therefore, necessary to re-

cite it loudly after bidding the concluding *Salam*, so that the mosque may resound with the collective echo of this *Takbeer*.

Similarly, it is also a *Sunnah* to recite the *Takbeer* loudly, while going out for the Eidul Azhaa prayer. The *Takbeer* for the Eidul Fitr prayer should be recited in a low tone.

Takbeer-e-Tashreeq is obligatory for women also

The *Takbeer Tashreeq* is prescribed for women as well, but which being generally ignored. Women generally forget to recite the *Takbeer Tashreeq*. As regards men who offer their prayers in the congregation in the mosque, they necessarily recite the *Takbeer*. This is, however, not a common practice among women. There are two opinions about its imposition on women as a compulsory duty (*wajib*). Some Ulama' say that it is wajib and some say that it is only *Mustahab* (desirable) for women. The more reliable opinion is that the *Takbeer Tashreeq* is a compulsory duty for women as well. They should also recite this *Takbeer* after every *Farz* prayer five days from the *Fajr* prayer of the Day of *Arafah* till the 'Asr prayer of the Thirteenth of Zil-Hijjah. Men are required to recite it loudly but women should recite it in a low tone. Women should be mindful of this duty. As women generally omit this duty I advise them to hang a card-plate with an inscription of the *Takbeer* at the place where they pray in their houses, and they should recite it without fail after the concluding salam, because this is *wajib* for them also. (Musnaf Ibn Abi Shaibah. vol. II, p-190. Shami vol.II, p 179)

The *Qurbani* cannot be offered on other days

The fourth excellent duty which Almighty Allah has prescribed to be discharged during the days of Zil-Hijjah is *Qurbani*. This *Qurbani* can be offered only during the three days, viz. the 10th, the 11th and the 12th of Zil-Hijjah and no other days of the year. The animals slaughtered on other than these days of the year shall not be the *Shari'ah Qurbani*.

Real Islam is to follow the Injunctions

Almighty Allah wants to teach us the reality of *Deen* by means of the *Hajj* and the *Qurbani* which are the two outstanding acts of worship during these days. We are asked to note that no act is important in itself, nor is any particular place or form is important in itself. Acts become important and virtuous only because of the command of Allah to do them. When Allah commands to do certain thing then only it carries a reward, but the moment the command is withdrawn, the reward also stands withdrawn.

Just take the example of the stay on the plain of *Arafah*. If you spend there 359 days of the year, excluding the 9th day of Zil-Hijjah, you shall not get an iota of *sawab* (reward) for your staying there, although this is the same plain of *Arafah* and the same Mountain of Mercy. This is because there is no command of Allah to stay there on other days of the year. The reward or punishment of an act is absolutely dependent on Allah's commandment.

Leave Masjid-al-Haram

You are all aware that offering prayer in the Masjid-al-Haram is such a virtuous act that the reward of one prayer offered there is equal to one lac (1,00,000). Prayers offered elsewhere and the *Hajj* pilgrims reap this additional reward. Almighty Allah commands the Pilgrims to leave the

Masjid-al-Haram on the 8th of Zil-Hijjah despite its one lakh-fold (1,00,000) reward for the prayers and to camp at Mina. Thus, the Pilgrims are commanded to stay at Mina from the Zuhr of the 8th till the Fajr of the 9th day of Zil-Hijjah. At Mina they have no duty other than offering five prayers, ignoring the reward of one lakh prayers of Masjid-al-haram. In this command there is an indication that virtue, righteousness and reward lie in obeying the commands of Allah. If anyone disobeys this command and decides to stay at Makkah to offer five prayers in the Masjid-al-Haram to reap the reward of five lakh prayers, he is a loser; He will not reap even the reward of one prayer for disobeying Allah's command and missing one important ritual of the *Hajj*.

Place and Deed are not important

While performing the rituals of the *Hajj* it is observed at each step that the 'idols' which man sometimes erects in his mind are smashed to pieces. Thus, there is no importance in a particular deed or place. It is the obedience to Allah that counts. Almighty Allah desires that His servants should do what He commands them to do and abstain from what he forbids. In obedience lies the credit and recompense.

***Hajj* acts as seen by Reason**

The entire worship of the *Hajj* presents the above philosophy. Just see that a block of stone is standing at Mina and lacs of men are throwing pebbles at this block. If you ask anyone about the objective of this strange ritual, you can get no satisfactory answer. It is just like insanity that pebbles are being pelted at a block of stone without any apparent cause. The cause lies that this is done in obedience to a command of Allah and there ends the whole matter. If one says that this is mere insanity, then it will be

dismissed by saying: Yes in this insanity lies the blessing and Allah's pleasure.

What lesson does *Qurbani* teach?

The same philosophy is visible in the ritual of *Qurbani*. The word "*Qurbani*" literally means something which is done to attain nearness to Allah. The word "*Qurbani*" is derived from the word "*Qurban*" and the word "*Qurban*" is derived from the root "*Qurb*". Thus, the word "*Qurban*"means something by which one may attain nearness to Allah. We learn from all the acts concerning the *Qurbani* that *Deen* (Faith) is the name of compliance with the commandments of Allah. When Allah's command is issued there is no scope to tax the mind in order to seek the wisdom and benefits underlying the divine command. All that is needed is total submission and surrender to it. "Order is order" is the common saying well known to everyone.

It is against Reason to slaughter one's own son

A command of Allah came to Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام in a vision to slaughter his son. If Allah had desired, He would have issued the command through a revelation (*Wahi*), but He did not do so. Instead, he was shown in a vision that he was slaughtering his son. If this had happened to an ordinary man he would have ignored the command on the plea that it was only a vision. However, a vision in the case of a prophet is as good as a revelation. It was, therefore, a trial for Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام to see whether he was ready to obey the divine command. When Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام came to know that it was an order from Allah to slaughter his son, he did not question Almighty Allah why such a command was being given to him and what wisdom and benefit lay in it. No law and no custom on the surface of the earth

can allow and appreciate that a father should slaughter his son. A command like this can in no way be justified and accepted on the scale of Reason.

Like Father like Son.

Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام did not inquire from Almighty Allah the reason for this command to slaughter the son. However, in order to test the son he put to him the following question:

يَا بُنَيَّ اِنِّيٓ اَرٰى فِي الْمَنَامِ اَنِّيٓ اَذْبَحُكَ فَانْظُرْ مَاذَا تَرٰى ط صافات ۱۰۲

O my son, I have seen in a dream that I must sacrify you. So look, What do you think? (37:102)

Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام did not inquire from his son his opinion so that if he did not agree to be slaughtered he would not carry out Allah's command to slaughter him. He asked this question only to test the son about his attitude towards Allah. The son was after all his father's son from whose progeny the last of all Prophets was to come. The great son also did not inquire why and for what fault he was going to be slaughtered. His only reply to the question was:

يٰٓاَبَتِ افْعَلْ مَا تُؤْمَرُ ز سَتَجِدُنِيْٓ اِنْ شَآءَ اللّٰهُ مِنَ الصّٰبِرِيْنَ ۝ ۱۰۲

O my father! Do what you have been commanded to do. God willing, you will find me Patient. (37:102)

The obedient son encouraged his father to obey Allah's command, assuring him that he would not offer any resistance against his action.

The father as well as the son being of so high status, resolved that Allah's command be executed. The father made the son lie down on the ground Hazrat Isma'el عليه السلام requested his father to place him on the ground, forehead downwards, for if his face was upwards, he Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام might not be able to use the knife on account of paternal love. Almighty Allah appreciated these charming manners so much that He mentioned them in the Qur'an thus:

فَلَمَّآ اَسْلَمَا وَتَلَّهٗ لِلْجَبِيْنِ ۚ (سورة الصافات:۱۰۳)

Then when they had both surrendered (to Allah) and he had flung him down upon his face.....

(37:103)

The Qur'an has used a very wonderful word on this occasion,"فلما اسلما" i.e. when father and son both surrendered (themselves). It may also be translated as, "When both of them accepted Islam", because Islam means to surrender oneself before Allah's commands. This contains a clear indication that man must obey Allah's command, however difficult, painful, harsh and opposed to reason that command may be and however tremendous sacrifices one may have to make of life, wealth and honour for that. Man must surrender himself to Allah's command. This is the reality of Islam. That is why Allah has said in the above verse: When both of them embraced Islam and surrendered themselves to Allah's command and the father flung the son down upon his forehead. He made the son lie down in this way lest the knife should stop cutting the son's throat on account of the face being in sight of the father. Almighty Allah has mentioned this unique scene in the Qur'an with special emphasis. It is stated in narratives that when Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام was flinging the son down, the latter asked his father to gather together his clothes lest they should become spoiled with blood and seeing them his mother might be stunned with grief.

Look at nature's wonder!

When these two had completed their part of duty Allah had to do His part. He said:

وَنَا دَيْنَاهُ اَنْ يّٰٓاِبْرٰهِيْمُ ۙ قَدْ صَدَّقْتَ الرُّؤْيَا ۚ (سورة الصافات ١٠٤، ١٠٥)

That is: We called to him: O Ibrahim, you fulfilled the vision (37:104-105).

Now see the wonder wrought by Allah's Omnipotence when Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام opened his eyes, he saw that Hazrat Isma'el عليه السلام was sitting beside, smiling and a slaughtered ram was lying there.

Allah's command has preference over all things.

The entire event related above is in fact the basis of the worship of *Qurbani*. It is declaring from the very outset that the *Qurbani* was prescribed in order to impress firmly on the heart of man and to teach him that Allah's command has preference over all other things and that *Deen* is the name of total obedience. When the Divine Command arrives it must be obeyed without trying to find out its wisdom, benefit or reason.

Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام did not seek a rational justification

Deviation and going astray from the right path are a common feature of our society today. The reason is that for every Divine command the people want to know the wisdom and benefit underlying that command, and its rational justification. They will obey the command; if they come to know its benefit, otherwise not. This is no *Deen* and obedience. Obedience is what Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام and his son Hazrat Isma'el عليه السلام demonstrated by their own unprecedented acts. Almighty Allah appreciated this sacrifice of theirs so much that

He prescribed the sacrifice (*Qurbani*) to be offered every year till the Day of Judgement. Allah said:

" وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ فِى الْاٰخِرِيْنَ "

This means: We prescribed the imitation of this act for the later generations. (37:108)

The *Qurbani* which we offer is an imitation of the splendid *Qurbani* offered by Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام and Hazrat Isma'el عليه السلام. This means that we should mould our lives on the pattern of the unique behaviour shown by father and son in obeying Allah's command without any hesitation and without seeking to know its rational background and justification. This is the lesson that we learn from the *Qurbani*.

Is *Qurbani* harmful to Economy?

A section of the people are raising objections to the very objective for which Almighty Allah prescribed the performance of *Qurbani*. They say that *Qurbani* has been imposed without - God forbid any benefit. Millions are spent to make the blood flow through the drains which is highly wasteful from the economic point of view. It means a great loss of our animal wealth. It would be much better, they suggest, to help the poor with the huge sums of money spent on *Qurbani*. The propaganda is being carried on so forcefully that every day persons come to ask if it would not be better to distribute the money to be spent on *Qurbani* among their relatives. Apparently there is no harm in this, they suggest.

The Real Spirit of *Qurbani*

It should be noted that every form of worship has an appointed time and procedure for example, if a man wishes to spend his time in helping the poor instead of praying, he will be guilty of missing the prayer which is an obligatory duty, even though he may earn some sawab (reward) for helping the poor. This holds good also in respect of other obligatory (*Farz*) and compulsory (*wajib*) duties. The propaganda campaign, launched against *Qurbani* that it is irrational and unjustifiable from the economic point of view, defies the very philosophy and spirit of the *Qurbani*. The worship of *Qurbani* has been prescribed for you and you should comply with it, whether you understand its wisdom and reason or not. The spirit of *Qurbani* is that it is Allah's command and you have to obey it unconditionally and unhesitatingly. Man is not man unless he cultivates in him the quality of obedience. The root-cause of all evils, wrongs, and sinful activities lies in the fact that man has forgotten the basic principles of following the Divine commands and is running after the dictates of his own mind and intellect.

Qurbani ceases to be worship after three days

So far as other forms of worships are concerned, they can be performed on optional basis as and when desired. As for *Qurbani,* Almighty Allah has commanded that it is only for the three appointed days. If one offers *Qurbani* after these three days, it will no longer be a worship. Allah has ordained this to teach us that the *Qurbani* is nothing in itself; it assumes the form of worship only because of His command. We wish that we had understood this basic point. On this depends to understand the *Deen* as a whole. The cardinal point and basis of *Deen* is that it is nothing but obedience to Allah's commands. What lies beyond is not *Deen.*

The Difference between *Sunnah* and *Bid'ah*

The same principle differentiates *Bid'ah* from *Sunnah. Deeds* done in the light of the *Sunnah* deserve credit and reward, but *Bid'ah* has no value in the sight of Allah. People ask what harm is there if they observe *Teeja* (the 3rd day after death), *Daswan* (the 10th day) and *Chehlam* (the 40th day) in which the Qur'an is recited and its *Sawab* is conveyed to the departed soul. The harm is that all this is done without any commandment by Allah and His Messenger ﷺ. They have themselves invented these rituals. What we do from our own choice and wish carries no reward and return.

Four *Rak'ats* of Maghrib Instead of three

Instead of three *Rak'aat* of the Maghrib prayer a man offers four *Rak'aat,* and argues that the number four is greater than three, and after all what harm is there in increasing the number only by one? They argue that adding something to the prayer, while observing all its prescribed elements, should be no sin. It will invalidate the all four *rak'aat* simply because Allah has not commanded it. This is not according to the procedure prescribed by Allah and His Prophet ﷺ. This is the difference between *Sunnah* and *Bid'ah.* The practice taught and followed by the Prophet ﷺ is *Sunnah,* and that invented by a man himself is *Bid'ah. Bid'ah* may seem to be attractive but it earns no credit and reward.

An interesting example of *Sunnah* and *Bid'ah*

Shah Abdul Aziz Sahib Du'a-jo رحمة الله عليه, a leader of the *Tablighee Jama'at* used to visit my respected father رحمة الله عليه from time to time. One day he related to my father a strange dream he had seen. The dream was as follows:

He said that my father was standing by the side of a black-board and teaching some people who had gathered

round him to take lessons. My father wrote on the black-board with a piece of chalk the number one (1) and asked the people what it was. They replied that it was one (1). Thereafter, my father put a zero (0) on the right side of the digit (0) and asked the people what it then became,. The people replied that it has become ten (10) My father added another Zero (0) to ten (0) and asked them what number it was. The people replied that it was one hundred (100). Again he added one Zero (0) making the number one thousand (1000) and put the same question to the people who replied that it was one thousand (1000). My father told them that the addition of every Zero on the right side of the number increased it ten-fold. He then erased all those zeros and added one to the number one (1) on the left side and asked the people about the result. They said it was (01), one tenth. He went on adding Zeroes till the number became 0001. Then he asked the people about the number and they replied that it was one thousandth (1/1000). Then my father told the people that every zero added to a number on the right side increased it ten fold and every zero added to the number on the left side reduces it by one-tenth. My father explained by saying that the Zereos added to the right represented *Sunnah* and those added to the number on the left represented *Bid'ah*. In other words, deeds done according to the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ increases the reward of the deeds many-fold. On the other hand, deeds falling within the definition of *Bid'ah* not only earn any reward, but they diminish the reward many-fold and all actions go waste. This example amply explains the difference between the *Sunnah* and *Bid'ah*.

As already emphasized, *Deen* is the name of compliance with the commands of Allah which alone earns credit and reward.

The late night Prayer of Hazrat Abu Bakr and Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہم

It reminds me a speech of my respected father رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. It is a well-known fact that sometimes the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to go out on nights to assess for himself the conditions of his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم. During one of these nights he saw that Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ was reciting the Qur'an in the *Tahajjud* prayer in a low tone. When he ﷺ went further he ﷺ saw that Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ was reciting the Qur'an in his *Tahajjud* prayer very loudly. Then the Holy Prophet ﷺ came back home leaving them in their prayers. In the morning when Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ called on the Holy Prophet ﷺ, he asked Hazrat Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ why he was reciting the Holy Qur'an in a very low tone in his *Tahajjud* prayer. In reply Hazrat Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ uttered a very beautiful sentence:

I was reciting the Qur'an to one (Allah) to whom I was addressing my supplication and who heard it. Recitation of Qur'an loudly is not a necessary condition.

اسمعت من ناجیت

Thereafter the Holy Prophet ﷺ put the same question to Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ who was reciting the Qur'an so loudly. He replied:

"I was reciting the Qur'an loudly so that I could awaken those in sleep and drive away the Satan.

اوقظ الوسنان واطرد الشیطان

Then the Holy Prophet ﷺ said to Hazrat Siddique رضی اللہ عنہم(Recite a bit louder); and said to Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ (Recite a bit in lower tone). (Abu Dawud Book salat. ch. on loud recitation etc. Hadith no: 1329).

Moderation is needed

The above is a famous saying mentioned in the Ahadith. Commenting on this incident it is said that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught his *Ummah,* to take a middle course while reciting the Holy Qur'an i.e. neither too loudly nor in low tone. This teaching is in conformity with the injunction of the Holy Qur'an about recitation. It said:

" وَلَا تَجْهَرْ بِصَلَاتِكَ وَلَا تُخَافِتْ بِهَا وَابْتَغِ بَيْنَ ذٰلِكَ سَبِيْلاً "

That is, do not recite the Qur'an in your prayers very loudly nor in a very low tone, but seek a middle course between the two. (17:110)

Negate your Propositions

Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hayi Sahib رحمة الله عليه has on the authority of Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه, furnished a wonderful interpretation of this Hadith. It was not wrong on the part of Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضى الله عنه when he said that it was not necessary to recite the Qur'an loudly as He to whom he was reciting it had heard it. Hazrat Umar Farooq رضى الله عنه had a loud voice. If it becomes louder during his prayer, there was nothing unlawful in it. The Holy Prophet ﷺ explained to them something like this: Previously you were reciting the Qur'an according to your own choice, so it was not so enlightening. If you recite the Qur'an according to my suggestion (i.e. in a moderate tone) it will bring more spiritual light and blessing, as it will comply with the *Sunnah.*

Make your life a model of Obedience

The essence of *Deen* is that one should not insist one's own opinion in matters concerning *Deen.* Everything concerning *Deen* should be done strictly in compliance with the procedure taught by Allah and His Prophet ﷺ. If

this point becomes firmly impressed upon the minds all forms of *Bid'ah* shall be uprooted. It was to attain this goal that the ritual of *Qurbani* was prescribed. We are all prone to be unmindful of it while offering the *Qurbani,* it is necessary to recall that this worship contains the lesson that our entire life should be subject to the commands of Allah. It should be a complete model of obedience and total submission, whether we understand or do not understand the wisdom and reason behind the commands. This is the philosophy of *Qurbani.* May Almighty Allah help us all to understand this philosophy and grant us its blessings.

The Excellences of *Qurbani*

According to the Ahadith the ritual of *Qurbani* has many blessings and benefits. The number of sins forgiven is equal to the number of hair on the body of the slaughtered animal. That is, one sin for one hair. No act is dearer to Allah during these three days than the shedding of *Qurbani* blood. The more *Qurbani* a man offers, the more he is liked by Allah. The blood of the slaughtered animal reaches Allah before it falls on the ground. Thus it becomes a cause of nearness to Allah. Almighty Allah has ordained this great reward for *Qurbani* in recognition of the fact that His servant is offering the *Qurbani* only in obedience to His command without carning to know the reason and wisdom behind this worship and without minding the money he is spending on it'.

The Story of a villager

It is said that it was a custom in olden days that when anyone attended a King's court he presented to the King some gift. The King obviously was not in need of that gift, but it was presented to gain the King's favour and pleasure

and some good return from the King. Maulana Rumi has illustrated this point through an interesting story, as follows:

Once a villager decided to pay a visit to the Caliph of Baghdad. He wanted to carry a gift for the King. He consulted his wife about the gift suitable for the Caliph. In her natural naivety she advised her husband to take with him for the Caliph a pitcher of water, as in her opinion, the Caliph might not be enjoying such sweet and cool water in the capital. The villager appreciated her wife's suggestion and set off for Baghdad on foot with a pitcher of water on his head. On approaching the Caliph he presented to him the gift of water, saying that it was pure and cool water, the like of which might not be available to the Caliph in his capital. It may be noted that on account of the long journey and contamination of dust and dirt the water gone dirty.

The Caliph ordered the villager to open the cover of the pitcher. As soon as the mouth of the pitcher was opened, the entire hall was filled with foul nauseating smell. Realising that the villager had decided to present that useless, rather disgustful present in his extreme simplicity and sincerity the caliph accepted and appreciated it and ordered the pitcher to be filled with gold coins. The villager, was very happy and heartily thanked the Caliph for his generosity. When the villager was going back home with his reward, the Caliph asked one of his servants to see him off along the bank of the river Tigris.

The villager was going back home joyfully with the caliph's escort, suddenly he saw the River Tigris proudly flowing with its cool, crystal clear and sweet water. He felt ashamed at the gift of worthless water he had presented to the Caliph and realised from the core of his heart the Caliph's generosity and magnanimity, because not only did

he punish him for presenting him such a worthless gift but filled his pitcher with gold coins.

The Value of our worship

Drawing a moral from the above story Maulana Rumi رحمة الله عليه has said that our worship is just like the villager's pitcher of dirty and foul water, deserving to be pelted at our faces. It is, however, the unlimited mercy of Almighty Allah that He accepts them for valuable recompense. Allah takes account of man's limited power and thanks that His servant has presented it with faith and sincerity. The example which Maulana Rumi رحمة الله عليه has given holds good of all our worships which are in fact no better than the villager's pitcher of worthless water.

Royal way of accepting gift

In the olden days it was a common custom that if anyone presented some precious gift of gold or gems etc, to a king, the king only touched the gift with his hand in token of having accepted it. The gift was then returned to the giver, because, the King fully realised that the need of the giver of the gift was greater than his own.

Allah looks for piety of the heart

Maulana Rumi رحمة الله عليه has said that the *Qurbani* which a Muslim presents to Almighty Allah is such a gift that no sooner is the knife applied to the animal's throat than the *Qurbani* is completed and accepted by Allah, and the slaughtered animal with all its meat and skin etc. is at your disposal. It is, as if, Almighty Allah has touched it with His hands and the entire gift is left to you for use as you please. Look at Allah's mercy and generosity shown to the *Ummah* of the Holy Prophet, Muhammad ﷺ that a gift is being de-

manded and when it is offered in the form of the slaughtered animal then the obedience to the command is enough to please Allah. He does not require anything more. Thus He has said:

لَنْ يَّنَالَ اللّٰهَ لُحُوْمُهَا وَلَادِمَآؤُهَا وَلٰكِنْ يَّنَالُهُ التَّقْوٰى مِنْكُمْ

It means that "neither their flesh nor their blood reaches Him". (22:37).

In other words, if a person offers the *Qurbani* with piety and purity of his heart Allah readily accepts his *Qurbani*. Allah does not require the flesh of the slaughtered animal but leaves its disposal to the option of the man who has offered the *Qurbani*. If he himself uses the entire flesh, there is no sin in it. It is, however, very desirable that he should himself use only one-third of it and distribute one-third among his relatives and the remaining one-third among the poor. The point to note here is that it does not displease Allah at all if the entire flesh is consumed by the person himself who is offering the *Qurbani*.

Are these animals our Carriers on "Pul Sirat"?

It is a common saying among the people that these animals of the *Qurbani* will serve as riding animals, sitting on which the men offering the *Qurbani* will cross over the Bridge leading to Paradise. This is based, on a weak narrative which is:

سمنوا ضحا يا كم فانها على الصراط مطايا كم

That is, fatten your sacrificial animals, because they will be your riding - animals to cross over the pul-sirat (the bridge leading to Paradise).

This is a weak narrative to which much attention need not be paid. Yet the saying has become very common. I neither accept it nor reject it. Only Allah knows its

reality. However, that Hadith is quite authentic which says that Allah accepts the *Qurbani* before the blood of the slaughtered animal falls on the ground.

I entrust to you my entire capital

All this has been prescribed, so that a spirit may develop in the heart to comply unconditionally and unhesitatingly with the commands of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ and to surrender oneself totally to Allah. This has been clearly emphasized in the Holy Qur'an:

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَّلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ اِذَا قَضَى اللّٰهُ وَرَسُوْلُهٗٓ اَمْرًا اَنْ يَّكُوْنَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ اَمْرِهِمْ (سورة الاحزاب: ٣٦)

That is believing men and women have no option in their affairs, when Allah and His Messenger have decided upon an affair.(33:36)

سپردم با تو مایۂ خویش را
تو دانی حساب کم و بیش را

This is a persian couplet which means:
I have entrusted to you my entire capital (of life). It is up to you to decide whether it is more, or less, enough or deficient.

I have tried in the foregoing pages to define the reality of *Deen*. May Allah help us understand this reality and grant us all the lights and blessigns this *Deen* contains. May He also help us to remember this reality and live up to it the whole of our lives. *Aameen.*

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram,
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.

Date : Friday, 11th Septemebr, 1992
After 'Asr Prayers

During assemblies held in the name of the "*SEERAT*" (biography of the Holy Prophet ﷺ) we indulge in such activities as are totally opposed to the injunctions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Speeches are delivered in these assemblies about the Prophet's teachings and *Sunnah*, but actually we ridicule these very teachings of *Sunnah* and directions which the Holy Prophet ﷺ brought with him.

LET US ATTUNE OUR LIFE WITH '*SEERAH*'

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه، ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له نشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيْ رَسُوْلِ اللهِ اُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُواللهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْاٰخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللهَ كَثِيْرًا ﴿سورة الاحزاب:٢١﴾

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم و صدق رسوله النبى الكريم و
نحن علىٰ ذٰلك من الشٰهدين والشٰكرين والحمد لله رب العٰلمين

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is none to let go astray whom Allah guides and there is none to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah Alone. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our sire, and our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah send on him on his household and on his Companions his mercy and bless them and send them peace in abundance.

In the messenger of Allah there is a beautiful model for such of you who hopes in Allah and Last Day and remembers Allah a great deal. (33:21)

The Discourse about the Prophet ﷺ is a means to great Blessing

The twelfth of Rabi'ul-Awwal of the Islamic month has assumed the status of regular celebration and festival in our society, in our country and in the Indo-Pak sub-continent. No sooner does the month of Rabi'ul-aw-wal arrives than an endless chain of *Seerat* (Biography of the Prophet ﷺ) and his Birth-Day celebrations commence. Discourses held on the subject of the biography of the Holy Prophet ﷺ are obviously the highest source of blessings for the believers. The difficulty however, in our society is that we confine these blessed and enlightening discourses and speeches only to the month of Rabi'ul-Awwal, rather, only to the twelfth day of this month. This practice is justified by saying that these celebrations are held on this date because this is the date of the blessed arrival of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in this world.

While doing all this we forget to consider what are the teachings of the reverend personality of the Prophet ﷺ on whose sacred biography seminars are being held and whose sacred birth-day is being celebrated. Do the Prophet's teachings contain any hint at the desirability of following such practices?

A Great Event of Human History

No Muslim can have a doubt that the event of the birth of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is the most splendid, blissful and blessed of all the phenomena that ever occurred on the surface of the earth. It was due to this unprecedented phenomenon that the humanity received the light of the Holy Prophet's teachings and the blessings of his unique personality. If Islam had allowed the celebration of the birth-day of any person, then the birth-day of the Holy Prophet ﷺ would have been the greatest celebration and the fittest occasion to be declared as an *Eid* (a joyous festival). The fact, however, is that after having been graced with the Prophetic mission, the Holy Prophet ﷺ lived in this world for twenty three years and witnessed the day of his blessed birth every year but he never thought of celebrating this day as a festival, as people do nowadays. It also never occurred in the mind of any of his Noble Companions رضی الله عنهم that they should celebrate the birthday of the Holy Prophet ﷺ with any zeal and fervor.

The Twelfth of Rabi'ul Awwal and the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم

After leaving behind about one and a quarter Lakh (1,25,000) loyal Companions رضی اللہ عنہم the Holy Prophet ﷺ left this world. The Noble Companions were so faithful, loving, true and devoted that they were ready to sacrifice even their lives for every breath of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. You will however, not find a single Companion who ever took care to celebrate the Prophet's birthday by holding meetings, taking out processions, burning candles or decorating places with flags and doing such other acts of merriment. Why did the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم not care to do so? This is only because Islam is not, like other religions, a religion of customs and festivals. The very existence of other religions depends on observing some rites, customs and formal traditions. On the other hand, Islam is a practical religion in which every Muslim is called upon to live his entire life up to the principles of Islam, reforming his conduct, guarding himself against sins and following the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It is his life long duty from birth till death.

The Origin of Christmas

The idea of celebrating birthdays has crept into our society from the Christians. The birthday of Hazrat Eesa (Jesus Christ) is celebrated in the name of Christmas every year on 25th of December. If you go into the records of history you will find that none thought of celebrating the birthday of Hazrat Eesa علیہ السلام at least for about three hundred years since the date of his ascension. None of his helpers and companions ever celebrated his birthday. This *Bid'ah* (Innovation) was started three hundred years after his leaving the world, by a section of the Christians. Even

at that time the true christians objected to this innovation on the ground that there was no hint in the teachings of Prophet Jesus علیہ السلام at such celebration. The innovators replied by asserting that there was no harm in this, as during such celebrations and gatherings the Prophet علیہ السلام would be remembered along with his teachings and this would induce the people to follow them. On the basis of such flimsy arguments this *Bid'ah* started.

The present Condition of Christmas

In the beginning the Christians used to assemble in a Church and a priest addressed them on the topic of the life and teachings of Hazrat Eesa علیہ السلام and then the assembly would disperse. This innovation started in a harmless and innocent way. Later on they felt that it lacked the colour and glamoaur. To give it colour and jubilation they added to these innocent celebrations music and recitations of poems and with the passage of time merry-making musical concerts, dancing, even drinking gambling, etc., became the hall mark of this celebration. Thus, all immoral activities and festivities came to the foreground driving into the background the teachings of Hazrat Eesa علیہ السلام.

The Fate of Christmas

You may be unaware of the havoc played by this so-called Christmas in the western countries. The wine consumed on this one day exceeds the quantity consumed during full one year. Fatal accidents, rape cases and other evils that occur on this day far surpass the number of casualties and such crimes during the entire year.

The Beginning of the *Meeladun Nabi*

Almighty Allah is well-Aware of the psychology and weaknesses of man. He knew that if the slightest hint was given to him about celebrating someone's birthday, he would make a great fuss out of it. So He left no hint for man in this regard. It is very unfortunate that what happened to "Christmas" also happened to the twelfth day of the Rabi'ul-Awwal. This *Bid'ah* was originated by some king in imitation of "Christmas" celebrations to commemorate the birthday of Hazrat Eesa عليه السلام In the beginning the celebrations of the twelfth Rabi'ul-aw-wal were simple. They contained only some speeches on the Prophet's biography and the recitation of a few eulogistic poems (*Na'at*). Now think for yourself how formidable form this *Bid'ah* has assumed.

This is like a Hindu Festival

It must be admitted that as a miracle of the Holy Prophet ﷺ even after the passage of fourteen centuries, matters concerning the celebrations of his birth-day, have not yet reached the level of the unbridled festivities of the "Christmas". Despite this, paper and wooden structures of the Prophet's mausoleum and of the Ka'bah are set up on the roads and people are seen going round this artificial Ka'bah. Look also at the extensive recordings, expensive illumination of houses and mosques with multi-coloured flags. In all respects these resemble the Hindu and Christian celebrations and have nothing to do with the prophet's birth-day and biography.

This is not an Islamic practice

The worst of this *Bid'ah* is being done in the name of *Deen* (Faith) and in the sacred name of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This is being done in the hope that these activities will bring great credit and reward from Allah. They think that by lighting their streets, their houses and mosques on this day they have paid their due homage to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. If you complain to them about their apathy to *Deen* they will reply that they celebrate the Prophet's birthday, decorate every nook and corner with illuminations and take out processions on this occasion in order to pay tributes to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This is not the way of Islam, nor that of the Holy Prophet ﷺ nor of his Noble Companions رضی الله عنهم. If there had been any good in such celebration then Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضی الله عنه, Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی الله عنه Hazrat Usman Ghani رضی الله عنه and Hazrat Ali Murtaza رضی الله عنه would never have missed these virtues if they were of any notice.

What was the objective of Prophetic Mission?

The Noble Companions رضی الله عنهم did not believe in assemblies and processions, illuminations, flags and decorations. The distinctive feature of their lives was that they had moulded their lives on the pattern of the Holy Prophet's life and had fully imbibed the essence and spirit of his beautiful teachings. Every day that dawned on them and every moment of their lives was for them a day or moment of the Prophet's *Seerah* (the Prophet's biography). Every thing they did, reflected the Prophet's *Sunnah*. They knew full well that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had not been sent to this world to popularise the celebration of his birthday, nor to have his own praise sung in eulogistic poems (*Na'at*) composed and recited in his praise - no nothing of this sort. It is well known that the unbelievers of Makkah offered to make him their

richest man, to give him in marriage the hand of the most beautiful damsel of Arabia or even to appoint him their king on the only condition that he ﷺ relinquished the preaching of his new faith. If the Holy Prophet ﷺ had the slightist inclination towards these offers he would have readily accepted them for the sake of worldly power, fame and authority. What was the Prophet's reaction to these attractive offers? His famous reply was:

I am not going to relinquish my divine mission of preaching Allah's *Deen* even if you place the sun on my one hand and the moon on the other.

Was it the aim of his mission to enforce the celebration of his birthday? The aim of his mission has been mentioned in the Qur'an in the following words:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيْ رَسُوْلِ اللهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُواللهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللهَ كَثِيْرًا ۝ (سورة الاحزاب: ٢١)

That is, in the messenger of Allah there is a beautiful model for such of you as looks for Allah and the last Day and remembers Allah a great deal. (33:21)

Thus this verse makes quite clear the divine intention of the Prophetic mission.

Man needs a model to follow

What is the need of a model when Almighty Allah has revealed His Book (the Qur'an) which we can study and follow its injunctions? It is because man, by his very nature, is incompetent to reform himself or to learn some art or trade only by reading books. Almighty Allah has so constituted man's nature that he must have before his eyes the practical demonstration of a teacher and a model to follow for learning any art or trade.

The "House Job" is compulsory for a new Doctor

If a man commits the folly of taking up the medical profession only by studying books on the medical subject he is doomed to fail in his practice; he can but cause only death and casualties to humanity.

It has, therefore, been prescribed as an international law that a man who passes the M.B.B.S. examination cannot practice as a physician, unless he undergoes a practical training in some hospital for a prescribed period, and observes during this period the practical medication and operations performed on patients under the guidance and supervision of some expert and experienced medical professors or surgeons. This is necessary because he has so far studied the medical science only in books and through class lectures, but he has not yet learnt how to put into practice his book knowledge. He must, therefore, undergo a thorough practical training before he can be given license to practice as a physician or a surgeon.

One cannot prepare stew by reading a book on cookery

Books are available in the market on the art of cooking with detailed recipes for preparing various dishes. If there is a man who has never cooked but wants to cook a dish, say of "stew", by reading the relevant recipe in the book lying open before him, he cannot succeed in preparing the desired dish. He can, however, prepare his desired dish under the instructions and practical demonstration of an expert cook.

The Book alone is not sufficient

Thus, it seems that Almighty Allah has so devised and moulded man's disposition that he cannot take the right course without the practical model of an experienced guide, nor can he learn or practice any art or trade without guidance. That is exactly why Almighty Allah evolved the system of sending to the world Prophets and Messengers عليهم السلام to provide practical demonstration as to how to put into practice the divine injunctions, as this could not be possible only by reading the divine scriptures. Thus Allah sent the last Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to serve as a perfect model for complying with the Qur'anic injunctions.

The Light of the Prophet's teachings is needed

How nicely has the Holy Qur'an expressed this idea in another place!

قَدْ جَآءَكُمْ مِنَ اللهِ نُوْرٌ وَّ كِتَابٌ مُّبِيْنٌ (سورة مائدہ: ۱۵)

A light and a clear Book has come to you from Allah. (5:15)

There is an indication in this verse that if a man has a book, but has no light, whether sunlight, electricity or candle light, he cannot benefit from the contents of the book. If a man has sources of natural or artificial lights but is blind, he too, cannot receive any benefit from books. In the same way Allah sent along with the Qur'an, the guiding light of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ without which you can neither fully understand the injunctions contained in the Qur'an, nor can you comply with them according to Allah's will.

The teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ are themselves light

Some ignorant and inconsiderate people interpret the above quoted Qur'anic verse to mean that the Holy Prophet ﷺ was not a man in his personal capacity but was a "Light". Just think, what is the worth of these electric and other artificial lights as compared with the light of the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ? This verse is telling us that the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ are a kind of light in which you can understand and follow rightly the injunctions of the "Clear Book", that is the Qur'an. Allah sent His Messenger ﷺ to this world that the light of his teachings may provide a practical explanation and demonstration of the Book of Allah before you. For this purpose Allah has made the Prophet's life a complete model, the like of which humanity is unable to produce. You have been commanded to see and follow this model.

The Prophet's life provides a model for every walk of life

If you are a father, then see how Hazrat Fatimah's father ﷺ behaved. If you are a husband, be like the husband of Hazrat 'Ayesha رضی اللہ عنہا and if you are a Ruler, then see how the ruler of Madinah ﷺ ruled over his territory. If you are a labourer, see how the shepherd of Makkah tended his goats on the hills of Makkah. If you are a trader see how the Holy Prophet ﷺ carried on his trade in Syria. The Prophet ﷺ was a businessman, a farmer, a labourer, a politician a ruler and a social being. There is no walk of life for which the Prophet's life does not serve as a perfect model. It is the will of Almighty Allah that men should observe that model and follow it. Allah did not send the Holy Prophet ﷺ that the people should celebrate his birthday by means of joyous

gatherings and processions and then think that they have paid their dues to Allah and His Prophet ﷺ by indulging in these activities. The Holy Prophet ﷺ was sent to the world that he should be followed and obeyed as did his Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم.

An etiquette for Assemblies

The Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم always remained in search of ways and means of following the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It was not a joke to become a Companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Once the Holy Prophet ﷺ was delivering a sermon in his mosque. He ﷺ saw that some men were standing on the sides of the mosque, as persons generally do on such occasions in our times also. This is against the etiquettes of an assembly not to take their seats in the assembly nor leave the place. Such behaviour distracts the attention of the speaker.

An Example of Obedience

The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked the people to sit down. At that moment. Hazrat Abdullah bin Masood رضی اللہ عنہ was at the door and had not yet entered the mosque. Hearing the Prophet's words he رضی اللہ عنہ sat down at the door. When he met the Holy Prophet ﷺ he told Hazrat Abdullah bin Masood رضی اللہ عنہ that he had asked those to sit down who were standing on the sides of the mosque and not him, as he was at the door. Hazrat Abdullah bin Masood replied saying: When the Prophet's order to sit reached my ears I had no courage to take a step forward.

It is not that Hazrat Abdullah bin Masood رضی اللہ عنہ did not understand the real aim of the Prophet's order to sit. He knew it very well but his fondness and love to obey the Prophet ﷺ were so deep rooted that he dared not ignore

the order. It is one thing to make empty claims of love and loyalty and quite another thing to have in the heart true love and loyalty for the Holy Prophet ﷺ. (Abu Dawud. Book of Friday....)

Maintenance of Etiquette on the Battlefield

In the battlefield of Uhud, Hazrat Abu Dujanah رضی اللہ عنہ saw that arrows were being shot at the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Hazrat Abu Dujanah رضی اللہ عنہ wanted to become a protecting shield for the Holy Prophet ﷺ against those arrows. His difficulty was that if he turned his chest against the arrows he would have to turn his back towards the Holy Prophet ﷺ which he did not like: So he stopped the bunch of arrows on his back, keeping his chest towards the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He took care to ensure that he did not commit the slightest disrespect towards the Holy Prophet ﷺ even in a battlefield.

An incident of Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ

Once Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ took up residence in a house quite far off from the Prophet's mosque. On account of distance he could not visit the Prophet's mosque for prayer frequently. He رضی اللہ عنہ, therefore, arranged with one of his neighbours that each of them would go to the Prophet's mosque on alternate days and relate to his companion what he heard from the Holy Prophet ﷺ, so that each would, by this arrangement, remain fully informed of the Holy Prophet's sayings. Thus did the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم devote themselves even to the smallest items of the Prophet's directions and teachings.

I cannot relinquish my master's sunnah

On the occasion of the Treaty of Hudaiybiah Hazrat Usman Ghani رضی اللہ عنہ went to Makkah as an emissary of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. In Makkah he stayed at the house of his cousin. When he left his place in the morning for the place of the conference with the leaders of Makkah, his trousers were above his ankles reaching up to the half of his shins. The Holy Prophet's ﷺ order about this is that it is unlawful to hang the trousers below the ankles. The Prophet's own practice was to keep the trousers up to half of his shins; not lower than that. The cousin of Hazrat Usman Ghani رضی اللہ عنہ told him that it was a mark of honour and dignity among the Arab dignitaries to let their trousers or loin clothes hang down below the ankles. He therefore, suggested to Hazrat Usman Ghani رضی اللہ عنہ to lower his trousers below the ankles, otherwise the leaders of Makkah would look down upon him and the result of the conference might be affected adversely. On hearing this advice of his cousin Hazrat Usman Ghani رضی اللہ عنہ gave this decisive reply:

لا ! هكذا ازرة صاحبنا صلى الله عليه وسلم

No, I cannot lower my trousers, because the trousers of my master remain like that. He did not care at all how the leaders of Makkah would behave with him. He would under no circumstances give up the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. That was not possible for him.

Should I give up the *Sunnah* of Holy Prophet for the sake of these fools

Hazrat Huzaifah ibn Yaman رضی اللہ عنہ is the conqueror of Iran. When Iran was attacked its Ruler, khosroe, invited him to his court for negotiations. When he رضی اللہ عنہ entered

the court, food was served to him as a mark of entertainment, which he began to eat. During eating a morsel of the food fell down on the ground. It is the teaching of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that on such occasions the morsel should be picked up, cleansed and eaten, as it is God's gift of sustenance and none knows which part of the food contains Allah's blessing. When Hazrat Huzaifah رضی اللہ عنہ intended to take up the fallen morsel from the ground, a man sitting by his side tried to stop him from that act, as it might degrade him in the eyes of the King and his courtiers. In reply Hazrat Huzaifah رضی اللہ عنہ uttered this wonderful sentence:

اَاَتْرُكُ سُنَّةَ رَسُوْلِ اللهِ ﷺ لِهٰؤُلَآءِ الْحُمْقٰى؟

That is, "Should I give up the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ for the sake of these fools? I cannot do that, irrespective of what the Iranians thought of him.

He reduced Khosroe's Pride to dust

Now consider! Did this Noble Companion رضی اللہ عنہم attain honour by following the Prophet's *Sunnah* or are we attaining honour by giving up this sacred *Sunnah*? He picked up the fallen morsel from the ground and ate it in compliance with the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and at the same time by bending with disgrace the proud head of Khosroe, he realised this prophecy of the Holy Prophet ﷺ:

اذا هلك كِسرٰى فلا كِسرٰى بعدهٗ

The day Khusroe perishes there will be no Khosroe after him. We all know how Khosroe's name was effaced from the surface of the earth.(Sahih Bukhari. signs of Prophet ﷺ food....)

I shall not give up my usual dress

It happened prior to this event that when Hazrat Hu-

zaifah bin Yaman رضی اللہ عنہ and Hazrat Rub'i bin 'Amir رضی اللہ عنہ proceeded for the negotiations and entered Khosroe's palace, they were in their usual flowing robes which might have possibly become soiled during their long journey. Seeing them in this unworthy dress the gatekeeper stopped them from entering the Court and gave them official cloaks to put on before appearing before the Emperor. Hazrat Rub'i bin 'Amir رضی اللہ عنہ refused to change his dress and said if the Emperor could not tolerate to give him an audience in his own dress he too was not anxious to see the Emperor and would prefer to go back.

A Dialouge with a Courtier

The gatekeeper sent words inside the palace telling that strange persons had arrived who were not prepared to accept a better cloaks. In the mean time Hazrat Rub'i bin 'Amir رضی اللہ عنہ was repairing the broken part of his sword which was wrapped up with pieces of cloth. The gatekeeper desired to see the sword which was handed over to him. On looking at it the gatekeeper said tauntingly: Are you going to conquer Iran with such a sword? Hazrat Rub'i bin 'Amir رضی اللہ عنہ replied: So far you have seen only the sword; you have not yet seen the hand that will use this sword. The gatekeeper desired to see the hand also. Hazrat Rub'i bin 'Amir asked him to procure the strongest shield available. The strongest iron shield was brought which, it was believed, no sword could cut or break. A man stood with that shield before Hazrat Rub'i bin 'Amir. He struck the shield with his sword with such force that it was broken into two pieces. The people present there to see the test were amazed at the strength of Hazrat Rub'i bin 'Amir's arm and wondered what kind of men they were.

It is they who conquered Iran

Thereafter, the gatekeeper sent words to the Emperor, telling him that a strange people had arrived who refused to put on the Emperor's official robe and one of them had cut in two the strongest shield with a broken sword. At last they were called in.

It was the custom of Khosroe's court that he was sitting on his throne, while his courtiers remained standing before him. Hazrat Rub'i bin 'Amir told Khosroe that they followed the teachings of the Holy Prophet, Muhammad ﷺ who disliked the custom one man sitting, while the rest were standing before him. They could therefore, not take part in the negotiations, unless arrangements were made for all to sit or Khosroe too stood up like others.

When Khosroe saw that they were insulting him he ordered them to be sent away with a basket full of dust placed on the head of the leader. The Emperor's order was obeyed at once. While leaving Khosroe's court with the basket of dust on his head, Hazrat Rub'i bin 'Amir رضی اللہ عنہ spoke these words: O Khosroe! Remember that you have gifted to us the dust of Iran. The people present there who heard those words thought that it was a very bad omen. They, therefore, sent their men to get back the basket of dust, but Hazrat Rub'i bin 'Amir رضی اللہ عنہ could not be overtaken. This is because Almighty Allah had ordained that those people with broken swords were the custodians of Iran's soil.

Why are the Muslims humiliated today?

It is the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم of the Holy Prophet ﷺ who subjugated the world as a result of their unflinching compliance with the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Today we feel ashamed in acting upon the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ, and we think that if we comply with a *Sunnah*

of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, the people of the world, including the English, the French, etc. will laugh at us. The obvious result is that we Muslims have lost our prestige and are being ridiculed and humiliated everywhere.

Today the Muslims make one-third of the world population and they are larger in number and richer in material resources than they were ever before. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had, however, prophesied that a time would come when the Muslims would be in a large number, yet they would be like straws floating on the surface of flood water, Today we have gone down to a position in which we have sacrificed everything to please our enemies. We have given up our character, our good deeds and have altered our appearances and form, in fact everything from head to feet to show that we are their slaves. Even then they are not pleased with us. How disgraceful it is for the Muslims that they are being constantly smitten by one nation or another! It must be borne in mind that when a Muslim turns his back on the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ he should expect nothing except humiliation and disgrace.

Do not be afraid of being laughed at

Asad Multani رحمة الله عليه was a good poet who has composed very good poems full of wisdom and wise morals.

کسی کا آستانہ اونچا ہے اتنا
کہ سر جھک کر بھی اونچا ہی رہے گا
ہنسے جانے سے جب تک تم ڈرو گے
زمانہ تم پر ہنستا ہی رہے گا

The meaning of these lines, in a nut shell, is that the more you feel afraid of being laughed at by the people, the more they will laugh at you. On the other hand, if you will place your head at a highly raised threshold of someone high your head will, in spite of being lowered down, remain at a higher level.

Thus, if you place your head at the feet of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and follow his sunnah you will achieve honour, dignity and authority.

A believer is bound to follow the *Sunnah*

A question is frequently asked. It is alleged that we have been doomed to disgrace and humiliation for having abandoned the *Sunnah*. As against this, the unbelievers of the advanced countries of America, Europe and also some eastern countries are enjoying honour, peace and power and worldly gifts of life. Whose *Sunnah* are these unbelievers following?

The answer to this question is not far to seek. Almighty Allah has granted you, by His mercy, the wealth of *Iman* and you have pronounced the *Kalimah* (Article of Faith) of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. So, you will not be safe from being smitten and disgraced, unless you surrender yourself completely to Allah and follow sincerely and submissively His Prophet ﷺ. As for the unbelievers, they have no share in the bounties and blessings of the Hereafter. If they are placed in authority, wealth, honour and progress in this world, you should not apply their analogy to yourself. Just go through the pages of history encompassing these fourteen centuries. You will surely find that as long as the Muslims complied with the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, they enjoyed, Power, Authority, Honour and Grandeur. They however, went down the abyss of humiliation want and poverty when they relinquished the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Review your own life

We all take part in religious gatherings and listen to sermons, yet it hardly brings any change in our lives. Let us resolve today to review what are the *Sunnah* acts which we are doing and those which we are ignoring. Which are

those acts of the *Sunnah* which we can start immediately and those which call for a little time. The acts which we can start immediately must be started from today. As for acts which call for time, we should give them that time so as to be able to start them as early as possible.

Become a Beloved of Allah

Our Dr. Abdul Hayi Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to advise us that, while going to the toilet, we should enter it first with the left foot and recite this *Du'a* (supplication):

"اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّی اَعُوْذُبِكَ مِنَ الْخُبْثِ وَالْخَبَائِثِ"

O Allah I seek refuge with you from wickedness and wicked spirits.

While reciting this, form the intention in your heart that you are doing this in compliance with the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. By so doing you will become a beloved of Allah because Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

فَاتَّبِعُوْنِیْ یُحْبِبْكُمُ اللّٰهُ (سورۃ ال عمران: ۳۱)

This means: (O Prophet! ﷺ say): If you follow me Allah will love you. (3:31)

Thus, if man forms the habit of doing small acts of *Sunnah* he will be taken into the attribute of belovedness and when he becomes a perfect follower of the *Sunnah* he will become a perfect beloved of Allah.

Dr. Abdul Hayi Sahib رحمة الله عليه related to us a practice of his in this way: When food was brought before him, he liked the food and was also feeling hungry, but he refrained for a moment from taking that food. The next moment he remembered the sacred *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that when, delicious food was placed before him ﷺ he would thank Allah then take the food. Following the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, Dr. Sahib also took the

food placed before him. By taking his food in this way he complied with the *Sunnah,* satisfied his hunger and, what is more he became a beloved of Allah.

Follow this practice

While entering your house. You see that a child is playing and you feel inclined to take it up in your lap, but you refrain for a moment from taking the child up. The next moment you remember that the Holy Prophet ﷺ was very fond of, and kind to, children and he used to pick them up in his lap. Thinking all this you too take up the child in your lap in compliance with the Prophets' practice. This act of yours will make you beloved of Allah. There is no act in this world in which one cannot make the intention to follow the Prophet's sunnah. A book named *uswa-e-rasool-e-akram* ﷺ has been published and is readily available. Get a copy of it, keep it before you and with its help introduce the *Sunnah* in your life gradually and one by one. In a few days you will be able to realize the light of the *Sunnah*. In this way every day of your life will become a seerah Day of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

May Allah help us all to act on these lines. *Aameen.*

Venue : Jame'Masjid No'man,
Lasbela Chowk,
Karachi.

Date : Friday, 12 Rabi'ul-Awwal
1405 A.H.,
After 'Asr Prayers

In the gatherings held in the name of discoursing about the life of the Prophet ﷺ we indulge during these discourses in acts which are totally against the injunctions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. In these gatherings we mention the sacred name of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, talk about his *Sunnah,* but in actual practice we ridicule the teachings, *Sunnah* and his guidance with which he ﷺ was sent to this world. This is highly regrettable, indeed.

ON THE CELEBRATIONS OF MILAD

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا نبينا ومولانا محمداً عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيْ رَسُوْلِ اللهِ اُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو اللهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْاٰخِرَ وَ ذَكَرَ اللهَ كَثِيْرًا ﴿سورة الاحزاب: ٢١﴾

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم و صدق رسوله النبى الكريم و

نحن علىٰ ذٰلك من الشٰهدين والشٰكرين والحمد لله رب العالمين

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is no one to let go astray whom Allah guides and there is no one to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah Alone. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our authority, our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah send on him, on his household and on his Companions his mercy and bless them and send peace on them in abundance.

Indeed, you have beautiful model for such of you as looks for Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah a great deal. (33:21)

I believe in Allah, Allah our Master has truly said and said His Messenger the truth. We bear witness to their truth and are thankful to them. We Praise Allah the Lord of the world.

The Blessed Discourses about the Holy Prophet ﷺ

To mention the biographical anecdotes of the Prophet's sacred life is a source of great blessing and fortune. To talk about no one's biographical sketches who lived or is living in this world is so praiseworthy and rewarding as to talk about the Holy Prophet's sacred life. Notwithstanding thus, we have begun to mention in these gatherings of the Prophet's birthday celebrations unauthantic and baseless anecdotes. So we do not reap the true reward and benefit from these birthday gatherings.

The sacred Biography of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the attitude of the Noble Companions رضى الله عنهم

One of the serious mistakes we commit on this auspicious occasion is that we have confined these speeches, addresses or the celebration exclusively to the month of Rab'iul Awwal and that too only to one day and only to a few hours of that day. We think that by so doing we have done full justice to the discourse about the Prophet's sacred "*Seerat*" (biography). This is indeed a great rather the greatest, injustice to the Holy Prophet's biography.

We find the no traces of such trends in the lives of the Noble Companions رضى الله عنهم of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. You will also not get a single occasion in their lives on which they ever celebrated the twelfth day of the month of Rab'iul-Awwal or held special gatherings in this month to celebrate the Prophet's birthday. On the other hand, every moment of their life reflected a remembrance of the Prophet's beautiful biography. Whenever two Companions رضى الله عنهم met, they talked about the Prophet's Ahadth, his teachings and different events and aspects of his ﷺ sacred life. In this way every gathering or meeting of the Noble Companions رضى الله عنهم was a meeting of discussion on the Prophet's biography. As such, they did not require any formal celebration or procession in the name of the birthday of the Prophet ﷺ to express the love of, and attachment they had with, the Holy Prophet ﷺ not a single instance of such showy and formal activities can be produced from the times of the Noble Companions, رضى الله عنهم the Tabi'een and their followers.

Islam is not the Faith of formalities

In fact it was not the practice of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم to indulge in formal and showy processions and celebrations. They had imbibed the very spirit of the *Sunnah* and the practices of the Prophet's sacred life. They always tried to understand why the Holy Prophet ﷺ had came to this world, what were his mission and teachings and what he ﷺ expected from the world concerning his mission. The Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم had devoted their entire lives to reflection on, and promotion of, such ideals concerning the Faith; they were not after such formal, empty and showy celebrations and processions which we have borrowed from the non-Muslims, like Christians and Hindus. We invented the festival of celebrating the Prophet's birthday in blind imitation of these infidel nations living around us who celebrate the birthdays and death anniversaries of their prominent leaders. We fail to consider that these so-called leaders of the infidels did not possess lives worthy of being followed; they were only either political leaders or leaders in some other field of worldly activities. These leaders were not, in general, men to be emulated on account of some moral spiritual or religious distinction.

The life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is a perfect model

As for the Holy Prophet ﷺ, the very divine intention of sending him to this world was that he ﷺ should present a perfect practical model for the entire humanity, so that men may follow his way of life and try to mould their own lives on the pattern available in the Holy Prophet's *Sunnah*. Every moment of his life is a valuable example for us to follow. As Muslims, it is a binding on all of us to imitate the Prophet's

life to the best of our abilities. The Holy Prophet ﷺ should not be compared to any other leader of the world in memory of whom a particular day relating to his life is celebrated and the matter ends there. Every day of our lives is a day to celebrate the memory of the Prophet's life concerning everything we do or say, Allah sent him ﷺ to this world to serve as a complete model till the Day of Judgement.

We are not sincere in our Intentions

It is true that *Seerah* (biographical) meetings are held from place to place and speeches are delivered therein about the sacred life and practices of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. However good and appreciable this action may be in itself, it will not produce the desired effect in the heart of the doer of that action unless he is true and sincere in his intention. If the action is not based on sincere intentions it is fruitless. At times such actions may become harmful and even sinful. For example, how highly dignified is the prayer! It is an act of worship of Almighty Allah. The Qur'an and the Ahadith are full of its virtues and importance, this dignified worship goes waste, if anyone does it only to show it to the people, so that they may regard him as a very pious and righteous man. It is not only useless, but it is possible that such worship may attract punishment instead of reward. It is said in a Hadith:

من صلی یرائی فقد اشرك یالله

This means: He who prays only to show his praying to the people, commits the grievous sin of attributing a partner to Allah.

This is quite obvious, because he is not praying to please Allah, but he is praying to please the people and to impress upon them that he is a pious and righteous man. It

is just as if he has made someone a partner in the Divinity of Allah. An action so virtuous and elevated as prayer became a sin for want of sincerity of intention.

The same applies to those who arrange and take part in assemblies held for having discourses and speeches on the sacred life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It is no doubt an act of great virtue and reward which may produce revolutionary results, if such assemblies are arranged and attention in right earnest and, true intention, sincerity of purpose and warmth of faith. If there is a man or a group that participates in *Seerah* (Biography of the Prophet ﷺ) Assemblies and processions, devoid of sincere intentions but prompted only by some hidden, worldly purposes and not in honour of and obedience to him ﷺ in whose sacred name these celebrations are being staged, then all this is a bad bargain. To all appearance these activities are very righteous deeds, but in reality they are sins incurring Allah's wrath and punishment.

Adultrated intentions

If we review our attitude and activities from this angle of vision to find if the gatherings we are holding and the celebrations we are staging on the twelfth of Rabi'ul-Awwal are to please Allah and follow the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and to make his teachings the guiding light of our lives, the result will be disappointing. There may be a few sincere persons attending these functions to reform their lives, but on the whole, the intention of holding these glamourous shows is something else. Some local groups usually arrange for purposes other than religion. There may be a group participating in these celebrations, so that people may praise the grandeur illumination and the number of the audience, the number of the speakers taking part and their formal high worded, well-prepared speeches eleciting applause

from the listeners. At places assemblies may be held to gain some political advantage or some sectarian attainment, not possible to attain it through open and direct approaches to the public. The general practice on such occasions is to open the meetings with a few words devoted to the topic of the prophet's ﷺ biography then to shoot, accusations and charges against the rival parties or sects in cleverly concealed words. These assemblies are held, in general, for such irreligious and mundane purposes.

The functions are attended to please the friends

The form and method of these celebrations would have been totally different had they been intended to sincerely seek guidance from them. These birthday celebrations take the form of private functions in which invitation cards are issued and displeasure is expressed against those who do not attend the functions held in the name of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Those attending these functions do not do so out of love for the Prophet ﷺ, but they participate in such functions only to avoid resentment and complains of the patrons of the function arranged to please men and the society and not Allah and His Prophet ﷺ.

Enjoying the oratory and force of the orator's speeches

Sometimes a person attends this function to enjoy the exciting speech of a famous speaker because he is renowned for his firy and thrilling speeches. In short, this gentleman is going to attend the birthday Assembly only to satisfy his lust for enjoying the sophisticated, well studied speeches and not to take any useful lessons from the sacred life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Just to while away spare time

Some people attend *seerah* assemblies for no purpose other than whiling away their spare time in listening to speeches, enjoying the lights and decoration and thus having a good time. It is obvious that a good number of men attending these auspicious assemblies have no special interest in listening to the speeches and learning lesson from the sacred *sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ projected in these assemblies. They attend them, as mentioned above, to satisfy their own desires. Although even while attending these gathering, in such a carefree and amusing mood, a man may be moved by some word or point and his life may be reformed, yet this happens in very exceptional cases. People in general do not participate in the gatherings with sincere intention to learn lessons from the life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

The Prophet's life guides those whom Allah wills

The Holy Qur'an declares:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيْ رَسُوْلِ اللهِ اُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ

You have a beautiful model in the Prophet ﷺ of Allah. (33:21)

In the light of this Qur'anic verse, it may be emphasized that the Prophet's sacred life is a beacon of light, a message of guidance and a complete, flawless model. It is, however, a beautiful model only for such people as desire to please Almighty Allah, have unflinching belief in the Hereafter and want to ameliorate their Hereafter, and are busy most often with the remembrance of Allah. So the Prophet's life is a message of guidance only for those who are endowed with these attributes and qualities. There is no guarantee that the Prophet's life will prove a guiding

light also for those who are devoid of these qualities, particularly, belief in the Hereafter and a desire to reform and beautify it. The light of the Prophet shone brightly even before Abu Jahl and Abu Lahab, but they could not receive any benefit from that light.

بران که درلطافت طبعش خلاف نیست
درباغ لاله روید و در شوره بوم و خس

This persian couplet means: The rain-water has the same refreshing and reviving properties, but in the gardens it brings out the beautiful crimson tulip flowers but it brings out the useless, thorny shrubs in the saline, barren lands. The meaning of this couplet applies with equal force to these two wretched infidels into whose hearts the light of the Prophet's life could not penetrate, as they neither believed in, nor had they any desire to prepare for their Hereafter, nor to please Allah. What effect can the discourse about the sacred life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ have on such errant and hard-hearted persons?

Most often we are not sincere and true in our intentions in organising these assemblies and the birthday celebrations. The result of all this is that no change for the better takes place in our lives even after listening to thousands of speeches on the Prophet's life and after attending thousands of gatherings held in the month of Rabi'ul Awwal in every nook and corner of the country. The temptation to commit sins and enjoy worldly pleasures is not at all eradicated or even reduced through these celebrations.

A Fun is being made of the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

Moreover, during these assemblies held on the subject of the Prophet's life we indulge in activities which are

totally opposed to the injunctions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This is nothing but making a fun of the *Sunnah*, the teachings and the guidance of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. These are topics on which we are delivering, and listening to, and attending full-throated speeches, without paying any serious attention to them.

Seerat Assemblies and the violation of *Purdah*

It is an increasing practice in our society that male and female joint gatherings are held on the topic of *Seerah*. This is being done in flagrant violation of the command of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The command lays down that if women have to offer prayer they should do this in their houses instead of going to mosque. Even in the house women have been commanded to pray not in the courtyard, but in a room, rather in a separate small room. This is the command of the Holy Prophet ﷺ about *Purdah,* but in an assembly held to talk about his life and *Sunnah* men and women are present side by side. None feels how fun is being made of the *Seerah* Assemblies. Women are participating in the assemblies alongwith men with glamorous make-up, in attractive dresses and without *Purdah.*

Music in *Seerah* assemblies

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said that one of the important duties for the sake of which he ﷺ was sent to this world was the total eradication of music and the forms of musical instruments. What an irony of fate it is that meetings are held in the name of *seerah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in which his praise "*Na't*" is sung to the accompaniment of musical instruments along with *Qawwali* "*Shareef* " (a special musical performance of the mystics). This *Qawwali* is called "*Shareef* " meaning pious. No difference is made

between the songs sung in praise of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and song on other worldly themes. What a greater fun one can make of the sacred, theme of the Holy Prophet ﷺ! More than this, both men and women are taking part in the Radio and Television *Seerah* programmes together with female partners with highly attractive make-up, showy attires and without *Purdah.* Is she not the same women about whom the Qur'an has said?

وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَىٰ (سورة الاحزاب: ٣٣)

That is, do not display your features (before men) as you used to display in the early days of Ignorance.

What a greater wrong and disrespect can be done to the pious *Na't* (praise) and *Seerah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that such ornately prepared women are taking part in these *Seerah* celebrations by delivering speeches and singing *Na't* along with males. You are in a great delusion if you think that this behaviour and conduct on your part will attract Allah's mercy. You are trying to efface the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, to violate his teachings and ridiculing his sacred *Seerah*. These are sins which can invite only Allah's wrath and punishment. While holding the *Seerah* meetings and making speeches on his *Sunnah,* we flagrantly violate and disobey the Prophet's teachings. May Allah guide us on to the right path.

Missing Prayers during *Seerah* Assemblies

In the beginning only some rules of the *Shari'ah* were violated during participation in these *Seerah* gatherings and none minded this, but with the passage of time things have gone too far. People involved in managing these gatherings and listening to the speeches delivered

therein forget to offer their prayers and miss them quite frequently. These gatherings with their programmes continue till two O'clock in the night and the Fajr prayer is missed deliberately. The injunctions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ about the importance of prayer are violated, although he ﷺ has emphasized in his injunctions that if a man who misses his one ʿAsr prayer is like one who loses all his property and all the members of his family: What a tremendous loss indeed! How strange it is that, we are busy with an apparently sacred programme concerning the Holy Prophet's life and at the same time we are freely violating his ﷺ imperative command regarding the protection and preservation of the obligatory Prayers!

Disturbing the Muslims through *Seerah* Gatherings

The *Seerah* programmes are in progress with only about two or three dozens of participant but a very big loud speaker has been installed which is transmitting the speeches of the speakers at its full volume disturbing all living in the surrounding area. This means that no sick, old or disabled person of the area can sleep as long as the programmes are going on. Was this the pious conduct of the Holy Prophet ﷺ?

When the Holy Prophet ﷺ got up at night for the *Tahajjud* prayer, as narrated by Hazrat ʿAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا he rose from his bedding very quietly, and opened the door also quietly, lest ʿAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا should be awakened from her sleep. As for the Holy Prophet's behaviour in an obligatory duty like the Prayer, he ﷺ is reported to have said: When I hear during prayer a child weeping I shorten the prayer, lest by hearing the child's weeping his mother should be in distress. But look! What is being done in these *Seerah* celebrations. Such powerful loudspeakers are installed unnecessarily only for the sake of two to three dozen participants with the result that an old and sick person cannot sleep in his house peacefully. Those responsible for all this are ignorant of the fact that by so doing they are committing grievous and major sins, because to cause distress to a Muslim is a major sin. Yet nobody is mindful of this serious situation. (Nasaee. Book of ten women..... Hadith no: 3963)

Taking out processions in imitation of others

All these activities prove that we are not true in our intentions - which are concentrated on something other than adopting and acting upon the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. As already mentioned, in the beginning our activities are confined only to holding gatherings and meetings at various places. Crossing this limit we have now gone ahead to the extent of taking out processions on the plea that such and such sect takes out processions in remembrance of the name of its Imam in a particular month. Why should we, too, not take out processions in Rabiʿul-Awwal in the name of our Prophet ﷺ? In other words, in taking out processions in the month of Rabiʿul-Awwal we are imitating the sect that takes out processions in the month of Muharram. By so doing we are only deluding ourselves into the belief that we are following the commands of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and are doing full justice to his ﷺ dignity and honour.

Would the Holy Prophet ﷺ appreciate the processions, if he ﷺ was ever to see them which are being taken out in his name? Our Holy Prophet ﷺ has always taught this *Ummah* to refrain from such formal and showy processions and demonstrations. He ﷺ has commanded us that instead of hankering after showy, useless and formal activities like these, we should resort to his sacred teachings and try to make them the guiding light of our lives. No-

body can point out a single instance from the pious lives of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم that they ever took out any procession in the month of Rabi'ul-Awwal or any other month of the year in the name of the Prophet's *Seerah* (biography). I at least have not come across even a single evidence during the history of this entire period of thirteen centuries which may prove that anyone ever took out such a profession. It is, however, true that the Shia community takes out processions in the month of Muharram in the name of their Imams. We also become tempted to take out processions in the name of our Prophet ﷺ in imitation of the *Shi'as,* in violation of this Hadith of the Prophet ﷺ.

من تشبه بقوم فهو منهم

(Abu Dawood,Book garments... Hadith no: 4031)

A man who tries to make resemblance with any community becomes one of them.

It is a pity that we have not confined our activities to taking out only processions. We have gone too far beyond that. Now we are making images of the sacred Ka'bah the sacred *Rozah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ including the green dome. A large number of men, women and children visit these images and touch them with their hands for blessing and ask for boons there and vow offerings for some need and the fulfilment of some desire. And all this is in the name of the sacred *Seerah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The Holy Prophet ﷺ was sent to this world to efface from the surface of the earth, apostasy, idolatry, *Bid'ah,* and ignorance, but today we have started all these innovations and sinful practices in the very name of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The image of the mausoleum of the Holy Prophet ﷺ which you have made with your own hands has absolutely no virtue in it. Yet this false and artificial image is being touched and

kissed for blessings. May Allah save us from this.

Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ and the Hajr-e-Aswad

At the time of Kissing the Black stone Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ said:

O Black Stone! I know that you are nothing more than a piece of stone. By Allah, I would never have kissed you, if I had not seen the Holy Prophet ﷺ kissing you. I am kissing you only because I have seen the Holy Prophet ﷺ kissing you and because this is his *Sunnah.* (Sahih Bukhari chapter on Hajj - Black stone, Hadith no: 1597)

This is what Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ said to the Black Stone, but here we have made with our own hands a Green Dome, and an image of the Ka'bah which are regarded as a source of blessing and which are being kissed. This is reviving what the Holy Prophet ﷺ had uprooted. There is illumination, record-playing, musical entertainments and enjoyments. Festivals are held in the name of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This is an excuse for turning the *Deen* (Faith) into a play and sport, which Satan has taught us to do. I appeal to you to have, for Allah's sake, mercy on your souls and do full justice to the dignity and honour of the Prophet's *seerah.* The Prophet's dignity and honour demand of us that we should try to mould our lives on the pattern of the Prophet's sacred practice.

For the sake of Allah change this practice

How many people attend these meetings with the intention that they shall change their practices according to the *Sunnah*? If they are deviating fifty of the Prophetic Practices after listning to these sermons they shall correct at least ten of them. Is there a single soul who changed himself like this? They are, however always ready to devote their time,

effort and spend money to take out processions, stage festivals, erect arches and arrange illuminations, because they receive joy and satisfaction from such activities. On the other hand neither the Self nor Satan are pleased with the real conduct and course of life shown by the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

An Appeal

I appeal, in the name of Allah, to relinquish this misconduct and disobedience and do full justice to the dignity and honour of the Holy Prophet ﷺ by strictly following his teachings. May Almighty Allah help us all to follow the straight path of his *sunnah*. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوٰنا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

And we close with the call that the praise
be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

Venue : Jame'Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.

Date : Friday 21st February, 1992
After 'Asr Prayers.

Values and views have totally changed today. Now respected, honoured and worthy of public attention is he who has dignity, high status, high office and wealth. On the other hand, he, who is weak in worldly resources, poor and who belongs to a lower profession, has neither respect, nor honour, nor public attention; he is rather treated with contempt. Remember well that such conduct has nothing to do with *Deen* (Faith).

DO NOT DESPISE THE POOR

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم بسم لله الرحمٰن الرحيم

وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِيْنَ يَدْعُوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدٰوةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيْدُوْنَ وَجْهَهٗ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ(سورة الكهف: ٢٨)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم وصدق رسوله النبى الكريم ونحن على ذلك من الشاهدين

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is no one to misguide whom Allah guides and there is no one to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah Alone. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our authority, our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah have mercy on him, his household and on his Companions and bless them and send peace on them in great abundance.

Restrain yourself along with those who call their Lord in the morning and the evening seeking His countenance and let not your eyes overlook them. (18:28)

Allama Nuwawi رحمة الله عليه has framed another chapter, viz., "باب فضل ضعفة المسلمين والفقراء والخاملين" The subject of this chapter deals with the virtues of such Muslims as are financially and socially weak.

These people are not weak

The intention of touching this topic is to invite attention to a sad state of affairs, that people whom Almighty Allah has granted some status in worldly life, e.g., wealth, rank and fame, etc. generally look down upon the people in the lower class of the society and treat them with contempt. They are being told, as a warning, that they should not despise those

who appear to be weak financially or bodily or in status. May be that such less privileged people are more respectable in the sight of Allah than those in the upper grade of the society. Allama Nuwawi رحمة الله عليه has, therefore, opened this chapter with a relevant verse of the Holy Qur'an:

وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِيْنَ يَدْعُوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدٰوةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيْدُوْنَ وَجْهَهٗ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنٰكَ عَنْهُمْ (سورة الكف: ٢٨)

This verse has been addressed to the Holy Prophet ﷺ saying "Restrain yourself along with those who call their Lord in the morning and the evening, seeking His countenance and let not your eyes overlook them".

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is asked not to refrain from paying attention to those who are poor, low in status and who belong to the depressed classes of the society.

Who are the beloved of Allah?

There is no Muslim who is not aware of the intimate relations existing between Almighty Allah and the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He ﷺ is most beloved in the sight of Allah of all that is in the universe, so much so that the entire Qur'an abounds in his ﷺ praise. Allah has said:

اِنَّآ اَرْسَلْنٰكَ شَاهِدًا وَّمُبَشِّرًا وَّنَذِيْرًا ۙ وَّدَاعِيًا اِلَى اللّٰهِ بِاِذْنِهٖ وَسِرَاجًا مُّنِيْرًا ۝ (سورة الاحزاب: ٤٥، ٤٦)

"(O Prophet ﷺ!) We have indeed sent you as a witness and a bringer of good tidings and a warner; and a summoner to Allah by His permission and as an illuminating lamp. (33:45-46)

Whenever Almighty Allah decides to praise His beloved Prophet ﷺ, He is very generous in using beautiful words of praise.

A Loving Indifference

There are two or three places in the Holy Qur'an where Almighty Allah has expressed towards the Holy Prophet ﷺ a little, mild reproof in a lover's style, showing His disapproval of some action of the Prophet ﷺ. One of these is the incident mentioned in the 80th Surah of the Holy Qur'an. It so happened that once a few leaders of the unbelievers were on a visit to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Considering that preaching Islam to them would be more profitable for the cause of Islam, he ﷺ became more attentive to them. In the meantime Hazrat Abdullah ibn Umme Maktoom also came to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He was a blind Companion whom the Holy Prophet ﷺ had also appointed as a Muazzin of his mosque. He began to ask the Holy Prophet ﷺ some questions about some religious points. As he was the Prophet's follower he ﷺ ignored him for the moment and continued talking to the leaders of the unbelievers. The Prophet's ﷺ idea was that if these leaders embraced Islam their entire clans would become muslims. Almighty Allah did not appreciate this conduct of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and revealed this verse :

"عَبَسَ وَتَوَلّٰى اَنْ جَآءَهُ الْاَعْمٰى"

In this verse the Holy Prophet ﷺ has been addressed in the third person as:

He frowned and turned away, because the blind man came to him. (80:1-2)

(This shows that Allah did not appreciate this act of the Holy Prophet ﷺ).

Allah further said:

وَمَا يُدْرِيْكَ لَعَلَّهٗ يَزَّكّٰٓى ۝ اَوْ يَذَّكَّرُ فَتَنْفَعَهُ الذِّكْرٰى

What could make you (O Prophet ﷺ!)know that he might perhaps become reformed or take head, so the reminder night benefit him. (80:3-4)

اَمَّا مَنِ اسْتَغْنٰى فَاَنْتَ لَهٗ تَصَدّٰى ۝

As for him who thinks that he is independent, you pay attention to him. (80:5-6)

وَمَا عَلَيْكَ اَلَّا يَزَّكّٰى ۝

Yet, it is not the responsibility of your's if they (the leaders) do not reform themselves. (80:7)

وَاَمَّا مَنْ جَآءَكَ يَسْعٰى ۝ وَهُوَ يَخْشٰى ۝ فَاَنْتَ عَنْهُ تَلَهّٰى ۝

As for him who hurries up to you in right earnest and feels afraid, you are unmindful of him. (80:8-10).

The seeker (of guidance) has a preference

All this was a very mild reproof to the Holy Prophet ﷺ, as if from a lover to his beloved. It was never the intention of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to ignore the weak and the poor blind man in preference to the rich and powerful leaders of the unbelievers. The Holy Prophet ﷺ considered it better to attend to the leaders first to convey the Truth. His own blind, poor Companion could be attended later on. Yet Allah did not appreciate even this inattention and explained that the man who had come seeking guidance had a preference over the one who had come without no crave for knowledge.

Although these verses have been addressed to the Holy Prophet ﷺ yet through them the entire Ummah has been taught that they should not despise anyone who looks to be poor and weak, because no one knows that this poor man may enjoy a respectable place and position in the sight of Allah.

Who are the people of Paradise?

The first Hadith which Allama Nuwawi رحمة الله عليه has cited under this chapter is as follows:

عن حارثة بن وهب رضى الله عنه قال" سمعت رسول الله صلى عليه وسلم يقول الا اخبر كم باهل الجنة؟ كل ضعيف متضعف لو اقسم على الله لا بره الا اخبر كم باهل النار؟ كل عتل جواظ مستكبر" (صحيح بخارى، كتاب الادب، باب البر، حديث نمبر ٦٠٧١)

(Sahih Bukhari, Book of Etiquettes; Kibr (pride), Hadith no: 6071.

Addressing the Noble Companions, the Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said: Should I not tell you who are the people of Paradise ? Then he ﷺ himself said in reply: Every one who is weak, financially or bodily or weak in rank and status and the people of the world also look down upon such a person yet that weak person may be so beloved in the sight of Allah that if he takes an oath for anything, Allah fulfils his oath. In other words, if he swears that this and this shall happen Allah, by His mercy, shall cause that to happen as desired by the weak and low person, because he is Allah's beloved. Allah rewards His love in this way.

Almighty Allah fulfils their oath

It Occurs in a Hadith that once two women fought with each other and one of them broke a tooth of the other. According to the Islamic *Shari'ah* judgment was passed that a tooth of the criminal should also be broken. On hearing this punishment the guardian of the criminal uttered these words in the presence of the Holy Prophet ﷺ:

والذى بعثك بالحق لاتكسر ثنيها

(I swear by Him who has sent you with the truth that her tooth shall not be broken).

The guardian of the criminal did not mean to object to the Holy Prophet's judgment, nor was he malicious in any way. He uttered these words, depending on Allah's Omnipotence that circumstances might arise suddenly in which the judgment might not be executed. As the man did not utter those words by way of an objection to the Prophet's ﷺ judgment the Prophet ﷺ did not feel offended at his words.

Retaliation has been prescribed in Islam: tooth for tooth, eye for eye subject to the condition that if the person wronged or his guardians forgive the wrongdoer, then retaliation will be waived. It so happened in this case that the woman whose tooth was broken agreed to forgive the offender so it was not executed. On that occasion the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: Some men are dearly loved by Allah, yet outwardly they are in bad condition; with dishevelled hair, are so weak and repulsive that if they call at anyone's door, they shall be driven out by force. They are, however, so honourable in the sight of Allah that if they take an oath, Allah will fulfil for them their oath. This is also one such favoured person that he swore that the tooth of the criminal would not be broken and Allah fulfiled the oath by inducing the woman wronged to forgive the criminal and give up retaliation. (Sahih Bukhari, book of Compromise.. ransom Hadith no: 2703)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has referred in the Hadith to the same point, viz., there is a man apparently weak and depressed, but he is pious and righteous, closely attached to Allah and deeply devoted to Him. Such a man is so dear to Allah that if he takes an oath for anything Allah fulfils his oath, such persons are the habitants of Paradise.

Who are the people of Hell?

Thereafter the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: Should I not tell you who are the people of Hell? Then he ﷺ said:

"كل عتل جواظ مستكبر"

A person who is ill-tempered, ill-mannered and talks very rudely and is never polite in speech is generally seen in angry mood, and despises others, and has other vices is called "عتل" (*utual*)'. The other word is "جواظ" (*Jawwaz*) which means a person who is fussy highly irritable and has a frowning face, too haughty to talk to ordinary people. He regards it an insult to talk to those who are weak, poor and depressed and low in rank and position. He always remains in a proud mood. The third word is مستكبر (*Mustakbir*) which means a person who is arrogant and thinks that he is far superior to others. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said that people having these evil traits are inmates of Hell.

The people who possess great excellence

In this Hadith it has been pointed out that people should never look down upon those who are poor and in lower grades of the society, because they have great excellence and value in the sight of Allah. The community of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم who embraced Islam at the hand of the Holy Prophet ﷺ consisted of persons of different economic and social status. Their majority came from the poorer classes, yet they attended the Prophet's assemblies without any discrimination shown to them. On one side sat highly affluent Companions رضی اللہ عنہم like Hazrat Abdur-Rahman bin 'Auf رضی اللہ عنہ and Hazrat Usman Ghani رضی اللہ عنہ and on the other side sat poor companions like Hazrat Bilal, Hazrat Salman, the Persian and Hazrat Suhaib Rumi رضی اللہ عنہم who frequently suffered from Hunger.

These starving People!

Once the unbelievers of Makkah told the Holy Prophet ﷺ that they were prepared to call upon him and listen to him but they were prevented from doing this because he was always surrounded by poor and starving persons. They said that to sit along with such degraded persons was below their dignity and status. They proposed that they should be invited to see him ﷺ in separate meetings. There was apparently no harm in accepting their request in the interest of Islam. As it involved a point of principle, Allah did not approve of such a proposal and revealed the following verse :-

وَلَاتَطْرُدِ الَّذِيْنَ يَدْعُوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدٰوةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيْدُوْنَ وَجْهَهٗ (سورة الانعام: ٥٢)

Do not repel those who invoke their Lord morning and evening, seeking His countenance. (6:52)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ, therefore announced that if they (the unbelievers) were desirous to seek and find the truth, they would have to sit with the general public for the purpose. If they did not like to sit with poor classes, they, should know that Allah and His Messenger ﷺ are in no need of them. Separate meetings would not be held for them. (Sahih Muslim, Book of the superiority of the companions....)

The followers of the Prophets علیہم السلام

The other Messengers in the past also faced the same situation and the unbelievers of their days made similar remarks:

وَمَانَرٰكَ اتَّبَعَكَ اِلَّاالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ اَرَاذِلُنَا بَادِيَ الرَّأْيِ (سورة هود: ٢٧)

We see that it is only the most degraded ones among us who follow you, without reflection. (11:27)

It means: "How can we follow you, as we are wise and highly dignified and noble persons?" Almighty Allah told them that whom they regarded mean, weak, poor and helpless, had great respect and status with Allah, so they should not be despised and looked down upon. A question of principle is involved here. It was not possible that the unbelievers should be accorded preference on account of their wealth, leadership and worldly possessions. This is a principle on which no compromise was to be made. Those believing servants of Allah enjoyed great status in the sight of Allah, in spite of their apparent conditions of weakness, poverty and disgrace.

Hazrat Zahir رضی اللہ عنہ

Sometimes a villager called upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ. His name was Zahir رضی اللہ عنہ. He was a rustic fellow, black - Complexioned and very much depressed financially. He had no respect and regard among the people. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had great affection for him. Once while passing through the market, the Holy Prophet ﷺ saw Hazrat Zahir رضی اللہ عنہ standing there. Who will take notice of a black, poor and unimportant villager, standing in a market in tattered clothes. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ passed through the market, ignoring everything he approached Hazrat Zahir رضی اللہ عنہ from the back and closing his arms round Hazrat Zahir رضی اللہ عنہ he blind folded his eyes with his hands - a kind of joke which intimate friends often make with one another. Finding himself in this grip, Hazrat Zahir رضی اللہ عنہ tried to liberate himself from this, not knowing who was behind him. The Holy Prophet ﷺ, then pronounced these words loudly as the hawkers generally do:

من یشتری العبد؟
غلام کون خریدے گا؟

(Who will purchase the slave?)

As Hazrat Zahir رضی اللہ عنہ did not know who had held him from behind he was trying to liberate himself from the grip. When he came to know that the person holding him was the Holy Prophet ﷺ then, instead of liberating him from the grip, he began to press his waist closer and closer to the sacred body of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the following words spontaneously escaped from his mouth.

O Messenger of Allah! If you sell me as a slave a very scanty price will be offered for me, because I am a very ordinary and poor man, having no value. What a wonderful sentence the Holy Prophet ﷺ spoke in reply!

"لکن عند اللہ لست بکاسد"

O Zahir, whatever value the people may place on you. Your value in the sight of Allah is not little, it is great. Now consider there are many rich and successful businessmen in the market rolling in millions but ignoring them all, the Holy Prophet ﷺ met Hazrat Zahir رضی اللہ عنہ to please him. He ﷺ gave him glad tidings and behaved with him freely and informally as two intimate friends behave with each other. (Musnad Ahmad, vol.3, p.161)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ used to make the following supplication (*Du'a*)

اَللّٰھُمَّ اَحْیِنِیْ مِسْکِیْنًا وَّاَمِتْنِیْ مِسْکِیْنًا وَّاحْشُرْنِیْ فِیْ زُمْرَۃِ الْمَسٰکِیْنِ

(ترمذی، کتاب الذھد، باب ماجاء ان فقراً المھا جرین یدخلون الجنہ قبل انمنیاء ھم حدیث نمبر ۲۳۵۲)

O Allah let me live as a poor man and let me die as a poor man and raise me to life (in the Hereafter) among the poor. (Tirmidhi... Hadith no: 2352)

The position of a servant in the Prophet's sight

Today values and conceptions have totally changed. Today the respected, honoured is one who occupies a high position and is wealthy. On the other hand he who lacks in worldly resources, is weak and depressed, is disgraced and despised. Remember that a man who behaves with the poor and the weak in this way has no share in Deen (Faith).

Sometime we do recite with our tongues this verse:

اِنَّ اَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَاللهِ اَتْقَاكُمْ (الحجرات:١٣)

Indeed, the noblest of you, in the sight of Allah is the best in conduct: (49:13)

It is regrettable that in actual practice we do not follow the principle laid down in this verse How do you talk to your own servants and the beggars who knock at your doors for alms? Do you try to solace them and please them or do you despise them? do you act upon the Ahadith on this subject? It is very dangerous to misbehave and despise the weak and the poor. May Allah protect us from this sin:

عن ابى سعيد الخدرى رضى الله عنه عن النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم
قال احتجت الجنة والنار فقالت النار فى الجبارون والمتكبرون
قالت الجنة فى ضعفاء الناس ومَسكينهم فقضى الله بينها انك الجنة
رحمتى ارحم بك من اشاء وانّك النار اعذب بك من اشاء ولكليكما
على ملؤها (صحيح مسلم، كتاب جالجنة، باب النريد خلها الجبارون، حديث نمبر ٢٨٤٧)

(Sahih Muslim. book of Paradise Hadith no: 2847)

A debate between Paradise and Hell

The above Hadith said:

Hazrat Abu Saeed Khudri رضى الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: A debate once took place between Paradise and Hell (as to which of the two is superior). Hell said: I am higher in dignity because I shall accommodate

great tyrants and proud people, including the rich and the high placed dignitaries. In reply paradise said: I shall accommodate the weak and the poor. Both were proud of their inmates. Allah judged between them. He addressed Paradise, saying: You are Paradise, the token and target of my mercy. Through you shall I send down my mercy on whom I please. Addressing Hell Allah said: You are Hell, the token and target of my wrath and punishment. Through you shall I send down my punishment on whom I displease. I promise that I shall fill both of you. I shall fill Paradise with those on whom I send down My mercy and shall fill Hell with those on whom I send down my punishment. May Allah protect us from Hell and qualify us for Paradise! *Aameen.*

How could Paradise and Hell talk?

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has described the details of a debate between Paradise and Hell. A question arises how two inanimates can debate and argue with each other. It is quite possible that a dialogue actually took place between the two. Paradise and Hell both are Allah's creation and Allah has the power to grant each of them power to speak. People are surprised to know that even such things, as have no tongues, can speak. They should consider how man is able to speak; who has given him the power of speech? It is Allah who has bestowed upon man speaking power. Even stone, a tree or the earth, can speak, if Allah allowes them the same speaking power.

The limbs will speak on the Day of Judegment?

Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه was once on a journey when a gentleman with modern education met him. He expressed doubt about the truth of the Qur'anic verse or some Hadith which states that human limbs will

speak on the day of Judgment. The Qur'an says that the hand, the leg, etc. will bear witness that they were used in committing such and such sin. How will they be able to speak? Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه told him that they will speak by Allah's power; Allah has absolute power to do what ever He likes. The gentleman asked if any example was available ? Did this ever happen? He was told by the saint that it is not necessary that there should be an example of every phenomenon. The gentleman insisted on being given some example of this possibility. Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه explained to him, by way of an example, that the tongue is only a piece of flesh, yet it speaks though it has no tongue of itself. It speaks only with the power of speech bestowed upon it by Allah. In the same way any limb, or for that matter, any thing, can speak if Allah grants it the power of speech.

Anyway, the debate between Paradise and Hell related by the Holy Prophet ﷺ may be a total truth that the two will actually speak to each other or it may have been related by him ﷺ only as an allegory - both are possible.

[Translator's Note: If we look closely into Allah's creation and keep our mind's eyes and ears open we can easily discern the truth of many things stated in the Qur'an and the Prophet's Ahadith which appear to be impossible. Take, for example, the faculty of speech. We have seen people born quite sound with their tongues but devoid the power of speech. Similarly, some malady inflicts a man and his power of speech is taken away and he remains dumb for the rest of his life. These phenomena demonstrate Allah's absolute ability to do anything, as the Qur'an has said at many places: على كل شئى قدير Allah has indeed power to do

every thing.]

Hell will be filled with the proud people

Anyway, Hell will be filled with the proud men who used to display their superiority and behaved with their fellow - men with arrogance, despised them and talked proudly about themselves.

Paradise will be filled with the weak and the poor

Paradise will be filled with the weak and the poor who were in their worldly life to be weak, modest and poor, Paradise will have for its inmates those who behaved with others with leniency, modesty and humility.

Allah does not like Arrogance

Allah shall fill Hell with the arrogants, because arrogants are those who display their superiority over others, consider themselves to be great and others to be inferior and low in status. Allah does not appreciate this pride and arrogance even for a single moment. It is narrated that Allah has said:

"الكبرياء ردائى فمن نازعنى فيه قذفته فى النار (ابو داؤد، كتاب اللباس باب ماجاء فى الكبر حديث نمبر ٤٠٩)

(Abu Dawud. Bk. of garment - Kibr Hadith no: 409)

This means: Greatness is my cloak. I shall throw him into the fire who disputes with Me about this. This pride is indeed an evil which drives the sinner into Hell. May Allah protect us from this sin. This is so grievous a sin that it may be called the mother of sins and the root of evils. Many sins emanate from this single sin of pride. Once this sin takes root in a man, it involves him in all sorts of sins.

The Example of a Proud man

There is a wonderful and wise proverb the Arabic language in which a proud man has been compared to a man who is standing on the peak of a mountain and sees those at the foot who look to him smaller than he and at the same time those at the foot see the man at the peak smaller than they. When a proud man casts his glance at others, he will feel in his heart contempt for them. It is a major sin to look down upon a believer, even upon a nonbeliever. May Allah save us from this. *Aameen.* Thus a proud man despises others and the greater the number of the persons he despises, the larger will be the number of the major sins recorded in his character roll.

Whenever a proud man talks to others, he talks in such a harsh tone as hurts the heart. It is a sin to hurt the heart of a Muslim.

Do not despise even an unbeliever

It is also a sin to despise even an unbeliever, because who knows that Allah may, by His mercy, help the unbeliever to embrace Islam, and he may become a better believer than you. So even an unbeliever should not be despised. It is only the sin of disbelief that should be despised. You may have in your heart contempt for sin and disobedience, but not the hater and the sinner. Sometime a man may not be able to realize whether he is despising the sin or he is despising the sinner and the disbeliever. One learns this fine difference by adopting the company of saintly persons.

Modesty of Maulana Ashraf Ali رحمة الله عليه

What to say of ourselves, even the Maulana رحمة الله عليه has said about himself:

> "I consider myself to be inferior to every Muslim in his present state of belief and to an unbeliever

> with regard to his final fate. In other words, I regard myself inferior to a Muslim in his present condition of being a believer and inferior to an unbeliever, because, it is just possible that the unbeliever may turn a Muslim in the future and become a better Muslim than me."

Pride and faith cannot go together

Pride and belief cannot go together, when pride enters the heart of a man - God forbid, sometime it becomes difficult for him to protect his *Iman* (faith) Was it not pride that drove *Iblis* (Satan) into ruin and destruction? He thought that he was created out of fire and Adam out of earth, thereby he fell a victim to the grievous sin of pride and despised Adam. He was, therefore, condemned for eternity. How dangerous is the sin of pride!

Pride is an inner disease

The Holy Prophet ﷺ, kind as he was to his *Ummah*, has taught them a very important lesson in a Hadith, saying that they should never go near pride. It is such a dangerous disease that the patient himself sometime does not realize that he is suffering from it. It is difficult for anyone to diagnose this inner disease. It is, therefore, necessary to attach oneself to some highly qualified spiritual guide for the diagnosis and treatment of this disease.

Spiritual training by a Sheikh is imperative

Under this institution a man attaches himself to some *peer* (spiritual Guide) and takes a pledge at his hand to lead a pious life. The disciple wrongly thinks that this action will prove to be blessed and the rehearsal of a few sacred words taught by the guide will be sufficient for sal-

vation. The intention of going to a *Pir* or a Reformer is to obtain cure from the inner diseases at the top of which is the grievous disease of Pride. Exactly as we consult a physician or visit a hospital for the treatment of our bodily diseases. In the same way the *Sheikh* (Spiritual doctor) provides treatment for our inner or spiritual diseases. It is only a formality to place the hand on the hand of the *Shaikh* in token of having become his disciple, otherwise the objective is to get the inner disease diagnosed and treated by the *Sheikh*.

The treatment of spiritual Diseases

Another harmful feature of the society is the increasing use of amules (*Ta'weez*) charms which has been given the false name of spiritual Treatment. Just go to some *'Amil* (dealer in Talisman and charms), purchase from him a Talisman and let him blow upon you after chanting some charm and you have received the spiritual Treatment. This is not spiritual treatment. The real spiritual treatment is to consult some righteous Sheikh for the treatment of your spiritual diseases, like pride, jealousy, malice, feeling of enmity, etc. It is the Sheikh who will correctly diagnose your spiritual disease and will, on the basis of his knowledge and experience, prescribe for you some easy treatment. To submit yourself to the Sheikh's treatment is called *bai't* (Pladge).

Hazrat Thanawi's method of Treatment

Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه laid great emphasis in treating the spiritual diseases of persons who visited him for such treatment. His method of treatment was based on sincere work and not on prescribing for them some doses of medicine in the form of some talisman or charm. For example, a man suffering from pride came to him the treatment pre-

scribed for him was that he should arrange in the proper position the shoes of the namazis. The Sheikh did not prescribe for him any charm, rehearsal or counting something on beads.

Pride leads to Hell

May Allah save us from the disease of Pride. This disease creeps into the heart of man so secretly that most often he does not feel its presence. He thinks that he is quite sound in heart and soul, yet he is a patient of the disease of pride. True faith and pride cannot go together. Pride leads to Hell. It is, therefore, imperative that the patient of this disease should do his best to seek a speedy cure. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has issued a warning against this disease in the above Hadith:

Majority of the weak and the poor will be in Paradise

In the second part of this Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said: Paradise is filled with the weak and the poor. In other words, among those who are near Allah are mostly, the poor and the needy, the down-grade people wearing very ordinary and cheap garments who attract nobody's attention. They harbour in their hearts feeling of Allah's greatness and love and His mercy descends on them. Such people form the majority of the habitants of Paradise.

The followers of the Prophets عليهم السلام were mostly the poor

Any one going through the Qur'an finds out that the followers of all the Prophets عليهم السلام sent to this world were the poor and weak people. That is why the idolaters refused to sit with this depressed class of people, consisting of fishermen, carpenters and other labour classes who were always surrounding the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The unbe-

lievers claimed that, being highly dignified persons, they were not prepared to sit with these low class people.

These apparently depressed classes are the recipients of Allah's mercy and honour, not granted to others. Such people should never be looked down upon and treated as mean and depressed.

Who are the weak and the poor

Another point deserving attention in this Hadith is that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has used, two words "ضعفاء" (the weak) and "مساكين" (the poor). The word "ضعفاء" signify those who are weak physically, financially and socially. As for the word "مساكين" (poor). It has two shades of meaning, viz, (i) the poor men who have no money, and are needy and (ii) those who may or may not have money, but they are meek and mild in temperament and have no trace of pride in their hearts. This group lives among the poor people and has humility in their nature. A person who is assuming, simple and humble comes within the definition of the word "مساكين" (the poor).

Poverty (in the second sense) and affluence can go together

It should not be misconceived that a man who is well-to-do and has wealth is ordained to enter Hell. What is meant to say is that if Almighty Allah has conferred on any one the blessing of wealth, yet he is humble and mild in his temperament and not proud, behaves with others nicely and discharges fully the rights of Allah and those of His servants, then he too will be counted among the class of the *Masakeen* (in the second sense).

Poverty and "*Maskanat*" (humbleness) are two different things

In another Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has prayed to Allah as follows:

اللهم احينى مسكينا وامتنى مسكينا واحشرنى فى زمرة المسكين

(Tirmidhi book of Zahr Chapter on the poor emigrants entering Paradise before their rich men Hadith no: 3352)

O Allah! let me live as a poor man and die as a poor man, and raise me to life (in the Hereafter) in the group of the poor.

In another Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has prayed to Allah in the following words :

اللهم انى اعوذبك من الفقر (ابوداؤد ، كتاب الصلوة، باب الاستعاذة، حديث ١٥٤٤)

O Allah, I seek refuge with you from poverty and want. (Abu Dawod, book of Salah Hadith no: 1544)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ sought refuge with Allah from poverty but prayed for *maskanat* (humbleness). This shows that this *maskanat* is something other than want, poverty and starvation. As mentioned earlier, *Maskanat* means modesty in temperament and natural disposition and nice behaviour with the poor. If this humbleness and leniency of character and conduct are born in anyone's heart he will be entitled to the rewards mentioned in this Hadith:

Allah's Judgment between Paradise and Hell

At the end of the Hadith Allah has given His judgment between Paradise and Hell thus: He said to Paradise: You are the token of my mercy, Through you I shall bestow my mercy on whom I please. He said to Hell: You are the token of my punishment. Through you I shall punish him whom I please. I shall fill Paradise and Hell both with men because both types of men are found in the world those who

deserve Paradise through their good deeds and also those who deserve Hell by dint of their bad deeds. May Allah include us among the men of Paradise.

A pious man did not laugh during his entire lifetime

There was a pious man who was known to have never laughed during his entire lifetime, nor was even a smile ever appear on his face. He was always seen pining with some anxiety. When asked about the reason for this condition of his life, his reply was:

I have read in a Hadith that some of Allah's creatures are such whom He has created for Paradise and some others whom He has created for Hell. I do not know to which group I belong. How can I laugh, unless I know that I belong to the group of Paradise? This is the anxiety that is always pressing upon me.

How can a believer sleep?

Some saint has composed this couplet:

وكيف . تنام العين وهى قريرة
ولم تدر فى اى المحلين تنزل

That is, how can a believer's eye sleep with coolness and comfort, unless it knows which of the two places (Paradise or Hell) is its final resort?

He smiled at the time of death

Thus, the pious man mentioned above did not laugh during the whole of his life. Observers say that while dying, as soon as his soul was taken out of his body there was smile on his face because it was on that day that he came to know the group for which Allah had created him: it was certainly the group destined for Paradise.

A life of negligence

How one who cares for the Hereafter can sleep peacefully when he does not know if he belongs to the people of Paradise or the Ones of Hell. It is also Allah's kindness to us that He does not allow such an anxiety to dominate everyone,otherwise the entire work and administration of the world would be disturbed and upset. So Allah does not make such extreme cases of anxiety a regular feature. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has warned his *Ummah* at many places against negligence which prevents them from thinking which course - right or wrong - they are taking. They are advised to consider from time to time whether the path they are following leads to Paradise or to Hell. They should also keep a vigilant eye on their acts and deeds. May Almighty Allah include us all in the group which He has created for Paradise. *Aameen.*

Do not be proud of physical health, strength and beauty

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله تعالى عنه عن رسول الله ﷺ قال انه ليأتى الرجل العظيم السمين يوم القيامة لايزن عند الله جناح بعوضة

(Sahih Bukhari, book of Tafsir of Surah Kahf... Hadith no: 4829)

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: On the Day of Judgment a great man will be brought fat and bulky in body, yet he will not be equal in weight even to the wings of a mosquito.

This entire worldly pomp and power, this physical strength and health and beauty will be of no avail in the Hereafter. This is because the man, inspite of all his greatness, power and beauty, did not work during his worldly life to please Almighty Allah; so he has not the least value in the sight of Allah. The intention of this Hadith is also to empha-

size that man should not feel proud of his apparent beauty, health and strength, his wealth and status, as these worldly gifts may not be of any value in the sight of Allah. The real value lies in assuring that a man's deeds are righteous and he is following the path shown by Allah and His Prophet ﷺ.

The woman who used to sweep the Prophet's ﷺ mosque

وعنه رضى الله عنه ان امرأة سوداء كانت تقم المسجد او شابا ففقدها او فقده رسول الله صلى عليه وسلم فسأل عنها أ و عنه فقالوا! مات قال افلا كنتم آذنتمونى به فانهم صغروا امرها اوامره فقال دلونى على قبره فدلوة فصلى عليه ثم قال ان هذه القبور مملوة ظلمة على اهلها وان ينور لهم بصلا تى عليهم (صحيح بخارى، كتاب الجنائز، باب الصلاة على القبر بعد مايدفن، حديث نمبر ١٣٣٣٧)

(Sahih Bukahri. book of funerals. chapter on salat. Hadith no: 13337)

In this Hadith Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه has related an incident which occured during the days of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He has narrated that there was a black woman who used to sweep the Prophet's mosque from time to time. The Holy Prophet ﷺ did not see that woman for sometime and asked his noble Companions رضى الله عنهم about her. Look! How the Holy Prophet ﷺ remembered that black woman and felt for her! The Noble Companions رضى الله عنهم replied that she has passed away. The Holy Prophet ﷺ complained to them that they did not inform him of her death. The Companions did not say anything in reply but it appeared from their attitude that they regarded that woman too ordinary to tell the Holy Prophet ﷺ about her death. The Holy Prophet ﷺ then asked the Companions رضى الله عنهم the way to her grave which he visited along with the Companions and offered there her funeral prayer.

The Injunction about offering funeral (*Janazah*) prayer on graves

The general injunction about funeral prayers is that if anyone's funeral prayer has been offered, then it is not lawful to offer the funeral prayer again at the grave of the dead. If a dead body has been buried without funeral prayer, the order of the *Shari'ah* prescribes that funeral prayer may be offered at the grave before the body has not become decomposed. It is not lawful to offer funeral prayer at the grave when as much time has passed as the body takes to decmpose.

Graves are cells of Darkness

The Holy Prophet ﷺ offered funeral prayer at the grave of that women as a special tribute to her and to show this to the Noble Companions رضى الله عنهم. After having offered the funeral prayer, he ﷺ is reported to have said: The graves are filled with darkness, but by the blessings of my prayer Allah illuminates these graves, by His mercy.

Do not despise anyone

The Holy Prophet ﷺ did all this to warn the people that it was not good to despise any man or woman and to consider him or her worthless, simply because he or she had no status and standing from the worldly point of view. This was because none knows what rank he or she occupies in the sight of Allah.

ہر بیشہ گماں مبر کہ خالیست
شاید کہ پلنگ خفتہ باشد

This Persian couplet means:

Do not think about every forest that it is empty. It may be that a tiger is sleeping there.)

If a man is in a depressed and down-trodden state do not think that he is of no worth because he may possibly

have a great value in the sight of Allah.

The people with their dishevelled hair !

وعنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم رب اشعث مدفوع بالا
بواب لواقسم على الله لابره (صحيح مسلم كتاب البروالصلة باب اوضعفاء والخاملين
حديث نمبر ٢٦٢٢)

(Sahih Muslim, Book on charity-the weak Hadith no: 2622)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said: There are many people with dishevelled and uncombed hair on their heads. Their bodies and faces are dusty, as they earn their livelihood by hard labour. They command no respect anywhere in the world and are likely to be turned out by force if they visit any house. They are worthless from the worldly point of view, but if they swear by Allah about anything, Allah shall fulfil their oaths. That is, if they say an oath, that such and such thing shall be done, Allah, by His grace and power, does that thing. If they swear by Allah that such and such thing will not happen, Allah stops the execution of that thing.

Our Behaviour with the poor

All these Ahadith show that we should not judge the value of anyone by his outer appearance and condition.

We admit and declare verbally that all Muslims are brothers, high and low, poor and rich, are equal before Allah and that the poor and the deprived have great value in the sight of Allah. Do we keep these principles in view when we actually deal with them? Do we follow these golden rules in dealing with our servants, our subordinates, and the poor and depressed persons whom we happen to come across during our daily lives? What actually happens is that we preach and listen to the golden principles of behaviour

but we forget them in our actual practices and dealings.

Hazrat Thanawi's رحمة الله عليه behaviour with his servant

Take mindful notice of the stories of those favoured saints Allah grants the ability to comply with these rules.

Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib رحمة الله عليه had a servant, named Niaz who was called "Brother Niaz" by all who visited the saint's convent. He was very intimate and informal servant of the Maulana. While serving the saint and being too close to him all the time, he had developed in him an informal attitude. Sometime he became harsh with the visitors. A visitor one day complained to the saint that "Brother Niaz" was rude with him. Such complaints against him had reached the saint earlier also. The saint called and scolded him for his rude behaviour with his guests. The servant at once retorted very arrogantly: Hazrat do not tell a lie and fear Allah. See how a servant is uttering such words to his own master who was the renowned saint! It is believed that the servant wanted to tell the saint that the complaint was false and the complainants had told lies. They should fear Allah. However, in a fit of confusion he used wrong words. See, how the great saint reacted to the servant's reply. The saint bent down his head and uttered these words استغفر الله، استغفر الله (I seek Allah's forgiveness).

He observed the limits laid down by Allah. The saint then said later on that he was mistaken as he began to scold the servant on hearing only one side of the sotry, whereas according to the rules of the shari'ah a judge should pass judgment on hearing both parties, which the saint forgot to follow and passed his judgment against the servant without hearing his explanation. The saint said that he was mistaken and when he was advised by the ser-

vant to fear Allah he had no alternative but to beg Allah's forgiveness by uttering: استغفرالله استغفر الله

These are people about whom it has been said: كان وقافا عندحدود الله (He observes the limits laid down by Allah). Thus, the lesson we learn from these incidents is that we should all behave properly with our servants, and subordinates and never despise them. May Allah protect us from this sin. *Aameen.*

Those who shall enter Paradise and Hell

وعن اسامة رضى الله عنه عن النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم قال قمت على باب الجنة فاذا عامة من دخلها المساكين واصحاب الجد محبوسون غير اصحاب النار قد امربهم الى النار وقمت على باب النار فاذا عامة من دخلها النساء (صحيح بخارى كتاب لاتأذن المرأة فى بيت زوجها لأحد الاباذنه حديث نمبر ٥١٩٦)

(Sahih Bukhari - Kitab Nikah.... Hadith no: 5196)

Hazrat Usamah رضى الله عنه was a favourite Companion رضى الله عنه of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He was the son of Hazrat Zaid Bin Harith, رضى الله عنه an adopted son of the Prophet ﷺ. In other words, he was an adopted grand son of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: I was standing at the gate of Paradise... (This might have been during *Mi'raj* (the Ascension), because on that occasion the Holy Prophet ﷺ was taken to see Paradise and Hell. Or it might have been on some other occasion during a vision Allah knows better. I saw that the people of Paradise belonged mostly to the humble and the poor classes. I also saw that those who were regarded in the world as fortunate. Prosperous, wealthy and high placed in their worldly lives were detained at the gate of Paradise and could not enter it. It may mean two things; either they were entitled to enter Paradise, but were subject to stern reckoning of

their deeds after clearing which they could enter Paradise. Therefore, they were detained at the door. Some of them had been ordained to enter Hell. The Prophet ﷺ went on saying: Standing at the gate of Hell I saw that the majority of the inmates of Hell were women.

The poor will be in Paradise

This Hadith has two parts. It is said in the first part that most people in Paradise appeared to be from among the poor classes as has already been mentioned. The poor class does not necessarily include only the needy but it also includes those who are humble by their nature and temperament.

Why will women be in Hell more in number?

The other part of the Hadith tells that the majority of the inmates of Hell appeared to be women.

Addressing women, the Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said in another Hadith:

انى اريتكن اكثر اهل النار

(Musnad Ahmad, vol. 2, p. 67)

I was shown that you form the major part of the inmates of Hell. It appears from this that the number of the female will be greater than that of its male dwellers in the Hell. This, however, never means that a women shall enter Hell only for being a women. That is not so. In another Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has mentioned the reason for this. While addressing women. He ﷺ is reported to have said: Women form a greater part of the population of Hell. When the women asked the reason for this. The Holy Prophet ﷺ mentioned two reasons for this, He (Prophet ﷺ) said: You frequently indulge in cursing and defaming one another on small and trivial issues. Women are more involved to these vices than men:

Ingratitude to Husbands

The other reason for this is. You are very ungrateful to your husbands. Your husbands try their best to please you with their hard-earned money, yet instead of thanking them you generally utter words of ingratitude. These are the two main reasons which will drive most of you to Hell. May Allah protect us from this. *Aameen.*

The sin of ingratitude amounts to disbelief

Ingratitude is a contemptible act in all circumstances. It is highly disliked by Allah. In the Arabic language and in the terminology of the *Shari'ah* شکر (ingratitude) is کفر called (disbelief), because an infidel (disbeliever) actually shows ingratitude to Allah, for the countless blessings granted by Him and thus he attributes a Partner to Allah, or denies the unity of All Compassionate Allah by his ingratitude.

Prostration before husbands

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith: If I were to command anyone in this world to bow down before anyone other than Allah, I would command a wife to bow down before her husband, but it is forbidden to bow down before anyone other than Allah. The intention is to tell that it is among the obligatory duties of a woman to obey her husband and not to be ungrateful to him, because this will be showing ingratitude to Allah. Allah is displeased with a woman's ungratefulness to her husband. That is why he ﷺ told women that they will be sent to Hell for this sin. How dangerous it is!

Two Formulas for safety from Hell

Allah has clearly prescribed the rights of a husband and his wife against each other. Our sisters must remember that he ﷺ took special care to address an assembly of women and tell them that these two sins are the causes for their entering Hell in larger numbers. Who knows better the secrets of Allah's *Deen* and the natural tendencies of the members of his *Ummah* more than the Holy Prophet ﷺ? There is none other than he ﷺ who can correctly diagnose the disease and prescribe the right remedy for its cure. Thus, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has prescribed two formulas for women to save themselves from the torment of Hell. These are: to refrain from the sins of (1) cursing and taunting one another and (2) being ungrateful to their husbands.

The Angels curse such a woman

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has gone to the extent of saying that if a wife disobeys her husband's call to go to his bed or if he passes a night in which she does not fulfils her husband's desire and he is displeased with his wife, the angels curse that woman the whole night. How terrible a warning of punishment the Holy Prophet ﷺ has given !

Control your tongue

It has been said that the number of women entering Hell will be larger than that of men. This saying is being used by some ill-disposed persons as an argument to accuse that women have been degraded to such an extent that even Hell will receive a larger number of women than men. It should be borne in mind that women will not be thrust into Hell for being women; they will enter Hell because of their sins and misconduct, - the sins of the tongue, in Particular. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that of

all his limbs the tongue is the most notorious in pushing man into Hell. The tongue is instrumental to many grievous sins if it is not kept under strict control. You can experience yourself that women are generally weaker than men in controlling their tongues. They are advised to use their tongues with due care so as not to utter words to hurt the hearts of others particularly of their husbands. Allah has commanded the wives to keep their husbands pleased and satisfied in all conditions. They can save themselves from the torment of Hell by correcting themselves and following strictly the laws of the *Shari'ah*. This responsibility lies equally on men and women both. You know that Allah appointed head of the women of Paradise and that leader is Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا. Allah has not debarred women from Paradise, but has declared them to be entitled to Paradise. The whole matter depends on the good deeds they do and the straight path they follow.

The Importance of the Rights of the people

There is another important point emanating from this Hadith which demands attention. The Holy Prophet ﷺ did not say that a larger number of women would enter Hell because they are more deficient in worship, offer less optional prayers or are slack in reciting the Holy Qur'an or in remembering the sacred names of Allah. The reasons mentioned by the Holy Prophet ﷺ for women entering Hell their indulgence in the sin of cursing and taunting one another and being ungrateful to their husbands. Both these sins are related to the rights of Allah's servants which they violate. This brings out the importance of discharging fully the rights of Allah's servants. This is indeed more important than the offering of optional prayers and doing other optional items of worship.

وصل اللہ تعالیٰ علی خیر خلقه محمد واله واصحابه اجمعین آمین

برحمتك یا ارحم الرّحمین

May Almighty Allah grant us by His mercy, the correct understanding of the importance of discharging the rights of Allah's servants and help us in discharging this responsibility and liability to the best of our ability. *Aameen.*!

May Allah have mercy on Muhammad ﷺ who is the best of His creation, and on his household and his Noble Companions. All of them with your mercy who are the most Merciful. O Allah.

Venue : Jame'Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.

Date : Friday 10th May, 1991
After 'Asr Prayers.

Our Self is proved to get addicted to worldly pleasures. It hastens up to the acts in which it finds taste and joy. As a result of this tendency it produces an inclination to satisfy lust and desire. Man ceases to be man if he leaves his Self controlled, accedes to its all demands works to attain all possible means that may prove conducive to the satisfaction of his tastes and enjoyments.

ON RESISTING THE INNERSELF

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نومن به و نتوكل عليه، ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطٰن الرجيم، بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

وَالَّذِيْنَ جَاهَدُوْا فِيْنَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا ۚ وَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ (سورة العنكبوت:٦٩)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم و صدق رسوله النبى الكريم و
نحن علىٰ ذالك من الشٰهدين والشٰكرين والحمد لله رب العالمين

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is no one to let go astray whom Allah guides and there is no one to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah Alone. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our sire, our authority, our Prophet and our. Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah have mercy on him, on his household and on his Companions and bless them and send peace on them in abundance.

And those who strive in Us We surely guide them to our paths. Indeed, Allah is with the good indeed. (29:69)

The meaning of *Mujahadah* (strife)

Allama Nuwawi رحمة الله عليه has formed another chapter on "*Mujahadah*" (strife). "*Mujahadah*" means to strive hard. The word "*Jihad*" has also been derived from the same word. So in the Arabic language "*Jihad*" does not mean fighting, but it means striving hard and putting in physical effort. The word "*Mujahadah*" also means the same, i.e. putting in efforts and exertions. In the terminology of the Qur'an, the *Sunnah* and the Sufism the word means efforts and endeavours whereby man may reform and rectify his deed, actions and character, so as to refrain from sins and stop his Self from taking a wrong course. This is "*Mujahadah*". The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith.

المجاهد من جاهد نفسه (ترمذى فضائل الجهاد باب ماجاء فى فضل من مات مرابطا حديث نمبر ١٦٢١)

(Tirmidhi virtue of Jihad .... Hadith no: 1621)

"Real "*Jihad*" is fighting against one's own Self to keep it tamed. It is also "*Jihad*" to fight against an enemy in a battle field, but the true *Jihad* is to launch a war against Self. The Self is always enticing man to fulfil its desires and submit to the temptations; On the other hand, man, resisting all these demands of the Self, takes the opposite direction of goodness and piety. This is "*Mujahadah*". A man who wishes to amelorate his life and take the path of righteousness for the sake of Allah has to take resort to "*Mujahadah*", by opposing his Self and exerting himself utmost to suppress his desires, however distressing and repulsive all this exertion may be. This struggle against one's own Self is called "*Mujahadah*".

Man's Self is fond of pleasures

Our 'Self' or the power which prompts man to action, has become addicted to worldly pleasures. So it hastens to those acts which provide it with immediate enjoyment. It is inherent and natural tendency of the Self to entice man towards pleasures and enjoyments by creating in him desires and lust. Now if man lets loose his Self so as to indulge freely in the pleasures which his Self invites him, then he degrades himself to the level of animals and ceases to be a man.

There is no peace in satisfying Carnal desires

It is a tendency of sensual desires that more you go on satisfying them, the more these desires will show with greater force and speed. It is nearly impossible to make an

end of such desires. Man can never claim to have satisfied all his desires and he has nothing more to desire. Thus, man can never attain peace in life. Let any one having any doubt can experience this for himself.

There is no limit to taste and enjoyment

Some people of modern time today advise that the private life of man should not be interfered by religion. Everyone can do and enjoy freely whatever one pleases. As a result man is free to satisfy his desires and enjoy himself to his hearts content without any restriction. In this respect he is not answerable to anyone. If you ask any of these pleasure-lovers whether they have reached the limit of their enjoyment and nothing more is left for them to desire, their reply will be in the negative. He would say that he has still countless wishes to realize. In fact, the satisfaction of one wish gives rise to another wish, and there is no end to it.

Open Adultery

If a couple in the western civilisation want to indulge in sexual intercourse with each other, there is no restriction, whatsoever, to stop them from this. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that a time will come when people will commit adultery in public view on the road and there will be none to stop them from this. If there is a man who advises them to do this behind a tree or wall he will be a pious man of that time. That time has come and we are seeing all this today with our own eyes.

Rape cases in America

If a man wants to satisfy his sexual urge in unlawful ways all facilities are available to him for committing this sin with the mutual consent of the partner without a fear of censure from any quarters. Notwithstanding this, America is the country where the largest number of rapes are committed every year. This is because after getting tired of adultery committed with the mutual consent man's insatiable desire for adultery urges him to enjoy the sensation of rape. As already stated man's desire, if left uncontrolled and unbridled knows no limits and ends.

InsatiableThirst

There is a disease called جوع البقر (*Joo'ul baqar*) in the Arabic language, gluttony being its English equivalent. In this disease the patient's hunger does not find satisfaction with all the quality and quantity of the food that he is given to eat. There is another disease called استسقاء (*Istisqaa*) in the Arabic language in which the thirst of a man becomes insatiable with any quantity of the water he may drink to quench it. Man's desires may be compared to these two diseases which cannot be kept under restraint, unless they are suppressed and controlled by the laws of the *Shari'ah*. If left free, these desires go on increasing by leaps and bounds.

Put some resistance

Allah and His Prophet ﷺ have forbidden us to pursue all the desires because they may throw man into the ditch of destruction. We have been advised to control them and keep them within the reasonable limits laid down by the *Shari'ah*. In doing so you may feel some difficulty in the beginning. A man used to listenng to the Radio programmes of music and enjoying the musical concerts and dramas on the Television will find it quite annoying in the beginning to forego and forget these enjoyments. However, if man wants to save his Self from destruction he should try to put some resistance like a patient who tolerates bitter doses of a medicine.

Self over-powers the weak

Almighty Allah has created this 'Self' in man with a peculiar characteristic. If a man decides to oppose it firmly, despite all the distress, hardships and sufferings involved the desire begins to give way and yield to man's resolution. This 'Self' and Satan overpower him who shows weakness before them and obeys them, but they slacken their grip and surrender before those who stand against them and decide to confront them with an iron will and determination. As a result, the distress and difficulties faced in opposing 'Self' will disappear one by one and thus man ultimately will defeat and overpower his 'Self'.

The 'Self' is like a suckling child

Allama Busairi رحمة الله عليه was a very prominent saint. His eulogistic poem, namely "Qasidah Burdah", in praise of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is famous all over the Muslim world. It contains a couplet full of wisdom.

النفس كالطفل ان تهمله شب على

حب الرضاع وان تفطمه ينفطم

The 'Self' of man is like a little suckling child which is suckling the milk of his mother and he has become used to it. If he is weaned from suckling by force, the child will protest against this by crying. Now according to Allama Busaire's opinion, if the parents decide to get rid of this problem, fury and fuss of the child by letting him continue suckling, the child will not give up suckling even when he grows into a young man. Suckling has become his nature, he refuses to eat hard food. There are, however, no parents in the world who will leave the child in this state. They will wean him from suckling by all means because it ensures the child's welfare.

The Self is fond of sins

Allama Busairi has further said that man's Self is like a child. It has become fond of sins. If it is left undisturbed and uncontrolled in this condition, committing whatever sins it likes (e.g., casting sinful glances, telling lies, backbiting, accepting bribes and indulging in usurious dealings) for the only reason that reliquishing these sins will be hard upon the 'Self' then what will be the result? The result will be that this Self will pass its entire life in these sins and will never receive peace.

Real peace is in Allah's remembrance

Note carefully that there is no peace in disobeying Allah. You might collect all the worldly resources of life, yet you cannot have peace. I have set before you an example from the Western society where there is great abundance of wealth, a high standard of living. All avenues of enjoyment and pleasure -seeking are wide open before them. Inspite of all this they have no peace. They cannot sleep without taking sleeping pills. Why is it so? It is because they are immersed in sins and disobedience to Allah. Peace resides only in Allah's remembrance.

اَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللّٰهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوْبُ

Beware! the hearts receive peace and contentment from Allah's remembrance. (13:28)

You can never receive peace as long as you are committing sins and disobeying Allah.

Almighty Allah grants peace and contentment only to those who remember Allah in their hearts. You will find people who are poor careworn and starving, yet they have in their hearts the blessings of peace and contentment. So one who desires to have peace and tranquillity must quit

sins by undergoing a little hardship and taking a firm stand against the seduction of Self.

Allah's promise cannot be false

Besides, Allah has also made this promise:

وَالَّذِيْنَ جَاهَدُوْا فِيْنَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا ۚ (سورة العنكبوت:٦٩)

And those who strive in Us, We surely guide them to Our paths. (29:69)

This verse declares that there are those who strive hard in the path of Allah, inspite of the unfavourable conditions and opposition of their society and the demands of their own Self and Satan. Allah guides them on to His straight path. As regards the words

لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا ۚ (سورة العنكبوت:٦٩)

we shall guide them to Our paths

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has explained the true sense of these words saying that "Allah will put them on the straight path by taking them to the path not showing them the path only from a distance. For getting this help from Allah sincere and firm intention and keen longing are, however, necessary. This is Allah's promise and it cannot be false.

In short, "*Mujahadah*" is the name of firm resolution in which a man resolves that he will not commit such and such sins in any circumstances happen what may. The day man presents such a resolute stand against the demands of his Self and Satan, he becomes Allah's beloved whom Allah puts on His straight path as though holding by his hands.

Make your heart worthy of Allah

Thus, the very first step towards correction is "*Mujahadah*" for man will have to take a firm resolution. Dr. Abdul

Hayi Sahib رحمة الله عليه frequently used to recite this couplet:

آرزوئیں خون ہوں یا حسرتیں پامال ہوں
اب تو اس دل کو بنانا ہے تیرے قابل مجھے

That is; I have to make this heart worthy of you (O Allah) at all costs notwithstanding that for achieving this objective I may have to kill all my pleasant wishes and ambitions. Now the divine light will descend on my heart and it will become a target of Allah's love. Hence forward I shall commit no sins.

You must remember that you will have to face great difficulties in the beginning in relinquishing for ever your favourite plans of pleasures and enjoyments only for the sake of Allah. It will not be long before this struggle of yours will make your Self will become a source of peace and satisfaction for you. In fact, you cannot imagine the pleasure and contentment which you will receive at the thought that you are undergoing all this test and torture for the sake of Allah to seek His pleasure.

Why does a mother endure all distress?

See how a mother sacrifies her comfort for her child. She is sleeping peacefully in her bed on a cold winter night. Her child beside her. The child urinates on the bed. The chilling cold of night stops her leaving the warmth of her bed, but she resists this desire for her chlid and gets up thinking that if the child remains wet he may catch cold and may have fever. Opposing the seduction of her Self she gets up from her warm bed changes the child's clothes, goes out in this cold night and washes the child's clothes with cold water. This is an arduous task, yet she is doing this in the interest of her child's health and welfare.

Love does away with distress

There is a barren women with no child. She consults doctors to cure her sterility and visits holy men for prayer that she may have a child . For this purpose she also uses talisman, charms and such other things. Another woman tells her about the pains a woman has to undergo on account of child birth and in delivering a baby. She will have to get up on cold nights and wash the baby's clothes and do many other odd things for the health and welfare of her baby. In reply the childless woman will says that she would sacrifice the peace and comforts of a thousand winter nights for her baby. This woman places a great value on a baby for which she is willing to go through the tortures and troubles involved in this way. They mean pleasure and comfort to her. So a woman is taking so much pains and is tolerating untold tortures, but she is satisfied with all this and feels contented that she is tolerating these hardships for the sake of her child. With this in mind she feels pleasure in giving up her desires and comforts. Maulana Rumi رحمة الله عليه has expressed the same idea in the following words:

از محبت تلخها شیریں شود

When in love even the bitterest things become sweet. Actions, otherwise hard and despised, turn pleasant in love.

The love of Allah should not be less than that of Laila

In his famous *Masnawi* (poetical work) Maulana Rumi رحمة الله عليه has written many interesting love - stories including the famous story of Laila-Majnoon. In his matchless love for his beloved Laila, Majnoon, the lover, underwent great tortures and distress, yet he was quite satisfied, and pleased with his ordeals in love. He was ready to sacrifice all for his love. Maulana Rumi has thus expressed this idea in a couplet:

عشق مولی کے کم از لیلیٰ بود
گوئے گشتن بہر او اولیٰ بود

The love of Allah cannot be less than that of Laila. It is, therefore, a credit to become (kicked and thrown like) a ball.

Love of Money

In order to take up his job, an employee has to get up early in the morning.It is winter and cold outside a man is sleeping comfortably on a warm bed. He has to go to his job, leaving behind his wife and children at home. After having toiled the whole day he will come back home late at night. There is a good number of workers who go to their work, leaving their children sleeping and come back at a time when the children have gone to bed. If anyone advises him to give up such an arduous job for the sake of his comfort and his family, he will reject this advice with contempt. He is pleased to get up and go to his job at an early hour, leaving behind his wife and children. This is due to the love of the salary which he will draw at the end of the month. For the sake of this love all his troubles and exertions for earning this salary have become pleasant for him. If he by chance loses his job at anytime he becomes deeply aggrieved and strives hard for another job. This is to say that in the way of love all hurdles and difficulties turn to be pleasure and enjoyment.

In the same way it is, indeed, difficult to give up sins. In the beginning one finds oneself unable of giving up some sins being committed for a long time, but when one resolves to relinquish it, divine help comes to his res-

cue with the result that the pains and distresses involved in quitting a sin in obedience to Allah's command begin to yield pleasure and joy.

Acquaint yourself with worship

Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hayi Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ once mentioned a wise point. He said: This 'Self' of man is fond of pleasure. This pleasure is not confined to any particular type. The Self craves for pleasure and enjoyment alone despite its nature and constituents. You have made this 'Self' addicted to a pleasure which is in reality unpleasant and disgustful and the 'Self' finds taste and enjoyment in it on account of the habit. Try to make it accustomed to the pleasure of Allah's worship and devotion and to the joys of passing life according to the injunctions of Allah. Then you will see that it will not be long before this 'Self' begins to feel pleasure and enjoyment in this transformed life of piety and purity.

مے سے غرض نشاط ہے کس روسیاہ کو
اک گونہ بے خودی مجھے دن رات چاہیئے

This is a couplet from a poem composed by the renounced Urdu poet Mirza Ghalib. Our Hazrat Dr. Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ interpreted it in a very unique way. According to him the couplet means: This sinful man does not drink wine for the sake of pleasure like other drunkards. He thus expresses himself: I drink it only that I may remain beside myself the whole night and day. When you have accustomed me to wine I am enveloped in a state of rapture. If you had accustomed me to Allah's remembrance and obedience, I would have received the same rapture and taste in Allah's remembrance. It is your mistake that you have accustomed me to wine instead of these virtuous occupations.

You will receive great enjoyment in negating the Self

This '*Mujahadah*' appears to be difficult in the beginning, as it demands that one should oppose one's Self when it incites one to the pursuit of desires. It is hard indeed to check yourself from backbiting when your friends freely indulging in it in a jolly assembly. Remember that the task of abstinance appears to be difficult from a distance but when you once take a firm resolution against this sin, Allah's help will overtake you and in this opposition of the seduction of 'Self' you will find a pleasure much greater than that you found in obeying the dictates of your Self.

Cultivate the taste of *Iman* (Faith)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said in a Hadith: Once a man felt in his heart an urge to cast a glance on a forbidden sight and who is there who does not feel such an urge? His heart was in a fix whether to cast the glance on the sight or not. The heart struggled hard and at last got control on the urge. In return for such a struggle and exertion Allah granted him a pleasure which far exceeds the pleasure of satisfying the forbidden urge. This is a promise from the Holy Prophet ﷺ which is available in the books of Ahadith. (Musnad, vol. 5, p. 264)

This promise is not confined to protecting the eyes from falling on forbidden sights, but it is general in its scope and applies to renouncing all sorts of sins. For example the sin of backbiting is pleasing, but a man holds his tongue back from it, just when it was on the verge of doing it. In the exercise of this Self-control there is a pleasure and when man becomes used to it, a relation and love springs up between him and Allah.

The Essence of *Tasaw-wuf* (Mysticism)

Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رحمة الله عليه has said something very instructive and worth remembering. The essence of *'Tasaw-wuf,* the Maulana said, abstinence is that when one feels lazy and hesitant in discharging some religious duties, e.g. the prayer, he should withstand with courage this hesitation and discharge the duty. Similarly, when his heart is inclined to commit some sin, he should oppose this inclination also with courage. This exertion and struggle will generate relation with Allah and develop that relation. A man who attains this capacity requires nothing more. Thus when a man crushes his desires with strenuous effort his heart becomes a mirror to reflect and absorb divine light.

The Heart has to be broken

My respected father, Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to quote an example in this behalf. In the olden days he said, there used to be Unani physicians who prepared medicines with by burning gold, silver, lead etc., to ashes commonly known as kushta. He said that the more the metal was burnt to reduce it to ashes, the more effective was the medicine. My respected father compared man's desires to the metals so processed. If these desires are crushed, burnt and reduced to something like ashes, then man's heart will become strong and worthy to receive Allah's love. The more man breaks his heart the more beloved it will become in the sight of Allah The renowned, poet Dr. Muhammad Iqbal has expressed this idea in a couplet:

نہ بچا بچا کے تو رکھ اسے تیرا آئینہ ہے وہ آئینہ
جو شکستہ ہو تو عزیز تیر ہے نگاہِ آئینہ ساز میں

This means: Your heart is like a mirror which, when

broken, becomes dearer in the sight of the maker of the mirror. so the more you subject your heart to strife and exertion in the cause of Allah, the dearer it will become in His sight. The heart is to be broken and purged of all desires and lusts to become worthy of Allah's attention and love. Our Dr. Abdul Hayi Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to recite a couplet:

یہ کہہ کہ کاسہ ساز نے پیالہ پٹخ دیا
اب اور کچھ بنائیں گے اس کو بگاڑ کے

It means: The potter broke the pot by throwing it down and said that he would make another and a better pot in place of it.

Do not think that the troubles you are receiving and the tortures you are enduring by crushing your desires are going waste. By this process of *Mujahadah*" when this heart becomes a resting - place for Allah's love, remembrance and devotion, you will receive a joy and rapture before which the entire enjoyments received from committing sins and disobeying Allah are not worth an iota.

All that is needed is a little resolution and sincere work. In the beginning everything looks difficult but it will become easy later on. This is "*Mujahadah*".

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said in a Hadith:

المجاهد من جاهد نفسه

That is, a *Mujahid* is one who struggles with his Self, crushes and suppresses his desires, instead of becoming a toy in the hands of his desires. May Allah protect us from this disgrace and help us to control efficiently our desires. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمدلله رب العالمين

And we close with the call that all praise be to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds.

Venue : Jame'Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.

Date : Friday 17th May, 1991
After 'Asr Prayers.

True "*Mujahadah*" means the act of confronting the Self in such a way that man does not yield to the desires, demands and dictates of 'Self', but takes the opposite course by crushing them all. He who wishes to reform and ameliorate his Self has to take to '*Mujahadah*' and endure the distress and tortures which confront him in his struggle against his carnal desires. This is called '*Mujahadah*'.

ESSENTIALITY OF *MUJAHADAH*

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه، ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم، بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

وَالَّذِيْنَ جَاهَدُوْا فِيْنَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا ط وَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ (سورة العنكبوت:٦٩)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم و صدق رسوله النبى الكريم و
نحن علىٰ ذالك من الشهٰدين والشٰكرين والحمد لله رب العالمين

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our souls and the vices of our deeds. There is no one to let go astray whom Allah guides and there is no one to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah Alone. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our sire, our Prophet and our. Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah send mercy on him, on his household and on his Companions and bless them and salute them in great deal.

And those who strive in us we surely guide them to or paths. Indeed, Allah is with the good. (29:69)

The Reality of *Mujahadah*

The gist of what was said in the earlier meeting about '*Mujahadah*' is that we should try to leave the carnal desires. This is the meaning of *Mujahadah*. This has to be discussed to day in greater details, so that it may become amply clear why it is necessary to take to *Mujahadah*.

Mujahadah in worldly affairs

It is difficult to pursue *Deen* (Faith) without resorting to *Mujahadah*. It is necessary even in the execution of worldly affairs. In order to earn a living one has to crush the dictates of the Self. The man feels inclined to take rest

at home but does not. He cannot earn his living, unless he exerts himself and works hard on his job.

Cultivation of the habit of *Mujahadah* from childhood

It is necessary to train a child for *Mujahadah* from his childhood. When the child is sent to school for the first time he resents and dislikes this. He does not feel inclined to go to school, but he is induced to do so by different ways. This is *Mujahadah*. Man has, therefore, to do many things against his natural disposition to receive education, earn his living, and attain all other objectives of life. If anyone decides not to do anything which is disagreeable to his nature, such a man can succeed neither in his worldly life nor in the religious field.

There will be no *Mujahadah* in Paradise

There are three worlds created by Allah. In one of these worlds all desires will be fulfilled without your doing anything against your will; everything will happen according to your sweet will. In this world man will be free to pursue his desires, without any hindrance. That world is the world of Paradise about which the Holy Qur'an has said:

وَلَكُمْ فِيْهَا مَاتَشْتَهِيْٓ اَنْفُسُكُمْ وَلَكُمْ فِيْهَا مَا تَدَّعُوْنَ (سورۂ حم سجدہ ۳۱)

You shall get in it (Paradise) all that your hearts desire and there will be for you what you call for. (41:31)

Details are available about this in the Ahadith. For example; if you desire to drink pomegranate juice, it will be before you the moment you desire it. You will get, by the grace of Allah, everything that you may desire. There

will be no need to suppress and crush your desires in Paradise, nor will you have to undergo any *Mujahadah* there. That is the world of Paradise. May Allah grant us a seat in Paradise by His mercy.

The world of Hell

The second world, i.e. Hell is just the opposite of Paradise. Everything in Hell will be tortuous and contrary to one's desire and choice. Every act in Hell will be painful and full of distress. That is the world of Hell. May Allah save every Muslim from that. *Aameen.*

The present world

Our world is the world in which things occur which are pleasant as well as unpleasant to us. There is joy and grief, distress and comfort. There is none in this world whose life is exclusively a bed of roses or a bed of thorns. Every comfort and joy has some painful features and every pain and distress has some pleasant aspects. In this world you may be a great capitalist, a millionaire, or a man of countless resources, yet you cannot claim that you have always been comfortable and carefree having, never tasted worry and anxiety, or that things have always been going according to your wishes and choice. Comfort and discomfort, joy and sorrow, health and sickness go side by side in this world of ours. It is not possible for anyone in this world to have all joy with no grief, nor all grief with no joy. This world is a place of trials and ordeals. A poet has thus expressed this idea:

قید حیات بند و غم اصل میں دونوں ایک ہیں
موت سے پہلے آدمی غم سے نجات پائے کیوں

That is, the prison of life and the confinement of

grief both are one and the same. So, man cannot get rid of grief before his death. Allah has created this world that you may enjoy and also may suffer from distress. It is, therefore, not possible for man to be relieved of pains and grief until his death. What to say of the common people even the Prophets علیہم السلام the most beloved personalities of Allah, were not spared from the tortures and distresses of this world. At times they suffered more grievously than the common people. They, too, had to face, situations distasteful to their nature. No man, whether he is a believer or an unbeliever can remain safe from these bitter and pinching vicinitudes of life in this world.

Seek the pleasure of Allah

In this worldly life you have to face things which are disgustful and abhorrent to your nature and temperament. When such is the situation from which there is no escape, then there are two ways open to you. One way is to do things which are against, and abhorrent to your nature and which involve pains and troubles, and yet you gain no reward and benefit for them in the Hereafter nor is Allah pleased with them.

The other way open to man is to work against the inclinations of his nature and Self and crush his desires to ameliorate his Hereafter and to please Allah. The Prophets of Allah علیہم السلام advise that in this world there is no escape for man from doing things which go against his nature and will, whether he appreciates this situation or not. Man should, therefore, resolve firmly that, if it is unavoidable to do things which are against his nature, why not should do only such of them that will please Almighty Allah.

For example it is the prayer time and the prayer-call (*Azan*) is coming from the nearby mosque but you do not feel inclined to go to the mosque on account of lethargy. In

such a situation you follow the dictate of your Self and remain in your bed, ignoring the prayer-call. Then somebody knocks at the door. The man is so important that you have to leave your comfortable bed and go out with him. The result is that you opposed your Self, crushed your desire, disturbed your rest, and could not avoid the trouble. Man should think positively that he has no control over troubles and distress; then why should he not endure these troubles and disturbance for Allah's pleasure? Thinking this way, he should at once get up and go to the mosque to offer prayers.

When receiving the King's commands

Our Dr. Abdul Hayi Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say useful things for us. Once he said: You are feeling laziness and inconvenience in going to the mosque for prayers, e.g. the *Fajr* or the *Tahajjud* prayers. You have risen from sleep, but your eyes are still heavy with sleep and in such a situation you do not want to leave your bed. Now in this condition if you receive a message that the King or the Head of the state wants to confer on you a great honour how will you react to this. Your sleep will diminish instantly. Because you place great value on the King's award for the sake of which you are ready to oppose your desires and your natural inclinations. When you can sacrifice your rest and comfort and sweet sleep for the honour to be confirmed by a King why can you not make the same sacrifice for the sake of Almighty Allah, the most Elevated and the Greatest of all King's and Rulers? You should certainly offer this sacrifice.

Almighty Allah will be with them

This has always been the message of the Prophets of Allah that men should form the habit of opposing their Self in doing such acts as are expected to please

Allah and that is what we call "*Mujahadah*". Apparently no benefit is received from the shocks and distresses being suffered unintentionally in "*Mujahadah*". It is, however, Allah's promise that He shall surely guide in His path those who exert themselves sincerely and oppose their Self and desires for His sake.

وَالَّذِيْنَ جَاهَدُوْا فِيْنَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا ط وَإِنَّ اللهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ (سورة العنكبوت:٦٩)

And they will not be alone on this path. Those who are walking on this path are among the (the good) and Allah becomes a companion of the good.

The task will become easy

Allah becomes a companion of the *Mujahid* and makes his path easy. It is indeed, very difficult to oppose the 'Self' in the beginning and to do something against the demands of man's natural dispositions. Yet when man decides to struggle against Self in favour of Allah the job becomes smooth and easy, because he has resolved firmly to please his Creator. A man finds it very difficult to offer five-time prayers, yet he fights against his Self and, opposing its seductions and ultimately succeeding some how in making himself a regular *Namazi*. Now not only does he not feel any difficulty in offering the prayers regularly, but he will not allow to miss his prayers even if he is offered a great prize for this. Now with the help of Allah, his *Mujahadah* has made him a regular *Namazi* and a pious man.

Only take a step forward

What is true of prayer (*Namaz*) is true of all other righteous deeds of *Deen*. If man sits idle only contemplating wishfully without action, everything will appear to him diffi-

cult. However, if he once resolves firmly to fight against his Self and opposes his desires, Allah makes his work easy. Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه used to quote an example to illustrate this. There is a very long and straight road with rows of trees on both sides of it. Standing on one end of the road, a man looks ahead, he will find that at some distance the two rows of the trees meet each other and block the way. Now if a fool thinks that it is useless to go on this road, because it is blocked, he can never reach his destination. Only that man shall reach his destination who takes a step forward and begins his journey, in spite of the fact that the road appears to be blocked at some distance ahead. After covering a little distance he will find that the road is not blocked, but it is giving him way, as he advances step by step. Thus, Allah is advising the travellers on the path of *Deen* not to lose heart and sit disappointed, finding the path difficult from a distance. They should go ahead and Allah will render the journey easy. All that is needed is a little courage, determination and resolution to oppose and struggle against the Self. This is what is called *Mujahadah.*

Mujahadah is to refrain from some lawful acts also

The essence of *Mujahadah* is that man should protect himself from unlawful acts and acts that are contrary to the laws of the *Shari'ah* by exercising pressure against his Self. Our Self has, however, become easy going in violating the injunctions of the *Shari'ah* and it is very difficult to divert it to the path of righteousness. In order to tame the Self and follow the straight path of the *Shari'ah* it becomes necessary to stop it even from some unnecessary but lawful actions, so that it may be compelled to relinquish enjoyments. After this it will be habituated to refrain from undesirable and unlawful actions. This too is called *Mujahadah* in the terminology of the sufis (mystics).

For example, it is not a sin to eat one's fill but the mystics advise against eating too much, because if makes the Self negligent and fond of enjoyments. It is therefore, *Mujahadah* to eat less than what is necessary to satisfy the hunger.

Why should *Mujahadah* be necessary in lawful acts?

Someone put a question to Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Yaqub Sahib رحمة الله عليه as to why the mystics stop their disciples even from some lawful acts, although Allah has declared them to be lawful. Hazrat Sahib رحمة الله عليه asked the questioner to fold the leaf of a book. This was done. Then Hazrat Sahib رحمة الله عليه asked the questioner to straighten the leaf. He tried but could not make the leaf straight. Hazrat Sahib رحمة الله عليه told him that to make it straight it was necessary to fold it back in the opposite side. When he folded the leaf in the opposite side it became straight as before. Hazrat Sahib رحمة الله عليه then explained that the leaf of this Self stands folded on the side of the sins and cannot be straightened unless it is folded on the opposite side away from the sins. In other words, compel the Self to give up some desirable and permissible acts also and it will become straight like the leaf. This is also a form of *Mujahadah.*

Four kinds of *Mujahadahs*

The respected sufis Spiritual doctors are known to subject their disciples in four kinds of Mujahadahs, viz., (1) Eat less, (2) Speak less, (3) Sleep less, (4) Mix with the people less.

(1) Eating less: In olden days, the respected sufis used to subject their disciples to very hard *Mujahadahs* by reducing their food, to the extent of starvation. Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib رحمة الله عليه has said that the present age is not

suitable for this kind of *Mujahadah*, as the people are weaker and poorer in health than their predecessors in the past. If they eat less they may fall sick and may be prevented from their usual course of worship on account of weakness. He رحمة الله عليه said that in the present time, if a man follows discipline at the time of eating the benefit of less eating will be obtained. While taking food a stage arrives when a man becomes hesitant whether to continue eating or stop it. When this stage arrives man should stop eating. This will ensure for him the benefit of less eating.

What is the cause of this hesitation at the time of eating? This is due to a confrontation between reason and Self. As there is a taste in the food the Self urges man to eat more to enjoy the taste, the reason urges the person not to eat more, as eating more may disturb his digestion and cause some sickness. The struggle between reason and Self is called hesitation. At such a stage in eating and on other occasions, accept the urge of reason and reject the urge of Self.

Allah's pleasure and freedom from fatness

I heard discussions on this topic many times in the meeting of my respected father, Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه as well as those of Dr. Abdul Hayi Sahib رحمة الله عليه and read them in their printed sermons. Later on I happened to read an article on this topic by an expert physician who wrote:

People use medicines to reduce the weight of their bodies some give up eating bread others avoid the midday meal. In modern terminology this is called 'Dieting' The practice of 'Dieting' has spread like an epidemic in Europe. The objective of 'Dieting' is to reduce weight. Women have become more accustomed to 'Dieting' and are taking pills to slim themselves. In so doing sometimes they lose their lives."

Thereafter that physician writes:

My medical opinion is that it is not possible to reduce weight either by giving up a meal or by refraining from eating bread. On the other hand the best way for man to reduce weight is to form a lifelong habit to stop eating a little before fully satisfying his hunger. The physician has concluded his article by giving exactly the same advice namely taking food one should give up eating as soon as he becomes hesitant to continue eating or not. The man who stops eating at the time of this hesitation will never be a prey to obesity, indigestion, nor will it be necessary for him to take to 'Dieting'.

Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib Thanawi رحمة الله عليه had recommended the same prescription in his printed sermons many years ago. Now it is up to you to take this prescription either to reduce your weight or to please Allah. If you take this advice to cure your sick Self and to please Allah, you will get reward and your weight will also get reduced automatically. On the other hand if you act upon this advice only to reduce your weight, then you may perhaps succeed in reducing your weight, but you will get no virtue and reward from Allah.

Keeping away from enjoyments

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has greatly simplified matters for us in this behalf. In olden days the respected sufis used to subject their disciples to diverse exercises in the name of *Mujahadah*. There used to be at their monasteries a general kitchen in which, it is said, a kind of soup was prepared which was distributed among the disciples in cups. They had orders that they should, each, mix their soup with an equal part of water and then use that mixture as food, so that the Self might be cured of the vice of enjoying taste. They

were also made to starve from time to time. However, those were different times and we are in a different age. In the same way, the Hakimul Ummah has prescribed treatment keeping in view the age we are living in and the demand of our natures and temperaments. The way, he has prescribed of less eating, serves the purpose of 'Dieting'.

The Frenzy of eating to one's fill

It is not unlawful from the *Shari'ah* point of view to eat to one's fill, but this is a cause of diseases both spiritual and physical. This is because all sins and disobedience are the outcome of eating to one's fill. A man with empty stomach can hardly think of sins and wrongdoings. It has, therefore, been advised that man should try to avoid eating to his fill. This is the *Mujahadah* of 'Less Eating' or Dieting' as they call it.

(2) The *Mujahadah* of speaking less

The second kind of *Mujahadah* is 'speaking less'. We chatter from morning till evening non-stop and there is no brake on this. This is highly undesirable. This tongue will go on committing sins, unless it is kept under strict control. You must remember that the Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said in a Hadith: It is man's tongue which will cause him to be thrown into Hell face-down, because if it is left uncontrolled with no check, whatsoever, it is bound to indulge in telling lies in backbiting and hurting the hearts of others. These are grievous sins which will take him to Hell.

Save yourself from the sins of the tongue

For avoiding the sins of the tongue man has to undergo the *Mujahadah* of 'Less speaking'. This requires that man should speak only when necessary, avoid talking about useless things and should more his tongue only when it becomes absolutely necessary. Before talking about anything he must first think coolly if it is necessary

and proper for him to talk on that topic if so it is not a sin. Man must guard himself against using his tongue unnecessarily. By following this method man becomes used to speak less. When man feels tempted to speak but suppresses this temptation, he gradually achieves control over his tongue, and then he does not commit sins of telling lies, backbiting and the like.

Lawful Recreation is permitted

Sometimes a few friends get together in their spare times and involve themselves in sinful gossips for nothing. The *Shari'ah* has, however, allowed us to enjoy and recreate. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is himself reported to have said:

روحوا القلوب ساعة فساعة (كنز العمال: ٥٣٥٤)

(Kanzul A'amal - 5354)

This means: provide relief to your hearts from time to time:

How useful and appealing the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ are! There is none who knows more than he ﷺ our psychology, needs and temperament. He ﷺ knew it fully well that if the *Ummah* was commanded to do nothing other than remembering Allah and to keep them engaged in reciting His sacred names, they would not be able to do so, because they are not angels. They are human beings. They need, by their very nature, some recreation, like relaxation and light pleasantry with one another. Not only is it lawful but it is also desirable, and it is a *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. However to indulge in such recreation for long hours and waste precious time may lead to sins. The people have, therefore, been advised to talk less, as this is also a kind of *Mujahadah*.

It is an act of *Sunnah* to converse with guests

A man used to call upon my respected father, Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه the man was very

talkative. He talked continuously on irrelevant topics. It has been the practice of our elders to honour their guests, listen to them and please them as far as possible. This is a difficult and tiring situation for a busy person. Those whose lives remain fully occupied with work can very well realize this difficulty. The usual practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was that whenever any person called upon him and started talking to him, he ﷺ never turned his face from him but remained listening to him unless the visitor himself turned his face. The words of the relevant Hadith are:

حتى يكون هو المنصرف (شمائل ترمذی باب ماجاء فی تواضع رسول الله ﷺ)

Until the visitor himself departed.(Shamail Tirmidhi).

This is indeed a very difficult task. Some people are continuous talkers and it is very tiring to listen to them patiently. It has, however, been the practice of our elders to pay full attention to such visitors in compliance with the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

A Method of Reform

Any one visiting my father with the intention of remedy, he used to point out his short comings. This visitor used to call upon my respected father رحمة الله عليه and the latter listened patiently to his conversation. One day that visitor expressed his desire to become a disciple of my respected father رحمة الله عليه for spiritual guidance and training and asked for some *Zikr* to recite. My respected father رحمة الله عليه advised him that he did not need any incantation or recitation. What he needed was to hold his tongue and maintain complete silence in the meetings. The *Mujahadah* prescribed for him of sitting silent was more difficult for him than a thousand *Mujahadahs*. By dint of this single *Mujahadah* he completed, with Allah's help, all the stages of his spiritual course. My respected father رحمة الله عليه had diagnosed his disease of unnecessary and irrelevant talking. When this was cured all other weaknesses and short-comings disappeared. Thus, only after

a short period of time Allah bestowed upon him a high rank. Thus, like a specialist physician, the Shaikh prescribes for his disciples spiritual treatment according to the disease of each individual patient. This is the *Mujahadah* of 'Less speaking'.

(3) Less Sleeping

The third '*Mujahadah*' is sleeping less. In olden days the disciples were prevented from sleeping except a little. It is well known that Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه used to offer his Fajr prayers with the ablution (*Wudu*) performed for the Isha prayers. The saints have, however, advised that a man must sleep at least six hours during the 24 hours of the day. Sleeping less than six hours may cause sickness. Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has stated that if anyone is addicted to sleeping at wrong hours he should give up this habit and follow proper sleeping hours. This change of sleeping hours also comes within the definition of 'Less sleeping' and is a kind of *Mujahadah*.

(4) Reduce your contacts with the people

The fourth *Mujahadah* consists in reducing contacts and mixing with the people to the minimum, because the wider a man's circle of acquaintance, the more exposed he is to the opportunities of sins. You may experience for yourself the truth of this assertion. Today it has become a recognised art to widen the circle of one's contacts which is called 'Public Relations'. The objective of this department of public Relations is to bring more and more people under the circle of your contacts and acquaintance and thereby to increase your influence among the people, so that you may reap all sorts of benefits from these contacts. Our elders have however, advised us to reduce, rather than increase, our contacts with the public as far as possible.

The Heart is a Mirror

Almighty Allah has made man's heart a mirror. Whatever passes by a man's eyes is, like a film, impressed upon man's heart. When man's circle of contact is wide, the heart will re-

ceive impression from good as well as bad people. When people involved in vicious activities will meet him, the heart will be impressed with the vices of their bad activities, thus spoiling the purity of the heart. Hence the advice to have contacts with the public to the minimum. the lessor a man's contacts with the public, the greater the possibility of increase in his relation with Allah. Maulana Rumi has said:

تعلق حجاب است وبے حاصلی
چوں پیوندھا بکسلی واصلی

Maulana means to say in this couplet that contacts with the public serve as a screen between man and his relation with Allah. The greater a man's intimacy and friendship with the people, the weaker and lesser will be his relations with Almighty Allah. So the advice forwarded here to reduce contacts with the public is subject to the condition that this should not adversely affect man's liability to the rights of the servants of Allah which has to be discharged at all costs. It should not be man's tendency to widen his circle of contacts and acquaintances unnecessarily. This is a kind of *Mujahada* named 'Reduction of contacts with the people'.

These *Mujahadahs* (spiritual drills or exercises) have been prescribed in order to control our 'Self' and to stop it from seducing us to commit sins and unlawful acts. Every body should, therefore, try to take up these *Mujahadah* but under the expert guidance of some experienced Sheikh. A disciple cannot himself decide the quantity of food he should take, the time of his sleeping and the number and type of people he should contact. Some Sheikh will guide him on these points and he will - god willing - receive benefit from these *Mujahadahs*.

May Allah help us all to act accordingly. *Aameen*!

واخر دعوانا ان الحمدلله رب العالمين

And we close with the call that all praise be to Allah, the Lord of the world's.

Venue : Seminar Hall
Jama' Karachi
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.

Date : 5th. July 1992
After 'Asr Prayers.

"Economics" is indeed a very important branch of the Islamic teachings. You can get an idea of the amplitude of the Islamic teachings on the subject of "Economics" from the fact that, if any book on Islamic Jurisprudence is divided into four parts, the two parts thereof will be found to be concerned with "Economics". It must, however, be borne in mind that unlike other systems, "Economics" is not the basic issue of life in Islam. In fact, the basic issue of life in Islam is the belief that this world in which man is living is not his final resort; it is rather a ladder to take man to his final resort, the Hereafter. The existing life is only a transitional stage. It is not compatible with the basic characteristics of Islam that man should exhaust all his energies and abilities on this transitional state of life.

ISLAM AND THE NEW ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF LIFE

الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلاة والسلام على سيدنا ومولانا محمد النبي الامين وعلى اله واصحابه اجمعين وعلى كل من تبعهم باحسان الى يوم الدين

امابعد:

All Praise be to the Lord of the worlds and mercy and peace on our sire and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ the un-lettered and trust-worthy Prophet and on his household and his companions, all of them and on all who followed them with goodness till the Day of

Judgment:

Todays Topic.

The President, respected ladies and Gentlemen! As-salamu 'alai-kum war rah-matullahi wa barakaatuh:

"Islam and the New Economic Problems" has been fixed to be the topic of todays sitting and I have been asked to speak on this, so that I may mention to you the basic features of this topic.

This in fact is a topic which requires to be dealt with thoroughly and in details for which an hour's space of time is quite insufficient. So, ignoring the formal introduction I want to take up the topic direct in order to mention to you some of its distinctive features in this short period, according to my capacity and knowledge. It is a topic so comprehensive and complicated that voluminous books have been written on it and full justice cannot be done to it in an hour or in a short sitting like this.

The new economic problems are so numerous and diverse that it will prove a very trying duty even if only one of them is selected for discussion, to the exclusion of the rest. So, instead of discussing partially many of its problems I want to present to you a basic and fundamental outline of the teachings of Islam relating to the economic activities of man, so that at least the basic conceptions of Islamic economics may become quite clear. This is because all the partial economic problems to which Dr. Akhtar Saeed has referred are in fact based on the basic conceptions and whatever solutions are found to them will lie within the framework of these basic conceptions.

It is the foremost and basic necessity that we should have in our minds a clear conception of the Islamic economics and its definition. What are its basic characteristics and in what respects it stands distinguished from other modes of eco-

nomic system? No discussion of these problems or their logical solutions will be in order unless the conception of Islamic economic system becomes quite clear in our minds. I, therefore, want to put before you a brief comparision between the basic conception of the Islamic economic system and the various other modes of such systems prevailing in the world. I pray to Almighty Allah that may He help me, by His mercy, to say something useful and correct on this important topic in this short time at my disposal. *Aameen.*

Islam is a Mode of Life.

The first thing which needs to be kept in mind about Islamic economics is that it is not an "economic system" in the typical sense of the term which is applied to the various other economic systems prevailing in the world today.

Islam, it should be noted, is a comprehensive mode of life, economics in an important branch of it. It is not right to define Islam as an "Economic System" or a "system of economic living", like capitalism or socialism. So when we talk of Islamic way of economic living or its conceptions or fundamentals, we should not expect that the Holy Qur'an and the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ contain theories and conceptions similar to those enunciated in the books of Adam Smith, Marshall and other economists. This is because Islam, in its entity and origin is not an economic system, but it is a comprehensive mode of life of which economics forms a very small branch. Islam has, indeed, laid stress on this branch but it has not declared it to be the aim of life. It should be borne in mind that, while on this subject, we shall not find in the Holy Qur'an and the Prophet's *sunnah* such economic theories, conceptions, terms and terminologies as are generally found in the various books of Economics. One can, however, find in Islam those basic conceptions on which the foundation of an "eco-

nomic system" can be laid. This is why in my personal conversation and writings I like to use the term "the Economic Teachings of Islam" instead of the term "Islam's Economic System". Now what shape does the economy of living take in the light of the teachings of Islam and what is the framework that emerges before us? This question is of a great importance for a student of Economics.'

Economics is not a basic problem of life.

Another point to note is that "Economics" is no doubt a very important branch of the Islamic teachings. You may get an idea of the amplitude of the Islamic teachings on the subject of Economics from the fact that if any book on Islamic jurisprudence is divided into four parts then of these four parts the two will be found to deal with the "Economics". You might have heard the famous book '*Hidayah*' on Jurisprudence with its four volumes. Its last two volumes deal mostly with teaching on "Economics". From this you can form an idea of the amplitude of the teachings of Islam on the subject of Economics. It must, however, be borne in mind always that in Islam "Economics" is not a basic problem of human life. In all other secular economic systems this has been considered to be the greatest basic problem of human life, on which the foundations of all related systems have been laid. As against this, in Islam the subject of Economics does occupy an important place, but it is not a basic problem of human life.

The Final Destination is the Hereafter.

The basic problem in Islam really, revolves round the belief that this world which man is inhabiting is not his final destination nor is it the target of his aspiration. It is rather a stage to take him to the final destination.

This world is only a transitional stage. This transitional stage should also be transversed with due care and piety yet it is not consistant with the basic characteristics of Islam which forbid that one should exhaust one's total endeavours, energies and exertions on the betterment of this world.

Islam has indeed laid great stress on the (resources of this) world as means of living, so much so that this has been given the name of Khair (Goodness) and Allah's Fazl (Bounty) and the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith:

طَلَبُ كسبِ الحلال فريضةٌ بعد الفريضةِ (كنز العمال حديث نمبر ٩٢٣١)

(Kanzul Ummal, Hadith no: 9231)

This means: To earn a living by lawful means occupies the second position among the obligatory duties imposed on man. It has also been commanded that one should not make it the pivot of all one's effort and exertions because beyond this world lies the Hereafter which is eternal and which everyone has to enter. The amelioration of this Hereafter and its welfare are really the most important duty of man.

A most befitting example of the world.

Maulana Rumi رحمة الله عليه has explained this conception of Islam through a very beautiful example:

آب اندر زیر کشتی پشتی است
آب در کشتی ہلاک کشتی است

(مفتاح العلوم شرح مثنوی مولانا روم جلد ۲ ص ۳۷)

(Miftahul 'Uloom, Key to the Masnavi, vol. II, p. 37)

The world and man have been compared to water and a boat respectively. Just as a boat can not sail without water in the same way man cannot do without the world and its re-

sources. However, this water is useful for the boat as long as it remains below and around it. If the water gets into the boat, instead of supporting it, it will drown it. In the same way these worldly things and resources are very profitable for man without which he cannot live. They are, however, beneficial only as long as they are around and below the boat of man's heart. If these worldly resources get into the boat of man's heart, they will drown and perish him.

This is the conception of Islam about "Economics". This, however, never means that this is totally useless. No, it is something very useful, because Islam does not teach its followers monasticism. The world and its resources are useful for man as long as they are procured and used within the prescribed, lawful limits and they are not made the basic aim and aspiration of life.

After the clarification of these two basic points we should now try to ascertain the basic problems of any economic system and how they have been solved by the capitalistic and the socialistic systems and thirdly, how Islam has solved them.

What does "Economics" of living mean?

In so far as the first question is concerned as to what the basic problems of "Economics" are, even the primary student of economics knows that the basic problems of Economics" are four. Before understanding these four problems we must first be sure about the meaning of the term economics which is called *Iqtisad* (اقتصاد) in the Arabic language. The dictionary meaning of this term is "man's efforts to satisfy his necessaries of life economically; in other words the science of "Economics" too contains a sense of economy, in fact it is derived from the word economy. Man is facing a situation in which his wants are

much more than the supplies with which he can satisfy his wants. If the resources had been equal to the necessaries and wants of man, the science of "Economics" would not have come into existence. The fact is that the needs of human life are more than the supplies necessary to satisfy them, and this disparity has given rise to the science of Economics. Then it became necessary to devise ways and means to remedy this disparity so as to make both ends meet. This is indeed the subject of the science of Economics. Four basic problems are involved in the study of the science of Economics.

1. Determination of Priorities

The first problem involved in "Economics is called, in the terminalogy of Economics, the determination of priorities. A man's means and resources are limited, but his needs and necessaries are more than his means. He has, therefore, to decide which of his needs he should first meet and postpone the rest. For example, a man has only Rs 50/- which he can spend on any of these items: flour for bread, garments, refreshment in some hotel, or enjoyment of a film-show in a cinema hall. The man concerned has to decide on which of these items he should spend this amount of Rs. 50/- and which he should ignore. This is what is meant by the Determination of Priorities.

Just as an individual is confronted with this problem in the same way, the entire state, country and the entire Economy are confronted with it. For example, Pakistan possesses some natural resources, man-power, mineral resources, and financial resources, but they are all limited. Against these, our needs are unlimited. We can utilize these resources in raising crops of wheat, rice or tobacco, or we may also squander them all on enjoyments and luxuries. All these options are available for

us. The foremost problem facing any economic system is to determine priorities, and how.

2. Allocation of Resources.

The second problem is known in the terminalogy of Economics as the "Allocation of Resources i.e., how should we distribute these and in what proportions, among the various items of expenditure we have to meet? For example, we have land, factories and man power. We have to decide what areas of the available land should be allocated to the cultivation of wheat, cotton and rice. In the terminology of Economics it is called "Allocation of Resources".

3. Distribution of Income.

The third problem relates to the "Distribution of Income", i.e. the result of Productions viz, the income received from production has to be distributed amongst the various classes of the society. This is technically known as Distribution of Income.

4. Development.

The fourth problem is called, in the terminalogy of Economics. "Development". This requires us to consider how we can develop our economic activities to ensure that the quantity, quality and the standard of the commodities produced may not deteriorate, but continue improving. In addition to this research work should be done to find out and introduce new commodities.

These are the four problems which every branch of economic activity has to face and solve. After having tackled these problems it is necessary to find out how the prevailing economic systems have tackled and solved these problems. It is only then that we will be able to understand

how Islam has tackled and solved these problems. You might have heard this Arabic proverb:

وبضدها تتبين الاشياء

This means that we come to know the reality of things by looking at their opposites. It is the darkness of night that brings out the value and brilliance of the daylight. Man could not appreciate the bliss of the refreshing rains, if there was no stiffling heat. In the light of this proverb we have to review briefly how the prevailing economic systems have solved these problems.

Their solution in the capitalistic system.

First of all we take capitalism. This system has tried to solve all these four problems, as it were, by one magic wand and that is by leaving every man free to earn as much profit as possible. In this way as man goes on exerting himself to earn profits to the best of his ability, all these problems will be solved automatically. It is, however, necessary to consider how all this will lead to automatic solution to these four problems.

This question may be answered by saying that the laws of Nature are in operation in this universe. One of these is called the law of Supply and Demand. Besides students of Economics, every common man knows that the price of a commodity increases when its supply is less than its demand, and conversly the price decreases when the supply of the commodity is more than its demand. For example, if the quantity of mangoes available for sale in the market is less than the number of the customers, the price will go up and conversely if the available quantity of mangoes is more than the buyers of mangoes the price will go down. In short, according to this law of Supply and Demand the price of a commodity increases or decreases in sympathy with the de-

crease or increase in the supply of that commodity.

According to the capitalistic system it is the law of Supply and Demand that determines what should be produced and in what quantity and how the resources should be allocated. When we have allowed everyone in this system to earn as much profit as possible, for his maximum profit he will produce only that commodity which has a roaring demand in the market.

If I want to start a business today I shall ascertain first of all which commodity commands a great demand in the market, so that by bringing that commodity in the market I may earn my maximum profit by selling my merchandise at a good price.

Thus, working under the incentive of their profit the people will bring to the market only that commodity that has a good demand. On the other hand they will refrain from bringing more of it to the market. because if they increase its supply its price will decrease and they may sustain loss or may not maintain the level of their profits. It is believed that it is the law of Supply and Demand that determines the quality and qauntity and the type of the commodities to be produced and offered for sale in the market. The same law also determines the allocation of resources, i.e., man will utilize his land and his factory in producing that commodity which has a greater demand in the country and brings more profit to the businessman. In other words, these four problems are solved in the Capitalistic system on the basis of the law of Supply and Demand and this process is called Price Mechanism.

The same law of supply and demand applies to the problem of Distribution of Income. For example, an industrialist opens a factory to manufacture some commodity and engages a few labourers to run the factory. A question now

arises in what ratio the income earned from the factory should be shared between the industrialist and the labourers. This too will be settled under the operation of the law of Supply and Demand, i.e. the greater the demand for the labourers, the more will be their wages. Conversely, the less the demand for the workers, the less will be their wages.

The last problem of Development will also be solved on the same basis. When under the Capitalistic System everybody is bent upon earning the maximum profit, he will try to make such inventions and introduce such devices as may attract to his factory the largest number of workers.

Thus, if everyone is left free to earn the maximum amount of profit, these four problems will be solved automatically. The same law determines the Priorities, the Allocation of Resources, the Distribution of Income and the pace of Economic Devolopment. This is the theory of Capitalism.

Their Solution in Socialism.

When Socialism came into the picture of world economics it protested against the prevailing system of entrusting every thing to the tyrannical and relentless forces of the market which are controlled by the law of Supply and Demand. The belief under this law that production should follow the trends of the Demand may be correct in theory, but man is able to ascertain the correct position of the Demand after a very long time and often his calculation about the Demand is misleading and unreliable. His action to increase or decrease production on this misleading calculation leads him to loss and causes depression of business in the market. The depression is very devastating for country's economy. Matters cannot, therefore, be left to the blind forces of the law of Supply and Demand.

Capitalism had, as we have seen, presented a magic

wand, and socialism presented another magic rod, claiming that all these four problems could be solved by putting all the factors of production under collective instead of individual control and ownership. This could be done by giving over charge to the Government of all the factors of production. After having taken charge of these factors, it would be the responsibility of the Government to plan the allocation of these factors, viz. how much land should be allotted to the cultivation of wheat and how much to that of rice or cotton and so on so forth. Similarly how many factories should produce cloth and how many should manufacture shoes? All these and related matters would be handled by the Government. The Government would also plan and chalk out the scales of wages to be paid to the workers. Thus, it was only the Government that would take decisions about Priorities, Allocation of resources, Distribution of Income and the Development plans.

Under Socialism all these activities are entrusted to the Government and its Planning Department. That is why socialistic economy is also called Planned Economy. As the Capitalistic Economy has surrendered its Economy to be governed by the law of Supply and Demand, operating in the market, it is also called Market Economy and laissez faire Economy.

These are two different theories which are presently in vogue in the world.

The Basic Principles of Capitalistic Economy.

The first principle that emanates from the philosophy of the Capitalistic Economy is private ownership. In other words, any individual can be the owner of all factors of production in his private capacity. The other principle is the Principle of laissez faire Policy of the state which

means the principle of non-interference, which allow man a free hand in earning profit without any let or hindrance. The third principle is the principle of personal incentive to profit-earning and that impetus should be given to this incentive to stimulate and accelerate economic activities. These are the basic principles of the Capitalistic system.

The Basic principles of Socialism.

As against this, the basic principles of Socialism consist in the total abolition of private ownership in so far as the factors of production are concerned. In other words, the factors of production cannot form the private property of anyone, i.e., neither, the land, nor the factory can be owned by anyone as his private property. The other principle consists in the need that everything should be done under well planned programmes. These are two different theories that have been mentioned to you.

The Results of Socialism.

By now the results of both systems have appeared and are before us. You have seen the consequences of Socialism that only within a period of seventy four years the building of the entire system has collapsed and its greatest advocates and supporters are seen lying prostrate and defeated. This is despite the fact that "nationalisation" remained in vogue in the world like a flourishing fashion. If anyone ever spoke against it he was dubbed as an agent of Capitalism and retrogressive person. But today the President of Russia is himself declaring:

> I wish that this theory of socialism had been experimented in some small country of Africa instead of in Russia. In the least it would have saved us from its devastating consequences.

Socialism was an unnatural system.

At any rate, socialism was an unnatural system. The world is teeming with countless social problems, in addition to its economic problems. If we try to solve them through planning they can never find a solution. After all, this is also a social problem that man has to marry a woman and for this he has to find out for him a suitable wife. Similarly a woman needs a suitable husband for her. If anyone proposes that the institution of marriage should be entrusted to the Government and it should be left to the Planning Department to select matching bridegrooms and brides, because the existing system of private selection by individuals is not efficient. The system controlled by individuals and private families results in frequent divorces and family disruptions, leading to so many social problems. If the question of marriage is sought to be solved in this way, it will indeed be quite unnatural and no good can be expected from such an experiment.

This is exactly what is taking place in Socialism in which the settlement of all problems have been left to Government's planning. Now who will do this planning? This will be done by the Government which is controlled and run not by angels but by a group of men liable to commit all sorts of mistakes. The socialists complain that the capitalists control the entire resources of the country and appropriate them to their advantage as they like. The advocates of socialism do not see that although the smaller capitalists have disappeared from the scene, yet their place has been taken by a single all-dominant and over-bearing capitalist which is called "Bureaucracy" and is composed of dominant Government officers. This body controls all the factors of production and other resources of the country. Who can guarantee that the members of this body

could not do wrongs and injustice. After all, they were not innocent angels. The system did develop defects and evils in its body and we have all seen how it collapsed and disappeared from the international forum so disgracefully in such a short period of time, in less than a century.

The Evils of the Socialistic systems.

The capitalistic countries of the west are very vehemently expressing joy and satisfaction on the collapse of socialism. They think that the failure of Socialism is a proof of the truth and soundness of Capitalism. Thus, in their opinion, this is the only feasible system on which the world shall have to fall back.

It needs to be understood that the philosophy of the capitalistic system is based on the existence of a free market and likewise freedom of the people to earn profit to the best of their ability. In theory this philosophy appears to be quite reasonable and plausible, yet it totally failed when action was carried to extremity. It is true that when the people are left free to earn profit without any restrictions, the law of Supply and Demand will come into play and set matters right, but it must be noted that this will happen only when there is free competition in the market which is not hampered by the hurdles of monopoly.

For example, you want to purchase a walking stick from the market and there are many shopkeepers in the market who sell sticks at various prices ranging from Rs. 400/-, 450/-, 500/- per stick. I am free to purchase a stick at any of these prices. In such a situation the forces of Supply and Demand will operate in the normal way. On the other hand if there is only one shopkeeper in the market who owns a monopoly to sell sticks, I have no alternative but to purchase the stick from this shopkeeper at whatever

price he charges from me. Here the forces of Supply and Demand fail to operate and do not take their natural course. Thus, the forces of Supply and Demand operate in a free atmosphere and fail where a monoplistic system is in operation.

Again when a man is left scot-free to earn profit to the best of his ability, he uses whatever method he finds useful to his end. As a result, the evil of monopoly finds its way to the market. As regards Capitalism it leaves man to earn profit by any method whatsoever, be it interest, gambling, and speculation all of which are unlawful and strictly prohibited in the laws of the *Shari'ah*. As a result of this freedom, sometimes monopolies spring up and the forces of Supply and Demand fail to operate and become totally paralysed. As a result of all this in actual practice the philosophy of Capitalism does not come into play.

The other evil that is born out of the unhampered freedom allowed for earning profit, is that there remains no moral value to determine what is useful and what is harmful for the society. I recently read in the famous American Magazine, the Times, that a model girl charges 25 million Dollars per day for being photographed for advertising products. One will surely ask where from does the businessman concerned gets this huge amount for advertisement? Obviously he will extract this amount from the common consumers, as this amount will be added to the cost of the product.

Look at these Five-Star Hotels! Their one day's rent ranges from Rs. 2500/- to Rs. 3000/- A man of average means cannot think of staying there. Yet all these hotels have been built with the earnings of the common public. Generally Government Officers stay at these hotels at Government costs and this comes out of the tax-payers' money. The other class that stays in these hotels are the rich Businessmen and Industrialists during their business tours. From which source do they meet the high charges of these hotels? They do not pay the charges out of their own pockets but they include the charges in the cost of the products which they bring to the market for sale, which, in turn, becomes a part of the price recovered from the consumers.

There is, thus, no moral standard or moral yard-stick to guage as to which way of earning profit is useful and which is harmful for the society. This naturally breeds immoralities, injustice and many forms of other wrongs.

Islamic injunctions of Economic Issues

Now I turn to the economic teachings of Islam, so that they may be understood well in the foregoing background. Islam admits the truth of this basic philosophy that the economic problems should be solved under the forces of the market instead of by Planning. The Holy Qur'an says:

نَحْنُ قَسَمْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ مَّعِيْشَتَهُمْ فِى الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا وَرَفَعْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَاتٍ لِّيَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُهُمْ بَعْضاً سُخْرِيًّا ؕ (الزخرف:٣٢)

We have apportioned among them their livelihood in the life of the world, and have raised some of them above others in rank that some of them may take labour from others. (43:32)

In other words Almighty Allah has created this universe and its administrative setup and He has devised a system for the distribution of its means of livelihood and resources, fixation of price and other related issues. The solution to these issues does not come from planning. Almighty Allah has so devised the systems of the life in this world that the resources and means of livelihood become distributed automatically. When Allah says that "We have

apportioned livelihood", it does not mean that He has personally made this apportionment. It only means that Allah has devised such laws of nature that these means of livelihood and resources find their automatic distribution among the people. In another Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has mentioned a very beautiful principle of livelihood and its apportionment:

دعوالناس يرزق الله بعضهم من بعض (صحيح مسلم كتاب البيوع باب تحريم بيع الحاضر للبادى حديث نمبر ١٥٢٢)

(Sahih Muslim, the Book of sales... Hadith no: 1522)

This means: Let people be free to work for their livelihood as it is Allah who provides them livelihood by means of one another. They should therefore, not be subjected to unnecessary checks and restrictions. Allah has devised a very wonderful economic system. For example, it occurred to me that I should purchase some fruit, say mangoes, and it occurred to a fruit-seller in the market to sell mangoes. I went to the market, saw a man there selling mangoes. After settling the price with him. I purchased some mangoes and paid the seller the price. This Hadith prescribes free trade and open competition against monopoly and artificial restrictions.

Islam accepts this basic principle that it is the natural market conditions that regulate these dealings of sale and purchase. Islam, however, does not accept the basic distinctive theory of Capitalism that the economics of livelihood should be left free and unhampered at the mercy of the forces of the market. Islam advocates that man should not be left so free that he encroaches upon the freedom of

another person and establishes his monopoly in the market. Islam has, therefore, imposed some restrictions on this freedom, which may be divided in three categories:

(1) Restrictions imposed by the laws of the *Shari'ah.* This may also be called Religious Restrictions;
(2) Moral Restrictions;
(3) Legal Restrictions.

(1) Religious Restrictions.

The first category of restrictions, based on the religion of Islam, is very important which distinguishes Islamic conception from other economic ideologies. After having recanted its basic principles, the capitalistic system has stooped so low that now the Government is able to interfere with it in one way or another. This interference from Government is based on personal intellect and worldly conceptions. On the other hand the restrictions imposed by Islam are based on moral and religious conceptions. What are these moral and religious restrictions? These are total abstension from interest, gambling, hoarding, monopoly, speculation. Islam has totally forbidden these immoral and sinful dealings. Ordinarily, Islam allows dealings between two persons or groups on the basis of mutual agreement and regards such dealings as lawful, Islam, however, does not permit mutual agreement on dealings which may lead to the ruin of the social integrity and morality and are against the Shari'ah. For example, mutual agreement on usurious dealings has been totally forbidden in Islam, because this leads to serious corruption and degeneration of the society. Many books have been written on the evils of interest which cannot be enumerated here, yet I set before you a simple example which will give you a little idea of the devastating effects of this evil, that is interest.

The Evils of the Interest - bearing system.

The theory of interest is based on the fact that one party's gain is guaranteed but the other party's gain is quite uncertain. A man borrows some money from someone on interest. The money lender is sure to get the amount of interest accrued on the money lent. As for the borrower, he has to pay the amount of interest to the money-lender at an agreed rate every year, whether the business carried on with that borrowed money results in profit or loss. So, the debtor's gain is not guaranteed at all and some times he is a loser.

Sometimes it so happens that the debtor makes a huge profit with his loan. Suppose a man starts business with a capital amount of Rs. ten crores (10,00,00,000) borrowed from a Bank on interest and he makes a profit of 50%. Out of this profit he pays to the Bank only 15% and appropriates the remaining 35% of the profit to his own end. Now consider, with whose money did he conduct the business? It was public money and 35% of the profit earned on that money went into one man's pocket i.e, the businessman. The remaining 15% went to the Bank. After deducting therefrom its own share the Bank distributed a small portion thereof, say 10%, among its depositors. The result was that out of the profit of 50% earned with public money only 10% is distributed among the public and 35% thereof goes to one man's pocket. The public becomes quite satisfied with their deposit of Rs. 100/- which became Rs. 110/-at the end of the year, but they do not know that even this meagre profit of 10%-reverts to the capitalist businessman. That is because the payment of 15% which he paid to the Bank will be added to the cost of the product and will be reflected in the price of the commodity produced. Thus the businessman will recover this amount from the cusumers. As a result of this vicious circle the businessman ultimately reaps the profit in every respect and remains safe and secure from the risk of loss. Even if he ever suffers any loss the Insurance companies are there to cover his loss and they also pay this compensation out of the money of the premiums charged from the policy holders in periodical instalments. Thus the Capitalistic system thrives on the public money.

I have tried in the foregoing lines to give only a faint idea of the interest-ridden system of public economy which breeds injustice. inequity and unfairness in the distribution of wealth which the Islamic Shari'ah has strictly forbidden.

The Benefits of Partnership and *Muzarabah* (cooperative enterprise)

If this very business was based on the principle of partnership and *Muzarabah* (cooperative profit - Sharing), it would not be necessary for the borrower and the Bank to agree on an interest rate of 15%. The agreement between the parties would be based on the principle of profit-sharing, viz., the businessman and the Bank would share the profit, say, on 50:50 basis. In other words, if the rate of profit was 50%, 25% of it would go to the Bank and the remaining 25% to the businessman. In this way the trend of wealth would be downwards and not upwards, because the depositors would receive on their deposits through the Bank 25% of the profit earned. It is thus obvious that interest-taking adversely affects the process of distribution of wealth which, in turn, disturbs the smooth economic process.

Gambling is unlawful

Islam has totally prohibited gambling. In gambling a man places at stake some fixed amount of money. The money so invested will either be lost or will bring with it a

much larger amount to the gambler. Gambling has many attractive forms. It is very strange that gambling is unlawful in many western countries, but when it takes a civilized shape it becomes lawful and legal. For example, if a poor man is gambling on the roadside the police shall apprehend him. On the other hand, if gambling is given some other name and is commited under the protection and auspices of some gambling association, it is considered to be lawful. Such form of camouflaged gambling is very common in today's capitalistic system. Small amounts collected from many persons are handed over to a few fortunate persons in the form of huge sums of money. The various forms of lotteries so widely prevailing in the world are nothing but a form of gambling. Islam has, therefore, totally prohibited gambling.

Monopoly

Monopoly is also prohibited in Islam. Everyone is well aware of this evil, so no prolonged discussion is considered necessary on the topic of monopoly.

Hoarding is not Lawful.

Iktinaaz, i.e. hoarding of monetary resources so as not to pay *zakat* (the compulsory tax) and other dues levied by the *Shari'ah*. This is also forbidden in Islam.

(1) Another Example

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said in a Hadith:

"لا يبع حاضر لباد" (صحيح مسلم كتاب البيوع باب تحريم الحاضر للبادى حديث نمبر ١٥٢٢)

(Sahih Muslim. Book of sales.... Hadith no: 1522)

No one living in a city should sell merchandise

belonging to a villager.

A villager brings his commodity for sale in the nearby city, but a person living in the city offers to sell the villager's commodity on his behalf. Apparently this involves no objection, because both the parties agree to this arrangement. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has, however, forbidden such a bargain. This is because the city-dweller will hold the commodity back from the market until the price rises up. This will cause dearness and shortage. If the villager himself sells his commodity, he will desire to sell it as early as possible and return home. In such a case the price of the commodity will be determined by the real Supply and the real Demand. In the case of the presence of a middleman the free operation of the law of Supply and Demand will be disturbed, leading to increase in the price.

Thus, the Islamic *Shari'ah* has blocked all doors to the birth of dearness, injustice and inequity in the society. This is the first restriction which has been imposed on this free economic activity in trading.

(2) Moral Restriction.

The second restriction which has been imposed on free Economic activities is called "Moral Restricition". There are many things and acts which are called "*Mubah*" (permissible) in the terminalogy of the *Shari'ah*. They are neither unlawful nor are there any orders to do them. The people have, however, been induced to do these "*Mubah*" or permissible things. I have already mentioned that Islam is not the name of an Economic system. It is a religion and a mode of life. The first lesson which Islam teaches is that the final goal of man is the Hereafter, and the blessings and prosperity provided for man there. Islam does not stand in the way of a Muslim in earning profit for himself,

but Islam attaches more importance to the effort which a Muslim puts in the way of ameliorating his life after death, that is the Hereafter. Islam has, therefore, taught us to earn profit in this world by lawful means but not at the cost of the Hereafter which is his final abode.

Islam has taught us to avoid evils and do good deeds in this world which will be beneficial in this world, but their benefit in the Hereafter will be countless. For example, if a man goes to the market with the intention that his dealings in the market will be useful not only for himself but for the society as a whole, this deed of him will become an act of worship and deserving of reward from Allah. In capitalism the capitalist satisfies the demand of the people without considering whether that demand is moral or immoral, but Islam always takes into consideration the moral and ethical aspects of our activities. A worldly wise businessman will not hesitate in opening a brewery when he finds that there is a brisk demand for wine and the enterprise will be very profitable - an act which Islam does not allow. If a man finds that if he invests his money on the construction of houses, knowing that the enterprise is not very profitable but it will relieve the people of a great difficulty by providing them with accommodation at reasonable rental, his act will be of high morality and value in the sight of Allah. Thus, Islam attaches more importance to moral and religious values than to profit - earning for worldly purposes only.

(3) Legal Restriction.

The third restriction is the legal restriction. If an Islamic Government feels that it is necessary, in the interest of Islam as well as the moral integrity of the people, to guide them on a particular track, Islam allows the Govern-

ment to issue a suitable ordinance for this purpose and that ordinance will be binding on the people.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اَطِيْعُوا اللّٰهَ وَاَطِيْعُوا الرَّسُوْلَ وَ اُولِى الْاَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ ۚ (سورة النساء ٥٩)

This means: O you believers! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those of you who are in authority. (4:59)

By those "who are in authority" are meant, as say the jurists, the high officials of a truly Islamic Government. Thus, if the Government finds it expedient for some reason that the people should observe fast on a particular day. It will issue an order to this effect and the people will have to obey that order. Those who defy this order will commit a sin, because it is an obligatory duty to obey this order in compliance with the above verse of the Holy Qur'an. (Shami, vol. iv p-464. Ruhul Ma'ani. vol. 5. p-66).

The jurists have also written that if "those in authority" issue an order that people should not eat melon, it will become unlawful for the people to eat melon. "Those in authority" have been authorised to issue such orders on the condition that the orders should serve some interest of the people. This may include partial planning. For example, the Government may order the people to invest money on such and such scheme and avoid investment on other schemes. Government can legally impose such restrictions within the limits of the *Shar'iah*.

Summary.

This brings out the basic difference between Capitalism and Islamic economic system. As regards legal restrictions, they are also found in capitalism but they are the product of the human mind. In Islam the restrictions are based on religion which is derived from Divine Revelations in

which the lawful and unlawful, the useful and the harmful for man are declared by Allah who is the Creator of the Universe. Humanity cannot take the right course of harmony and moderation, unless it turns to ways shown by Allah.

Socialism has, indeed, been defeated, but have the evils and inequities of capitalism been also defeated and eradicated? No, they as usual linger even today and their remedy lies in the restrictions imposed by Allah. Man cannot get peace and prosperity, unless he accepts and abides by the restrictions imposed by Allah, through the Islamic *Shari'ah*. It is our misfortune that we have not so far been able to bring before the world a practical form of economic system based on the 'Divine Restrictions'. It is a great challenge before this Islamic Jumhuriyah of Pakistan that it should bring before the world a practical example of these economic teachings, so that the world may know the basic characteristics of the Islamic economic system and how they can be adopted.

I think that I have taken your time more than my due and I also feel that I have kept you engaged in rather an uninteresting subject. I am also grateful to you that you have given me a patient hearing during this discussion.

May Almighty Allah make this useful for the listeners as well as for myself and bring out better results out of it. *Aameen.*

Vanue : Madarsah Ashraful - ʿUlum
Liqquat Colony
Hyderabad
Date : 22nd March 1988

THE WEALTH OF THE QUR'AN ITS VALUE AND GREATNESS

الحمد لله نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرو انفسنا ومن سيّات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يُضْلِلْهُ فلا هادى له واشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له واشهدان سيدنا وسند نا وشفيعنا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله ـ صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا ـ

اما بعد!

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطٰن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

اِنَّ هٰذَا الْقُرْاٰنَ يَهْدِىْ لِلَّتِىْ هِىَ اَقْوَمُ (بنی اسرائیل:۹)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم وصدق رسوله النبى الكريم ونحن

على ذالك من الشاهدين والشاكرين والحمدلله رب العٰلمين ۔

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His assistance and forgiveness. We believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is none to let him go astray whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the one Who has no partner. I bear witness that our sire, our authority, our intercessor and our master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah Almighty have mercy on him, on his household, his companions and bless them and salute them in great abundance.

Surely, this Qur'an guides to that which is the straightest (17:9).

Respected Ulama, honoured saints and dear brothers! It is a great bounty of Allah that I am attending a meeting which has been held at the end of the academic year of the teaching of the Holy Qur'an during which many boys have completed their *Hafizah* (memorisation) of the Holy Qur'an. It is a matter of the greatest blessing for every Muslim to participate in a meeting held to mark the completion of the learning and teaching of the Holy Qur'an

May Almighty Allah help us all to share this honour and blessing.

Value of the Blessings and wealth of the Qur'an.

In fact today we are not aware of the blessings and the value of the Hoy Qur'an. Our boys learn the Holy Qur'an, some memorise it and become Hafiz-e-Qur'an.

We, by Allah's grace, express on such occasions joy and satisfaction on this achievement. The truth still remains that, it is not possible for us in this world to realize correctly the blessings and the inestimable wealth of the Holy Qur'an. This is because Almighty Allah has graced us with this wealth of the Holy Qur'an as a free gift without any toil or sacrifice on our part. We had to put in no efforts and offer no sacrifices to attain this blessing, nor did we spend any money to gain it. That is why we fail to realize, as it should be realized, the value and blesings of this wealth. Just go through the biographies of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم of the Holy Prophet ﷺ who put at stake their wealth, lives, their peace and comfort and even their honour and prestige to learn a single verse of the Holy Qur'an. It is difficult to find in the annals of human history examples of such sacrifice and dedication.

The Holy Qur'an and the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم

We are not fully aware of the difficulties, hurdles, distresses and the tortures which the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم endured for the sake of a single verse of the Holy Qur'an. We have before us the Holy Qur'an in a very beautifully and artistically bound volume. Qur'an schools are open from place to place and teachers are available to teach the Holy Qur'an. All that we have to do is to avail ourselves of these very cheap facilities like gulping a morsel of food, but even this we do not do as it should be done. We take all these things very easy.

Ask the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم about the value of the Holy Qur'an who took floggings, endured tortures from the infidels to get small verses of the Holy Qur'an. Today it seems hardly credible to realise what tyrannies

and tortures they endured in the path of acquiring and learning the verses of the Holy Qur'an. There is a story of a Companion رضی اللہ عنہم recorded in the Sahih Bukhari. He was a small boy at the time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ who lived in a village situated at a long distance from Madinah Munaw-warah. It was not possible for him to travel to Madinah. He had embraced Islam, but it was very difficult for him to go to Madinah Munawwarah to learn religion from the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He himself relates his story:

"I would daily go to the road leading to Madinah and wait for some caravan coming from the Holy City. When some caravan came I would ask if anyone of them remembered a verse of the Holy Qur'an. If so, he may kindly teach me that verse. In this way I was able to collect in my memory a good many verses of the Holy Qur'an, one by one, two by two or three by three from these caravans.

Ask of them the value of the Holy Qur'an who had to beg these caravan people to teach them one or two verses. As for ourselves, we have in our possession the Holy Qur'an in its complete form, in beautifully bound volumes, we forget the toils and sacrifices of the men of God who so laboriously collected and conveyed the Holy Book to us. All that we have now to do is to learn the Qur'an, try to understand it then act upon its injunctions. It is, as if, the table has been laid before us and we have only to extend our hands to partake of the feast. That is why we do not value the Qur'an as it deserves to be valued.

Every Muslim knows full well the ordeal of Hazrat Umar's sister and her husband رضی اللہ عنہ Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ had not embraced Islam by that time, and these two persons knew that if Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ came to know about their recitation of the Holy Qur'an he would severely punish them. They, therefore, learnt and recited the Holy Qur'an very secretly.

It so happened that one day, instigated by the infidels of Makkah, Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ was going to kill the Holy Prophet ﷺ. When a man came to know Hazrat Umar's intention he told him tauntingly: You are going to kill Muhammad ﷺ but you do not care for what is happening in your own house. Being taken aback by this taunt Hazrat 'Umar رضی اللہ عنہ at once turned back towards his house. He رضی اللہ عنہ saw there that his sister and his brother-in-law were learning and reciting the *surah Taa-haa*. It is not necessary to relate the whole story, as it is lengthy and well known to every Muslim.

It is to say that the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم got the wealth of the Holy Qur'an by putting in great exertions and making tremendous sacrifices, and that is why they recognised and valued the worth and value of the Divine Book. We do not realize the value of the Holy Qur'an because this inestimable wealth has come to us without any effort on our part. As long as these eyes are open, the world's administration is on foot, and we are alive, our eyes and our minds are fixed on its apparent glamour and temptations, enjoyments and pleasures. The time is not very far away when man will leave this world for the Hereafter through the dark grave, the doorway to the next world. Man will realize the value, esteem, and blessings of the Qur'an then and there. He will know what light what blessing and what bounty each single verse of the Qur'an has for those who esteemed and honoured it.

The reward for reciting the Holy Qur'an.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said in a Hadith: When anyone recites the Holy Qur'an he gets ten virtues for one letter. He ﷺ went on elucidating this Hadith:

I do not say that الم (Alif laam-meem) is one letter; it consists of three letters Alif, Laam and Meem. Thus when a man recites this word thirty virtures will be recorded in his Record of Deeds.

Some men doubt about the benefit of reciting the Holy Qur'an without understanding it. They maintain that it is a prescription of guidance, requiring to be understood and then acted upon. What is the use, they say, of committing it to memory and uttering its words like a parrot? The Holy Prophet ﷺ has stated that the Qur'an is indeed, a prescription of cure for those who recite it and act upon its injunctions by understanding them, but even a person who recites it without understanding it is rewarded, by Allah's mercy, ten virtues for each word as elucidated by the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

The reason for showing apathy to the Holy Qur'an.

Why is it that no desire, interest or attraction is born to reap these virtues and bounties by reciting the Holy Qur'an with or without understanding its meaning, because the virtues and Divine Rewards are not the Legal tender of our present world. It carries no meaning to the worldly men of today to talk of increasing virtues in the Record of Deeds and generous compensation in the Hereafter for doing good turns in this world. Man's heart would feel elated if it was said that ten rupees would be paid for each single word and the recitation of (Alif-lam-meem) would thus earn thirty rupees. People would rush to the recitation of the Holy Qur'an if the recitation was compensated in terms of money. We are not moved at all at the prospects of the reward for good deeds in the Hereafter. People today think in terms of money and not virtues and good deeds. They think that with the increase of money they can purchase more necessaries and luxuries of life, but they cannot purchase a car, nor can

they build a house with these unseen virtues and bounties. It is difficult to convince them that just as the Pounds, Rupees and Dollars are the legal tenders in this world these virtues and good deeds are legal tender of the Hereafter.

The value of the virtues, good deeds and good turns vis-a-vis the current coins will be realized, the moment the eyes are closed, the heart fails to pulsate and the doors to the next world are opened for the departed souls.

Who is a real pauper?

It occurs in a Hadith that the Holy Prophet ﷺ once asked the Noble Companions رضی الله عنهم to tell him ﷺ who was a pauper, and what the word pauper meant. The Noble companions رضی الله عنهم replied: O Prophet ﷺ of Allah, a pauper is one who has no money. A man who has no gold or silver coins is indeed poor. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said that a person who had no worldly wealth was not a real pauper, and asked them: Who is a real pauper? After putting the question he ﷺ himself answered his question, saying: A real pauper is that person whose scale of deeds will be weighty with good deeds when he is presented before Allah on the Day of Judgement. He will have to his credit virtues of prayers, fasting, *Hajj* and *Zakat*, Allah's remembrance, teaching and preaching *Deen* and other services to Islam and to the servants of Allah, etc.

When these good deeds were presented before Allah along with him, it appeared that he had not discharged the rights of Allah's servants due by him. He had beaten someone, abused and backbitten some person, had attacked to kill someone, disgraced some one's honour, deprived a man of his money by fraud. In fact despite all his good deeds, he had hurt his fellow men with his tongue and hands and in many other ways. It was Allah's court of Jus-

tice: Those who had been wronged were commanded to recover their dues from that man. But alas he had no money there to pay off his debt. He therefore, had to pay his creditors with his good deeds which alone will be legal tender in the Hereafter. The reward of his prayers, *Haj, Zakat,* remembrance, teaching and preaching *Deen* was all exhausted yet the claims of some creditors remained unpaid who would press for compensation. Rendered so helpless and destitute, nothing will be left with him to pay his debt to others. As the only remedy the bad deeds of his creditor's will be wiped off their records and debited to the account of this man who had appeared with heaps of good deeds and virtues but it all disappeared in no time.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ told the people how this man was rendered destitute and a pauper not only because all his good deeds were exhausted in payment of his debts to others, but also because the bad deeds of others were added to his account. See how this man had come with a heap of good deeds and is now going with a heap of bad deeds. May Allah save us from such a horrible situation.

The importance of rights of the servants of Allah.

One must be cautious about these rights of the servants of Allah. To usurp the rights of the people whether they are in the form of money, honour or life is a very grievous sin. Other sins are forgiven through repentance, but the sin of usurping the rights of the servants of Allah cannot be forgiven through repentance. Sins like drinking wine, adultery, gambling etc., are forgiven if the sinner repents for them sincerely before Almighty Allah by uttering the words

اَسْتَغْفِرُ اللّٰهَ رَبِّیْ مِنْ کُلِّ ذَنْبٍ وَّاَتُوْبُ اِلَیْهِ

(I seek Allah's pardon from every sin and turn

to Him in repentance).

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said in a Hadith:

اَلتَّائِبُ مِنَ الذَّنْبِ کَمَنْ لَاذَنْبَ لَهٗ

This means:

A sinner who repents for his sins is like him who has committed no sins.

If one has usurped the rights of anothr man, by taking his money unlawfully, speakig ill of him, backbiting him or hurting his feelings, then these are sins which cannot be forgiven even by repentance, unless the sinner compensates those whom he has wronged or gets the sins committed against them forgiven or the dues outstanding against him waived by the claimants and the creditors.

An example of teasing the people and disturbing their peace is the use of the loudspeakers opened at their full volumes. Sometimes these loudspeakers are used so ruthlessly that not only patients but even healthy person cannot sleep in their beds. This is an example of hurting the feelings of the people. On the Day of Judgement Almighty Allah will question the wrongdoers. What answer will they give to the Lord of the universe?

Who is a Muslim?

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said in a Hadith.

اَلْمُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلِمَ الْمُسْلِمُوْنَ مِنْ لِّسَانِهٖ وَيَدِهٖ

This means: A muslim is he who does not harm other Muslims through his tongue or hand. In other words, a Muslim does not speak ill of another Muslim nor does he inflict on him any kind of trouble, or cause distress to him in any other way. We think that we are preaching *Deen* but we do not preach it in the right way taught by Is-

lam. A man is not interested in your preaching for some reason but you are thrusting your words into his ears by force through the loudspeaker. There is no justification in the Shari'ah for such misconduct.

Once Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ went to the Mosque and saw that a man was preaching *Deen* in the mosque to a gathering in a very loud voice which could be heard out of the mosque. Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ asked that preacher to preach as loudly as it was necessary for the listeners present around him. He رضی اللہ عنہ threatened to use his whip on him if his voice exceeded the limit. This warning was given at a time when there was no loudspeaker. Now imagine the noise pollution careated intentionally over the loudspeakers. If Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ had lived in our days none of us would have escaped his whip.

The room of Hazrat Ayeshah Siddiqah رضی اللہ عنہا was adjacent to the Prophet's mosque where he ﷺ lies buried. It was Hazrat Ayeshah's routine to take rest there after the Friday prayer. A preacher used to call at that place and preach *Deen* very loudly. Hazrat Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا sent words to that preacher asking him to preach as loudly as it was necessary for his listeners. The preacher did not mind Hazrat Ayeshah's advice on the plea that he was only preaching *Deen*. Hazrat Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا made a complaint to Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ against that preacher and demanded that he should be stopped from his troublesome practice by lowering his voice.

The Prophet's Teachings

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has always taught us the right course of *Deen* (Islam), although we have misunderstood and forgotten his teahings. Look! He is getting up for the *Tahajjud* prayer, but what etiquette does he ﷺ follow while getting up from his ﷺ bedding? It occurs in a Hadith:

قام رويدا وفتح الباب رويدا

He got up quietly and opened the door quietly.

Why so! Lest Ayeshah Siddiqah رضی اللہ عنہا may be disturbed in her sleep - that Ayeshah siddiqah رضی اللہ عنہا who was ready to sacrifice even her life for every command and gesture of her dear husband, the Holy Prophet ﷺ.Notwithstanding that, the Prophet of Allah ﷺ is teaching us that even if we are going to do some act of worship we should never do this in a way that others may be put to inconvenience and be disturbed.

This is the way of discharging the rights of servants of Allah which His Prophet ﷺ has taught us; but what is our behaviour? If we do some good deed, some act of *Deen*, we consider it necessary to show it to the entire world without ever considering that some one is sleeping, ailing seriously or busy with some worship. It never occurs to anyone that he is committing a grievous sin by this misbehaviour and is violating a "human right".

The Honour and Esteem of a Muslim

It is a major sin to cause distress to a Muslim, just like the sin of drinking wine, committing robbery, theft, adultery, etc. It occurs in a Hadith of Ibn Majah that once the Holy Prophet ﷺ was making *Tawaaf* (going round) of the Holy Ka'bah, along with Hazrat Abdullah bin Mas'ood رضی اللہ عنہ. He has narrated: I saw that addressing the Ka'bah, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: O House of Allah, how great, honourable and sacred you are! After a little pause the Holy Prophet ﷺ again said, addressing the Ka'bah: yet there is something which is more elevated, honourable and

sacred than you! Hazrat Abdullah bin Mas'ood was taken aback at hearing these words and remained thinking what that thing might be. Then the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: It is the life, possessions and honour of a Muslim!

What does this saying of the Holy Prophet ﷺ mean? It means that to kill a Muslim, injure him or otherwise harm him, rob him and defame and dishonour him, are sins equal in grievousness to the sin of demolishing the Ka'bah.

Now think for yourself, what great stress the Holy Prophet ﷺ has laid on the soul, possessions and honour of a Muslim! If some wretched tyrant musters courage to attack and disgrace the Holy Ka'bah, is there any muslim who will not rise at once to punish such a tyrant for his audacity? No, never will a true Muslim put up with one who does the slightest harm or desecrates the Holy Ka'bah in any way.

Yet look! How many Ka'bahs are we demolishing from morning till evening? Today the soul of a Muslim, declared by the Holy Prophet ﷺ to be so sacred, has become cheaper than the soul of a fly, or mosquito. All the diverse ways of troubling and torturing a muslim including his killing are being practised, what a grievous sin it is! That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that on the Day of Judgement a man will come with a large heap of good deeds but at the end of the accounts-taking he will have no good deeds left to his credit, because his misdeeds and misbehaviour with the servants of Allah will nullify his good deeds.

The reality of the religion of Islam

Today we have conferred the name of *Deen* on some external forms of worship. These are prayers, fasting, payment of *Zakat, Hajj* and *Umrah,* etc. There is no denying that these items are, in their places, great blessings, yet *Deen*

is not confined to them alone. The science of religion which is called *Fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence) has been divided into four parts. Only one part deals with worship; the remaing three parts deal with the rights of the people. We have however, excluded totally from *Deen* the topic of the rights of the people which covers the three parts of *Deen.* If we commit some excess towards the servants of Allah by distressing them, injuring or harming them we do not feel that we have committed a sin or have done some unlawful act or have displeased Allah. We forget totally that sins or excesses committed towards the servants of Allah cannot be forgiven by repentance. They can be forgiven only when the people wronged and oppressed forgive the wrongdoers.

Bribery is rampant in our society today. We are causing distress to others, usurping their rights, depriving them of their possession unlawfully -- all these acts relate to the rights of the servants of Allah. Anything that causes pain and distress is a violation of this right. It is a very serious matter to violate these rights of the servants of Allah. May Almighty Allah help us to understand the importance of the rights of the people and discharge them rightly.

This *Deen* -- Islam -- is not the name of a few external and formal rituals. It teaches us everything about our lives, including religion. I was telling you that we do not realize the value of these virtues while we are alive in this world. We believe that all goodness and blessings lie in worldly wealth and resources, eg. a good bank balance, a car and a palacial building. We are concentrating all our thoughts, hopes and energies on worldly temptations in preference to the virtues and rewards of the Hereafter.

An Event full of Admonition

My respected father Hazrat Maulana, Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمه الله عليه related to us an incident of his life. Men of God always take some warning from things and events that happen to them. He told us that when he was a small boy he was playing with his brother. In Deoband (India) of father's time the games of our time were not in vogue. Boys enjoyed themselves with very primitive, simple games like making small pieces of reed sticks. They used to roll it down and the boy whose piece of the reed covered the larger distance was the winner and the loser had to give one piece as penalty.

My father said: One day I was playing this game with my brother for which, I had collected many sticks. My brother had also brought with him many sticks. It so happened that this time I lost in the game all the sticks to my brother who was the winner and now he had with him a double number of sticks. At this loss I was so much shocked that I wept bitterly for a long time and I thought that by losing my valueless sticks I had lost all my world.

Today when I recollect that incident and imagine the cause of my weeping, I simply laugh to think how foolish I was that I was so grievously shocked at something which had absolutely no value it was not even worth a feather. Now we think that we have become wise and feel that it is the money, bungalow, property and cars that are worthy of acquisition and retention.

My father continued saying: When we close our eyes, leave this world and appear before Almighty Allah in the Hereafter, we shall come to know that all these valuable and attractive possessions were worthless and valuless like the sticks of reed mentioned above. We shall all realize in the Hereafter that these possessions and treasures do not constitute real wealth. Real wealth is our good deed and righteousness that will take us to Paradise.

The bliss and joy of Paradise and the severe torment of Hell

It occurs in a Hadith that on the Day of Judgment Almighty Allah shall summon a man who had spent his worldly life in distress and difficulties and all sorts of shocks. He will be asked how he spent his life in the world. He shall reply, saying: O Allah! I had a life full of troubles, worries, distresses, wants and shocks that I do not remember to have the faintest glimpse of joy and happiness. Allah will then command His angels to take him to the outskirts of Paradise. The angels will take that man round about Paradise to feel a gust of wind emanating from it. The same question will be put to him again: How did you pass your life in the world. He shall reply saying: O Allah! I lived in the world a life in peace, prosperity and satisfaction that I did not have a single moment of distress. I lived my life surrounded on all sides by joys, comforts and luxuries. Thus a little touch of the breeze of Paradise will be so pleasing and soothing that he will forget all the discomforts and distresses of his worldly life.

Then Allah shall command His angels to produce before Him a man who never faced any distress, worry or shock in his worldly life but passed his lifetime in complete peace and pleasure. He will be questioned! How did you pass your life in the world? He shall reply, saying: O Allah! I passed my life in peace and comfort without any trouble, anxiety or shock. Allah shall ask His angels to take him round the outskirts of Hell. The angels will comply with Allah's command and the man, while going round Hell, will feel slightly the hot wind escaping from Hell.

He will then be asked: Tell me how did you pass your life in the world? He will say: O Allah! I had been facing distress and trouble the whole of my lifetime and I never tasted bliss and happiness. A few moments of his exposure to the hot wind of Hell and its horrible effects will make him totally forget the peace, contentment, joys and pleasures of his entire worldly life. Such are the joys of Paradise and the torments of Hell which shall make man forget how he faced in his worldly life.

Our pitiable condition

As for our state of affairs we are so much bewitched by the temptations of this world that all our thoughts, movements and efforts are concentrated on the acquisition of the transitory luxuries and riches of this world to the total neglet of our eternal life of the Hereafter:

All men of the world are unanimous on one Issue

There is no subject in this world on which the entire world is unanimous except one. There is some difference of apinion wide or narrow on every issue. There is, however, one phenomenon on which all are unanimous and that is Death. This is a phenomenon on which there is no difference of opinion. Every one in this world feels sure that sooner or later he has to die. Despotic infidels, tyrants atheists, enemies of God and religion take for granted this undisputed truth that death must overtake everyone. He also believes that all are ignorant of the hour of death. He also feels that at the most one will live 100 to 150 years, then he must breath his last to go to the other world.

An Event that contains a lesson

There is a very interesting, wonderful and instructive event. All should take lesson from it. Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ was once on a journey. During that journey he felt hungry. In those days there were no hotels or restaurants where one could go to take food. Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ looked for some village where he could get something to eat, but there was none. By chance he found a herd of goats grazing there. He approached the herdsman and asked him for some milk on payment. The herdsman replied, saying: My dear Sir, I must have entertained you with milk but these goats do not belong to me. I am only a keeper engaged to look after them. I am not authorised to give milk to anyone until my master permits me to do so. It was also the habit of Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ to test the people. He رضی اللہ عنہ said to the herdsman. I want to tell you something in your own interest. Sell one of these goats to me and I shall pay you the price just now. Our interest lies in this that I shall satisfy my hunger with its milk and if necessary, I may slaughter it for its meat and you shall get its price. When the master asks you about the goat you may tell him that the wolf killed and ate it and this excuse is quite plausible, as the master would not worry to make an investigation. You may retain the money for your personal use. Thus both of us shall be benefited.

Hearing this the herdsman spontaneously uttered these words: O Prince, but where is Allah? O prince, you want me to tell a lie to the master that a wolf has eaten one of the goats. But then where is Allah? My master and creator is indeed watching me. The Master of the owner of these goats is watching me. I can convince the owner but how shall I convince Allah, the Master of all masters.

Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ said: As long as men like

you are found in this *Ummah* no calamity can befall it. Peace will pervade the world as long as there are men who realize that they will have to account for their deeds to Almighty Allah. The moment this feeling of accountability disappears from among them, man will cease to be man and degenerate into wolves, as we see him now.

Man is no longer man. He has gone down to the level of beasts, always trying to flay his own fellow men and suck the blood of others -- all these beastly acts only to reap some trifling benefit of this world.

Anxiety for the Eternal life of the Hereafter

The Holy Prophet ﷺ fostered the idea among the *Ummah,* that the duration of the worldly life is not known to anyone and everyone is bound to render accounts to Allah. People should, therefore, prepare themselves for the Hereafter, which represents an eternal life into which man is destined to enter soon. The legal tender of this future eternal life is not the coins and money of this world, whatever its quantity and value, Millions, Billions a Milliards. All this wealth will have to be left in this transitory world. If there is anything of this world which will pass on to the next world, it is the good deeds.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said in a Hadith: When a dead body is taken to the graveyard, three things accompany it -(1) its kinsmen who got to see the body off, (ii) its possession, e.g. its shroud in which the body is wrapped up and the cot on which the body is carried to the graveyard and (iii) its' deeds. The first two, i.e. its kinsmen and the possessions come back from the side of the grave. Only the man's deeds, whether good or bad are left that go with the body to the next world,.

Thus, the legal tender of that world is not the wealth of this world but it is the good deeds the man did in this world

during his lifetime. The greatest wealth which Almighty Allah has bestowed upon us is the Holy Qur'an. This is a panacea for this Ummah. It is a great virtue and cause of reward for man to read and understand it and to act upon its injunctions and to convey its teachings and commands to others.

The Method of valuing the Holy Qur'an

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said: I am leaving behind for you something so valuable that if you hold fast to it you will not go astray and that is the Book of Allah, the Holy Qur'an. The least which we are required to ensure is that no child of a Muslim should remain ignorant of the Holy Qur'an. No child should be engaged in any work unless he has learned the recitation of the Qur'an correctly.

There was a time when in the morning sounds of recitation of the Holy Qur'an used to come out of the villages and townships. Now our ears are deprived of hearing this ravishing sound. You can hear all sorts of film-songs and various disgusting music, but not the soul-lifting and life-giving sounds of the recitation of the Holy Qur'an.

The duties of Muslims towards *Deeni* schools

These *Deeni* schools have been opened to create in the members of the *Ummah* a sense of religion and to make them religious-minded, so that they may turn towards the Holy Qur'an and take care to grasp and convey the words, meanings and their importance to others. It is a great mercy of Allah and His bounty that this school is running in your area. May Allah develop it externally and internally and in all aspects. The Managers of the school have told us that their institution is dedicated to the service of *Deen.* All Muslims should, therefore, cooperate with them. These people have dedicated their lives to the service of Islam. They de-

serve to be relieved from the disgrace of holding out their hands before the people to collect donations.

I am of the opinion that it is more important to collect donations from the Muslims for the sake of Muslim children to teach them the Holy Qur'an. It has now become a common practice to engage children in learning worldly subjects and doing other work, depriving them of the learning of Allah's Book - the Qur'an. This is deplorable. This practice must stop.

Child Education

Teach your children during their early childhood the Holy Qur'an and enlighten their pure hearts with its light. Thereafter engage them in any form of education, training or work. The blessings of the Holy Qur'an will always assist them in their later life. The seed of the Qur'an sown in their hearts in the tender age will always keep the candle of Eeman burning in their hearts, in whatever condition and profession they may be.

Instead of teaching your children the sacred words of الحمد لله، سبحان الله ، بسم الله etc, if you teach them in the very beginning the words, "C-A-T cat, B-A-T. Bat" you impress upon their impressionable minds these useless words. If you stop the blessings and light of the Qur'an from entering their minds. How can the light of *Eeman* enter into their minds? How will they vlaue Islam and think of the Hereafter? without the teaching of the Holy Qur'an? Without proper religious education we shall be producing the same worldly men whom we see wandering around us every day. This group does not care at all for the truth that one day they will have to appear before Almighty Allah. Devoid of spiritual light they are busy day and night in perpetrating wrongs on others and robbing their wealth.

I, therefore, appeal to all of you not to engage your children in any work unless you have taught them the Holy Qur'an. The purpose of today's meeting will be achieved if while getting up from here we firmly resolve that we shall not engage our children in any work, unless we have taught them the Holy Qur'an. If we do not take lessons from the speeches delivered in these meetings, then we are simply wasting our precious time:

نشستند و گفتند و بر خاستند

They sat, talked and dispersed without doing anything useful.

What we heard with one ear we let it go out from the other ear. If we disperse from this gathering with the resolution that we shall teach our children the Holy Qur'an and will divert the attention of our friends, acquaintances and relatives towards this pressing need, then our attendance here will be fruitful, indeed. May Almighty Allah help us in pondering over and acting upon what we have said and heard in this gathering May Allah develop this school into a *Jami'ah* and radiate its light and blessings far and wide. *Aameen.*

وَ آخِرُ دعوانا ان الحمد للّٰه رب العلمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.

Date : Friday 18th December, 1991
After 'Asr Prayers.

Just as the humanbody suffers from various diseases, like fever, stomach-ache, constipation, dysentery, or some trouble in the waist, in the same way the human spirit, too, suffers from diseases. These disease are:
Pride jealousy, malice, and ingratitude. These are spiritual diseases. It is compulsory to treat and cure them. To leave them without treatment is forbidden (*Haram*).

THE DISEASES OF THE HEART & THE NEED FOR A SPIRITUAL PHYSICIAN

الحمد لله نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرو انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له ونشهدان سيدنا وسند نا وشفيعنا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

قال النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم:

الا ان فى الحبسد مضغة اذا صلحت صلح الحبسد كله واذا فسدت

فسد الجسد كله اذا وهى القلب (اتحاف السادة المتقين ص ٣ ص ١٥٣)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness. We believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evil of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is none to let him go astray whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no God but Allah the one Who has no partner. I bear witness that our sire, our authority, our intercessor and our master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah Almighty have mercy on him, on his household, his Companions and bless them and salute them in great abundance.(Athaafus-saadatil-muttaqeen vol. 3. p. 153)

The Importance of Character

To reform character and shape it in conformity with the commands of Allah is as important and necessary as the performance of worship. If we look into the matter a bit more closely we shall see that no orders relating to worship, dealings and living can be obeyed properly unless the character is refined and polished. If the character is not good, sometimes worship like prayers and fasting go waste, rather they turn into an scourge. That is why the ameliorating character and moulding it on the pattern of the pleasure of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ form the foundation of man's practical life. It is not possible to raise a building without a foundation.

What is Character

The character of which I am talking is quite different from what it is commonly understood by the people.

What is character, as the common public understands it? It is to meet someone with a smile, to speak to him pleasantly and politely to show that the man is gifted with high morals and has an amicable conduct and character. However, the character of which I am talking and the character which our *Deen* demands of us is more comprehensive. It is not that one behaves with the people cordially and pleasantly. Although this is also a part of the Islamic character, yet this is not true character. The real character is an attribute of man's inner self, his heart and his soul. Many kinds of emotions, thoughts and desires are born and bred in man's inner self. These represent character. Stress has been laid on their improvement and betterment.

The Importance of the soul

If we want to understand the details of this aspect of the issue, we must first understand 'man'. What does man mean? Man is the name of a combination of body and soul. Man is not the name of the body. Man is the name of that body which has a soul in it. Look at a dead body. The dead body has all the limbs and forms of a man, it has a tongue, a nose, eyes ears, hands and feet, etc, yet it is deprived of the soul / spirit. When a man is deprived of his soul, he ceases to be a man; he is only a lifeless corpse, like dust, stone and metals.

Bury it promptly

While a man has his soul in his body, i.e., while he is alive, he is dear to his friends and relatives; he possesses landed property, looks after his family, loves his society and is loved by them. In fact, he was active and energetic. Yet what happens when he breathes his last? He is motionless, devoid of all his activities and possessions. He is now a corpse which every body is trying to bury as soon as pos-

sible. None will agree to retain and look after this dead bundle of meat and bones for long. In an emergency the body may be retained in cold-storage at the most for a weak. Those very persons who loved him in his life and respected him are now anxious to deposit the body into the grave without losing any time.

It is related that a man fell into deep coma and thinking him to be dead, the people buried him. By chance the state of coma came to an end and the man somehow managed to get out of the grave and went to his house. When his near and dear ones saw him, they thought that it was not the man, but his ghost was standing before them. They were awfully frightened. They, therefore, killed him. Thus the man who had not died earlier died now at the hands of his own men.

What is this drastic change that the entire body of the deceased is there in his own house, but no body is now ready to let him remain there. The change is due to the soul of the man which has left the body and the man is now a corpse. So, the body without its soul has ceased to be the man once it was and has now become a waste matter to be buried.

The Diseases of the soul

The human body passes through different stages of health and sickness. Sometimes it is quite healthy, radiant with beauty and energy and at times it is sick, weak, unsightly and shrivelled. In the same way the human soul also passes through the stages of health and sickness. Sometimes it is strong; at other times weak. It faces stages of goodness and evils. Just as the human body suffers from various diseases which are well known to all, in the same way the human soul contacts and suffers from various diseases like pride, jealousy, malice, ingratitude, etc.

The Beauty of the soul

Just as the human body has attributes of beauty like a glowing attractive face, a handsome, healthy body, beautiful piercing eyes, in the same way the soul, too, has its attributes of beauty like modesty, patience, gratitude, sincerity and open mindedness, truthfulness and leniency, etc. These attributes make the soul beautiful.

Physical forms of worship

Almighty Allah has commanded us to discharge many duties, including worship. Some of these relate to our body, e.g., prayers in which the body takes different postures like standing, kneeling, prostrating and sitting. These are all bodily movements that occur while performing a physical item of worship. The fasting, the payment of *zakat* (compulsory tax), the *Hajj* are performed with the body and are also physical forms of worship.

Modesty is an action of the heart

Just like these physical forms of worship, Allah has prescribed for us many inner and spiritual forms of worship, e.g. abiding by the rules of modesty and humbleness in our dealings. This attribute of modesty is not a physical act; it is a spiritual act which belongs to the heart. Allah has commanded us to cultivate this quality in our hearts.

Many ignorant persons misunderstand the meaning of 'modesty' and think that to entertain a guest with due generosity and respect is modesty. Those who are educated also think that modesty means behaving with others with due humbleness. With the necks slightly bent down along with the breast. A man who deals with his fellow-men in this way is generally called (modest), yet this is not quite true.

Note it carefully that (modesty) has nothing to do

with the body. It is related to the soul and the heart. A man should wholeheartedly believe that he is only a helpless, humble creature of Allah. When this thought takes root in a man's heart and soul he is or modest and Allah has commanded us to cultivate in us this attribute.

Ikhlas (sincerity) is a particular state of the heart

Almighty Allah has commanded us to cultivate in our lives the quality of sincerity. This means that there should be sincerity in all our acts and activities, in our worship and all that we do should be for the pleasure of Allah and in compliance with His injunctions. *Ikhlas* (sincerety) is not attained by a word of the mouth or some act of the body. It is a particular state of the heart and a quality of man's inner self and Allah has commanded us to attain this quality as well.

Gratitude is an act of the Heart

Almighty Allah has commanded us to cultivate the attribute of gratitude or thankfulness. When Allah bestows upon us anything, we should thank Him: This, too, is more an act of the heart than that of the tongue. The more we show gratitude to Allah, the stronger shall become our souls.

The Reality of patience

Allah has also commanded us to be patient when something unpleasant happens to us. We have been taught to believe that everything good or bad that happens to us is due to Allah's will and pleasure and His ordinance. However, unpleasant an event may be, it should be borne with patience, because in it lies Allah's dispensation. Who knows, it may ultimately turn beneficial to us.

It is an obligatory Duty (*Farz*) to attain inner *Ikhlas* (sincerity)

Many duties and responsiblities which Allah has imposed on us belong to our soul and inner self. You must note very carefully that it is an obligatory duty, just, as prayers, to show and maintain patience when a situation calls for patience. To practise patience, gratitude, sincerity, etc., where each is called for and indicated is an obligatory duty, jsut like praying, fasting, *zakah*. These are all obligations which Allah has prescribed for us.

It is forbidden (*Haram*) to leave inner diseases neglected

Many visible and bodily acts have been declared to be sins. These are lies, backbiting, bribery, usury, drinking wine, robbery, etc. which are committed with one or another limb of our bodies Allah has likewise declared many inner acts to be sins. Examples of these sins are pride, jealousy, malice, etc. They are sins like lies, backbiting, bribery, drinking wine, eating pork, lewdness, etc.

In short, Allah has issued some commands which apply to man's heart and his inner soul. Allah, has commanded man to cultivate certain attributes and qualities of the heart and to refrain from certain vices and evils only then a man will be regarded to be of a good moral and inner character. Character is the name of these inner states and qualities of the soul, to which a referance has been made in the foregoing paragraphs. Good moral character which man has been commanded to cultivate in him is called (good moral habits and character). Similarly bad moral character which man has been commanded to shun is called رذیلہ (bad moral habits and character).

You must have understood by now that it is not the

meaning of good character that people should behave with one another with smiles playing on their faces and with cordiality. Although they emanate from good moral character yet they are not true moral character. Such traits of nice behaviour may, indeed, be seen in man when he succeeds in reforming his moral character. The reality of moral character lies in the amelioration of man's inner rectitude and integrity, by cultivating in the soul nice manners and eradicating from it bad manners.

The Reality of Anger

What is the method of reforming character? An example is quoted here which provides an answer to this question. Anger is an attribute of the inner soul of man. It takes its birth in man's heart and finds its expression in the acts of the hands and the feet and sometime through the tongue. During a fit of anger the face becomes red, the nerves are strained and the tongue goes out of control, and the person starts using abusive language, resulting in violance. These are the visible outcome of anger but real anger is born in man's heart and this is the root-cause of many inner evils and vices, and gives rise to many sins and inner ailments.

Absence of Anger, too, is a Disease

It is also a disease if a man does not feel angry in any circumstance even when the worst wrongs are being committed before his eyes and he remains unaffected. Allah has created anger in man, so that he may defend his life, honour, property and above all his faith. If a murderer is standing, pistol in hand, to shoot his victim and the victim remains calm, unaffected by the crisis of the situation, then he is suffering from a disease. If a man does not at all feel offended and excited with anger on occasions, which

call for the expression and use of anger, he is a patient devoid of normal human feelings. The expression and use of anger are virtues on their right occasions.

Moderation is needed during Anger

It is also a disease if the faculty of anger exceeds its limits. It is quite right that a man feels angry to defend himself against the attrocities of his enemies. If the opponent deserved only one stroke but the defender is striking him hard mercilessly, this is going beyond the limits which is a sin. Thus, to exceed the limits of anger or to feel no anger at all is an inner disease. Man should be careful to maintain normal limits of anger on either side. If anger overpowers a man although there is no occasion for anger, the man concerned should suppress this anger with effort.

Anger and Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ

It is a well known event that happened with Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ that a jew spoke some abusive words about the Holy Prophet ﷺ. How could Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ put up with such a situation? He at once got the Jew down and sat on his chest. When the Jew found himself totally helpless, he spat on the face of Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ. Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ stood up releasing the Jew. When asked about this strange behaviour Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ explained the reason saying:

First I had punished him because he had been insolent to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. At that time my anger was not for my self; it was to defend the honour of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. That is why I sat on his chest to punish him. When he spat on me, anger arose in my heart for my own self inciting me to take revenge from the Jew for my own self. Then it occurred to me that to take revenge for my own self is not good.

It is the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that he ﷺ

never took revenge from anyone for his own self. I, therefore, stood up and let him go.

This event illustrates moderation in anger. On the first occasion anger was justified so anger arose rightly and was rightly expressed. On the second occasion it was not justified, so no action was taken in response to it.

The need for limit in moderation

It is a characteristic of all morals of man's inner soul that they are not bad in themselves, as long as they remain within the prescribed limits. They become bad and a disease only when they exceed the limits. The reform of the self means that these morals are kept confined within the proper limits. They should neither be more nor less.

The Importance of the Heart

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said in a Hadith:

الا ان فی الجسد مضغة اذا صلحت صلح الجسد کله واذا فسدت فسد الجسد کله الا وهی القلب (اتحاف ص ۳ ص ۱۰۳)

(Athaf. Vol. 3, p-103)

Note it well that there is in man's body a lump of flesh; if it is good, the whole body is good and if it becomes bad, the whole body becomes bad, and that is the heart. By heart is not meant the lump of flesh which is visible to our eyes. If the heart is cut open, we shall not see in it the spiritual diseases like pride, jealousy, malice etc. If you go to a Doctor after check up he will tell you its physical diseases concerning its pulpitation, arteries, circulation of blood. This check-up is carried out with the help of fine instruments and presents only a chart of apparent working of the heart:

These unseen Diseases

The human heart has some characteristics and peculiarities which are invisible and cannot be seen with our eyes. Those unseen characteristics and peculiarities are the presence or absence of these inner diseases, i.e. pride, jealousy, ingratitude, want of patience, etc. These diseases cannot be checked up and detected by a heart specialist. No machine has been invented to detect these inner, spiritual diseases of the human heart as yet.

The Doctors of the Heart are the Pious Sufis (Mystics)

There is another class of Doctors who can check and detect these inner diseases of the heart and treat them. These Doctors are the respected Sufis. They are masters of the science of ethics and morality. This is a specialised branch of knowledge which is learnt and practised in the same way as the usual medical sciences are taught, learnt and practised in the medical colleges.

You may have experienced that some physical diseases are felt by the patient himself, like fever, pain in the body, etc. If the patient is himself not able to find out the name of the disease he will visit a Doctor who will diagnose the disease and prescribe for him some medicines.

The matter with the inner diseases is quite different. Most often the patient does not feel that he is a patient of an inner disease like pride or Jealousy. So far, no machine has been invented to detect these inner diseases. It is, therefore, indispensable that to find out the inner diseases the patient should consult some spiritual physician for treatment.

Modesty or show of Modesty

By now you must have understood the meaning of modesty which is that a man should regard himself to be worth nothing, of no consequence. This quality is commonly called "humbleness". Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رحمة الله عليه has said that some people declare that they are worthless, without any substance, ignorant, sinful, unfit and undeserving. Thus, by using these words they apparently claim to be modest.

This behaviour appears to spring from modesty and the person concerned also seems to be modest, yet it is far from the truth. Such a man is a patient of two inner diseases. Pride and show of modesty. He is not sincere in claiming that he is worthless, ignorant and sinful, but he is making these claims simply that the people should regard him to be a modest person.

The method of testing the modesty of a person

The respected saint has said that the method of testing the modesty of such a man is that some one should say to him that he is a very worthless ignorant and sinful person and then see how he reacts. Will he be thankful to you that you have informed him of his weaknesses? No, he will take it very ill and may fall out with you for having insulted him.

This shows that he was calling himself worthless, ignorant, sinful, etc. with his tongue only outwardly and not from the core of his heart. He thought that when he declared himself to be worthless, ignorant and sinful, the addressee would contradict this by saying: No sir, you are very able and learned, you are simply showing your modesty. The truth is that his heart is filled with pride, arrogance and ostentation, although he is trying to show that he is a very modest person.

Now think who can ascertain that a person is claiming some attribute only outwardly or from the bottom of his heart, or that he is suffering from an unseen spiritual disease? Only that physician can diagnose the inner disease who is an specialist of hidden diseases. It is, therefore, necessary that a person desirous of knowing his spiritual diseases must consult an specialist in that line of treatment and that specialist is the spiritual guide or the Peer.

To straighten the shoes of others

A gentleman used to attend the meetings of my respected father, Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه. One day my father saw that he was straightening the shoes of the visitors of his own sweet will. He had made this his regular routine to straighten the shoes of the visitors and then sit in the meetings. When my father saw him doing this he stopped him from this. This man thought that he was suffering from the disease of pride and to cure the disease he himself began to straighten the shoes of the visitors as a remedy for the disease of Pride. My father told us that instead of gaining he would be losing something by following that practice.

Then he told us that there was some difference between pride and conceit. By straightening the shoes of men he would feel that he reached the peak of modesty and this would create in his mind self complacency. Thus my father stopped him from that practice and prescribed for him some other remedy.

Look here! A man is straightening the shoes of others and thinks that he has become modest, but the specialist in the field of inner diseases knew that the man was really a victim of pride and conceit by his act. The inner diseases of the self are so intricate that the patient himself cannot realize

them, unless he consults a specialist. It is the specialist who can say whether a man's behaviour lies within the permissible limits or has exceeded them to become harmful.

What is "*Tasaw-wuf* (Mysticism)?

The usual practice today is that a man visits a *Peer* (spiritual guide), puts his hand under the *Peer's* hand,swears fidelity and becomes a *mureed* (disciple) of the *Peer*. The *Peer* teaches the disciples some sacred words and asks the latter to rehearse them every morning and evening. This practice has been given the name of *Tasaw-wuf*. There is no place in so-called *Tasaw-wuf* for the thought of improving the character, acquiring the superior degrees of character and giving up the undesirable and bad habits and conduct. What is more, sometimes these rehearsals aggravate the inner diseases instead of curing them!

The Reality of *Wazaa-if* (Rehearsal of sacred names) and *Ma'moolat* (Routine rituals)

The *Wazaa-if*, rehearsals and daily routines may be compared to tonics. If a patient takes some tonic during his sickness, sometimes it so, happens that the tonic, instead of strengthening the patient, strengthens the disease. A disciple suffering from the inner disease of pride malice, anger etc., is busy day and night with rehearsals (*Wazaa-if*). Instead of bringing cure this may aggravate the diseases. In the syllabus of true *Tasaw-wuf* it has been prescribed that these wazaa-if should be rehearsed under the guidance of some experienced Sheikh (Peer or Guide), because the Sheikh understands the capacity of his *Mureed* and the quantity of the exercise which the *Mureed* can tolerate and from which he can receive benefit. From time to time the Sheikh changes the doses and the prescription.

It is said that Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi Sahib رحمة الله عليه stopped some of his disciples from these rehearsals, realising that they were harming the disciples.

The Real Objective of *Mujahadat* (spiritual exertions)

As already mentioned, today the entire emphasis is being laid in *Tasaw-wuf* on teaching the disciples some daily routines of *Zikr* (rehearsals) and prescribing for them a programme of such rehearsals for day and night, without any attention to the inner diseases of the disciples. It was the practice followed in *Tasaw-wuf* in the olden days that first of all attention was paid to the reform of character and conduct. For this the disciples were subjected to severe *Mujahadat* (exertions) and drills. Amelioration of character was then achieved and only then did man attain some worth and ability.

An account of the Grandson of Sheikh Abdul Quddoos Gangohi رحمة الله عليه

Hazrat Sheikh Abdul Quddoos Gangohi رحمة الله عليه was a very eminent *Wali* (Saint) among the saints of Gangoh (India). His spiritual linkage is very high among the links of our pious saints. He had a grandson who did not care to receive any spiritual training and status from his saintly grandfather, although a large number of people received spiritual uplift and rank from the saint while he was alive. The grandson seriously and regretfully realised his loss and began to think how to make it good. He decided to visit for this purpose some of those who had received spiritual training at the hands of his grandfather. He came to know that one such grand saint was living at Balkh. What an irony of fate! He had to go to such a distant place to re-

ceive something which was easily available in his own house during his grandfather's lifetime. As the desire was genuine he decided to undertake the dangerous and arduous journey to Balkh.

Reception given to the Sheikh's grandson

When the Sheikh of Bulkh came to know that the grandson of his own Sheikh of Gangoh was coming, he gave a very rousing reception to his guest at the entrance of the city. He lodged him at his house with great honour and entertained him with best kinds of food and comfortable bedding and what not.

Kindle the Fire of the *Hammam* (Hot-bath)

After enjoying that kingly entertainment for a few days the grandson informed the Sheikh of the object of his visit. After praising the Sheikh's kindness and entertainment he told him that he desired to get some portion of the spiritual wealth which the Sheikh had acquired from his grandfather. The Sheikh told the grandson that in that case all the honour, the comforts and luxuries of lodging and fooding would be withdrawn and he would have to undergo a very hard and rough life. When the grandson accepted this condition, he was ordered to sit near the Hot bath attached to the mosque and feed fuel to the fire burning under it to keep the ablution water warm for the *Namazis*. That was all the grandson was ordered to do. There was no *Baiyat* (Pledge-taking), no routines of rehearsals and remembrance, nothing of the sort. As regards the place of sleeping, he was advised to sleep by the side of the Hot-bath. Look at the wide difference. On his arrival the grandson was received and entertained like a prince. Later on he was ordered to look after the fire of the Hot-bath and pass the night sitting

and sleeping on the bare ground by the side of the bath.

The Training is not yet complete

The grandson passed some days feeding the fire of the bath with fire-wood. One day the Sheikh asked the sweeper-woman to pass by the grandson with the basket of garbage, so that he could smell the foul odour of the garbage. The woman obeyed the Sheikh's order. When she passed by the grandson with the basket of filth and he smelt the nauseating odour he felt highly offended. After all he hailed from a rich family. He, therefore, scolded the women thus: Are you so audacious that you are passing by me with this basket of filth. Alas, if it had been the town of Gangoh. I would have taught you a lesson.

When the Sheikh asked the woman about the matter she related to him how the man felt offended and said that if it had been Gangoh he would have punished her severely for her action. The Sheikh said: Oh he is not yet ripe!

After a few days the Sheikh asked the sweeper woman not only to pass closely by the grandson with her basket but also let the basket touch his body, and see how he reacted. The woman followed the Sheikhs instruction. When the Sheikh inquired from her of his reaction, she told him that the grandson looked at her with an angry look but did not say anything with his tongue. The Sheikh said: Praise to Allah, he is improving.

The Idol of the Heart has now been smashed

After a few days the Sheikh again ordered the sweeper-woman to pass by the grandson with her basket of garbage in such a way that some portion of the filth should fall on the body of the man. She did as desired by the Sheikh. In so doing not only did some filth fall on his

body but she also fell down there. When the Sheikh asked her about his reaction, the woman told him that forgetting the condition of his own clothes he asked her if she was hurt. On this the Sheikh exclaimed: Praise to Allah, the idol of the heart has now been smashed.

Do not let the chain slip off your hands

After this the duty was changed. The grandson was relieved from his duty at the Hot-bath and was ordered to accompany the Sheikh on his hunting expeditions holding the chain of his hunting dogs. This meant a promotion that now he had to remain with the Sheikh from time to time. Whenever the dogs chased some animal this man was dragged after them as he held the chain in his hand. Sometimes he was badly bruised.

The spiritual wealth was entrusted to him

One night this Sheikh of Bulkh saw in a dream his own Sheikh Hazrat Abdul Quddus Gangohi رحمة الله عليه who said to this Sheikh: O Man! I did not impose on you such hardship which you have imposed on this boy. After this admonition the Sheikh called for the grandson, embraced him and told him that he had entrusted to him the spiritual wealth which he had received at the hands of his grandfather in Gangoh.

The Real object of Reform

What I mean to say is that the real duty of the pious Sufis (Guides) is to diagnose and cure the inner diseases. The teaching of *Wazaaif*, remembrance and routine rehearsals are only helping devices and not the main object. Resort is taken to these practices to help cure the inner diseases of pride, jealousy, malice, arrogance, etc. and to

eradicate them totally from the heart. The object is to wipe these vices off the heart and implant in their place, Allah's fear, hope of mercy, reliance on Allah, perseverance in Deen, modesty and sincerity, etc.

Why is the reform of the soul necessary

People think that *Tasaw-wuf* is something different from the *Shari'ah* (the Islamic code of Law). This is not so *Tasaw-wuf* is a part of this *Shari'ah*. *Shari'ah* may be defined as a collection of all the injunctions concerning the external acts and deeds of man. As regards *Tasaw-wuf* it is a collection of injunctions relating to the inner and spiritual acts and deeds of man. The importance of the reform of man's inner soul lies in the fact that if this is not in order the external acts and deeds of man are also adversely affected. Take *Ikhlas* (sincerity) as an example. This is an inner attribute of man. If this is not inculcated in a man's heart in its proper degree and level, his external acts like prayer and fasting will be of no value as the man doing them without sincerity is doing them only for show. These acts and deeds are quite sound to see but they are devoid of the spirit of sincerity and are, therefore, worthless, rather they are sin. There is a Hadith to this effect:

من صلى يرائى فقد اشرك بالله (مشكوة شريف)

This means:

He who prays only to show his prayer to the people, then he is committing the sin of Shirk.

(Mishkat..... Hadith no: 5331)

It is as if, he has appointed a partner to Allah in his prayer and this is a major sin which Allah will not forgive without sincere repentance. Thus, the purity of the inner acts of man and the purity of his external acts go together.

Seek for you a spiritual physician

As man cannot cure his inner diseases himself he must search for a spiritual physician whom you may call a Peer, a Sheikh or a Teacher as you like. He is qualified to treat the inner diseases of man. A man can never prosper externally, nor internally without the care and treatment of such a physician. Man must, therefore, be on the look out for such a Sheikh or Guide.

What I have said in the foregoing pages is only an introduction to what I am going to discuss, item by item concerning the efforts one must put in to ameliorate one's moral character and to save oneself from bad character.

May Almighty Allah help us in understanding and acting upon the relevant injunctions and advice on this important subject. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

Venue : Jame'Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.

Date : Friday 19th October, 1992
After 'Asr Prayers.

You need not be afraid of anything as long as the wealth and riches of the world are lying scattered around you, because these resources will keep the boat of your life floating. However the day when these resources gather together and get into the boat of your heart, they will drown you.

DO NOT LOVE THE WORLD

الحمد لله نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرو انفسنا ومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا وسند نا وشفيعنا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله، صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

فاوعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم، بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اِنَّ وَعْدَ اللهِ حَقٌّ فَلَا تَغُرَّنَّكُمُ الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَا ۪ وَلَا يَغُرَّنَّكُمْ بِاللهِ الْغَرُوْرُ (سورة الفاطر: ٥)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness.We believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our selves and from the vices of our deeds. There is no one to misguide him whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom Allah lets go astray. We bear witness that there is no God but Allah alone and that He has no partner. We also bear witness that our sire, our authority, our Prophet and our master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah have mercy on him, on his household and on his Companions and bless them and salute them all in great abundance.

O people! The Promise of Allah is true. So let not the life of the world beguile you, nor let the Chief Deceiver deceive you with regard to Allah. (35:5)

The comforts of the world depend on *Deen* (Faith)

It is binding on every Muslim that he should acquire an excellent inner moral character. Without this neither can he ameliorate his *Deen* (Faith), nor his worldly life. This is because in reality the betterment of the worldly life, too, depends on the betterment of *Deen*. It is the Devil's deception to think that one can lead a fully contented and comfortable life without *Deen*. It must be noted that it is one thing to possess the resources and comforts of the world and quite another thing to have a care free, contented and peaceful life in this world. You may amass great wealth in the form of gold,

silver and precious stones, cars and factories even without *Deen*, but you can never acquire without *Deen* what is called peace of the heart. That is why the pious men, who have totally devoted themselves to the cause of *Deen*, are those fortunate men who enjoy this blessing of the peace of the heart. It is possible neither to ameliorate *Deen*, nor the worldly life, without the amelioration of the moral character. Two of these aspects of the moral character, viz. (i) Fear and (ii) Hope were discussed earlier. May Allah grant us understanding of these, by His mercy.

The Reality of *Zuhd* (Asceticism)

Today I am going to speak on the subject of a basic aspect of character which is called "*Zuhd*" (Devotion). You might have heard people saying: That man is a great "*Zahid* and *Ábid* (devotee and worshipper). *Zahid* is one who possesses the quality of "*Zuhd*" and "*Zuhd*" is a sort of inner character with which every Muslim must be equipped. '*Zuhd*' is the quality of being disinterested in, and having no love for the world. This is the attribute of one whose heart is not entangled in the temptations of the world, so that one is not always thinking of the world and its affairs and hankering after its gains.

The Love of the world is the root of all sins

It is necessary for every Muslim to acquire the quality of "*Zuhd*", because if the heart is occupied with the love of the world, the love of Allah cannot find access to the heart. If the heart is devoid of Allah's love it goes astray in other undesirable directions. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said in a Hadith:

حب الدنيا رأس كل خطيئة (كنز العمال : حديث نمبر ٦١١٤)

The love of the world is the root-cause of

every sin and evil. (Kunzul Amaal Hadith No: 6114)

If man analyses carefully the cause of the crimes that are being committed in the world everyday, he will find that the love of the world is at their bottom. A thief commits theft, because he loves the world. A man commits adultery, because he loves worldly pleasures. A drunkard drinks wine, because he is fond of the worldly enjoyments. Take any sin, you will find that the love of the world is involved in it in one way or another. When the heart is fully occupied, with the love of the world how can it receive and contain the love of Allah?

I would make Abu Bakr my beloved

Allah has so constituted the heart that it can contain the real love of only one. In this life a man has working relations with many, yet he can cherish the real love of only one being. That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ said about Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ:

لو كنت متخذاً خليلاً لتخذت ابا بكر خليلاً (صحيح بخاری، كتاب الصلاة باب الخوخة والممر في المسجد، حديث نمبر ٤٦٦)

(Sahih Bukhari ..... Hadith no: 466)

If I were to make anyone my friend I would befriend Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ. The Holy prophet ﷺ loved Hazrat Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ most of all, In spite of this unique position which Hazrat Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ enjoyed, the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not say that he had made Hazrat Abu Bakr his beloved; he ﷺ only said that if he were to make anyone his beloved, he would confer that honour on Hazrat Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ as the Prophet's real beloved was Almighty Allah exclusively. There is no denying the fact that a man has cordial relations with many of his near and dear ones, e.g. wife, children, parents, brothers and sisters, etc., but these relations remain subordinate to the real love for Allah.

Only the love of one can occupy the heart

As a result the heart can contain either the love of Almighty Allah or the love of the world and not of both at the same time. The Love of two things cannot co-exist in one place. Maulana Rumi رحمۃاللہ علیہ has explained this point in a persian couplet:

ہم خدا خواہی وہم دنیائے دوں

ایں خیال است و محال است و جنوں

You desire Allah and also the worthless world; this is only a thought, this is only an imagination, this is impossible and this is madness)

In other words it is not possible for anyone to lodge in his heart the love of the world as well as that of Allah. If a man's heart is devoid of the love of Allah, all his actions for *Deen* will be only in letter and not in spirit. In fact a man, having in his heart the love of the world instead of the love of Allah will fail in practising his religion properly and will ever remain worried and disturbed mentally and find himself stumbling and staggering at every step. Man should not harbour in his heart the love of the world. This is called *Zuhd* (asceticism). It is imperative to attain this virtue.

I am in the world but I do not cherish it

The world and man's relations with it are a very delicate issues. We have to live in the world and make use of its resources to maintain life. We require food to satisfy hunger, water to quench thirst, a house to take shelter against cold heat and rains. We have to work to earn livelihood. When we are so intricately entangled in the affairs of the world how can we banish the love of the world from our hearts? It seems quite impossible to exclude totally the love of the world in trying to lodge the love of Allah in our

hearts. Apparently the problem appears to be incapable of a solution, but the Prohpets of Allah and their vicegerents have taught how Allah's love can be established, while living in this world and protecting ourselves from its temptations. Hazrat Majzoob رحمةالله عليه, a disciple of Hazrat Thanawi رحمةالله عليه has experessed a solution to this ticklish problem in a couplet:

دنیا میں ہوں، دنیا کا طلب گار نہیں ہوں
بازار سے گزرا ہوں، خریدار نہیں ہوں

That is, although I am living in this world yet I do not cherish it just like a person who passess through a market without buying anything offered for sale.

The question, however arises how to live in the world, benefit by its resources, yet keep the heart unaffected by its charms and keep it reserved exclusively for Divine Love!

An Example of the world

The renowned sufi poet Maulana Rumi رحمةالله عليه has explained this point by a very beautiful example. He has said: It is not possible for men to live without availing themselves of the resources of the world. Man is like a boat and the world is like water. Just as a boat cannot sail without water in the same way man cannot live without availing himself of the resources of the world, like food, water, clothes, a house, etc. The water is useful and helpful for the boat as long as it remains under and around the boat, but if the water gets into the boat it will drown it and destroy everything in it.

In the same way the resources of the world are helpful for the safe sailing of the boat of man's life, but as soon as the water of the worldly resources get access to the boat of your heart. It will drown you. Maulana Rumi رحمةالله عليه has expressed this beautiful example in a persian couplet:

آب اندر زیر کشتی پشتی است
آب در کشتی ہلاک کشتی است

This means: The water is helpful and useful for the boat as long as it remains under and around it, but it drowns the boat when the water gets into it.

The love of two things cannot get together

"Zuhd" (Asceticism) is the name of that condition of life in which the world with its resources should remain around a man, but its love should not find access to his heart. If the love of the world gets into the heart of man, the love of Allah cannot get together with the love of the world, because the heart cannot contain the love of two things. My dear father, Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمةالله عليه used to recite a couplet stated to be composed by Shaikh Hazrat Mian jee Noor Muhammad رحمةالله عليه. The couplet runs:

بھر رہا ہے دل میں حُبِّ جاہ و مال
کب سماوے اس میں حُبِّ ذوالجلال

That is: when the heart becomes filled with the love of honour, rank and wealth then how can that heart receive and contain the love of Allah? That is why, if has been commanded that man should banish from his heart the love of the world and that is all. It is not necessary to renounce the world like a christian monk. The world and its resources are not harmful, if their love is not allowed to enter the heart.

The World may be compared to a latrine

It seems to be a curious paradox that on one hand the world is important and indispensable for man, and on the other hand its love should not be harboured in the heart.

This may be explained by an example. When you construct a house you provide in it one' or two bed rooms, a drawing room, or dining room and a laterine. If there is no laterine the house will not be complete, even though it may have very beautiful and nicely furnished bedrooms dining and drawing rooms. Now think! Will there be any man, so fond of the laterine that he is always thinking about it and waiting for the hour when he will go to it to ease himself? Obviously there will be none whose mind remains so much occupied by thoughts about the laterine. Although the man knows full well that a laterine is very essential for a house, yet he will never give it so much thought and attention. He uses the laterine when it becomes urgently pressing to use it.

Worldly life should not deceive you

Our *Deen*, Islam, also teaches us that all this worldly wealth and resources are necessary for our worldly life, just as the laterine, but they should not be the sole concern of our minds. They should be used to the minimum extent to keep body and soul together and as an aid to ameliorate the Hereafter. In the verse which I have recited in the beginning Allah has said

يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اِنَّ وَعْدَ اللّٰهِ حَقٌّ فَلَا تَغُرَّنَّكُمُ الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَا ۪ وَلَا يَغُرَّنَّكُمْ بِاللّٰهِ الْغَرُوْرُ (سورة الفاطر: ٥)

O people! The promise of Allah is true, so let not the life of the world beguile you, nor let the chief Deceiver deceive you with regard to Allah. (35:5)

Soon you shall be produced before Allah for reckoning, so you must be cautious about the seduction of Satan. *Shari'ah* has advised us to live in this world but beware of its temptations which are meant for your trial. If you have

collected the comforts and necessaries of life, there is no harm in this provided that they have not become the main concern of your mind.

The Story of Shaikh Fareeduddin *'Attar* رحمة الله عليه

There are some fortunate servants of Allah that He, by His mercy, makes plans to guide them towards Him, by purging their hearts of the love of the world. Hazrat Shaikh Freeduddin Attar رحمة الله عليه was one of them. My late Father Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه related to me an interesting story about him. Hazrat *'Attar* رحمة الله عليه was a great merchant of perfumes and indigenous drugs, and that is why he was called '*Attar*' (chemist). He had a flourishing and extensive business of perfumes and drugs and he was at that time a world wide trader of indigenous medicines. His big shop was full of small and large bottles of various medicines. One day a *Majzoob* (a saint lost in rapture) suddenly visited the shop and began to make a survey of its contents. When he continued this survey for a long time Hazrat Fareeduddin *'Attar* asked the *Majzoob* what he wanted to purchase. He said that he wanted to purchase nothing but he wondered about the owner of such a big shop. Being deeply engrossed in his business how would he breathe his last? At the time of death the shopkeepers soul would be entangled in this endless collection of bottles and it would hardly find its way out. Hearing this reply Hazrat 'Attar felt irritated and offended and said to the *majzoob* angrily: Do not worry about my death but how would you die, O foolish man? The *Majzoob* replied, saying: I have neither a shop nor bottles of drugs nor any worldly resources. Look! I shall die in this way. Saying this, the *Majzoob* lay down on the ground in front of the shop and breathed his last reciting the article, of Faith

No sooner did Hazrat *Áttar* saw this strange scene than his heart received a shock which set him thinking that he was really devoting all his attention and energies to the affairs of this fleeting world, forgetting totally Allah, his creator, and that a servant of Allah (*Majzoob*) having no stake in this world passed away so easily and lightly! This was a hidden impetus from Allah which brought right guidance to Hazrat *Áttar*. That very day he left his flourishing business, to others, took the path of Allah to which Allah had guided him and ultimately became a great Shaikh and became a source of guidance to others.

The Story of Hazrat Ibrahim Bin Adham رحمةالله عليه

Hazrat Ibrahim Bin Adham رحمةالله عليه was the ruler of a state. One night he saw that a man was strolling on the roof of his palace. Hazrat Ibrahim رحمةالله عليه took him for a thief and challenged him. He caught hold of him and asked who he was, from where he had come and what he was doing on the roof. The stranger replied, saying: My camel is missing and I am searching for it. Hazrat Ibrahim bin Adham replied: Have you gone mad? It is very foolish to search for a missing camel on the roof of a palace. If you have lost your camel, go and search for it in the forest. The stranger replied, saying: If it is not possible to find a missing camel on the roof of a palace, it is also not possible to find Allah in a palace. If I am a fool, you are a greater fool than I, that you hope to find Allah in your palace. The moment Hazrat Ibrahim heard this admonition from the stranger, his heart got a shock. As a result he renounced his state and went out of his palace in search of Allah.

Take a lesson from this story

For people like us, it is not advisable to renounce the world and go out in search of Allah like Hazrat Ibrahim bin Adham رحمةالله عليه. It is not good for weaker people, as we are, to take such a daring step, yet we learn from this story that Allah's love cannot stay in a heart that is occupied day and night with love and thoughts of this world. Harbouring Allah's love in one's heart does not, however, prohibit the possession of lawfully acquired worldly resources, if their love does not find access to the heart that is filled with Allah's love.

My respected father vis-a-vis love of the world

We find in the life of my respected father Hazrat Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمةالله عليه many valuable models of the *Shari'ah* and the *Tareeqat*. If we had not seen our father رحمةالله عليه, we would not have known what a life based on the *Sunnah* means. While living in this world, he did a lot of work, viz., teachig, writing *Fatawa* (religious rulings), compiling books, preaching *Deen*, acting as a Peer to provide spiritual guidance to his disciples, earning a livelihood for his children and carrying on business to discharge his dues and so on so forth. Notwithstanding all this I saw that there was not in his heart the slightest trace of love for this world.

The thought of the Garden went out of my heart

My respected father رحمةالله عليه was very fond of gardening. Before the creation of Pakistan he planted with great enthusiasm a garden in Deoband (India). During his employment in Darul-Uloom, Deoband, his salary was scanty, though he had a large family to support. He made both ends meet with difficulty. However, out of his small savings from

his monthly salaries he planted a garden of mangoes. The year in which the garden brought out its fruit for the first time, an announcement about the creation of Pakistan was made and he migrated to Pakistan. All his property, including the mango garden, was taken over by the Hindus. I often heard my father saying: Since the very day on which I left that house and that garden, their love disappeared from my heart and I never remembered them again. The reason was that he had done all that to create a property only for the cause of *Deen* and his heart was not entangled in it.

The world comes humiliated and disgraced to those who hate it

It was my father's practice that whenever anyone disputed about something which rightly and lawfully belonged to him he never entered into the dispute but he relinquished his right in favour of his opponent. He followed this practice the whole of his life. He used to tell us this Hadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ:

انا زعيم ببَيْت فى ربض الجنةلمن ترك المراء وان كان محقا(ابو داؤد، كتاب الادب، باب فى حسن الخلق، حديث نمبر ٤٨٠٠)

(Abu Daood..... Hadith no:4800)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said: I am responsible for the allotment of a house in the precincts of Paradise to a man who gives up his claim in the cause of peace, although he is right.

I saw my father رحمةالله عليه acting upon this Hadith during his entire lifetime. As a result of this sacrifice Almighty Allah granted him the world which came to him humiliated and disgraced as occurs in a Hadith:

اتته الدنيا وهى راغمة(ابن ماجه، كتاب الزهد، باب الهم بالدنى، حديث نمبر ٤١٥٧)

(Ibn-e- Majah ..... Hadith no: 4157)

This means that if a man turns his face once from the world Allah sends the world to him disgraced and humiliated. That world touches the feet of the man but its love does not find access to his heart.

The world is like a Shadow

Someone has very aptly compared the world to man's shadow. If a man tries to catch hold of his shadow which is before him, by running after it he cannot catch it, because the faster does he run after the shadow the faster will the shadow go on shifting before him. On the other hand, if the man moves on in the opposite direction, leaving the shadow behind him, the shadow will follow the man doggedly. Like this has Allah created the world. If you run after the world with its love in your heart, the world will, like the shadow, run before you and you can never catch it. However, when you turn your back upon the world, Allah will make it follow you disgraced and humiliated. You may find many examples that a man condemns the world and kicks it, but it follows that man tenatiousy. Just take a firm resolution in your heart to reject the world and experience the result yourself. This stage is reached by understanding the reality of the world. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has mentioned رضى الله عنه the real worth and value of the world in many Ahadith in compliance with which we should try our best to banish from our hearts the love of the world.

Arrival of Wealth from Bahrain

عن عمر بن عوف الا نصارى رضى الله عنه ان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بعث عبيدة بن الجراح رضى الله تعالى عنه الى البحرين..... الخ (صحيح بخارى، حديث نمبر ٦٤٢٥)

(Sahih Bukhari, Hadith no: 6425)

Hazrat Ummar bin Auf Ansari رضی اللہ عنہ has said that the Holy Prophet appointed Hazrat Ubaidah bin Jarrah رضی اللہ عنہ Governor of Bahrain and asked him to collect and remit the amount of *Jizyah* (capitation tax) from the *Mushrikeen* and other taxes due by them.

Accordingly, once he brought with him a large amount of *Jizyah*. It was in the form of cash, cloth, etc. It was the practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to distribute the amount of *Jizyah* among his companions رضی اللہ عنہم. When some Ansari Companions رضی اللہ عنہم came to know that Hazrat Ubaidah رضی اللہ عنہ had brought some wealth from Bahrain, they went to the Prophet's mosque at the time of the *Fajr* prayer when after the conclusion of the *Fajr* prayer the Holy Prohpet ﷺ was returning to his house, those Ansari Companions رضی اللہ عنہم appeared before him ﷺ, although they did not say anything to the Prophet ﷺ. They desired that the wealth brought from Bahrain might be distributed among them. It was a very difficult time for the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم when they were undergoing starvation for long periods and had no clothes to cover their bodies. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ saw them in this condition, he smiled and realized the purpose for which they had assembled there. He then asked them if they had come to know about the wealth brought from Bahrain by Hazrat Ubaidah bin Jarrah رضی اللہ عنہ. They replied in the affirmative. Then the Holy prophet ﷺ said to them: Here is a glad tidings for you that you are soon going to get what will please you and you shall get that wealth.

I have no fear that poverty and starvation will befall you

The Holy Prophet ﷺ felt, lest their coming to him for the sake of money and worldly resources should create in

their hearts the love of the world, he broke to them this glad tidings:

فواللہ ما لِفَقْرٍ اخشی علیکم ولکنی اخشی ان تبسط الدنیا علیکم
کما لبسطت علی من کان قبلکم فتنافسوها کما تنافسوها فتهلکم
کما اهلکتهم (صحیح بخاری، کتاب الرقاق، باب ما یحذر من زهرة الدنیا والتنا فس فیها، رقم ٦٤٢٥)

By Allah I do not fear poverty and starvation in your case that may make your life miserable on account of want and destitution, because the time of ease, plenty of wealth is near at hand. It is a fact that the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself took his *Ummah's* share of hardship want and poverty. Hazrat Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا is reported to have said that the fire for cooking food was not kindled in her house sometimes continuously for three months. For their food they had to depend only on dates and water. The Holy Prophet ﷺ never ate bread his fill for two times a day. This is about bread of barley; wheat was never available to them. Imagine for yourself what a hard life the Prophet ﷺ of Allah lived! (Sahih Bukhari..... Hadith no: 6425)

Poverty during the times of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم

Hazrat Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا is reported to have said: Once some printed cloth came to her house as a gift. It was of cheap quality. Even so, on the occasions of marriages the people of Madinah used to borrow from me the garment made from that coarse and cheap cloth to decorate their brides. Later she said: Today many kinds of cloth are being sold in the markets. If I give the same garment to my maidservant she will reject it.

Lest this world should perish you

That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ said that the Muslims would not suffer from want and poverty in the times to come. This prophecy came true. Even if poverty and want ever fell upon the Muslims, it was not so harmful. At the most the people would have a hard life. What the Holy Prophet ﷺ feared was that when the Muslims were surrounded on all sides by wealth and luxuries, they would compete with one another to increase their lot. This plenty and abundance of worldly resources would destroy them as it destroyed the earlier genrations.

When you will have carpets spread under your feet

It occurs in another narrative that the Holy Prohpet ﷺ once said to the Noble Companions رضی الله عنهم: What will happen to you when there will be carpets spread under your feet? The companions were astonished to hear this Hadith, as they had at that time not even mats of palm-leaves, what to say of carpets. They had to sleep sometimes on their cots without bed sheet. They, therefore, said to the Holy Prophet ﷺ:

انا لنا الا نمار قال انها ستكون

That is: Where from will we have carpets? The Holy Prophet ﷺ told them that they had no carpets at that time, but a time would come when they would have carpets. (Sahih Bukhari ..... Hadith no: 3631)

That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ told the Noble Companions رضی الله عنهم that he had no fear about their poverty and want, but he feared about the time of ease and plenty, when the *Ummah* would have carpets and heaps of worldly wealth and resources. All this would make them forget Allah and the world might overpower them.

Handkerchiefs of Paradise are better

It occurs in a Hadith that once some quantity of silk cloth came from Syria the like of which the Noble Companions رضی الله عنهم had never seen before. Therefore, they began to feel the softness of the cloth with their fingers. Seeing this the Holy Prophet ﷺ at once said:

"لمنا ديل سعد بن معاذ فى الجنة افضل من هذا" (صحيح بخارى، كتاب بدء الخلق

باب ماجاء فى صفة الجنة، حديث نمبر ٣٢٤٩)

(Sahih Bukhari ..... Hadith no: 3249)

Are you wondering at this cloth and do you like it very much? The handkerchiefs which Almighty Allah has granted Saad bin Ma'az in Paradise is far better than these.

Thus, the Holy Prophet ﷺ lost no time in diverting the attention of the Noble Companions from this world to the Hereafter. From time to time, the Holy Prophet ﷺ had been impressing upon his Companions رضی الله عنهم that this world is worthless and short lived. All its temptations are perishable. It is not an object to be courted and loved.

The Entire world is not worth a gnats wing

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said in a Hadith:

"لو كانت الدنيا تعدل عندالله جناح بعوضة ماسقى كافرا منها شربة"

(ترندى، كتاب الزهد، باب ماجاء فى هوان الدنيا على الله، حديث نمبر ٢٣٣٢١)

(Tirmidhi ..... Hadith no: 23321)

This Hadith means that if the value of this world had been worth the wing of a gnat in the sight of Allah, He would not have given a draught of water to a disbeliever to drink. You see that the disbelievers are in possession of the wealth and riches of the world in abundance. They are enjoying great comforts and luxuries and blessings of the world

in spite of their disobedience to Allah and their rebellion against Him. The reason is that in the sight of Allah the world has no value; it is not even worth the wing of a gnat in the sight of Allah. If it had any value Allah would not have granted to the disbelievers the smallest particle of it:

Once the Holy Prophet ﷺ was going some where alongwith his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم . In the way he ﷺ saw a dead kid with its ears cut off from which foul smell was emanating. Pointing to the dead kid he ﷺ asked the Companions which of them could purchase that dead kid for one Dirham. The reply came: O Prophet ﷺ of Allah! None could purchase it for one Dirham, even if it was alive, far less a dead kid. It is worthless. Hearing this reply the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: The entire world with all its wealth, treasures and charms is as worthless in the sight of Amighty Allah, just as this dead kid is worthless in your eyes.

The Entire world became their slave

By so saying the Holy Prophet ﷺ firmly impressed upon the hearts of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم that they should not take a fancy to the world. They should make use of it sparingly at times of need without implanting its love in their hearts. When the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم banished the love of the world from their hearts, Allah made the entire world their slave. They subdued both Caesar and *kisra* (cyrus), but they did not throw even a glance at their vast possessions and treasures.

Hazrat Ubaidah bin Jarrah, رضی اللہ عنہ the Governor of Syria

During the Caliphate of Hazrat 'Umar رضی اللہ عنہ Hazrat Ubaidah bin Jarrah رضی اللہ عنہ was appointed Governor of Syria, because it was he who had conquered most parts of Syria. Syria was at that time a very large country including in its territories present Syria, Jordan, Palestine and Lebanon. These four parts formed one province of which Hazrat Ubaidah bin Jarrah رضی اللہ عنہ was Governor. Syria was then a very fertile and rich land. It was therefore, a very favourite province of the Roman Empire. Sitting in Madinah, Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ was controlling and commanding the entire Islamic world. Once Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ made an inspection tour of Syria. During this tour Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ expressed his desire to Hazrat Ubaidah bin Jarrah that he wanted to see his brother's house (i.e. the Governor's house).

Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ expressed his desire to see how Hazrat Abu Ubaidah bin Jarrah رضی اللہ عنہ was living, as the Governor of such a fertile and rich province and if he had collected some wealth for himself.

The Residence of the Governor of Syria

Hazrat Abu Ubaidah رضی اللہ عنہ told Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ that the caliph would only feel disappointed to see his house which might draw his tears yet Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ insisted on seeing the Governor's house. Both set out for the house which was at the end of the township. After going through the richly decorated and furnished streets of Damascus, they came to a hut thatched with date-palm leaves and the Governor told the Caliph that it was his residence. When Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ entered the house and looked closely into it he could find in it nothing except a prayer carpet. Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ asked Hazrat Abu Ubaidah رضی اللہ عنہ how he lived in such a lowly dwelling which had no pots, no beds and no furniture. Hazrat Abu Ubaidah رضی اللہ عنہ replied that all his household needs were supplied by the prayer-carpet on which he of-

fered his prayers, slept at night. Then raising his hand towards the thatched ceiling he brought out a pot which was filled with water and there were a few crusts of dried bread in it. Hazrat Ubaidah رضی اللہ عنہ told Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ that as he was busy with his official duties all night and day, he had no time for other things. He said a woman baked bread for him for two-three days which he preserved with him and when it was dry he soaked it with water and ate it at night. (Sair 'Alaam v.1, p. 7)

I have only passed through the market; I am not a buyer:

When Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ saw this condition, his eyes were filled with tears. Then Hazrat Abu Ubaidah رضی اللہ عنہ said: O Commander of the Faithful! I had already told you that the condition of my dwelling will only draw tears from your eyes. Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ replied, saying: The grandeur and charms of this world has affected everyone of us, but by Allah you have not changed from what you were during the time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

In fact the following words apply to people like Hazrat Abu Ubaidah bin Jarrah رضی اللہ عنہ

بازار سے گزرا ہوں خریدار نہیں ہوں

I have only passed through the market; I am not a buyer.

The entire world with all its wealth, resources charms, pleasures, comforts and luxuries is before the eyes along with all those who are absorbed in enjoying with these luxuries, yet all this has no temptation for him whose heart is saturated with Allah's love. Hazrat Majzoob رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has said in a couplet:

جب مہر نمایاں ہوا سب چھپ گئے تارے
تو مجھ کو بھری بزم میں تنہا نظر آیا

(مجذوب)

This means: All the stars faded away when the sun rose and like the sun you alone were visible to me in the full assembly.

These were the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم whose feet the world licked humiliated and disgraced. Even so, they had no place in their hearts for the world. This was only due to the teaching and training of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Time and again He ﷺ has pointed out to them the reality of the world that it is transitory, while the Hereafter and its blessings as well as its torments are eternal. The Holy Qur'an as well as the Ahadith are full of such exhortations and admonitions.

Everyone has to die one day

Let man think how long his life in the world shall last! Does anyone know how many days, months or years he has to live in this world? Is there anyone who can say for sure if he shall be alive, the next hour or the next moment? Even the greatest philosopher, scientist, or the ruler cannot predict the number of days of his life in this world. Notwithstanding this uncertainty of life everybody is busy collecting the resources, wealth and comforts of life day and night. All day long he remains engrossed in this thought, totally oblivious of the final call to leave this world with all his possessions and riches.

The "World" is nothing but an illusion

The Holy Qur'an says:

"وَمَا الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَآ اِلاَّ مَتَاعُ الْغُرُوْرِ (سورۃ حدید: ۲۰)

The life of this world is nothing but a matter of illusion. (57:20)

The warning contained in this verse is telling us that the world in which we are living is a mere deception. We should be on our guard that it does not lead us astray from the eternal life that is the Hereafter. We are advised to take advantage from this world to the minimum without being totally carried away by its temptations. These bank balances, the grand edifices, the landed properties can do you no harm if their love is not rooted in your hearts. Subject to this condition you are on the path of *Zuhd* (asceticism).

According to Imam Ghazzali رحمة الله عليه, the greatest loser in the world is he who has earned no money in the world and is a pauper, yet he has harboured the love of the world in his heart. Such a man has no *Zuhd* (asceticism) and he will not be called a *Zahid.* He has lodged in his heart the love of the world and is a great loser.

How to attain *Zuhd* (Asceticism)

A question arises as to how to attain *Zuhd. Zuhd* may be attained by acting upon the injunctions of the Holy Qur'an and the Ahadith. He should also contemplate about death and his presence before Allah on the Day of Judgment, the blessings and the torments of the Hereafter and the transitory period of the world. For this contemplation he should set apart every day a time of five minutes. This practice; if followed regularly, will banish from his heart the love of the world.

May Allah help us to understand the reality of the world. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

Maulana Rumi رحمة الله عليه has said: The world is the best capital of life and a blessing and Allah's bounty for man, as long as it remains around him. With it he meets his needs, earns sustenance and livelihood to support his life in this world. The moment the world shrinks to get into the boat of his heart and makes him worldly-wise, and its love totally occupies his heart and over-powers it, then there is the deluge. At such a stage the world becomes for man an allurement of illusion, a trial and carrion and those who hanker after it are no better than dogs.

DOES THE WORLD MEAN WEALTH AND PROPERTY?

الحمد لله نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرو انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له ونشهدان سيدنا وسند نا وشفيعنا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطٰن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

وَابْتَغِ فِيْمَآ اٰتٰكَ اللّٰهُ الدَّارَ الْاٰخِرَةَ وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيْبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَاَحْسِنْ كَمَا اَحْسَنَ اللّٰهُ اِلَيْكَ وَلَا تَبْغِ الْفَسَادَ فِى الْاَرْضِ ط اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يُحِبُّ

الْمُفْسِدِيْنَ (سورة القصص: ٧٧)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness. We believe in Him and have trust in Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no God but Allah Alone Who has no partner. I also bear witness that our master, and our authority, our Prophet and our master Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him and on his household and on his Companions and bless them and salute them all in great abundance.

Respected Elders and Dear Brothers!

I want to give during this short time at my disposal a brief explanation of the meaning of the Qur'anic verse which I have just now recited before you.

May Allah help me to explain this verse as desired by Him.

A misunderstanding

The reason why I have selected this verse for my topic is to remove a misunderstaing prevailing in the minds of a large section of the people, even those who are well educated. This verse removes that misunderstanding. The misunderstanding lies in the general trend of thought of the people that in today's world, if one tries to live on Islamic life, following the rules of the *Shari'ah*, one will

have to renounce the world with all that it contains, its comforts and joys and luxuries. It is not possible, they say, to lead an Islamic life without foregoing all these means of ease and comfort. This misunderstanding is in fact based on a totally wrong conception of Islam's attitude towards the world --- what Islam thinks about the world and its vast resources and to what extent resort should be taken to them. Again, what is the limit which should not be exceeded in taking advantages from the worldly resources, we are not quite clear about these vital points.

The Qur'an and the Ahadith condemn the world

The confusion in our minds on these points are also due to the fact tht we often hear that the Holy Qur'an and the sacred Ahadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ have, in general, condemned the world. There is a narrative in which the Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said:

الدنيا جيفة و طالبوها كلاب (كشف الخفاء للعجلوني حديث نمبر ١٣١٣)

This means that the world is like carrion (dead flesh) and those who are fond of it are like dogs.

(Kashful-Khafa-il lajalooni Hadith no: 1313)

Some Ulama have declared this Hadith to be a forged one, yet there are others who accept it as genuine likewise, the Holy Qur'an has said:

وَمَا الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَآ اِلاَّ مَتَاعُ الْغُرُوْرِ (سورة آل عمران ١٨٥)

The life of this world is only an enjoyment of illusion. (3:185)

In another verse of the Holy Qur'an it has been said:

اِنَّمَآ اَمْوَالُكُمْ وَاَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ (سورة التغابن: ١٥)

Your wealth and your children are only a trial (for you). (64:15)

We have before us the statements of the Holy Qur'an

and the Ahadith, condemning the world and its charms. This is one side of the coin by looking at which a man may presume that if he wants to become a Muslim, he must renounce the world. This is, however, not quite correct.

The virtues and goodness of the world.

As regards the other side of the coin, you may also have heard that at some places in the Qur'an Allah has declared that wealth is a bounty of Allah. About trade Allah has asked us "اِبْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِ اللهِ" to seek Allah's bounty through trade. Thus, in the chapter, 62 الجمعة, the command to offer the Friday Prayer is followed by a command to seek Allah's bounty as under:

فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَانْتَشِرُوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَابْتَغُوْا مِنْ فَضْلِ اللهِ (سورة الجمعة ١٠)

This means: When the Friday prayer is over, disperse in the land and seek Allah's bounty (62:10)

In the same way at some other places in the Holy Qur'an wealth has been called "خير" (good) meaning prosperity. Moreover, we all recite many times every day this famous (supplication).

رَبَّنَآ اٰتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَّ فِي الْاٰخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَّ قِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ (سورة البقرة ٢٠١)

O our Lord, grant us good in the world and grant us good also in the Hereafter. (2:201)

Now it seems to be a queer paradox that at one time this world is compared to carrion and its lovers to dogs and at another time the same world is called Allah's bounty which we are advised to seek. This paradox creates a confusion in our minds and we find our selves at a loss to understand what is correct and what is not correct, which meaning to accept and which to reject.

It is not necessary to renounce the world for the sake of the Hereafter

On looking closely into the meanings of the words of the Qur'an and the Ahadith, it becomes quite clear that Allah and His Prophet ﷺ do not desire that we should renounce the world and become monks, as in Christianity, in which it was not possible for anyone to find access to Allah, unless he relinquished his wife, children and worldly affairs and dedicates himself exclusively to Allah. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has never advised us to cut ourself off from the world, do nothing, nor earn a living nor build a house nor have some happy time with your wife and children; no nothing of the sort He ﷺ however, did tell us that this world is not our ultimate destination, nor is it the final goal of our lives. It is, however, wrong to think that all our activities are confined to this world and we have nothing to do beyond that. What we have been advised is that, while living in this world and using its resources, we have to prepare ourselves for our next life in the Hereafter. We have been asked to take advantage from this world without forgetting the life in the Hereafter, so that while using the good things of this world in this life, we should also be doing something for the betterment of our next life of the Hereafter.

Nobody can deny Death

It is an open truth which even the most perverted persons cannot deny that everybody has to die one day. This is so glaring a truth that none has denied it and none shall ever deny it, even though there are people who have denied and are denying the existence of Allah. Nobody knows the time and hour of his death. It is not possible even for the greatest philosopher, Doctor, Capitalist or Scientist to predict the time of his death.

Real life is the life of the Hereafter

The third qeestion, what shall happen after death? No science, no philosopy and no knowledge has so far been able to find out what happens to man after his death. The western world is inclined to accept that faint indications are available to suggest that there may be a life after death. There is, however, no indication as to what kind of life it is and what shall happen to man after death. However what is firmly established is that death is certain and we have no direct knowledge about the life after death. We have, however, believed in the *Kalimah*:

لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله

(There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah). The words "محمد رسول الله" signify that every message which the Prophet ﷺ has given us is based on divine revelation and is perfectly true with no trace of falsehood in it. Muhammad ﷺ, the Prophet of Allah has informed us that man's real life will commence from the time of man's death and this new base of life will be eternal as compared with the life of this world which is only transitory.

The Message of Islam

The message of Islam to humanity in general and to the Muslims in particular is that, as they have to live in this world for an appointed period of time, they must acquire the worldly resources to the extent needed and benefit by them. They should, however, not regard this world to be the last resort and the final goal.

A very befitting example of the world

Maulana Rumi رحمة الله عليه has given a very nice example of the world by comparing it to water, and man to a boat. Water, as we all know, is indispensable for a boat, because a

boat cannot sail without water. Just as a boat cannot do without water in the same way man cannot live without the worldly resources, e.g., food, drink, clothes, a house, etc. He must do some work to earn money to procure the means of life. The Maulana has further said that water is useful for the boat as long as it remains under and around the boat, but if this water gets into the boat, it will drown the boat and send it down to the bottom of the river, and will thus become harmful. Maulana Rumi رحمة الله عليه has, therefore, said that the world is very serviceable and useful for man as long as it remains around him and he uses its bounties to preserve his life and satisfy his needs. To this extent the world is really a "bounty of Allah" and a blessing. On the other hand when the world gets into the boat of man's heart and totally occupies his thoughts and its love obsesses his heart then this very world leads him to ruin and fall, because now the world has become "an enjoyment of illusion" and a "trial". Then it is no better than "carrion" and its lovers no better than dogs.

(Muftahul-Uloom. Masnawi Maulana Room vol. 2, p-37, chap. I, part 2)

The world is a ladder to the Hereafter

The Muslims have been allowed to pass their lives in this world, use its good things to maintain health and well-being, but with the belief that this world is only a step-ladder to the Hereafter and it is not an end in itself. If the world and its resources are used with this angle of vision fixed on the eternal life of the Hereafter, then this world is a blessing and a "bounty" of Allah and it is all goodness and bliss. On the other hand, if this world is regarded as the final goal, then it is delusion and destruction.

The World turns into *Deen*

These apparently self-contradictory aspects of the world can be explained in this way. If thoughts about the world and its temptations overpower the human mind, so that man devotes all his energies to its acquisition and enjoyment then the world is no better than carrion (dead meat). On the other hand, if the world is used only as a means to attain the blessings of the Hereafter, then the world becomes an affair of *Deen* and a cause of virtue and reward.

An advice to "*Korah*"

How can the world be turned into *Deen*? This has been mentioned in the Qur'anic verse which I have recited before you and that is the verse no:77 of Surah 28-Qasas. This verse relates the story of *Korah* who was a great capitalist during the time of Hazrat Moosa (Moses) عليه السلام. According to the Qur'an he had such a vast treasure and riches locked in strong rooms that the keys of the locks were too heavy to be lifted by one man. The advice given to *Korah* by Allah is mentioned in this verse. *Korah* was not asked to forgo all his treasure or to burn it in fire, but he was advised:

"وَابْتَغِ فِيْمَا اٰتَاكَ اللّٰهُ الدَّارَ الْاٰخِرَةَ"

He was asked to seek the good and salvation of the Hereafter with the wealth, treasure and the worldly resources he had been granted. The words (What Allah has granted you) indicate that what a man earns with his labour, knowledge and experience is in reality a bounty of Allah because the faculties by dint of which a man earns anything are a gift from Allah. In his arrogance *Korah* used to claim:

اِنَّمَآ اُوْتِيْتُهٗ عَلٰى عِلْمٍ عِنْدِيْ ط (سورة القصص:٧٨)

That is: I have earned all this treasure with my own knowledge wisdom and experience. He was told that there

were men more hard-working wise and experienced than he, yet they had nothing of the sort. So it has to be admitted that whatever a man acquires of the resources of the world in wealth, materials, properties and other possessions is nothing but a gift from Allah.

Should the entire wealth be spent in alms?

A question arises if we should give in charity all the wealth we possess. Some people think that spending money in the cause of the Hereafter means that the entire money one possesses should be given in alms. The Qur'an has, however, refuted this idea in the next verse:

وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيْبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا

This means: Do not forget and give up your share from the world that has been ordained for you, but deal with this share of money in this way:

وَاَحْسِنْ كَمَا اَحْسَنَ اللّٰهُ اِلَيْكَ

That is, do good to others with this money, just as Allah has done good to you by granting you this money. Allah has further said:

وَلَا تَبْغِ الْفَسَادَ فِى الْاَرْضِ

Do not use this money in spreading trouble and corruption on the earth.

The cause of corruption on the Earth

Trouble and corruption spread on the surface of the earth when men do such acts as Allah has forbidden and, made unlawful. If any one collects money by unlawful means, i.e. by theft and robbery, fraud, bribe and embezzlement, there will be corruption on the earth. Trying to acquire money by deception, gambling and interest or such other unlawful practices will also lead to corruption on the

earth. The Qur an does not prohibit us from earning money and acquiring wealth, but it does stop us strictly from using means and methods in our pursuits that have been declared illegal and unlawful. so, you have been commanded to accept that which is pure and lawful and reject what is impure and unlawful, however huge the amount may be.

Comfort cannot be purchased with money

It should be remembered that money, by its nature, is not a source of comfort and benefit. No one can quench his thirst and satisfy his hunger direct with the coins or currency notes in his possession. Money is only a means to procure ease and comfort which are gifts of Allah. If you have amassed great amounts of wealth by unlawful and illegal methods, it is not at all necessary that this money will bring you comfort, peace and contentment. It is a common experience that people possessing very large bank balances cannot sleep comfortably without taking sleeping pills. The millionaire has everything with him, a furnished bungalow, servants and attendants, all possible delicacies at his dining table, but he feels no appetite. Compare this rich man with the poor labourer who works hard for about eight hours a day, yet he eats his fill and sleeps soundly for about eight hours. Now consider which of the two is happier and more comfortable.

As already mentioned, ease comfort and contentment are gifts of Allah. Allah's ways of dealing with the Muslims is that, if they earn their livelihood by lawful and legal means, He grants them comfort, peace and prosperity. On the other hand, if they amass great wealth and treasure by dishonest and unlawful means, they can never enjoy what is called peace and comfort.

The way by whch the world can be turned into *Deen*

You are therefore commanded to earn money through lawful means and avoid unlawful ways. Then pay the obligatory charges that have been levied on this wealth, e.g., *Zakah*, *Sadaqah* and other charitable items and do good to others as Allah has done good to you. If man follows this advice in right earnest and tenders thanks to Allah for His bounties, then all his worldly possessions and wealth become *Deen*. As a result all his actions of eating drinking trading and providing comforts of life will become righteous deeds entitled to Allah's mercy in this world and recompense in the Hereafter. This is because man did not take this world and its resources as his sole aim of life, but took them only as a means to ameliorate his eternal life of the Hereafter, shunning all sinful acts and paying the dues imposed on him by the *Shari'ah*.

May Allah help us understand this point and follow it rightly. *Aameen*.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi

Date : Friday 29th November, 1991
After 'Asr Prayers.

Today falsehood is circulating in our lives like blood in our veins. We are telling lies, while rising up, sitting down and moving about. Sometimes we tell lies only in jokes, to earn some profit and to show our importance. It has indeed become a common practice --- so common that people do not regard it unlawful or sinful. They, rather, think that this habit has no effect, whatsoever, on our righteousness and piety.

LYING AND ITS PREVAILING FORMS

الحمد لله نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له واشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له واشهدان سيدنا وسند نا وشفيعنا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد!

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم اية المنافق ثلاث اذا حدث كذب واذا وعدا خلف واذا اوتمن خان فى رواية وان صام وصلى وزعم انه مسلم (صحيح بخارى، كتاب الايمان، باب علامات

المنافق حدیث نمبر ۳۳)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and we seek His help and forgiveness. We believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and from the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him Whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no God but Allah, the One, Who has no partner. I also bear witness that our sire, our authority, our Prophet and our master, Muhammad ﷺ, is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah have mercy on him, and his household and his Companions and bless them and salute them all a great deal.

Three signs of a hypocrite

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said. There are three habits, which distinguish a hypocrite. That is, these habits are not found in a Muslim. If there is anyone having any of these habits, be sure that he is not a Muslim. These habits are - (1) When he talks, he tells lies; (2) When he makes a promise, he breaks it; (3) when something is entrusted to him, he betrays it. There is a narrative with the addition of these words, "even if he may be a *Namazi*, fasting and claiming to be a Muslim. In reality such a man does not deserve to be called a Muslim, because he has relinquished the basic attributes which distinguish a Muslim from a non-Muslim.

Islam is a comprehensive Religion

We fail to understand why we have harboured in our minds the belief that Islam is confined to a few items of worship, like praying five times, fasting in the holy month of Ramazan and observing a few other like rituals. One who follows these routine items is regarded a Muslim and here end his responsibilities as a Muslim. The man thinks that he is now free to do whatever he wills. So misguided, he tells lies when he goes to the market and indulges in all unlawful and fraudulent business dealings. He has no regard for his word or for his trust, nor for the injunctions about what is lawful and what is unlawful. The conception that Islam is the name of a few routine forms of worship is highly misleading and dangerous, in the light of the Hadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ alluded to above. Such a man hardly deserves to be called a Muslim, even though he may be praying regularly and observing his Ramazan fasting. Although he is not declared an unbeliever formally, yet in the ordinary sense he is not a true Muslim, but is a hypocrite.

It is necessary to give some details about these three traits in a man, viz, telling lies, breaking promises and betraying trusts, because people are not quite clear about these traits and take them very lightly.

Lying and the Days of Ignorance

The first of these three signs is telling lies. It is such a grievous sin that there is not a nation past or present in which it was not declared a forbidden sin. Even during the pre-Islamic Days of Ignorance people hated telling lies.

When the Holy Prophet ﷺ sent his messenger with a letter to the king of Rome,inviting him to Islam he asked his courtiers to send to him such persons as were aware of the Holy Prophet ﷺ his personality and his message, so that he

might question them about the claimant to prophethood. By chance Hazrat Abu Sufyan رضی اللہ عنہ was available who had gone there with a trading caravan. He had not yet embraced Islam. They took him to the King. The following dialogue took place between them.

King of Rome: To what clan does this Muhammad ﷺ belong and what is the reputation of the clan?

Abu Sufyan رضی اللہ عنہ: He ﷺ hails from a very noble clan and the whole of Arabia acknowledges the honour and dignity of that clan.

King of Rome: (Testifying to this), you are quite right. All Prophets of Allah hailed from noble and honourable clans.

Do his followers belong to the lower classes of the society or are they among the dignitaries and the Leaders?

Abu Sufyan رضی اللہ عنہ: The majority of his followers are the ordinary commoners.

King of Rome: (Testifying to this that in the beginning the followers are the poor classes), What happens when you are at war with each other, who is victorious?

Abu Sufyan رضی اللہ عنہ: Sometimes we are victorious and sometimes his party is victorious. (By that time battles of Badar and Uhud were fought. In the latter the Muslims had suffered loss).

I could not tell a lie

Later on when Hazrat Abu Sufyan رضی اللہ عنہ had embraced Islam he told that he thought of uttering a sentence which could convey a wrong impression about the Holy Prophet ﷺ, but in answering the questions put by the King he found no occasion to insinuate in his answer such a point, and he could not, of course, tell a lie about the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Therefore, whatever he said in reply to the

King's questiosns went in favour of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The intention of relating this incident is to emphasize that even those who were not Muslims could not tell lies, how could it be possible for a Muslim to tell lies? (Sahih Bukhari .... Hadith no: 7)

False Medical certificates

It is very regretful that it has become a common practice to submit false medical certificates. Even those who try to distinguish between lawful and unlawful and follow the path of the *Shari'ah* have excluded many types of falsehood from the list of what is really false. They are indulging in falsehood with the belief that it is not falsehood. They are thus committing a double sin; one by actually committing a sin and the other by believing that it is not a sin. A religious - minded person, regular in his prayers and fasting and daily routines of rehearsals and remembrance of sacred names of Allah, was working in some foreign country. Being on leave, once he paid a visit to me. I asked him how long he would stay here. In reply he said that he would stay eight or ten days more. His leave period had expired but he had submitted a medical certificate for extension of leave.

Do prayer and Fasting constitute *Deen*?

He mentioned to me the act of submitting a medical certificate in such a way as if it was a very simple matter and there was nothing unusual in it. I asked him about the nature and purpose of the medical certificate. In reply he told me that it was to get an extension in leave, as without a medical certifiate extension could not be obtained. I again asked him to tell me what the certificate stated. He replied that it was written in the certificate that the person was so sick that he could not undertake the journey. I said to him:

Does *Deen* mean. prayer, fasting and rehearsals only? You have spiritual links with the saints, and still you are taking resort to such a certificate? He told me that he learnt from me for the first time that it was wrong to submit a false medical certificate. I told him that it was nothing but telling a lie. He asked me how could he then get additional leave? I told him first to exhaust the leave due to him then take leave without pay and that there was no justification to take leave on the basis of a false certificate.

People nowadays think that the submission of a false medical certificate does not come within the definition of telling lies, and that *Deen* consists only in rehearsals and remembrances. They think that there is no harm in taking resort to lies in the rest of our activities in life.

False Recommendations

Once when I was at Jeddah, I received from a fairly educated and reasonable person a request to furnish a recommendation to a certain person. I reproduce below the letter:

The bearer of this letter who is meeting you is an Indian national. Now he wants to go to Pakistan. I therefore, request you to recommend him to the Pakistan Embassy for issuing a Pakistani passport for him, on the basis that he is a Pakistani National and his passport has been lost in Saudi Arabia. He has himself applied for a passport to the Pakistani Embassy and I request you to make a recommendation for this purpose:

Now look! people are performing in that holy place the *Umrah*, the *Hajj*, the *Tawaf* and the *Sa'ee*, etc. and along with these sacred deeds, falsehood, forgery and fraud are also going on side by side, as if these sinful acts do not form part of *Deen*. People have come to believe that a lie is a lie only when one tells a lie with full consciousness that one is

telling a lie. It is not a lie to get false certificates from Doctors, false recommendation from officers or to file false suits against someone. Allah has said in his Book:

مَا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ اِلاَّ لَدَيْهِ رَقِيْبٌ عَتِيْدٌ (سورة ق: ١٨)

He utters no word, but there is with him an observer ready (to record it). (50:18)

Every word which man speaks is being recorded in his record of deeds.

Do not tell lies to children

It so happened once in the presence of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that a lady wanted to attract a child to hold him in her lap, but the child was not inclined to go near that lady. The lady tried to tempt the child by promising to offer him something. The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked her if she really wanted to give the child something or was only cajoling him. The lady replied that if the child came to her she intended to give him dates. The Holy Prophet ﷺ told the lady that if she had attracted the child only to cajole him without giving him anything the sin of one lie would have been recorded in her record of deeds. (Abu Daood ... Hadith no: 4991)

This Hadith contains a lesson that even children should not be told lies, nor should be betrayed if promise made to them. If you do not follow this lesson, the child will become bold on these sins from the very beginning of his life.

Do not tell lies even in Jokes

We have become used to tell lies only by way of jokes and recreation, although the Holy Prophet ﷺ has forbidden us to tell lies even in jokes. He ﷺ has said in a Hadith to warn that a painful punishment awaits that person

who tells lies only to make persons laugh. (Abu Daood .... Hadith no: 4990)

The Prophet's way of cutting Jokes

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has also sometimes indulged in jokes and recreations. He ﷺ however, never said anything that involved a lie or a mis-statement. It may be mentioned, by way of an example, that once an old woman called upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ and requested him to pray for her entry into Paradise. The Holy Prophet ﷺ told that woman that no old woman would find admission into Paradise. Hearing this, the woman started weeping. Then the Holy Prophet ﷺ explained to her that no woman would enter Paradise in the state of her senility, but before entering Paradise old women would be converted into youthful damsels. This fine joke has no trace of falsehood in it, yet it is enjoyable. (From Shamail-Tirmidhi)

A Unique Style of Joke

A villager called upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ and begged of him a she-camel. The Holy Prophet ﷺ promised to give him the young one of she-camel. The villager said: O Prophet of Allah ﷺ, what shall I do with the young one of a she-camel. I want a grown-up she-camel for riding. The Holy Prophet ﷺ told the villager that the she-camel given to him would after all be the young one of some she-camel. Thus, the Holy Prophet ﷺ indulged in a fine joke, which was neither a lie nor a mis-statement. This emphasizes the need of guarding your tongue against lies even in a joke. Notwithstanding all this, fabricated and exaggerated stories are current among us and we relate them to listeners by way of jokes and recreation. All this falls within the definition of lying. May Allah save us from this. (Shamail Tirmidhi)

False Character certificates

It has become a common practice nowadays to submit false character certificates. Quite religious and pious persons are involved in this sin. They either obtain false certificates or write certificates in favour of others. The person writing the certificate certifies that he has known the person concerned for about five years and he bears a good moral character. Nobody thinks that what he is doing is unlawful, but he flatters himself that he is doing a good term to a needy person. The fact, however, remains that it is a sin to issue a character certificate in favour of a person whom the writer does not know at all. This is a two-way traffic. The writer of the certificate and the beneficiary of the certificate both are sinners.

There are two ways of knowing someone's character

Mentioning someone to Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ a man praised a third person's conduct and character. Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ said to him: Let me know if you ever had business dealings with him or have ever accompanied him on a journey. The man replied to the question in the negative. Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ then said to him: How do you know that he is a man of good conduct and character when you have had neither business dealings nor have ever accompanied him on a journey. A man is honest, well-behaved and upright when he is honest in his business dealings and also when he behaves nicely and amicably with his companions رضی اللہ عنہم on a journey. A man's real worth, his feelings, his patience, broad mindedness and his fellow-feelings, etc, can rightly be judged only on these two occasions. When you have no experience of him, you should keep quiet, and should speak neither well

nor ill of him. If anyone asks you about anyone, you should tell only as much as you know about him. For example, you may say that you have seen him praying in a mosque, but you do not know anything more about him.

Certificate is a witness

The Holy Qur'an says:

اِلاَّ مَنْ شَهِدَ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُوْنَ (سورة الزخرف: ٨٦)

..... except those who bear witness, having knowledge (of the truth) (43:86)

It should be noted that the writing of a certificate is equivalent to bearing a legal witness, as if he is standing in a witness box in a *Shari'at* court. According to the injunctions implied in the verse a certificate writer should sign a character certificate only when he knows full well about the conduct and character of the man for whom he is writing the certificate. To give a character certificate about anyone without knowing anything about him is bearing a false witness and the Holy Prophet ﷺ has condemned this sin by comparing it to *Shirk* (polytheism).

False witness is equivalent to *Shirk* (شرك)

It occurs in a Hadith that once the Holy Prophet ﷺ was sitting, supporting his body against something. He ﷺ asked the Noble Companions رضی الله عنهم: Should I let you know the major sins? The Companions رضی الله عنهم replied in the affirmative. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said: To associate someone with Allah; to disobey parents. Then releasing his body from the support and sitting erect he said: And bearing false witness, (he ﷺ repeated this thrice). (Sahih Muslim ..... Hadith no: 143)

Now consider the grievousness of this sin of bearing false witness. On one hand the Holy Prophet ﷺ compared it

to *Shirk* (polytheism) and on the other hand, he ﷺ repeated it thrice and that too after releasing his support and sitting erect. The Qur'an itself has mentioned it along with *Shirk*:

"فَاجْتَنِبُوا الرِّجْسَ مِنَ الْاَوْثَانِ وَاجْتَنِبُوْا قَوْلَ الزُّوْرِ" (سورة الحج: ٣٠)

That is, shun the filth of idolatry and also shun false speech. This clearly shows how dangerous and grievous sins telling lies and bearing false witness are! (22:30)

One who issues a false certificate is a sinner

To bear false witness is more grievous and dangerous in consequences than telling lies, because this combines in it many sins, e.g. the sin of lying, the sin of misguiding a person. If relying on the certificate, the officer approached has a dealing with the certificate holder, he may incur a loss because of the false certificate. Similarly if a man bears a false witness in a court and the court passes a judgement on the basis of that witness against the rightful party. the responsibility for the loss in either case will be on the shoulders of the writer of the certificate. Thus, bearing false witness is not a light sin; it is a very grievous sin.

Telling lies in a Court

Nowadays telling lies has become so rampant that it has become almost a necessity and a fashion to tell lies in courts, to such an extent that people are heard, saying:

You may tell the truth here you are not standing before a Court. All that it means is that the fit place for telling lies is a court. Outside a court there is, according to them, no harm in telling the truth. This is said, although the Holy Prohpet ﷺ has compared it to *Shirk* and it is a combination of many sins.

Certificate about a *Madrasah* (School)

All types of certificates which are issued without adequate knowledge of the subject come within the definition of bearing false witness. Examples are: medical certificates, certificates of qualifiction and character certificates, etc.

Many people come to me for certificates about *Madrasahs* (schools) in which it has to be certified that the *Madrasah* is running and it is teaching such and such courses of study. These certificates are needed by the managers of schools to collect donations. Whenever my late father Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه was approached for giving such certificates, he used to refuse the request on the ground that it was an act of bearing witness and he could not issue such a certificate without knowledge about the *Madrasah* because it would be giving false witness. He would, however, issue certificates about *Madaris* only stating the facts he knew about them.

It is an act of bearing witness to write a review about a book

Many people call on me with their books that I should write reviews in favour of those books. How can anyone say that a book is good without going through it and without evaluating it correctly. Writing review on a book without having read it is making a mis-statement and bearing a false witness. People have, however, excluded such sinful acts from the list of mis-statements and false witness. If the request for review is turned down on this ground they feel offended. They do not realize that a man will be asked to give an account before Allah of every word that he speaks or writes. Everything that is escaping from our tongues or pens will be questioned about and answerable in the presence of Allah.

Abstain from lying

The habit of telling lies has spread in our society like an epidemic. Even highly educated people regular in their prayers, daily routines of rehearsals and having spiritual links with saints are involved in this vice. They too do not feel that it is a sin to issue wrong certificates. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith اذاحدث كذب(when he talks, he tells lies). All these acts are included in the meaning of this Hadith. To consider them outside the limits of *Deen* is the worst type of straying. It is imperative to avoid these sins and mis-deeds.

Occasions on which telling lies is permitted

There are however, occasions on which Almighty Allah has allowed telling lies. The occasions are such on which a man's life is in serious danger or he is exposed to some unbearable torture or oppression from which he cannot save him without telling lies. Even in such critical situations the injunction is that as far as possible man should avoid telling clear-cut lies. He should save himself by using some ambiguous expressions conveying double meanings.

How did Hazrat Siddiq رضى الله عنه avoid lying?

When Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضى الله عنه was migrating from Makkah to Madinah alongwith the Holy Prophet ﷺ the polytheists of Makkah deputed their men from all sides to arrest them. They announced a reward of one hundred camels for the capture of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. As a result the people of Makkah became active in search of the couple. In the way they by chance came across a man who knew Hazrat Siddiq رضى الله عنه but did not know the Holy Prophet ﷺ. That fellow asked Hazrat Siddiq رضى الله عنه about his companion. Now Hazrat Siddiq رضى الله عنه was in a very

difficult situation. If he told the truth that he was Muhammad, the Prophet ﷺ, the news might reach Makkah. He was in a fix what to do. If he told the truth the Holy Prophet ﷺ might be caught and if he concealed the fact he might be guilty of lying. Allah alone guides his servants in such critical situation. Hazrat Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ replied, saying:

هذا الرجل يهدينى السبيل

This man is my guide who guides me the way.

Now look, how Hazrat Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ avoided telling a lie by uttering a sentence meaning that being a Prophet ﷺ he was one who showed the straight path of Allah. See how wisely Hazrat Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ steered clear of the awkward situation without having to tell a lie. (Sahih Bukhari, Hadith no: 3911)

Almighty Allah always helps out of such difficulties those who themselves try their best to avoid telling lies.

Hazrat Gangohi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ and his abstension from lying

Hazrat Maulana Rashid Ahmad, Hazrat Maulana Qasim Nanutawi and Hazrat Haji Imdadullah Muhajir Makki رحمہ اللہ علیہ took prominent part in the freedom-fighting of 1857 against the British Government. The Jihad was not successful and in the last resort the English Army began to arrest and hang the freedom-fighters on the cross-roads of the cities.

جسے دیکھا حاکم وقت نے
کہا یہ بھی صاحب دار ہے

Whomsoever the ruler saw, he said, that he too was to be hanged.

Magistrates' courts had been opened in every sector. Every suspect was tried by these courts and sentenced to

death and hanged. During this period a suit was filed against Hazrat Gangohi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ also, and he was produced before the Magistrate. The Magistrate asked him if he had any weapons. The Maulana had in his possession guns but he answered the Magistrate's question by raising his hand with his *Tasbih* (rosary) and saying to the Magistrate: Yes this is my weapon. He did not say to the Magistrate that he had no weapons, because that would be telling a lie. His appearance, too, was like that of a saint which misguided the Magistrate.

Almighty Allah also comes to the rescue of His beloved servants. While this interrogation was in progress, a villager came there and uttered: Sahib! where did you get this man? He is the *Muazzin* (Announcer of prayer calls) of my area!

Hazrat Nanotawi's abstention from lying

Warrant of arrest had been issued against Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanotawi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ and the Police was searching for him in all places. He was sitting in the mosque of chhattah. The police raided that mosque where the saint was sitting all alone. On hearing the name of Hazrat Nanotawi it occurs to the mind that he must be putting on imposing and costly garments, but there was nothing of this sort. He always wore a loin-cloth and an ordinary *Kurta* (shirt). When the Police entered the mosque it took him for a servant of the mosque and asked him about Maulana Muhammad Qasim: The Maulana stood up from his place moved back one step and said: Just now he was here. By so saying He gave the police an impression that at that moment he was not there, without telling that he was not there. This would have been telling a lie. The police, therefore, went away without doing any harm to him.

This is an illustration of the fact that devoted servants of Allah avoid telling lies even in such critical moments of danger and save themselves by taking resort to clever, ambiguous phrases instead of telling clear-cut lies. It may be noted that the *Shari'ah* has permitted us to tell lies in such critical situations when word of ambiguous and vague import are not helpful. It is, however, unlawful and forbidden to take advantage of this permission so frequently in our daily dealings, as this involves the sin of bearing false witness. May Allah save us all from this sin *Aameen*!

Create in the hearts of the children aversion to telling lies

While trying to shun lies from the very beginning try your best to create in the hearts of your children hatred for telling lies, and create love for truthfulness. So, do not tell lies before the children. When a child sees his parents telling lies he too imitates them and thinks that there is nothing bad in telling lies. Thus, it is necessary for everyone to adopt truthfulness always and in every matter at all costs. Just consider that next to Prophethood comes the status of "Siddiq" which means most truthful totally averse to falsehood and lying.

One may be a liar by one's actions also

Sometimes a man may indulge in lying by his actions just as he lies in his speech. This is done by doing something outwardly only to show his actions to others. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith:

المتشبع بمالم يعط كلا بس ثوبى زور (ابو داؤد، كتاب الادب، باب فى المتشبع بمالم يعط. حديث نمبر ٤٩٩٧

(Abu Dawud .... Hadith no: 4997)

There is a man who tries to show by his action

that he possesses something which is not with him. He is, as it were, wearing a garment of falsehood.

In other words, it is a sin that by his action the man shows to be what he is not in reality. For example it is a kind of falsehood that a man is trying by his movements and habits to show that he is a rich man, although he is not so. The vice versa is also true. It is, therefore, a sin for a man to give a wrong impression about him to others by his action and behaviour.

To prefix the title sayyid (سيد) to one's name

There are many people who prefix to their names such titles and appellations as do not in reality belong to them. This has become a common fashion For example, some people add to their names the title Sayyid, although they do not belong to this family. A Sayyid is that person who is related to the family of the Holy Prophet ﷺ from the paternal, and not the maternal, side. It is a lie to use the title Sayyid; if this is not proved by the history of the family.

To use the titles "Professor" and "Maulana"

Some men write the title "Professor" with their names, although they are not qualified as professors which is a specialised rank. Likewise the titles "*Aalim*" (عالم) or "*Maulana*" (مولانا) is to be used for those only who have qualified themselve by passing the "*Dars-e-Nizami*" course and have studied under the supervision of some Learned "*Aalim*". Some men use these titles without any authority and this too is a form of lying. It is a pity that we take this practice lightly and do not realize that it entails the sin of lying.

May Allah help us to shun all these sins *Aameen*:

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi

Date : Friday 2nd December, 1991
After 'Asr Prayers.

There are many forms of Breach of Promise which we have excluded from the list. If a question is put to anyone about Breach of Promise, his answer will be: "It is something very bad and it is a sin." However, when an occasion arises in his practical life the same person will commit a Breach of Promise, even without realising that he is breaking a Promise.

BREACH OF PROMISE

الحمد لله نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرو انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له ونشهدان سيدنا وسند نا وشفيعنا ومولانا محمداً عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد!

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله تعالى عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم اية المنافق ثلاث اذا حدث كذب واذا وعدا خلف واذ اؤتمن خان وفى رواية وان صام وصلى وزعم انه مسلم (صحيح بخارى كتاب الايمان باب علامات المنافق حديث نمبر ٣٣)

Praise be to Allah. We praise Him and seek

His help and believe in Him. We rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our souls and from the vices of our deeds. None can misguide him whom Allah guides and none can guide him whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no God but Allah, the one and that He has no partner. I also bear witness that our sire, our authority, and Prophet and our master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him, his household and his Companions and bless them and salute them all in great abundance.

A "Promise" should be fulfilled as far as possible

In the recent past, one of the three signs of a hypocrite, mentioned in the Hadith, viz., "telling lies," was discussed in detail. The second sign of a hypocrite which the Holy Prophet ﷺ mentioned in the Hadith is: واذا وعد خلف It means: When he (hypocrite) makes a promise he breaks it; but when a believer makes a promise he fulfils it. If a man makes a promise to anyone but is not able to fulfil his promise on account of some un-avoidable circumstances, the rules of the *Shari'ah* prescribe that in such a situation the man who made the promise should explain to the other party his inability and seek redemption from his promise. For example, a man promises a man to advance him a sum of Rs 1000/- on a certain date, but something prevents him from fulfilling his promise. In such a situation he must tell the person concerned that he is not able to keep his promise to advance the promised amount for such and such reasons. The man, however, remains under obligation to make good his promise, as long as he has the ability to fulfil it, and is not prevented by some *Shari'ah* handicap.

Betrothal is a Promise

A man engages himself for marriage with a woman, then this engagement or betrothal is a promise which should be fulfilled to the best of his ability. However, if some reasonable excuse comes to light later on which prevents the fulfilment of this engagement, e.g., disparity of age, or disgreement of habit and temperament or some other factors, not known before, then the intention of going out of the engagement must be made known to the other party along with the reason for this breach. In normal circumstances, it is a binding to honour the promise according to the *Shari'ah*, failing which the party breaking the engagement will become liable to the blame of hypocrisy mentioned in this Hadith:

A Promise made by Hazrat Huzaifah رضی اللہ عنہ to Abu Jahl

You cannot find today examples of promises fulfilled by the Holy Prophet ﷺ in most trying and difficult situations. Hazrat Huzaifah bin Yaman رضی اللہ عنہ is a renowned Companion and a confidant of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. After having embraced Islam, he and his father Yaman رضی اللہ عنہ were going to the Holy Prophet ﷺ in Madinah. On their way to Madinah they met Abu Jahl and his army who were going to fight against the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He caught hold of Hazrat Huzaifah رضی اللہ عنہ and asked him where they were going. Hazrat Huzaifah رضی اللہ عنہ replied that they were going to Madinah to meet the Holy Prophet. ﷺ. Abu Jahl then said: I will not let you go there because after reaching Madinah you will take part in the battle against us. Hazrat Huzaifah رضی اللہ عنہ told him that he was going only to meet the Holy

Prophet ﷺ and would not take part in the fight. Abu Jahl then asked them to make a solemn promise that they would not take part in the fight but would only meet Muhammad ﷺ. They made a promise to this effect and Abu Jahl let them off. When they met the Holy Prophet ﷺ he, was setting off from Madinah for the battle of Badr, along with his ﷺ Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم.

The Battle of Badr - the first encounter of truth with falsehood

Just consider! The first encounter of Islam between right and wrong (the Battle of Badr) is in progress. This is the battle which the Qur'an has named "the Day of Criterion", i.e, the Day that decided between right or wrong (belief and disbelief). The man who took part in this battle was honoured with the name of "*Badri*". To be a "*Badri*" is a great distinction among the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم and the names of the fighters in the Battle of Badr are rehearsed by way of remembrance. So sacred and efficatious these names are that Allah accepts supplications in token of their sacredness and piety. These were the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم about whom the Holy Prophet ﷺ had predicted: "A battle is going to take place and Allah has granted salvation to all those who will take part in the battle."

A promise that was elicited by putting the sword on the neck

On meeting the Holy Prohpet ﷺ, Hazrat Abu Huzaifah رضی اللہ عنہ related to him ﷺ the whole story and explained how he was able to escape from Abu Jahl by promising to him that he would not take part in the battle. Notwithstanding this, he expressed his ardent desire to join the Battle of

Badr. As regards the promise, he was compelled to make it at the point of the sword, so he requested the Holy Prophet ﷺ to allow him to break the promise.

You have escaped by giving a word of Honour

The Holy Prohpet ﷺ said in reply to Hazrat Huzaifa's رضی اللہ عنہ request: You have made good your escape by making a promise that you have come here only to see me and you will not join the battle. I cannot, therefore, allow you to take part in the battle.

These are occasions when a man's integrity and trustworthiness are put to the test. It was possible for an ordinary man to find an excuse to break the promise by saying that it was made only outwardly and under duress and there was no harm in breaking it by taking part in the battle which was going to be fought under the command of the Holy Prophet ﷺ for the sake, and in the cause, of Islàm.

Moreover, it was a battle between Islam and *kufr* (infidelity), raging at a time when the muslim army was weak and ill-equipped. They were only 313 in number unarmed, with only 70 camels 2 horses and 8 swords. Some had taken in their hands sticks and pieces of stones etc. This force was going to encounter a host of 1000 armed men adequately equipped. Thus, in such a critical situation each single soul was highly valuable. Despite all this, the Holy Prophet ﷺ told him that "a promise is a promise"; it must be fulfilled at all costs.

The objective of *Jihad* (Holy War) is the upholding of the Truth

This *Jihad* was not going to be waged to conquer a country; it was, on the other hand, a *Jihad* for upholding the Truth. Would it be right to launch a *Jihad* for the sake

of the Truth and betraying the same Truth by breaking a word of honour? This is indeed impossible.

Today our efforts in preaching Islam are going waste, because we are committing falsehood and following ways and means which are un-Islamic and form sinful strategies. We have become fond of finding excuses and plausible pleas. We do things against the laws of the *Shari'ah* by satisfying ourselves that we are taking such and such steps only because the emergency of the situation demands it.

This is how a promise is fulfilled

The incident mentioned in the preceding paragraphs brings out clearly that the main objective was nothing but the attainment of Allah's pleasure, which lay in the performance of a promise and not in acquiring money, victory or fame of any kind. Hazrat Huzaifah and his father رضی اللہ عنہ were deprived of the unprecedented honour and glory of participating in the battle of Badr. This is what the fulfilment of a promise means!

Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ

We cannot find today examples of such integrity in keeping promises except among the slaves of the Holy Prohpet ﷺ who provided such unique examples. Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ is among those Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم about whom ill-wishers have fabricated false reports. There are people who show insolence and disrespect towards him yet listen to this story.

Military Strategy to gain victory

Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ being the Governor of Syria, frequently remained at war with the Romans. Rome at that time was considered to be a super power, endowed

with a tremendous international fighting force. Once Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ concluded with Rome a peace treaty valid up to an appointed date. Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ decided to attack the Romans immediately after the expiry of the appointed date of the peace treaty. It occurred to him that he should assemble his army at the border of the Roman empire and lose no time in launching his attack on the enemy as soon as the peace treaty expired. Thus, the Muslim Army would gain an easy victory.

This is a breach of Treaty

Following this plan, Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ stationed his forces at the border and a part thereof within the enemy's land and were ready for the attack. No sooner did the sun of the appointed day set than Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ ordered his army to advance. This strategy proved very successful and the muslim Army captured a large area of the enemy's land, as there was none to stop them. When the muslim army was thus advancing, they suddenly saw that a rider was heading fast towards them. Seeing him Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ halted his army under the impression that he might be bringing some new order from the commander of the Faithful. On coming nearer the rider began to utter these words loudly:

اللہ اکبر اللہ اکبر قفوا عباد اللہ قفوا عباد اللہ

"Allah is Great, Allah is Great. O servants of Allah halt; O servants of Allah halt!"

When the rider came nearer, Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ saw that it was Hazrat 'Amr bin 'Absah رضی اللہ عنہ. Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ asked him about his mission. Hazrat 'Amr bin 'Absah said:

وفاء لا غدر وفاء لاغدر

A believer is always loyal and faithful and not disloyal and dishonest in his dealings. He does not betray his pledge. Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ replied: I have not committed any breach of treaty. I launched the attack at a time when the appointed time of the treaty had expired. The messenger said: But you assembled your forces at the border before the expiry of the appointed time and also allowed a part of your forces to cross the border. All this was a clear breach of the peace-treaty. I have heard with my own ears the Holy Prophet ﷺ saying:

من كان بينه و بين قوم عهد فلا يحلنه ولا يشدنه الى ان يمضى اجل

له او ينبذ اليهم على سواء (ترمذی، کتاب الجهاد، باب فی الغدر، حدیث نمبر ۱۵۸۰)

(Tirmidhi..... Hadith no: 1580)

This means: When you have concluded an agreement, you should not betray that agreeent, unless the appointed time of the agreement has expired or you have announced openly before the other party that you have abrogated that agreement.

So in the light of this injunction of the Holy Prophet ﷺ it was not lawful for Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ to assemble his forces near the border of their territory before the expiry of the agreement or before a clear announcement of the abrogation of that agreement.

The entire conquered territory was returned

Just see how a victorious army is advancing and conquering a large enemy territory and is overjoyed with its victory, yet a sudden change takes place in its behaviour. No sooner did its commander Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ heard the injunction of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, than he ordered the entire conquered territory to be returned to the enemy. The territory was returned atonce and the Muslim army came back to their territory. No example of such incident can be found in the history of the world that a victorious army returned its entire conquered area only to avoid being guilty of the breach of a treaty. Here the question of acquiring land was not involved, nor that of acquiring authority, nor a kingdom. It was the question of acquiring Allah's pleasure for which they aspired. Their action had some resemblance to breach of treaty, so they came back. This is the importance of keeping a promise. When a word of honour is uttered it must be honoured at all costs.

Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ and an Agreement

When Jerusalem was conquered during the Caliphate of Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ an agreement was concluded between the victorious Muslims and the Christians and the Jews concerning the Holy land. It stipulated that the muslims would protect their life, honour and property and in return they (the Jews and the Christians) would pay a tax called *Jizyah*. Which is levied on non-Muslim subjects of a Muslim state. The Christians and Jews began to pay this tax every year according to the agreement.

Once it so happened that, being engaged in fighting with enemies on other fronts, more forces were needed to deal successfully with them. In order to meet the crisis someone suggested that the forces stationed at Jerusalem were more than necessary. Some Divisions of that force should be sent to the fronts where they were needed. Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ accepted this suggestion subject to the condition that the christians and the Jews living in Jerusalem should be advised as under:

We Muslims had taken the responsibility of protecting your lives, honour and property and concluded an

agreement with you to this effect. Now we are required to send our forces to other fronts. As such, we will not be able to make good our pledge to give protection to you. So we are returning the *Jizya* tax realized from you. Now the responsibility to protect your lives, honour and properties will rest with your own selves.

These are some of the examples how the Muslim rulers made good their promises and pledges the like of which cannot be found in the history of any other nation of the world.

The prevailing Forms of Breach of Promise

The second sign of a hypocrite which the Holy Prohpet ﷺ has mentioned in the Hadith is breach of promises and pledges. This is a grievous sin from which every Muslim should protect himself. I had explained in my address that there are many forms of lies which we have excluded from our list of falsehood and lies and do not regard them to be sins. Just in the same way there are certain forms of breach of promises and pledges which we have excluded from our list of breach and betrayal of promises and pledges. There are people who, when asked about a breach of promise, will readily say that it is a grievous sin, yet in their practical life, they commit this sin without feeling any hitch or hesitation.

It is a binding to obey the laws of the country

I want to point out something which the people do not heed, nor do they regard it a matter of religion. My father, Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say: A promise is not only verbal but it is also a practical issue. For example, a man is living in a country as its national. It means that he has actually given an undertaking that he will obey the laws of the country in which he is

living, as long as the laws do not involve some sinful act. The national is not bound to obey a law which involves a sin and by acting upon it the national becomes a sinner. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has clearly said:

لاطاعة المخلوق فی معصية الخالق (مُصنف ابن ابی شیبة ج ۱۲ ص ۵۴۶)

(Musannif ibn Abi Shaibah. vol. 12. p.-546)

The obedience to such repulsive laws is not only a binding, and it is also unlawful to obey them. If there is a law and by obeying it you do not commit a sin, you are bound to act upon this law because you have actually made an implied promise that you will obey the country's laws.

Hazrat Moosa (Moses) عليه السلام and Pharaoh's laws

By way of an example, my father رحمة الله عليه used to relate to us the story of Hazrat Moosa عليه السلام. Hazrat Moosa عليه السلام lived in Pharaoh's country. Before becoming a Prophet he had killed a *Qibti* (coptic) by delivering him a fatal blow. This is a well known story which the Holy Qur'an has also related: Hazrat Moosa عليه السلام also used to seek forgiveness from this sin:

لَهُمْ عَلَيَّ ذَنْبٌ (سورة الشعراء: ١٤)

That is: "they have a charge of crime against me" and I have committed a sin against them." Hazrat Moosa عليه السلام considered it a sin and used to seek Allah's pardon. A question arises from this murder. The coptic whom Hazrat Moosa عليه السلام had killed was an unbeliever and belonged to a country which was belligerent. What crime or sin did the murder of this coptic involve? My father رحمة الله عليه explained. When Hazrat Moosa عليه السلام was living in pharaoh's land, he had given an implied undertaking that he would obey the laws of that land, and it was not lawful to

kill anyone. Thus the murder committed by Hazrat Moosa عليه السلام was a violation of the law. Thus the national of every country, whether it is a Muslim or non-Muslim country makes a promise to obey the laws of the country, subject to the condition that this does not compel the national to commit some sin.

To obtain a Visa is an implied undertaking

Likewise when you obtain a visa to go to another country, whether it is a Muslim or a non-Muslim country, like India, America or Europe you give an implied undertaking that you will obey the laws of the country concerned as far as possible, unless this compels you to commit a sin. It is not lawful for you to obey that law which involves you in a sin. In short, all such laws are included in this implied undertaking, unless they compel the visitor to commit some sin.

It is a sin to violate Traffic Rules

Traffic Rules demand that traffic should to kept to the right or the left or should stop at red signal lights and resume movement at green lights. As a national, it is your implied undertaking that you will obey these rules. If anyone does not obey these rules he commits a breach of promise as well as a sin. People generally do not believe that it is a sin to violate the traffic rules, rather they think that it is a matter of cleverness that they disobey the traffic rules and escape from the grip of the law.

You will be responsible for the consequences of this violation here and in the Hereafter

Remember that violating the traffic rules is a sin in many respects. In one respect it is a breach of promise and in another respect by violating these rules you may cause

harm to someone else. These rules are promulgated to maintain order and discipline, so that the action of one person may not jeopardize the safety of another person and thus endanger the well-being of the society as a whole. Thus, if you harm anyone by breaking these rules you render yourself liable to punishment here as well as of the Hereafter.

This is Allah's *Deen* (Faith)

I am explaining these matters because people think that they have nothing to do with religion, but they relate to this worldly life. Why is it necessary to abide by these man-made rules? Bear in mind well that this is Allah's *Deen* which is applicable to all walks of our lives and is not confined only to some particular branch of life. To sum up, it is under no circumstances binding on anyone to obey a rule which compels one to commit a sin subject to this condition, we are bound by the *Shari'ah* to obey all the rules of Government.

Summary

There are many acts which we consider to be acts of breach of promise and there are others which we think they do not involve any breach of promise, although they too involve the same sin. It is necessary to shun such sins and do our best to subject ourselves to the laws of the *Shari'ah* in its entirety.

We have discussed two signs of a hypocrite; the third sign is the betrayal of trust. We take this sin in the same light that we regard some acts of betrayal of trust as betrayal and exclude some other acts from the list of this sin, although they all fall within the definition of betrayal of trust.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله اب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi

Date : Friday 13th December, 1991
After 'Asr Prayers.

The most valuable trust which every man has with him without any exception is man's own life and existence, the parts of his body and limbs, and the time at his disposal. Does anyone think that he is the sole owner of these limbs, including the eyes, the ears, the nose, the tongue, the hands and feet, etc. and can use them as he likes? This is certainly not so! All these limbs belong to Allah Who has bestowed them upon us for using them. It is the demand of this Trust or bequest that we should use this existence of ours, these limbs, faculties and capacities only for the very purpose for which they have been bestowed upon us. If we use them for some other purpose, then we will be guilty of breach of trust.

BREACH OF TRUST AND ITS PREVAILING FORMS

الحمد لله نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرو انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا وسند نا وشفيعنا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله ـ صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا ـ

اما بعد!

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله تعالى عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: اية المنافق ثلاث، اذا حدث كذب واذا وعد اخلف واذا اؤتمن خان ـ وفى رواية، وان صلى وصام وزعم انه مسلم (صحيح بخارى، كتاب الايمان، باب علامات المنافق، حديث نمبر ٣٣)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness. We believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the mischief of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is none to lead him astray whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no God but Allah alone and that He has no partner. I also bear witness that our sire, our authority, and our Prophet and our master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on his household and his Companions. And bless them and salute them all in great abundance.

In this Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has mentioned three signs of a hypocrite and has indicated therein that a man who possesses these three signs does not deserve to be called a believer in the true sense. The two of these, viz. telling lies and betraying promises were discussed in some detail in our earlier assemblies. May Almighty Allah help us in shunning these two vices.

Emphasis on the virtue of trustfulness

The third sign of a hypocrite mentioned by the Holy Prophet ﷺ is the *betrayal of a trust*. A Muslim is not expected to commit this sin. Only a hypocrite can do this. There are many verses of the Holy Qur'an and Ahadith in which emphasis has been laid on trustfulness that trust must be discharged. Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an :

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَى أَهْلِهَا (٥٨: سورة النساء)

Allah commands you to return Trusts (depos-

its) to their owners. (4:58)

The meaning is quite clear. There is a Hadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ which emphasizes the same point:

لا ايمان لمن لا امانة له

(Musnad Ahmad-v.3, p. 135).

That is, a man devoid of the virtue of trustfulness is devoid of *Eeman* (belief). The quality of trustfulness is an essential demand and need of *Eeman*. A man should never betray a trust.

The conception of Trustfulness

What I want you to note in this meeting is that we have become used to restricting the sense and meaning of these items. What we understand by the attribute of trustfulness is that if a man deposits with us some money for safe custody for sometime we have to return it to the depositors as and when he wants his deposit back. If we return the deposit on demand, we discharge the trust and are trustworthy; but if we fail to do so, we betray the trust. This is all that we understand by discharging or betraying a trust and nothing beyond that. This too, no doubt, falls within the subject trust. In Qur'an and Hadith, the attribute of trustfulness is very vast in its import, and include many acts which come under trustfulness and are a part of trust and trustfulness.

The meaning of Trustfulness

"*Amaanat*" is an Arabic word which means "to have trust on anyone in any matter". Thus it is the reality of trustfulness that you entrust anything to anyone, of money, a secret or the like, with the hope that the trustee shall maintain the trust with him honestly and discharge it honestly and fully when called upon to do so. Keeping this import of trust you will realise that the attribute includes a

great deal more than which we understand by it.

The undertaking given on the Day of "A-last" (Am I not your Lord?)

Almighty Allah had taken on the "Day of A-last' an undertaking from all men saying:

اِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْاَ مَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَاَبَيْنَ اَنْ يَّحْمِلْنَهَا وَاَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَ حَمَلَهَا الْاِنْسَانُ ط اِنَّهٗ كَانَ ظَلُوْمًا جَهُوْلاً (۷۲ الاحزاب)

Indeed, we offered the trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to bear it and were afraid of it, but man bore it. Indeed, he is a tyrant and a fool. (33:72)

Allah says that man was really a tyrant and a fool that he accepted to bear the responsibility of this tremendous Divine Trust when powers far stronger than he shrank from this responsibility. He did not take into consideration the weight of the burden which might crush him.

This life is a Trust

Almighty Allah has called this burden a trust. What was that burden which was imposed on man? The commentators of the Holy Qur'an have said that the Trust was this life which was granted to man with option to do good or bad. For doing good, man's reward would be eternal blessing of Paradise and for doing bad the reward would be Allah's wrath and the eternal torment of Hell. Hafiz Shirazi رحمة الله عليه the great mystic poet has expressed the same idea in this persian couplet:

آسمان بارِ امانت نتواند کشید
قرعۂ فال بنام منِ دیوانہ زد

That is: The heavens could not bear this burden of the Trust, but this heavy burden fell to the lot of this weak

and feeble creature that is man. Any way, the Holy Qur'an has called the burden of this life a "Trust".

This body is a Trust

This entire life has been entrusted to us as a trust. We are required to make use of this life strictly according to the will of Allah and the injunctions of His Prophet ﷺ. Thus, the most valuable trust with which every man has been entrusted without any exception is his own life with all its parts, limbs periods of time and energies. Is there anyone who can claim that he is the owner of his hands, eyes, ears, etc.? None can claim this. This body with all its limbs is a trust with us from its Creator, Allah. All these limbs with the power and advantages inherent in them are blessings granted to us by Allah. We are, therefore, called upon to use them as well as our energies for the purpose for which they have been granted to us and in the way in which we have been commanded to use them. If we do otherwise, it will be a betrayal of trust on our part.

The Eyes are a Blessing

The eyes are a great blessing of Allah which He has bestowed upon us. A blessing like these cannot be purchased at any price. Despite this we hardly value them, because they came to us as in-built lenses in our bodies at the time of birth and have been functioning automatically like the other limbs. In acquiring this blessing of sight man had to spend neither money nor any effort. Man realizes the value of his eyes the day when some defect afflicts them and the blessing of sight is threatened. In such a critical situation man is prepared to spend his entire wealth for the restoration of his eyesight. The eyes may be compared to a delicate piece of machinery which needs neither servicing, nor over-

hanling, nor any monthly expenses, nor rent nor tax.

The Eyes are a Trust

Allah has, however, conferred this machine of the eyes on us as a trust. With them we may see the world and enjoy its wonderful scenes and beauties with the exception of a few objects. Allah has forbidden us to cast our glances on forbidden faces of women because by so doing we would be betraying our trust. According to the Holy Qur'an the misuse of the eyes is a betrayal of trust.

يَعْلَمُ خَائِنَةَ الْأَعْيُنِ (١٩ غافر)

He (Allah) knows the traitor eyes.... (40:19)

This means that Allah is aware when men use their eyes to see forbidden faces or scenes. This is, as if a trustee is misappropriating stealthly someone's money or property that had been entrusted to him to be kept as a trust. This fool does not know that Allah is watching everything and no secret is a secret for Him. That is why Allah has declared the betrayal or misuse of the eyes to be a very grievous sin and crime. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has also given serious warnings against this.

On the other hand, if this blessing and trust of the eyes are used rightly, then you attract Allah's mercy. It occurs in a Hadith that if a person enters his house and casts a loving glance at his wife and his wife also looks at her husband with love, then Allah also looks at both with love and mercy. It is because they put their eyes to the right and lawful use, even for personal gratification. They deserve Allah's mercy for having obeyed Allah's injunction in using their eyes.

The ears are a Trust

Almighty Allah has granted men ears for hearing and allowed them to hear everything. He has imposed only a few restrictions, on hearing like all sorts of music, backbiting, lies and Slanders, etc. If the ears are used to hear such forbidden things, then this is the betrayal of a trust.

The Tongue is a Trust

The tongue is such a blessing bestowed by Allah upon man that it has been discharging its duty of speech since birth and shall continue to do so till his death. It is difficult to encompass how many duties a slight stir of the tongue has been performing for man. Such a great blessing of Allah is this tongue that if by moving it only once you utter these sacred words:

سبحان الله الحمد لله

then according to a Hadith the weight of these sacred words fill half the space of the scale of "Deeds". We should, therefore, use this tongue to ameliorate our Hereafter. If this tongue is used in telling lies, backbiting, in teasing a Muslim or in causing distress to others, then this is a betrayal of trust.

Suicide is forbidden (*Haram*)

So far we have talked only about the limbs of the body. Our entire existence and body as a whole are a trust for us from Allah. Some think that this body is our own and we can use it as we like but this is not correct. It is a trust from Allah. That is why the *Shari'ah* has forbidden suicide. Suicide has been forbidden and made a very grievous sin, because this body, this life and these limbs are not our property; they belong to Allah and we have been forbidden to misuse them.

For example, this book belongs to me and I have

every right and it is lawful for me, to give it to any other person. If there is a man who permits another man to kill him and executes an authority for the killer on a stamped paper to this effect, yet it will never be lawful for the executor to commit this murder on the basis of this permission. The body or the life does not belong to the person who has permitted the murderer to kill him. As already explained, the body or the life belongs to Allah who has entrusted it to one of his trustees as a sacred trust. When a persons body is not his own property how can he be allowed to commit suicide by killing himself or by permitting someone else to kill him.

It is a breach of Trust to commit sins

Allah has granted us this entire existence, life, its energies and faculties, as a sacred trust. So, if anything is done or said in life with the help of these limbs against the will of Allah, it will be committing a breach of trust. The conception of trust in our minds, as hinted earlier, is that if anyone entrusts to us some money as a deposit we should keep it with us, guard it carefully without misappropriating it and return it to its owner without any hesitation as and when he wants it back. If we do not do this but spend that money, then we commit a breach of trust. This conception of Trust is too narrow and limited. The entire life is a trust and every word and act of life are a trust.

It has been said that it is a sign of hypocrisy to commit a breach of Trust. It means that all the sins that are committed either by the eyes, or the ears or the tongues or any other limb of the body are included in the definition of breach of trust; they are not the deeds of a believer but those of a hypocrite.

Borrowed things are a trust

What has been discussed in the preceding pages are general aspects of Trust. There are also some particular aspects of Trust. Sometimes we do not count these latter aspects as Trust. An example is that of things borrowed from others. A man does not himself possess a thing but needs it and borrows it from his neighbour or some friend only for temporary use. I want to read a book and borrow it from a friend of mine for reading and return. Now it is my duty to use this book, or, for that matter, any other borrowed thing with due care and in a proper way without doing any harm to it and return it within the agreed period after using it according to the desire and pleasure of the owner.

These pots and plates are a Trust

Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi Sahib رحمة الله عليه has explained this important point in many of his sermons, by means of suitable examples. A friend of yours sends you a gift of some food. It is your duty to receive the food in your own plate or pot and return at once the plate or pot of the person who brought the food. What actually happens is that the plate or the pot is retained for many days or are not returned at all. This is clearly a breach of Trust, because the plate or pot was brought to you as a trust and not as a permanent gift along with the food.

This book is a Trust

Another example is that of a book which you borrow from someone for reading and return to the owner. But instead of returning the book in time you keep it with you. This is a breach of trust. This undesirable practice has become so common that people have now begun to say that "it is lawful to steal a book". As such, it does not involve

any breach of trust, therefore the question of returning the book to its owner does not arise. All this comes within the meaning of breach of trust. It must be noted that all borrowed goods are trusts and it is an obligatory duty (*Farz*) to use them according to the wish of the owner. It is unlawful to do otherwise.

Working hours are a Trust

Take another example. A man enters some service and takes up a job. He gives an undertaking to work for eight hours. In other words he has sold these eight hours to the employer . Now these eight hours of his are a Trust of his employer, kept with him. Now if he spends even one minute out of these eight hours in something other than his official duties without the permission of the employer he commits a breach of Trust. For example if some friends visit him during the working hours and he entertains them with tea in a hotel and in gossiping with them. This action of his is a grievous breach of Trust.

Now consider, how negligent we are that we are misusing those hours which we have sold to our employers. Thus, the remunerations that we receive at the end of every month is not lawful for us fully, because we have not given full time to the work for which we have been employed.

The practice of the Teachers of Darul-Uloom, Deoband (India)

Consider the practice of the learned teachers of the Darul-Uloom, Deoband (India) who remind us of the sacred atmosphere which prevaild during the days of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم. Their monthly salaries did not exceed Rs 10/- or Rs 15/- As they had sold some agreed hours of their time to the Darul-Uloom, they were careful

not to use them in something other than their teaching work. If they ever happend to receive some visitors and spent sometime with them they noted the time so spent. They kept a record for the whole month. At the end of the month they reported the total time thus noted in their note books to the Administrator, requesting him to deduct from their salaries the amounts due to the hours spent on activities other than their regular teaching duties. They followed this practice, because they believed, and rightly so, that the remuneration received from the institution for personal work would not be lawful for them. What is the practice now! Employees apply for increase in salaries but never for deduction of salaries in respect of time spent on personal work and work other than their allotted duties.

The monthly salary of Hazrat Shaikh-ul-Hind رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Shaikh-ul-Hind Hazrat Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was the first student of Darul-Uloom, Deoband (India) through whom the Darul-Uloom commenced its mission. He enjoyed a high position in learning, knowledge and righteousness. At the time when he was a professor of Hadith, his monthly salary was only Rs 10/-. When he grew older, acquired more experience in teaching and his needs of life too increased along with his duties, the advisory council of the Darul-Uloom, decided to grant him an increment of Rs 5/-, raising his salary to Rs 15/- per month. When he received Rs 15/ instead of Rs 10/- he felt surprised. On inquiry he was told that his salary had been increased by Rs 5/- raising it to Rs 15/-. The Shaikh did not accept this increment and told the Administrator of the institution that having grown older and less active he was giving less service, so he did not deserve any increment. He suggested the usual

salary of Rs 10/- should be restored.

The teachers of the Darul-Uloom approached and requested him to accept the increment, otherwise his precedent would create hardship for others. The Shaikh, however, did not change his mind for the fear of the Hereafter where he would have to render an account for every penny earned and spent in this transitory world.

The Darul-Uloom, was not on the pattern of a Univerity of our days in which the professor delivers a lecture to the class and the students take notes from that lectures and the class is over. The Darul-Uloom was founded and is running on the basis of piety and righteousness where all concerned fear accountability in the Hereafter before Allah.

Today is the age of demanding rights

Today all efforts are concentrated on receiving rights. Agitations are being staged, processions taken out and slogans raised for preferring claims and demanding rights. But these agitators never care to think if they are discharging their liabilities and paying what is due by them to others. Today everyone is clamouring for increase in salary, prompt promotion, and more days of leave and allowances, without ever thinking if he is discharging his duties and dues honestly and according to the service rules and agreement.

Everyone should be watchful of his duties:

We must acknowlege the truth that nobody's rights can be discharged in the world as long as we remain demanding our rights and neglecting the rights of others that lie against us. The effective way of meeting claims and discharging rights honestly and justly is that which Allah and His Prophet ﷺ have taught us. For this everyone should be mindful of his own responsibilities, liabilities and duties,

with a view to discharging them honestly and conscientiously. Such a trend of thought and feeling will lead automatically to justice being done to everybody. If husband and wife both realize sincerly the rights and liabilities of each other will find their right settlement between them. In the same way if the employers and the employees are conscious of their rights and liabilities of each party there will be no difficulty in their settlement between them. If such feelings of mutual sympathy and responsibility do not arise in the hearts, no peaceful settlement can come out, despite these everyday, agitation, processions, slogans and creation of associations for the protection of rights and payment of claims. These rights will remain neglected, undischarged and betrayed, unless we fear Allah and we remember the Day of Judgement. Fear of Allah is the only panacea for establishing peace and tranquility in this world.

This is also fraud in weights and measures

The time at our disposal is a trust from Allah. The Holy Qur'an says:

وَيْلٌ لِّلْمُطَفِّفِيْنَ ۝ اَلَّذِيْنَ اِذَا اكْتَالُوْا عَلَى النَّاسِ يَسْتَوْفُوْنَ وَاِذَا كَالُوْهُمْ اَوْ وَّزَنُوْهُمْ يُخْسِرُوْنَ (المطففين: ٣)

This means:

Woe to the defrauders who demand full measure when they take it from mankind; but if they measure to them or weigh for them they give less than due. (83:1-3)

The meaning of the verse as given above is self-explanatory. There is painful torment for those who take full measure when taking something from others, but give short measure when weighing something for others. People are under the impression that this ordinance applies only to

transactions concerning sale and purchase of some commodity. The Ulama have said that this التطفيف فی کل شئی applies to all sorts of dealings. For example, if a worker has been employed to work eight hours, but he works less than eight hours, he renders himself liable to this painful punishment.

"Post" and "Position" impose responsibilities

Nowadays we are required to undergo a great fatigue and torture, in case we have to contact an office for some official business, because you have to call at that office many times to get your work done. Sometime the officer concerned is not found in his seat or you are asked to visit the next day or some other plea is taken to postpone disposal. Thus, you have to make endless rounds of that office. This is due to absence of the sense of responsibility towards one's duty and Trust. It is not an easy job and a bed of roses, if one is occupying some high position, it carries with it a heavy burden of responsibilities. Great integrity and moral rectitude are needed to discharge these responsibilities. The heaviness of these responsibilities can be easily guessed from an assertion of Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ who said: If even a dog dies of hunger on the bank of the River Euphrates, I feel afraid lest I should be questioned on the Day of Judgement about the death of that dog during my caliphate.

Should I appoint such a person as a Caliph?

It is narrated that when Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ was fatally wounded by a murderer, some of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم called on him, they advised him to appoint someone to succeed him as a Caliph to take over charge of the affairs of the Caliphate. They proposed to him رضی اللہ عنہ for this appointment the name of his son Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ. Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ

rejected this advice, saying: You want me to appoint a person as Caliph who does not know how to divorce his wife. (Suyutis History of the Caliphs. p.113)

It so happened that during the time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ divorced his wife, while she was in her menses. He violated the order of the *Shari'ah* that one must not divorce one's wife during menstruation. In fact Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ was not aware of this order. When this came to the knowledge of the Holy Prophet ﷺ he asked Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar to revoke the divorce and if he wanted to divorce his wife, he should divorce her again during the period of her purification from the menses. Referring to this incident Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ had said that he did not know how to divorce his wife.

Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ and his sense of responsibility

In addition to reference to this incident Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ gave them a second reply by mentioning that it was enough that the noose of the Caliphate had been round the neck of a man hailing from Khattab family (i.e. himself) for twelve years. He did not like to throw that noose round the neck of any other person of his family. He رضی اللہ عنہ further said that he did know what would be his condition when he was called to account before Allah for this tremendous responsibility of his caliphate. This Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ is the same person who had heard from the Holy Prophet ﷺ the glad tidings of "عمر فی الجنة" (Umar is in paradise). After this glad tidings no doubt remained about his entering paradise. Notwithstanding this, he was so much afraid of his accountability before Almighty Allah on the Day of Judgement. (Tabari's History, vol. III, p-292)

Once Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ said that he would

deem it quite satisfactory for him if he was let go on the Day of Judgment on "no loss no gain basis and was sent to "اعراف" (the purgatory). This is a place in between Paradise and Hell which will be allotted to those whose balances of good and bad deeds are just equal. In short, even if a very small fraction of the sense of responsibility and trust is born in our hearts, by Allah's grace, all our problems will be solved.

Problem Number one of Pakistan is Breach of Trust

A question once arose in Pakistan as to what is Pakistan's problem number one. In other words, what is the greatest difficulty of Pakistan requiring the first priority for its solution. It was felt that the problem Number one needing first priority was "Breach of Trust". The conception of honesty or trust is totally absent in our minds. We have lost all sense about the importance of discharging our duties, liabilities and responsibilities. We are running after money and are racing to grab high positions politically and monetarily. We never feel that we will one day have to render accounts before Allah about our deeds done in this world.

Office materials are a Trust

All the materials, articles and equipments of the office where you are working are Trust placed under you. They have been entrusted to you for use for official work and not for personal work. Using them for personal benefits is a breach of trust. Most people think that there is no harm in using small things of the office, e.g., paper pins, small pieces of paper. Remember well that breach of trust is forbidden and it is unlawful whether it relates to small and cheap or valuable articles. Breach of trust is a major sin and disobedience to Almighty Allah. We must refrain

from this sin in all circumstances,

Government and public properties are a Trust

As it has already been said the correct meaning of "Trust" is brought out in this example. Someone having reliance on you, entrusts to you some duty, but you do not discharge that duty according to his trust on you. This is a breach of trust on your part. These roads on which you walk or drive, these buses and Railway trains on which you travel are all a trust to be used honestly and lawfully. If they are used unlawfully and unauthorisedly, then this is a breach of trust. For example, while they are in your use, you make them dirty and unserviceable in one way or the other, then you are guilty of committing a breach of trust. It is a matter of known practice that people dig out drainage lines across roads, enclose parts thereof for holding functions and erect canopies with thick iron nails driven into the roads. Thus, they are damaging them, obstructing their free use and service. These are all unlawful encroachments and are therefore, breach of trust. If a man fixes the drain-pipe of his house so as to let the waste-water on the road, he misuses land which is not his property. According to the laws of the *Shari'ah* this act is unlawful. The Ulama have discussed these issues in detail which may be seen for guidance.

The Drain-pipe (Aquaduct) of Hazrat Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ

Hazrat Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ was an uncle of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The story of his drain-pipe is well known. His house was adjacent to the Prophet's mosque. One drain-pipe of his house projected in the direction of the mosque and its water fell into the courtyard of the mosque. Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ happened to see that pipe and inquired whose pipe it was that pointed towards the courtyard of the mosque. He

was told that it belonged to Hazrat Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ who was an uncle of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ said that it was unlawful and ordered to break it. When Hazrat Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ came to know this incident he called on Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ and complained to him about this action. Hazrat Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ explained to Hazrat Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ the reason for his action. Hazrat Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ told Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ that he had fixed that drain-pipe with the permission of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Hazrat Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ took Hazrat Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ to the Prophets mosque. He kneeled down under the drain-pipe and asked Hazrat Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ to refix the pipe by standing on his back. Hazrat Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ also said that Khattab's son had no business to break a drain-pipe which had been fixed with the permission of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Hazrat Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ replied that he would have the needful done. To this Hazrat Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ reacted by saying that as he had ordered the drain-pipe to be broken he should bear the punishment. Anyway, as Hazrat Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ had fixed the drain-pipe with the permission of the Holy Prophet ﷺ his action was lawful. In normal conditions it is unlawful to fix such drain-pipes without the permission of the Government. (Tabaqat Ibn-ul-Ma'arij. vol. iv, p-20)

Today the situation has become so hopeless that a man grabs as much land as he desires, without thinking at all that he is committing a sin. People are offering their prayers and at the same time are committing many sins and breach of trust. People must do their best to save themselves from such sins.

Topics discussed in a meeting are a Trust

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith: "المجالس بالامنة" (Jami-ul-usool, 6:545). This means that what is said and talked in a

meeting is also a trust with those who hear that talk. For example, two or three men are talking together in a formal style and their talk may include some secrets also. It is a breach of trust to divulge these secrets to other circles and outsiders. Some people are fond of spreading rumours and conveying the secrets of one person or group to another. This is nothing but creating disorder and corruption. There is, however, an exception to this principle. If in a meeting plans are being hatched to commit robbery murder or breach of peace and order, it is necessary to bring such conspiracies to the notice of the authorities concerned to suppress the mischief. The general rule however, is that secrets of one person should not be divulged to others.

Secrets are a Trust

Sometimes it so happens that a man hears someone's secret and, unable to keep it to himself, he divulges it to another person forbidding him to divulge the secret to any one else. This latter person divulges that secret to a third person forbidding him with emphasis to tell the secret to a fourth person. This vicious circle goes on widening till the secret becomes a common talk of the public. Just think for yourself of the harm and sin involved in breach of trusts.

This is a vice which has created terrible chaos and corruption in our society. This is a gengeral trend of behaviour prevailing in the society that incorrect and exaggerated reports are being circulated among persons leading ultimately to large-scale disturbances.

To overhear other's telephone conversation

It is a breach of trust to over-hear conversation going on between two persons on the telephone which may be some secrets about their private affairs of which

they may not like others to know. Over and above this, everyone is aware of the scourge of telephone-tapping which may be intentional or unintentional through some fault in the telephone lines. All these activities fall within the definition of spying, are unlawful and a grievous sin as well as a breach of trust. What is more, some people feel proud by becoming aware of the secrets of others and consider these activities as an art and a fine performance on their part, yet according to the Holy Prophet ﷺ this is included in the sin of breach of trust.

Summary

To sum up, there is not a single aspect of our life in which command has not been given to discharge and honour trust. Equally numerous are, also the occasions on which the sin of breach of Trust is being commited by the people. The vices mentioned to you fall within the definition of breach of Trust and may be regarded as hypocrisy. It is, therefore, necessary that all of us should always preserve in their memory the sacred words of the Hadith, saying that there are three signs of a hypocrite, viz.,

(1) When he talks, he lies;

(2) When he makes a promise he breaks it, and

(3) When he is entrusted with a trust he betrays it.

It is a part of *Deen* to follow the injunctions implied in the Hadith. We have confined *Deen* only to a few aspects of our lives, although it encompasses the entire course of our existence.

May Almighty Allah help us to understand the true meaning and spirit of *Deen* and follow it as desired by Allah and His Prophet ﷺ. *Aameen*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi

Date : Friday 29th November, 1991
After 'Asr Prayers.

What does society mean? Society includes in its meaning you, I and all individuals, living together in a given sector, area, city or a country. If every individual takes care to reform himself, the society as a whole will become reformed in due course. Ignoring this principle, if we find fault with and speak ill of one another; the society can never be reformed.

HOW TO REFORM THE SOCIETY?

الحمد لله نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرو انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا وسند نا وشفيعنا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد!

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا عَلَيْكُمْ اَنْفُسَكُمْ لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَنْ ضَلَّ اِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ ط اِلَى اللّٰهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيْعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ (المائدة: ١٠٥)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and believe in Him and rely on Him.

We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our souls and from the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom Allah guides and none to guide him whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no God but Allah, the one the one Who has no partner. I also bear witness that our sire, our authority, our Prophet and our master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah send mercy on him, his household and his Companions, and bless them all and send salutations on them in great abundance.

O you who believe! Take care of your own souls. He who is strayed cannot harm you, if you are rightly guided. To Allah will you all return; and then He will inform you of what you used to do. (5:105)

A unique and wonderful verse

This is a unique and wonderful verse of the Holy Qur'an which diagnoses a very serious disease of ours. In fact it discloses a very hidden and imperceptible malady in our souls. Who knows the psychology and temperament of man more than his Creator, Allah? This verse also contains an answer to a very important question which is arising in our minds.

Why do the efforts made to reform the society are ineffective

We see today that in this world strenuous efforts are being made every where to effect reform and improvement in the human society, through associations and groups formed for this purpose. Innumerable sessions, meetings

and assemblies are held. Agitations are staged and processions taken out for the sole purpose of arresting the degeneration of the society and uplifting its standard of morality and discipline. All the associations, committees and social Institutions are striving hard day and night to achieve the same aim to reform the society. In addition to these Associations and Bodies a large number of philanthropists have devoted their valuable lives to this righteous cause yet without any encouraging results.

If you take the trouble of visiting offices, market places, parks, hotels, etc. and see for yourselves, the activities and conduct of the people in these places,you are sure to realize that the fast deteriorating conditions of our society are counter acting and nullifying the effects, if any, of the efforts made to bring reform in the standard of the society and to raise the level of its morality. It seems as if the wheel is revolving in the reverse gear. If there is any progress, it is in vice not in goodness. In such a deplorable state of affairs a question naturally arises why the efforts made to ameliorate the society are going waste. Leaving aside a few exceptions, this degeneration is visible in every nook and corner.

Diagnosis of the Disease

Almighty Allah has, by His mercy, furnished in this verse, along with diagnosis, a remedy for the disease. This is a verse the words and meaning of which generally remains absent from our minds.

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا عَلَيْكُمْ اَنْفُسَكُمْ لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَنْ ضَلَّ اِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ ؕ
اِلَى اللّٰهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيْعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ (المائدة ١٠٥)

O you who believe! Take care of your own souls. He who is strayed cannot harm you; if you are rightly guided. To Allah will you all re-

turn; then He will inform you of what you used to do. (5:105)

Mindful of others' interests and neglectful of one's own

This verse has pointed out to us a very basic disease of our own. An effective cause of the failure of our reformative efforts lies in the fact that when people launch their campaign to ameliorate and reform the society, they concentrate all their attention on others but fail to look into their own selves to find out their own short comings and faults requiring to be remedied and reformed first. It has now become a common practice of our public leaders, reformers, and preachers to find fault with, and pry into, the behaviour and conduct of, others and conniving at their own personal faults and lapses which deserve their attentions first. They exhaust all the art of oratory in commenting on others without bestowing the least attention upon their own weaknesses and defects. In most cases these preachers and speakers deliver their addresses and sermons only to get public applause and to satisfy their own ego. The obvious result of such campaigns is failure and frustration.

The most ruined person

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith:

من قال هلك الناس فهو اهلكهم (صحيح مسلم كتاب البر و الصلة باب النهى عن قول هلك الناس حديث نمبر ٢٦٢٣)

(*Sahih Muslim ..... Hadith no: 2623*)

That is: "The man who says that the people are ruined is himself ruined most of all".

In other words; if a man is commenting on others by his remarks that they have gone astray, then he himself has gone astray farther than they. This man is finding fault

with others instead of minding his own business. He, therefore, requires reform more than others!

A sick man cannot afford to worry for others sickness

A man who is suffering from gripes and is restless on this account can hardly worry for those who are sneezing and are thereatened by an attack of influenza. If a man has the attack of some serious disease, it will be very natural for him to get rid of his own disease, instead of worrying for others, suffering from minor diseases. It is therefore, very unnatural, rather foolish, to feel for others when the situation demands that he should feel for himself and first mind his own health safety and welfare.

"But she is not suffering from colic"

It so happened that once I took a female relative to a Hospital, because she had some mild pain in her stomach. At the time of getting into the lift I saw a female patient approaching the lift door on a wheel - chair. Her hands and feet were broken and covered with plaster. Her chest was burnt. She was indeed in a very pitiable condition. To console my relative patient I said to her: Look here! How much distress and pain this woman is undergoing! A man feels a sort of relief in his own pain which induces him to thank Allah. In reply my relative patient said: She has indeed broken hands and feet, but at least she has no pain in her stomach.

In her opinion, the pain in her stomach was greater than the suffering of the other seriously wounded woman whose hands and feet were broken and the chest burnt. This is because one feels ones own pain and agony more acutely. This is an example of how we are trying to search for the defects and weaknesses of others but do not look

into our own faults and shortcomings to eradicate them.

Treatment of the Disease

In this verse Allah is warning us by commanding that first we should take care of our own souls instead of finding faults with others. If we follow the path of right guidance, the deviation and erroneous conduct of others will not harm us. Everyone will be responsible for his own deeds. So he should mind his own affairs. because he shall have to render an account for his doings before Allah in the Hereafter. Who knows that the deeds done by the man who is being criticised may be more valuable in the sight of Allah than the deeds of the person who is indulging in criticism and fault finding.

Any way, we generally make speeches and deliever sermons as a hobby and enjoyment. This is not the way of reforming the society.

Meetings of self-searching and self-accountability

It is all right to hold meetings to discuss the vices that have crept into our society and to attend such meetings to listen to, understand and act upon the reformative instructions and other religious matters discussed in such meetings. In fact such meetings are welcome.

Man's First task

It is the primary duty of man to review his day's activities to ascertain what work he is doing according to the pleasure of, and in the way taught by, Allah. He should also see how many deeds he is doing against the pleasure of Allah. If he is disobeying any of Allah's commands, he must think how to make himself obedient and

how to reform himself. If Almighty Allah creates this thought in our hearts, this will, God willing, lead to the reform of our society.

What is Society?

Society may be defined as a group of individuals living in a particular area. If every individual living in a society reforms himself and improves his conduct, this will automatically lead to the reform and improvement of the society as a whole. On the other, hand, if everyone tries to reform others, ignoring his own need of reform, there will be no improvement in the society at all.

The practice of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم

If we look closely into the lives of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم we shall find that the first and main concern of everyone of them was to reform himself and to get rid of his defects and weaknesses and become an obedient servant and a good Muslim. Hazrat Hanzallah رضی اللہ عنہ is a renowned companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ who used to attend the Prophet's meetings to receive benefits from him ﷺ and purify his soul. One day he came to the Holy Prophet ﷺ running and shouting these words: Hazrat Hanzallah رضی اللہ عنہ has become a hypocrite! The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked him what had happened to him. In reply he said: O Prophet ﷺ of Allah! As long as I remain in your company and listen to your sermons, my heart is highly inspired and I feel inclined to improve my soul. However when I leave your company and go out to attend worldly affairs, all this blessed effect vanishes. I feel afraid that this is a hypocrite's character that what is within does not correspond to what is outside.

On hearing this the Holy Prohpet ﷺ pacified him by saying: O Hanzallah رضی اللہ عنہ, you have not become a hypo-

crite. These are momentary changes. The condition of the heart does not remain constant at all times. The emotions and feelings are subject to change from time to time. It is not, therefore right to feel that one has become a hypocrite on account of such temporary changes. (Sahih Muslim .... Hadith no: 2750)

Now consider that Hazrat Hanzallah رضی اللہ عنہ felt that he had become a hypocrite, but he did not charge with hypocrisy any other person. By the process of self searching and self accountability he felt very much worried by the thought that he had become a hypocrite. This behaviour demonstrates that he was sincerely concerned with his own reform and improvement.

A distinction of Hazrat Huzaifah bin Yaman رضی اللہ عنہ

The Holy Prophet ﷺ had taken Hazrat Huzaifah bin Yaman رضی اللہ عنہ in his confidence and informed him of many of his ﷺ secrets, including the names of all the hypocrites residing in Madinah Hazrat Huzaifah رضی اللہ عنہ was aware of the hypocrites of Madinah with such certainty that if he did not join the furneral prayer of any person in Madinah, the companions concluded that the deceased was a hypocrite for sure. Conversely, if Hazrat Huzaifah رضی اللہ عنہ joined the funeral prayer of anyone, it was taken as a sign that the deceased was a believer. It was, therefore, from Hazrat Huzaifah's absence or presence in a funeral prayer that the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم knew about the belief or unbelief of the departing man.

The second Caliph's suspicion about his own hypocrisy

Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ had been appointed Caliph of the Islamic Empire extending over about half the

world. He was known to be a very strict disciplinarian and a stern administrator. He was always vigilant on the lawless and the miscreants, with his whip in his hand. His awe spread far and wide. Despite all this power and pelf, he, according to a Hadith, used to request Hazrat Huzaifah to tell him if his name was also included in the list of names of the hypocrites which he had received from the Holy Prophet ﷺ Hazrat Farooq's anxiety to know if he was or was not a hypocrite shows his sincerity in *Deen* and fear of Allah. (Albidayah Wannihayah. vol. 5. p. 19).

What emanates from the core of the heart is effective, indeed

The Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم were so sincere and true in their Deen that they always scrupulously guarded themselves against doing anything anti to the Commands of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ. When they remained obsessed with such thoughts their advice to others for reforming themselves did have its effect on the hearts. It is such sincerity that transforms the pattern of lives and brings revolutions in the society. Allamah ibn Jauzi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was a renowned religious preacher. It is said that his sermons were so touching, attractive and effective that after listening to one sermon about a thousand persons made pledges at his hands to give up all their sins and became righteous Muslims. It was not the eloquent and inspiring oration that worked the miracle. The secret of the effectiveness of his sermons was that the words came from the depth of his heart and touched the strings of the hearts of the listeners.

Our plight

On the other hand, our plight is deplorable. I am giving you advice, and I myself do not act up what I am advising my auddience to follow. Such empty sermons have hardly any effect on the listeners and if they ever have some effect the effect vanishes when the man finds that the preacher himself does not follow what he is recommending to others. In this way the teachings or the sermons evaporate in the air without having any effect, whatsoever, on the audience.

The prayer (*salah*) of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

What is the secret of this miraculous success of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that only in a short period of twenty three years he revolutionised the entire Arabian peninsula, rather the entire world. The secret of this success lies in the fact that he acted more sincerely and vigorously upon what he preached to others for action. He ﷺ commanded us to pray only five times a day, while he ﷺ himself prayed at least eight prayers daily, these three were the prayers of *Ishraq*, *Chasht* and *Tahajjud*. His ﷺ condition was that:

اذا حزبه امر صلى

(Mishkat. Book of Salah.... Hadith no: 1325)

Whenever some distress befell him ﷺ, he at once stood up for prayer and turned his attention to Allah in supplication. He ﷺ used to say:

جعلت قرة عينى فى الصلاة (نسائى كتاب عشرة النساء باب تمير ايك)

The coolness of my eyes lies in prayer (Nisa'i. Book-ten women chapter 1)

The Prophet's Fasting

According to the Holy Qur'an the Muslims have been commanded to observe fasting only for one month during Ramadhan. The Holy Prophet ﷺ imposed upon himself additional fasting. There was not any month of the year in which he ﷺ did not fast at least three days. In some months he observed fasting for more than three days.

Continuous Fasting is prohibited

The Holy Prophet ﷺ saw that some Companions رضی الله عنهم were fasting continuously for two days. The Holy Prophet ﷺ stopped them from fasting in that way and declared such fasting unlawful for them. As for himself ﷺ, he did observe continuous fasting and asked the Companions not to follow his analogy, because his Lord, Allah, satisfied his hunger and quenched his thirst. In other words, the Companions رضی الله عنهم did not have that strength which the Holy Prophet ﷺ had to observe continuous fasting. See how the Holy Prophet ﷺ paved for others the path of ease and convenience that they ate their fill at the end of the fasting till the beginning of the next fasting day.

(Tirmidhi chapter 62. Hadith no: 778)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ and *Zakah* (the obligatory alms)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has commanded us to pay the fortieth (2.50%) part of our wealth every year as *Zakah* (obligatory alms). As for himself, he gave out in charity all the wealth that came to him from time to time from various sources. Once the Holy Prophet ﷺ stepped on the prayer-mat to conduct the prayer in his mosque and the prayer was about to commence when he ﷺ suddenly stepped back, went to his house and came back after a little while and con-

ducted the prayer. The Noble Companions رضی الله عنهم were surprised at this unusual behaviour of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and asked him about this. The Holy Prophet ﷺ told them: When I stepped on the prayer - mat I remembered that I had left in the house seven Dinars (a gold coin). I felt ashamed to think that I am standing before Allah in a condition that I have in my house seven Dinars which are more than enough to my needs. I therefore, quickly disposed of them and came back to conduct the prayer.

The Beloved of Allah (i.e. the Prophet ﷺ) dug ditches also

Dictches were being dug on the occasion of the battle of Ahzab. He ﷺ did not prefer that being the leader he should be taking rest, while others were doing the hard work of digging ditches. He ﷺ therefore, allotted to himself an equal portion of the work. A Companion رضی الله عنهم has related that it was a hard time for the Muslims and they had hardly any food to satisfy their hunger. At the time of digging the ditch this Companion had tied on his belly a piece of stone to appease his hunger.

To tie pieces of stone on the belly

We have often heard the proverb of tying a piece of stone on the belly on being unable to satisfy hunger for want of anything to eat. We feel surprised how this device can appease hunger. This is explained by saying that the weight of the stone tied on the belly helps the man to straighten his back and this enables him to stand erect.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ had tied two pieces of stone on his belly

In that time of scarcity a Companion called on the Prophet ﷺ and complained to him ﷺ that he had tied on his belly a piece of stone to appease his hunger. In reply the Holy Prophet ﷺ showed the Companion رضی الله عنهم his own belly on which he had two pieces of stone.

This is just the principle that is being taught to others - the principle that one should first follow oneself what one is going to advise others to follow.

The task and toil borne by Hazrat Fatimah رضی الله عنها

Once Hazrat Fatimah رضی الله عنها, the leader of Paradise among women, called on the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Showing her hands to the Holy Prophet ﷺ on which skin-corns had formed on account of moving the grinding hand-mill for flour and blue marks had formed on her chest by carrying the water-bags. He begged her reverend father, the Holy Prophet ﷺ to grant her one maid-servant out of the captives captured on the occasion of the victory of Khyber who had been distributed among the Muslims. It would not have been an extraordinary favour to Hazrat Fatimah رضی الله عنها the Prophet's own beloved daughter, if a slave girl had been allotted to her. The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied to this demand, as follows:

O Fatimah رضی الله عنها! No slave or maidservant would be allotted to the household of Muhammad the Prophet ﷺ of Allah until the Muslims, as a whole, are settled well. To relieve you of this toil and distress I am prescribing for you a formula better than a slave or a maidservant,. It is: Recite after every prayer (*Subhan-allah*) "سبحان الله" 33 times; "الحمد لله" 33 times (*Alhamdu-lillah*) ; and "الله اكبر" 34 times; (*Al-*

lahu Akbar). (Sahih Muslim, vol II p. 351)

That is why this is called "تسبیح فاطمہ" (*Tasbih-e-Fatimah*). Now see the difference. Slaves maidservants and money are being distributed among the general public, but the household of the Holy Prophet ﷺ has been totally deprived of these bounties.

The intention in relating this incident is to emphasize that the advice of a preacher affects the hearts and touches the soul of the listeners only when the preacher himself acts upon his advice. It is the hearty, sincere and purely disinterested teachings that bring revolutions in the lives of the people and affect their conduct and character, widening their outlook. The unprecedent revolution that came over the lives of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم is indebted to the sincere and selfless teachings and training of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

To observe optional fast on the 30th of Sha'ban

Some people observe fast on the 30th of the month of Sha'ban. They do this to ensure that they may not miss a fast on account of a possible failure in sighting the Ramazan moon. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has however, forbidden to observe fasting on the 30th of Sha'ban. This prohibition relates only to those who fast on the 30th of Sha'ban by way of precaution against losing a Ramazan fast. The prohibition does not apply to a person who is regular in observing optional fast and fasts on this day also. This optional fast is lawful for him. (Tirmidhi, book of Ramazan, chapter no:3)

Imam Abu Yusuf رحمۃ اللہ علیہ himself used to fast on the 30th of Sha'ban, yet at the same time he used to go about the city asking everyone not to fast on that day (i.e. the 30th of Sha'ban). The secret of this strange prohibition lay in the Imam's anxiety to ensure that the people should not

fast on the 30th of Sha'ban by way of precaution against missing a Ramazan fast, for that would be a sin.

The precaution of Hazrat Thanawi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was a Shaikh who always tried, through his *Fatawa* (Religious Rulings), to provide ease and facilities for the people in following the path of *Deen*.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith that it is unlawful to sell or purchase fruit trees before they bring forth their fruit which can be seen and evaluated correctly. With reference to this Hadith some Shaikhs issued their *Fatawa* (Rulings) that it is unlawful to purchase and eat the fruits sold in the markets, because the trees on which they grow are sold and purchased before they bring forth their fruits. Hazrat Thanawi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ issued a ruling that it was quite lawful to purchase and eat the fruits which are sold in the market, yet he himself never ate fruits purchased from the market. The teachings of such selfless Shaikhs have their effects on the hearts of the listeners, because they first themselves act assiduously upon what they preach to others.

How to reform the society

Those men, groups, associations that stand up with a mission to reform the society have in their minds that those whom they want to reform are all bad people. This is a serious weakness and misunderstanding of the so-called reformers. These reformers do not care to look into their own weaknesses and defects. Almighty Allah has said in His Book, the Holy Qur'an:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا عَلَيْكُمْ اَنْفُسَكُمْ لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَنْ ضَلَّ اِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ ط

(المائدۃ:۱۰۵)

O you who believe! Take care of your own. He who is strayed cannot harm you, if you are rightly guided... (5:105)

The verse warns all men to take a stock of their own acts and doings rather than feeling anxious about the affairs of others. It is no wisdom to try to reform others and ignore their own defects and errors. Men should concentrate all their attention on reforming their own lives and ways to the best of their ability. This is the way of reforming the entire society. What is society? It is a group of individuals, families and tribes. On the reform of these depends the betterment of the society. Instead of searching for the faults and sins of others look for your own faults and shortcomings. If you see that people are telling lies, taking bribes, accepting and paying interest, cheating others and devouring ill-gotten income, then do not indulge yourself in these sins. Think of reforming others when you have reformed yourself.

Discharge your Duty

It is also necessary to understand, that while trying to reform yourself, it is also your duty to convey words of piety and righteousness where they are needed. Without this you cannot be regarded as rightly guided, nor can you reform yourself. This is what Hazrat Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ has explained in a narrative:

عن ابی بکر الصدیق رضی اللہ تعالی عنہ قال: یا ایھا الناس انکم تقرؤن ھذہ الایۃ :

" یٰٓاَیُّھَا الَّذِیْنَ اٰمَنُوْا عَلَیْکُمْ اَنْفُسَکُمْ لَا یَضُرُّکُمْ مَنْ ضَلَّ اِذَا اھْتَدَیْتُمْ ط " وانی سمعت رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم یقول ان الناس اذا راوا الظالم فلم یاخذوا علی یدیہ اوشک ان یعمھم اللہ بعقاب منہ

A misunderstanding about the meaning of the verse

In this narrative Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ has admonished the people in misunderstanding the meaning of this verse. In the exposition of its meaning he quoted a Hadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ which throws light on the correct meaning of the verse.

Hazrat Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ said: The people think that this verse demands from them that they should take care of their own lives and they are not concerned with the good or bad deeds of others. It is wrong to interpret this verse in this way. If the people see that a wrongdoer is doing wrong to another person, they should stop the wrongdoer from his wrong. If they do not stop this oppression, then Allah may inflict on them His punishment.

Hazrat Siddiq Akbar رضی اللہ عنہ is saying that a tyrant is committing tyranny against some person and you have power to stop the tyrant from his tyranny, yet you sit idle; you think, in the light of this verse, that it is not your responsibility to interfere in the matter as long as you are safe from committing such tyranny. You think that, as the verse says, no harm will fall upon you on account of this passive attitude of yours. Such thinking is not right.

Hazrat Siddiq Akbar رضی اللہ عنہ says that it is quite wrong to interpret this verse in this way. Allah has also commanded that you must stop tyranny when you have the power to do so.

Correct Interpretation of the verse

Then what is the correct meaning of this verse? It has been stated in the verse: If you take care to reform yourself the straying and error of others will not harm you. There is a man who has discharged his duty to enforce the right and forbid the wrong to the best of his ability, yet another person

is not heeding the former's advice and teachings. In such a situation the error and straying of the latter will not harm the former who should take care of himself and his own affairs, leaving the other person in his error and straying. The latter's straying will not harm the former in any way nor will any blame lie on him before Almighty Allah.

How long is it necessary to pursue the duty of reforming the children

Men have been commanded to look after their children and put them on the right path, if they are found to be going on the wrong path. This is exactly in compliance with an injunction of the Holy Qur'an:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا قُوْٓا اَنْفُسَكُمْ وَاَهْلِيْكُمْ نَارًا

O you who have believed! Save yourselves and your families from (Hell) Fire. (66:6)

Thus it is an obligatory duty of parents to look after and save their children from the punishment of the Hereafter. Now take the example of a man who devotes all his energies to the guidance of his children, but the children do not heed the advice of their father. In such a situation no blame lies on the father. The son of Hazrat Nooh (Noah) عليه السلام also did not embrace Islam till the last moment. Hazrat Nooh (Noah) عليه السلام exhausted all his energies and methods to preach him and persuaded him to take the right path. The erroneous son, however, did not see his way, to accept Islam to the last moment. Now no blame will lie on the shoulders of Hazrat Nooh (Noah) عليه السلام for the misguidance and error of his son.

A man notices that a very fast friend of his is following the wrong path of error and aversion. This man, therefore, tries to correct and reform his friend with love and

sympathy as far as possible. However, his efforts failed to reform the errant friend. Now no responsibility lies on the shoulders of this man in respect of his disobedient friend.

Do not forget yourself

Allamah Nuwawi رحمة الله عليه has cited this verse:

اَتَاْمُرُوْنَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَ تَنْسَوْنَ اَنْفُسَكُمْ وَاَنْتُمْ تَتْلُوْنَ الْكِتٰبَ ؕ اَفَلَا تَعْقِلُوْنَ (سورة البقرة : ٤٤)

Addressing the Jews in this verse Allah said to them: Do you enjoin righteousness upon others, and forget your own selves, while you read the Book? Do you then not understand? (2:44)

That is, the Jews were highly learned in the scriptures and the common people revered them on this account, yet these learned men did not themselves practise the religion. Although addressed to the jews, the verse applies more appropriately to the Muslims that one who is preaching religion to others should first follow his preachings himself.

I have already mentioned to you the precept that a man who is committing some sins and wrongs himself is not forbidden from teaching and preaching to others. He should preach religion to others but, while preaching, he should also consider his own self and apply his preaching to himself also. He should bear in mind that what he is preaching to others equally applies to him also.

A dangerous situation for speakers and preachers

After this verse Allamah Nuwawi رحمة الله عليه has cited a Hadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ which contains something very alarming for us:

عن اسامة بن زيد بن حارثه رضى الله عنهما قال سمعت رسول الله

صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول يؤتى بالرجل يوم القيامه فيلقى فى النار فتندلق اقتاب بطنه فيدور كمايدور الحمار فى الرحا فيجتمع اليه اهل النار فيقولون يا فلان مَالكَ؟ الم تكن تأمر بالمعروف وتنهى عن المنكر؟ فيقول: بلى كنت آمر بالمعروف ولا آتيه وانهى عن المنكر وآتيه (البداية جلد ١: ص :١٨٧)

It is narrated from Hazrat Usamah bin zaid bin Harisah رضى الله عنه that he heard the Holy Prophet ﷺ saying: On the Day of Judgement a man will be brought and thrown into the Fire. Then owing to heat his intestines will come out of his stomach and the man will go round his intestines like an ass going round a grinder. Seeing him in this condition the inmates of Hell will gather round him and ask him about his plight, saying" Why are you being punished? Are you not the same fellow who used to enjoin upon right and forbid wrong? You were a well educated person, a Preacher and a Reformer. How are you today in such a pitiable condition? At that time the man will reply, saying" I did really enjoin upon the people right, but did not myself follow the right course. I used to stop people from bad pursuits, yet I myself followed those bad pursuits. This has driven me today into this condition. May Allah save us all from this horrible situation. *Aameen*!

I shudder with fear on reading this Hadith. This is a very critical situation for those who have to teach good things and address people on the topic of religion. It is feared lest these holy persons should become liable to this humiliating punishment.

May Allah protect us all from becoming a target for punishment.

A candle is lighted from another candle

If a man overlooks his own condition, but finds faults with others and tries to reform them, then such attitude will effect no reform in the society; instead, it may create corruption and disorder. This is just what we are witnessing today. If Allah is kind enough to create in our hearts the desire to see that everyone of us looks into his own self to find out his defects and shortcomings and renounce them this will lead to betterment. There is no doubt that at the end of this life, whatever its duration, everyone has to enter his grave and render before Allah an account of his deeds he did in his life. Everyone should therefore, review his deeds and activities and try to reform those aspects of his life where reform is called for. If every individual succeeds in reforming himself one after another, the light of betterment and amelioration will go on spreading farther and farther, just as one candle lights a second candle and the second a third candle and so on so forth. In this way the light of *Deen* will go on expanding more and more, until the society, as a whole, will become fully reformed.

May Almighty Allah beget this desire and enthusiasm in our hearts. *Aameen*.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi

Date : Friday 7th January, 1992
After 'Asr Prayers.

It is the demand of discipline and respectfulness that when a senior and elder orders juniors and the youngers, the latter should obey that order, even though it may seem to be against the rules of etiquette and discipline. This is because obedience to the order of an elder has a priority over, and preference to the rules of etiquette.

OBEDIENCE TO ELDERS AND DEMANDS OF ETIQUETTE

الحمد لله نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرو انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له واشهد ان سيدنا وسند نا وشفيعنا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد!

عن ابى العباس سهل بن سعد الساعدى رضى الله ان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بلغه ان بنى عمرو بن عوف كان بينهم شر فخرج رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يصلح بينهم فى اناس معه فجلس رسول الله

صلى الله عليه وسلم وحانت الصلاة..... (صحيح بخاری، کتاب الاذان، باب من دخل ليوم الناس، حديث نمبر ٦٨٤)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness. We believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our souls and the vices of our deeds. None can misguide him whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the One. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our sire, and our authority and our Prophet and our master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him and on his household and his Companions and send on them blessings and salutations in great abundance.

The chapter on "Reconciliation among the people" is in progress and three Ahadith on this chapter have been cited earlier. This is the last Hadith of this chapter. As it is a bit lengthier, it is being translated and explained below.

To effect reconciliation among people

Hazrat Sahl bin Sa'd-as-Saa'idi رضی الله عنه has narrated that once the Holy Prophet ﷺ came to know that the people of the tribe of Bani 'Amir bin 'Auf were quarreling among themselves. The Holy Prophet ﷺ called on them in order to effect a reconciliation among them. He ﷺ also took with him some of his Companions رضی الله عنهم to help him ﷺ in this attempt at reconciliation. The discussions drew lengthy and in the meantime the prayer - time arrived. the result was that he ﷺ could not go to his mosque to conduct the prayer.

The intention of mentioning this Hadith here is to point

out the importance the Holy Prophet ﷺ attached to the working of effecting reconciliation and bringing peace among people. To him ﷺ this matter was so important that he ﷺ missed the opportunity of joining the prayer in his mosque.

The narrator of the hadith says that when the Muazzin of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, Hazrat Bilal رضی الله عنه saw that the prayer-time had approached, and the Holy Prophet ﷺ had not returned to the mosque he called on Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique رضی الله عنه and requested him to conduct the prayer. Hazrat Siddique رضی الله عنه agreed to the request to conduct the prayer. Thereafter, Hazrat Bilal رضی الله عنه called out the *Azan* (prayer-call) and Hazrat Siddique رضی الله عنه advanced to the prayer-carpet to conduct the prayer. When the prayer had commenced and was in progress, the Holy Prophet ﷺ returned and joined the prayer as a follower. Being not aware of the Prophet's presence in the prayer row Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique رضی الله عنه continued the prayer. Now the Companions رضی الله عنهم who had become aware of the Prophet's ﷺ presence in the congregation, wanted to inform Hazrat Siddique رضی الله عنه, so that he might get back, making room for the Holy Prophet ﷺ to get forward and conduct the remaining part of the prayer. For this purpose they began to clap their hands. Hazrat Siddique رضی الله عنه was so deeply absorbed in praying that these clapping first failed to draw his attention, yet soon he became alive to the Prophet's presence in the prayer rows. He was about to get back from the prayer carpet, the Holy Prophet ﷺ beckoned with his hands to Hazrat Siddique رضی الله عنه to complete the prayer. Hazrat Siddique رضی الله عنه could not stand on the prayer carpet. He, therefore, stepped back and the Holy Prophet ﷺ stepped forward and completed the remaining prayer.

The way to draw the attention of an *Imam* (Leader of a Prayer)

At the end of the prayer the Holy Prophet ﷺ called the attention of the *Nemasis* and admonished them that it was not appropriate to the dignity to clap hands during prayers to express an alarm or the like, as this was allowed only for women praying behind a male *Imam*. This is because women cannot utter the cautionary words (*Sub-haanal-llah*) "سبحان الله" or (*Alhamdu lillah*), "الحمد لله" to attract the Imam's attention. It may be noted that it is prohibited for women to let men hear their voice; they are allowed to clap their hands for this purpose. Men are, however, allowed to utter these cautionary words "سبحان الله" or to invite the Imam's attention during prayer if he is committing some mistake through forgetfulness or inattention. The hands should, therefore, not be clapped during prayer to caution the *Imam*.

The son of Abu Qahafah رضی الله عنه could not dare to do so

Thereafter, the Holy Prophet ﷺ turned to Hazrat Siddique رضی الله عنه and said to him: O Abu Bakr! I beckoned to you to continue the prayer and not to step back. What was there to make you step back and refrain from Imamat. How apt was Hazrat Siddique's reply to the Holy Prophet:

ماكان لابن ابى قحافة ان يصلى بالناس بين يدى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم

O Prophet of Allah! The son of Abu Qahafah are not to conduct the prayer in the presence of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This reply is self explanatory.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ raised no objection to this reply and remained silent.

The status of Hazrat Abu Bakr رضی الله عنه

This incident shows the status of Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique رضی الله عنه that he dared not conduct the prayer in the presence of the Holy Prophet ﷺ nor could he tolerate a situation in which the Prophet ﷺ of Allah was compelled to stand behind him.

Order has preference over etiquette

Sometimes a man is ordered by a respectable elder to do a job which is, in the opinion of that man, not worthy of the dignity of the elder and is also against the rules of etiquette. In such a perplexing situation the man concerned should accord preference to the order and ignore the rules of etiquette. At times it becomes very difficult to follow this principle, yet this has been the practice of our elders and saints to prefer obedience to orders rather than observance of the rules of etiquette.

It is necessary to obey the orders of the elders

Suppose a very reverend saint is sitting on a wooden broad table and a young man comes to the saint. This saint asks the young man to sit on the table by his side. In this situation the saint's order should be obeyed, although in an ordinary situation it would be against the rules of etiquette for a young boy to sit close to and by the side of a reverend elderly saint. In such a situation obedience to the order of a respectable elder has preference over the rules of etiquette.

Obedience is the essence of *Deen* (Faith)

It has been mentioned repeatedly that as a whole, obedience is the essence of *Deen*, obedience to elders, obedience to Allah and His Prophet ﷺ and obedience to his successors. You have to act upon their commands, even

though this action may appear to you to be against the rules of etiquette and below their dignity.

My attendance in the meetings of my respected father رحمة الله عليه

My respected father used to hold a meeting on every Sunday which was a public holiday in those days. The incident I am going to relate took place on the last of my father's meetings. My respected father passed away before the arrival of the day of the next meeting. As my father was seriously ill and bedridden people used to assemble in his room. My father lay on a bed and the people sat on sofas and on the ground in front of him رحمة الله عليه. On that day of his last meeting a large number of people turned up and the room was fully packed and few men remained standing. I arrived there a bit late. When my father saw me he asked me to go and sit near him. Although I knew fully well that obedience is imperative; yet I hesitated to go to my father by passing over so many guests. Noticing this hesitation on my part my father again ordered me to go near him and promised to tell me a story. In obedience to him I got near my father some how.

My father's attendance in a meeting of Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه

My father related to me an incident saying: Once a meeting of Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه was in session and a similar situation arose there. The available space was packed to capacity and I was a bit late in attending the meeting. Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه asked me to go near him and I hesitated in carrying out his order. The Shaikh asked me again to go near him and promised to tell me a story. In compliance with this second order I somehow drew near the Shaikh and he related a story.

Decision on the dispute between Alamgir and Dara Shikoh to accede to the Throne

The story which Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه related runs thus:

On the death of Shah Jahan, the King of India. A dispute arose as to which of his sons, Alamgir or Dara Shikoh, should accede to the Throne. Both the candidates were trying their best to win the throne. There was a great saint living in those days. Both the princes thought of visiting this saint for getting his blessings for success in their campaign. First, when Dara Shikoh called on the saint he was sitting on a wooden throne. the saint asked Dara Shikoh to sit on the throne by his side. Dara Shikoh avoided sitting by the side of the great saint out of his awe and elevated personality and in obedience to the rules of etiquette. The saint again asked the prince to sit on the throne by his side, but the prince again preferred to sit below the throne at a respectful distance from the saint. The saint did not insist on his order and let the prince off with a few words of advice.

Shortly after the departure of Dara Shikoh, Alamgir also called on the Saint. When he was going to sit below the saint's throne, the saint asked Alamgir to get up and sit on the throne by his side. Alamgir obeyed the saint's order and sat on the throne by his side. The saint spoke some words of advice to the prince and the latter took leave of the saint and departed. After Alamgir's departure, the saint told the people present there that the two brothers have themselves taken their decisions. The throne was offered to Dara Shikoh but he rejected it. When it was offered to Alamgir he accepted it. As such Alamgir would accede to the throne and he actually acceded to the throne.

This was the story which Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه related to my father رحمة الله عليه (Sermons of Hazrat Thanawi).

One should not resort to false excuses

Now we come to the conclusion that it is an act of etiquette to carry out, without any excuse or hesitation, the order which we receive from some respectable elder. This is in consonance with the principle discussed above that obedience has a preference and priority over the rules of etiquette.

To take up the shoes of the respectable elders

It is seen sometimes that people desire to take up the shoes of Shaikhs and elders. If the elders concerned disapprove this practice, it should be given up. This is also a way of respect and etiquette towards elders to carry out their orders inspite of your own preference. That is why this proverb is well known and popular among the people.

الا مر فوق الادب

If an elder orders you to do something and it seems to you to be against the rules of etiquette, obey the order ignoring the demand of etiquette. However, there is no harm if you humbly request the elder to let you do for him some service, but if he stops you from that, obey him without any hesitation: In obedience lies his pleasure. The Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم followed this principle.

Two events relating to the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم

The first event relates to Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique رضی اللہ عنہ. The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked him to remain on the prayer-mat conducting the congregational prayer, but he stepped back and acted upon the dictates of etiquette. The second event relates to Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ which is related below:

By Allah I shall not erase it

An agreement was being drafted for being signed by the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the unbelievers of Makkah. The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ to write the agreement. When Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ commenced writing the agreement with "بسم اللہ الرحمن الرحیم" (*Bismilla-hir-rahmaa-nirraheem*), the representative of the unbelievers objected to these words and proposed to substitute them by باسمك اللهم (*bi-ismik al-laa-humma*) which were commonly used by the people during the days of Ignorance. The Holy Prophet ﷺ saw no harm in this proposal because both he expressions were similar in meaning. So He ﷺ asked Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ to make the necessary change and he did the needful After this Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ commenced writing: This is an agreement concluded between Muhammad, the Prophet ﷺ of Allah and the leaders of Makkah. The representative of the unbelievers again took exception to this phrase. He said that the unbelievers did not believe in Muhammad as a Prophet of Allah and that is the bond of contention between the two parties. They insisted that the words "Muhammad son of Abdullah" should be written, instead. The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ to substitute the words "Prophet of Allah" by son of Abdullah. Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ had submissively carried out the order. For substituting the words واللہ لا امحوہ by the words رسول اللہ but this time he refused to do so. He bluntly uttered these words

(by Allah, I shall not erase that). The Holy Prophet ﷺ realized Hazrat Ali's رضی اللہ عنہ feelings and taking the paper from him. He ﷺ himself erased the words رسول اللہ (Prophet of Allah) with his own hands. (Sahih Muslim..... Hadith no: 6133)

When obedience to an order becomes impossible

As happened in the event about Hazrat Siddique رضی اللہ عنہ here too Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ refused to obey the command which the Holy Prophet ﷺ had given him رضی اللہ عنہ. Apparently Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ accorded preference to etiquette over obedience to an order, although the order has a preference over etiquette. The secret of this behaviour of Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ lies in the fact that sometimes man is so severely overpowered by some emotion that it becomes impossible for him to give due consideration to an accepted principle and to distinguish between what is proper and what is improper. In a situation like the one under consideration the act of ignoring the order cannot be treated as disobedience. In fact such a behaviour falls within the meaning of the verse

لَايُكَلِّفُ اللّٰهُ نَفْسًا اِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

which means that:

Allah does not burden a soul beyond its capacity (2:286).

The obedience of the Holy Prophet's command by Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique and Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ needs to be considered in the light of the meaning of this verse.

That state is better in which the beloved wants to keep the lover

The real fact, however remains that a lover should surrender himself totally to the beloved's will and give up his own preferences and choices.

نہ ہی ہجر اچھا نہ ہی وصال اچھا ہے
یار جس حال میں رکھے وہی حال اچھا ہے

عشق تسلیم و رضا کے ماسوا کچھ بھی نہیں
وہ وفا سے خوش نہ ہوں تو پھر وفا کچھ بھی نہیں

The essence of the ideas expressed in these Urdu Couplets is that if the beloved wants the lover to do something which violates the rules of etiquettes, the lovers must follow and satisfy the desire of the beloved. The work that wins the pleasure of the beloved is much better and acceptable.

Summary

The real intention of Imam Nuwawi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ in citing this Hadith is to bring out the importance of effecting reconciliation between quarrels among two parties or betweem the members of the same tribe. We see how the Holy Prophet ﷺ could not reach his mosque in time owing to his engagement in establishing peace and harmony between two groups.

May Almighty Allah protect us, by His mercy, from quarreling with one another *Aameen.*!

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد للہ رب العالمین

Venue : Residence of Mr. Yusuf Ghani, Clifton, Karachi.

We may, if we so desire, make the Trade we are carrying on a path leading to Paradise and a means for being raised along with the Prophets ﷺ. We may also make it a means to end in Hell and being raised along with the sinners and the wrong doers. It is now to be seen which of the two paths we choose.

TRADE - IT IS DEEN AS WELL AS A WORLDLY AFFAIR

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه و نستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطٰن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم.

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ آمَنُوْا اتَّقُوْاللّٰهَ وَكُوْنُوْامَعَ الصّٰدِقِيْنَ (سورة التوبة: ١١٩)

وقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم:

التاجر الصدوق الامين مع النبيين والصديقين والشهداء(ترمذى، كتاب البيوع، باب ماجاء فى التجارة، حديث نمبر ١٢٠٩)

وقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم :

التجار يحشرون يوم القيامة فجارًا الا من ماتقى وبروصدق

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم وصدق رسوله النبى الكريم ونحن

على ذالك من الشاهدين والشاكرين والحمد لله رب العالمين

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness. We believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our souls and the vices of our deeds. None can misguide him whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the One. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our sire, and our authority and our Prophet and our master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and Messenger.
O believers, take to the virtue of taqwa and adopt the society of the truthfuful (9:119)

The Foundation stone of a Muslim's life

A meeting of this kind was arranged in the past also which I had the honour to attend. I have been asked in the meeting first to say something about *Deen* (Faith). I must accept this proposal, because *Deen* is the foundation stone of the life of every Muslim. May Allah help us in holding fast to this Foundation.

Traders will be raised up along with the Prophets عليهم السلام

The majority of the audience in this meeting belong to the business community. In this behalf I have cited two Ahadith and recited a verse of the Holy Qur'an which explains the subject of the Ahadith. The two Ahadith seem to contradict each other but in reality this is not so. In one of the Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said:

التاجر الصدوق الامين مع النبيين والصديقين والشهداء

The trader who observes truthfulness and trust in his business dealings will be raised up on the Day of Resurrection along with the Prophets عليهم السلام the Siddiqeen (the truthful) and the Martyr. We are carrying on this trade as a worldly business to support our living and are under the impression that it has nothing to do with *Deen*. This is not correct. The Hadith tells us quite clearly that a trader who is truthful and trustworthy in his business dealings will be raised up on the Day of Judgement along with the Prophets عليهم السلام, the Siddiqeen and the martyrs.

Traders will be raised up alongwith the wrongdoers

The second Hadith which appears to contradict the first one is:

التجار يحشرون يوم القيامة فجارا الامن اتقى وبروصدق

Traders will be raised up as wrongdoers and sinners, excepting him who is pious and righteous and is truthful in his dealings.

There are two categories of Traders

In reality there is no contradiction between the two Ahadith with regard to the meaning. In fact, traders fall in two categories. One category of the traders consists of those who will be in the company of the Prophets عليهم السلام, the truthful and the martyrs. The other category consists of those who will be with the sinners and the wrongdoers.

Honesty, truthfulness and trustworthiness are the

Hallmark of the first category. On the other hand dishonesty, adulteration, profiteering and fraud are the hallmark of the second category.

Trade may lead to Paradise or Hell

If we combine the two Ahadith and consider their joint meaning, it will become clear to us that, if we so desire, we can make trading activities a road leading to Paradise and the Company of the Prophets عليهم السلام and the truthful. Again, if we so desire, we can make the same trading activities a road leading to Hell and the company of the sinners and the wrongdoers. May Almighty Allah protect us from the torment and disgrace of the second category.

Every activity has two angles

It is peculiar not only to trade but to every activity, be it service, trade, agriculture or any other profession, that if man looks at an activity from one angle, it may be mundane, but if he looks at it from another angle it is *Deen* (Faith).

Change your angle of vision

Deen (Faith) is in fact the name of bringing a change in the angle of vision. An act which appears essentially to be worldly in its form becomes *Deen* (Faith), if done from a different angle of vision and intention.

It is an act of worship to take meals

If a man is taking meal as a routine habit to satisfy hunger, it is a worldly affair. The same act of eating becomes *Deen* when he eats his food with the intention that his life, body and health are gifts from Allah and it is the right of these divine gifts that he should maintain them in good order by taking food so as to be able to perform efficiently the duties imposed on him by Allah. Now see how one and the same act change into *Deen*, simply by a change in man's intention and outlook.

Hazrat Ayyub (Job) عليه السلام and the golden butterflies

People generally think that it is *Deen* to renounce the world, sit in a secluded corner and devote oneself exclusively to the remembrance of Allah. This is, however not correct. Just think of Hazrat Ayyub (Job) عليه السلام. Whose name is well known to every Muslim. He has been a great Prophet who had to go through terrible trials and tribulations in his life of this world. It occurs in a Hadith in Sahih Bukhari that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: Once Hazrat Ayyub عليه السلام was taking bath when suddenly golden butterflies began to rain down on him from the sky. Hazrat Ayyub عليه السلام abandoned the bath began to catch and collect the butterflies. Almighty Allah did not approve of this conduct of Hazrat Ayyub عليه السلام and questioned him if He had not already bestowed upon him great blessings and supplied all the needs of his life, yet he was so greedy that he began to run after the butterflies. Hazrat Ayyub عليه السلام replied:

لاغنى بى عن بركتك

What Hazrat Ayyub عليه السلام meant to express by these words is that he could not be indifferent to Allah's gifts and blessings when Allah Himself had by His grace, showered them on him. He said that it would be an act of insolence on his part, if he did not acknowledge and collect Allah's bounties. That is why he was collecting the golden butterflies.

Had there been a thoughtless ascetic he would have

ignored and ignored these blessings. Hazrat Ayyub عليه السلام being a Prophet عليه السلام could not behave in this way. He knew very well that it was pure Deen to welcome and honour these bounties of Allah and express gratitude for them.
(Sahih Bukhari... Hadith no: 279)

The eyes should be fixed on the giver of the blessings

We were five brothers and everyone of us was an earning member. Sometimes we all assembled in the house on the occasions of the Eid Festival our respected father رحمة الله عليه used to give us each, as Eid gift Rs 20/- to Rs 30/-. Although we were all well-to-do, yet we tried our best to get some increase in these amounts, say, of Rs 5/- every year. It was not the amount, but the paternal favour and blessings concealed in these small amounts that we clamoured for. In other words, our eyes were fixed not on these amounts but on the benevolent and blessed hand that distributed the gift. These small amounts were, in fact, expression of love and affection which deserved to be accepted with earnestness and sincere gratitude. So we did not spend these amounts but preserved them carefully as very valuable gifts.

This is *Taqwa* (Righteousness)

As already stated, *Deen* consists in a change in the angle of vision. When this angle of vision is changed in the right direction, in the terminology of the Holy Qur'an it is called *Taqwa* (Righteousness). Everyone of us is engaged in the struggle of life in diverse activities like, working, eating, sleeping, earning a living, etc. If we do these acts with the belief that we are doing them for the sake and in compliance with the injunctions, of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ then we have indeed achieved what is called

Taqwa. Thus, if we carry on our business with this belief and from this angle of vision, then the activity turns into pure *Deen* and ceases to be a worldly affair. It becomes a righteous deed opening before us the road leading to Paradise and the blessed company of Prophets عليهم السلام Siddiqeen (the truthful) and martyrs.

It is the company of the pious that breeds *Taqwa*

A question generally arises in the hearts how this *Taqwa,* or the change in the angle of vision can be attained. In reply to this question I had recited at the very outset:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ آمَنُوْا اتَّقُوْا اللّٰهَ وَكُوْنُوْا مَعَ الصّٰدِقِيْنَ

This means:

O believers, take to the virture of *taqwa* and adopt the society of the truthful.

It is a principle of the Holy Qur'an that when it enjoins any duty, it also suggests the easiest way to discharge that duty. This is a great mercy of Allah upon us that he does not leave us groping in the dark, but He puts us on the right path. He has thus shown us the way to attain *Taqwa* by saying "كُوْنُوْا مَعَ الصّٰدِقِيْنَ". Adopt the society of the truthful. The society of these sacred men will generate in your lives the virtue of *Taqwa*. If a man tries to create in him *Taqwa* by following the various methods and practices enumerated in books for attaining *Taqwa*, it will be a very difficult and time - consuming task. The easiest and shortest cut to attain this virtue is to search for and adopt the company of the *Muttaqeen* (the righteous and the truthful). It is a law of nature that a man takes the colour and ways of those in whose company he lives and moves, even though the process of transformation may be very slow.

Only books are not enough for guidance

What has been said in the foregoing pages equally applies to the bearing of *Deen*. It is for this purpose that the Holy Prophet ﷺ was sent to this world to give a practical demonstration of *Deen*, otherwise it would have been sufficient only to reveal the Holy Qur'an. The polytheists of Makkah were demanding that the Qur'an should have been sent down upon them. It was not at all difficult for Omnipotent Allah to send down direct a well bound beautiful Book to everyone. But the All-knowing Creator knew that this was not enough. He therefore, in His infinite wisdom and mercy, sent a Messenger along with every Book. Why so? This was because a practical demonstration is indispensable for the proper understanding of an art.

The result of becoming a Doctor only through reading books

If a man learns something of the medical science and practices by reading books and starts his practice by treating patients, then instead of curing he will only be sending them to the graveyard. After going through the full medical courses one has to take for a given period a practical training under the care and supervision of some experienced Doctors and Surgeons, before he is allowed to practice the medical profession.

Take another example. Untold number of cookery books are available in the market, these books contain recipe and methods to prepare various dishes, yet none can prepare a dish worthy of eating with the help of these books. He will only spoil the cooking materials and the spices. As in the case of all other arts, in cooking practice is needed under the guidance and supervision of expert cooks, before one can become a successful cook.

Adopt the company of the Muttaqeen (the righteous)

The same principle applies to *Deen*. Only reading of the books on religion cannot mould a man into a religious personality. A teacher as well as a training instructor is necessary. The Prophets عليهم السلام and after them the Companions رضى الله عنهم performed the duties of teaching and training their followers. Who are these Companions رضى الله عنهم? They are those noble persons who were fortunate to enjoy the blessed company of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. They learned religion from him ﷺ Next came the Tabieen followers of the Noble Companions رضى الله عنهم, and this system continued ahead. Thus people learnt *Deen* through the company of their pious and righteous elders. Even Almighty Allah has, in His Book enjoined upon the believers to fear Him and adopt the company of the truthful.

The whole discussion now boils to this - We should do our best to be on the look out for and adopt the company of the righteous, if we want to become religious, pious and righteous.

May Allah help us to follow the right path and adopt companies of God-fearing and righteous men. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Faran Club
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi
Date : Thrusday 26th December, 1991
After 'Asr Prayers.

Experience bears out that a man cannot discharge, in the true sense, the liabilities he owes towards another man, unless he has fear of Allah in his heart, feels his liability to accountability, his being presented one day before Allah to render explanation for his deeds and words on the Day of Judgement. Without this sense of responsibility and fear neither the wife nor the husband can discharge her / his mutual rights to the other.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MATRIMONIAL SERMON

الحمد لله وكفى وسلام على عباده الذين اصطفى

اما بعد:

The blissful ceremony is about to commence--God willing--just now in which the bridegroom and the bride will be joined with each other by the conjugal tie (*Nikah*) according to the prescribed procedure of the *Sunnah*. May Almighty Allah make this happy relationship auspicious and blessed.

Marriage Ceremonies

I have been asked that I should say something to you on this happy occasion before the performance of the *Nikah* ceremony. Ceremonies and celebrations on the occasions of marriages are not suitable today for delivering reformative sermons and addresses. The organisers of the celebrations and some of the audience have, however, desired to listen a few words on the subject of religion, so I am saying something on the subject in compliance to the desire of the organisers and their guests.

Three Qur'anic verses about *Nikah* sermon

The *Nikah* (Conjujal relationship) sermon is about to commence just now. The *Nikah* as well as the connected sermon is based on a sunnat of the Holy Prophet ﷺ who has said in a Hadith:

اَلنِّكَاحُ مِنْ سُنَّتِيْ

"*Nikah* is my *sunnah* i.e. my way and practice". (Ibn Majah .... Hadith no: 851)

From the *Shari'ah* (legal) point of view *Nikah* (conjugal relationship) is solemnized by *Eejaab* (responding), i.e., saying: I respond to the proposal of marriage and by *Qabool* (acceptance) i.e., saying: I accept the proposal. This is done in the presence of two witnesses. However, the way which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has prescribed is that before '*Eejaab*' and '*Qabool*' a sermon is delivered. In the beginning of this sermon (Praise) of Allah is said and *Darood* (blessing) is sent on the Holy Prophet ﷺ and then three verses are generally recited from the Holy Qur'an. Thus the Holy Prophet ﷺ has enjoined for Nikah.

The First Verse: This is the very first verse of chapter "An-Nisaa":

يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوْا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَكُمْ مِّنْ نَّفْسٍ وَّاحِدَةٍ وَّخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالاً كَثِيْراً وَّنِسَآءً ج وَاتَّقُوْا اللّٰهَ الَّذِيْ تَسَآءَلُوْنَ بِهٖ وَالْاَرْحَامَ ط اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيْباً (سورة نساء: ١)

"O Mankind! Fear that Lord (Allah) of yours. Who created you from one soul (i.e. Hazrat Adam عليه السلام from that one soul and take to righteousness. He created your mate i.e., Hazrat Hawwa Eve and He spread in the world many men and women from this couple (Adam and Eve, the entire world being their offspring). Fear Him by the auspices of Whose name you demand from each other the fulfilment of your rights. Fear also the rights due to the close blood-relations. Allah is, indeed vigilant (over all your deeds and words). (4:1)

This is the first verse which is recited in the matrimonial sermon.

The Second Verse: is a verse of chapter 3 'Al-'Imran:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهٖ وَلاَ تَمُوْتُنَّ اِلاَّ وَاَنْتُمْ مُّسْلِمُوْنَ

(سورة آل عمران: ١٠٢)

"O Believers! Fear Allah as He deserves to be feared, i.e in right earnest and do not die but in a state in which you are Muslims, i.e. obedient servents. (3:102)

The Third Verse: This is from Chapter 33 Al-Ahzab:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَقُوْلُوْا قَوْلاً سَدِيْداً ۝ يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ اَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوْبَكُمْ ط وَمَنْ يُّطِعِ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزاً عَظِيْماً (سورة الاحزاب: ٧٠-٧١)

> O Believers! Fear Allah and speak words straight and to the point. He will then set right your acts and deeds and accept them and forgive your sins. He who obeys Allah and His Messenger shall achieve a great victory. (33: 70-71)

The Point common to all the three verses

These are the three verses which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has enjoined to be recited on the occasions of *Nikah* (matrimonial ceremony). The command common to, and emphasized in, these three verses is that of taking to *Taqwa* (righteousness). What is the secret in the repetition of this one and the same command on the occasion of a matrimonial rite, being performed? *Taqwa* (righteousness) is a quality without which man cannot discharge any of his responsibilities in life, but why so much emphasis on this injunction on this particular occasion?

It is not possible for man to discharge his rights without *Taqwa*

The relationship created by the ritual of the *Nikah* is so unique and delicately sensitive in its nature that its rights cannot be discharged nor its blessings attained, unless the couple have Allah's fear. We learn from experience that it is not possible for people, husband and wife in particular, to discharge their mutual rights and fulfil their commitments, unless they have in their hearts Allah's fear, fear of being called to account by Allah for each and every act and movement of theirs in the most august presence of Allah. It is not possible to have mutual rights and liabilites settled among persons, through the legal process by which one may manage to escape from his responsibilities but this will not be possible before the presence of All-Knowing All-Powerful Allah on

the Day of Resurrection when all good and bad deeds will be laid open to be evaluated and rewarded or punished, as the case may be. These important injunctions are, therefore, brought to the newly wedded couple that they may each become aware of the great responsibilities and liabilities that have been placed on their shoulders by this new union.

It is an act of *Sunnah* to recite these three verses

Taqwa (righteousness) has been prescribed to be inculcated and observed by every Muslim in every walk of life but its importance with regard to a husband and wife is too great to be ignored. That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ has prescribed the recitation of these three verses on the occasion of *Nikah*.

The start of a New life

This occasion of marriage with effect from which a new tenure of life is to start is like a cross-road for the couple, revolution is coming over their lives. They must refresh in their minds on this auspicious occasion the importance of *Taqwa*. They should re-dedicate their lives to this basic virtue. Not only is this point important for the newly-wedded couple but for all of us. None can save from ruin his life of this world or his Hereafter without learning and acting upon this virtue of *Taqwa*.

Let is all note this and mould our lives accordingly: *Aameen*.

وآخر دعوانا ان لله رب العالمين

REFROM AND TRAINING OF CHILDREN

الحمدلله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهدان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له، ونشهد ان سيدنا و سندنا ونبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا

اما بعد!

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا قُوْٓا اَنْفُسَكُمْ وَاَهْلِيْكُمْ نَارًا وَّقُوْدُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلٰٓئِكَةٌ غِلَاظٌ شِدَادٌ لَّا يَعْصُوْنَ اللّٰهَ مَآ اَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُوْنَ مَايُؤْمَرُوْنَ (سورة التحريم:٦)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم، وصدق رسوله النبى الكريم ونحن على ذلك من الشا هدين والشاكرين، والحمد لله رب العالمين.

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and seek His forgiveness and believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our souls and from the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom He guides and there is none to guide him whom He lets go astray. We bear witness that there is no god but Allah the One Who has no partner. We also bear witness that our sire, and our authority and our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him, his household and bless and salute them all in great abundance.

O Believers! Save yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is men and stone, over which are appointed angels strong, severe who do not disobey Allah in that which He commands them (to do); they do that which they are commanded (to do) (66:6)

Allama Nuwa-wee رحمةالله عليه has next introduced a new chapter in the book, Riazus-Saliheen. He رحمةالله عليه intends by this chapter to state that not only is it binding upon a man to reform himself, but he is also obliged to reform the lives of his family, his wife and children and all those who are subordinate to him, by inviting them to learn and follow the rules of the Faith, discharge their religious duties and shun all sins. The Allaham has introduced this chapter for this specific purpose in which he has cited some Qur'anic verses and Ahadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

The Beautiful topic of the Address

The verse which I have just recited before you is really the basic theme of this chapter. Addressing the

entire Muslim community, Almighty Allah has said:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا

i.e. O, people who have believed.

You might have observed that while addressing the Muslims in the Qur'an, Almighty Allah has used these very words, يا ايها الذين امنو Our late Dr. Abdul Hai رحمةالله عليه used to say that this style of Allah's addressing the Muslims is very beautiful. One way of addressing someone is to address him by his name. The other and more affectionate way of addressing is to address a person by mentioning the intimate relation which exists between the addresser and the addressee. For example, a father may address his son by his name or by the word "son". It is quite obvious that the love and affection concealed in the word 'son' are not present in the mere name of the son.

The word "Son" is a way of address full of love and affection.

Shaikh-ul-Islam, Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani رحمةالله عليه was a great religious scholar and Jurist, I happened to see him at a time when there was none equal to him in learning and accomplishment, not only in Pakistan but in the entire world. In recognition of his deep knowledge and piety some called him "Shaikh-ul-Islam' and some others called him "Allamah". The Allamah sometimes called at our house, My grandmother who was then alive was the Allamah's maternal aunt. She used to address the 'Allamah' as 'son' and pray for his long life. We were much surprised at hearing these words of prayer. Allamah Usmani told us that he visited the house of my father Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمةالله عليه for two objectives.

The first objective was to meet Mufti Shafi رحمةالله عليه and

the other objective was that at that time there was none on the surface of the earth, other than that lady who addressed him as "son". The 'Allamah' said that he dearly loved the word 'son' addressed to him by that pious and venerable lady.

Apparently this is an insignificant incident, but the value of the affectionate word 'son' can be appreciated only by him who knows the emotion of the person who utters the word 'son'. A time comes in man's life when he finds none to address him with such loving words.

Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمةالله عليه explained that by using the words يا ايها الذين امنو Almighty Allah has referred to the relation which exists between every believer and Allah. This is just as a father addresses his son by uttering the word 'son' with the intention of telling him something full of love, sympathy and valuable advices. This is exactly how Almighty Allah addresses His obedient servants. For example He says at one place in the Holy Qur'an:

The Translation of the verses

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا قُوْٓا اَنْفُسَكُمْ وَاَهْلِيْكُمْ نَارًا وَّقُوْدُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلٰٓئِكَةٌ غِلَاظٌ شِدَادٌ لَّا يَعْصُوْنَ اللّٰهَ مَآ اَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُوْنَ مَا يُؤْمَرُوْنَ (سورة التحريم:٦)

This means :

O you who believe, protect yourselves and your families from a Fire, the fuel of which is men and stones, over which are (appointed) angels, strong, severe who do not disobey Allah in that which He commands them, and they do what they are commanded (to do). (66:6)

Individual Deeds are not sufficient for salvation

Almighty Allah has warned in this verse that one should not consider it sufficient for one's salvation that one has saved oneself from the Fire of Hell by doing good deeds. One must also do one's best to save ones children and family also from that Fire. It is a common sight to day that we see a man who is very regular in his prayers, fasting, payment of *Zakat* and spending money on charity. He is doing his best to enforce what is right and shun what is wrong., yet he is totally negligent of the acts of the members of his family, who are drifting in the other direction. They are flagrantly violating the commands of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ and their guardian feels no worry about their misconduct and misdeeds. Beware that you cannot attain salvation by ameliorating your own life and ways, unless you take care to put your children and family also on the right path of Islam. This is because it is your responsibility to guide and protect from sins those also who have been entrusted to your charge.

What, if the children do not obey you?

In the Qur'anic verse quoted above we have been commanded to protect ourselves and our family from Fire. The verse points out the answer to a doubt that generally arises in our minds when questioned about the misconduct and deviation of their sons, the parents or guardians try to shake off their responsibility by saying that they did their best to guide and reform their children and members of their family, but in vain. Affected by the trends of the times, they are not prepared to accept right guidance. Now they are responsible for their deeds and we are responsible for our deeds. After all, the son of Hazrat Nooh عليهم السلام also did not listen to his father's admonition and died an unbeliever.

How do you protect them from the worldly fire?

By using the word Fire in this verse, the Holy Qur'an has calrified this doubt and misunderstanding. It is all right, in principle, that if parents do their best to save their children from deviation from righteousness and religion, but the children do not obey their parents, the latter will be absolved of their responsibility and the children shall have to take the consequences of deviation. It must, however be assessed as to what extent the parents tried to save their children from falling into error and disobedience. By using the word "Fire", the Holy Qur'an has provided a hint that the parents should try to save their children from sins and Hell Fire as they would save them from the conflagration of worldly fire.

Suppose that a very dangerous fire has broken out at a place. It is so severe that anyone caught by it is sure to be burnt to death. If your ignorant and innocent child advances towards the flames of this fire, what will you do? Will you consider it sufficient to warn the child from a distance that he should not approach the fire lest he should be burnt to death. If the child approaches the fire and burns himself, will the parents be absolved of their responsibility by arguing that they had warned the child of the danger in time but the child did not mind their warning. What else could they do? No such parents will be found in this world with this attitude. Genuine parents will find no rest and peace, unless they rush to the child and get him away from the fire.

What Almighty Allah says may be summed up as under:

When you do not consider it sufficient to utter only a few words as lip service to save your child from worldly fire, why do you consider it sufficient in the case of Hell Fire which is unlimited and the fury of which cannot be

imagined in this world.

It is, therefore, wrong and unacceptable to say that you had warned the child and the members of your family about their deviation from the path of religion and you are not responsible for them, if they did not care your warning.

Today care is taken of everything except *Deen*

It is not right to give in this context the example of the son of Hazrat Nooh عليه السلام who died an unbeliever and his Prophet father could not save him from the punishment of Fire. Just see how Hazrat Nooh عليه السلام spent continuously about nine hundred years to guide and reform his son. Even after this continuous effort for such a long time, if the son did not take the right path, no blame and charge lies on Hazrat Nooh عليه السلام for the misguidance of his son. As for ourselves, only after giving a few light warnings to our children we feel satisfied that we have discharged our responsibility. What is really needed is that we should do our best to save them from the punishment of Hell Fire with the same care and anxiety with which we try to save them from the conflagration of worldly fire. The fact is that we take all possible care to feed and clothe them nicely, and provide for them good worldly education, but pay no attention to their education and training in matters relating to *Deen* and the Hereafter.

He has deviated only a little from the path of *Deen*

It so happened that the son of an acquaintance of mine who had received good modern English education got a good job. His father, who was himself a religious man, regular in his *Tahajjud* and other prayers, praised his son's accomplishments and his lucrative job by dint of which he had secured a high position in the society. He also added

that his son had deviated only a little from the path of *Deen*.

Now look at the trend of thinking of this religious-minded father. He spoke highly of his son's worldly attainments and made only a passing remark about his deviation from the path of *Deen*, as if it was a trifling matter.

Only the "soul" has departed from the body

My respected father Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه used to relate an event saying:

A man died, although the people thought that he was alive. In order to ascertain the truth they sent for a Doctor. After examining the body the Doctor told them that the man was quite sound in his body with all its constituent limbs, except that the 'soul' had departed from the body.

Just like this my friend said about his son that by the grace of Allah the son's career was very brilliant, except that he had slightly deviated from the right path of *Deen*. It was as though a little deviation from the path of *Deen* was not a serious matter.

The Plight of the new Generation

Today we have reached a stage in which we care for everything other than our *Deen*. If this *Deen* is such an insignificant and unimportant item, why did you practice *Deen* by observing the five time prayers along with the *Tahajjud* prayer? You too should have carved for yourself a career like that of your son. *Deen* has no place in the educational plan of our children. From the very beginning the child is sent to a nursery school where he is taught dogs and cats but he is not taught Allah's names, nor anything concerning *Deen*. That generation has now risen and taken up in its hands the reins of power - a generation

that does not know how to recite the Holy Qur'an and offer prayers. If a survey is made of the society, it will be revealed that the majority cannot recite the Qur'an nor can they offer correctly the prayers. This is because the moment the child is born, the parents begin to think about the best school for the child's worldly education, without giving any thought to the teaching of *Deen* and its pratice.

Today the children have the upper hand over their parents

Remember that according to a Hadith Almighty Allah has decided upon a way of dealing with His servants. It is that if anyone displeases Allah in order to please some created being, Allah places that person under the control authority of the created being. For example, a man commits a sin to please someone and by committing the sin he displeases Allah. Then Almighty Allah places the sinner under the power and authority of the person whom he wants to please by displeasing Allah. You may experiment this for yourself.

Today we are trying to please our children by providing for them the best worldly education that they may have a brilliant career and attain an elivated position in the society. In preference to these worldly gains they do not teach them *Deen* and thereby they displease Allah. The natural result of this is that the children, whom the parents please by displeasing Allah, impose their authority and control over their parents. See for yourselves how today the children are disobeying and misbehaving with their parents and have become a torment for them. The parents admit their children into a totally irreligious society, so that they may have a comfortable worldly life through a lucrative job and high position. They leave their children free in an

environment which has no place for the honour and regard for parents. If on growing up the son takes a decision according to his own free will in total disregard of their parents wishes, the parents themselves are to be blamed. They taught and trained their children for a civilisation in which old parents are considered unfit for society and are thrown into Nursing Homes where they pine away till death.

The old Father is in Nursing Home

Incidents are often heard about Western Countries that when an old father pining away dies in a Nursing Home the manager of the Home informs his son on the phone of his father's death. The son feels a little sad on hearing this news, asks the Manager to arrange for the funeral ceremonies of his father and send the bills to him for payment. What is surprising is that somebody told me that such a Nursing Home has been opened in Karachi also where old men are lodged and looked after. When a person died in this Home, his son was informed of this. First he made a promise to attend the funeral arrangements but later on expressed his inability to attend the funeral for some reason and requested the Manager to do the needful. This is the son whom you pleased and displeased Allah and that very son has now been given authority and control over you according to the words of the Hadith referred to above.

You must reap what you have sown

When such a misguided son has got the upper hand over his parents and is taking the wrong path, the parents are pained to see this, but they can do nothing when the parents themselves put their son on the wrong path, they must now take the consequences. Now there is no escape from this.

درمیانِ قعرِ دریا تختہ بندم کردہ ای
باز مے گوئی کہ دامن تر مکن ہوشیار باش

This Persian couplet means:

Having tied me on to a wooden plank, you have thrown me into the bottom of the river and yet you ask me to be alert and save my skirt from getting wet. (How is it possible).

My brother! If you had taught your son the Holy Qur'an and some Ahadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, he would have been a better man today. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith:

When a man leaves this world three things prove profitable for him: Firstly, it is the knowledge which he has left behind from which people are benefiting; For example, he has compiled some useful book, or has left behind his pupils who are teaching *Deen* to the people, Secondly, he has left behind some permanent charitable act like a mosque, school or hospital, a well for water. The reward for such acts/institutions accrues to the man even after his death. Thirdly, pious and obedient children will be praying for their parents. Whatever good deeds the sons/daughters do as a result of the good teaching/training provided by their parents are added to the character-role of the parents also. If the parents had taught their children this Hadith, they would not have today met this fate. It is very sad that they did not guide their children on to the right path. The result of their negligence is now before their eyes.

The Prophets عليهم السلام and their concern about their children

The care to guide children to the right path of *Deen* is as neessary and important as the care to guide one's own

self to that path. It is not enough to provide guidance to the children only verbally and half heartedly. The care and concern to guide them to the path of *Deen* must be as keen, genuine and urgent as is the care to save one's child from this worldly fire when the child is seen advancing towards it in his ignorance and innocence. The entire Qur'an is full of such exhortations. Thus mentioning the accounts of the Prophets عليهم السلام Almighty Allah says in his Book:-

وَكَانَ يَأْمُرُ اَهْلَهٗ بِالصَّلٰوةِ وَالزَّكٰوةِ (سورہ مریم:۵۵)

This means that Hazrat Ismael عليه السلام used to enjoin upon his family prayer and *Zakat*. (19:55)

When death approached Hazrat Yaqoob عليه السلام he called together all his sons. At such critical moments the worldly people gather around them their children and advise them about how after their death they should earn their living. When Hazrat Yaqoob عليه السلام gathered his children around him at the time of his death, he asked them whom they would worship after his death. He had no worry except the worry about whom and how they should worship. This is the right thinking one should inculcate in oneself about the *Deen* of one's children and family. (See verse No 133, Surah 2 - Al-Baqarah).

The Masters will be questioned about their subordinates on the Day of Judgment

This responsibility is not confined only to the members of the family, but it extends to all those who are under, and subordinate to, some master or officer. For example, some subordinate employees are working under an officer. On the Day of Judgment the officer will be questioned if he had tried to persuade his subordinates to

take to the path of *Deen*. Similarly a teacher will be questioned on the Day of Judgment what he did during his worldly life to guide his pupils on the path of *Deen*. Likewise an employer shall be questioned on the Day of Judgment about what efforts he made to guide his employees to the right path of *Deen*.

كلكم راع وكلكم مسئول عن رعيته

This sacred Hadith means:
Everyone of you is a shepherd (guardian) and he will be questioned on the Day of Judgment about those placed under his charge. (Jami'ul-usul: 5/663, Hadith No: 3946)

These sins are in reality Fire

My father, Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه used to explain the Qur'anic verse quoted above as follows:

Allah has commanded the believers to save themselves and their families from fire, as if there is fire, although no fire is visible. The sins which are being committed are in reality fire, even though they may appear to be tasteful and pleasant. The world has become Hell on account of these sins. Having gone too deep in the abyss of sins and having become used to them we have become unable to feel the heat of this blazing fire. Those gifted with true sense and the light of belief see these sins in the form of fire or darkness.

The result of one morsel eaten out of ill-gotten money

Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Yaqoob Nanotvi, the Principal of Darul Uloom Deoband and teacher of Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi has related that once he

visited the house of a person to partake of food in a feast. He had hardly taken a morsel from the food when he felt that the food served was not prepared from lawful money. This was later on confirmed by an inquiry made in this behalf. Hazrat Maulana said that he repented for this and besought Allah's forgiveness, but he felt the darkeness of that unlawful morsel for about two months during which he was urged by some unseen power to commit sins. The curse and darkness of these sins are felt by those whose hearts Allah has cleaned and purified. We, however, do not feel this curse and darkness because we have become accustomed to them.

We have become accustomed to Darkness

We have become accustomed to electric light. The city is shining with electric bulbs all day and night. It becomes unbearable for us if the electricity fails even for a few minutes. This is because we have become too much used to the shining light and comforts of electricity. There are, however, many rural areas where the people have not even seen electric light. These villagers, deprived of electricity, live in darkness and feel no inconvenience, because they have not yet seen, tasted and enjoyed the comforts of electricity. Those who are used to electric light and fans, etc., become depressed and dejected when electricity fails even for a few minutes.

Even so is our exampe, we have become used to the darkness of these sins, so we cannot realize it. We can realize this darkness only when Almighty Allah grants us the light of belief (*Eeman*) and righteousness (*Taqwa*). As said by my respected father رحمة الله عليه, these sins are in reality fire. That is why it occurs in the Holy Qur'an:

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَاْ كُلُوْنَ اَمْوَالَ الْيَتٰمٰى ظُلْمًا اِنَّمَا يَاْ كُلُوْنَ فِىْ بُطُوْنِهِمْ نَارًا

(النساء: ١٠)

Those, who devour the wealth of orphans wrongfully, do not but swallow fire into their bellies. (4:10)

While commenting on this verse some commentators have said that the word fire has been used in the verse only as a metophor which indicates unlawful and ill-gotten money the eating of which will lead to Hell. Against this, other commentators have said that it is not a metaphor, but a reality that the morsel out of unlawful money is fire, although it is not seen and felt by the people. According to this latter class of commentators, all the sins that we see around us are nothing but Fire of Hell which we do not feel owing to the loss of our spiritual sensitiveness.

It is the divine saints of Allah who can observe sins

Only those people can see the reality of things whom Allah has granted spiritual insight. It is related on reliable narratives about Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه that he could observe the traces of sins committed by a man from the water falling from his body after ablution or bath.

It is said about a saint that when he went out of his house, he covered his face with a cloth. Someone asked him the reason for this practice. The saint replied that he was not able to go out with his face uncovered. This was because when his face was uncovered he did not see any man. Instead he saw dogs, swines, wolves, asses. The reason was that sins committed by men took such shapes. As the reality of these sins is not visible to our sinful eyes, we take pleasure in them. In reality these sins are nothing but filth, pollution and, indeed, darkeness and Fire.

The world is filled with the Fire of sins

My respected father رحمة الله عليه explained this point by saying that this world full of sins is like a room filled with gas. This gas is in reality fire. Only a spark is needed to make the room ablaze. In the same way these sins, misdeeds and wrongs spread in the world are fire. Only the blowing of the Trumpet is wanting to convert everything into fire. Thus our misdeeds are Hell. Save from its fire yourself and your family.

First be regular in Prayers yourself

Hazrat Allama' Nuwawie has quotd another verse:

وَأْمُرْ اَهْلَكَ بِالصَّلٰوةِ وَاصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا (طه:١٣٢)

And enjoin upon your family Prayer and be constant on it. (Yourself) (20:132)

In this verse Almighty Allah has changed the order of advice. Apparently the order should have been: first establish the prayer yourself and then enjoin your family on that. Here the order has been changed that first enjoin upon your family prayer and then be constant on it yourself. There is a hint in this changed order that your enjoining prayer upon your family and children will not be effective unless you make yourself constant and regular in your prayers. Thus, an effective way of enjoining prayer upon your household is that you should yourself be more sincere and enthusiastic in practising what you advise others to practise.

Do not tell lies to children

It occurs in a Hadith:

Once in the presence of the Holy Prophet ﷺ a woman called her child to her , but the child was not inclined to go to her mother. The woman then promised

the child to give something if he came to her. The child then came to his mother. The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked that woman if she really intended to give the child something. She replied that she had with her a date which she intended to give to the child. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said: If you had not the intention to give the child anything, it would have been a great lie and a sin, because in that case you would be making a false promise to the child and impressing upon him that the breach of a promise and telling lies were not so serious sins.

This verse, therefore, contains a hint that you must be firm and regular in what you enjoin upon your children and family to practise.

The style of imparting training to children

Allamah Nuwawie رحمة الله عليه goes on to say:

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله تعالى عنه قال: اخذ الحبسن بن على رضى الله عنهما تمرة من تمر الصدقة فجعلها فيه فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: كخ كخ، ارم بها، اما علمت انا لا نا كل الصدقة ! (جامع الاصول: ٤:٦٥٧)/رقم الحديث ٢٧٤٨)

Hazrat Abu Hurarirah رضى الله عنه has narrated that Hazrat Hasan, son of Hazrat Ali رضى الله عنه, took a date out of the dates of charity while yet he was an innocent little child, and put it into his mouth. Seeing this the Holy Prophet ﷺ at once uttered the word كخ كخ meaning spit it out, saying: Do you not know that the sons of Hashim do not eat charity money?

Hazrat Hasan رضى الله عنه is the maternal grandson of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and beloved to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Once he ﷺ was delivering an address to the congregation in his mosque when Hazrat Hasan رضى الله عنه entered the mosque. He ﷺ at once advanced and took up Hazrat

Hasan رضی اللہ عنہ in his lap. Sometimes it also happened that Hazrat Hasan رضی اللہ عنہ got on the Prophet's shoulders while he ﷺ was praying. While going down for prostration he ﷺ would take Hasan رضی اللہ عنہ down holding him by one hand. Sometimes the Holy Prophet ﷺ would take him in his lap and say:

"مبخلة و محبنة"

These sons are such that they make man miserly as well as coward. Occasions come when man practises miserliness as well as cowardice on account of his children.

Now look! How dearly the Holy Prophet ﷺ loved Hazrat Hasan رضی اللہ عنہ yet when in his ignorance and innocence he put a date of charity in his mouth, he ﷺ did not tolerate that his grandson should eat that date. As he ﷺ devised to train his grandson even on such small matters he got the date out of Hazrat Hasan's mouth saying that "we do not eat charity money."

The limit of showing affection to children

There is a hint in this Hadith that the training of children in religion and morality begins from small things. This frames his mental trend and shapes his life. This is, as we have seen a *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It is seen that a strange trend has sprung up among parents of not stopping children from doing something wrong. In the past parents did love their children, but in so loving they used their wisdom and discretion. To day it has become a fashion not to interfere with the children, however foolishly or arrogantly they may be behaving. Parents think that being innocent and of tender age children should be allowed a free hand in all they do. This is not right. It is the responsibility of the parents to admonish their children when they are

found violating some rules of etiquette, morality or some injunctions of *Deen*. If this is not done they will grow up ill-bred, ill-tutored and disobedient and will become a curse for the parents when nothing can be done. The Hadith enjoins that we should keep a vigilant eye on small lapses and faults committed by our children and try to correct them.

An Incident that happened to the Shaikh-ul-Hadith Hazrat Maulana Zakaria رحمۃاللہ علیہ

Shaikh-ul-Hadith Hazrat Maulana Zakaria رحمۃاللہ علیہ has related an incident in his autobiography. He says:-

When I was a small child, my parents had made for me a small pillow. I had a great liking for that pillow, which I always kept with me. One day my father wanted to lie down for which he was looking for a pillow. I offered to my father that small pillow, saying: My dear father! Take my pillow. My father at once slapped me, saying: Even at this stage of your age you call this pillow to be your property. My father wanted to tell me that it was his property and not mine. I was greatly grieved at this treatment of my father. Later on I came to know the secret of my fahter's action. This incident entirely changed the direction of my mind. It is necessary for right education and useful training of children to keep a keen eye even on their small activities and movements.

An etiquette of taking food

عن ابی حفص عمر بن ابی سلمة عبد الله بن عبد الا سد ربیب رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم قال: کنت غلاما فی حجر رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم، وکانت یدی تطیش فی الصحفة، فقال لی رسول الله صلی

الله عليه وسلم: يا غلام سم الله، وكل بيمينك، وكل مما يليك، فما زالت تلك طعمتي بعد (جامع الا صول: ٧/ ٣٨٨ رقم الحديث ٥٤٤٥)

Hazrat Abu Salmah رضی اللہ عنہ was a step son of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, He was born from Hazrat Umme Salmah رضی اللہ عنہما, a mother of the believers, by her late husband. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ married Umme Salmah, Hazrat Abu Salmah رضی اللہ عنہا also came with her to the house of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. That is why he is a step son of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The Holy Prophet ﷺ loved him dearly and often talked to him very freely and informally. Hazrat Abu Salmah رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated: As a small child I was under the care and upbringing of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. One day while taking food my hand moved in the plate from side to side. Seeing this the Holy Prophet ﷺ said to me: Recite بسم اللہ (In the name of Allah), eat with the right hand and eat from the side of the plate which is before you. It is not right to move the hand on all sides of the plate, while eating. This demonstrates how the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to teach etiquette and good manners from small lapses and faults.

These are Islamic Rules of Etiquette

Another companion Hazrat ʿAkrash bin Zoaib رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that once he called on the Holy Prophet ﷺ When the food was served, he began to eat it from different sides of the plate. Catching hold of his hand the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: Eat the food from one side, because the food in the plate is the same. Eating it from here and there is bad etiquette and ill manner. Hazrat ʿAkrash رضی اللہ عنہ then began to eat if from one side. When the meal was over a very large plate was brought full of dates of different kinds. On the basis of the past experience Hazrat ʿAkrash رضی اللہ عنہ began to eat the dates from one side, while the Holy Prophet

ﷺ was eating them from different sides. Seeing him eating the dates from one side, He ﷺ again said: O ʿAkrash pick up the dates from any side you like because they are of different types and you may choose them according to your taste and choice.

In other words, the Holy prophet ﷺ has taught this rule of etiquette that if the food is of one type then the man eating should eat it from the side in front of him. If the food or the fruit is of different types, then it may be picked up from different sides according to the choice of the person partaking of the meal. See how the Holy Prophet ﷺ had his eyes on small items in teaching rules of etiquette to his companions رضی اللہ عنہم. All these are Islamic rules of etiquette which should be learnt and practised by all Muslims and should also be taught to their children and families.

"عن عمر وبن شعيب عن ابيه عن جده رضى الله عنه قال:قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: مروا اولاد كم بالصلاة وهم ابناء سبع واضربو هم عليها وهم ابناء عشر وفرقوا بينهم فى المضاجع" (جامع الا صول: ٥/٨٧/رقم الحديث ٣٢٤٣)

Hazrat Abdullah bin ʿUmar رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: Order your children to offer prayer when they reach the age of seven years, (even though prayer is not binding on them at this age). When they reach the age of ten years and do not offer prayer, you may beat them for that. Also separate their beds at the age of ten years.

Teaching and Training children before the age of seven years

The first order given in this Hadith is that efforts be made to introduce prayer to children, to teach and habituate

them at the age of seven years. This confirms that it is not proper to impose on children any responsibility or duty of this kind before they attain the age of seven years, as some people induce their children to fast during Ramazan before attaining this age. Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه vehemently opposed this practice, because this could not be right when Almighty Allah Himself does not advise us to impose prayer on children before the age of seven years. That is why it has been suggested not to bring to the mosque children below the age of seven years. This is however, allowed only occasionally to make children acquainted with the mosque gradually, on the condition that they do not pollute the mosque with urine or filth. It is not right to burden the child in any way before attaining the age of seven years.

Let them learn at home

Our elders have advised that it is also not proper to burden the child even with school education before the age of seven years. You may, however, introduce light teaching to him before this age through play things and toys, instead of making him a regular school-going boy. Nowadays it has become a custom that no sooner does the child attain the age of three years than the parents begin to arrange for admission into some school. This is not at all right. After the child has attained the age of three year, teach him only basic things at home. Let him learn the names of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ the Kalimah and some other basic lessons in *Deen*. Give the child these easy lessons at home without making him a regular school-going child.

Qari Fath Muhammad Sahib رحمة الله عليه

May Allah elevate the rank of our saintly Maulana Qari Fath Muhammad Sahib رحمة الله عليه. He was a living

miracle of the Holy Qur'an. He devoted all his life to the study and teaching of Qur'an. As occurs in a supplication in a Hadith, Qur'an had become his life-blood and his soul was saturated with the light of its verses.

Qari Sahib was a very stritct teacher of the Qur'an, yet he asserted with force that it was not right to throw on the weak shoulders of the child the burden of learning before he attained the age of seven years. Such a burden he said, would retard the child's natural growth and development. He supported this opinion with the Holy Prophet's ﷺ Hadith in which the age of seven years has been recommended for children to learn and offer prayers.

The burden of learning should be thrown on the child's shoulders gradually when he attains the age of seven years. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has allowed that if the child does not pray he may be beaten, only after he has attained the age of ten years.

The limit to which bodily punishment may be inflicted on children

It should also be borne in mind that it is lawful for teachers or parents to beat children only when the beating does not leave any mark on the body nor causes injury. The way in vogue today of beating children recklessly is unlawful. It is a grievous sin to beat children so severely as to cause bleeding and injuries. In the opinion of Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه, this is an unpardonable sin, as the victim, being a minor cannot himself pardon it. It is, therefore, not understood how to be saved from the punishment of this sin. So dangerous is this sin! Beating is allowed only in unavoidable situations but that is also mild beating which should not leave any mark on the body nor cause injury.

The way how children should be beaten

Hakimul-Ummat Hazrat Maulana Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has suggested a unique prescription for this, which is worth remembering. He has suggested that if it ever becomes unavoidable to beat the child, do not resort to beating while you are in a state of anger. When the anger has disappeared, then beat the child under pretended anger. In beating the child in a state of genuine anger one may exceed the limit and cause irreparable loss to the child. Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has stated that he acted upon this method the whole of his life. Remember that anger is a passion in which there is always the danger of exceeding limits.

How to train children

For this purpose Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه used to mention a principle, which is not of general application, yet it is workable in the majority of cases. He has suggested that it is not right to punish a person while he is doing some wrong. The wrongdoer may be advised, scolded or punished later on. It is also not right to raise objections to a person's conduct frequently. It is better to call him only once and point out to him his failings in detail. Then if it is necessary to punish him, punish him only once.

Anger is a passion which overpowers man and under the spell of anger man is most likely to exceed the limit. In short, when necessary one may resort to beating within the allowed and reasonable limits. Today people follow the extremes. Either they exceed the limits in beating or leave the child un-checked and free to do what he likes. We should follow the golden mean which is the way of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Everyone of you is a Guardian

In the end the same Hadith has been cited as was cited earleir.

وعن ابن عمر رضى الله عنهما قال: سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: كلكم راع وكلكم مسئول عن رعيته الامام راع ومسئول عن رعيته والرجل راع فى اهله ومسئول عن رعيته والمراة راعية فى بيت زوجها ومسئولة عن رعيتها، والخادم راع فى مال سيده ومسئول عن رعيته فكلكم راع ومسئول عن رعيته (جامع الا صول: ٥٠/٤ رقم الحديث٢٠٢٨)

It is narrated from Hazrat Abdullah bin 'Umar رضى الله عنه that he heard the Holy Prophet ﷺ saying: Everyone of you is a Shephard (Guardian) and he will be questioned on the Day of Judgment about his charge and responsibility. The Ruler is responsible for his subjects and he will be questioned about them on the Day of Judgment as to how he dealt with them, trained them, and discharged their rights. Man is a guardian over his children and family. He will be questioned about how he discharged his responsibility towards them with regard to their upkeep and rights. The wife is in charge of her husband's house. On the Day of Judgment she will be questioned as to how she discharged her responsibility about the things entrusted to her charge. The servant is a guardian of his master's properties which are a trust and he will be questioned on the Day of Judgment how he dishcarged this trust.

In short, everyone of you is a guardian in one way or another. He will be questioned about his charge and responsibility on the Day of Judgment.

Take care of your subordinates

The intention to cite this Hadith is to tell that the responsibility is not confined only to parents and their

sons. In fact in all walks of life there is a master or incharge with his servants or subordinates. For example, within the boundary of the house a man's subordinates are his children and wife. In an office the officer has his subordinates. A shopkeeper has a few helpers under him. A factory-owner has a number of workers working under him. All these masters, owners or officers are responsible to guide their subordinates or employees on to the right path of *Deen*. None of them should think that he is responsible to reform only himself and has nothing to do with his subordinates. They should all bear in mind that they are in a better position to teach *Deen* to their subordinates and make them follow its principles and injunctions. If these subordinates and employees are indifferent to *Deen* the blame lies on their masters and employers. These responsible persons should, feel and discharge their responsibility which they owe to their subordinates in the matter of *Deen*.

Spare only Ten minutes

There is no doubt that life has become very busy nowadays and everyone is hard pressed for spare time. Notwithstanding it is possible for everyone to spare five to ten minutes every day to teach *Deen* to his subordinates. For example, he may read to his subordinates from a book some injunctions relating to *Deen* for a few minutes at an appointed time. He may read the translation of a verse or a Hadith. By so doing he will be acting upon the Hadith cited above. May Almighty Allah help us all to follow the injunctions contained in the Hadith. *Aameen*.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram
after 'Asr Prayers
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.

SERVICE TO PARENTS A MEANS TO PARADISE

الحمدلله نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه، ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له واشهدان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له واشهد ان سيدنا وسندنا ونبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلىٰ له واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا

اما بعد !

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطٰن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

وَاعْبُدُوْا اللّٰهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوْا بِهٖ شَيْئًا وَّبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ اِحْسَانًاوَّبِذِى الْقُرْبٰى وَالْيَتٰمٰى وَالْمَسٰكِيْنِ وَالْجَارِذِى الْقُرْبٰى وَالْجَارِالْجُنُبِ وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجَنْبِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيْلِ لا وَمَا مَلَكَتْ اَيْمَانُكُمْ ؕ (النساء:٣٦)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم وصدق رسوله البنى الكريم ونحن على ذٰلك من الشاهدين والشاكرين والحمد لله رب العالمين

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness. We beleive in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. None can misguide him whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom He lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no God except Allah, the One. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our Master, our authority, our Prophet and our Sire, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah shower mercy on him, on his household on his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم and may He bless them and salute them a great deal.

And worship Allah, Ascribe nothing as partner to Him. (Show) Kindness to Parents and to near Kindred and orphans, and the needy and the neighbour who is of in to you) and the neighbour who is not of kin and the fellow-traveller and the wayfarer and (the slaves) whom your right hands possess. (4:36)

A description of the rights of the servants of Allah

Allamah Nuwa-wee رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has opened a new chapter on the topic of kindness to and good behaviour with paretns and maintenance of close ties with blood relations. As I have already mentioned, these chapters in the book Riazus-Saliheen deal with the rights of the servants of Allah. Some rights of the servants have already been discussed about which you have heard the injunctions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The Allamah has quoted in this new chapter verses and Ahadith about nice

behaviour with parents and the rights of the close relatives. The first Hadith is as follows:

Which deed is the best

عن ابی عبدالرحمٰن عبد اللہ بن مسعود رضی اللہ عنہ قال سئلت النبی صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم ای العمل احب الی اللہ؟ قال اَلصَّلاۃ علی وقتھا قلت ثم اَیٌّ ؟ قـــال بـرالوالدین قلت ثم ای؟ قال الجھاد فی سبیل اللہ(صحیح بخاری، باب مواقیت الصـــلاۃ حدیث نمبر ٥٠٤)

It is narrated from Abdullah bin Mas'ud رضی اللہ عنہ that he asked the Holy Prophet ﷺ which act is the best of all in the sight of Allah. He ﷺ said: It is prayer at its appointed time. He رضی اللہ عنہ asked which was the next best act after prayer. He ﷺ said: Nice behaviour with the parents. He رضی اللہ عنہ asked which was the next best act after that. He ﷺ said: It is *Jihad* (Holy war) in the path of Allah.

As is quite clear, in the Hadith the best act has been declared to be prayer at its appointed time; then nice behaviour with parents and the third place has been given to *Jihad* in the path of Allah.

Desire to do good deeds

Two points need to be understood here. Firstly, many companions رضی اللہ عنہم asked the Holy Prophet ﷺ at different times the best act in the sight of Allah so that they could act upon it. They were always obsessed with the idea of the Hereafter and the way of attaining nearness to Almighty Allah and His pleasure.

Today we read in the books about "Good Deeds" and the virtues of various acts and deeds, but no sincere desire is born in our hearts to do them. On the other hand the noble companions رضی اللہ عنہم eagerly picked up even the

smallest act bearing reward of the Hereafter.

Alas! I have lost many Qeerats!

Once Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ mentioned before Hazrat Abdullah bin 'Umar رضی اللہ عنہ a Hadith in which the Holy Prophet ﷺ was quoted as saying:

A man who joins the funeral prayer of his Muslim brother will get reward of one Qeerat. In those days Qeerat was a measure with which silver and gold were weighed. And he who accompanied the coffin will get two Qeerats. He who takes part in his burial will get three Qeerats. It occurs in another Hadith that the Qeerat of Paradise is bigger than mountain Uhud.

On hearing this Hadith from Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ Hazrat Abdullah bin 'Umar رضی اللہ عنہ said regretfully that he had not heard that Hadith earlier, so he lost many Qeerats. It may be borne in mind that Hazrat Abdullah bin 'Umar رضی اللہ عنہ was one whose only concern was to act up to the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and he had already a great stock of good deeds in his character-roll. Even so, he regretted having missed some reward for want of knowledge of the Hadith.

Different Answers to the same Question

So we have seen how the Noble companions رضی اللہ عنہم frequently used to ask the Holy Prophet aout the best deeds to do for reward in the Hereafter. We also see that the Holy Prophet ﷺ gave different answers to different companions رضی اللہ عنہم to the same question. For instance, the Holy Prophet ﷺ replied to one companion رضی اللہ عنہ that the best act is to offer prayer at its appointed time; to another that the best act is to remember Allah with the tongue at all times; still to a third companion رضی اللہ عنہ that the best act is to obey parents and behave nicely with them; to a fourth one, that the best act is to take part in *Jihad*. These answers appear to

contradict one another, but in fact there is no contradiction.

The Best Act for every man is different

The fact is that the best deed changes from person to person according to circumstrances. For some it is prayer, for another it is nice behaviour with parents, still for others it is *Jihad*, remembrance of Allah and the like. The Holy Prophet ﷺ knew very well about one of his ﷺ companions that he was regular in his prayers but he was negligent in the service of his parents. So He ﷺ prescribed for him as the best act the service of his parents. He ﷺ found a companion رضی اللہ عنہ slack in *Jihad* and another in remembrance of Allah, so he ﷺ prescribed for them respectively *Jihad* and remembrance of Allah as the best acts to do. All these are acts that carry great virtues and rewards, but the Holy Prohet ﷺ prescribed them as the best act differently for different persons according to the circumstances of each.

The Excellence of Prayer

While mentioning actions in order of their excellence, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has mentioned in this Hadith prayer as the best act in its appointed time. Some time a man postpones prayer through laziness until the appointed time expries and he misses the prayer. This is not proper. One must offer prayers within the prescribed time. There is a verse of the Qur'an to this effect:

فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُصَلِّيْنَ O الَّذِيْنَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُوْنَ (الماعون: ٤،٥)

Woe to those worshippers who are heedless of their prayer. (107: 4-5)

There is also a Hadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ:

الذی تفوته صلاة العصر کانما وتر اهله وماله

This means that:

one who misses his *Asr* (late after-noon) prayer is like one the whole of whose family and all his wealth has been plundered.

To delay praying till the prayer is missed is a very serious matter.One should therefore, be cautious of prayer as well as of its appointed time.

The Excellence of *Jihad*

In this Hadith service to parents has been declared as the best action, and *Jihad* in the path of Allah has been declared as the third best act. This means that service to parents and nice behaviour with them have been given preference over *Jihad.* You know that *Jihad* is a very high form of service and it occurs in a Hadith that if a man takes part in *Jihad* in the path of Allah and is martyred, Almighty Allah will take him from this world to the other world purified from all sins as if he was bron from his mother's womb the moment he was martyred.(Sahih Bukhari Hadith No: 2662)

It occurs in a Hadith that after death when a man observers his nearness to Allah and the pleasures of Paradise, he will never desire to return to the world, because the reality of the world will be disclosed before his eyes at that time, He will realize how mean worthless, filthy and hateful the world is in comparison with Paradise which he has been awarded. The martyr will however, desire to be sent to world again to take part in *Jihad* and be martyred again and again. That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ had himself desired to take part in *Jihad* in the path of Allah, be martyred then again be sent to the world to take part in *Jihad* and be martyred again and again. After having entered Paradise none, but a martyr, will desire to be sent back to the world. So excellent is the rank of *Jihad* among acts of

devotion!(Sahih Bukhari ..... Hadith No: 2644)

The Rights of Parents

Notwithstanding all this, obedience to parents with nice behaviour with them has been accorded preference to *Jihad.* The jurists have said that rights of parents are foremost of all the rights of the servants of Allah. No right is more esteemable in this world than the rights of the parents. As Allah has made parents a cause of man's coming into existence. He has granted them more rights than any other class of relatives. According to a Hadith:

If a man casts a loving glance at his parents, Allah will grant him reward equal to that for a *Hajj* and *Umrah.* So high in the sight of Allah is the reward for nice behaviour with the parents!

Selfless Love

You must remember that all relations acquaintances, love and affection that exist in this world among men are based on some motives. It is difficult to find in this world selfless love. An exception to this is parents' love for their children. The parents have no interest of thier own involved in thier love for their children. The love between husband and wife, friends and brothers, etc., has some interest involved in it. As mentioned above, the love of parents for their children is selfless and free from the traces of any interest. They are prepared even to sacrifice their lives for the prosperity and welfare of their children. That is why Almighty Allah has placed the rights of parents above all other rights of servants.

Kindness and service to Parents

It occurs in a Hadith that a Noble companion رضی اللہ عنہ called on the Holy Prophet ﷺ and expressed his keen desire to take part in *Jihad* in the path of Allah, in order to please Allah and attract His favour and reward. The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked him: Do you want to take part in *Jihad* only for this purpose? The companion رضی اللہ عنہ replied in the affirmative. The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked the companion رضی اللہ عنہ if his parents were alive. To this question also he replied in the affirmative. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said to him رضی اللہ عنہ. Go and serve them. The reward which will accrue to you by serving your parents will not accrue to you even from your participation in *Jihad*. The following words occur in a narrative which places service to parents above *Jihad*.

فَفِيْهِمَا فَجَاهِدْ

So go and serve them (the parents). This is *Jihad* (Sahih Bukhari, Ch. 136, Hadith No: 2842)

It is not *Deen* (faith) to satisfy one's fancy

Our Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ often said that it is not *Deen* to satisfy one's fancy - a point which is worth remembering for ever. *Deen* is the name of obeying Allah and His Prophet ﷺ. Look for their commands and carry them out. For example some likes always to stand for prayer in the first row, some desires to take part in *Jihad* and still there is one who desires to go for the *Tabligh* (preaching) of *Deen*. All these are practices of *Deen* and carry reward, yet one must try to find out the demand of the time. For example, your parents are seriously ill and hardly able to move and you are anxious to join the prayer in the mosque in the first row. At such a time Allah and

His Prophet ﷺ demand that you should forget joining prayer in the first row but serve your ailing parents and behave nicely with them and offer your prayer in the house alone. If in such a critical time you insist upon going to the mosque to join the first row, this is not *Deen*; this is an act of satisfying your fancy.

This injunction applies when the mosque is far away, but if it is quite near the house and the parents are in a state that they will not feel the absence of their son for a short time or there is in the house another man to look after the parents, it is better to go to the mosque to join the congregation.

This is not *Deen* (Faith)

Hazrat Maulana Masihullah Khan Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, an elderly divine of ours has illustrated this by an example. Suppose a man is all alone with his wife in a deserted place and there is none other than this couple and the mosque is at a considerable distance from the place. If the man insists on going to the mosque to join the congregation in the first row leaving behind his wife in the deserted place all alone, then this is not *Deen*. It is the demand of *Deen* to ignore the fancy of repairing to the mosque for joining the first row and instead pray alone at the place where he and his wife are staying. If one does otherwise, one is satisfying one's own fancy in preference to the commands of Allah and his Prophet ﷺ, and this indeed is not *Deen*.

Take another example. Your parents are sick at home and are badly in need of your service and you want to go out for *Tabligh* (preaching), leaving your parents in this condition. Although *Tabligh* is a very important part of *Deen*, yet in such a situation service to your ailing parents has a preference over *Tabligh*. To ignore this preference and

go out for *Tabligh* is no *Deen*; it is only an act of satisfying your fancy.

You have just read this Hadith that a Noble companion رضی اللہ عنہ called upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ and expressed his desire to take part in *Jihad*, but the Holy Prophet ﷺ commanded him to remain at home to serve and look after his parents.

Hazrat Owais Qarni رضی اللہ عنہ

Hazrat Owais Qarni رضی اللہ عنہ lived during the time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He was a believer and had a burning desire to call on the Holy Prophet ﷺ and earn an honour equal to which there could be no honour on the surface of the earth. He asked the Prophet ﷺ for permission to visit him ﷺ inspite of his weak and ailing mother, who required her son's help and service. The Holy Prophet ﷺ forbade Hazrat Owais Qarni رضی اللہ عنہ to visit him ﷺ and advised him to serve and look after his ailing mother.(Sahih Muslim ..... Hadith No: 2542)

Just imagine, how anxious a believer was to pay a visit to the Holy Prophet ﷺ while he ﷺ was yet living! Also imagine the burning desire of Muslims in our times to visit Holy Prophet's Mausoleum and Madinah Munaw-warah and to visit it again and again at all costs. Also imagine the emotions of Hazrat Owais Qarni that he suppressed his desire to see the Holy Prophet ﷺ during his ﷺ life in compliance with the latter's command to serve and look after his ailing mother. Thereby he also abandoned the great honour of being a "companion" - an honour far above that of the greatest of the saints and divines.

The status of being a companion (Sahabi)

Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, a renowned jurist and Muhaddis was a follower *Taabi'ee*. Once a man put to him a queer question. The question was: Who is the better of the two, Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ or Hazrat 'Umar bin Abdul Aziz رضی اللہ عنہ? For putting this question, on one side, the questioner selected Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ about whose status as a companion, the people have woven many stories on account of the battle between him and Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ. On the other hand he selected for his question Hazrat 'Umar bin Abdul Aziz رضی اللہ عنہ who is called the second 'Umar in the matter of justice, fairplay and piety, etc. He is regarded as a Mujaddid of the second century, Hijri. Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمۃ اللہ علیہ replied this queer question saying:

The dust which entred the nostrils of the horse of Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ, while he was taking part in *Jihad* with the Holy Prophet ﷺ is better than one thousand 'Umars bin Abdul Aziz. The status which Allah had granted Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ on account of being a companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ cannot be attained even by the greates of saints, despite their best devotion, piety and righteousness practised during their whole lifetime. (Al-Bidayah wan-nihayah, Vol-I, P-139)

Continue serving and looking after your mother

The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked Hazrat Owais Qarni رضی اللہ عنہ to serve and look after his mother, and it was not at all necessary for him to visit him ﷺ or attain the status of companionship. If there had been a person unable to assess the need of the time he would have advised attainment of "companionship", as it could not be attained after the demise of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. No matter if the

mother was ailing; after all a man has to leave his house for one or another business. The matter with Hazrat Owais Qarni رضی اللہ عنہ was quite different. His desire was to obey the injunctions of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ and not to the satisfaction of his own fancy. Hazrat Owais Qarni رضی اللہ عنہ therefore, could not become a companion (Sahabi) by paying a personal visit to the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

The reward for mother's service

Now see how Allah compensated Hazrat Owais Qarni رضی اللہ عنہ on his devoted service to his mother! The Holy Prophet ﷺ once said to Hazrat 'Umar رضی اللہ عنہ: O 'Umar! At sometime a man will come to Madinah from Qarn in Yemen, who will have such and such distinctive features. When you find this man, get him to pray for you, because Almighty Allah will accept his prayer.

It occurs in narratives that whenever a caravan came to Madinah from Yemen, Hazrat 'Umar رضی اللہ عنہ would ask them about Hazrat Owais Qarni. At last a caravan came and Hazrat 'Umar رضی اللہ عنہ was told that Hazrat Owais Qarni was among the Carvan. Hazrat 'Umar رضی اللہ عنہ recognised him by the features which the Holy Prophet ﷺ had described to him رضی اللہ عنہ. Hazrat 'Umar رضی اللہ عنہ met him, saluted him and requested him to pray for him رضی اللہ عنہ. Hazrat Owais Qarni رضی اللہ عنہ asked Hazrat 'Umar رضی اللہ عنہ why the latter had visited him and asked him for praying. Hazrat 'Umar رضی اللہ عنہ told Hazrat Owais Qarni رضی اللہ عنہ the entire background. Hearing that Hazrat Owais Qarni رضی اللہ عنہ was moved to tears on the Prophet's remarks about him رضی اللہ عنہ.

Look! A high-ranking companion like Hazrat 'Umar رضی اللہ عنہ is being asked to seek prayers from Hazrat Owais Qarni رضی اللہ عنہ. Hazrat Qarni رضی اللہ عنہ attained this unique position by obeying the Holy Prophet ﷺ and serving his

old ailing mother, as he رضی اللہ عنہ was advised by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. (Sahih Muslim ..... Hadith No: 2542)

Devotion of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم

There is not a single companion who was not devoted whole-heartedly to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. If a companion could be able to prolong the life of someone by a few minutes by sacrificing his own life, then the entire population of the noble companions would not have hesitated to sacrifice their lives to add a few breaths to the sacred life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. They were so sincerely loyal to the Holy Prophet ﷺ that they did not like that the shining face of him ﷺ went out of their sights at any time even during a raging battle. During the battle of Uhud, the Holy Prophet ﷺ had presented a sword to Hazrat Dujanah with his own blessed hands. So armed, when he advanced to fight the enemies, he saw that volleys of arrows were being shot at the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Turning his back at the showering arrows, Hazrat Dujanah رضی اللہ عنہ kept his face towards the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Thus to save the Holy Prophet ﷺ he received all the arrows at his back. He adopted this strategy so that he may not commit the disrespect of turning his back towards the Holy Prophet ﷺ and lose his ﷺ enlighting sight. Now see how the Noble Companions maintained the honour and dignity of the Holy Prophet ﷺ even during the heat of battles.

These companions who did not like to be away from the Holy Prophet ﷺ even for a short time complied with his command to leave his august companionship in Madinah to go to Syria, Yemen, Egypt, etc., to preach his *Deen*.

Our Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ used to tell a very important point that Deen is the name of understanding

and acting according to the demands of the times. One should be wide awake to grasp the need of the times and act accordingly.

Thus if the demand of the time is to serve and look after the parents, both *Jihad* and *Tabligh* lose for the time being their importance and preference. Even prayer in congregation loses its urgency in such a situation, although each of these items of devotion has its importance and excellence in its normal time and situation. The demands of the times should, therefore, be kept in view and fulfilled in all situations.

The importance of service to parents

Almighty Allah and His Prophet ﷺ have enjoined upon service to parents, saying that it has preference over all forms of worship. The Qur'an contains many verses about the excellence and importance of kindness and service to parents. It has been mentioned in one of these verses:

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْاِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حُسْنًا (العنکبوت:٨)

It means: We have enjoined upon man kindness to parents. (29:8)

In another verse it has been said:

وَقَضٰى رَبُّكَ اَلَّا تَعْبُدُوْٓا اِلَّآ اِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ اِحْسَانًا (الاسراء: ٢٣)

That is: Your Lord has decreed that you should worship none but Him and (you should show) kindness to parents. (17 : 23)

Note how in this verse Allah has combined kindness to parents with *Tauheed*. (The "Oneness" of Allah). It is as if the most pressing obligation after Tauheed is kindness to and nice behaviour with parents.

When the parents have grown old

Thereafter how beautifully Almighty Allah has enjoined:

اِمَّا يَبْلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ اَحَدُهُمَآ اَوْ كِلٰهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَّهُمَآ اُفٍّ .....

(الاسراء: ٢٣)

This means:

If one of them or btoh of them attain old age with you, do not say "Fie" to them, nor repulse them, but speak to them a gracious word. (17: 23)

When the parents attain old age they sometime become irritated and utter irrelevant and improper words. Even in such sitautions their sons/daughters have been advised to put up with the words of their parents with patience and never to scold them in any circumstances, but show to them due regard and respect. Next it has been said:

وَاخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَّبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيٰنِي صَغِيْرًا (الاسراء: ٢٤)

This means:

And lower to them the wing of submission and humbleness out of mercy to both of them and say: My Lord! Have mercy on them both, as they cared for me and brought me up when I was a little child. (17: 24)

It has been specially emphasized that if on account of old age they show irritation in their speech and behaviour with you, do not take it ill and be patient with them.

An instructive Event

I once read a story that has a moral in it, though it is not quite sure whether it is true or false. The story runs thus:

An old man was sitting in the courtyard of his house

along with his son who had received high education. Suddenly a crow perched on a wall of the house. The father asked the son: What is this? The son replied: It is a crow. After a little while the father again asked the son: What is this: The son said: It is a crow. After a few minutes the father asked his son the third time: What is this? The son said: Father, I have just now told you that this is a crow. After a little while the old father again asked his son the fourth time; what is this? At this time some expression of irritation was felt in the son's tone when he said to his father with a rebuff. Father! It is a crow, a crow. A little after the father again asked his son; what is this? This time the son replied to his father with a vein of temper. Father: You are always repeating the same question, although I have told you so many times that it is a crow. Are you not able to understand this? A little later the father went to his room and came back with an old diary. Opening a page of the diary he asked his son to read that. When the son read it the following words were written in the diary:

Today my little son was sitting with me in the courtyard, when a crow came there. My son asked me twenty-five times what it was and I told him twenty-five times that it was a crow and I did not at all feel irritated. I rather felt affection for the innocent child.

The father then told the son the difference saying: between a father and a son's attitude, while a little child he asked me this question twenty-five times and and I felt no irritation in replying to the question twenty-five times and when today I asked him the same question only five times, he felt irritated and annoyed.

Kindness to, and nice behaviour with parents

Any way, Almighty Allah wants you to note that in old age parents become somewhat irritable. At this stage they may utter words which may be unpleasant. You must endure these words from your parents patiently as they endured more undesirable and annyoing words from you when you were little children. This is so important that even about infidel parents Allah has said in His Book.

وَاِنْ جٰهَدٰكَ عَلٰٓى اَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِىْ مَالَيْسَ لَكَ بِهٖ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا وَ صَاحِبْهُمَا فِى الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوْفًا ز (لقمان:١٥)

This means:

If they (your parents) compel you to commit *shirk* (polytheism) with Me, then do not obey them. Associate with them in the world with kindness. (31:15)

According to this verse Allah forbids you to obey your parents if they press you to become *Mushriks* (polytheists), yet He commands you to behave with them nicely in the life of this world, because they are your parents.

Order of things have changed now. The young boys are being so taught and trained as to disown their loyalty to parents. They are being advised that being human beings all are equal in rights and liabilities.

Such misleading ideas spring up in man's mind when he goes astray from *Deen* and the fervour of obeying. Allah and His Prophet ﷺ cools down and the thought of the Hereafter vanishes from his mind. May Almighty Allah save us from this. *Aameen.*

The curse of disobeying parents

Obeying parents is an obligatory duty. If the parents order their children to do anything, that order becomes

binding on them, just as praying is binding on a believer, provided the act ordered by parents is lawful in the *Shari'ah*. This is called حقوق الوالدين which means disobedience to parents. The learned divines have said that a man disobedient to his parents is prevented from reciting the *Kalimah* at the time of death.

An event full of moral lessons

It is written about a person that at the time of his death he was going through the throes of death. People around him were trying to make him recite the *Kalimah*, but he was unable to recite it. The people, therefore, brought a saint and asked him what to do. The saint advised that if the man's mother or father was alive they should seek her/his pardon for him. One of the parents, it seems is displeased with the man because of his disobedience. This has brought this curse on him. The *Kalimah* would not run on his tongue, unless his parents pardon him. Look, how serious and dangerous it is to disobey and displease parents! At every step the Holy Prophet ﷺ has laid stress on according nice behaviour with parents and has advised his noble companions رضی اللہ عنہم accordingly.

Parents' permission for receiving education

Among the students who come to seek admission to our Darul-Uloom for receiving religious education are some who do this witout the permission of their parents. When questioned on this point they say that their parents do not give them permission to receive this education. I tell such students that to become a Molvi is not compulsory but to obey parents is an obligatory duty (*Farz*). As explained earlier, it is not necessary to obey parents if they stop their children from some obligatory duties, like Prayer, Fasting, etc. As regards education to

become a Movli or the like, parents' permission is necessary, because it is neither compulsory nor obligatory to become a *Molvi*. If one insists on following one's own choice by disobeying the parents,it is not *Deen*; it is the satisfaction of one's fancy. May Allah help us understand this truth. *Aameen.*

An easy way to win Paradise

Bear in mind well that the parents are a great blessing as long as they are alive. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith that to cast a loving glance on parents is equal in reward to a *Hajj* and *'Umrah*. In another Hadith he ﷺ has said: Condemned be he who gets his paretns in their old age but fails to have his sins pardoned by them. If parents are old and living with you it is very easy for you to win Paradise. Just serve them with obedience and kindness. If they are pleased with, and pray for you, your Hereafter will be ameliorated. So, as long as parents are alive win their hearts with service and obedience and value them, so that you may not have to regret your negligence towards them when they are no more in this world.

How to compensate for negligence towards parents after their death

It is not uncommon that after the death of their parents their sons/daughters feel remorse for their disobedience to, and misbehaviour with their paents. They realize from the cores of their hearts the blessings and rewards they lost on account of their indeference to their parents while they were living with them. Allah has however, kept open two ways out for such unfortunate sons/daughters. Firstly, they should transmit to the souls

of their parents reward earned through charity, optional prayers, and recitation of the Holy Qur'an etc. Secondly, they should behave with kindness and sympathy with the friends, relatives and acquaintances of their paretns. Almighty Allah is so merciful that by such posthumous remorse and good deeds He makes good the negligence committed by the sons/daughters towards their parents while they were living.

The mother has three rights as against the father who has only one right

عن ابی هریرة رضی الله عنه قال جاء رجل الی رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم فقال یا رسول الله من احق الناس بحسن صحبتی؟ قال امك قال ثم من؟ قال امك قال ثم من؟ قال امك قال ثم من؟ قال ابوك (جامع الاصول، جلد ۱، ص۳۹۷)

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه has narrated that a man called on the Holy Prophet ﷺ and asked: O Prophet of Allah who in the entire world is more deserving of my kindness and nice behaviour? The Holy Prophet ﷺ said:Your mother. He again put the same questin and the Prophet ﷺ gave the same reply. He put the same question the third time and the Holy Prophet ﷺ gave the same reply, saying: Your mother. When the man put the same question the fourth time, the Holy Prophet ﷺ replied saying: your father.

Thus, we see that in this Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ referred to the mother three times and to the father only once. The learned divines have concluded that the mother's rights are three-fold of the rights of the father.

This is because the father does not endure even one-fourth of the distress and torture which the mother endures in giving birth to, and bringing up, the child.

Due respect to father and devoted service to mother

The learned divines have advised that if one has to give a gift or present to one's parents, the mother deserves a greater share of it. They have also differentiated between respect and devoted service. In the matter of respect the father has preference over the mohter, but in the matter of kindness and devoted service, the mother has preference over the father which is estimated at the ratio of three to one for mother and father.

Almighty Allah has, in His wisdom, made it a natural tendency that the children are more informal and free with the mother. There are many things which a son can tell his mother freely without any hesitation but he cannot tell the same to his father. The Islamic *Shari'ah* has kept this natural tendency in view. Hafiz Ibn Hajar رحمة الله علیه has mentioned in the Fathul-Bari, the principle stated by the divines that sons/daughters should accord more respect to their fathers, but more kindness and service to their mothers. This principle reconciles the varying versions of the Ahadith to one another.

The result and reward of service to mothers

Kindness shown and service rendered to a mother are virutes which elevate a man to unknown heights of excellence and honour as we have seen in the case of Hazrat Owais Qarni رضی الله عنه. The same achievements have been stated in books by the learned divines. It is stated about Imam Ghazali رحمة الله علیه that he could not devote

himself to learning and education for a long time on account of his devotion and service to his mother. When he was relieved of his service to his mother, Allah granted him a very high position in the field of learning, piety and knowledge. One should, therefore, avail oneself of this great virtue.

So go and do good to them

وعن عبد الله بن عمرو بن العاص رضى الله عنهما قال اقبل رجل الى نبى الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال ابايعك على الهجرة والجهاد ابتغى الاجر من الله تعالى فقال هل من والد يك احد حى قال بل كلا هما قال فتبتغى الا جرمن الله تعالى؟ قال نعم قال فارجع الى والديك فاحسن صحبتهما (مسند احمد: ج ٥ ص ٣٦٨)

This is narrated by Hazrat Abdullah bin Amr bin Al-'as رضى الله عنهما who said: One day a man called on the Holy Prophet ﷺ and siad: O Prophet of Allah! I have come to you to swear allegiance on two points. The first is *Hijrat* (migration) and the second is *Jihad* for the sake of reward. (That is I want to leave my home and migrate to Madinah and take part with you in *Jihad*). The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked him if any of his parents was alive: He replied: Yes, both of them are alive. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said to him: Do you really desire return and reward? He replied in the affirmative. The Holy Prophet ﷺ then said: Instead of taking part with me in *Jihad*, go back to your parents and do good to them.

Go and make your parents laugh

Just see how in this Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has advised to sacrifice the excellence and virtue of *Jihad* with him ﷺ for doing good and being kind to parents, and sent the man back. It occurs in a narrative that once the Muslims were preparing for *Jihad*. A man called on the Holy Prophet ﷺ and offered to take part in the *Jihad*, adding that he was so fond of *Jihad* that he left his parents weeping, because of his separation. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said to him.

ارجع فاضحكهما كما ابكيتهما (مسند احمد: ج ٢ ص ٢٠٤)

That is:

go back to them to pelase them and make them laugh as you left them sad and weeping.

You are not allowed to take part with me in *Jihad*.

Deen (Faith) is the name of abiding by limits

Our Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say that *Deen* is the name of abiding by and maintaining the prescribed limits. It is no *Deen* to rush to *Jihad* on hearing its reward and virtue, leaving behind all other demands of *Deen*. In the matter of *Deen* actions have to be taken with due regard to the injunctions of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ. My father, Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say that nowadays the people have become one sided. They doggedly pursue only one aspect of a matter, ignoring all other aspects, like a single-bridled horse that can go only in one direction. When they come to knew the virtue of some act they run after it, leaving behind all other acts that are more pressing and compulsory. This is transgressing the prescribed limits.

Company of Godly men

This virute of abiding by and protecting the limits is not generally attainable, unless one finds the company of some Godly man. I have said and you have heard something about this virtue and you may read lessons about it in books. However, it is not possible without the company of an accomplished Shaikh to know what one should prefer and what one should ignore and on what occasions. Without the company of a Shaikh man remains entangled in excesses and shortages. It is he who can diagnose and prescribe for you the right path to follow.

When men came to Hazrat Maulana Ashraft Ali Thanwi Sahib رحمة الله عليه for spiritual reform, he would ask most of them to give up their *wazaif* (daily round of incantations) and engage them in other actions. He knew very well that if they followed their usual incantations (*Wazaif*) they would not maintain the limits.

Shari'at*, *Sunnah* and *Tariqat

Dr. Abdul Hai Sahibr رحمة الله عليه used to say that "rights" fall largely within the definition of *Shari'ah*. In other words, *Shari'ah* is the name of "rights" - the rights of Allah and of His servants. The "limits" are all *Sunnah*, i.e, it is the *Sunnah* from which we know the prescribed limits of each "rights". The protection and maintenance of the limits are in them entirely. "*Tariqat*" which is also called "*Tasawwuf*" and "*Sulook*". The limits which are proved by the *Sunnah* ae maintained by "*Tasawwuf*" and "*sulook*." In short, the "rights" come within the "*Shari'ah*", the limits, within the *Sunnah* and the maintenance and protection of the rights within the *Tariqat*. If these three degrees are attained nothing more is needed. However, generally these degrees are not attained unless man strives

hard under the guidance and supervision of a divine Sheikh:

There is a Persian Couplet which means: give up speech and argumentation and become a man of spiritual ecstasy. Let yourself be humbled before an accomplished Shaikh for spiritual uplift.

This aim cannot be achieved, unless a man submits himself with due humiliation to the attention and training of a genuine Shaikh. Without this he will be drifting this direction and that direction and will be caught between extremes instead of following the golden mean. It is the Shaikh who will teach his disciples the demands of the times. May Allah help us all to follow the right course. *Aameen*!

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

BACKBITING
A GRIEVOUS SIN OF THE TONGUE

الحمدلله نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهد ان لااله الاالله وحده لا شريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا وسندنا ونبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطٰن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

وَّلَا تَجَسَّسُوْا وَلَا يَغْتَبْ بَّعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا ؕ اَيُحِبُّ اَحَدُكُمْ اَنْ يَّاْكُلَ لَحْمَ اَخِيْهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوْهُ ؕ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيْمٌ (سورة الحجرات ١٢)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم وصدق رسوله النبى الكريم ونحن على ذلك من الشاهدين والشاكرين والحمد لله رب العالمين

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and

seek His help and forgiveness. We beleive in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. None can misguide him whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom He lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no God except Allah, the One. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our Master, our Authority, our Prophet and our Sire, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah shower mercy on him, on his household on his Companions and may He bless them and salute them a great deal.

And do not spy, nor backbite one another. Would one of you love to eat the flesh of his dead brother which you would abhor (to eat)? And fear Allah. Allah is surely Relenting, Merciful. (49: 12)

Backbiting is a heinous sin

Imam Nuwa-wee رحمة الله عليه is beginning to deal with those sins which are committed by the tongue. First of all he has taken up that sin which has become very common among the people. That is the sin of "Backbiting". This is a calamity which has pervaded our assemblies and our society. No gathering, nor any dialogue is free from it. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has warned us of very severe punishment for it and Allah has used very threatening words which He has not used against any other sin. Thus, He has said:

وَلَا يَغْتَبْ بَّعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا ۚ اَيُحِبُّ اَحَدُ كُمْ اَنْ يَّاْكُلَ لَحْمَ اَخِيْهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوْهُ ۚ (سورة الحجرات ١٢)

That is:

Do not backbite one another. Would one of you love to eat the flesh of his dead brother which you would abhor (to eat)? When you will not like to eat the flesh of your dead brother, then do not backbite your brother; this is a sin equally abhorrent. (49 : 12)

Just think how many calamities of backbiting have been mentioned in this verse, viz, (1) to become a man-eater (2) the man eaten is your own brother (3) and he is not alive, but he is dead. So heinous, abhorrent and dangerous is the sin of backbiting.

Definition of "Backbiting"

"Backbiting means speaking ill of a man in his absence, irrespective of that the ill spoken of is found or not found in the man concerned. It is backbiting to speak of an ill in the absence of the person even though he may be actually involved in that ill. It occurs in a Hadith that a companion رضى الله عنه begged the Holy Prophet ﷺ to define 'Backbiting'. He ﷺ replied saying:

ذكرك اخاك بما يكره

To tell something about your brother in his absence which he would dislike to hear.

That companion again asked:

ان كان فى اخى ماقول

Even if what I say about my brother is found in him? The Holy Prophet ﷺ explained to the companion رضى الله عنه that if the evil or defect is presnent in the person concerned, it is "Backbiting". If the evil or defect is not found in him and it is being falsely attributed to him, it is not "Backbiting", but it is slander which is a double sin.

(Abu Dawood Book of Adab, Ch. on Backbiting, Hadith No: 4874)

Now turn a glance at our assemblies, gatherings and parties; how common this heinous sin has become and is being committed day and night! May Allah protect us all from this. *Aameen.*

In order to justify this sin some people say: I am not backbiting him; I can say this on his face. According to them if they can speak ill on the face of a person then it is not "Backbiting" if they are speaking the same ill in the absence of the person conerned. Bear in mind that it is "Backbiting", if you speak ill of a person in his absence which the man would dislike to hear then you can speak that ill even on his face has no relevance to the issue and cannot change the definition of Backbiting given by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. "Backbiting" is also major sin.

Backbiting is a Major Sin

Backbiting is a major sin like drinking wine, committing dacoity, adultery etc. There is no difference between these sins, Backbiting and these sins are major sins and are forbidden totally. Backbiting being a violation of the rights of the servants of Allah, is more heinous than the other major sins. The sin of Backbiting cannot be pardoned, unless the person against whom this sin is committed pardons it. Other major sins are pardoned through sincere repentance, but not backbiting. All are, threfore, advised neither to commit the sin of Backbiting nor listen to it. Also try to change the topic of the talk, if Backbiting is going on in an assembly of men. If you do not succeed in changing the topic of the talk, leave the assembly at once. As already mentioned, committing the sin of "Backbiting" and listening to "Backbiting" are both unlawful and forbidden (*Haram*).

Let them tear their faces

عن انس بن مالك رضى الله تعالى عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لما عرج بى مررت بقوم لهم اظفار من نحاس يخمشون بها وجوههم وصدورهم فقلت! من هؤلاء ياجبريل؟ قال هؤلاء الذين يأكلون لحوم الناس ويقعون فى اعراضهم (ابو داؤد، كتاب الادب، باب فى الغيبة، حديث نمبر ٤٨٧٨)

Hazrat Anas bin Malik رضی اللہ عنہ was a favourite servant of the Holy Prophet ﷺ who swerved him ﷺ for ten years. He رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: In the night during Ascension in which I was taken up I passed by people who were tearing their faces with their nails. I asked Hazrat Jibrael علیہ السلام to tell me who they were. He replied saying: They are people who used to eat other people's flesh and cast slur on the honour of others.

Backbiting is worse than adultery

The Holy Prophet ﷺ explained the heinousness of the sin to the companions رضی اللہ عنہم in various ways. We should also keep in view all those aspects, so as to implant on our hearts their vices. May Almighty Allah save us from this grievous sin. You see in this Hadith how the sinners will be tearing their faces with their own nails. There is another Hadith which is not so authentic in point of its authority but is quite plausible in point of its meaning. In this Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ is narrated to have said: The sin of Backbiting is more henious than the sin of adultery. The sin of adultery is pardonable when the sinner repents and expresses regret and remorse. As for the sin of "Backbiting" and slander, it cannot be pardoned unless the person who was subjected to Backbiting and slander is prepared to pardon it and that is a very difficult matter, indeed.

The Backbiter will be prevented from entering Paradise

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith that those addicted to Backbiting will be people having to their credit apparently very nice deeds in the form of prayers, fasting and other forms of worship. While passing through the "*Pul-sirat*" (a bridge over Hell), those entitled to Paradise will pass through it safely and enter Paradise. Those who are condemned to Hell will be pulled down to Hell. As for the Backbiter, he will be stopped from passing through the bridge. He will be told that he cannot go ahead unless he gets his sin of Backbiting pardoned by those against whom he had committed the sin.

Backbiting is the worst form of Usury

In a Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has gone to the extent of saying that Usury is a very heinous sin. In fact it is a combination of many sins. The least of these is like committing adultery with one's own mother - God-forbid! No threat of punishment is as severe as the punishment for Usury. Thereafter the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: The worst form of Usury is to slander the honour of a Muslim brother. How severe and dangerous is this threat! (Abu Dawood ..... Hadith No: 4876)

Backbiting is like eating the flesh of a dead brother

It occurs in a narrative that there were two women during the Prophet's time. They observed fast and during fasting they became busy with conversation which involved them, as is usual in the sin of Backbiting. In the meantime a companion رضی اللہ عنہ called on the Holy Prophet ﷺ and informed him, saying: Two women are fasting, but their

condition has become so hopeless that they are almost dying. Perhpas the Holy Prophet ﷺ had come to know about them through *Wahi* (revelation). He ﷺ ordered these women to be brought to him. When the women were brought to the Holy Prophet ﷺ, he saw them in a very hopeless condition. He sent for a big cup and asked one of the women to vomit into it. During vomitting it was seen that pus, blood and pieces of flesh came out from her stomach. The other woman was also asked to vomit into the cup. She also vomitted pus, blood and pieces of flesh with which the cup became full. The Holy Prophet ﷺ then said: This is the pus, blood and flesh of those your brothers and sisters which you had eaten during your fasting.

During fasting you refrained from lawful food and drink but you did not refrain from unlawful food, i.e. the blood and flesh of your Muslim brothers and sisters. As a result, these nauseating things filled your stomachs and you both reached this hopeless state. Never backbite anyone again. Here Almighty Allah showed the curse of this heinous sin in its visible and real form.

The truth is that we have lost good sense and have bcome insensitive, so we are unable to realize the heinousness of such sins. Those who possess the right sense and the fine feelings can observe the hidden curses of these sins.

A dream full of admonition

A man named Rub'ee relates that once he went to an assembly of men and sat with them. They were having conversation with one another. During this they began to backbite someone. To avoid becoming a party to the backbiting the man, following the injunction of the *Shari'ah*, left the assembly. Thinking that backbiting

would have stopped he again went to the assembly. After a few minutes backbiting again started. This time not only did the man not leave the assembly, but he also said a few words by way of backbiting.

When the man left the assembly went home and slept during that night he saw in a dream a very black man who had brought with him some meat in a very large tray. He found that the flesh was pork. The black man asked the man to eat it. The man, being a Muslim, refused to eat pork. The black man insisted on the other man to eat that pork and began to thrust it into the man's mouth by force. In this very horrifying condition the man awoke from sleep. Shortly after this when the man was taking his meal at meal time he felt in the food the foul-smelling and a nauseating taste of pork. He felt this foul smell and disgusting taste for thirty days. By this event Allah warned the man against the curse of taking part in Backbiting. May Allah save us all from this curse.

The Darkness of eating forbidden (*Haram*) things

The fact is that on account of the worsening of the environment altogether, we have become insensitive and we do not feel that a sin is sin. Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Yaqoob Sahib Nanotawi رحمة الله عليه often related an incident with him. He said that once he ate in a feast one or two morsels from food the lawfulness and purity of which was doubtful. He felt the darkness of these morsels in his heart for many months. This had the effect of creating in him desires to commit sins.

Sins also have the effect of creating in the heart darkness which in turn, urges the sinner to commit sins after sins. This is very harmful indeed. May Allah save us from this.

The crux of the problem is that the sin of Backbiting is a very heinous and dangerous sin. This can be felt only by those whom Allah has granted the right sense to understand the reality of things.

Occasion on which Backbiting is allowed

It is necessary to understand clearly the definition of Backbiting which has already been given. It is to speak ill of a person in his absence in such a way that the man if he heard that, would dislike that, even if the ill attributed to the man is a truth. The Islamic *Shari'ah* has, however, granted an allowance to every matter, in consideration of the temparament and nature of man and his lawful needs. The *Shari'ah* has, therefore, excluded from "Backbiting" certain sins which apparently fall within the definition of "Backbiting".

To commit Backbiting to save someone from another's wickedness

Take an example. A man is doing something which is likely to harm another man. If in such a situation you inform the latter of the former's plan to save an Allah's servant from possible loss and harm, this is not "Backbiting". The Holy Prophet ﷺ has himself taught this rule. Hazrat Ayeshah رضى الله عنها has narrated that once she was sitting with the Holy Prophet ﷺ and a man was seen coming to them. While the man was yet in the way, the Holy Prophet ﷺ pointed out to him and told Hazrat Ayeshah رضى الله عنها:

بئس اخو العشيرة

That is:This man is the worst of his tribe.

Hearing this Hazrat Ayeshah رضى الله عنها became alert,

lest that bad man should do some harm. When the man came near and sat in the assembly, the Holy Prophet ﷺ spoke to the man according to his habit polite words. When the man went away, Hazrat Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا said to the Holy Prophet ﷺ: O Prophet of Allah! you said that this is a bad man, but when came and sat near you, you talked to him very mildly and politely. What is the matter? The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied, saying: Look, he is the worst man of his tribe. He is wicked by his very nature. If he is not treated politely he may create confusion and corruption. That is why I talked to him politely according to my habit(Tirmizi ..... Hadith No: 1996)

The learned Ulama have explained the meaning of this Hadith in this way. The Holy Prophet ﷺ fore-warned Hazrat Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا that the man was wicked. This fore-warning is apparently a case of "Backbiting", because this ill comment was made in the man's absence. This apparent Backbiting is, however, lawful, because His ﷺ intention was to warn Hazrat Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا to beware of the wickedness of that person. It is, therefore, not Backbiting to warn someone against the wickedness of a wicked person in the latters absence.

If the life of a person is in danger

In certain situations it is compulsory to mention the wickedness of a wicked person. For example, you have come to know that a man is planning to attack and kill another person. In such a situation it becomes obligatory for you to tell the other person that an enemy is planning to kill him and his life is in grave danger, so the person in danger may take necessary measures to save himself from the murderer. So, on such occasions Backbiting is not a sin; it is lawful.

To backbite a person who commits a sin openly and above board

There is a Hadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ which the people generally do not interpret correctly. The words of the Hadith are:

لاغيبةَ لِفاسقٍ ولا مُجاهرٍ

People interpret this Hadith to mean that if a person is committing a major sin, it is allowed to backbite him. Likewise it is allowed to backbite one who is committing "*Bid'aat*" (Innovations in *Deen*). This interpretation is not correct. The correct meaning of the Hadith is that if a man is committing sins openly and himself feels no shame in his sins, it is no sin of backbiting in talking about his sins. For example, a man drinks wine openly and he will feel no shame pinching at all if you say to anyone in his absence that he is a drunkard. So, it is not backbiting to talk to others in his absence about his drinking.

This too is included in the sin of Backbiting

If a man is drinking wine and earning money by usury openly it is not backbiting to talk about these sins in his absence. On the other hand if there is a sin which the same person commits secretly and the sin is such as does not harm others, it will be backbiting to talk about this sin to others in the absence of the sinner. This is the correct interpretation of this Hadith.

The Backbiting of a sinner and wrongdoer is not lawful

Hazrat Thanawi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has said that Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ, was pesent in an assembly. In this asembly someone began to speak ill of Hajjaj bin

Yusuf. Hazrat Abdullah bin 'Umar رضی اللہ عنہ objected to this and said that it was backbiting and warned that backbiting Hajjaj bin Yusuf had not become lawful, because he was responsible for murdering many persons. When Almighty Allah shall call to account Hajjaj bin Yusuf for the murders committed by him, He shall also call to account to man who is backbiting him. May Allah save us from this.

Thus, we should not think that as such a person is a sinner, wrongdoer or a *Bid'ati* (Innovator), so we are free to backbite him. No, we are under obligation not to backbite him.

It is not Backbiting to speak ill of a tyrant

The Islamic *Shari'ah* has allowed backbiting on another occasion. For example, a tyrant commits tyranny on you. If you mention the case of this tyranny on you to others, this is no sin and no backbiting, whether or not those to whom you are complaining against the tyrant are able to redress the wrong done to you. For example someone has stolen something from your house and you lodge a report against him with the nearest Police Station and nominate the thief in your report. This is not backbiting, even when you report against the thief to the Police in his absence, because you have been wronged and you have protested against that wrong.

If you mention this case of theft to such people as have called upon you to express sympathy with you but have no authority to help you against the thief, even then it is not backbiting.

Now see how the Islamic *Shari'ah* has taken into consideration the trends of human nature. If some wrong is done to a man and he suffers some loss, he tries to

lighten his grief by telling the details of his loss to others and consoles himself in this way. This involves no backbiting whether those who are informed of this loss have or have not any authority and say in the matter

لَا يُحِبُّ اللّٰهُ الْجَهْرَ بِالسُّوْٓءِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ اِلَّا مَنْ ظُلِمَ ۭ (سورۃ نساء: ۱۴۸)

Almighty Allah does not like that men should talk about a vice (sin) freely and openly, except that a man who has been wronged has permission to tell others the wrong and excesses done to him by a wrongdoer. This is lawful and is not included in backbiting. These are, however, exceptional cases which Almigty Allah has excluded from the sin of backbiting. We are addicted in our meetings and assemblies to indulge in talks about others' faults and shortcomings as a pastime and source of recreation. This is all backbiting. We should all try to feel pity on ourselves and stop this practice by excercising check on our tongues. May Allah save us all from this curse.

Resolution and courage are needed to give up the sin of Backbiting

I have said and you have heard my discourse about Backbiting, but this is not enough to eradicate the sin. Resolution, firm decision and courage are needed to resist the temptation of backbiting. Just resolve that from today onwards no word of backbiting will God willing, escape from this tongue. If you relapse into the evil by mistake, repent for it at once. A better and more effective remedy is to crave pardon of the person whom you have backbitten. It looks difficult to do so but there are men who follow this course for fear of Allah.

The Remedy for getting rid of Backbiting

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has said that some men called on him confessing that they had backbitten him and for this they begged his pardon. Maulana's reply to such men was: I shall pardon you on the condition that you tell me the point on which you had backbitten me, so that I may know what the people say behind my back.

کہتی ہے تجھے خلق خدا غائبانہ کیا

What do the people say about you in your absence?

The Maulana's motive in imposing this condition was to know the ills of which the people spoke of him,so that he would try to purify himself from those ills or defects, if they were really found in him.

If you unfortunately ever commit the sin of backbiting, the remedy is to confess the sin before the person backbitten and beg him to pardon you. The pill is indeed very bitter and hard to swallow but if swallowed three or four times it will bring cure from the evil of backbiting. Haazrat Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه has suggested another remedy for this evil. When tempted to speak ill of a person, the man should at once think of his own faults and shortcomings and that no man is free from defects and weaknesses in this world. The man should search for his own vices instead of prying into others. He should also remember the severe punishment for backbiting mentioned above. He should also pray to Allah from the core of his heart to protect him from this major sin. When a man happens to be in an assembly and the talk seems to turn to backbiting he should at once seek refuge with Allah from this evil.

Expiation for Backbiting

There are some narratives on this subject which are weak in authority but quite right in their meaning. They suggest that if unfortunately anyone commits this sin of backbiting and it is not possible to seek the victim's pardon personally on account of death or some other cause, the backbiter should pray for the victims of his backbiting that Allah may have mercy on them and forgive him for his sin of backbiting.

How to compensate the outstanding rights and dues of others

The measures taken in this behalf by Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه and my respected father, Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه was that each of them sent a circular letter to all, seeking, for the sake of Allah, their pardon of what excesses and wrongs he might have committed against them during his life Each expected that the people would be generous in accepting his request for pardon.

As regards such victims of backbiting as are no more alive or are not easily accessible for some reason, the measure suggested by Hazrat Hassan Basri رحمة الله عليه, mentioned above should be taken. It consists in praying heartily to Allah for the salvation and elevation of the rank of those who have been backbitten. This too is a way of compensation.

If we too follow this meausre of addressing circular letters to our friends, relatives and acquaintances seeking their pardon, this does not involve any insult or disgrace for us. It is not unlikely that in this way Merciful Allah may procure pardon for us from the curse of this heinous sin that is Backbiting.

The Excellence of seeking and offering pardon for sins

It occurs in a Hadith that if a servant of Allah sincerely begs someone's pardon and the latter, feeling the former's sincerity and entreaty grants him pardon, Allah is very much pleased with the person who grants pardon. Almighty Allah will grant His pardon to this man on a day when he will be in a most pressing need of pardon. On the other hand there is a callous fellow who refuses to grant pardon to a person who is begging pardon with persistent entreaty. About such a callous person Almighty Allah has said that He shall not grant him pardon on a day when he will be in a most pressing need of pardon.

This is indeed a very serious issue. If a man has begged another man with submission and humbleness to grant him pardon, he has done his duty, whether the other man grants or does not grant him pardon. It is necessary that we should always be prepared to seek pardon of persons whose rights and dues we have failed to discharge.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has himself sought pardon

It is narrated that one day the Holy Prophet ﷺ stood up in the Prophet's Mosque and addressed all the companions رضی اللہ عنہم present there, saying:

Today I am surrendering myself to you. If anyone has received some hurt from me or if I have usurped any body's right in his money or life. I am present here before you. If you like you may take revenge on me or if you like you may pardon me, so that tomorrow on the Day of Judgment none of you may have his right or claim outstanding against me. When this is the attitude of the Holy Prophet ﷺ with regard to others' rights

where do we stand?

Think a bit! The greatest benefactor and leader of the world is a personality for the addition of only one breath to whose sacred life the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم were ready to sacrifice their lives. Even He ﷺ is saying: If I have beaten or caused distress to anyone he may take revenge from me. At this offer a Companion stood up, saying: O Prophet of Allah! Once you had beaten me on my waist and I want its revenge. Without expressing any displeasure the Holy Prophet ﷺ allowed the companion رضی اللہ عنہ to take revenge by beating him on the waist. When the companion رضی اللہ عنہ came behind the Propeht's waist he said: O Prophet of Allah, when you had beaten me my waist was bare, while your waist is covered with cloth. If I take revenge in this condition the revenge will not be complete. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had at the time a cloth sheet on his body. He offered to remove the sheet from his waist. No sooner did the Holy Prophet ﷺ bare his waist than the companion رضی اللہ عنہ advanced and kissed the seal of Prophethood on the Prophet's back. At this scene the companion said: O Prophet of Allah, I committed this audacity only to get an opportunity to kiss the seal, Kindly pardon my audacity.(Majm'uz-zawaid, vol. 9, P-27)

Thus, did the Holy Prophet ﷺ offer himself for revenge. Where do we stand? If we too follow the plan of issuing circular letters to friends, relatives and acquaintances, asking them for pardon, we lose nothing,but may possible gain pardon and Allah may grant us success by virtue of the Prophet's Sunnah. May Allah help us all to act upon this strategy.

A Golden Principle of Islam

There is a golden principle of Islam which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught us. It is that you should desire the same for others which you desire for yourself and conversely, you should dislike the same for others which you dislike for yourself. Now consider how you would feel if anyone spoke ill of you in your absence. If you would not appreciate this situation for yourself how would you appreciate it for your brother? To follow double standard of dealings is nothing but hypocrisy, as if backbiting contains a shade of hypocrisy as well. If you think over these aspects and the severe punishment ordained for backbiting, you will, God willing, be relieved of this sin gradually.

An easy way of getting rid of Backbiting

Hakimul-Ummat Maulana Ashraft Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه used to say that an easy way of refraining from backbiting is that one should avoid speaking anything good or bad about others. When you are praising anyone and are thinking that you are not speaking ill of anyone, this cunning Satan will cleverly insinuate during your praise something that will become backbiting by introducing the word "But -". This will convert praise into backbiting. So the Maulana has advised that we should shun talking about others- neither good nor bad. If you are ever forced by circumstances to praise anyone, then beware of Satan's insinuation.

Have an eye on Your own vices

Why do you worry about others' short-comings? Look into your own defects and faults, because you will not be called to account for others' faults. You have to account for your own deeds and take the consequences in

the form of reward or punishment.

You have nothing to do with the sins and vices of others. Look at your ownself. When a man is aware of one's own defects and shortcomings he does not worry about the defects and faults of others. The late famous royal poet, late Bahadur Shah Zafar رحمة الله عليه has composed very nice couplets on this topic in Urdu :

تھے جب اپنی برائیوں سے بے خبر
رہے ڈھونڈتے اوروں کے عیب و ہنر

پڑی اپنی برائی پر جو نظر
تو نگاہ میں کوئی برا نہ رہا

(When I was unaware of my own vices, I used to search for the bad and good aspects of others. The moment I looked at my own vices, I found that there was none worse than I).

May Allah help us to look into our hearts to find our own defects Amen. The main cause of this corruption is that we do not look into our own selves. We are busy speaking ill of others totally forgetting that we have at last to go into our graves and account for our deeds, good or bad, before Almighty Allah. Let us, for God's sake, try to get rid of this vice.

Change the trend of the talk

This is a difficult work indeed, in the condition and the society we are passing by. Still if it had been impossible for man to shun this vice, i.e., Backbiting, Allah would not have made it unlawful so, it is within the power of man to save himself from this sin. When you are in an assembly and feel that the topic of the talk is drifting towards backbiting, try to bring it back. If you are ever

involved in this sin, seek Allah's pardon and renew your resolve to refrain from it in future.

"Backbiting" is the root of all vices

Bear in mind that this "Backbiting" is the root cause of many evils like quarrels, mutual differences and mistrust, etc. The sin of Backbiting is to a large extent responsible for the deterioration and corruption so rampant in our society. A drunkard is generally looked down-upon in the society. The addict will himself feel the vice of the sin in his heart. As regards "Backbiting" neither the addict nor the people around him feel the vices inherent in it. They hardly feel that it is a grievous sin; even though both the sins are equal in severity and punishment. If you hate one you should also hate the other. So let your hearts feel the gravity of Backbiting.

To commit Backbiting through hints and signs

Once the mother of the believers, Hazrat Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا was present before the Holy Prophet ﷺ. By chance a mention of the mother of the believers, Hazrat Safiah رضی اللہ عنہا was made. She was of short stature. As a natural trend of human nature there is some feeling of jelousy among co-wives. While mentioning her name, Hazrat Ayesha رضی اللہ عنہا hinted at her short stature with the help of her hand, although she said nothing with her tongue. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said to Hazrat Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا: Today you have done a deed so vicious that if the foul smell and poison of this deed are thrown into the sea, it will turn the entire sea foul-smelling and poisonous. See how the Holy Prophet ﷺ condemned the sin of Backbiting even when it was committed not with the tongue but only by a sign made by the hand. He ﷺ is also reported to have said that even if he

was granted the entire wealth of the world, he would not mimic anyone in order to make fun of him and disparage him. (Tirmizi.....Hadith No: 2624)

Take care to refrain from Backbiting

To mimic anyone has now become a branch of the fine arts. The man who can mimic others nicely deserves admiration. However, see how the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that he would not mimic anyone even if he ﷺ was given the wealth of the entire world. You can now easily realize how seriously he has warned his *Ummah* against such frivolities. We fail to understand why the people hate drinking of wine and adultery but do not hate 'Backbiting', although no assembly is free from this vice. This needs to be shuned.

How to refrain from Backbiting

The method to keep yourself away from this sin is to bear in mind well the vice of this sin, then pray to Allah to protect you from this and then make a firm resolution to Allah that you would never, never commit this sin. Remember that you cannot abide by your resolution without Allah's assistance. Do not delay, but make this resolution and seek Allah's help just now.

Make a Resolution to refrain from Backbiting

Firm resolution is needed for every work. Nothing can be done in this world without this resolution. On the other hand, there is Satan to cause delay in the execution of every good deed by suggesting various plausible excuses for delay. So if the idea of doing a good deed occurs to your mind do it at once, rejecting Satan's insinuations.

It is a natural urge in man to feel anxious and worried

to acquire a job when he is unemployed, to pay off his creditors if he is in debts and to seek recovery if he is sick. Why then do we not feel worried when we are not able to free ourselves from this dangerous sin of Backbiting? Let an anxiety be aroused in your heart in this behalf. Offer two rakats of *Salat-e-Hajat* (prayer for the grant of a boon), and request Allah most submissively to save you from this evil. After this prayer take a resolution to give up this sin and impose on yourself a ban never to speak ill of anyone in future.

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has advised that if this does not help you, then impose a fine on yourself in money or in kind. For example, resolve that if you backbite anyone you will offer two *Rakats* of opitonal prayer or give as *Sadaqah* (charity) a given amount. It is hoped that by means of this self-imposed fine, the vice will be eradicated gradually. To get rid of this heinous sin one has to feel as anxious and concerned as one feels to recover from some serious illness. The disease of Backbiting is more deadly than any bodily illness, because it leads to Hell. It is necessary not only to save yourself but also to save your family, particularly the women who are more addicted to this sin. If the woman folk follow this advice and get rid of this sin, this will save the entire family from this curse. May Almighty Allah help us all to follow the right path. *Aameen.*

"Calumny" -a grievous sin

There is another equally grievous sin which resembles "Backbiting", it is rather more grievous. It is "Calumny". In the Arabic language it is called (*Nameemah*). In the Urdu language it has been translated as *chugli*, but it is not its correct translation. (*Nameemah*) is a sin in which the vice found (or not found) in a person is disclosed to another

person with the desire that the listner may do some harm to the person to whom the vice is ascribed and the man committing the sin of "*Nameemah*" may derive pleasure from this nasty scheme. This is a kind of Backbiting in which the intention is to cause some harm to the victim.

"Calumny" is worse than Backbiting

The Qur'an and the Ahadith have very much condemned this sin and have declared that it is more heinous than Backbiting. This is becausae in Backbiting it is not necessary that the backbiter should also desire that some harm or calamity should befall the victim. Such ill-will is however, necessarily present in "Calumny." The sin of "Calumny" is therefore, a combination of two sins; the one being Backbiting itself and the other being the desire to cause some harm or injury to a Muslim. That is why the Qur'an and the Ahadith contain warnings of severe punishment for this sin. It has been said in the Holy Qur'an:

هَمَّازٍ مَّشَّآءٍۭ بِنَمِيمٍ (سورة القلم: ١١)

That is: A slanderer, going about with calumnies (68:11)

While giving the attributes of the infidels, Allah has said that they walk like one who slanders and indulges in calumny towards others. In a Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said:

لا يدخل الجنة قتات

The calumniator will not enter Paradise.

Two reasons for the torment of the grave

There is a well-known Hadith in which it is narrated that once the Holy Prophet ﷺ was going somewhere with the Noble Companions رضى الله عنهم. On the way he ﷺ passed

by two graves. Pointing out to them, He ﷺ said to the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم:

انهما ليعذبان

meaning that the inmates of the two graves are being subjected to punishment. Almighty Allah had disclosed to him ﷺ the punishment of the graves. In another Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that Allah has, by His infinite mercy, concealed from us the cries of the punishment of the graves. If men heard these cries none would remain alive out of terror, nor do any work in life. It is Allah's great mercy that He has concealed the cries of the inmates of the graves. Notwithstanding this sometime Allah discloses the cries of the graves to some of His servants by way of an exception. As for these two graves, the Holy Prophet ﷺ asked the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم if they knew why the two were being punished. Then He ﷺ said: They are being punished for two sins from which it was not difficult for them to save themselves. If they wished, they could easily save themselves from the punishment.

The two reasons for punishment are that one did not save himself from the sprinkles of urine. He used to pass urine at a place from where fine drops of urine flew and polluted body or clothes. In those days people tended their goats and camels and lived among them and could not save themselves from tiny urine drops.(Musnad Ahmad, Vol-V, P-49)

Beware of sprinkles of Urine

Praise to Allah that Islam has taught the etiquette of cleanliness to the Muslims in full details. However, today under the influence of western civilisation great care is taken of external cleanliness but no attention is paid to the rules of the *Shara'ih* cleanliness.. Latrines are so

constructed that there is no protection from splashes of urine.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith:

استنزهوا عن البول فان عامة عذاب القبر فيه (سنن دار قطنی ج ۱ ص ۱۲۸)

Beware of pollution from urine, because punishment of the graves is genrally due to pollution of urine. Its splashes pollute the body and the clothes. Great care is needed to protect yourself from this.

Beware of "Calumny"

The other fellow of the grave was being punished because he used to culminiate others. The Holy Prophet ﷺ attributed the punishment of the grave to indulging in calumny, because the sin of calumny is more heinous than that of backbiting. In calumny the calumniator speaks ill of a person with the intention that the listener may be incited to harm the victim of the calumny.

It is Calumny to divulge a secret

Imam Ghazali رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has said that to divulge anothers' secret also comes within the definition of calumny. A man does not want that his secret should be divulged to others. For example, there is a rich man who wants to keep the amount of his wealth a secret, but another man some how finds out his secret and spreads it among others. This is calumny which is forbidden (*Haram*).

Take another example. A man chalks out a plan about his household, which you have come to know some how and are now spreading it among others. This also is "calumny". Likewise it is calumny to divulge someone's secret to others without his permission. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in another Hadith:

المجالس بالامانة

Whatever is said and heard in the assemblies is a trust. (Abu Dawood..... Hadith No: 4869)

Whatever is said and heard in the assemblies is a trust. For example, taking you to be a reliable person someone confides to you his secret, but you are disclosing that secret to others. This is also the betrayal of a trust and comes within the definition of backbiting.

Two serious sins of the Tongue

Today I want to mention two serious sins of the tongue. Both these sins are very grievous and dangerous. You have heard about their severity and grievousness in the Ahadith. It is regretful that the people are as unmindful and careless of these sins as the sins are dangerous and severe in punishment. These are being committed freely and with pleasure in every assembly, home and meeting without the slightest hitch. For Gods' sake control your tongue and use it according to the injunctions of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ. The sins are so devastating that homes and families are being disintegrated and broken, mutual enmity is being spread unchecked and Allah knows how many other vices are being nurtured by the curse of these sins in this world. The curse of these sins in the Hereafter are beyond man's imagination. May Allah, by His mercy, make us feel and understand the enormity and viciousness of these sins and ever keep us away from them. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.

Date : Friday 21st February, 1992
After 'Asr Prayers.

ETIQUETTES OF SLEEPING

الحمدلله نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهدان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له واشهدان سيدنا وسندنا ونبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطٰن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

عن البراء بن عازب رضى الله عنهما قال كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم اذا اوىٰ الى فراشه نام على شقه الايمن ثم قال اللهم اسلمت نفسى اليك ووجهت وجهى اليك و فوضت امرى اليك والجات ظهرى اليك رغبة ورهبة اليك لا ملجأ ولا منجأ منك الا اليك امنت بكتا بك

الذی انزلت وبنیك الذی ارسلت (صحیح بخاری، کتاب الدعوات، باب مایقول اذا نام)
قال قال لی رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم اذااتیت مضجعك فتوضا
وضوء ك للصلاة ثم اضطجع علی شقك الایمن وقل"وذکر نحوه"
(حوالہ سابقہ)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness. We beleive in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. None can misguide him whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom He lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no God except Allah, the One. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our Master, our Authority, our Prophet and our Sire, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah shower mercy on him, on his household on his Companions رضی الله عنهم and may He bless them and salute them a great deal.

A long *Du'a* (supplication) for reciting at bed-time

In this Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught us a *Du'a* (supplication) and the style of sleeping. See the kindness and sympathy of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that he has taught every thing concerning our life, just as a kind father teaches every thing to his innocent son. There is another Hadith narrated by the same Companion رضی الله عنه:-

Perform Ablution before going to bed

Hazrat Bara'a bin 'Azib رضی الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said to him: while going to bed for sleeping, perform ablution in the same way as you do for prayers. This is also a sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that man should go to bed after having performed ablution. Ablution is not compulsory for going to bed, yet the Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught us the etiquette of going to bed for sleeping that one should be in ablution.

The rules of Etiquette are dictated by love

The rules of etiquette which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has very kindly taught us are neither compulsory nor obligatory, yet they possess in them great spiritual lights. Our respected Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله علیه used to say that these compulsory and obligatory duties have been prescribed because they represent a right of Almighty Allah by virtue of His Greatness. As for such rules of etiquette as are only optional and desirable, they too represent a right of Almighty Allah by virtue of our love for Him and for the Holy Prophet ﷺ. All men should, therefore, adopt and act upon these rules. It is indeed a great mercy of Allah that He has not imposed them upon us as obligatory duties, but has left them to our option and choice. Even so, it is the duty of a good believer to observe as far as possible all these rules of etiquette which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught us in his *sunnah.*

When going to sleep lie down on the right side

It is a rule of etiquette to perform ablution before going to bed. None knows the wisdom and benefit concealed in the injunctions of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ. Who can imagine the extent of spiritual lights and

blessings with which these acts stand charged? It is also a rule of etiquette that a man should first lie on his right side and may, if necessary, change sides later on. While falling into sleep, establish contact with Allah and turn to Him by reciting the following beautiful words:

اللهم اسلمت نفسی الیك ووجهت وجهی الیك و فوضت امری الیك

والجات ظهری الیك رغبة ورهبة الیك لا ملجأ ولا منجأ منك الا الیك

امنت بكتا بك الذی انزلت وبنبیك الذی ارسلت

Entrust to Allah all the affairs of the day

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has used in this *Du'a* (supplication) so beautiful words that man may sacrifice himself for thier beauty and efficacy. He ﷺ has thus said: O Allah: I have surrendered myself to You; and have entrusted all my affairs to You; and have found support for my back with You out of longing for, and fear of You. There is no shelter and no place of safety from You but in You. I believe in the Book which You have sent down and the Prophet You have commissioned.

It is to say that man remains bsuy all day long, searching for livelihood, employment, trade or industry or similar other affairs until the day ends and he returns home to pass the night in his bed. It is man's natural tendency to review in his mind at the time of sleeping all his hopes and fears and anxieties about his property and business and other problems about the next day. How nice and befitting it is to turn to Almighty, All-Powerful, Allah and entrust to Him all your affairs, seeking His help and assistance and thus banishing from your mind all fears and worries!

"*Tafweez*" (Entrusting) brings peace and comforts

This "*Tafweez*" (Entrusting) implies reliance on Allah. After having done his best to achieve some thing man entrusts the matter to Allah for final disposal. In the *Du'a* mentioned above the Holy Prophet ﷺ has advised us to banish from our minds all anxieties and surrender everything to All-Powerful Allah.

سپردم با تو مایۂ خویش را

تو دانی حساب کم و بیش را

This is a Persian couplet which bring out the same meaning. It says: I entrust to Your care all my resources. You alone know what is less and what is more. Man cannot appreciate the state of this surrender and entrusting, unless he passes this state to experience it personally. Remember well that none in this world can attain safety, satisfaction, peace and tranquillity without surrender to and dependence on Allah.

There is a limit to human exertion and effort in every field. After having done his best man should leave his case to Allah for disposal. This is the difference between a Muslim and an unbeliever. The unbeliever exerts himself day and night to attain something and depends for success on his efforts and enedeavours. As a result he always remains worried and dejected. As regards a Muslim who has been granted the qualities of "Entrusting" and reliance on Allah, leaves the matter to his Allah for final disposal after having done his best to attain his goal. This leaves him free from anxiety and fear. That is why you are being advised to recite this *Du'a* whereby you surrender yourself and entrust your affairs to Allah.

There is only one place of refuge

Next it has been said:

والجات ظهرى اليك رغبة ورهبة اليك لا ملجأ ولا منجأ منك الا اليك

That is, I have totally taken refuge with Allah and cut myself off from all the worldly means and resources. No source of assistance except that of Allah is available for me. I have hope in Allah for mercy and fear Him for His wrath and revenge. On account of my sins. Next occurs in the *Du'a* a very wonderful sentence, viz.

لا ملجا ولامنجا منك الا اليك

This means:

There is no place of refuge from you except your place. I cannot look for protection to anyone other than you.

To protect yourself from the arrow take your seat by the side of the archer

Suppose that there is a great power with a bow in its hand. This bow is made of the entire sky and the entire earth is its string. The accidents and the calamities are, as it were, the arrows shot from this bow. Now the only shelter from the flying volley of arrows is that the man seeking protection should stand or sit by the side of the Archer, that is Allah Himself in this example. This is the interpretation of the words.

لا ملجأ ولامنجأ منك الا اليك

Learn a lesson from an innocent child

My elder brother has a grandson. One day he saw that the child's mother was beating him for some reason. He saw a strange scene. The more the mother beat the child, the more tenaciously the child lept into and clung to

the mother's lap, instead of running away from her. Why did the child do so? He did so, because he knew that the protection from the mother's beating was also available with the mother and with none else. Look! An innocent little child knows this reality.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ desires to create in us the same sense and understanding, viz., if some distress or calamity comes from Almighty Allah, the way of protection from it also lies with Allah. Seek that refuge and protection from Allah alone, as it can be found with none else.

You shall enter Paradise direct

He ﷺ said furhter:

امنت بكتا بك الذى انزلت وبنبيك الذى ارسلت

That is: I believe in the Book which You have sent down and in the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ whom You have commissioned. (He ﷺ has emphasized that these should be the last words on your tongue, when falling into sleep.

Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه advised some acts to be done at the time of going to sleep:-

Repent for all the sins committed durig the day, rather committed during the past life. Perform ablution. Recite the *Du'a* mentioned above in which there is refreshment of *Eeman* (belief). Lie on the right side.

By doing these acts the entire sleep becomes worship. If anyone dies in this conditin, he will, God willing, enter Paradise without any let or hinderance.

A brief *Du'a* before going to bed

وعن حذيفة رضى الله تعالى عنه قال كان النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم اذا اخذ مضجعه من الليل وضع يده تحت خده ثم يقول:" اللهم باسمك

اموت واحيا"واذا استيقظ قال:" الحمد لله الذى احيا نابعد ما اما تنا واليه النشور" (صحيح بخارى، كتاب الدعوات، باب مايقول اذا نام)

Hazrat Huzaifah رضى الله عنه has narrated that at the time of going to bed at night the Holy Prophet ﷺ placed his hand under his cheek and thereafter recited this *Du'a*: "اللهم باسمك اموت واحيا" O Allah I live and die with your name. (Sahih Bukhari. Book of *Da'wat*, for sleeping)

Sleep is minor Death

The *Du'a* which occured in the earlier Hadith is long. In this Hadith it is brief. However it is proved that both the *Du'as* are recited at bed-time. It is, therefore, suggested that these *Du'as* may be recited alternately, but it would be better if both are combined for recitation.

The second *Du'a* is very brief and easier to memorise. In this bed-time *Du'a* the Holy Prophet ﷺ has pointed out that sleep, too, is minor death, because during sleep man becomes totally unconcious, like a dead person. It is, therefore, necessary to think of the major death at the time of the minor death (sleep). This minor death comes upon man daily but after the major death man will rise on the Day of Resurrection, and not earlier. This should be kept in mind at all times and it should be confessed to Allah: O Allah I live and die with your name.

Du'a to recite on awaking from sleep

The Holy Prophet ﷺ recited this *Du'a* on awaking from sleep:

"الحمد لله الذى احيا نابعد ما اما تنا واليه النشور"

That is: Praise and thanks to Allah Who brought us to life after causing us to die and to Him is the resurrection.

After the minor death man rises every day but he has ultimately to face the major death after which there will be no return to this world.

Remember Death most frequently

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has been kind enough to teach us at every step two important lessons. One of them is to establish contact with, and to turn to, Allah, i.e., to remember Allah at every step. The other lesson is that He ﷺ has drawn our attention to the Hereafter. The power to give life and cause death vests in the hands of Allah. When man recites these *Ad'yiah* (supplications) every day while going to sleep and rising from it, he is sure to remember some day death and the events that come in the wake of death. After all, how long will he remain unmindful of his end and the Hereafter? These *Ad'iyah* (supplications) are very effective in arousing man's thoughts about the life after death. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has thus said:

اكثر واذكر هاذم اللذّات الموت (ترمذى، صفة القيامة، حديث نمبر ٢٤٦٠)

This means:

Remember most frequently Death which destroys all pleasures and enjoyments.

(Tirmizi.....Qiyamah, Hadith No: 2460)

By remembering death the thought is spontaneously born in man's mind that one day he will have to appear in the presence of Allah for reckoning. We are leading a life of carelessness - carelessness from the thought of death, from rendering accounts before Allah. If man begins to believe sincerely that after death he will be called to account for his deeds before his creator, he will become careful in his doings and deeds and will not disobey Allah. It is, therefore,

advised that all should recite these *Adyi'ah* and teach also their children and family to learn and recite them.

It is not good to lie down on one's belly

عن يعيش بن طحفة الغفارى رضى الله تعالى عنهما قال قال ابى بينما انا مضطبح فى المسجد على بطنى اذا رجل يحركنى برجله فقال ان هذه ضجعة يبغضهاالله" قال فنظرت فاذا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم"(ابو داؤد، كتاب الادب، باب فى الرجل ينبطح على بطنه، حديث نمبر ٥٠٤٠)

Hazrat Ya'eesh bin Ghifari رضى الله عنه has narrated that his father related to him this incident saying that one day he was lying down in the mosque, his belly downwards. Suddenly he felt that someone was goading him with his foot and was saying: Allah does not like this way of lying. When he turned to see what the matter was, he found that it was the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This is to say that the Holy Prophet ﷺ also did not like that way of lying down and warned Hazrat Ya'eesh Ghifari رضى الله عنه against that mode of lying, by goading him with his foot. This shows that it is disgusting to lie down on one's belly without justification.

That assembly will be regrettable

وعن ابى هريرة رضى الله عنه عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال من قعد مقعدا لم يذكر الله تعالى فيه كانت عليه من الله ترة ومن اضطجع مضجعا لا يذكر الله فيه كانت عليه من الله ترة(ابو داؤد، كتاب الادب باب كراهية ان يقوم الرجل..... الخ، حديث نمبر ٤٨٥٦)

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: If a man sits in an assembly in which Allah has not been remembered, nor has His name been mentioned in it, that assembly will become a cause of regret for him in the Hereafter, i.e he will wish with regret

that he had not been in that assembly in which Allah's name was not mentioned.

That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that no assembly of the Muslims should be devoid of the mention of Allah's name.

The plight of our assemblies

Let us now review the conditions of our assemblies to see how many of them fall victim to our negligence and carelessness and the sacred and blessed name of Allah is not remembered in them. The Holy Prohet ﷺ has said about such assemblies that on the Day of Judgment they will become a cause of regret and remorse. It has become a regular feature of our society to hold assemblies and devote them to idle and loose talk and thus waste the valuable time. When these meetings are held without any aim or undesirable aims and objections, they are sure to be indifferent to, and neglectful of, Allah's name. On the other hand there will be lies, backbiting and slanders in them, along with jokes and ridicules. An assembly oblivious of Allah's name is to become a place of sins and, according to the Holy Prophet ﷺ, a cause of regret and sorrow for the valuable time lost in meaningless gossips. The value of these moments will be realized at the time of reckoning on the Day of Judgment, before Almighty Allah. He will wish in vain, for the addition of one good deed to his Roll of Deeds. The Holy Prophet ﷺ who is kinder to us than our parents is calling our attention to reform ourselves and our assemblies before the arrival of the time of regret and remorse.

It is lawful to indulge in Recreation

It must however, be mentioned here that it is not the intention that man should grow morose and peevish, totally devoid of jolliness and become averse to recreation.

This is never the intention. It is narrated that when the Holy Prohpet ﷺ sat among his companions ﷺ he sometimes indulged in recreative remarks. He ﷺ has himself said:

روحوا القلوب ساعة فساعة (کنز العمال، حدیث نمبر ٥٣٥٤)

Recreate and relieve your hearts from time to time."(Kanzul-Ummal, Hadith No: 5354)

There is, therefore, no harm in light talk and recreation. It is narrated that in their assemblies with the Holy Prophet ﷺ sometimes they talked about life in the pre-Islamic days of ignorance. The Holy Prophet ﷺ listened to their accounts and sometimes smiled at them. It was, however, strictly forbidden in those assemblies to talk or do anything sinful, like slander, backbiting and calumny, etc. Further those assemblies were not devoid of Allah's remembrance. For example after saying something about the pre-Islamic days, they thanked Allah for saving them from the ignorance, darkeness and errors of those days. This was how the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم recreated themselves from time to time on the principle contained in these words:

دست بکار .... دل بیار

The hands are busy with their work, but the heart is concentrated on the remembrance of Allah

The unique versatility of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

The state of the mind and the heart indicated above seems to be easy but can be attained only by steady practice. My Shaikh Dr. Abdul Hai رحمۃ اللہ علیہ used to quote frequently Hazrat Maulana Thanawi's "It is difficult to understand how the Holy Prophet ﷺ was able to talk with his sacred wives about worldly affairs when he was all the time in communion with Allah, receiving Wahi (revelation), meeting angel and having conversation with Allah, and thus stationed at such an elevated seat of honour. Despite all this, the Holy Prophet ﷺ could find time to relate to Hazrat Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا at night the story of eleven women. These women had agreed among themselves that each would state in detail the conditon of her husband.(Shamail Tirmizi, chapter on the Propeht's night talks)

Hazrat Thanawi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ stated that in the beginning he could not understand how a personality so intimately attached to, and absorbed in Allah could take part in the recreation with Hazrat Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا and the other sacred wives. He says that later on he understood that these two apparently contradictory status could combine with each other. The secret beind this is that the recreation was being enjoyed for the sake of Allah and to obey Him in the matter of discharging the rights of these wives which Allah had imposed on him ﷺ. Thus, the communion or contact established with Allah continues unbroken and is also not weakened on account of this recreation. In fact this deepens the contact with Allah.

Compensation and Reward for expression of love

Once a man said to Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifah رحمۃ اللہ علیہ that when anyone has conversation with his wife and is

expressing love to her neither of them feel that what each is doing is in compliance with Allah's command. Will they even then receive reward from Allah? Hazrat Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه replied to this question in the affirmative. When once man has intended that he is doing all that in obedience to Allah and as ordained by Him, that is enough. It is not necessary to repeat the intention. He will be getting the reward on the basis of his initial intention. So Merciful is Almighty Allah!

Do every act only for the pleasure of Allah

Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to advise that after getting up from sleep in the morning one should offer the *Fajr* (morning) prayer, recite the Holy Qu'ran, complete all one's routine incantations (*Tasbeehat* and *Wazaif*). Thereafter everyone should make a covenant with Almighty Allah:

إِنَّ صَلَاتِيْ وَنُسُكِيْ وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِيْ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ (سورة الانعام: ١٦٢)

That is: certainly my worship and my sacrifice of animals and my living and my dying are for Allah (6:162)

This implies saying that a servant's all activities and movements including earning livelihood, entering the house, talking to children will be only for Allah, in obedience to His injunctions and to please Him. When man has once made this pledge to Allah then whatever one does under this pledge will be pure Deen done for Allah's pleasure. Not only will this not terminate but will strengthen the relations with Allah.

Hazrat Majzoob and Allah's remembrance

Almighty Allah had granted these qualities to all the successors of Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه. I heard this story repeatedly from my respected father Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه that Hazrat Khwaja Azizul Hasan Sahib Majzoob رحمة الله عليه a renowned successor of Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه, himself and some other saintly men assembled in the Madrasah (School) of Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Hasan Sahib. It was mango season. After having taken our supper we were eating mangoes and talking to one another freely and informally. Being a poet, Hazrat Majzoob Sahib رحمة الله عليه recited to us some poems also. About an hour passed in this way. Hazrat Majzoob رحمة الله عليه said: We have all been busy in gossip for about an hour. Tell me who has been neglectful of Allah's remembrance. Their reply was: We have all been busy with this gossip for an hour and have been unmindful of Allah and His remembrance. Hazrat Majzoob رحمة الله عليه said: It is Allah's kindness and mercy that I have not been oblivious of Allah's remembrance during this period. Now look, jokes and merry-making, recitation of poems in the usual poetical style and tone were going on during all this period, yet Hazrat Majzoob's heart and attention were not diverted from Allah's remembrance. He said that his heart remained concentrated on Allah.

This state of conversation is attained only by regular exercise and practice. May Allah grant us some part of this spiritual concentration which is a great blessing.

The "Needle" of the heart in the direction of Allah

I have seen a letter of my father addressed to Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه. The letter reads as follows:

"Hazrat! Just like the needle of the compass which

always point to the North, the needle of my heart points to Thana Bhawan (U.P-India) in all circumstances, whether I am working in the Madrasah or at home or am at a shop in the bazar.

We cannot understand this state unless Allah grants us all this state by His Mercy. It can, however be attained by effort and exercise. Man should try to form the habit of remembering Allah while walking, sitting or standing and feeling that he is with Allah. By means of this practice he can gradually attain this state, that in whatever action, talk or recreation he may be engaged the needle of his heart will always be pointing to Allah. We should all try to attain this state. *Aameen.*

Allah has created the heart for Himself

All the *Ad'yiah* (supplications) which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught us are intended to fix your heart on the remembrance of Allah, irrespective of the worldly work you may be doing. Allah has created the heart for Himslef. The rest of the limbs, e.g., the eyes, the nose, the ears the tongue etc., are meant for worldly affairs to attain thereby worldly objectives. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has explained this point in a Hadith in these words:

> "The best deed is that man's tongue should remain saturated with Allah's remembrance." Almighty Allah has created the tongue as a step leading to the heart. If you remain remembering Allah with the tongue, He will conduct this remembrance to the depth of the heart. This is the real objective of "*Tariqat*" "*Tasaw-wuf*" and "*Sulook*", that this heart may become saturated with Allah's remembrance and love and may ultimately turn into an exhibition screen to reflect and radiate His light at all times".

The *Du'a* (supplication) are *Kaffarah* (expiation) of an Assembly

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has mentioned in this Hadith that the assembly in which Allah's name is not mentioned will become on the Day of Judgment a cause for regret and remorse. That is why, for weak and careless persons the Holy Prophet ﷺ has prescribed easy remedies to save them from this regret. Thus, He ﷺ has taught us to recite these words when leaving an assembly:

سبحان ربك رب العزة عما يصفون وسلام على المرسلين والحمد لله رب العالمين

> Glorified is your Lord, the Lord of honour, above what they allege And peace be on the Messengers; and All praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.

If the assembly has so far been devoid of Allah's remembrance, it will now become blessed with His remembrance by the recitation of these words. Apart from this the recitation of these words will work as an expiation and compensation for any omission or shortcomings that marked that assembly. The other set of words are:

سبحنك اللهم وبحمد ك اشهدان لا اله الا انت استغفر ك واتوب اليك

(ابو داؤد، كتاب الادب، باب فى كفارة المجلس، حديث نمبر ٤٨٥٩)

(Abu Dawood.... Hadith No: 4859)

If both sets of these words are recited before leaving the assembly, that assembly will not be a cause for regret and remorse on the Day of Judgment - God willing. The fautls, shortcomings and minor sins, if any committed in that assembly will be pardoned. As for the major sins, they

cannot be pardoned in this way, unless the sinner repents for them. It is, therefore, necessary to avoid in such assemblies telling lies, backbiting, and causing distress to anyone. Major sins must be avoided.

Convert sleep into worship

The next sentence of this Hadith is:

ومن اضطجع مضجعًا لا يذكر الله تعالى فيه كانت عليه من الله ترة

If a man sleeps on a bedding and he does not pronounce the name of Allah duirng his sleep neither in the beginning nor in the end, even once, his sleeping will be a cause of regret and remorse for him on the Day of Judgment.

That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ has advised us to recite these words in the beginning as well as in the end. A believer and an unbeliever both sleep with the difference that the believer goes to bed, remembering the name of Allah, but the unbeliever sleeps in total oblivious of
Allah's name. As a blessing of the remembrance of Allah's name the sleeping of the believer turns into worship.

If you are the best of the creation

These are the rules of Islamic etiquette which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught us and the observance of which distinguishes us both from animals and unbelievers. After all, asses and horses also sleep. There is no animal that does not sleep. If you claim to be the best of the creation do not forget to remember your Creator at the time of going to bed and at rising from sleep. *Ad'yiah* (supplications) have been prescribed for this. May Allah make us persistent in reciting these supplications and

grant us their lights and blessings. *Aameen.*

An Assembly like this is a dead ass

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ما من قوم يقومون من مجلس ولا يذكرون الله تعالى فيه الا قاموا عن مثل جيفة حمار وكان لهم حسرة (ابو داؤد، كتاب الادب، باب كراهية ان يقوم الرجل من مجلس، حديث نمبر ٤٨٥٥)

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: If the members of an assembly disperse from the assembly in which Allah's name was not mentioned, then the assembly is like a dead ass and that assembly will become a cause of regret and remorse for them.(Abu Dawood ..... Hadith No: 4855)

Sleep is a gift of Allah

We are presently discussing sleep, the etiquettes of sleeping and other matters concerning sleep. As I have already stated, there is not a single aspect of life about which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has not provided us right guidance. He ﷺ has also taught us what work we should do at a given time. Sleep is a great blessing of Allah. Only when we are deprived of it, can we realize what a calamity it is to be deprived of sleep. Allah has granted us this blessing without our asking for it and He has devised such a unique system that we fall into sleep at the appointed time without any effort on our part. There is no switch in man's body by pressing which he can impose sleep on him. It is exclusively a gift of Allah.

The night is a great blessing of Allah

My respected father used to say that it is worth reflecting that Allah has devised such a system of sleep that all wish to sleep at one and the same time. If everyone was free to select the time of his sleep, then different persons would be found sleeping at different times and this would turn topsy-turvy the entire social system. For exampe, a man is feeling sleepy and his neighbour is beating iron bars with a hammer near the man desiring to sleep. To forestall such confusion, Allah has so planned matters that men, animals, birds, etc. feel sleepy at the same time. Had any International Conference been held to decide upon a suitable sleeping time for all? If this was left to men it was not possible for them to evolve a universal programme for all to sleep at the same time. Allah has Himself appointed for all His creation to sleep at the night time. He has said in the Holy Qur'an:

وَجَعَلَ الَّيْلَ سَكَنًا (سورة الانعام: ٩٦)

That is: He appointed the night for peace (sleep) and the day for work.

You should benefit by Allah's grant and remember Allah and thank Him for this benevolent grant. You should always remember that one day you have to appear before Him. This is the gist of all these teachings.

May Allah help us act upon them. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.

Date : Friday 17th September, 1993
After 'Asr Prayers.

An Easy way of Establishing Relatonship with Allah

الحمدلله نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا وسندنا ونبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

عن ابى سعيد الخدرى رضى الله عنه قال كان رسول الله سلى الله عليه وسلم اذا استجد ثوبا سماه باسمه عمامة اوقميصا او رداء يقول اللهم لك الحمد انت كسوتنيه اسألك خيره وخير ماصنع لهٗ واعوذمن شره و شرما صنع له (ترمذى كتاب اللباس، باب مايقول اذا لبس ثوبا جديدا، حديث نمبر ١٧٦٧)

Praise for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and parodn and we believe in Him and

rely on Him and seek refuge with Him from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is none to mislead him whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom He lets go astray. We bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the only One. He has no partner. We bear witness that our master, our authority, or Prophet and our Sire Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and Messenger. May Allah have mercy on him, on his household, his Companions رضی اللہ عنہ and bless them all and send salutation on them in great abundance. (Tirmizi, Book of garment... Hadith No: 1767)

Du'a (supplication) to recite when putting on a new garment

Hazrat Saeed Khudri رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that it was the habit of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that when he put on a new garment, he would utter the name of the garment whether it was a turban, a shirt or a sheet and would pray to Allah, saying: O Allah, I thank you that you have given me this garment to wear. I beseech you to grant me the good of this garment and the good of that for which it was made and I seek refuge from its evil and the evil of that for which it was made.

There is a separate *Du'a* (supplication) for every time

It was the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to recite this *Du'a* at the time of putting on a new garment. If anyone does not remember these Arabic words, he may recite them in his own mother tongue. It is a great favour of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to this *Ummah* that he has taught

us to pray to Almighty Allah at every step. On the other hand, we are persons who, despite our pressing needs, have not learnt how to beg of Allah our needs. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught us a *Du'a* for each of our needs and acts with which we are confronted all day and night. For example there are *Ad'yiah* (supplications) to recite on getting up in the morning, on going to the laterine and coming out of it, on beginning and finishing the ablution and during its performance, on entering and going out of the Mosque and on entering your house and on going to the market. In fact, the kind Prophet ﷺ of Allah has not forgotten to teach us a *Du'a* for every movement of our life and the way how it should be recited.

The way of establishing relationship with Allah

Why has the Holy Prophet ﷺ taught us a separate *Du'a* for every act and movement? He ﷺ has done this to teach us an easy way of establishing our relationship with Almighty Allah, so that man should be begging Allah's pardon and favour always and without fail. The Holy Qur'an has given us this command:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيْرًا (سورۃ الاحزاب ٤١)

That is: O believers, rememebr Allah in great abundance. (33:41)

Someone requested the Holy Prophet ﷺ to tell him the best deed. He ﷺ replied saying:

ان یکون لسانك رطبا بذ کر اللہ (ترمذی کتاب الدعوات، باب فضل الذکر، حدیث نمبر ٣٣٧٢)

That is: your tongue should remain always saturated with the remembrance of Allah.

(Tirmizi,Hadith No: 3372)

The act of remembering Allah without break is so important an act that Allah and His Messenger ﷺ have

both commanded us to adopt it. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has particularly mentioned its excellence in this Hadith.

Allah does not stand in need of anyone's remembrance

A question arises why has Allah commanded us to remember Him a great deal? Does He receive any benefit, enjoyment or pleasure when His servants remember Him? It is quite obvious that none having belief in Allah and any knowledge about Him can answer this question in the affirmative. The reason for this is quite clear. If the entire universe remains busy in remembering Allah continuously without losing a single moment, there will be no increase, not worth an atom, in His greatness, power, honour and beauty. On the other hand, if the entire universe decides - Godforbid - to refrain from Allah's remembrance, disobey and rebel against Him, there will absolutely be no decrease and deficit in His greatness, power, honour and beauty. That is a Personality that is free from all sorts of wants, needing neither our remembrance, our prostrations, prayers nor our incantation. He is free from all wants.

Indifference towrds Allah is the root of all evils

It is really for our own benefit that we have been advised to remember Allah in great abundance. Indifference to Allah is the root cause of all the evils, crimes, corruption and misconduct. When man forgets Allah he commits sins. If he remembers Allah in his heart and realizes sincerely that one day he has to appear before Allah to account for his deeds in this life, he will not commit sins.

A thief is indifferent to Allah's remembrance when he is in the act of committing theft. He would not commit

theft, if he was not indifferent to Allah's remembrance. The same principle applies to all sorts of sinners. They would never commit sins, if they were not indifferent to Allah's remembrance. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has brought out the same principle in the following Hadith:

لا يزنى الزانى حين يزنى وهو مؤمن لا يسرق السارق حين يسرق وهو مؤمن لا يشرب الشارب حين يشرب وهو مؤمن (صحيح مسلم، كتاب الايمان، باب بيان نقصان الايمان، حديث نمبر ١٠٠)

This means: An adulterer ceases to be a believer at the time of committing adultery. Similarly a thief and a drunker cease to be believers when they are in the act of committing theft and drinking wine respectively.(Sahih Muslim ..... Hadith No: 100

That is, belief becomes dimmed and suppressed in the hearts of these sinners when they are in the act of committing these sins. In other words, if the remembrance of Allah had a place in their hearts, they would never commit these sins. This proves that indifference to Allah is the basic cause of all the wrongs, immoralities and sins prevailing in the world.

Where has Allah gone?

It is related about Hazrat Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ the great that once he was going on a journey through forests. In those days there were no hotels from which one could purchase food. When he رضی اللہ عنہ felt hungry and his provision ran short he thought of going to some nearby village in search of food. During his search he saw a herd of goats grazing in the land. He رضی اللہ عنہ searched for the herdsman. On meeting him he said to him that he was a traveller and was hungry. He, therefore, asked the herdsman to give him some milk of the goats on payment to enable him to

satisfy his hunger. This story relates to a period of history when Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ had become the Ruler of about half the world. The herdsman replied, saying: Sir, I would surely have given you some milk, had these goats been my property. They belong to my master who has entrusted them to my care as a trust. Their milk is also a trust with me. I am sorry to tell you that I have no right to help you with some milk without the permission of the owner. It occurred to Hazrat Umar Rafooq رضی اللہ عنہ to put the herdsman's integrity to test. He رضی اللہ عنہ, therefore, said to the herdsman: Look here, I am telling you a plan. If you accept and act upon it both will be benefited. "What is that? asked the herdsman. Hazrat 'Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ replied, saying: Sell one of the goats to me and take the sale-price. I shall keep the goat with me and take its milk to satisfy my hunger. You shall get the sale price of the goat. If the owner asks you about the goat, you may tell him that the wolf ate it, because such events are common in forests. In this way both parties will stand to gain. No sooner did the herdsman hear this plan than these words spontaneously escaped from his mouth: O man, where has Allah gone? The herdsman meant to say that Allah is seeing everything and how could he justify before Allah that fraud.

Indifference to remembrance of Allah leads to increase in sins and crimes

This is an example of Allah's remembrance which had settled in the herdsman's heart strongly which left the heart neither in the loneliness of the jungles nor in the darkness of the night.

Hearing the reply of this herdsman, Hazrat Umar. Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ said: As long as people like you are living

on the surface of the earth and the feeling of appearing before Allah for accountability is present in the hearts the earth will be free from tyranny and corruption. The fear of accountability proves an effective check on the heart. In the absence of this fear all sorts of crimes like dacoity, murder, rape, etc., are constantly on the increase, notwithstanding increase in the Police, in the courts, posting of military and security guards on every road, street and lane. Why is it so? It is because crimes cannot be uprooted, unless the remembrance of Allah is settled in the hearts and the thought of being called to account before Allah remains pinching man's conscience from time to time. Without the candle of responsibiity and fear of accountability enlightening the hearts, the crimes will not end, despite all the security measures taken by posting Police and Military guards. What is more, the very agencies entrusted with the duty of eradicating crimes and protecting people, wealth and lives are themselves involved in dacoities, thefts and murders. In short, crimes cannot be uprooted unless the hearts become saturated with Allah's remembrance and His awe.

It is the Holy Prophet ﷺ who put an end to crimes

In fact it is the Holy Prophet ﷺ who put an end to crimes, although there were no formal departments of Police, Criminal Courts nor army. If anyone ever committed a crime he himself approached the Holy Prophet ﷺ confessing his crime and insisting upon him ﷺ to inflict on him the punishment of the *Shari'ah*, even it may be by stoning him to death, so as to be safe from the punishment of the Hereafter. The secret lies in the fact that the hearts were then fraught with the remembrance of Allah and with the fear of His relentless grip. This state of

hope and fear is generated by remembering Allah. It is we and not Allah who are the beneficiaries of the fruit of Allah's remembrance. The more we remember Allah, the stronger will grow in our hearts the sense of responsibility which will result in eradicating crimes, wrongs, corruption & disobedience. That is why it is stressed: Rememebr Allah to the best of your capacity.

Even verbal remembrance of Allah is beneficial and desirable

People generally say that it is no good repeating with thetongue the sacred words اللہ اللہ (*Allah, Allah*), سبحان اللہ (*Subhan Allah*) or الحمدللہ (*Alhamdu lillah*), when their hearts and minds are wandering elsewhere. Bear in mind that remembering Allah only with the tongue is the first step to the objective without which you cannot take the higher steps leading to the destination. If you take the first step by remembering Allah only with the tongue then by its blessing Almighty Allah will help you in taking the next higher steps. So, do not under-rate this first step, as it is also a blessing. If you persist in this, you are sure to cross the other hurdles to reach the final goal.

The Reality of "Relationship with Allah"

At any rate, when Allah's name is firmly settled in the heart by virtue of its continuous remembrance, then a state is reached which is called "Relationship with Allah". In other words, some "contact" or "connection" remains established with Allah for all times. The various forms of spiritual exercises, practices, incantations and disciplines practised and taught by the Sufis and Sheikhs aim at establishing and strengthening this "Relationship with Allah", when this aim is attained man refrains from sins

and improves the tone, depth and standard of his worship and devotion. He then acquires higher moral character by banishing from his heart meaner habtis and tendencies. These qualities are born in man as a gift of his "Relationship with Allah"

Continue begging Allah your needs at all times

Our respected Sufis and Shaikhs used to prescribe tedious spiritual exercises and arduous practices and disciplines to attain this "Relationship with Allah". Our Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has taught us a very easy and short way to attain this divine "Relationship". It is that you should form the habit of begging of Allah your needs every time and every moment. Seek His help and blessings in every difficulty, sorrow and illness. If it is very hot beg Him to make it cool If the electricity fails beg Allah to restore it. If you are hungry beg of Him to provide for you good food. At the time of entering your house beg Allah to show you a pleasant scene and break to you some news of peace and safety with no cause of worry and difficulty. While entering the gate of your office make a similar appeal to Allah that you may not have to face any unpleasant situation. If you are going to the market, beg Allah to help you in easy and cheap shopping. Form the habit of turning to Allah every minute and every moment with your needs and prayers.

It is a very cheap but effective formula

The formula mentioned under the Preceding heading is so simple that no importance is attached to it. You are advised to try it by approaching Allah with all your problems for solution. If you form this habit no moment will pass without your submitting to Allah one problem or

another. For example, you see that a man is coming to see you. Now just approach Allah requesting Him to make his visit propitious for you. If you are going to consult a Doctor, turn within your heart to Allah begging that He may make your consultation with the Doctor fruitful by bringing about prompt cure. This is an inexpensive, very easy and simple formula. Just try it and see for yourself what miracles it works.

There are no pre-conditions for Remembrance of Allah

The *Ad'iyah* (supplications) taught by the Holy Prophet ﷺ are easy to recite as no conditions have been prescribed for their recitation:

Our Lord! And raise up in their midst a Messenger from among them who shall recite to them your verses and shall instruct them in the Book and in wisdom and shall purify them. Surely, You are the Mighty, the wise. (2:129)

Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام recited this *Du'a* at the time of building the House of Allah, the Ka'bah. In this there is a hint that this and other Mosques cannot fulfil the objective for which they are built, unless the teachings of the Prophet of Allah, Muhammad ﷺ are followed there. Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام has desired in his *Du'a* that the last Prophet should recite Allah's verses. In this there is an indication that the recitation of the verses is in itself an objective and it is a brilliant success of man to achieve this objective. Not only will that Prophet ﷺ recite the verses but he will also explain and teach the meaning of Allah's Book.

The Light of the Ahadith is indispensable for understanding the Qur'an

There is an indication in this *Du'a* that it is not possible to understand the meaning of the Qur'an only by study which has nowadays found favour with the people. The light of the Ahadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his teachings are indispensable to find the true meaning of the verses of the Holy Qur'an. Almighty Allah has said in another place:

"Now has come to you a light from Allah - a clear Book". (5 :15)

You have a book, but there is no light, so that you cannot read the book and benefit by its contents. Almighty Allah has said in this verse that not only has He sent down a Book, but with it He has also sent a light (Prophet Muhammad ﷺ) to help you read and understand the Book. If you ignore this light you will not be able to understand the correct meaning of the Book. Apart from this, the Prophet ﷺ will purify you from immorality, sins and vices. In this there is a hint that mere verbal teaching is not enough. training and company of righteous men are necessary to reform man's conduct and guide him on to the right path. This *Du'a* of Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام is really the essence of Islam. Muslims should recite this *Du'a*, while traversing on the path of *Deen*, putting on garments and so on so forth. Children can easily learn this and other *Ad'iyah* and it is hardly necessary to hold classes for this. It is not easy to learn them by heart in the advanced age. It is, however, necessary to tackle this problem carefully. The *Ad'iyah* taught by the Holy Prophet ﷺ are brief one. By learning one *Du'a* every day one can learn the whole lot in a few days. Then resolve to recite each *Du'a* on its proper occasion. If you follow this programme sincerely,

you will soon realize the light and blessing of these *Ad'iyah.*

May Almighty Allah help us to remember Allah regularly and submissively. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal
Karachi.

Date : 3rd December 1993
After 'Asr Prayers.

PROTECT YOUR TONGUE

الحمدلله نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا وسندنا ونبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

عن ابى هريرةرضى الله تعالى عنه ان رسولﷺ صلى الله عليه وسلم قال من كان يؤمن بالله واليوم الأخر فليقل خيراوليصمت(بخارى)

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله عنه انه سمع النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول ان العبد يتكلم بالكلمة ما يتبين فيها يزل بها فى النار ابعد ما بين المشرق والمغرب(صحيح بخارى)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him, seek His help and pardon. We believe in Him and rely on

Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evil of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the One. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our master, our authority, our Prophet and our Sire, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him, his household, his Companions and bless them and salute them all in great abundance.

Three blessed Ahadith

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: He who believes in Allah and the Last Day should talk only on good and righteous topics or keep quiet. (Sahih Bukhari)

The second narrative is also attributed to Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ:

It is narrated by Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ that he heard the Holy Prophet ﷺ saying: when a man speaks out a word without thinking and understanding (its repercussions), that word throws him down into Hell to a depth deeper than the distance between East and West. (Sahih Bukhari)

There is a third Hadith narrated by Hazrat Abu Hurairah which brings out the same meaning:

عن ابی هريرة رضی الله عنه عن النبی صلی الله عليه وسلم قال ان العبد يتكلم بالكلمة من رضوان الله تعالی لايلقی بها بالا يرفعه الله بها فی الجنة و ان العبد ليتكلم بالكلمة من سخط الله تعالی لايلقی بها

بالا يهوی بها فی جهنم

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: Sometime a man says something to please Allah, even though he does not feel the importance of the word and utters it unwittingly; yet Almighty Allah elevates his rank in Paradise because of that word. On the contrary there is a man who sometimes utters a word that displeases Allah. Although he utters that word unintentionally and carelessly, yet the curse of that word throws him down into Hell. (Sahih Bukhari)

Take care of your tongue

The three Ahadith invite attention to the importance of refraining from the sins of the tongue and use it only in uttering words which pleases Allah and save it from incurring Allah's displeasure. It has already been stated that the most important point for us is that we should always try to shun sins. Out of these sins here we are dealing only with such sins as are committed with this tongue. Sometimes a man utters with his tongue words without caring their effect and they become a cause of punishment for him. That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ has advised that we should all use our tongues with due precaution and thought. If you have in your mind something good and beneficial, speak it out or keep quiet.

The Tongue is a great blessing

Just thinkg a bit what a great blessing is this gift of Allah - the tongue! Allah has been so Merciful that He has bestowed upon us a talking machine which accompanies man during his whole lifetime from birth till death. It is so efficient that it starts speaking at the slightest hint from its

master-man. We do not value this unique, wonderful machine, because we have got it as a free gift from Allah without paying any price or taking any pains to acquire it. It is man's natural tendency that he does not value things which he gets without any sacrifice and effort on his part. This applies also to this God-given gift - the tongue. Go and inquire about the value of this gift from those who are deprived of it. The small piece of flesh, that is the tongue, is there with them but they are unable to speak. Their hearts ae full of ideas and emotions, but they cannot speak them out. What a great gift of Allah is this tongue, indeed!

What, if the tongue suddenly stops speaking?

Just imagine what will happen if all of a sudden your tongue stops - God forbid - from speaking! You want to say something but the tongue fails you. What an incapacity. A relative of mine who has recently undergone a surgical operation told me that after the operation for sometime his body remained in state of total benumbness and paralysed. He was feeling thirsty: There was water as well as attendants, but only he could not express to them his need. He remained in this state of incapacity for about half an hour. He said that those thirty minutes were the most arduous and painful minutes of his life.

The Tongue is a Trust from Allah

Almighty Allah has so intimately connected the tongue with the brain that no sooner does the brain desire to speak something than the desire is transmitted to the tongue and it speaks out the desired words. If the process of finding out the relevant letter and constructing the meaningful words had been left to man himself, he would have been in great difficulty. Merciful Allah has endowed

man with a natural power that as soon as he wants to speak out something, the word or phrase spontaneously escapes from his tongue. Now think a bit. Did you yourself invent this wonderful machine or purchased it from a shop? No, this is a gift from Allah. It is not your property. It has been placed under your custody only as a sacred trust from Allah. Being a trust, it is binding upon you to use it according to the will of the testator, Allah. It is, therefore, necessary that you should use this machine according to the will of the testator and not according to your own will and desire. Mind that this is Allah's property to be used as He desires.

The correct use of the Tongue

Almighty Allah has so created the tongue that if according to the foregoing Ahadith, a good word is uttered even unwittingly and carelessly Allah, in His infinite mercy, raises the rank of the speaker by untold degrees and grants him countless reward for that word. It is by virtue of this very tongue that by uttering the sacred *Kalimah* (Article of Shahdat) a *Kafir* (Infidel) turns a believer:

اشهدان لا الٰه الااللہ واشهدان محمدًاعبده و رسوله

Before uttering this *Kalimah* he was an unbeliever and a prospective inmate of Hell. Now by uttering the *Kalimah*, he has become a believer or a Muslim and an inmate of Paradise. Previously he was under the wrath of Allah, but now he has become a beloved servant of Allah, and has also become a member of the *Ummah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This tremendous revolution took place only by virtue of uttering a few words.

Keep the Tongue wet with the remembrance of Allah

It occurs in a Hadith that if, after becoming a believer, the man utters with his tongue only once the words this utterance fills half the scale of the Balance (سبحان الله). The words are small and light but the reward for them is big and heavy. It occurs in a Hadith that the words: سبحان الله وبحمده سبحان الله العظيم are light on the togue and hardly take any time in speaking out, but they are very heavy on the scale of Deeds and highly valued and beloved in the sight of Allah.

Anyway, Allah has so created this tiny machine that by changing a little its basic working order and operating it with a little care, it shall greatly add to the reward in our Roll of Deeds and build for us a palace in Paradise. It will make us the target of Allah's pleasure. Use this invaluable gift in remembering Allah and keep it wet with it and then see how effective it proves in elevating your rank. Once a Companion رضی الله عنه asked the Holy Prophet ﷺ: O Prophet of Allah, which deed is the best ? The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied, saying: Your tongue should remain wet with Allah's remembrance. Keep yourself busy with the remembrance of Allah sitting, standing, walking, in fact in whatever condition you may be.(Tirmizi..... Hadith No: 3372)

Utilize the Tongue to teach *Deen*

It is a virtue and righteousness to utilize the tongue in teaching *Deen*. For example, you find a man praying inccorectly, you may teach him the correct way of praying, in privacy, politely and affectionately. Now a little movement of your tongue makes a man correct his praying and you become entitled to reward for the Prayers he should offer during his entire life time, which will be

credited to your Roll of Deeds.

To utter a word of solace

A man is suffering from some torture and is facing difficulties which have made him distracted. Seeing him in this condition, you say to him with your tongue a few words of solace, sympthy and encouragement, which soften his heart and bring some relief to his distressed mind. By saying words of solace and consolation you stand to gain a great reward. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith:

من عزّى ثكلى كسى بُرداً فى الجنة

If a man utters a few words of solace to a woman whose son is missing or has died, Allah shall grant this man a precious suit of garment to wear in Paradise. (Tirmizi..... Hadith No: 1076)

In short, use this tongue in the right acts and paths which Allah has ordained. You will see that untold rewards and good deeds are added to your Roll of Deeds. For example a man asked you to show him the right path and you guide him on to that path. This is a very insignificant good turn to which you paid no attention, but Allah will grant you great reward even for such small acts of righteousness. If a man uses his tongue in the right way, the doors of Paradise will flung open for him and it will become a means to the pardon of countless sins committed by him. Conversely, this very tongue, if used wrongly, shall drive the man into Hell Fire. May Allah save us from this.

Tongue may lead to Hell

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith that of the men who enter Hell, the majority will be of those who commit sins by their tongues. That is, those who tell lies,

backbite others, injure anyone's heart, join others in the sin of backbiting, exult over the distress of others. They will enter Hell on account of these sins. There is a Hadith to this effect:

هل يكب الناس فى النار على وجوههم الا حصائد السنتهم(ترمذى. حديث ٦٢١٦)

This means that many people shall enter Hell on account of the sins of their tongue.

(Tirmizie.....Hadith No: 2616)

We should, therefore, use this gift of Allah with due care and precaution and keep it under control, instead of leaving it unbridled. We should use it for lawful speech. That is why we have been advised that, if we have to say anything, we should say what is true and lawful or keep quiet.

Think before you open your mouth to speak

It is prohibited to be talkative. If man talks much the tongue will go out of control and utter something undesirable, involving him in sins. It is, therefore, necessary that one should speak only when it is unavoidable and strictly to the extent needed. A wise saint has advised that before opening the mouth to speak one should think well what to speak and why,. This will keep the tongue under control.

Hazrat Mian Sahib رحمة الله عليه

Hazrat Mian Sayyid Asghar Husain Sahib رحمة الله عليه was one of the teachers of my respected father Hazrat Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه. He was a saint of a very high status. He was known as Hazrat "Mian Sahib". He was so righteous a saint that after seeing him one was reminded of the days of the Noble Companions رضى الله عنهم. My respected father had special relations with him

and frequently used to call on him. Hazrat Mian Sahib also was very kind to my father. My respected father told me that one day when he called on Hazrat Mian Sahib رحمة الله عليه and sat near him the latter said: Look here, Maulawi Shafi: Today we shall talk in Arabic, instead of Urdu. My father was very much surprised at this, as this had not happened earlier. How did the idea of speaking in Arabic occur to him so suddenly. When my father asked Mian Sahib رحمة الله عليه to tell the reason; first he avoided telling anything about it, but when my father insisted Hazrat Mian Sahib رحمة الله عليه said: When we talk in Urdu, sometimes we go off the rails and drift to undesirable topics. This will not happen when we talk in Arabic, because neither you nor I can speak this language fluently and freely. This scheme will exercise control on our tongues and we shall not indulge in unncecessary talk.

Our Example

Thereafter Hazrat Mian Sahib رحمة الله عليه went on saying: Our example is like a person who sets off on a journey from his house with large amounts of gold coins and money. He squandered this money during the journey before reaching his destination. Only a few coins were left with him. He spent these coins only sparingly and when it was unavoidable to spend something. Out of the coins left with him he spent as little as possible so that he could some how reach his destination.

Hazrat Mian Sahib رحمة الله عليه further said: We have passed the major parts of our ages. The precious moments of life which Allah had bestowed upon us were like the gold coins and money to take us to the destination. If we had spent these moments wisely and carefully it would have been very easy to reach the desired destination. We

spent these precious moments in gossip and loose talks in assemblies and we do not know how many days of our lives are left. It is my heart's desire that I should spend these few remaining moments of our lives sparingly and very carefully. This is the trend of thought of those whom Allah grants this insight. They value the precious divine gift of the tongue and take care to avoid its misuse.

The remedy to keep the tongue under control

Hazrat Siddiq Akbar رضی اللہ عنہ is the best man after the Prophets of Allah علیہم السلام. Once he was seen holding his tongue in his hand and twisting it. When the people asked him about his strange behaviour, he رضی اللہ عنہ said:

ان هذا اوردنی الموارد (موطا امام مالك، كتاب الكلام، باب ما جاء فی ما يخاف من اللسان)

This tongue has involved me in great dangers and calamities. I want to keep it under control.

(Muwatta. Imam Malik. Book of Talks... Tongue)

It occurs in other narratives that he put into his mouth some pebbles so that unnecessary words may not escape from his mouth. At any rate, the tongue is a piece of flesh with which a man can attain Paradise as well as Hell. It is imperative to keep it under strict control, so as to save it from being misused. This is possible only when man avoids loose talks. The more man talks, the more readily he will fall into sins and errors. When people desiring spiritual reform visit some Shâikh, he prescribes different remedies for different "patients" according to the nature of the malady of each. In most cases they prescribe control over the tongue.

Put a lock on the tongue

A gentleman used to visit my father Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. He had not so far submitted himself to my father as a disciple for reform. His visits were only usual courtesy visits. He was so talkative that when he started talking he would not stop and related stories after stories in one chain. My respected father tolerated all this. One day the gentleman requested my father that he wanted to become a disciple for spiritual reform and training. My father accepted his request. He requested my father to prescribe for him some (incantation). My father told him that the only *Wazifah* (*incantation*) for him was to put a lock on his tongue and keep it under strict control. No other *wazifah* was necessary for him. His reform and training were completed satisfactorily by controlling his tongue.

Refrain from using the tongue in gossip

It is very alarming that the misuse of the tongue has spread in our society like an epidemic. People assemble their friends in the drawing room only for gossiping. In this gossip sins like, speaking ill of some and backbiting and mimicking others are freely committed as a recreation. Thus, one such assembly is a combination of countless sins. Pull up courage to exercise control over your tongue. May Almighty Allah make us realize the importance of this point.

Our women and the use of the tongue

There is no exaggeration that the entire society is addicted to the sins of the tongue. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has pointed out in women folk many spiritual diseases. One of these is the disease that they have no control over their tongues. It is narrated in a Hadith that addressing the

womenfolk once the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

O women! Of all the inmates of Hell I found you in the largest number. That is, as compared with men the number of women is larger. The women asked the Holy Prophet ﷺ: O Prophet of Allah ﷺ! What is the reason for this? The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied:

تكثرن اللعن وتكفرن العشير (صحيح بخارى، كتاب الحيض، باب ترك الحائض الصوم، حديث ٣٠٤)

This means: You indulge too much in cursing and defaming others and showing ingratitude to your husbands. That is why your number in Hell is larger. (Sahih Bukhari ..... Hadith No: 304)

Just see! The two sins which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has mentioned in this Hadith belong to the tongue - excessive cursing and ingratitude to husbands. Misuse of the tongue is one of the diseases which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has diagnosed among women. The sins of taunting, cursing, backbiting, slandering and calumny are all included in this.

I guarantee Paradise for you

عن سهل بن سعد رضى الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من يضمن لى ما بين لِحييه وما بين رجليه اضمن له الجنة (صحيح بخارى)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is narrated to have said: I guarantee Paradise for him who can guarantee two things:- One of them is that which lies between two Jaws, i.e. his tongue, that it will not be misused by telling lies, backbiting, injuring the heart of anyone etc. The other guarantee is about what lies between the two legs, i.e., the private parts, that this will not be misused.(Sahih Bukhari)

It means that protection of the tongue from misuse is

tantamount to the protection of the half of *Deen*, because half of the sins are committed through the tongue. The need to protect and control the tongue cannot be under-rated.

Three acts for salvation

عن عقبة ابن عامر رضى الله عنه قال قلت يا رسول الله ماالنجاة ؟ قال امسك عليك لسانك وليسعك بيتك وابك على خطيئتك (ترمذى حديث ٢٤٠٨)

It is narrated from Hazrat *'Aqabah* bin 'Aamir رضى الله عنه that he asked the Holy Prophet ﷺ to tell him how to attain salvation in the Hereafter, freedom from Hell and entry into Paradise. In reply to this question the Holy Prophet ﷺ uttered three sentences;

1. Keep your tongue under your control.
2. Let your house be enough for you. Do not remain out of it unnecessarily, so as to keep yourself away from the vices and evils prevailing outside the house.

The third sentence which the Holy Prophet ﷺ uttered is: If you ever commit some sin, wrong or fault, then weep for that, viz., feel regret and repent for it and ask for Allah's pardon. (Tirmizi....Kitab -uz-zuhd..... Hadith No: 2408)

Recently a man told me that he could not weep for which he felt worried. There is no harm if a man is not able to weep spontaneously. What is needed is that if a sin is committed the sinner should feel ashamed for it from the core of his heart and seek Allah's pardon with due submission and humbleness.

O Tongue, fear Allah!

وعن ابی سعید الخدری رضی الله عنه عن النبی صلی الله علیه وسلم
قال اذا اصبح ابن ادم فان الاعضاء کلها تکفر اللسان تقول اتق الله فینا
فانما نحن بك فان استقمت استقمنا وانی اعوججت اعوججنا

(Tirmizi .... Hifzul-lisaan...Hadith No: 2407)

Hazrat Abu Sa'eed Khudri رضی الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: when the morning dawns, all the limbs of the human body address the tongue and say: O tongue! Fear Allah. We are subordinate to you. If you are straight, we shall also be straight. If you become crooked, we shall also become crooked. That is to say that all the parts of the human body are subordinate to the tongue. If the tongue goes wrong, the entire human body gets involved in sinful acts. That is why they ask the tongue to be straight, otherwise they too will have to face calamities.

How do these limbs address the tongue? It is quite possible that they may be actually speaking to the tongue, because it is not unlikely that Almighty Allah may grant them power of speech to speak to the tongue. The power of speech in the tongue has also been granted by Allah. Allah will confer on the human limbs the power of speech on the Day of Judgment.

The limbs shall speak on the Day of Judgment

The philosophy of "Naturalism" was widely in vogue in the past. The advocates of this philosophy did not believe in miracles and argued that this was against nature and quite impossible. A man asked Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله علیه how it would be possible for limbs like the hands and the feet to speak and bear witness on the Day of Judgment as has been claimed in the Qur'an. The limbs have no tongue. Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله علیه asked that man to

explain how the tongue was able to speak although it had itself no tongue. It is only a piece of felsh but it is speaking without a tongue. Almighty Allah has bestowed upon this piece of flesh the faculty of speech, so it is speaking. It will stop speaking when Allah withdraws from it this faculty. When Allah bestows this faculty upon the hands and the feet they too will speak.

It may be a fact that, the limbs may be addressing the tongue each morning, as mentioned above or the statement may be only a metophorical expression. Both alternatives are possible. However, what has been written on this point in the Qur'anic verses cannot be challenged.

Anyway, it is absolutely necessary to guard this tongue, to keep it under strict control and protect it from sins. Without this, success is not possible. May Allah help us all to protect the tongue and use it in the right way. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمین

Venue : Masjid Fatima, near
Hafiz Rabri House
Hyderabad.

Date : 26th January, 1992
After 'Isha Prayers

HAZRAT IBRAHIM عليه السلام AND BUILDING OF THE HOUSE OF ALLAH (AL-KA 'BAH)

الحمدلله نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له واشهد ان سيدنا وسندنا ونبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطٰن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

وَاِذْ يَرْفَعُ اِبْرٰهِيْمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَاِسْمٰعِيْلُ ط رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّآ ط اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ o رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمَيْنِ لَكَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَآ اُمَّةً مُّسْلِمَةً لَّكَ وَاَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا ج اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيْمُ o رَبَّنَاوَابْعَثْ فِيْهِمْ رَسُوْلاً مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُوْا عَلَيْهِمْ اٰيٰتِكَ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيْهِمْ ط اِنَّكَ

اَنْتَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ○ (سورة البقرة ۱۲۸:۱۲۹)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم، وصدق رسوله النبى الكريم ونحن على ذلك من الشاهدين والشاكرين، والحمد لله رب العالمين.

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him, seek His help and pardon. We believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evil of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the One. Who has no partner. I also bear witness that our master, our authority, our Prophet and our Sire, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him, his household, his Companions رضى الله عنه and salute them and bless them all most abundantly.

And when Ibrahim عليه السلام was raising the foundations of the House of Allah and Isma'el عليه السلام (Ibrahim prayed:) Our Lord! Accept from us (this duty). Surely, it is you Who are the Hearer, the Knower. Our Lord! And make us Submissive to you and (make) of our progeny a nation submissive to you and show us our ways of worship, and relent towards us. Surely it is you Who are the Relenting, the Merciful. Our Lord! And raise up in their midst a Messenger from amongst them who shall recite to them your verses and teach them the Book and wisdom and shall purify them. It is you Who are the Mighty, the Wise. (2: 127-129)

My Honourable Elders and Dear Brothers!

It is a matter of great happiness and good luck for all of us that Almighty Allah has favoured us with an opportunity to participate in the auspicious ceremony of laying the foundation-stone of a mosque. I was asked to say something to you on this happy occasion. Praise to Allah that in this blessed assembly many elderly saints and learned savants are present on the stage who are far senior and superior to me in knowledge, competence and righteousness. It would seem to be an act of audacity on my part to speak anything in their presence. Keeping in view the time-honoured principle when the senior ones command their junior ones to do anything the latter have no choice but to obey the commands, I have hesitatingly taken the liberty to discharge this difficult assignment before all of you and in the presence of these learned savants. May Almighty Allah help me, by His mercy, to say something which may suit His pleasure and be useful for me and for the respected audience.

The Comprehensiveness of *Deen*

I find myself in a fix as to which aspect of our *Deen* should I touch upon in this assembly. Allah has made the *Deen* which you and I follow so comprehensive that every aspect of it deserves to be treated as a permanent topic for which a pre-determined programme is needed

زفرق تابہ قدم ہر کجا کہ می نگرم
کرشمہ دامن دل می کشد کہ جا ایں جا است

This is a Persian couplet which means: When I look at the beautiful body of my beloved from the forehead right up to the feet, I find that every spot of the body is equally charming to attract the lover's heart.

So is the position of our *Deen*. Every aspect is equally important and attractive to serve as a topic for discourse have solved the difficulty of selection of a topic for this occasion and decided to say something on the verses of the Qur'an which I have just now recited before you. They have an affinity to the foundation ceremony of a mosque and in which Almighty Allah has described a very magnificent event.

The Event of Building the House of Allah (The K'abah)

Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام built the House of Allah along with his highly able son, Hazrat Isma'el, عليه السلام (Zabihullah). The Holy Qur'an has described this event in a wonderfully unique and affectionate style and by including it in His favourite Book has preserved it for the entire Muslim *Ummah*, so as to continue it undistorted till the Day of Judgment. He has also called upon the Muslims to refresh the memory of this great event by recalling it to their minds again and again. This has pursuaded me to present to you a brief commentary on these verses and some details of the *Du'a* which Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام addressed to Allah when he was building His House and which Almighty Allah has also mentioned with some details in Surah Al-Baqarah.

First of all Almighty Allah said:

وَاِذْ يَرْفَعُ اِبْرٰهِيْمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَاِسْمٰعِيْلُ

Remember the true when Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام was raising the foundations of the House of Allah and Hazrat Isma'el عليه السلام (was also with him). (2:127)

"واذ" is an Arabic word which is used to suggest that

the topic which is going to be stated shortly deserves to be visualised every moment.

This verse contains a hint that this House of Allah had been in existence with its foundations since the time of Hazrat Adam عليه السلام. However, with the passage of time the building had disappeared and was not in existence at the time of Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام, but its foundations were intact and in existence. Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام re-built the House of Allah on the existing foundations. Hazrat Isma'el عليه السلام also took part in this work along with his father.

It is a rule of etiquette that joint Prophets are ascribed to the elderly member of the team

It was a regular practice of my respected father, Hazrat Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه that every day when he recited the Holy Qur'an, he also pondered over its verses during the recitation. If any new point occurred to him during the recitation, he would express it to anyone of us who was available there. One day he was reciting the Qur'an and I was sitting near him. When he came to this verse:

وَاِذْ يَرْفَعُ اِبْرٰهِيْمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَاِسْمٰعِيْلُ

he stopped recitation and said to me: Look! Allah has adopted in this verse a unique style. He could alter the verse in this way:

وَاِذْيَرْفَعُ اِبْرَاهِيْمُ وَاِسْمَاعِيْلِ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ

(Remember the time when Ibrahim عليه السلام and Isma'el عليه السلام both were raising the foundations of the House of Allah. Allah, however, did not say so. Instead, He said: "Remember when Ibrahim عليه السلام was raising the foundation of the House of Allah and Isma'el عليه السلام: Allah mentioned the name of Hazrat Isma'el at the end although, both were

doing the work jointly. Hazrat Isma'el عليه السلام was bringing the stone blocks and Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام was laying the blocks to construct the walls.

Thereafter my father رحمة الله عليه explained a very fine point involved in the matter by saying that when a senior and a junior both are doing some work together, etiquette demands that the work should be ascribed to the senior person and the name of the junior should be mentioned at the end. The senior and the junior both should not be placed at an equal footing.

Hazrat 'Umar رضى الله عنه and observance of Etiquette

My respected father explained the same point by giving another example. It occurs, he said, in a Hadith on the authority of Hazrat 'Umar رضى الله عنه that it was a regular routine of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that he did not engage himself in any work after the *Ísha* prayer, so that the *Fajr* Prayer might not be affected. At the same time it is also narrated from Hazrat 'Umar Farooq رضى الله عنه that sometimes the Holy Prophet ﷺ held consultation with Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique رضى الله عنه after the *Ísha* prayer about the affairs of the Muslims and Hazrat 'Umar رضى الله عنه also attended the discussions. While mentioning this event, Hazrat 'Umar Farooq رضى الله عنه did not say that the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to have consultations with him and Hazrat Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه, but first he mentioned the name of Hazrat Siddique Akbar رضى الله عنه and that he too used to be with them. This indicates the rule of conduct for a junior person that when a junior person is working with his senior, it is not proper for the junior to ascribe the work to himself. He should ascribe it to the senior and place his name in a secondary position, by saying: so and so performed the job and I was also with him.

The Holy Qur'an has also adopted the same style, viz., Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام was raising the foundations of the House of Allah and Hazrat Isma'el عليه السلام was also working with him. In the verse the main work was attributed to Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام and the name of Hazrat Isma'el عليه السلام was mentioned at the end, as if he was a secondary role in the work. This is a fine point which I remembered with reference to my father's name.

An outstanding Event

That Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام built the House of Allah is one of the most outstanding events of human history and the history of religions and of the place of worship. In fact there can be no event more tremendous than this, because this is connected with the building of the House of Allah, involving the collection of so many details: where did the stone blocks and the mortar come from, who was bringing the blocks and who was laying them, at what height the House was being built; what was the height, length and breadth of the four sides, how much money and time was spent on its construction? The Holy Qur'an has not furnished any of these details. It has only pointed out that Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام was building the House of Allah.

Thereafter, those *Ad'yiah* (supplications) have been mentioned which Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام was rehearsing while he was building the House of Allah. This shows that these *Ad'yiha* which Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام was rehearsing to establish a "Relationship with Allah" carried more weight than his action of building the House of Allah. Almighty Allah was so much pleased with these *Ad'yiah* that he made them a part of the Holy Qur'an for all times till the Day of Judgment. When he was busy with the construction of the

House of Allah the following *Du'a* was on his tongue:

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا ط اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ (سورة البقرة ۱۲۸:۱۲۹)

"O our Lord! Accept from us (this duty). Surely, it is you Who are the Hearer, the Knower. (2:127)

Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام was doing something highly splendid and magnificent like building on the surface of the earth Allah's first and the last House - a House that was going to prove a negative force till the Day of Judgment to which Pilgrims will be drawn to perform Hajj and worship Allah. Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام was rebuilding the House of Allah whose foundations had become nearly effaced and its building had fallen into ruins. Great and highly dignified though this work was,yet the action most lovely and acceptable in the sight of Almighty Allah was Hazrat Ibrahim's humble submission and sincere praying to Him. He عليه السلام had no trace of pride in his heart for what he was doing. He عليه السلام in all humility realized, the insignificance of his own effort. He عليه السلام most humbly prayed to Allah for its acceptance, by His mercy.

There should be no feeling of superiority in the heart

This *Du'a* contains a hint that after all man is a servant of Allah. He should never think that he is doing some magnificent deed or rendering some remarkable service to *Deen*, even if he may actually be performing some praiseworthy task. Man should always keep himself away from pride, and think that neither he nor his work as acceptable and worthy of any reward, unless Allah accepts it by His mercy. The prayer to Allah should be that may He, by His mercy, accept the trifling and worthless deed done by His sinful servant. Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام has

taught us through his *Du'a* that when a man accomplishes some important job, his inner soul instigates him to take pride and make a parade of his worth and ability before others. The Prophets of Allah have taught by their *Sunnah* that if you have done some good deed but some pride or self-complacency is born in your heart on this account, then the good turn done by you will go waste. On such occasions you should sincerely feel and admit your worthlessness and pray to Allah to accept your deed by His mercy alone.

The victory of Makkah and the Prophet's modesty

When, after the victory of Makkah, the Holy Prophet ﷺ was entering the city as a victor, he demonstrated by his behaviour unprecedented modesty and humbleness. This was the same Makkah the inmates of which had left no stone unturned in torturing the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم for about twenty-one years - a city where conspiracies were hatched to kill the Holy Prophet ﷺ, where the believers were made to lie down with their bare backs on scorching sand. Had there been on this occasion some other victor, his chest would have been puffed with pride and arrogance, his neck turned askance and the lanes of Makkah reddened with the blood of the vanqished population. However, nothing of the kind happened. Read in the words of Hazrat Anas رضی اللہ عنہ the account of the Prophet's ﷺ entry into the Holy City after gaining this epoch-making victory. Thus Hazrat Anas رضی اللہ عنہ narrates:

I remember vividly that scene as though I am observing the original one just now. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is entering Makkah Mukarramah from the direction of "Mu'alla" riding his dromedary Quswa, his sacred neck

bent down so much so that his chin was touching his chest, drops of tears rolling down his eyes and he reciting the following verse with his tongue:

إِنَّا فَتَحْنَا لَكَ فَتْحًا مُّبِيْنًا (سورة الفتح:١)

"Surely, We have given you a singular victory." (48:1)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ in all modesty and humbleness was acknowledging that the singular victory was due to Allah's mercy and help and not to the efforts of the Prophet ﷺ and his companions رضی اللہ عنہم. It was Allah Who opened the city of Makkah Mukarramah for entry of the Holy Prophet ﷺ as a victor. Show of modesty, humbleness and submissiveness are the distinctive qualities of the Prophets of Allah including Prophet Ibrhaim Khalilullah علیہ السلام and Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Help comes from Almighty Allah alone

If you are ever able to do some good deed, remember always that this is due to Allah's help. It is Allah's great mercy that you were enabled to do a good turn.

منت منہ کہ خدمت سلطان ہمیں کنی
منت شناس کہ او را مخدمت گزاشتن

A persian couplet meaning: Do not lay obligation on anyone that you are serving the King. You are under the King's obligation that he has admitted you under his service.

It does not go to your credit, if you have done countless good deeds in the form of worship, service to *Deen* compilation of books, delivering speeches, writing *Fatawa* (Religious Rulings). You should be grateful to Allah that He enabled you to do these good turns so, you

should always be thankful to Allah and be seeking His help so that you may do more and more good deeds. You should pray to Alalh to accept the good deeds you do. There is absolutely no occasion to be proud and boastful for these deeds. There is a proverb in the Arabic language:

صلّى الحائكُ ركعتين وانتظرَ الوحيَ

that is to say, that once a weaver offered two Rak'ats of prayer and remained waiting for *Wahi* (revelation) to descend upon him, as if he had performed a great religious feat. This is the behaviour of an ignorant and mean minded fellow. A really devoted servant of Allah works in the path of Allah to the best of his ability and at the same time remains afraid that his service may or may not be worthy of Allah's acceptance. He should always be praying to Allah to accept his humble services.

The first thing which attracted Allah's pleasure and appreciation in the building of His House was this modesty of Hazrat Ibrahim علیہ السلام that in spite of the fact that he was doing such a job of outstanding dignity, he felt no pride no arrogance and no conceit for that.

Who is a genuine Muslim?

The next part of the *Du'a* is unique in its import. The second *Du'a* which Hazrat Ibrahim علیہ السلام was reciting while building the Ka'bah is as follows:

رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمَيْنِ لَكَ

O our Lord! Make us both (i.e. myself and my son Isma'el) Muslims.

It is really a strange *Du'a*. Were they not Muslims? If not, who else could be Muslim

In the Arabic language the word Muslim means subordinate, obedient, submissive, etc. By these words

Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام was praying to Allah to make him and his son throughout their lifetimes obedient and submissive to Him. Ordinarily a man becomes a Muslim as soon as he utters this Kalimah, irrespective of his age:

اشهد ان لا اله الا الله واشهد ان محمد رسول الله

Yet it is not the distinction of a *Mu'min* (believer) only to utter the *Kalimah*. It should be noted very carefully that a believer cannot be regarded as a genuine Muslim, unless after having uttered the *Kalimah*, he makes his entire life obedient and sub-ordinate to Almighty Allah. That is why the Qur'an says at another place:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا ادْخُلُوْا فِى السِّلْمِ كَآفَّةً

That is: O believers enter into the fold of Islam in totality (2: 208)

This verse is addressed to those who have already believed in Allah. Now into which Islam should they enter? It is intended to point out that it is one thing to become a believer by uttering the *Kalimah*, but quite another thing to enter the fold of Islam with total submission. The very meaning of Islam implies that a Muslim should subject his entire life with all its movements, acts and interests to the will and pleasure of Allah. Unless this is done, none can claim to have accepted, and entered into Islam in true sense of the word, "Islam". That is why Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام prayed to Almighty Allah to make him and His son عليه السلام Muslims in the true sense.

The Objective of building a Mosque

Here I want to invite attention to one important point. Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام was indeed doing something very sublime by building the House of Allah. Yet it seems that

the raising of the House was not in itself the main objective, although its importance cannot be denied. It appears from the context of these *Ad'yiah* that after the completion of the construction of the Mosque the Muslims should submit themselves and all their affairs and interests to the pleasure and will of Allah. The truth of this is quite apparent from the *Du'a* of Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام. If this objective which is implied in the meaning Muslimeen is not achieved, then the idea expressed in the following couplet will apply to the mosques we are building:

مسجد تو بنا دی شب بھر میں ایمان کی حرارت والوں نے
من اپنا پرانا پاپی ہے برسوں میں نمازی بن نہ سکا

That is those who have the fire of Eeman in their hearts lost no time in building the mosque but my heart is an old sinner. I could not become a *Namazi* (one who prays) even during the period of so many years.

Deen is not confined to praying and Fasting alone

Sometimes people think that it is enough for a Muslim to repair to the mosque five times to offer prayers, fast during the fasting month of Ramazan, pay the *Zakat* (compulsory alms) and observe certain other forms of worship, and here ends the matter:

In this *Du'a* of Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام there is an indication that, although it is *Deen* to build mosque use them for the worhsip of Allah and His remembranc ., yet this is not all. Islam, being a comprehensive faith, extenus beyond the boundary of the mosque. We have to be Muslims in all walks of life. *Deen* really consists of five brances, viz.,

1- Adherence to the correct tenets and demands of belief.

2- Worship, i.e. prayers, fasting, etc.
3- Dealings and Transactions, i.e. Public dealings, financial transactions and trade, etc..
4- Co-living in society.
5- Moral conduct and character.

These are the branches that make up what is called Islam. Islam is not confined within the four walls of the mosque. It is not that as long as a man remains in the mosque he is a Muslim, but outside the mosque he is free to do whatever he likes. He has to be a Muslim in all walks of life and at every step. That is why the Holy Qur'an says:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا ادْخُلُوْا فِى السِّلْمِ كَآفَّةً

O Believers! Enter into the fold of Islam in totality.

Only repairing to the mosque for the five-time prayers and other forms of worship is not enough when public dealings, co-living in the socity, conduct and character all stand spoilt.

It also comes within the rights of the Mosque that in other places, say a markets the *Namazi* has to carry out the commands of the same Authority before when he is prostrating himself in the mosque. It is not Islam that one offer prayers in the mosuqe but out of the mosque one receives and pays bribe, indulges in usurious dealings. One must also reform his conduct and character and morals so as to confirm to the norms of the *Shari'ah*. The printed collections of the talks of Hazrat Maulana Ashraft Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه are full of admonitions that the amelioration of the social living, morals and public dealings are as important as the reform and improvement of the prayers. Today people have forgotten this important truth and think that *Deen* is the name only of Prayers, fasting, etc.

It is a compulsory duty to reform children

Next, Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام spoke the following words as mentioned in the Holy Qur'an:

وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَآ اُمَّةً مُّسْلِمَةً لَّكَ

....and of our progeny a nation submissive to You.

That is: O our Lord! Make our future generations also Muslims. These words contain a hint that the duty of a Muslim does not end with his beocming a Muslim. It is his obligatory duty to feel concerned about the Islam of his children also. Today there are men among us who are themselves regular Namazis of the first *saff* (row) of the congregation and they also recite the Qur'an regularly, but they have no concern about their children who are heading fast in the direction of disbelief, atheism, Allah's displeasure and Hell. Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام has in this *Du'a* clearly pointed out that it is not enough for a Muslim to reform himself alone, letting his children and other relations take whatever course they choose. The Holy Qur'an syas:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا قُوْٓا اَنْفُسَكُمْ وَاَهْلِيْكُمْ نَارًا

O you who hae believed, protect yourselves and your families from (Hell) Fire. (66:6)

Just as it is an obligatory duty of an individual to become a Muslim, it is also his obligatory duty to reform lookafter, and protect the Islam of his future generations. The Qur'an further says:

وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَآ اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيْمُ

....and relent towards us. It is you who are the Relenting, the Merciful (2:128)

Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام did not pray to Alalh to reward him for his work for fear of its worthlessness and possible faults that might have marred it. His prayer was for Allah's

acceptance of his repentance.

It is a believer's duty to pray to Alalh to accept his deeds and then to beg Allah's pardon for the fautls and shortcomings, if any, that might have found access to the deeds done.

Why *Istighfar* (request for pardon) after Prayers?

It occurs in a Hadith that after concluding a prayer the Holy Prophet ﷺ asked for Allah's pardon by uttering the word استغفرالله (I ask for Allah's pardon) three times. This occasion for استغفرالله is hardly understood, as pardon is generally sought on committing some fault or sin. So why استغفرالله after a highly praise-worthy act like payer? The answer to this question is quite obvious. We have indeed offered the prayer, but owing to our weakness and inability we may not have done full justice to it and it may not have been worthy of Allah's dignity, honour and greatness.

مَا عَبَدْنَاكَ حَقَّ عِبَادَتِكَ

O Allah we could not do full justice to Your worship which You deserve.

The occasion for (استغفرالله) is, therefore, quite justified when we call upon Allah to pardon the mistakes and shortcomings traceable in our prayers. In praise of His righteous servants Almighty Allah has said in Surah Zariyat:

كَانُوْا قَلِيْلاً مِّنَ الَّيْلِ مَايَهْجَعُوْنَ o وَبِالْاَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُوْنَ

They used to sleep but little at night and used to seek forgiveness before dawning of each day. (51: 17-18)

Hazrat A'yeshah رضی الله عنها once asked the Holy Prophet ﷺ: What occasion is it for a person to seek pardon when he has spent the whole night in prayer without committing any sin? The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied

to this question, saying: They seek pardon because they feel that the worship they offered in the night is not worthy of being presented to Allah. They are, therefore, seeking pardon for the faults and shortcoings that night have crept into their worship. It is, therefore, a servant's duty not to feel proud of his good deeds; he should rather think of its possible defects and deficits and seek Allah's pardon for them. He should render thanks to Allah and pray for their acceptance. May Allah, by His mercy, enable us to understand this reality and follow it accordingly.

A Comprehensive *Du'a*

After reciting all these Ad'yiah Hazrat Ibrahim علیه السلام recited the following comprehensive and effective *Du'a*:

رَبَّنَاوَابْعَثْ فِيْهِمْ رَسُوْلاً مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُوْا عَلَيْهِمْ اٰيٰتِكَ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيْهِمْ (سورة البقرة ۱۲۸:۱۲۹)

O our Lord! And raise up in their midst a Messenger from amongst them who shall recite to them Your verses and teach them the Book and wisdom and shall purify them. (2:129)

As already stated not only has Hazrat Ibrahim علیه السلام begged Allah to send down a Messenger with a revealed Book - the Qur'an, but he has also begged Allah to send down such a Messenger as would teach the people the Divine Book and points of wisdom and purify them from the filth of infidelity and shirk and all other sins. Thus, we see that this *Du'a* teaches, in a nut shell, principels by understanding and acting upon which a believer can attain success in this world as well as in the Hereafter.

By these *Ad'yiah*, the Holy Prophet ﷺ is teaching his *Ummah* that when some problem or difficulty arises, they should refer them for removal to Allah. He has also

made the procedure and style of seeking Allah's help too simple and unconditional. For so doing neither you require ablution nor facing the Qiblah. *Du'a* (supplication) is not prohibited even during pollution by coition. However, it is not lawful to recite the Holy Qur'an in this condition. It is prohibited to offer *Du'a* or *Zikr* (rememberance) with the tongue while one is in the latrine. Supplication and remembance in the heart are lawful even in this place.Any way, Allah has made the process of remembrance no condition nor has He prescribed any special procedure for it. You are free to make your appeal to Allah without ablution, without raising your hands and without moving the tongue. Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has said that when anyone visited him to put some question he رحمة الله عليه become a bit concerned about the nature of the question. In such a situation Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه always turned to Allah for help. He رحمة الله عليه never omitted to follow this practice throughout his life and help indeed always came to him from Allah.

The importance of the *Ad'yiah* (supplications) occuring in the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has been very kind to us in teaching us a *Du'a* suitable for every occasion. Not only has he ﷺ given us the *Ad'yiah* but he has also taught us how to recite them and when. It is our duty to learn those *Ad'yiah* and to recite them with rapt attention when the occasion arrives. This is so to say that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has spread the table decorated with delicious dishes but we are so lazy as not to extend our hands to partake of the food. The learned saints have collected these *Ad'yiah* in the form of books so that every Muslim may read and remember them with ease. In olden days it was the

practice that as soon as a child was able to speak he was taught to say بسم الله before taking a morsel and the other prescribed *Ad'yiah* on finishing the food. The children were similarly taught other *Ad'yiah* for other occasions.

May Almighty Allah help us to follow the path of *Deen* and include us all in the blessing of founding and building this mosque. May He also help us in discharging the rights of this mosque that fall on our shoulders.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal
Karachi.

Date : After 'Asr Prayers

REALIZE THE VALUE OF TIME

الحمدلله نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهدان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا ونبينا ومولانا محمداً عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد ! :

عن ابى عباس رضى الله تعالىٰ عنهما قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم نعمتان مغبون فيهما كثيرمن الناس الصحة والفراغ (بخارى، كتاب الرقائق، باب ماجاء فى الصحة والفراغ، حديث نمبر ٦٠٤٩)

All praise to Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His pardon. We believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah

from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the One. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our master, our Prophet and our Sire, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant His Messenger. May Allah shower His mercy on him, his household and his Companions رضى الله عنه and bless them and salute them all in great abundance.

(Bukhari -- Kitabur-riqaq..... Hadith no: 6049)

Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه

As I had said earlier that after completing the study of "*Riyazus-Saliheen*" it is the intention to commence, God willing, the study of some other book of Hadith. So, today another book of Hadith is being commenced, in the name of Allah. May Allah grant us, by His mercy, lights and blessings and help us to act upon the injunction contained therein.

This book, "Az-zuhd war-Raqaiq" was compiled by Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه an Imam, Faqih, Muhaddis, Sufi, and Mujahid. He is one of those saints of our *Ummah* on hearing whose name a current of affection and deference runs through our hearts. Even earlier I have mentioned from time to time in these meetings some accounts of his life. He was probably born in the beginning of the second century - *Hijri*. That is, he belonged to the period when about one hundred years had passed since the sad demise of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He is senior to and more reverent than the compilers of the six renowned books of Hadith known as *Sihah Sittah* from

sacred Imam Bukhari to Imam Ibn Majah. He is also a contemporary and a student of Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه. He lived in a period when the Islamic world was glittering with prominent personalities of knowledge and science. In those days peerless personalities were present almost in every corner of the Islamic world. Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه was born in the city of Merv in Khurasan, but later on he migrated to Baghdad and settled there.

A Unique event that reformed his life

Queer are the conditions of his life. The biographies of such saints are full of light and blessings. Every detail of these biographies have the effect of revolutionizing the trend of hearts, by the grace of Allah He hailed from a well-to-do family. In his book "Bustanul-Muhaddiseen" Hazrat Shah Abdul Aziz, Muhaddis Dehlavi has written an incident about him. He owned a very large and flourishing grarden of apple trees. Like the sons of rich men of those days he had become a spoilt boy, away from school and learning, enjoying full freedom to lead a life of revelry and merry-making, with no interest in *Deen* and its practices.

In one apple season he and his family shifted to the garden to enjoy the delicious apples and create the scene of a picnic party. He also invited to the party his friends. At nightfall a full-fledged merry-making party commenced with drinking and singing. He himself was an expert violin-player and a meritorious singer. Affected by the musical melody and the intoxicating wine, he fell into sleep, with the musical instrument in his lap. When he awoke-from the nap and touched the instrument it was totally dead. He did his best to repair it, but in vain_no tune, no music. He once again tried to repair the instrument by re-setting its strings. When he played upon it, then instead

of music, a voice was heard, but it was the voice of the Qur'anic verse:

اَلَمْ يَأْنِ لِلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اَنْ تَخْشَعَ قُلُوْبُهُمْ لِذِكْرِ اللّٰهِ وَمَا نَزَلَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ

(سورة الحديد:١٦)

Is not the time ripe for those who have believed (in Allah) that their hearts should submit to the remembrance of Allah and t the truth which has been revealed? (57:16)

What an effective way of addressing a man drowned in sins inducing him to take to the path of righteousness!

According to a narrative this voice of recitation of the Qur'anic verse was coming out of the same violin. According to another narrative it was emanating from the beak of a bird. Any way, it was a miraculous incident from Almighty Allah which indicated His Mercy. This voice touched his heart to the core and he irresistibly fell to the thought that he had wasted his life in wrongs and sins only. At once he replied saying:

بلی یارب قدآن... بلی یارب قدآن

(Why not O my lord: The time is now ripe (for that).

"Now I give up all my sinful activities and turn to Almighty Allah." He was true to his pledge. After relinquishing all these foolish and harmful engagements he decided to devote himself whole-heartedly to *Deen*. Now compare his previous life of revelry and merry - making with this tremendous revolution that he became the compiler of this book to guide humanity and he died in this honoured capacity. Today the necks of the entire Muslim *Ummah* are bent before his favours and kindness shown to them. (Bustamul Hadith p-155)

His status in the science of Hadith

Almighty Allah had bestowed upon him a very high status in the science of Hadith. Very grand Ulama of Hadith have fallen victim to adverse comments. Even Imam Bukhari, Imam Abu Hanifa رحمة الله عليه and Imam Shafi'i رحمة الله عليه could not be spared from such comments. I have, however, not come across anyone who has made any comment on the narratives and Ahadith of Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه. So high-ranking a Muhaddith he is!

His lack of interest in, and retirement from the world

As mentioned earlier, he belonged to a noble dynasty and was himself a rich man. Even in the changed conditions of his life he used to have on his dining table from ten to fifteen delicious dishes which were shared by a large number of guests. While the guests were eating the food and he was playing host to them, he himself was fasting.

His occupation with the Ahadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

It is recorded about his ancestral house in the city of Merv in Khurasan that its courtyard was fifty yards square. The entire yard remained filled with the needy. Some called upon him to ask some questions in *Deen*, some to take lessons and some for their personal needs. Later on when he migrated to Bughdad, he purchased for himself a small house where he lived in seclusion and obscurity. Someone asked him how he lived in such a small house in Bughdad after having left his palatial building in Merv. In reply he said that he lived more comfortably and happily in the small house in Baghdad, because in Baghdad he had a more peaceful and seculded

life which was not available in Merv. In Baghdad he went to the mosque for praying and came back to his house to busy himself with the study of the Ahadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ . He said that a life of seclusion like that was more pleasant to him.

Respect and love for him in the hearts of the people

In those days there was a city named Ruqqa which is now a sector of Baghdad. During his caliphate once Haroon Rashid was sitting in the royal tower with his mother or wife, when he heard a huge noise rising from the boundary walls of the city. Haroon Rashid thought that perhaps some enemy had attacked the city. He at once sent his men to inquire about the matter. He was informed that the noise was due to the people's clamour who had gone out of the city to receive. Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه who was coming to the city of Ruqqa.

I heard from my father, Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه that during the reception Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه happened to sneeze he said (الحمد لله). In reply to this the people uttered (يرحمك الله) (May Allah have mercy on you) . This was the cause of the noise. Seeing this scene the wife of Rashid said to her husband: You are a great king, ruling over about half the world, but it is these godly men who deserve to rule over land. A real king is he who rules over the hearts of the people. It was not Police but the love of the saint which had brought so many people at the place, this was the high station at which. Almighty Allah had placed him. (History of Baghdad 1/156).

A strange event of his generosity

Almighty Allah had granted him رحمة الله عليه huge wealth and luxuries of the world, but his heart was not at all occupied with the love of the world. His condition was a full demonstration of the common proverb "the world is in the hand not in the heart". while living in Khorasan, he intended to proceed on the *Hajj* pilgrimage, when the people of the town came to know this, they called upon him in a delegation and desired to go for *Hajj* with him, so that they may benefit by his company during the journey. Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه agreed with them on the condition that they should deposit their provisions and money with him, so that he may spend the amount joinitly for all of them. The people deposited their purses with him رحمة الله عليه and he kept them in box, and set off on the *Hajj* journey. He himself arranged for the conveyance and food , till on the completion of the *Hajj* he took them with him to Madinah Munaw-warah. Here he asked his companions what their families had desired them to bring home for them from Madinah Munaw-wareh. He took them to the market and purchased for them what they desired. On coming back to Makkah Mukar- ramah, he repeated the same question and purchased for them from Makkah Mukar-ramah their needs.On coming back to Khorasan he arranged for a sumptuous feast for all. He also presented to every one some costly present. In the end he opened the bax in which he had kept their purses and returned to every one his purse- Such was his unique generosity: (Siar- Ilaa un- nubala 8/385)

His generosity and help to the poor

There is another similar story about him. Once he was going an a *Hajj* journey with a Caravan. On the way a

hen of a member of the caravan died. They threw away the dead hen on the dust heap. Hazrt Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه was comming behind the caravan. He saw that a girl from the neighbouring village came out, rushed to the dead hen, wrapped if with a cloth and took it home quietly and quickly. Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه was observing all this and was at a loss to understand what the girl would do with that dead hen. Hazrat Abdullah Bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه followed that girl to her house. He asked her who she was and what she was going to do with that dead hen. The girl said to Hazrat Abdullah Mubarak رحمة الله عليه with some reluctance: I am an orphan girl and my mother is a widow. Today there is nothing in the house to eat. For many days we have been passing a wretched state in which the *Shari'ah* has made it lawful for us to eat dead meat. Thus, we keep ourselves alive by picking up from this heap dead animals.

Hearing this Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak's heart was awfully shocked. He thought what a pity that these servants of Allah are living on the meat of dead animals and he was going on the *Hajj* Pilgrimage! he inquired from his assistant about the money with him. The assistant replied that it was perhaps two thousand Dinars. He asked him that after deducting twenty Dinars for their Journey back home he should hand over the entire money to that girl. He would not go on the *Hajj* Pilgrimage that year. He thought that the reward Allah would give him for helping the poor family of the girl would be much more than the reward for *Hajj*.

Not only had Allah favoured him with one opportunity but many for doing righteous and good turns the extent of which we can hardly comprehend.

Another example of his generosity

Whenever Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه visited the city of Ruqqa a young man called upon him to ask him some religious problems and other matters. On one of his visits the saint did not see the young man and inquired the people about him. They informed the saint that he was heavily in debt which he could not pay. His creditor had, therefore got him arrested and imprisoned. The saint was very much pained to know this. He found out the amount of the debt which was ten thousand Dinars. He also found out the name of the creditor. He went in search of the creditor and at last met him. He offered to pay off the debt on the condition that the creditor would make a solemn promise not to tell the debtor who paid the debt. The creditor made such a promise. The saint, therefore, at once paid the amount of ten thousand Dinars to the creditor and the latter got the debtor released from the prison.

When after being released from the prison the young man came to the city, he came to know that Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه had recently been in the city but had left it just then. The young man ran after him and overtook him. Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه said to him: I was told that you are in prison. The young man replied in the affirmative and said that he had been released, by the grace of Allah. The saint asked the young man how he was released. The man said: Allah sent from the unseen world an angel who paid off his debt and brought about his release. Hearing this, Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه said: Now thank Allah for this favour. I too was praying to Allah for your release.

The young man told his friends that while Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه was alive he could not

know who had paid off his debt. The creditor had made a solemn promise to the saint not to disclose the secret. After the death of Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه the creditor told the debtor that it was really the saint himself who got him released from the prison by paying off the the debt. (History of Baghdad 10/159).

Kitabuz-zuhd war-raqa-iq

At any rate, he رحمة الله عليه is a saint of very lofty status. The book we are going to start today is his compilation. It bears the name "*Kitabuz-zuhd war-raqa-iq*". It is a collection of those Ahadith in which the Holy Prophet ﷺ had preached the importance of a life of austerity and abstinence. By reading this book man's interest in the world is effaced from his heart and interest in the Hereafter is created. "Raqaiq" or "Riqaq" means those Ahadith that generate softness leniency and pathos in the hearts and removes negligence and carelessness from them. almost all *Muhadiseen* (Traditionalists) open in their books permanent chapter on such Ahadith, but Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه has compiled a separate book on this topic. There are other Muhaddiseen like Imam Wakee' bin al-Jarrah رحمة الله عليه, Imam Ahmad bin Hambal رحمة الله عليه and Imam Baihaqi رحمة الله عليه who had compiled books under the name of "Kitabuz-zuhd". However, this book of Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه earned greater fame than others, because, firstly, he is among the earlier writers and secondly, because Almighty Allah had endowed every work of his with blessings. That is why I decided to commence the study of this book so that Allah may, by His mercy and by virtue of this book", create some softness in our hearts and an interest in the Hereafter instead of the love of the world that has overwhelmed our hearts.

Two great blessings are being neglected

This book contains some Ahadith as well as some accounts and statements of the Noble Companions رضى الله عنهم The first is that famous Hadith which is narrated from Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbas رضى الله عنه who has quoted the Holy Prophet ﷺ as saying:

نعمتان مغبون فيهما كثير من الناس الصحة والفراغ (بخارى، كتاب الرقاق، باب ماجاء في الصحة والفراغ حديث نمبر ٦٠٤٩)

(Bukhari. Kitabur-Raqaiq.... Hadith no: 6049)

There are two blessings of Almighty Allah about which many people are in deception. One of these blessings is health and the other is freedom from engagement and work or leisure at one's disposal. As long as man is enjoying these two blessings he remains under the impression that these will linger on with him for ever. As long as he is in good health he never thinks that one day he may fall ill. Similarly when he has leisure he thinks that a time will never come when he will become too much occupied with work and duties.

So as long as he enjoys these two blessings, in deception and misconception he whiles away his energies and time in useless pursuits and goes on postponing good deeds. He thinks, and quite wrongly, that he has yet much time at his disposal. The result is that he fails to reform and ameliorate himself. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has advised us that we should acknowledge the values of these blessings, the very moment they come to us.

Realize the value of Health

We do not know when the blessing of health, which we are presently enjoying, may be taken away from us by one disease or another. It is, therefore, imperative that we should start without loss of time projects of good deeds

and charitable work, our own reform and the work of turning to Allah with repentance. Start work to ameliorate your Hereafter while you are enjoying this blessing; who knows if it will be available tomorrow?

Illness attacks its victim all of a sudden without giving any prior notice. A hale and hearty man suddenly falls victim to a disease. Now he is bed-ridden, unable to move. So, do not while away the period of your health and ability in sitting idle. Allah has granted you this health and strength for doing good deeds for this life as well as for the life after death i.e. the Hereafter. If you lose this health and are attacked by some disease, you will have to weep for the rest of your life and feel regret for not having turned to good account the available period of your health, although at this last stage regret and sorrow will not benefit you.

Act only upon one Hadith

This Hadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ belongs to the group of the جوامع الكلم (comprehensive speech). Imam Abu Daood رحمة الله عليه has said: There are a few such Ahadith that if a man acts upon them, it will be sufficient for his salvation in the Hereafter. The Hadith under consideration is one of these "comprehensive" Ahadith. That is why Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه has begun his book of Ahadith with this Hadith. Imam Bukhari رحمة الله عليه has also begun his book "Kitabur Riqaq" in the Sahih Bukhari with this Hadith. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has admonished us in this Hadith, well in advance. Admonition is of no value after the propitious time has passed away. The Holy Prophet ﷺ who is kinder to us than our parents and is well aware of our tendencies and temparaments has worried us saying: The state of good Hadith and leisure available to

you now may or may not be available later on. So turn to good account these blessings before the opportunity passes away and you face regret and sorrow.

It is Satan's deception to feel that I am in the bloom of youth

This "Self" is always deceiving man by beguiling him: We are yet in the bloom of our youth. We have not seen the world. This is the age to enjoy ourselves. We shall turn to Allah when the ripe time arrives for that. Then we shall think of reforming ourselves.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is warning us saying: do not mind the deceptions of the self and satan. The time which Almighty Allah has granted is very precious; it is huge wealth. Every available moment of man's lifetime is very valuable. Do not waste them. Use them for the good of the Hereafter.

Had We not granted you an age so long

It accurs in the Holy Qur'an that when man will be brought before Allah on the Day of Judgement, he will say to Allah:

"Our Lord! Release us; we will do right not (the wrong) that which we used to do. (35:37)

Allah will say:

أَوَلَمْ نُعَمِّرْكُمْ مَّا يَتَذَكَّرُ فِيهِ مَنْ تَذَكَّرَ وَجَاءَكُمُ النَّذِيرُ (سورة فاطر:٣٧)

"Did We not grant you a life long enough for him who reflected and who cared to reflect. And the warner came to you. (35:37)

That is : Not only did Allah grant you a sufficiently long life, but He also sent for you warners from time to time, about one lakh and twenty four thousands in

number, the last being the Holy Prophet ﷺ, assisted by his caliphs and successors to prompt you to action and tell you to utilize rightly the time and resources at your disposal.

Who are these warners?

The commentators of the Qur'an have given different meanings of the term "Warners" Some have said that the word means the Prophet ﷺ and their successors who preach "*Deen*" to the people. Some have said that by "Warner" is meant the "white hair" on the head. When the hair turns white, it should be taken as a warner from Allah to warn us of approaching death, and exhort us to repent for our past sins, reform our ways of life and prepare for the Hereafter. Some others have interpreted it to mean "Grandsons" If a grandson is born to anyone and the man becomes a grand father, then this grandson is a warner, as if saying: O grandfather! Your hour is approaching Now make room for us.

A Dialogue with the Angel of death (عزرائیل)

I heard from my respected father, Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه that a man happened to meet the angel of Death (عزرائیل). The man complained to the angel, saying: You visit your victims without prior notice and take out their souls from their bodies and thus cause their deaths. This is not followed in the worldly courts. No criminal is caught unless a notice is issued to him, calling for his explanation. The angel of death replied, saying: Mr., you are mistaken in levying this charge against me. I issue more notices and more frequently than any court or department of this world. None takes seriously these notices. You have my notice on everyone of these occasions; when you have fever or you suffer from any

other disease; become white haired: when a grandsn is born. I issue so many notices from time to time but none takes these notices.

That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: control yourself and utilize the periods of your good health and vacant hours and leisure to prepare yourself for the Hereafter. None knows what shall happen the next day.

If you have anything to do, do it

While admonishing us, our Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to tell us: Allah has granted you youth, good health and leisure. Make use of them and do whatever you want to do just now. Remember Allah and save yourself from sins, as you will be able to do nothing when you fall ill and become weak and short of time. He often used to recite this urdu complets:

ابھی تو ان کی آہٹ پر میں آنکھیں کھول دیتا ہوں
وہ کیسا وقت ہوگا جب نہ ہوگا یہ بھی امکان میں

It means : presently I am able to open my eyes on hearing the sound of the beloved's footsteps. What an awfully horrible time it will be when this too will become impossible!

At such a time of inability and helplessness it will not be possible to do anything for the Hereafter, even though there may be a burning desire to do something.

The regret for inability to offer two *Raka'ats* of prayer

It is narrated that once Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی الله عنه was going on a journey. On the way he saw a grave. There he got off the animal and offered two Rak'ats of *Nafl* (optional) prayer. Then he got on the animal and

resumed the journey. Thinking that it was perhaps the grave of some particular person, one of his companions asked the reason for his praying two *Rak'ats* Hazrat Abdullah bin 'Umar رضی اللہ عنہ replied, saying: When I passed by this place it occurred to me that the deeds of those who have gone to their graves have come to an end. These inmates of the graves may be keenly desiring if they could be able to offer two *Rak'ats* of *Nafl* prayer, but they cannot do so. I, therefore, thought that Allah has granted me this opportunity, so I should avail myself of it. That is why I got off my animal and offered two *Rak'ats* of *Nafl*.

Fill your Balance of Deeds with good deeds

These moments are very precious. That is why we have been commanded not to long for death, because we do not know what will happen to us after death.

You should note that all you can do and shall do will be done within the limits of the time and the opportunities which Allah has granted you in this world and not beyond that. So value the moments which Almighty Allah has granted you and utilize them in useful work without wasting a single moment. For example, in one moment you can rehearse once the sacred words سبحان اللہ According to a Hadith, only by uttering these two words, half the Balance of Deeds will be filled. After uttering once the words, الحمد للہ the Balance of Deeds will be filled. Now see how precious are these moments, but you are wasting and losing them. For God's sake use them in doing beneficial and sacred act. (Kanzul-'Ummal. Hadith no: 2018)

Hafiz Ibn Hajar رحمۃ اللہ علیہ and the realization of the value of time

Hafiz Ibn Hajar enjoys a very high status among the Muhaddiseen. He is a commentator of the sacred Bukhari and a mountain of learning. Man cannot imagine the height of his knowledge to which Allah had raised him. He is well known as an 'Alim, a compiler and a Muhaddis. It is recorded in his biography that during his writing when his pen of reed became blunt, it had to be reshaped by cutting off the blunt edge with a pen-knife. This took some time. The Hafiz رحمۃ اللہ علیہ did not like to waste even this little time. During this interval he رحمۃ اللہ علیہ uttered at least once the third Kalimah:

سبحان اللہ والحمد للہ ولا الہ الا اللہ واللہ اکبر

He رحمۃ اللہ علیہ did this to save time from being wasted. The time which he spent on writing books was like the time spent on worship. The time spent on uttering the third *Kalimah*, too, did not go waste. Anyway, the essence of the injunction of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is that we should all realize the value of time.

Hazrat Mufti Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ and the value of time

The most neglected thing today in our environment and society is time. It is passed in gossip, idle and useless talk or in occupations which are beneficial neither for *Deen* nor for the worldly life. My respected father Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ spent his time with great care, so that not a single moment went waste, but it was spent on some acts of *Deen* or of the world. Any worldly affair done with right intention also turns into an affair of *Deen*. By way of advising us, he once said to us

that while a man is sitting in a latrine he can neither indulge in remembrance of Allah which is forbidden, nor in any other work. He felt his inactivity even in such a place very heavy on him. He, therefore, used to wash and clean the jug meant for use in the latrine. Thus, he took some advantage of the time he got in the latrine.

My father further said: I estimate in advance that I shall get five minutes after such work and I shall utilize those five minutes in doing such and such things. After taking meals one should avoid reading and writing at least for ten minutes. I, therefore, make a pre-plan for utilizing these ten minutes and do accordingly.

Those who have met my respected father رحمة الله عليه may have seen that even while driving in a car he used to scrible something. I have seen him writing in a rickshaw in which the traveller receives jerks after jerks. He used to utter one very useful sentence which is worth preserving in the memory by all of us.

The best formula for working

If you put off any work till the availability of time, it is postponed for ever and will never be done. If you have two items on your working programme and a third item suddenly arises insert this third one between the other two items. All the three items will get disposed of without difficulty. I am grateful to my respected father for this valuable advice which I follow and find quite plausible. If you postpone a work for some other time, it will never be done, because the vicissitudes of time will never spare you for this. If a man feels the imprtance of some work, he finds time to complete it somehow.

Will the "Self " be neglectful despite this?

Our Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه gave us very useful advice, saying: If you decide to recite the Qur'an or to offer nafl prayers, but when the appointed time arrives you feel lethargic and disinclined to get up from your bed, then on such occasions try to train your "self", and address it in this way: You are not inclined to get up for prayer this time, but what will you do, if you receive an invitation from the King or the President of the country to award you some valuable prize or a high-grade and high-paid post? Will you feel lethargic even in such a situation and reject the President's invitation on the ground that you are feeling sleepy and cannot leave your bed at this time? No sensible man can treat the royal invitation with this apathy. He will jump out of his bed atonce and begin to receive the valuable reward.

This shows that in reality there is no excuse for lying in the bed. Had there been an excuse the self would not have shown agilty in accepting the President's invitation. Now consider this. A worldly authority, who is indeed powerless and weak, is inviting you to offer a post and you are so anxiously and hurriedly preparing for the interview. Consider what should be your attitude towards an invitation from the King of Kings, the Creator and Nourisher of the entire Universe, the Omnipotent and Oniscient Lord and the Master of life and death? Such an imagination and argumentation will generate courage in you and you will be able to put to good use the time which you used to waste.

The remedy to cure lustful thoughts

Once Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه delivered before us the following sermon:

Desires arise in the heart from time to time to

commit sins. How to resist them? Suppose you are being instigated from within to cast a glance on some forbidden and unlawful but attractive sight. Before succumbing to the sinful urge think if you would commit this sin when your father, your Sheikh or one of your sons daughters was looking at you in this situation. Certainly not. You would resist the temptation at all costs in such a situation.

Consider again that it would make no difference in your status in this world nor in the Hereafter if these relatives saw you committing this sin of the eye. Why should you not mind the fact that, after all, the King of all Kings, Allah, is seeing you in this condition? He is able to punish you for this sin: If you resist the temptation by such imagination and thinking, it is hoped that Allah will save you from such sins.

The Film of your life will be televised

I remember another advice of Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه which he offered, saying:

Just consider what would be your answer if Allah made to you on the Day of Judgement the following proposal:

"All right, if you are afraid of Hell, I shall save you from Hell on the condition that I shall prepare a film depicting your entire life beginning from your child-hood, including your youth and old age till the day of your death. I will show the film on a screen. Among its spectators will be your father, your mother your brothers and sisters, your children, your pupils, your teachers and your friends. The film shall display the picture of your entire life. If you accept this condition then I shall save you from Hell. Hazrat Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه went on saying: In such a situation man shall probably tolerate the punishment of the Fire, but will not tolerate the secrets of his entire life to be

disclosed to all these persons. When you cannot tolerate that all the good or bad aspects of your life are disclosed to your parents, relatives, friends and others, how would you like the disclosure of the details of your life to Almighty Allah. Just reflect on this.

Do not postpone it till tomorrow

Anyway, this Hadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is very useful and deserves to be firmly impressed on the heart, that every moment of life is very precious. Do not waste the time presently available to you by putting off work. If you postpone it till tomorrow that tomorrow will never come. If you have to do anything do it today and just now; commence doing it without the slightest delay. Who knows if tomorrow shall dawn, the urge shall remain alive and the circumstances shall be favourable or the capacity to do it shall not be taken away from you? More than this, who knows if you will be alive tomorrow? That is why the Holy Qur'an has said:

وَسَارِعُوْا اِلٰى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمٰوٰتُ وَالْاَرْضُ

(سورة ال عمران: ١٣٣)

"And rush to seek the forgiveness of your Lord and Paradise as wide as are the skies and the earth." (3: 133)

In this verse man has been urged to compete with one another in rushing to Allah's forgiveness and Paradise so wide and spacious as the skies and the earth.

It is desirable to make haste in doing good

Ordinarily, hurry and haste are not desirable habits, but they are quite desirable in doing good deeds when an urge arises in the heart for that مسارعت implies in its meaning

competing with one another in doing good. Almighty Allah has granted us this time for this work. May Allah impress this point upon our hearts and help us to act upon it. *Aameen*. Today we have fallen victim to carelessness and thoughtlessness. The idea of the Hereafter hardly finds a place in our thoughts and reflections at any time during the twentyfour hours. We are proceeding headlong towards negligence. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has explained this point in a Hadith in the following style:

Realize the value of five items

عن عمر بن ميمون الا ودى رضى الله تعالى عنه قال قال رسول الله عليه وسلم لرجل وهو يعظه اغتنم خمسا قبل خمس شبابك قبل هرمك وصحتك قبل سقمك وغنا ك قبل فقرك وفراغك قبل شغلك وحياتك قبل موتك (مشكوة كتاب الرقاق رقم ٥٩٨٧)

(Mishkat Kitabur-riqaq Hadith no: 5987)

Hazrat Umar bin Maimoon Awdi رضى الله عنه has narrated that, while advising one of his companions, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: Realize the value of five items before the loss of five other items, viz., (1) the value of youth before old age; (2) the value of health before illness; (3) the value of affluence before poverty; (4) leisure and vacant time before occupation and engagement; and (5) your life before your death.

Realize the value of youth

All these five blessings are ordained to come to their natural ends. If presently it is youth it is to be followed by old age or death. It is not everlasting. There is no third alternative. So, while you have good health, strength, courage and resolution, do some good deeds. After

becoming crippled and disabled by old age you can do nothing. Take lesson from Sheikh Sa'di's persion couplet:

وقت پیری گرگ ظالم میشود پرہیزگار
در جوانی توبہ کردن شیوہ پیغمبری

Even a cruel wolf becomes righteous during the old age, because he has no strength in him to hunt his prey. To turn to Allah in repentance during youth is the Practice of the Prophets. So realize the value of youth for doing good work before the arrival of the old age or before.

Realize the value of Health, wealth and leisure

At this time you are hale and hearty. Remember that there is none in the world who is immune from the attack of diseases. Everyone is sure to fall victim to some disease. Man is, however, quite in dark about the time of the disease. That is why it is advised that you should realize value of the health you are presently enjoying.

Presently you are well-to-do and have monetary resources with you, but none knows how long this affluence will continue with you. How many persons there are who have become paupers, though a little before they were rich men. None knows what will happen the next day. So, realize the value of your wealth before its possible change into poverty and spend your resources in ameliorating the affairs of your Hereafter.

Similarly if you have leisure now, value it before you become engaged in some work. The hours of leisure which Allah has granted you are not eternal. They may soon pass away and you may become engaged in some work. So utilize this leisure in useful and lawful work. Likewise, realize the value of life before death visits you.

Recite these *Adʿyiah* every morning

In order to turn to good account the time available to you in this world, draw up a time-table for your daily activities of life from morning till evening. Then make a careful survey of what you are actually doing and how far it is possible for you to add to charitable and benevolent work; what are the sins you are committing which you must give up. After the *Fajr* (morning) prayer make it a routine to approach Allah with this prayer: O Allah! I am going out for my regular work with the intention to convert the activities of today into a deposit for the Hereafter. O Allah! Help me in the realization of this intention. All should remember the Adʿyiah which the Holy Prophet used to recite every morning. He ﷺ used to open the day with this *Duʿa*:

اللهم انی اسئلك خیر مافی هذا الیوم وخیر ما بعده اللهم انی اعوذبك من شرما فی هذا الیوم وشرما بعده (ترمذی، ابواب الدعوات، باب ماجاء فی الدعاء اذا اصبح)

"O Allah I beg you to grant me the good of this day and the good of what comes after it. O Allah I seek refuge with You from the evil of this day and the evil of what comes after it.

(Tirmidhi .... Chapter on Adʿyiah morning)

اللهم انی اسئلك خیر هذا الیوم وفتحه ونصره ونوره وبرکته وهداه (ابو داؤد کتاب الادب، باب مایقول اذا اصبح، حدیث نمبر ٤٩٢٠)

O Allah I beg you to grant me the good of this day, its victory, its assistance, its light its blessing and its right of guidance. (Abu Daood..... Hadith No: 4920)

The *Adʿyiah* (supplications) which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught us includes every thing concerning our *Deen* and the world. He who remembers these should recite

them every morning; those who do not remember then should implore Allah in their own mother tongue in this way: O Allah! I am starting this day with the intention that I shall spend the twentyfour hours of the day in the right way and try to save them from wrong use and wasting them in vain. This is only my intention, but everything depends on You, on Your help, courage and resolve that You may grant me kindly put me on such a path and create for me such circumstances that I may spend the twentyfour hours of this day according to Your will and pleasure. Pray every morning in this way and Allah will not let these hours go waste.

After this Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمۃ اللہ علیہ is citing two sayings of Hazrat Hasan Basri رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

عن الحسن رحمة الله تعالى انه كان يقول ادركت اقواما كان احد هم اشح على عمره منه على دراهمه ودنانيره وعن الحسن انه كان يقول ابن آدم ايا ك والتسويف فانك بيومك ولست بغد وان يكن غدلك فكس فى غد كما كست فى اليوم والا يكن لك لم تندم على ما فرطت فى اليوم (كتاب الزهد والرقائق ص ٤)

(Kitabuz-zuhd war-ra-qaiq, P-4)

Hazrat Hasan Basri رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Hazrat Hasan Basri رحمۃ اللہ علیہ is one of the most dignified "*Tabi-ʿeen*" (followers of the companions)). All orders of the *Tariqat* and the *Mashaikah* terminate in Hazrat Hasan Basri رحمۃ اللہ علیہ.

In other words, the order commencing from the Holy Prophet ﷺ passes through Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ and ends in Hazrat Hasan Basri رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. Those who recite the "mystical tree know very well that it contains the name of Hazrat Hasan Basri رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. We are all highly indebted to

him for so many favours he has done to the Muslim *Ummah*. It is through the auspices of these dignified saints that we have been receiving so many blessings from Allah.

Time is more precious than gold and silver

Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه has cited here two sayings from him. In the first saying he has said that he saw and enjoyed the company of such saints as valued the moments of their lives a great deal more than the gold and silver coins of Dinar and Dirham. Just as men, in general, are careful in saving and spending their money, in the same way these godly men valued the moments of their lives and regarded them more precious than the metal coins, lest they should be wasted in useless pursuits, unlawful activities and acts not approved by the *Shari'ah*. They were men who realized the value of time and spent it most cautiously and sparingly. We should all learn a lesson from them about the correct use of time and its value.

The value of two *Rak'ats* of Nafl (*optional*) Prayer

Once the Holy Prophet ﷺ was passing by a graveyard along with some of his companions رضی الله عنهم. He ﷺ addressed his companions, syaing: You often offer two *Rak'ats* of the *Nafl* (Optional) Prayers hurriedly and without realizing their value. However, in the sight of the man lying buried in the grave, these two *Rak'ats* are more valuable than all the wealth of the world. The soul confined in the grave might be earnestly and regretfully wishing if he could find in his life two minutes more to offer two *Rak'ats* of *Nafl* Prayer and add its reward to his Record of Deeds.

A voice is coming out of the graveyard

My respected father Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه has composed a poem which is worth reading and which is based on a poem of Hazrat Ali رضی الله عنه. The theme of the poem is "Voice from the Graveyard". Thus begins the poem:-

مقبرے پر گزرنے والے سن
ٹھہر، ہم پر گزرنے والے سن

ہم بھی ایک دن زمین پر چلتے تھے
باتوں باتوں میں ہم مچلتے تھے

The poet imagines the dead saying:
O passer-by, halt and listen to me, One day I was also walking on the earth, and showing obstinacy on every trifle.
The poet explains the meaning of these two couplets thus: Even like you we ate and drank and enjoyed life. However, not even an atom of what I earned in the worldly life came with me. I brought with me from the world what good deeds I could do, by the grace of Allah. Except for this, nothing came with me to the grave. O passer-by, I am anxiously waiting day and night for someone to offer Fatiha and transmit to me its reward. On the other hand, O passer-by you are enjoying these precious moments of life for which I am longing anxiously and regretfully.

Only the "Deeds" will go with you

What wonderful and unique styles did the Holy Prophet ﷺ employ to warn his *Ummah* about the Hereafter! He ﷺ has said in a Hadith:

When the dead body is carried to the graveyard three things go with it: (1) its friends and relatives who go to the grave to see him off; (2) some of his belongings, e.g., his cot, coffin, etc.; (3) his deeds. The first two, i.e., his relatives and friends come back. The thing that accompanies the dead body is only the man's deeds.

(Bukhari, Kitabur-raqa-iq, ch. Throes of death)

Someone has so beautifully described this in a couplet:

شکریہ اے قبر تک پہنچانے والو شکریہ
اب اکیلے ہی چلے جائیں گے اس منزل سے ہم

Thanks to you, O who have come to see me off the grave. Now from this destination I shall go on alone.

In the poem "The voice coming out of the Graveyard," Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ has advised us that when we pass-by a grave we shall think a while that he too was a man like ourselves, living as we are living. He too had wealth, property, firends and relatives and lovers. He too had wishes and emotions. Today they have all gone to the dust. If he has anything, it is the deeds he did in the world. Now he is desiring regretfully, if he could get a few moments to add something to the collection of his good deeds.

Do not long for death

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has forbidden us to long for death, whatever the severity of the distress and tortures we may be undergoing in this life. Never pray: O Allah give me

death. Although you are suffering from so many calamities surrounding you on all sides, yet you may do some good deeds in the moment available to you during your life time. These last instalments of good deeds may procure for you success and salvation in the Hereafter. Instead of praying for death, pray for safety and peace and that Allah may help you to spend the available moments of your life in good deeds calculated to please Almighty Allah.

Hazrat Mian Sahib's revelation

Hazrat Mian Sayyid Asghar Husain Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was one of the teachers of my respected father رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. He was a very highly qualified saint with miraculous capacity. My respected teacher, Maulana Fazl Ahmad Sahib is in Swat. Once the latter himself told me this story He said that when Mian Sahib returned from *Hajj*, he was a student. One of the students proposed to call on Mian Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ to eat dates with him. We did not appreciate the reason for visiting Mian Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ only to eat dates instead of asking for *Du'a* from such a great saint. Even so, we proceeded to meet him in a group of six to seven students. When we met Mian Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ and saluted him, he said to his servant: This gentleman has come here for dates so give him some dates and let him go. As for the rest, call them in. So enlightened a saint he was!

How to be safe from too much talking

My respected father رحمۃ اللہ علیہ told me that once when he called upon Mian Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ, the latter proposed that in that meeting they both would talk together in the Arabic language. This was a very unusual plan the like of which had never happened before. My father then asked Mian Sahib to tell him the reason for that strange plan.

Mian Sahib رحمة الله عليه replied, saying: When we sit together talking to each other in Urdu sometimes we drift into useless topics and this tongue gets out of our control. As regards talking in Arabic, neither you nor I can speak it freely and fluently. The natural result will be that the talk will be confined to the most unavoidable topics.

Our Example

He further said: Our example is like that of a man who sets off on a journey with much wealth including gold and silver coins and he squandered nearly all the wealth and the coins during the journey. Only a few coins remained. Now that fellow was spending those remaining coins very sparingly and cautiously, lest he should squander those few remaining coins. He went on to say: We have passed a greater part of our lives in useless pursuits and only a few moments remain with us. We should be careful about these few precious moments, lest they too should be spent in useless pursuits. This is the same principle to which Hazrat Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه has also referred in his sermon. The true fact remains that the team of learned men whom Almighty Allah raised from the institution of Deoband refreshed our memories of the Noble Companions رضى الله عنهم of the Holy Prophet ﷺ by their conduct and character.

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه and the value of Time

My Shaikh, Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه has mentioned a unique behaviour of Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه. When Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه was lying on his death bed the Doctors had stopped all interviews and totally forbidden him to speak. One day suddenly he opened his eyes and sent for Maulawi Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه. When the latter come Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه

said to him: you are writing "Ahkamul Qur'an". It occurred to my mind just now that from such and such verse a religious injunction can be deduced an injunction which I did not see elsewhere earlier. After saying this he closed his eyes. Soon after he again opened his eyes and sent for another man. When that man came he entrusted to him some work. When Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه repeated this practice then the Manager of the Khanqah and his informal and intimate friend, Maulana Shabbir Ali Sahib, reminded Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه of the instruction of the Doctors and physicians which he was disobeying repeatedly. In reply to that freindly warning the ailing Maulana spoke a very wonderful sentence: You are quite right but I think that:

"those moments go waste which are not used in the service of anyone. It is a great blessing of Allah if one spends his lifetime in the service of humanity".

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه and his Timetable

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه had drawn up a complete Time Table for the period from morning till evening which he strictly followed. It was his routine to visit his two wives after the *'Asr* (late afternoon). prayer to have some conversation with them and inquire after their welfare. It was to comply with the orders of the *Shari'ah* to accord fair-play and justice to wives. This was in fact to follow the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. There is a Hadith to the effect that He ﷺ used to visit his sacred wives one by one daily after the 'Asr prayer to inquire after their welfare and also to have some conversation with them. See how the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not fail to entertain and please his sacred wives رضى الله عنهن, notwithstanding all his multifarious engagements including Jihad, instruction and teaching and

preaching of *Deen*.

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه had moulded his life on the pattern of the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. His visit to his two wives after the 'Asr pryaer was in compliance with the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The time for staying with each wife was fixed viz., fifteen minutes with each. He used a watch to ensure punctuality in time and justice to his wives. He would not reduce or increase the time even by a single minute. How meticulous was he in such matters!

So time is a great blessing of Allah which should not be wasted. Every moment of it is precious. It is slipping away from our hands slowly. It is melting away like ice, as someone has expresed it in these words:

ہو رہی ہے عمر مثل برف کم
چپکے چپکے رفتہ رفتہ دم بدم

Man's life is getting shorter and shorter minute by minute and second by second like the melting of ice.

The Reality of Birthdays

Birthday is celebrated when one year of anyone's age is completed. The people consider it a matter of joy that one year of the age has been completed. They celebrate this occasion like a joyous festival by lighting candles and cutting cakes, etc. The renowned Urdu poet Hazrat Akbar of Allahabad (India) has expressed the reality of this celebration very wisely in a couplet:

جب سالگرہ ہوئی تو عقدہ یہ کھلا
یہاں اور گرہ سے ایک برس جاتا ہے

Salgirah "عقدہ" means a year's knot; (گرہ) is an Arabic word meaning knot. The word (*Girah*) has also another meaning pocket. Thus, the couplet means: Allah has granted man some years, like putting some money in one's

pocket. Now the completion of one year of life means that out of one's age ordained by Allah one year has passed or the age has been reduced by one year. Is it an occasion for enjoyment or for mourning that the boy or the person has lost one precious year of his life?

A Dirge (مرثیہ) on the past years of life

My respected father رحمة الله عليه on reaching the age of thirty years had made it a routine to compose a dirge after the passage of a certain number of years from his life. A dirge is composed to mourn the death of someone, but my father used to compose his own dirge under the title of "A Dirge on the past years of life."

Only with the help of Alalh can we understand the truth that past time does not, and cannot, come back. It is, therefore, no occasion of joy; it is rather an occasion to reflect seriously how to turn to good account the remaing years of our lives.

It is a matter of regret that time has become the cheapest thing today in our society. It is being wasted mercilessly in useless pursuits, gossips and other activities which are beneficial neither in our worldly affairs nor in the affairs of the Hereafter.

There are three categories of activites

Hazrat Imam Ghazzali رحمة الله عليه has said that the activities of this world may be divided into three categories: Firstly, those that have some benefit and use, whether pertaining to the world or to *Deen* (religion). Secondly, those that are harmful and useless, either in resepct of the world or *Deen*. Thirdly, those activities which are neither beneficial nor harmful; they are totally useless. Thereafter, Hazrat Ghazzali رحمة الله عليه has said that so far as harmful

activities are concerned they have to be shunned at all costs. The third category of activities, which are neither beneficial nor harmful, may also be regarded as harmful. This is becausae instead of spending your time in something beneficial and useful you are wasting it in doing something in which there is no benefit for you. Thus, you have only wasted the time which you could have turned to good account.

In reality this too is a great loss

Take an example. Suppose a man goes to an island in which there is a rock of gold. The owner of the rock permits the man to take out gold from the rock as much as he desires till a certain date but not after the expirty of the appointed date when the permission shall be cancelled suddenly and the man shall have to get out of the island. Now consider will that man waste any moment in taking advantage of the permission to extract gold? Will he postpone the work of collecting gold and prefer to go about in the island to enjoy its beautiful scenes for sometime? That man shall never do so. It will be his anxiety and effort to extract gold as much as possible, because that gold will be his sole property. If, instead of extracting gold, he sits aside, he really shall incur a great loss because of his negligence.

The queer loss of a businessman

A businessman used to call on my respected father from time to time. He had a big business in the city. Once he came to my father and requested him to pray for him as he had sustained a great loss. My father felt very sorry to hear that and asked him about the extent of the loss. He said that the loss ran into millions of Rupees. On being asked to give the details of the loss he told my father that a

business bargain worth millions of Rupees could not be settled. But for this, the normal busines activities were going on smoothly and satisfactorily. The businessman told my respected father رحمة الله عليه that the failure to strike the bargain entailed a great loss. Now see! This businessman considered it a huge loss when he could not earn a prospective profit. After relating this story, my respected father رحمة الله عليه observed:

It was better if the businessman had thought similarly about *Deen*. If he had spent the available time in useful activities and in the path of Allah and the Hereafther, he would have earned a huge profit which he could not earn. Thus, he sustained a great loss in the matter of *Deen*.

The Story of a Bania
(An Indian Hindu Shopkeeper)

There is an event of exciting laughter, yet it contains useful morals for one endowed with intelligence. An elderly saint of ours who is also a famous physician told us this story of a Bania who was a druggist and his son also used to help him in the business at the shop. One day the Bania was going somewhere. He asked his son to look after the business. He instructed the son as to the prices of the various drugs. The son agreed to look after the business in his father's absence. A little later a customer came to the shop and purchased two bottles of some syrup at the rate of one hundred Rupees per bottle. When the father returned after some time he asked his son about the sales. The son told his father about the sales including the two bottles of the syrup which he had sold for one hundred Rupees each. On hearing this the father was greatly shocked at the action of his son who had sold the

two bottles of the syrup for one hundred instead of two thousand Rupees each. He scolded the son at his folly. The son too seriously felt the loss of his father and began to weep owing to the fault and besought his father to pardon him. When the father saw that his won was very much shocked at his folly, he consoled and comforted him thus: My son, it is not necessary to worry so much, because even the amount of Rs. 100/= for which you have sold the bottle of the syrup contians an element of profit. If you had worked wisely you could have sold the bottles for Rs two thousands, each. Anyway, we are not in loss at all.

Thus we see that if a businessman does not make a profit he thinks that he is in loss. If the absence of profit is regarded as loss in the worldly business, the same principle should apply to transactions concerning *Deen*. That is why Imam Ghazzali رحمة الله عليه has said that if we spend the available moments in activities which do not bring any profit, then this really means loss. If you had so desired, you could have earned a huge profit for the Hereafter. Mould your life on this pattern and see the result.

The Present Age and Time-saving devices

And think a bit how many comforts and blessings Allah has bestowed upon us in this scientific age, which our ancestors could not imagine. For example, in the olden days we had to collect wood sticks and dry them to make fire. Making tea used to take at least half an hour. Now, by the grace of Allah, we have electric and gas stoves on which we can prepare tea in two minutes. Thus, only in preparing tea we save twenty-eight minutes. In the same way the lengthy and tedious process of baking bread,

cooking meat and other foods have given way to instant baking and cooking on scientific appliances. Similarly, there are so many labour and time-savings blenders, grinders, crushers, cutters and choppers that provide us with finished products in minutes. Now think how is the time so saved employed. If we ask our women to do something, they say they have no time for that. In the olden days women did all this household duties manually, yet they had time enough to offer prayers, recite the Holy Qur'an and indulge in remembrance of Allah. Inspite of all these facilities women say that they get no time for the recitation of the Qur'an and remembrance of Allah.

In the olden days journeys were performed on foot or on horses and camels and thereafter on horse-carts and bicycles, buses and trains and then aeroplanes. Journeys taking months are now performed in days and hours. Yesterday I was in Madinah Munaw-warah where, by the grace of Allah. I offered the *Zuhr*, *'Asr*, *Maghrib* and *'Isha* prayers and today I have offered the Juma prayer here. Could anyone imagine in the past that it was possible for anyone to come back from Madinah Munaw-warah the next day? The position of journeys in the past was that if anyone was going to the Haramayn Sharifayn he would set off on the long journey after having his fautls and shortcomings excused by his friends and relations, becuase the journeys were very long and hazardous. Now Allah has made travelling so easy that a month's journey is performed in one day. Where has the saving of twenty-nine days gone? The simple answer is that the saving in time has been wasted and people say that they have no time.

Almighty Allah has granted us these facilities, so that we may save time and utilize it in remembring Him and

in preparing for the Hereafter. Now think where we are.

Satan has involved us in show-business

Lest the time saved should not be used in the remembrance of Allah and other useful activities, Satan has invented other engagements. He has involved us in show-business and instigated us to acquire the various luxuries of modern life and to earn more money for purchasing these luxuries, like the Radio, Television, V.C.R. We are all under the instigation of Satan and are sailing on the same boat. The time so saved is killed in gossip, useless recreation and other harmful pursuits.

Wastage of Time among womenfolk

The womenfolk are more commonly and widely afflicted with the show-business and wastage of time. They do a work in one hour which can be easily done in one minute. When they sit together they engage themselves in long and tall talks which necessarily include backbiting, lying, injuring the hearts of others and God knows what not. That is why Hazrat Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه has said that he has seen people who regarded the moments of their lives more precious than gold and silver. They scrupulously guarded these moments, lest they should be lost in useless pursuits.

Why should I waste time in taking revenge?

Perhaps I have already related this story to you that a gentleman went out in search of a friend of Allah (اولياء). He came across a saint and informed him of his objective. The Wali advised him to go to a particular mosque where he would find three saints engaged in rememberance of Allah. He advised the man to strike each of them with a blow at the back. When the man went to the mosque he

found there three saints engaged in remembrance of Allah as he had been advised. He struck a blow at the back of one saint. The saint did not even look back at what had happened and remained remembering Allah. Why did he do so? He thought that during the time spent on looking back and taking revenge from the culprit he would utter the words سبحان الله many times and the benefit which would accrue to him from this conduct would not accrue to him from taking revenge.

Hazrat Mianji Noor Muhammad and how he realised the value of time

When Hazrat Mianji Noor Muhammd Janjanavi رحمة الله عليه went to the market to purchase anything he would hold his purse in his hands. After making the purchases he would place the purse before the shopkeeper and ask him to count and take the price. He did this, because he would utter the sacred words سبحان الله many times during the time spent on taking out the money from the purse, counting it and paying it to the shopkeeper.

Once when he was going somewhere with his purse in his hand, a thief snatched the purse from his hands and ran away. Hazrat Mianji Noor Muhammad رحمة الله عليه did not even look back to see who had snatched his purse and came back home. Why did he do so? He thought it better to remember Allah than to run after the thief. These saints and friends of Allah took care not to waste their time in activities which were not conducive to, and beneficial for their life in the Hereafter.

The matter needs to be tackled more hurriedly

This was in fact in compliance with a Hadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. I feel afraid when I read this Hadith. The

Hadith contains many morals and warnings. Hazrat Abdullah bin ʿUmar رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that he had a hut. The Arabic word for hut is خص. The hut had some wear and tear and one day he was repairing it. By chance the Holy Prophet ﷺ passed by him and asked what he was doing. In reply Hazrat Abdullah bin ʿUmar said:

خص لنا وهي فنحن نصلحه

O Prophet of Allah we have a broken hut which we are repairing. At this the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

ما اری الامر الا اعجل من ذلك

"There is a matter which requires to be tackled more promptly". (Abu Dawood..... Hadith No: 5236)

That is, none knows when the lifetime will expire and death will overtake man and take him to the other world of the Hereafter. The moments which are presently available demand matters to be disposed of more promptly. In such a situation "you are busy with the useless work of repairing your hut".

Now look! That Companion رضی اللہ عنہ was not building a palatial building, nor was he busy with its painting and decoration. He was only repairing his hut on which the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: There is a matter which requires to be tackled more promptly."

While explaining the meaning of this Hadith the learned Ulama have said that the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not stop the Companion رضی اللہ عنہ from repairing the hut, because it was not a sin nor was it unlawful. The Holy Prophet ﷺ desired to make him رضی اللہ عنہ cautious and alert, lest he should devote all his efforts and energies to the affairs of this world.

Anyway, if we cannot follow in the footsteps of

these saints cent percent we should take care at least not to waste our precious time in useless pursuits. We should spend in useful work. It is a reality that by virtue of the remembrance of Allah a man can spend every moment of his life in preparing for the Hereafter.

Let your tongue remain wet with the remembrance of Allah, walking, sitting, standing, do every deed with true and sincere intention. If you act upon this advice your precious time will not go waste.

The relation of the Holy Prophet ﷺ with this world

Hazrat ʿAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا has narrated that when at night the Holy Prophet ﷺ slept at his bedding, marks of the bedding would appear on his sacred body. One night Hazrat ʿAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا spread the bed-sheet in two folds, so that there might be no marks left on the Prophet's ﷺ sacred body and he ﷺ might sleep more comfortably. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ got up in the morning he asked Hazrat ʿAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا to let the sheet be in one fold instead of two.

Once Hazrat ʿAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا decorated the walls of her room with a curtain on which there were pictures. The Holy Prophet ﷺ expressed displeasure at this and said: I shall not enter the room unless the curtain is removed, because it has pictures on it.

At another time Hazrat ʿAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا hung a curtain which had no pictures on it, yet on seeing it the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

مالی وللدنیا ما انا والدنیا الا کَرَاکبٍ استظل تحت شجرة ثم راح وترکها (ترمذی کتاب الزهد حدیث ۲۳۷۸)

This means: What have I to do with the world. I am like a rider who takes rest for a short time

under a shade, then leaves it and goes ahead."

(Tirmizi, Kitabuz-zuhd, Hadisth No: 2378)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has not prohibited his *Ummah* from these things, but by his habit and practice he has taught his *Ummah* not to take fancy to the charms of the world, nor to devote much time to its affairs, but he ﷺ has urged them to prepare for the Hereafter.

A Working Principle in this World

In one Hadith the Holy Prophet has said:

اعمل لِدُنيَاكَ بقدر بقائك فيها واعمل لِآخِرَتكَ بقدر بقائك فيها

This means:

work for your world in proportion to your stay in the world and work for your Hereafter in proportion to your stay in the Hereafter.

Our life in this world is short and limited , so we should work less for the sake of this world. As for the Hereafter it is eternal and limitless, so we should work more for the sake of the Hereafter.

This is the teaching of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

We cannot aspire to reach the status of Hazrat Mianji Noor Muhammad رحمة الله عليه or other saints like him. We must not, however, become totally unmindful of the Hereafter by becoming deeply drowned in, and attracted by the charms of the world.

An easy way of turning time to good account

An easy way of making good use of the available time is to do two things. Firstly, make the intention (نیت) rightly and sincerely so that whatever you decide to do, you shall do it for the pleasure of Allah. For example, if you earn money, take food, associate with your family at home, it

should all be to please Allah and in compliance with the injunctions of the *Sunnah*. Secondly, you must keep yourself engaged in the remembrance of Allah to the best of your ability. It costs man nothing to remain rehearsing the following words while walking, sitting or lying in bed:

"سبحان الله والحمد لله ولا اله الا الله والله اكبر"

Does the rehearsal of these words entail any inconvenience or labour? If man follows this programme, his moments of life will remain profitably utilized.

Draw up a Schedule for your time

Thirdly refrain from useless activities and spend your time sparingly and thoughtfully and draw up a timetable of the available time and live strictly up to this Timetable. My respected father told me that every businessman prepares a Profit and Loss Account, showing the income, expenditure and Profit. He advised us to draw up a Profit and Loss Account of our time, out of the twenty four hours granted to us by Allah. We should calculate how many hours were spent for the pleasure of Allah and how many in useless and undesirable activities. In this way we should find out the Profit and Loss of our avilable time. If this is not done it means that the business is running in loss. Allah has said:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا هَلْ اَدُلُّكُمْ عَلٰى تِجَارَةٍ تُنْجِيْكُمْ مِّنْ عَذَابٍ اَلِيْمٍ ۝
تُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهٖ وَتُجَاهِدُوْنَ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ بِاَمْوَالِكُمْ وَاَنْفُسِكُمْ

(سورة الصف: ١٠)

O you who believe! shall I show you a business that will save from a painful doom? You should believe in Allah and His Messenger and strive for the cause of Allah

with your wealth and your lives. (61.10)

This too is *Jihad*

People think that Jihad is only fighting the enemies of Islam in the battlefield with swords and guns. This is indeed a superior branch of *Jihad*. *Jihad* is, however, not confined to this. It is also a branch of Jihad to fight against one's "self", ones desires and emotions. If some feelings and thoughts are arising in the heart against the will of Allah, these should be resisted. This too comes within the definition of Jihad and is a profitable business. Its profit will accrue in the Hereafter. I have heard from my respected father a principle of Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه that one who does not draw up a timetable of his time, nor does he keep an account of how one is spending one's available hours and minutes can hardly be regarded as a man. May Allah help us all to act upon these Principles. *Aameen.*

Never Postpone a Good Deed

Hazrat Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه has further said:

ابن ادم ایـاك والتسويف

O son of Adam, beware of postponing good deeds. It is a natural tendency of man to postone good deeds for some other time i.e. till tomorrow or the day after tomorrow or for some other time. This is not a good tendency because experience shows that once a work is postponed it is never done. The principle of doing good deeds is that the deed should be undertaken as soon as the idea of doing it occurs to the mind and it should not be left undone.

Man gets time for a deed which he considers in his heart to be important

One of my Professor related to me an event which happened to him. Hazrat Maulana Khair Muhammad Sahib رحمة الله عليه who was a great successor of Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه once complained to professor Sahib that he never paid a visit to him (i.e. Maulana) nor did he maintain any contact with him even through correspondence. In reply professor sahib said, that he did not get time for that. Hazrat Maulana Khair Muhammad Sahib رحمة الله عليه said: Look here! when it is said about anything that one could not get time for that it only means that no importance is given to the work. A man is sure to spare time for something when he realizes its importance in his heart. When this importance is absent in his heart the man ignores the work by saying that he has no time to do it.

Important work shall be accorded preference

It should be borne in mind that when many items of work accumulate with a person he cannot undertake all of them at one and the same time. In such a situation he will classify these items in order of their importance. If a person is doing a job but a more important job comes to him, then he will begin to work on the new job and postpone work on the first one for some time. This means that a man somehow or other finds time for a work when he realizes its importance. For example you have in hand many items of work and in the meantime you receive a call from the Prime Minister to see him. Will you ignore the Prime Minister's call for want of time? No, you will not do that, because now the response to the Prime Minister's call is more important. Postponing good deeds means that man does not realize their importance in his heart. He can find time for doing

them only when he realizes their importance.

You have at your disposal only today

What a wonderufl sentence has Hazrat Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه spoken next:

فانك بيومك ولست بغد وان يكن غدلك فكس فى غد

كما كست فى اليوم

This means that it is certain that today is at your disposal, but about tomorrow you are not certain. When tomorrow is not certain then dispose of your important business today on the belief that you will not see tomorrow and that whatever you have to do you must do today. Fortunately, if you get tomorrow then treat it in the same way as you are treating today, that this is at your disposal today and there will be no tomorrow. In this way work on the basis that the day at your disposal (i.e. today) is the last day of your life.

This *Namaz* (Prayer) may perhaps be the last Namaz of my life

That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said:

When you pray, pray like one who is going to leave the world for ever and who may not get another opportunity to pray again. So, offer the present prayer as best as possible, because you are not sure of getting an opportunity to offer another prayer.(Ibn Majah, Kitabuz -Zuhd-Hikmah)

Anyway, every Muslim knows with belief and certainty the points and principles which Hazrat Hasan Basri رحمة الله عليه has explained, this knowledge is of no use unless it is acted upon. True knowledge is that which includes a man to action. The sayings of these learned

saints have this effect that if they are listened to or read with due attention and sincere desire they, by the grace of Allah, are sure to urge man to action.

Summary

From what we have discussed in the foregoing pages may be concluded that we should all realize the value of every moment of our lives and try to spend it in the rememberance of, and obedience to Almighty Allah. We should shun negligence, carelessness and wastage of time in useless pursuits. How nicely has someone put this idea:-

یہ کہاں کا فسانہء سود و زیاں

جو گیا سو گیا جو ملا سو ملا

کہو دل سے کہ فرصت عمر ہے کم

جو دلا تو خدا ہی کی یاد دلا

It does not matter what you have gained or what you have lost. Profit and loss deserve no consideration. Forget them.

Life is very short. During this short life let your heart remain occupied with the remembrance of Almighty Allah.

May Allah, by His mercy, so mould our hearts that we may spend the time at our disposal in this life in the remembrance of, and obedience to, Allah and in the path of the Hereafter. We should refrain from useless pursuits.

May Allah help us all to act upon all these golden principles-*Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

Venue : Islamic Centre,
London
Date : 31st August, 1993

ISLAM AND HUMAN RIGHTS

الحمدلله نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له واشهد ان سيدنا وسندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيْ رَسُوْلِ اللهِ اُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْاٰخِرَ وَ ذَكَرَ اللهَ كَثِيْرًا (سورة الاحزاب : ٢١)

اٰمنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم وصدق رسوله النبى الكريم ونحن على ذلك من الشاهدين والشاكرين والحمد لله رب العالمين

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness. We believe in

Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. None can misguide him whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom He lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no God except Allah, the One. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our Master, our authority, our Prophet and our Sire, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah have mercy on him, his household and his Companions رضی اللہ عنہ and bless them all abundantly.

And in the Messenger of Allah you have a good model, for him who looks to Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah much. (33:21)

Respected Ulama',

Mr. President of the Assembly and Hon'ble Audience,

The mention of his Blessed name

It is an occasion of great delight and luck for me to participate in this assembly which has been held to revive the mention of the blessed name of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It is a fact that this auspicious "mention" of his ﷺ blessed name is a source of great joy for us as some poet has said:

ذکر حبیب کم نہیں وصل حبیب سے

To talk about the friend is not less enjoyable than an actual meeting with him.

Almighty Allah has bestowed on this "mention" of the Prophet ﷺ excellence that if a person recites the sacred *Darood* on the Holy Prophet ﷺ only once, the reward of ten

good deeds are credited to the reciter's account, by Allah's mercy. It is, therefore, a matter of great joy and luck to take part whether as a speaker or as a listener in such an auspicious assembly which is held to revive the mention of the "friend", the Holy Prophet ﷺ. May Allah bestow upon us all the blessings of this assembly. *Aameen*!

His ﷺ attributes and accomplishments

We are going to say something about the sacred biography of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It is so comprehensive a topic that one cannot do full justice even to only one aspect of it during the whole night. So thoroughly had Allah endowed his ﷺ sacred life with all the imaginable human accomplilshments! Someone has referred to them in a Persian couplet, this:

حسن یوسف دم عیسیٰ ید بیضا داری
آنچہ خوباں ہمہ دارند تو تنہا داری

This means: You (i.e. the Holy Prophet ﷺ possesses the beauty of Hazrat Yusuf علیہ السلام, the enliving breath of 'Eesa علیہ السلام and the miracle of the "White hand" of Hazrat Moosa علیہ السلام. In other words you combine in you all the attributes which others possessed one by one.

There is no exaggeration in this. He came to this world as a masterpiece of Allah's creation. He ﷺ appeared to be an embodiment of perfection from whatever angle of vision one looked at him ﷺ. Therefore, the speaker finds himself in a fix as to which aspect of his sacred biography he should select for his speech and which aspect he should ignore.

زفرق تابقدم ہر کجا کہ می نگرم
کرشمہ دامن دل می کشد کہ جا اینجا است

This is a persian couplet, meaning: When I look at the beautiful body of my beloved from the forehead right up to the feet, I find that every spot of the body is equally charming to attract the lover's heart.

The famous Urdu poet, Mirza Ghalib has also expressed the same idea in his couplet:

غالب ثنائے خواجہ با یزداں گذاشتیم
کاں ذاتِ پاک مرتبہ دانِ محمدؐ است

The poet says that he has left the matter of praising the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to Almighty Allah, because it is He alone Who knows the dignified status of the Prophet ﷺ.

The Propaganda of Todays World

It is not possible for man to do full jsutice to the praise of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Our polluted mouths, and dirty tongues do not really deserve to be permitted to utter the name of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It is, however, a great mercy of Almighty Allah that not only did He accord this permission, but He also permitted us to seek guidance and benefit from this. The biography of the Holy Prophet ﷺ contains countless topics, but respected Hazrat Maulana Zahiuur-Rashidi has proposed that we should discuss that aspect of the Prophet's sacred biography which contains guidance on the subject of Human Rights. The reason for adopting this topic is that presently a campaign of propaganda has been launched throughout the world that a practical implementation of Islam shall violate the Human Rights. It is being widely publicized that the concept of Human Rights was conceived and raised from the chambers of the western world and the first to confer rights on humanity are the people of the west and that no concept is available, - God forbid - regarding Human Rights in the

teachings of the Holy Prophet, Muhammad ﷺ. In deference to the command of Maulana Zahidur-Rashidi, I shall try to confine my speech to this topic. The topic has a somewhat scienfitic aspect which calls for careful and keen attention. So, I request all to bestow their best thought and reflection on this delicate topic. May Allah enlighten our hearts with something right and convincing on this topic!

The concept of Human Rights

An important question arises whether or not there is a comprehensive concept in Islam about Human Rights, in the light of the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ? We have to find an answer to this question. This important question arises, because in this age a strange tendency is seen of evolving a concept of Human Rights in the light of an arbitrary and self-conceived principle and to present it to the world, as something sacred and inviolable requiring protection and implementation. Islam is being tested and judged by the yard-stick of this man-made conception of Human Rights. If any of these so-called Human Rights are found in Islam, or, for that matter, in the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, then these worldly-wise champions of Human Rights can stoop to recognize them, otherwise not. I take the liberty to put a question to these "thinkers and wise men". What is the norm and basis on which you have evolved these "Human Rights"?

The Human Rights have been changing from age to age

If you cast an eye on the past history of the world from its creation till the present day, you will find that the concepts of Human Rights have been changing from age to age, and region to region. Something regarded as a human

right in one age or palce was considered to be a violation of Human Rights in another age or another place. If you go through the annals of human history, you will find that whenever a concept of Human Rights was evolved in any age, intensive propaganda was launched in its favour that it was declared a cognisable crime to speak against it.

When the Holy Prophet ﷺ was commissioned as the last Messenger of Allah to this world, the concept of Human Rights was in existence, widely prevailing throughout the world. This concept was regarded as an irrefutable standard of Human Rights. Just take an example: According to that concept a slave in those days was not allowed to exercise any right over his life, property, and his body. What is more, he was deprived of every other conceivable human rights and gains and interests. It was the basic right of the master to put a collar on the neck of his slave or paly fetters on his feet. To justify it and to prove that it was in conformity with justice, they had evolved many principles and philosophies. You can verify this from their literature which is easily available. The modern champions of Human Rights may reject this by saying that this happened in ancient periods or at least fourteen centuries ago. All right, go back and to one hundred or one hundred and fifty years back when Nazi-ism and Fascism had sprung up in Germany and Italy, respectively. Today the names of Nazi-ism and Fascism have become words of abuse, and are hated throughout the world. Even so, go through their philosophies. They are so cleverly worded that you will find it difficult to condemn them purely on the basis of rational thinking. The concept they had put forward was that the strong has the right of ruling over the weak. It was considered a basic right of the powerful. The

weak were ordained to bend heads before the powerful. Thus, we see that in the history of human thinking, the concept of Human Rights have never been the same and uniform. It has always been changing. Something considered as a right in one age was rejected and substituted in another age. The items considered as Human Rights in any age were given protection of the law and it was considered, a cognisable offence to speak against them. What is the guarantee that the Human Rights for which the protection of the law is being demanded today will not be chagned tomorrow? Again, on what basis can they be regarded as right, incapable of being changed?

Determination of the correct Human Rights

The greatest contribution of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to the philosophy of Human Rights is that he ﷺ has furnished the right basis for the determination of Human Rights - the basis in the light of which it can be decided which of the Human Rights deserve, and which do not deserve protection. If the guidance and directions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ are not recognized as a basis, then no other basis is available in the world to settle the issue of protection.

An Organisation advocating the cause of Human Rights

It will be interesting to know that some time ago when I was sitting in my house after the *Maghrib* prayer, I received a visiting card from some person who wanted to see me. The card belonged to the internationally renowned organisation named "Amnesty International" which claims to be a champion for the protection of all the basic Human Rights. A Director of this organisation had come to

Pakistan who wanted to see me. I called him in. There was no prior appointment for this interview. A responsible officer of the Pakistan Foreign Ministry was also with him. You may probably be aware that the "Amnesty International" is that organisation which is regarded as champion for the protection of Human Rights and the freedom of writing and speech. The organisation has been objecting to and protesting against certain *Shari'ah* Laws promulgated in Pakistan or certain restrictions imposed on the Qadianis. When we met each other he said that he had come to see me, because his organisation had appointed him to make a survey of the public opinion obtaining in the South East Countries about the freedom of writing and speech and Human Rights. In other word, he wanted to know how the Muslims of South East Asia thought about Human Rights, freedom of writing and speech and freedom of expression and how far they were prepared to cooperate with his organisation. For this purpose he wanted to interview me. He apologized to me for not making a prior appointment for want of time. He desired me to answer a few questions on this issue to enable him to draw up a report.

The Kind of Surveys carried out nowadays

The following dialogue took place between us:

I : When did you arrive here?

He: I arrived here only yesterday.

I : What is your future programme?

He: I am going to Islamabad tomorrow.

I : What next?

He: After staying at Islamabad for a day or two I shall fly to Delhi.

I : How long will you stay there?

He: Two days.

I : What next?

He: After that I shall go to Malaysia.

I : You came to Karachi yesterday and to day in the evening you have called on me and tomorrow morning you are going to Islamabad. Today you have been in Karachi. Have you made a survey of the public opinion of the people of Karachi? He was very much upset at this question and went on saying:

He: A complete survey could not indeed be made during such a short time. Still, I have interviewed some persons and have been able to get some idea.

I : How many persons did you interview?

He: I have interviewed five persons and you are the sixth.

I :After interviewing only six persons you have made a survey in Karachi. Tomorrow you are going to Islamabad where you will stay only one day. You will complete your survey at Islamabad by interviewing another six men there. Thereafter you will go to Delhi and stay there for two days. After interviewing a few persons there you will have completed your survey at Delhi. Please let me know if this is the way of carrying out a survey.

He: You are reasonably right. I am not giving the time to this work as I should but I have insufficient time at my disposal.

I : If you do not have sufficient time then how did it become necessary for you to carry out a survey on this subject. If at all necessary, this survey work should have been taken up by a person who had the requisite time and who could call upon people and interview them for the purpose. It was hardly necessary to take up the survey if adequate time was not available.

He: You are quite right, but this was their time allowed to me for the work and I was helpless.

I : Excuse me, please. I am doubtful about the sincerity of this survey of yours; so I am not prepared to become a party to your survey, nor am I inclined to answer any of your questions. This is because only after interviewing five or six persons you will submit a report, claiming that this is the public opinion on the issue. What value can such a report have? Again he was very much upset at this argument.

He: Technically you are quite right, yet as I have called upon you to make our inquiry, please answer a few of my questions.

I : No. I shall not answer any question put by you. I am not going to become a party to this so-called survey, unless I become convinced that your survey has a scientific background and is based on sincerity. Kindly excuse me for this. However, you are my guest and as such I shall entertain you to the best of my ability.

Is the Theory of Freedom of Thought absolute?

I : If I am unreasonable and mistaken in my stand, kindly let me know that.

He: Your stand is quite reasonable, yet I request you as a brother to answer some of my questions.

I : I am afraid, I cannot answer your questions, but I want to put to you a few questions.

He: I had called on you to get answers to certain questions, but you do not want to oblige me with your answrs. Anyway, you may put your questions. What are they?

I : You have come out, flying the banner of Freedom of thought and Human Rights which you have

been vehemently propagating. Is this Freedom of Thought and Human Rights Absolute with no restrictions or conditions or do they need to be qualified with some restrictions and conditions?

He: I could not understand what you mean.

I : The meaning is quite clear. I want to know if the Freedom of Thought which you have been preaching is such that everyone is free to express openly whatever opinion or thought comes to his mind. Is this the intention? If so, a man may think that these rich men have earned and amassed great wealth and the poorer classes are starving. So the wealth of the rich should be robbed and distributed among the poorer classes. Suppose a man forms an association or an organisation in all sincerity and honesty to snatch the wealth and property of the rich through an organised form of dacoity and robbery for distribution among the poor. Will you uphold such Freedom of Thought?

He: Certainly not. It will not be permitted to rob others' property and wealth for distribution among the poorer classes.

I : This is exactly what I wanted to know. That is to say that Freedom of expression or of thought is not so absolute as not to require some restriction or condition must be imposed on it.

He: Yes, there must be some restriction or condition.

I : Tell me what will be the basis for imposing that restriction or conditoin? Who will impose that? Who will decide as to which kind of expression of though is lawful and which is unlawful. What will be the basis for taking such a decision? I would like to know if your organisation has conducted some scientific survey or

research in this behalf.

He: We did not reflect beforehand on this aspect of the issue.

I : Look here: You have come out on such a grand mission of procuring for the entire humanity the Freedom of expression of thought and opinion, but you have not yet resolved as to what should be the basis for the grant of this Freedom. What should be the restrictions and the conditions to be imposed on that Freedom?

He: All right, kindly let me know what they should be?

I : I have told you at the very outset that I am not going to answer any question. On the other hand I am asking you what restrictions and conditions should be imposed. I have requested you to tell me the answer to this question in the light of your angle of vision and that of your respectable organisation.

You have no standard

He : So far I have no formula in my mind for this. I, however, think that freedom of expression of an opinion that favours violence should not be allowed.

I : It has occurred to your mind that violence should be disallowed but another man may hold another opinion quite different from yours. Now who will decide, and on what basis, as to which form of expression of opinion should be allowed and which should be disallowed? After all, there should be some formula and standard.

He : After hearing your views the importance of the question about a formula or standard has dawned upon my mind which I shall convey to my chiefs. If I come across any literature about it, I shall send

it to you.

I : God willing, I shall be waiting for that literature and I shall also be grateful to you for any philosophy that you can furnish me concerning this issue. I am telling you in all sincerity to find out a formula and it should be furnished to me. I cannot help mentioning that despite all your theories and philosophies you cannot bring out an agreed formula which may be unanimously accepted by the whole world that freedom of expression should be allowed on such and such issues and disallowed on other issues. I shall feel highly obliged to you on helping me in the matter.

A period of one and a half year has passed, but I have received no reply.

The human intellect has its limitations

In fact these are vague slogans that there should be 'Human Rights' freedom of expression of opinion and freedom of writing and speech. They have no basis nor is it possible for them to have any basis, on which the world opinon will become unanimously agreed. Why? It is because whoever will evolve these bases will do so according to his own understanding and intelligence. The intellectual frames of two men, two groups or two ages can never be one and the same. So they differed and shall differ from one another and there is no way to uproot this difference. This is due to the fact that human intelligence has its own limitations; it has its jurisdiction which it cannot transgress. It is a great favour of the Holy Prophet, Muhammad ﷺ to the world that he ﷺ has taught that all such questions should be referred for answer to Allah, the creator of man and the entire universe. It is He and He alone Who can advise which Human Rights deserve, and which

do not deserve protection. There is none except Him who can solve this problem.

Islam is not in need of you

There are some people who say that they will accept Islam only when they come to know what rights Islam grants them. If they have already decided that they will accept that faith which allows them their favourite rights and they wish to accept Islam because they can get their favourite rights in Islam, then they should be told that Islam is not in need of them. Islam demands that man should first confess his weakness, helplessness and inability and admit in all sincerity and submissiveness that his intellect is unable to solve these problems and that he needs the basis on which he can solve these problems. When a man turns to Islam with this point of view, Islam provides him with right guidance. It is هدى للمتقين - It is guidance for the righteous. The attribute (*Mut-taqeen*) implies confession of one's inability and helplessness and the need to turn to the creator for help and guidance.

It has now become a common fashion to ask before accepting Islam, what advantages Islam offers by way of Human Rights. Note carefully that this is not the way of entering the fold of Islam.

When the Holy Prophet ﷺ conveyed to this *Ummah* the message of Islam, he did not ask them to accept Islam, because in Islam they could get this and that benefit. He invited them to the worship of Allah unconditionally. He ﷺ said:

قولوا لا اله الا الله تفلحون

(O People!) Say: there is no god but Allah and (by so saying) you will be successful.

If a man accepts Islam for the sake of material gains and worldly interest and desires, he is not searching for the right path in sincerity and submissiveness. First of all man must confess his inability that he cannot solve these difficulties with the help of his intellect.

Jurisdiction of the Intellect

You should bear in mind that the human intellect is not useless. It is a very useful gift from Allah. It, however, remains useful as long as it is used within its bounds. If you use it for things which do not fall within its jurisdiction, it will begin to give misleading answers. Allah has granted man another source of kowledge and information beyond the human intellect. This is called *Wahi* (Revelation). *Wahi* (Revelation) comes to man's help to provide him right guidance at a time when the human intellect utterly fails.

Jurisdiction of the Senses

Almighty Allah has granted us eyes, ears, a tongue. These are very useful organs with the help of which we are able to know many things, by seeing hearing and tasting. Almighty Allah has, however, ordained a jurisdiction for each organ, beyond which it cannot operate. For example, the eye can see but it cannot hear. The ear can hear but it cannot see. Then comes beyond which neither the eye nor, the ear, nor the tongue can do anything. For this occasion Allah has bestowed upon man his intellect to guide him where these organs fail.

The Intellect alone is not sufficient

Take an example. This chair is lying before me. By seeing with my eyes I come to know that its handles are yellow; by touching them with the hand I came to know that

they are smooth. A question arises whether the chair came itno existence by itself or it was made by someone. Neither the eye, nor the ear or the tongue can answer this question. For this purpose Allah has created another faculty. With the help of this faculty, that is the Intellect, I conclude that this beautiful handle cannot come into existence by itself, but it is the carpenter who made it. Next a fourth question arises, i.e., how should this chair be used? Where is its use profitable and where is it unprofitable? Even the intellect is unable to answer this question. To help man on such occasion Almighty Allah has created another channel of information. This is the *Wahi* (Revelation). It descends from Allah and decides what is good and what is evil, what is useful and what is harmful. In fact, *Wahi* comes into play where the human intellect becomes totally helpless. When Allah and His Prophet ﷺ issue some orders to guide man in situations where the intellect fails they should not be disobeyed on the ground that our Intellect fails to understand the wisdom of those orders. Such an attitude is due to the ignorance of the reality of the intellect and the *Wahi*. If all things could be understood through the Intellect, there was hardly any need to send down *Wahi*. It is sent down to guide man in matters which lie beyond the jurisdiction of the human intellect. If it had been within the jurisdiction of the Intellect to solve all problems it would have been enough for Almighty Allah to issue a command directing that He has granted man intellect which will help him in deciding what is good and what is bad, and that is all. Neither a Book, nor a Prophet, nor any *Deen* would have been necessary. Allah however, did not consider it enough to grant man Intellect, but He sent down Messengers, scriptures and *Wahi* (Revelation). This only means that the Intellect alone is not sufficient to guide man. Those who do

not accept this fact are ignorant of the reality of *Deen*.

This provides answer to another question, which very frequently arises in man's mind. They say that the Holy Qur'an did not teach man to climb to the Moon, nor did the Holy Prophet ﷺ teach the way to conquer the space. The other nations worked to arrive at formulas for such miraculous strides and we have remained behind in spite of the Qur'an. Why did the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* not give us these formulas?

The answer to this question is not far to seek. Allah and His Prophet ﷺ did not reveal to the world formulas to conquer the space or climb to the Moon, because these subjects lie within the jurisdiction of the human Intellect. The more man studies science, makes experiments and uses his Intellect to master these fields, the more he will go ahead with his scientific discoveries. As these subjects are purely within the scope of the Intellect, it was not at all necessary either to send a Prophet or reveal a book for this purpose. They are needed only where the human itnellect becomes helpless. Likewise, the organisation of the "Amnesty International" is unable to decide which Human Rights or which form of expression of thought and opinion need or do not need, protection. As the human Intellect was quite helpeless in this matter the Holy Propeht ﷺ came with his enlightening formulas concerning this important issue.

How to protect the Rights?

It is the Holy Prophet ﷺ who decided which Human Right deserves and which does not deserve protection. This is indeed his ﷺ great contribution to the subject of Human Rights. Now consider which rights the Holy Prophet ﷺ bestowed upon man, which rights he ﷺ recognised and which rights discharged practically.

In today's world of ours there are many champions of Human Rights everywhere, crying hoarse with diverse slogans in favour of protection of rights, but when their own interests are at stake they trample upon all principles and norms of morality.

The condition of today's world

One requirement of Human Rights is that there should be Democracy - secualr Democracy. As American book named "The end of History and the Last man" has become very popular among all the educated circles. It claims that the theory of Democracy marks the end of human history and now it will not be necessary to evolve any new theory concerning the rise and fall of man, we believe in the "Finality of Prophethood" and now we have the Fianality of Theories". In other words, now no theory for the welfare of men will follow in the wake of the theory of Democracy.

On one hand, slogans are raised that what the majority says is the whole truth. On the other hand when the same majority wins the elections in Algeria, Democracy is defeated and its existence jeopardized. So, it is one thing to raise slogans and quite another thing to put them into practice.

It is quite all right to raise slogan that all men should get their rights, should have freedom of expression and the right of self-determination. All this looks very nice, but on the other hand by violating this very right of self-determination the people are being ruthlessly crushed and tyrannized. It is dangerous to say a word concerning them. The same advocates of Democracy and Freedom are now persecuting them. Only saying something with the tongue in favour of Human Rights and sitting idle without

any action has no sense. It was the distinction of the Holy Prophet, Muhammad ﷺ that he himself actually worked to discharge the rights which he granted to others.

A promise must be honoured

It is occasion of the Battle of Badr and Hazrat Huzaifah bin Yaman رضی اللہ عنہ is going to Madinah Munaw-warah along with his father to see the Holy Prophet ﷺ. On the way they confronted Abu Jahl's army. The army men stopped them from going to the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, because they thought, that the two would join the Prophet's army to fight against them. After some argumentation they agreed to let them go on the promise that they would not join the Prophet's army. Hazrat Huzaifah and his father رضی اللہ عنہ made this promise and thus they got rid of the enemies. They at last arrived at the Prophet's camp and stayed with him ﷺ, until the battle was declared. It was a battle in which the Mushrikeen of Makkah numbered one thousand men strong, fully equipped. The Muslims only 313 uneqipped persons. They had only eight swords, two horses, seventy camels. Some had picked only sticks and pieces of stone. At such a critical time every individual had his value. Someone suggested to the Holy Prophet ﷺ to recruit for the battle these two new converts to Islam, irrespective of the promise which had been elicited from them by coercion. After all, this was a Jihad called "*Yaumul-Furqan*", about which the Holy Prophet ﷺ had said: Almighty Allah has forgiven all the past and future sins of the people of Badr. Hazrat Huzaifah bin Yaman رضی اللہ عنہ desired to take part in the *Jihad* along with the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The Holy Prophet ﷺ however, stopped him from joining the *Jihad* in honour of the promise he had made to the enemies. It is

one thing to make verbal claims and quite another thing to discharge them. A man's integrity is tested on critical occasions. We are champions of Human Rights, but we destroyed the innocent people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (Japan) with the atom bomb so ruthlessly that even their future generation are being born disabled and crippled. When one's own interest is involved, morals and character are set aside. (Al-isabah, Vol-1, Page 316)

To sum up not only did the Holy Prophet ﷺ teach Human Rights, but he ﷺ demonstrted them practically.

Protection of Life in Islam

The foremost among the Human Rights and the basic rights is the protection of man's life. None should kill a man by oppression.

وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِيْ حَرَّمَ اللّٰهُ اِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ (سورہ بنی اسرائیل: ۳۳)

And do not kill the soul which Allah has forbidden, except with right. (17:33)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ directed his soldiers not to kill children, women nor old persons. These prohibitions were binding on the fighters in *Jihad* also. These were not empty words. They were followed in letter and spirit. As regards our present champions of Human Rights, you have just seen what havoc they played among the innocent population in Japan-God forbid!

Protection of wealth and property in Islam

The second basic right of man is the protection of his welath and property. Allah has said:

وَلَا تَأْكُلُوْا اَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ (البقرہ:۱۸۸)

And do not eat your property among yourselves unlawfully. (2:188).

The Muslims did not misappropriate others' property by creating false excuses. Today, these so-called champions are very honest and trusty, as long as their own interests are safe. When their interests and safety are at stake and matters develop into enmity leading to fighting, they commit all sorts of attrocities, including confiscating properties and freezing accounts. The sancity and importance of Human Rights vanish altogether. In such a crisis protection of property has no meaning.

I am mentioning below the exampel which the Holy Prophet ﷺ set during the battle of Khaibar between the Muslims and the Jews. The Holy Prophet, Muhammad ﷺ and his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم were besieging the fort of Khaiber. There was a poor herdsman in Khaiber who used to tend goats for wages. He saw the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his army surrounding the fort. He had already heard the name of the Prophet, Muhammad ﷺ. It occurred to his mind to see him ﷺ on this occasion and hear what he ﷺ has to say. He came out of the fort alongwith his goats and asked about the whereabouts of the Prophet ﷺ. On being guided to him ﷺ he was surprised to see that the commander of the Muslim army and such a great Prophet was staying in a lowly hut raised with date-palm leaves. When the hredsman entered the hut, he found there the man ﷺ he wanted to see. He said: O Prophet of Allah ﷺ what is your message? The Holy Prophet ﷺ briefly explained to him the belief concerning *Tauheed* (oneness of Allah). The herdsman asked: what will be my status, if I accept your message. The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied, saying: I will embrace you, you will become my brother and you will have the same rights which other Muslims enjoy. In utter surprise the herdsman reacted, saying: you are telling me such things, while I am a jet black herdsman in tattered

and foul-smelling clothes. In such a pitiable condition you say, you will embrace me. In my present status I am scolded and disgraced. Why will you embrace a hated man like me? The Holy Prophet ﷺ said: I shall embrace you, because all Allah's creatures are equal in His sight. The herdsman said: If I accept your message and turn Muslim, what will be my fate? The Holy Prophet ﷺ said: If you die in this battle I bear witness that Allah will change the darkness of your face into shining white and the foul smell of your body into refreshing fragrance. The truthful words of the Holy Prophet ﷺ had their effect on the heart of the herdsman and he embraced Islam by pronouncing the *Kalimah*

After thus becoming a Muslim he offered to obey the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The Holy Prophet ﷺ did not command the herdsman to offer prayers or observe fasting. The first thing he ﷺ ordered him to do was to return the herd of goats to the owner, as it was a trust with him. Whose goats were these? They belonged to a jew with whose tribe the Muslims were at war. Their wealth and properties could be seized as war spoils

The Holy Prophet ﷺ explained to him that it was lawful to seize a property during the state of a waging war, but as the herdsman had tkaen possession of the goats under a contract, it should be fulfilled and the goats returned to the owner, jew, safe and sound. The herdsman siad: O Prophet of Allah ﷺ, the goats belong to your arch enemies, thirsty for your blood, yet you ﷺ desire the return of these goats to them. The Holy Prophet ﷺ insisted on the goats to be returned and they were returned.

Can anyone cite an example of this honesty and trustworthiness that full protection is being afforded to

human property during the state of a raging battle. After returning the goats the herdsman came back to the Holy Prophet ﷺ and asked what he should do. The Holy Propeht ﷺ said to him: Neither is it prayer time that you should pray nor is it the month of Ramazan that you should observe fasting, nor you have money to pay *Zakah* (compulsory tax). The only form of worship for you is to take part in the *Jihad*. Accordingly, he joined the battle. His name was Aswad Ra'ee. It was the practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ at the end of a battle that he ﷺ made a round of the battlefield to find out the battle casualties. He ﷺ saw that the Companions رضی الله عنهم had assembled at a place round the dead body of a black man whom they had not seen earleir. The Holy Prophet ﷺ recognized the body on going near it and thus addressed the Noble Companions رضی الله عنهم: I recognize this man and I see with my eyes that Almighty Allah has given him a bath with the sacred water of *Kausar* and *Tasneem* (rivers in Paradise) in the Paradise of "*Al-Firdous*" and has changed the darkness of his face with shining white. Likewise He has changed the foul smell of his body into refreshing fragrance. The Protection of wealth and property was not only the subject of formal talk. The Holy Prophet ﷺ actually demonstrated this by giving protection under a contract to property and wealth belonging to infidels and enemies.

Protection of honour in Islam

The third basic right of man consists in the protection of his honour and dignity. It is easy to find many champions of the protection of man's honour. Yet it was for the first time that the Prophet ﷺ taught that it is also a part of man's honour that none should backbite him. Not only is it forbidden to backbite anyone but it is also

forbidden to listen to backbiting. There is, however, none among the so-called champions to raise his voice against this sin. Hazrat Abdullah bin Masood رضی اللہ عنہ, the most knowledgeable among the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم was once performing "*Tawaf*" (circumambulation) of the Ka'bah. Addressing the Ka'bah during Tawaf, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: O House of Allah! How sacred, how magnificent you are! Then addressing Hazrat Abdullah bin Masood رضی اللہ عنہ he ﷺ said:O Abdullah! This House of Allah is very sacred, very honourable, yet there is a thing in this universe which is more sacred than this House of Allah, What is that? The life, property and honour of a Muslim are more sacred than the Ka'bah. A man who causes loss of life, wealth and property and violates anyone's honour without right then, according to the Holy Prophet ﷺ, he commtis a sin more heinous than demolsihing the Ka'bah. It is the Holy Prophet ﷺ who has granted this right.

Protection of livelihood in Islam

The protection of life, property and honour being man's basic right is indeed imperative. Then man also needs to earn livelihood to live in this world; he needs work and employment. On this question the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said: None can be permitted to close the door of livelihood upon others by force of one's wealth.

On one hand he ﷺ said that "Freedom of Contract" is allowed in Islam, in general. On the other hand he ﷺ ordered that all such contract agreements upset and disturb the common social order and close the door of livelihood upon others are prohibitted. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said: meaning, "The inhabitant of a city should not sell the goods of a villager." Suppose a man brings goods, e.g.,

agricultural products, vegetables, fruits etc., for sale in the city, no city-dweller should beocme his broker or commission agent. Apparently there is no objection to concluding such agreements between two persons. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has disclosed the defect underlying such an agreement. The city-dweller will hoard the goods with him and in this way he will become a monopolist and impose his monopolistic policy on the market. This will close the door of livelihood upon others. Hence the Prophet's ﷺ order: لا بیع حاضر لباد To conclude, everyone has a right to earn his living with reasonable freedom. It is unlawful to amass wealth by means of interest-bearing transactions, gambling, speculative bids, etc., and thus gain monopolistic control over the entire market. This policy stops others from entering the market for earning their livelihood. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has declared protection of livelihood as a basic right for all human beings. He ﷺ has said:

دعوالناس یرزق اللہ بعضھم ببعض

Leave the people free, so that Allah may provide them livelihood through one another.

This is the protection and guarantee of earning livelihood. It is the Holy Prophet ﷺ who has taught these Human Rights and he ﷺ has shown how to discharge them by his own acts and practices.

Protection of Belief in Islam

Everyone is free to entertain whatever beleif or faith one prefers. Islam lays no restrictions on anyone on one's freedom to adopt the faith of one's choice. The Holy Qur'an declares:

لَا اِكْرَاهَ فِی الدِّیْنِ

There is no compulsion in religion.(2:256)

If any person decides to remain a Christian, a Jew, or a Hindu, he is free to do so. None can force him to change his faith. Preaching of Islam is, however quite lawful. The principles and good points of Islam will be preached to all but they will be left free to accept or reject the preaching. As mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, none can be forced to accept Islam. It should, however,, be noted that if a man has accepted Islam by his own choice and without any pressure brought against him, he is not allowed to renounce Islam and become a renegade. If freedom to go back to apostasy is allowed to him he will spread corruption in the society. He will, therefore, be stopped from doing this mischief by means of capital punishment.

Anyway, I have already pointed out that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has provided the basis for resolving such issues. It is another matter that some may not be able to understand this. The true and genuine right is that which is recognized by Allah and His Prophet ﷺ. Intially everyone is free to adopt whatever faith one prefers, but after having accepted Islam one is not allowed to go back and become an apostate. Had this freedom been allowed the enemies of Islam would have made Islam a child's play, entering it in the morning and renouncing it in the evening.

After having once accepted Islam it is not permitted in a *Darul-Islam* (Muslim Land) to go back to *Kufr* (infidelity). While one is living in a Muslim land one is not allowed to spread corruption in this way.

The practice of Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ

The topic under consideration is quite lengthy. I have placed before you five examples: (1) Protection of life, (2) of wealth and property, (3) of honour, (4) of belief and (5) of the means of livelihood. These represent man's five basic necessaries of life. The important point worth noting in this behalf is that champions of these Rights are found everywhere but among the protectors and guarantors of these rights is only the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم and their followers.

It was during the Caliphate of Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ that the *Jizya* (Poll) tax was collected from the non-Muslims living in Baitul-Muqaddas (Jerusalem) in lieu of the protection provided to them for their lives and wealth and properties. Once it became necessary to detach the army from Jerusalem and send it to some other battle front under some emergency. Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہ said that they had taken upon themselves to protect the lives and properties of the unbeleivers living in Jerusalem in lieu of *Jazya*. If the army was removed from there, who would provide them this protection? The situation was explained to the non-Muslims that under some emergency the army was being sent to some other front and they could not provide protection for their lives and properties. As such, the entire amount of the *Jizya* collected from them was returned to them.

The Practice of Hazrat Mu'a-wiyah رضی اللہ عنہ

Hazrat Mu 'a-wiyah رضی اللہ عنہ is one of the greatest companions and champions of Islam against whom his enemies have woven false defamatory stories. It is recorded in Abu Dawood that during the battle between the Muslims and the Romans an armistice was signed between the

Muslim and the Christian armies. This armistice was valid up to a given date. Hazrat Mu'a-wiyah رضی اللہ عنہ was a very wise commander. The planned to station the army at the order on the date on which the armistice was to expire. The intention was that being on the border he would launch his attack on the enemy as soon as the date changed, marking the expiry of the armistice. He ﷺ followed his plan. no sooner did the date change than he attacked the enemy land, while the enemies were quite unaware of this plan. The Muslim army finding no resistance, entered far into the enemy land. While they were pressing forward with victory after victory. They heard a loud call coming from behind. The call was قفوا عباد اللہ! عباداللہ (O servants of Allah, stop). Hazrat Mu 'a-wiyah رضی اللہ عنہ stopped and came to know that the man making the call was Hazrat Amr bin 'Abasah رضی اللہ عنہ who was shouting that he had heard the Holy Prophet ﷺ saying:

من كان بينه وبين قوم عهد فلا يحلنه ولا يشدنه حتى يمضى امله

اوينبذ عليهم على سواء (ترمذی کتاب الجهاد، باب فی الغدر، حدیث نمبر ۱۵۸۰)

sThis means: when an agreement is concluded with a people not even the slightest change should be made neither in its opening nor its tying, until the expiry of its term or until it is declared openly that the agreement stands abrogated.

(Tirmizi, Book of Jihad.... Hadith No: 1580)

Hazrat Amr رضی اللہ عنہ further said: you stationed the army on the enemy's border during the validity of the agreement and you may perhaps have penetrated the border a little. This is a violation of the agreement and the land grabbed by you during this period is against Allah's will. Now see what Hazrat Amir Mu'a-wiyah رضی اللہ عنہ did in such a crisis. In obedience to the Holy Prophet's injunction he called the army back and vacated the

conquered territory. Perhaps the world cannot cite another example in which a conqueror vacated his conquered territory for the only reason that a slight doubt had occurred in the interpretation of the agreement as to the period of its validity.

In short, firstly, it is the Holy Prophet ﷺ who has furnished the basis as to who will determine and define correctly the Human Rights. Secondly, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has himself put into practice the Human Rights which he has dictated to the world.

Human Rights, as being propagated today

Printed charters in the name of Human Rights are being circulaed worldwide with great pomp and show. These so-called champions of Human Rights feel no hesitation in killing and destroying innocent men by shooting down aeroplanes where these attrocities serve their vested interests. These worldly-wise champions of Human Rigts cry hoarse for the protection of these Rights only when their own profit and loss are affected and not otherwise. The Holy Prophet ﷺ does not recognise such Human Rights as are based on mere show and selfishness. There are people among us who take an apologatic attitude before the clarion propaganda of the west and try to distort the meaning of the Qur'an and the Ahadith in an attempt to accommodate in them the types of Human Rights preached by the so-called champions of the west. Remember, however, the truth contained with verse of the Holy Qur'an:

وَلَنْ تَرْضٰى عَنْكَ الْيَهُوْدُ وَلَا النَّصٰرٰى حَتّٰى تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمْ ۭ قُلْ اِنَّ هُدَى اللّٰهِ هُوَ الْهُدٰى ۭ (البقرة: ۱۴۰)

And the Jews will not be pleased with you, nor the Christians, unless you follow their creed.

Say: Surely the guidance of Allah is the (true) guidance (2:120)

When the bare fact remains that the Jews and the Christians will never be pleased with you, until you follow their religion, then take no heed of their propaganda and stand firm against them in your stand in the light of the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. May Allah guide us all on the straight path. *Aameen*.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul Mukarram,
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi
After 'Asr Prayers

THE REALITY OF SHAAB-E-BARA'AT

الحمدلله نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له واشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له واشهد ان سيدنا وسندنا ونبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده و رسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His pardon. We believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our souls and the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god except Allah the One, Who has

no partner. I also bear witness that our master, our authority our Prophet and our Sire, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah send mercy on him, on his household and on his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم and bless them and salute them all a great deal.

The month of Sha'ban has begun in which there is a blessed Night, named "Shab-e-Bara-'at". Some people think that the excellence of this night is not proved from the Qur'an and the Ahadith and it is baseless to keep vigil in this night. They think that worship and devotion in this Night have no special claim to reward. Moreover, they think that it is a *Bid'ah* (innovation) to specify this night for some special worship. As such, various questions are arising in the minds of the people about this night. Hence discourse about it.

Deen (Faith) consists in compliance

I must tell you here briefly that I have repeatedly clarified that it is a *Bid'ah* (innovation) to count as a part of *Deen* all those forms of worship which cannot be proved valid from the Holy Qur'an, the *Sunnah*, the statements and practices of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم as well as from the acts and practices of the *Tabi'een* (followers of the companions). I have also been telling you from time to time that it is no *Deen* to invent some practice from one's own mind and follow it as an item of *Deen*. On the other hand, *Deen* is the name of compliance and obedience - compliance with, and obedience to, the Holy Prophet ﷺ, his ﷺ companions رضی اللہ عنہ, the *Tabi'een*, and the righteous saints and savants. If it is proved that this Night carries no distinctive feature, then it will be *Bid'ah* to invent it with

special importance. I have expressed the same opinion about the Night of Ascension (معراج) that the Qur'an and the Ahadith do not mention any special worship this Night.

It is not right to think that the excellence of this Night is baseless

It is in fact absolutely wrong to say that no excellence of Shab-e-Bara-'at is proved from the Hadith. It is a fact that ten Noble companions رضی اللہ عنہم have narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ did mention the excellence of this Night. Some of these Ahadith are indeed weak in authenticity. On this account some 'Ulama' have declared that the claim of excellence for this Night is baseless. It is, however, the decision of the Muhaddiseen and Doctors of religion that, if a weak Hadith is confirmed by many other Ahadith, its weakness in authenticity disappears. As I have already mentioned, narratives of ten companions ﷺ are available in support of the excellence of this Night. It is, therefore, not right to declare that the excellence of this Night is baseless.

Shab-e-Bara-'at and the earlier centuries

Care was taken to benefit from the excellence of this night during the earlier centuries of the Muslim *Ummah*. The people used to take special care to indulge in worship in this Night. It is, therefore, not right to call it a *Bid'ah* (innovation) or baseless. It is quite true that it is a Night of excellence which enjoys a special importance. It is a source of reward and divine favour to take to worship and devotion in this Night.

No specific form of worship is prescribed

It is, however, quite correct to say that no specific form of worship has been prescribed for this Night. Some

people have invented various ways of praying from their own minds. They suggest, without any proof and authority, that so many *Rak'ats* with such and such verses should be offered and so many times. This is all baseless. One may take advantage of this sacred Night by offering Nafl prayers, reciting the Holy Qur'an, remembering Allah and counting over the beads (تسبیح) sacred words and phrases. They may also pass the Night by praying to Allah for His grants and favours. No specific form of worship is proved for this night.

To visit Graveyards in this Night

There is another act for this night which is proved by a narrative that the Holy Prophet ﷺ once visited the graveyard, named Jannatul Baqi' (جنت البقیع). The Muslims also began to visit the graveyards in compliance with this narrative. My father Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi' Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say something very useful about this issue. He said that in the matter of following the Holy Prophet ﷺ we should not try to overstep him ﷺ. It is narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ visited the graveyard of Janatul-Baqi' in this Night only once in his ﷺ sacred lifetime. Following this *Sunnah*, it is all right to visit some graveyard only once in life. It would be overstepping the Holy Prophet ﷺ to visit graveyard regularly as a compulsory duty and to cosnider this practice as an inseparable part of the Shab-e-Bara-'at and consider its omission as an omission of the Shab-e-Bara-'at itself. If anyone visits a graveyard once in defference to the Prophet's *Sunnah*, it is a good act deserving divine reward. This should, however, not be made a regular practice. It is a point of understanding *Deen*. Take everything concerning *Deen* at the same degree and level at which it is proved from the Ahadith and do not go beyond

the permissible limits. You are free to observe other *Nafl* (optional) of worship and devotion, as you desire.

Offer *Nafl* (optional) Prayers at home

It has come to my knowledge that some people offer *Nafl* Prayers in this Night and in the Night of Power in congregation. Previously people offered Shabina Prayers (Recitation of Qur'an during Ramazan) in congregation, but now they have begun to pray the *Salatut-Tasbeeh* (A Nafl Prayer) also in congregation. Congregation of *Salatut-Tasbeeh* is not lawful in anyway. Note carefully a principle about congregational prayers. It is proved from the Holy Prophet ﷺ that prayers of *Taraweeh*, *Kusoof* and *Istisqa* may be offered in congregation. It is better that prayers other than these should be offered at home. It is only the *Farz* (obligatory) Prayers that need to be offered in congregation in the mosque. Not only is it better to do so, but it is also *Sunnah Muakkada* (confirmed), nearing in importance a compulsory prayer. The basic rule about *Sunnah* and *Nafl* prayers is that a man should offer them at home. When the *Fuqaha* (Islamic Jurists) saw that sometime the people omit the *Sunnah* prayers at home, they also advised that if there was likelihood for the *Sunnah* prayers to be ignored at home, then these too may be offered in the mosque. As regards *Nafl* prayers, there is a consensus of opinion among the *Fuqaha* that they should better be offered at home. Arranging congregation for *Nafl* Prayers is strictly unlawful in the opinion of the Hanafites. As such, to offer *Nafl* Prayers in congregation will, in their opinion be a sin instead of an act of virtue to deserve any reward.

Offer *Farz* (obligatory) Prayers in congregation

The *Farz* (obligatory) Prayers are a distincitive rite of *Deen*. It is imperative to offer them in the mosque in congregation. It is not lawful to offer *Farz* Prayers at home. It would not be lawful and right for anyone to think that it would be an act of ostentation to offer prayer in the mosque in a congregation. *Farz* Prayers must be offered in the mosque in congregation, because pryaing in this way is demonstration of a distinctive rite of Islam and Islam's might and dignity.

Seclusion is needed for *Nafl* Prayers

The *Nafl* (optional) Prayer is a form of worship which represents a personal relation between the *Namazi* and his Creator and Nourisher, Allah. This is demonstrated in what happened with Hazrat Siddiq Akbar رضی اللہ عنہ . The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked him رضی اللہ عنہ why he recited the Qur'an in such a low voice, He رضی اللہ عنہ replied saying:

اسمعت من ناجیت (ابو داؤد حدیث ۱۳۲۹)

(I was reciting it to Him Whom I was addressing in my Prayer.

(Abu Dawood, Book of Salat.....Hadith No: 1329)

In so far as *Nafl* Prayers are concerned, they are like a secret whisper between the devotee and his Allah. None should intervene between the two. Allah desires that His servants should establish direct contact with Him. That is why, congregations and assemblies have been declared disgustful in the matter of optional forms of worship. The servant of Allah has been commanded to approach his Allah alone and in seclusion. What a great prize is this seclusion and privacy! Just reflect on this divine gift and favour.

Come to Me in loneliness

The congregational prayer may be compared to a general assembly of Almighty Allah, just as there are general assemblies of worldly kings and presidents. In addition to general assemblies there are also secret or special assemblies with restricted audience. It is a great favour of Almighty Allah that in addition to His general assemblies, He admits His servants to this specific, private and secluded assemblies. If a man converts these secluded assemblies into general assemblies, it only means that he is not paying due regard to Allah's special court. Allah is calling you to approach Him in loneliness and privacy to receive His special favours but you are approaching Him with a large assembly.

You have disregarded this blessing

Take an example. You want to have an audience with a King and the King makes you an appointment to see you in privacy today at nine p.m. in the night. You call on the King at the appointed hour, not alone, but with a crowd of friends and relatives. Now think for yourself if you have in this way regarded or disregarded the King's appointment and favour. The King bestowed upon you a special favour by desiring to see you alone to establish special contact with you and you made light of his favour by visiting him in a large group. Thus, you did not pay due regard to the King's favour. Imam Abu Hanifah رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has advised us not to disregard *Nafl* Prayers in this way. Paying due regard to these Prayers consists in offering them in total seclusion and privacy where there is none to interevene between you and your Allah. It has, therefore, been prescribed concerning *Nafl* forms of worship that they should be performed alone and in seclusion. To

perform them in congregation is nearly forbidden. Almighty Allah is calling you in this way:

اَلاَهَلْ مِنْ مُّسْتَغْفِرٍ فَاغْفِرْلَهٗ

That is: Is there anyone seeking forgiveness that I may forgive him?

Here the word مستغفر (Seeker of forgiveness) has been used in the singular number. This implies that Allah desires the petitioner to approach Him for forgiveness all alone. Against this desire of Allah what is our behaviour? We arrange an assembly with pomp and show and excessive illumination and many other formalities. This is simply showing lack of regard for Allah's favours. Therefore, it is not lawful to offer in congregation all forms of *Nafl* worship, like: *Shabinah* and *Salatut-Tasbeeh*, etc,.

The moments of loneliness

These Nights of excellence and blessings do not admit of hue and hubbub. These are not nights of revelry and festivals. They have been granted to you that sitting all alone you may establish your relationship with Allah when there is none to itnervene between you and Allah.

میانِ عاشق و معشوق رمزیست
کراماً کاتبیں را ہم خبر نیست

A persian couplet which means: Between the lover and the beloved there is a secret of which even the twin recording angels are not aware

Some people say, as an excuse, that while praying in loneliness sleep overwhelms the devotee. The attack of sleep is easily resisted when there is a gathering in the mosque full of men and when it is brightly illuminated with extra candles and bulbs. This excuse is not plausible.

If you succeed in getting a few moments for communion with Allah in loneliness and privacy, then these few moments are far better than the entire Night spent in the hue and hubbub of the crowds. The mometns spent in loneliness spent according to the *Sunnah* and the time spent otherwise in crowds is spent against the *Sunnah*. You must admit the blessings of the moments spent with Allah in loneliness according to the *Sunnah*.

Hours are not counted there

I have repeatedly mentioned that it is not *Deen* to work according to your own wisdom, nor is it *Deen* to satisfy your fancy, *Deen* consists in obeying Almighty Allah. Do you think that Allah will count the hours which you have spent in the mosque? No, hours are not counted. It is the sincerity that is valued. If you are lucky enough to get only a few moments of communion with Allah, those few moments will take you to the shore of salvation. Hours spent in worship against the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ will take you nowhere.

It is sincerity that matters

My Sheikh Hazrat Dr Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say in a state of great ecstasy: 'you rehearse in your prostrations the words سبحان ربی الاعلی (Subhaana rabbi-yal-a'laa) many times. You do this only mechanically and inattentively. If you rehearse these sacred words any day in all sincerity and from the core of your heart, even once, then as a reward of Allah will grant you salvation and success.

So, do not think that you will fall into sleep, if you worship Allah in loneliness at home. If you really feel sleeply, there is no harm in sleeping. However, if you spend

a few moments in worship, make it sure that you spend them according to the *Sunnah*. It will be according to *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that, if you feel sleepy during reciting the Holy Qur'an, you go to sleep and then get up after refreshing yourself with a little sleep. This is necessary, so that you may not pronounce some words of the Holy Qur'an incorrectly on account of sleepiness. Thus, a man who has been awake only one hour in praying to Allah according to the *Sunnah* and in obedience to the commands of Allah is far better than one who spends entire night in worship, violating the injunctions of the *Sunnah*.

Keep every form of worship within its prescribed limits

In the court of Almighty Allah the deeds are not counted but they are weighed. If you have done countless good deeds but they are light in weight, they have no value. That is why it is advised that during worship, if you are overwhelmed with sleep, you should take a nap. On getting up engage yourself in worship again with alertness and attention with the help of Allah. Only take heed that you do not do anything in violation of the *Sunnah*. It is, therefore, advised that only those prayers should be offered in congregation which are proved and permitted for congregation. These are: All *Farz* (obligatory) prayers, *Taraweeh* and *Witr Prayers* in the month of Ramazan, the *funeral prayers*, the Two *Eid* Prayers and the Prayers of *Istisqa* and *Kusoof*. There is no congregation for prayers other than these. Allah desires that in the latter category of prayers for which there is no congregation His servant should approach Him all alone. The honour, which Allah has bestowed upon His servant of establishing contact with Him in loneliness is a great honour which should be

acknowledged and valued with gratitude.

Congregation of women

What is the injunction about the congregation of female *Namazis*? It is not desirable for women to pray in congregation whether the prayer is *Farz*, *Sunnah* or *Nafl*. Allah has commanded women to worship in loneliness in their homes. So congregation for praying is not desirable for women. As I have mentioned earlier, *Deen* consists in obeying the injunction of the *Shari'ah* and not in the satisfaction of one's own choice or fancy. In the matter of *Deen* one's personal preference or choice has no place. We should not do things which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has not approved or permitted.

Sweetmeats and Shab-e-Bara-'at

This Shab-e-Bara-'at is a sacred Night of excellence. It is good to put in as much worship in this Night as possible. As regards other useless rites and customs invented for this Night, they are too evident to need any detailed exposition. One of these is the preparation of sweetmeats. This has nothing to do with this sacred Night. In fact, it is Satan's seduction to entangle the Muslims in such frivolities, so that they may remain away from the blessings of this Night. There is a narrative that in this Night Almighty Allah grants salvation to as many men as the number of the hair found on the goats of the Kalb tribe.

Treacherous Satan saw that it would be a great loss to him, if so many men received salvation. So he taught the people to prepare sweets on the occasion of the Shab-e-Bara-'at. It is qutie lawful to prepare sweetmeats and enjoy them throughout the year but this has nothing to

do with this Night. This custom is proved neither from the Qur'an nor from the Ahadith, nor from the practices and sayings of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم. The people do not pay heed to worshp and good deeds as they do in preparing sweetmeats. This is due to the seduction of Satan.

Distinctive features of *Bid'aat* (Innovations)

Note carefully this important point. My father Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi' Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ used to say that when a man becomes involved in *Bid'aat*, his interest in following the *Sunnah* is considerably reduced. You may perhaps have noted that those who devote longer time in offering the *Salatut-Tasbeeh* in congregation, remain generally absent from the congregations for the five-time prayers. Similarly those who are used to *Bid'aat* like (sweetmeat) and Konda are generally neglectful of the *Farz* Prayers. While engrossed in these *Bid'aat*, they do not worry if they miss the congregation or even the prayers.

Allah and His Prophet ﷺ have emphatically commanded that when a man dies his legacy should be distributed according to the injunctions of the *Shari'ah* as early as possible. It is, however, seen that, ignoring these injunctions, the people engage themselves in the baseless customs of *Teeja* (the third day after death), *Daswan* (the tenth day) and *Chaliswan* (the fortieth day) and *Barsi* (Aniversary). This shows that *Bid'aat* have the effect of removing men from the *Sunnah*. May Allah save us from this vice - *Aameen.*

In short man should refrain from *Bid'aat* and other useless customs and acts at all costs. As regards this Night, it is not correct to think that it has no special

excellence and distinction.

Fasting on the fifteenth Day of Sha'ban

There is another question asked about fasting on the day following the Shab-e-Bara-'at. viz., the fifteenth of Sha'ban. It should be noted that among the entire collection of the Ahadith, one narrative is a weak one. On this account some Ulama do not regard it an act of *Sunnah* or even a Mustahab (desirable) act to fast on the fifteenth Sha'ban. It is, however, proved that it is an act of excellence to observe fasting during the period from the first to the twenty-seventh of Sha'ban. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has forbidden to fast on the 28th and 29th days of Sha'ban, so that a man may remain well prepared and energetic for fasting in the month of Ramazan. It is, however, meritorious to observe fast on days in the period from the first to the twenth-seventh day of Sha'ban. Moreoever, this fifteenth day of Sha'ban is one of the three days of Ayyam *Beez* (the white days). i.e. the 13th, 14th and 15th of each month. The Holy Prophet ﷺ used to observe fasts frequently on these three days. If a man fasts on the 15th day of Sha'ban because firstly it is a day of the month of Sha'ban and secondly, because this day is one of the three days of *Ayyam Beez*, he will, God willing, be granted recompense for his fasting. It is, however, not right, in the opinion of some *Ulama*, to regard fasting on this day as *Sunnah*, only because it is a day of the month of Sha'ban. While mentioning the *Mustahab* (desirable) days of fasting, most *Ulama* have included for fasting the 10th of Muharram and the day of *'Arafah*, but they have not said anything separately about fasting on the 15th of Sha'ban. All that they have said is that it is meritorious to fast on any day in the month of Sha'ban. If anyone

observes fast on this day from this angle of vision he will be entitled to reward. Except for this, no other day has any importance.

I have already mentioned that every matter has to be dealt with within its prescribed limits and its approved level. In fact, *Deen* consists in the protection of the prescribed limits and not in transgressing these limits of one's own discretion and choice.

Fasting on the 15th of Sha'ban should be regarded as an act of *Sunnah*, yet if anyone fasts on this day will due regard to the limits, he will be entitled to divine reward.

Refrain from argumentation and altercation

What has been discussed above is a gist of the injunctions regarding Shab-e-Bara-'at and fasting on the day following it. It is, however, not advisable to carry the discussion too far to give rise to argumentation and altercation and thus create two groups quarrelling and disputing with each other. If you feel convinced of a view, act upon it and leave the matter there. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has forbidden to indulge in disputes and arguments. Imam Malik رحمة الله عليه has said:

المراء يطفئى نور العلم

This means: Quarrelling and arguing with one another in such matters destroy the light of learning and knowledge. The renowned poet Akbar of Allahabad (U.P. India) has very aptly mentioned this point in an Urdu couplet:

مذہبی بحث میں نے کی ہی نہیں
فالتو عقل مجھ میں تھی ہی نہیں

I never took part in religious controversies because I did not have superfluous intelligence for that.

It is not desirable to waste time in useless religious

controversies. If you feel convinced of the correctness of the opinion of an Alim, follow that. Do not quarrel with those who advance some other opinion. This is the straight path for you to follow which will result in your salvation, God willing.

Prepare and purify yourself for the month of Ramazan

At any rate, it is not correct to say that this Night, the Shab-e-Bara-'at, has no basis to be regarded as a Night of virtues. I am inclined to feel that by appointing it two weeks before Ramazan Almighty Allah has made it a happy precursor for the sacred fasting of Ramazan month. It is a rehearsal of, and prepartion for, fasting in Ramazan, so as to qualify for the mercy and forgiveness of Allah so generously showered in this month. So get ready for this divine favour.

When a man intends to attend a magnificent court, he makes himself neat and clean and puts on nice clothes. In the same way when the most Dignified Court of Allah is going to be held in the form of Ramazan, Allah has granted one sacred Night for preparation before attending the divine Court. It is Allah's desire that by cleaning and purifying himself in body and soul and from sins man may be able to establish relationship with Him. When this is done man will be able to benefit from the flood of mercies and favours of Ramazan in the true sense. It is for this purpose that Allah has granted us this blessed Night. It should be respected and valued.

May Allah make us welcome this night with due regard and devote ourselves therein to worship. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

MODESTY - A MEANS TO RISE TO HIGH RANKS

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه، ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيئات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا۔

اما بعد! فقد قال رسول الله سلى الله عليه وسلم :

من تواضع لله رفعه الله (ترمذى، كتاب البروالصلة، باب ماجاء فى التواضع)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and seek his forgiveness and believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom Allah guides and there is

none to guide him whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god except Allah the One He has no partner. I also bear witness that our sire, and our authority and our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him, his household and and on his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم and bless them and salute them all in great abundance.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

"Allah raises him in rank who takes to modesty for the sake of Allah".

I have read to you at the moment a saying of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It means that Allah raises him in rank who takes to modesty for the sake of Allah. Presently I want to explain briefly the reality of modesty, its importance, as implied in the Prophet's ﷺ saying, and how to practise modesty. May Almighty Allah help me, by His mercy, to tackle the topic rightly.

The Importance of Modesty

The importance of Modesty may be understood from the fact that a man who is deprived of this quality become Pharaoh and Namrood. This is because a heart vacant of the quality of modesty falls a victim to the vice of pride and self-esteem - vices which are the root of all spiritual diseases.

The Foundation of the First sin of Disobedience

The first sin of disobedience was committed in this universe by Iblis (Satan). It was he who sowed the first seed of this sin. Before him there was no concept of disobedience. When Almighty Allah created Hazrat Adam

علیہ السلام and commanded all the angels to prostrate themselves before him علیہ السلام. Iblis refused to porstrate himself and said:

اَنَا خَيْرٌ مِنْهُ خَلَقْتَنِيْ مِنْ نَارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهٗ مِنْ طِيْنٍ (سورۃ ص:۷۶)

"I am better than he, because you have created me from Fire and have created him from clay."

(38 : 76)

Iblis thought that Fire being superior to clay, he was superior to Adam علیہ السلام. He could, therefore, not postrate himself before Adam علیہ السلام.Thus, this was, the first sin of disobedience in the universe and this sprang from a feeling of pride and self-esteem. Allah, therefore, condemned him till the Day of Judgment. This clearly shows that the root of all vices is pride. A heart harbouring pride must also harbour in it other vices.

Do not use your Intellect against Allah's Command

The reason for this pride was that Satan felt proud of his intellect. He thought that he was offering an inllectual proof which was, difficult to dismiss as, in his opinion, fire was better than clay. Thus, he used his intellect against Allah with the inevitable result that he was condemned for ever and turned away. Dr. Iqbal has very ably brought out this fine point:-

صبح ازل یہ مجھ سے کہا جبرئیل نے
جو عقل کا غلام ہو، وہ دل نہ کر قبول

That is: on the morning of eternity, Jibrael علیہ السلام advised me not to accept that heart which is a slave to the intellect.

See how Satan, becomng a slave to his intellect, disowned slavery to Allah. He failed to understand the truth that it was Allah Who created Adam علیہ السلام and the

entire Universe. As such, it was his duty to bow down his head before Allah. He disobeyed Allah's command and was rightly condemned for ever.

Pride is the root of all sins

Anyway, pride is the root of all sins. Pride generates anger, jealousy, malice etc. It is due to pride that sins of injuring others feelings and backbiting are committed. It is impossible to get rid of these vices unless modesty is acquired and practised.

The Reality of Modesty

" تواضع " is an Arabic word. It means that one should consider oneself to be inferior. It is, however, not (modesty) to claim it (modesty) only verbally. It has become a fashion nowadays to call oneself meanest, worthless Guilty or sinner. They are under the impression that by using these words the quality of modesty is acquired. It should be noted that it is not modesty to call oneself modest. The real modesty is to feel and realize in the heart that one is modest. One should feel that one has no importance and if one has done anything good, it was due to Allah's help and mercy without which one could do nothing. This is the reality of modesty. If this true modesty has been attained it does not matter whether or not one calls oneself mean, worthless or good for nothing. Allah raises him in rank who acquires modesty in the true sense as pointed out above.

Examples of Modesty practised by our saintly elders

There are respected saints and learned men from whom we learn *Deen* (Faith) and virtuous acts. If we read their biographies we will know that they considered themselves the lowest of all. I have heard this statement of

Maulana Ashraft Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه from many of my saintly elders:-

It is my behaviour that I regard every Muslim superior to me, because he is a believer in his existing state; and I regard every non-Muslim superior to me, because there is always a possibility of his becoming by the grace of Allah, a beleiver any time in the future and he may become a better Muslim than I.

Once Hazrat Maulana Khan Muhammad Sahib رحمة الله عليه, a favourite Khalifah of Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه said to Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Hasan Sahib رحمة الله عليه he felt that he was inferior to all these present in the assembly of Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه. Hearing this Hazrat Mufti Sahib رحمة الله عليه said that he too had the same feeling about himself. They both decided to submit this matter to Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه to know whether this was a good or a bad situation for them. Hearing this experience, Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه told them that there was nothing wrong in it and said that when he sat in the assemblies he also felt likewise that all the members present there were suprior to him.

This is the reality of modesty. When this sense of modesty overpowers a man he feels that he is inferior even to animals, what to say of men.

The Modesty of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

Hazrat Anas رضى الله عنه has narrated in a Hadith that when any man shook hands with the Holy Prophet ﷺ on meeting him ﷺ, he did not withdraw his hands until the other person withdrew his hands. The Holy Prophet ﷺ also did not turn his face until that person turned his face. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ was sitting in an assembly he did not place his knees so as to project them before those

of others. In other words he did not sit in a distinctive pose. (Tirmizi, ... ch. No: 46)

It occurs in certain narratives that in the beginning it was the practice that the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to sit in assemblies along with the people without any distinction, but in this way new comers could not distinguish the Prophet ﷺ from others. When the assembly was large it sometimes became difficult for the people at the back to meet him ﷺ. They, therefore, proposed that the Holy Prophet ﷺ should take his seat at some raised place to enable the audience to see and hear him ﷺ with convenience. The Holy Prophet ﷺ accepted the proposal and a wooden bench was provided for him to sit on and talk to the people.

The style of walking of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

It appears from all this that man should not create for himself a distinctive and prominent position. He should pass his life among the common men like a commoner. It is, however, allowed to adopt a distinctive pose where it becomes unavoidable to do so There is a Hadith which describes the style of the Prophet's ﷺ walking:

" ما رأى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ياكل متكئاقط، ولا يطأ عقبه رجلان " (ابو داؤد، كتاب الا طعمة، باب فى الاكل متكا)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ was never seen eating, while supporting himself against a cushion, or walking followed by a group of men. It is, therefore, not desirable that a man should be walking with his disciples and pupils walking behind him at his heels. On such occasion the human self and Satan beguile him into the belief that such a large crowd is following him only because there is some

superiority and attraction in him. Man should avoid such a situation as far as possible. Following the Prophet's style man should try to walk either all alone or alongwith the people and not as a leader walking in front of them.

Hazrat Thanawi's Announcement

It is written in the notebook of Maulana Thanawi's routine that he had made an announcement that nobody should follow him from behind, nor walk side by side with him. If he was walking alone he should be left alone. He said that he did not like at all that he should walk like a leader, two men walking on his right and another two men on his left. Man should walk like an ordinary man.. Once he announced that if he was going with something in his hand, none should try to take that thing from his hand, but he should be left to go undisturbed. This was to avoid creating any distinction for himself.

Take to Humbleness and Self-dedication

My Sheikh, Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say that what is needed is a matter of servitude, dedication and obedience, a matter of humbleness and submissiveness. The more man effaced his ego and the more he displayed his quality of servitude, the more acceptable he would become - God willing - in the sight of Allah. The Sheikh would then recite this Persian couplet:

فہم خاطر تیز کردن نیست راہ
جز شکستہ می نگیر و فضل شاہ

This means that one cannot find the straight path leading to Allah by claiming wisdom and cleverness. the King's (Allah's) mercy and favour overtake him who displays his humbleness and obedience

Expression of pomp and show and pride is nothing but mere vanity. The occasion for feeling joy and pride is that moment when at the time of departing from this world Almighty Allah should say:

يٰٓاَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ارْجِعِيْٓ اِلٰى رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً فَادْخُلِيْ فِيْ عِبَادِيْ وَادْخُلِيْ جَنَّتِيْ (سورة الفجر:٢٧-٣٠)

"O contended soul! Return to your Lord satisfied and contented. Enter among My servants and enter (as a result) My Paradise.(89: 27-30)

Look! The soul is being addressed to enter into the group of Allah's servants. This shows that servitude (or obedience) is the highest station of man.

The way of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to express humbleness

In every matter the Holy Prophet ﷺ preferred that mode of life in which there was servitude, obedience and humbleness. Almighty Allah once asked his Prophet ﷺ, if he liked that the mount Uhud was turned into a mount of gold to remove his hardships. In reply to this divine offer the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: No, I prefer that I may remain hungry one day and satisfy my hunger the other day (اجوع يوما واشبع يوما), so that I may render thanks to You on the day I am well-fed and have patience on the day I am hungry and have to beg You to feed me. It occurs in a Hadith:

ماخير رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بين امرين قط الااخذايسرهما

(صحيح بخارى، كتاب الادب، باب قول النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم: يسروا ولا تعسروا)

This means that when the Holy Prophet ﷺ had to choose between two alternatives, he ﷺ always chose the easier of the two. He ﷺ did so, because choosing the

difficult alternative implies a claim to bravery and show of ability. On the other hand, choosing the easier alternative implies an admission of humbleness, submissiveness, obedience, weakness and helplessness. The road to success is, therefore, humbleness, obedience and self-dedication. Dedication means that man should adopt self-denial before Allah's pleasure and command. The dedication guarantees all success and salvation.

The Time is not yet Ripe

Our Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say very useful and wonderful points of wisdom and knowledge. One day he رحمة الله عليه said: When "*Polaw*" (a delicious dish of rice and meat) is cooked, the rice first begins to boil with a boiling sound and it circulates in the cooking pot. All this is a sign that the cooking is not complete and the dish of "*Polaw*" is not yet ready to eat. When the process of cooking nears completion, the rice settles down in the pot: it has no noise, no movement and no boiling. No sooner is the process of cooking complete, than the rice begins to give out refreshing and appetizing fragrance. Now it has become tasteful and palatable, worthy of being served and enjoyed.

صبا جو ملنا تو کہنا میرے یوسف سے
پھوٹ نکلی تیرے پیراھن سے بو تیری

The couplet contains a reference to the story of Prophet (Joseph) Yousuf علیہ السلام. Here the sudden fragrance emanating from the cooking pot has been compared to the smell emanating from the garment of Prophet Yusuf علیہ السلام.

Same is the example of a man. He is not ripe in his conduct, character and piety, as long as he claims openly or secretly that he has such and such qualities and

accomplishments in him. On the other hand when he admits before Allah his worthlessness and nothingness by renouncing his high-sounding claims, he becomes a favourite of Allah from whose personality rays of goodness and piety radiate.

On such occasions Dr. Sahib used to recite this beautiful couplet:

میں عارفی، آوارہ صحراء فنا ہوں
ایک عالم بے نام و نشاں میرے لئے ہے

This means: Almighty Allah has made me an aimless wanderer in the desert of self-dedication and has taught me the lesson of self-dedication. I have, thus, been granted a world which has neither a name nor marks of location. May Almighty Allah bestow this favour upon us also - *Aameen.*

Hazrat Sayyid Sulaiman Nadwi رحمة الله عليه and "Modesty"

Hazrat Sayyid Sulaiman Nadwi رحمة الله عليه was an 'Alim widely renowned and respected for his learning and academic accomplishments. He has related his own story as under:

"When I completed the Prophet's Biography in six volumes, a question continuously arose in my heart: Is there any reflection in my own life of the life of the sacred person ﷺ whose biography I have compiled. If not, how should this reflection be attracted. For this purpose he thought of calling upon a man of God, a saint. He had heard the name of Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi Sahib رحمة الله عليه who was providing right guidance to the people those days. He, therefore, went to Thana Bhawan (U.P. India) and called upon Maulana Thanawi رحمة الله عليه.

He stayed with Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه for few days. At the time of his departure Hazrat Nadwi requested Maulana Thanawi رحمة الله عليه to give him some advice. In such a situation Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه found himself in a fix and prayed to Allah for help so that he could say something which could prove beneficial to both. Thereafter, Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه addressed Sayyid Sulaiman Nadwi رحمة الله عليه saying:

"Slef-effacement is the first and the final panacea in our system of spiritual discipline."

Hazrat Sayyid Sulaiman Nadwi رحمة الله عليه has said that while uttering these words he took his hand to his chest and brought it down with such a strong jerk that Hazrat Nadwi felt something like a shock on his heart.

Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه has reproted that after this incident Hazrat Nadwi رحمة الله عليه totally effaced his self that it is difficult to find another example. Dr. Sahib said that one day he saw Hazrat Nadwi رحمة الله عليه straightening the shoes of the visitors to the assembly of Maulana Thanawi رحمة الله عليه. Thus did Almighty Allah create this modesty and self-dedication in him. What was the result? Thereafter, emanated from him the fragrance of guidance and Allah raised him to a height which none but Allah alone Knows.

Expel the idol of Ego

It should be noted that as long as the idol of Ego is present in the heart the personality is immature and unripe. It will come to maturity like the boiling broth when the idol of "ego" has been smashed to pieces; this is the quality of self-dedication or self-effacement. Dedication means that man should purge his living and all his acts and movements from the vestiges of pride and

arrogance and take to humbleness and modesty. The road to success will-God willing - be opened for him the very day he adopts humbleness. Pride is the greatest hurdle in the way leading to the Truth. However great and dignified does a proud man regard himself and however depressed and disgraced does he regard the rest of humanity, in the last resort Allah grants honour and dignity to the modest and disgraces the proud and the haughty.

The Example of a Proud man

There is a very wise parable in the Arbaic language. The example of a proud man is like one who is standing on a mountain peak and thinks that those at the foot of the mountain are small. In the same way those at the foot of the mountain think that the man at the peak of the mountain is small. This is an optical illusion, otherwise they are all equal. In the same way the entire world regards the proud man as mean and the proud man regards the entire world as mean. The truth is that Almighty grants honour to those who efface themselves before Allah.

May Allah inculcate in us also the quality of modesty and humbleness. *Aameen.*

Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه and Modesty

Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say that sometimes he walked in his house barefooted. He did this in compliance with a *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He had read in some narrative that the Holy Prophet ﷺ on a certain occasion had walked barefooted.He said: While walking barefooted I said to myself: Look here! your real worth is that you have neither shoes for your feet, nor a cap on your head nor clothes on your body. You are ultimately going to return to the dust.

Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه and Modesty

Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to relate an anecdote about Mufti Sahib رحمة الله عليه. He said that once he was sitting in his clinic on Robinson Road, Karachi, Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه was passing in front of the clinic all alone with some pot in his hand. Dr. Sahib asked those who were sitting with him if they knew the man who was passing by. Then he himself told them that he was the Grand Mufti of Pakistan who was going with a pot in his hand. None could guess from his clothes, style, and mode of walking that he was such a great Allamah.

Hazrat Mufti Aziz-ur-Rahman Sahib رحمة الله عليه and Modesty

Hazrat Mufti Aziz-ur-Rahman Sahib رحمة الله عليه was one of the teachers of my respected father and the grand Mufti of Darul-Uloom, Deoband (U.P. India). My respected father رحمة الله عليه told me that some widows also lived around Mufti Sahib's house. It was his daily routine that when he set off from his house for the Darul-Uloom, he would call upon those widows and ask them if they wanted him to purchase anyting for them from the market which he would bring for them. The widows would, each, tell him their requirements of their kitchen and households, e.g. spices vegetables, etc. He would do their shopping and hand over their goods to them. Sometimes the widows would complain about the quantity, quality, or the very nature of their needs. Mufti Sahib would again go to the market and bring back the goods in the desired quantity and quality. After this voluntary service Mufti Sahib would go to the Darul-Uloom to write *Fatawa* (Rligious Rulings). My father رحمة الله عليه said:

The man who was walking about in the market for the sake of the widows was the Grand Mufti, yet after seeing his simplicity and humbleness none could say that he is a mountain of learning and virtues. It is the outcome of his modesty that so far his *Fatawa* have been published in twelve volumes and work on this is still in progress, and the entire world is receiving benefit from his work. It is so to say:

پھوٹ نکلی تیرے پیراہن سے بو تیری

Your fragrance has issued forth suddenly from your garment.

He breathed his last while writing a *Fatwa*.

Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Qasim Sahib Nanotawi رحمة الله عليه and Modesty

Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Qasim Sahib Nanotawi رحمة الله عليه is the founder of Darul Uloom, Deoband. It is written about him that he always wore a long cloth and an ordinary *Kurta* (Shirt). None could guess from his appearance and clothes that he was such a great personality. He was a successful debater. The greatest of his competitors dared not stand for long before him. As regards the state of his modesty, he used to sweep the courtyard of the mosque clad in his long cloth and ordinary *Kurta* (Shirt). He had taken part in the *Jihad* against the British in India so as a warrant of arrest had been issued against him and a man had come to arrest him. Someone had spied that the Maulana resided in the mosque of Chatta.When the man came to the mosque he saw that a person wearing a vest and long-cloth was sweeping the courtyard of the mosque. The warrant of arrest bore the words, "Maulana Muhammad Qasim

Nanotawi should be arrested." The man thought that the Maulana must be an Allamah of imposing personality clad in a long flowing robe who had headed such a tremendous movement. He could never imagine that the person sweeping the mosque was Maulana Qasim Nanotawi. He, therefore, asked this person about the whereabouts of the Maulana. In the meantime Hazrat Maulana's instuition guided him that a warrant had been issued for his arrest. The Maulana was now caught in a very confusing situation. He had to conceal his identity and yet he could not tell a lie. To get himself out of this awkward situation, he stepped back from the place where he was standing and said to the man. A little before the Maulana was here. The man thought that a little before the Maulana was in the mosque, but had left it and gone elsewhere.

Hazrat Sheikhul Hind رحمة الله عليه and Modesty

Hazrat Sheikh-ul-Hind Maulana Mahmoodul-Hasan is the man who launched such a vigorous freedom movement against the British Government of India as shook to the core of the whole of India, Afghanistan and Turkey. My respected father Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه related a story about him on the authority of Hazrat Maulana Mughis Sahib رحمة الله عليه An 'Alim of Ajmer (India), Maulana Mu'eenuddin Ajmeri رحمة الله عليه decided to go to Deoband to pay a visit to the Sheikhul-Hind. Accordingly, he reached Deoband and asked a Tonga driver to take him to Maulana Sheikhul-Hind. In Deoband he was know as *Bare* (big) Maulana Sahib. The Tonga-driver inquired: do you want to go to *Bare* Maulawi Sahib? The reply being in the affirmative, the Tonga-driver took him to the house of Hazrat Sheikhul-Hind. It was summer time, when this visitor knocked at the door, a man wearing a vest and a long

cloth, came out of the house. The visitor told the man at the door that he had come from Ajmer to meet Hazrat Maulana Mahmoodul-Hasan Sahib رحمة الله عليه and that his own name was Mu'eenuddin Ajmeri. He was let in and asked to take his seat. The visitor repeated his desire to see the Sheikhul-Hind. The man asked him to have patience. As the season was hot he began to fan him. The visitor asked the man with some irritation to inform the Maulana that a man had come from Ajmer to see the Maulana. He went in came out with food. The visitor told the man that he had not come to take food; he wanted to see the Maulana. The man requested the visitor to take the food and he would soon meet the Maulana. The visitor took food and drank water. Then the visitor complained with some irritation that the man was not informing Sheikhul-Hind of his visit. The man (who was Sheikhul-Hind himself) said to the visitor: Hazrat! No Sheikhul-Hind resides here. Mahmoodul Hasan is indeed the name of the man standing before you. This was the character of our elder saints. May Allah grant us some of this colour: *Aameen.*

Hazrat Maulana Muzaffar Husain Sahib رحمة الله عليه and Modesty

Hazrat Maulana Muzaffar Husain Sahib Kandehlawi رحمة الله عليه was once returning from some place to Kandehla by rail. When he got off the train at the station he saw that an old man was going with a heavy bundle on his head. He was walking with difficulty on account of the heavy load. Feeling pity on the old man the Maulana asked his permission to carry the load himself. The old man agreed to this and thanked the stranger for the help. The Maulana took up the bundle on his head and both set off on the journey. On the way the following dialogue ensued

between the two:

Maulana: Where are you going?
Old man: To Kandehla.
Maulana: Why are you going there?
Old man: I have heard that a great Maulawi Sahib resides there. I am going tomeet him.
Maulana: Who is that great Maulawi?
Old man: Maulana Muzaffar Husain Sahib Kandehlawi. I have heard that he is a very great Maulana and a big 'Alim.
Maulana: Yes he can read Arabic.

While this dialogue was going on they reached Kandehla. When the people saw Maulana carrying a load, they rushed towards him to pay regard to, and take the load from him. Seeing this the old man was very much upset and shocked that he had burdened the Maulana with such a heavy load. The Maulana solaced the oldman, saying: Brother, there is nothing to worry. When I saw that you are in trouble, Almighty Allah helped me to render this service. Thanks to Allah.

Another event relating to Hazrat Sheikhul-Hind رحمة الله عليه

It was a regular programme followed during Ramazan at the place of Hazrat Sheikhul-Hind رحمة الله عليه Maulana Mahmoodhul Hasan Sahib رحمة الله عليه that the *Taraweeh* prayer was started after the 'Isha prayer and continued throughout the night till dawn. The Qur'an was completed after every three or four days. A Hafiz recited the Qur'an and Sheikhul-Hind رحمة الله عليه listened to the recitation standing behind the Hafiz. He himself was not a Hafiz-e-Qur'an. At the end of the *Taraweeh* the Hafiz Sahib used to lie down for a short nap near the

Sheikhul-Hind. The Hafiz Sahib related that one night when he opened his eyes he saw that someone was massaging his legs. He thought that it might be some pupil or student. When he looked up after sometime he found to his great surprise that it was Hazrat Sheikhul-Hind himself who was massaging his legs. The Hafiz Sahib at once got up and asked what the Sheikh was doing. The Sheikhul-Hind رحمة الله عليه replied: You remain standing during *Taraweeh* the whole night. I am massaging your legs that they may receive some comfort.

Maulana Muhammad Ya'qoob Sahib Nanotawi رحمة الله عليه and Modesty

Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Ya'qoob Sahib Nanotawi رحمة الله عليه was the principal of Darul-Uloom, Deoband. He was a high-ranking 'Alim. Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has said that when anyone praised him in his presence, he would keep quiet, instead of uttering some formal common words like, "It is your good opinion about me, otherwise I am nothing, etc.." Such formal words are uttered with a concealed desire to hear more praise. This is false and not real modesty. The man praising Maulana thought on account of his silence that he was pleased with his praise.An observer might have thought that the Maulana had no modesty. Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه said: These formalities do not mean modesty. Modesty is a quality of the heart. True modesty demands that a man should not consider any work, however low, below his dignity.

Another event about him, demonstrating Modesty

There is another event relating to Maulana Muahmmad Ya'qoob Sahib Nanotawi رحمة الله عليه. Someone invited Maulana Sahib to a feast and he accepted it. The

village of the host was at some distance, but he provided no conveyance. Maulana Sahib رحمة الله عليه, therefore, set off for the place on foot. He did not at all mind the absence of conveyance. He took food along with mangoes. The host did not arrange conveyance even on Maulana's return journey and what is more, handed over to him a heavy load of mangoes to take home. Maulana accepted the gift of mangoes and set-off homewards with this heavy load. The load was too heavy for a man like Maulana Sahib who had never in his life lifted such a heavy load. To carry it he had to use both his hands alternately. When he approached Deoband both his hands had become almost paralysed. At long last he placed the load on his head. this brought some relief to his hands. At this he regretted that he did not place the load on his head in the very beginning to avoid all that distress. Maulana arrived home at Deoband with the load of mangoes on his head. He was supporting the load with one hand and shaking hands with the people who came to greet him with the other hand. The grand Maulana never thought that the work of carrying the load on his head was not worthy of his status. It is a token of modesty that man should never consider any work to be derogatory to his position.

An even Unique of its Kind

You might have heard the name of Hazrat Sayyid Ahmad Kabir Rifa'i رحمة الله عليه who was among the most dignified saitns of Allah. A unique event happened with him which had happened to none else in the world. He had a great longing in his heart to visit the Holy Shrine of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. After long waiting and longing Allah at last granted him an opportunity to perform the *Hajj*. After *Hajj* he went to Madinah Munaw-warah. When he visited

the Holy Shrine of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, he spontaneously recited two couplets of Arabic poety:

فی حالة البعد روحی کنت ارسلها
تقبل الارض عنی وهی نائبتی

وهذه دولة الاشباح قد حضرت
فامدد یمینك کی تحظی بهاشفتی

That is: O Messenger of Allah! when I was at a distance from you I used to send my soul to kiss the earth on my behalf and as my representative. Today when I am present here in person, kindly; hold out to me your right hand that my lips may enjoy by kisisng it.

As soon as these couplets were recited, the sacred hand of the Holy Prophet ﷺ came out of his shrine and all present there graced themselves with its sight and Hazrat Sayyid Ahmad Kabir Rifa'i رحمة الله عليه kissed the Prophet's hand. Thereafter the hand went back. This unique event is recorded in history and the reality is known to Allah alone.

The Remedy to cure Pride

After the happening of this event Hazrat Sayyid Ahmad Kabir Rifa'i رحمة الله عليه thought of the great honour which Almighty Allah had conferred upon him which had not been conferred upon any person before. He feared lest this should create in his heart some vestige of pride. To forestall this he lay down at the gate of the Prophet's mosque and he requested the public on solemn oath to go out of the mosque by crossing over him, so as to remove all traces of pride and superiority from his heart. I have related this story only as an interlude, otherwise the main event which I want to relate is as follows:

The best Example of Public service

Once Hazrat Sayyid Ahmad Kabir Rifa'i رحمة الله عليه was going to the market when he saw on the way a weak and sick dog suffering from scabies and unable to walk.

The righteous servants of Allah are always full of love for Allah's creatures. This love and affection is a sign to show that they maintain special relationship with Allah. Sheikh Sa'di رحمة الله عليه the famous Persian Sufi poet of Shiraz has expressed the same point in his persian couplet:

زتسبیح و سجاده و دلق نیست
طریقت بجز خدمت خلق نیست

The way leading to Allah is nothing, but service to the creatures of Allah. It does not consist in counting over the rosary, the prayer carpet and the saint's long ragged robe.

My Sheikh Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say that when a servant of Allah loves Allah and Allah also loves him, then Allah infuses into the heart of his servant the love of creatures. As a result the hearts of men of God become full to the brim of the love of Allah's creatures. So deep is their love that it is beyond our imagination.

When Hazrat Sayyid Ahmad Rifa'i رحمة الله عليه saw this dog in such a sad plight he felt pity on it, he brought the dog with him, and provided for it medical treatment bandaged its wounds, until the dog recovered from its diseases. He looked after the dog with due care, being a God's creature.

Dialogue with a Dog

After the event mentioned above one day Hazrat Sayyid Ahmad Kabir Rifa'i رحمة الله عليه was going somewhere and it was the rainy season. He was walking on the raised

path separating one field from the other, each filled with water and mire. Suddenly a dog appeared coming from the other side. Both stopped seeing each other, as the path was so narrow that both could not pass by each other. One of them must get down into the mire to let the other pass unsoiled. Hazrat Rifa'i رحمة الله عليه was in a fix what to do. It is said that a dialogue took place between the saint and the dog. Only Allah Knows how this dialogue became possible. None knows if it was a miracle worked by Allah or Hazrat Rifa'i رحمة الله عليه conceived it mentally. However, the dialogue runs thus:

Hazrat Rifa'i: Get down from the path so that I may pass on.

Dog: Why should I? You pose to be a great Wali (friend of Allah). A true Wali makes sacrifices for others. You are asking me to get down but why do you not get down yourself to let me pass on?

Hazrat Rifa'i: You and me. I am duty-bound and you are free from all obligations. I have to be clean to offer my prayers, but you are exempt from prayer. If my clothes become polluted by getting down the path I cannot pray in this condition. That is why I am asking you to get down the path to let me pass on.

Otherwise the heart will become polluted

Dog : Ha! what an excuse that your clothes will become polluted! you can clean by washing them with water. If I get down your heart will beocme polluted you will think that you are a man and far superior to a nasty dog. It is, therefore, better for you to save

your heart from pollution by getting down instead of saving your clothes.

Hearing this reply of the dog Hazrat Rifa'i رحمة الله عليه accepted defeat and admitted the dog's logic that the clothes could be cleaned by washing but the heart could not be cleaned by washing. He, therefore, got down in the mire and made way for the dog to pass on.

At the end of this dialogue an inspiration came to Hazrat Rifa'i رحمة الله عليه in which Almighty Allah addressed him thus:

"O Ahmad Kabir, today I have graced you with such wealth of knowledge as has no equal. A few days ago you had felt pity on a poor, sick dog by providing medical treatment for it. As a reward for this I have granted you, through the dog, peerless knowledge. "A man should not consider himself to be superior even to a dog."

Hazrat Bayazeed Bustani رحمة الله عليه

Hazrat Bayazeed Bustani رحمة الله عليه has been a great Muslim saint of international fame. It is related about him that after his death someone saw him in a dream and asked him how Almighty Allah dealt with him. The saint replied, saying: Something very strange happened to me. When Allah asked me about deeds I had taken with me there, I replied that I had nothing with me, I have come empty handed. I totally depend on Your mercy. Almighty Allah said: Out of all the good deeds you did in the world I appreciated very much one of them. When you got up one night you saw that a kitten was shuddering with severe cold, you felt pity on it and provided it cover under your quilt and the kitten passed the night comfortably. This act of yours was based on sincerity and you did it exclusively for the sake of My pleasure. It pleased Me so much that I granted

you forgiveness only on account of this deed.

Hazrat Bayazeed Bustani رحمة الله عليه has said that the learning and knowledge he had acquired in the world proved futile. Only one deed was counted as worthy in the sight of Allah. It was kindness to and nice behaviour with the creatures of Allah.

The gist of the discussion

Anyway, Hazrat Sayyid Ahmad Kabir Rifa'i رحمة الله عليه was instructed by means of this inspiration that the most valuable of all the learning is man's admission that he is "worthless" and that his own personality has no reality. This is the essence of all knowledge and is called "Modesty" - total freedom from Pride. All godly men take care to safeguard themselves from the vice of Pride in whatever form it may be.

The difference between "Modesty" and "Inferiroity Complex"

Nowadays the science of psychology has become very popular among the people. "Inferiority Complex" is a subject of this science which is regarded as something very undesirable. Medical treatment is provided for a person who falls a victim to this malady. Some people allege that the mystic formula of "modesty" or "selfeffacement" is only creating the feeling of "Inferiority Complex" among the people which is apparently not a desirable tendency.

It may be stated to clear that "Modesty" and "Inferiority Compelx" are two different traits of human behaviour. Those who evolved the science of psychology are totally ignorant of *Deen* (Faith), Allah and His Prophet ﷺ. They invented the term "Inferiority Complex", even though it has some good aspects as well. There is in

reality a difference between "Modesty" and "Inferiority Complex".

"Inferiority Complex" a complaint against creation

"Inferiority Complex" consists accusation against Allah's creation, A man suffering from this complex thinks that he has been deprived of something which should have been given to him and that he has been pushed back. He has not been given his due share. He was born ugly, poor, sick or crippled, etc. Such complaints necessarily create irritation and, in turn, jealousy. They create in him dependency and dejection. At any rate, "Inferiority complex" is based on a complaint against dispensation and ordinance of Allah.

Modesty is the product of gratitude

As regards"Modesty", it cannot be acquired by complaining against Allah's Decree. It is acquired through rendering thanks to Allah for His grants and favours. The man practising "Modesty" thinks that he did not deserve any blessings, but Almighty Allah favoured him by His mercy and grace.

Now you can realize yourself the difference between "Inferiority Complex" and "Modesty". The qulaity of "Modesty is highly desirable. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said "Modesty" raises to honour and dignity whoso practises it". As against this, pride ultimately brings disgrace and humiliation. The man practising "Modesty" is ultimately favoured with honour, provided he is true and sincere in his "Modesty".

Show of "Modesty"

Sometimes we make a show of modesty by using formal words like, "I am worthless, the lowest, sinful" etc. This is no Modesty; it is only a show of modesty; it is an illusion of "Modesty." Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has givern us a very effective formula to test the modesty of anyone. When a person says that he is worthless, wrongdoer, guilty and good for nothing, etc., confirm to him his statements, syaing, "yes, really you are what you are telling about yourself." Now see his reactions. If he does not take ill what you have confirmed he is really sincere in his claim of modesty. On the other hand, if he feels offended then be sure that he was making only a show of "modesty". He was using words of modesty with the intention that his listeners may contradict him, saying "No sir, you are very honourable, pious and modest, etc." This is not "Modesty, but a show of modesty."

Modesty and Ingratitude

A man's life possesses many good aspects. Some have been favoured with learning and knowledge, some with health, some with wealth and still some with high status. How can a man deny these blessings? If he denies these blessings, it will be ingratitude on his part. To steer clear of this situation the saints have suggested that "Modesty" should not be strained so much as to touch the boundary of ingratitude. Modesty and gratitude should go together. The one should not repel the other.

This is not Modesty

Hazrat Maulana Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has related an event in one of his sermons. He has stated that once he was

travelling by train and some passengers were sitting around him. As they were talking to one another, he could not sleep and came down from his berth. They sat down to take food and invited the Maulana also to it, saying: Kindly come and partake with us our poor and coarse food. Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه objected to this that they were calling the food inferior which was Allah's gift. They replied that they called the food poor and coarse by way of modesty. It would be an act of pride to call the food to be of superior quality. The food was a gift from Allah. It was not at all right to call it poor and coarse. Likewise, if Allah has granted someone a blessing, one should be thankful to Allah for the valuable grant. The gift should not be taken lightly.

Refrain from Pride as well as ingratitude

On the one hand it is necessary for us to refrain from pride and on the other hand from ingratitude. We must refrain from both the vices. If there is man who offers prayers, observes fasting and thinks that he is doing something very praiseworthy, he is committing the sin of pride. If the same man thinks that his acts of pryaing and fasting are worthless and fruitless, this is an act of ingratitude in the sight of Allah.

How to combine Gratitude and Modesty

A question arises as to how to combine two virtues apparently quite different from each other - gratitude and pride at the same time. In other words, gratitude and modesty should go together. It is very easy to combine the two virtues. Man should think that he had no capacity at all to do this work which he was able to do only with the kind help of Almighty Allah. In this way both the virtues get combined. When man thinks that he is quite incapable

and good for nothing, he practises modesty. When he thinks that he did something only with the help and mercy of Allah, he is showing gratitude to Allah. A servant who is grateful to Allah can never be proud, because gratitude implies in its meaning admission of weakness and inability. If he has done anything or attained any success it was through Allah's help and mercy. See how the Holy Prophet ﷺ combined both the virtues in himself:

انا سيد ولد ادم ولا فخر(ترمذی، کتاب المناقب، باب نمبر۳، حدیث نمبر ۳۶۳۲)

I am the leader of Adam's son yet, I take no pride in it. (Tirmizi..... ch. No: 3, Hadith No: 3632)

In this Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has claimed that he ﷺ is the leader of Adam's progeny. This implies admission of superiority, yet it has been set off at the same time by the denial of pride (ولا فخر). The Holy Prophet ﷺ admittedly deny pride that his status of leadership is due only to Allah's favour and mercy and not to any qualification in his own self.

An Example

Hazrat Maulana Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has explained this by an example. In the olden days there used to be a class of slaves. They were owned by their masters like some property. Their masters had full authority to sell them in the market. A slave was solely bound to obey his master. If the master asked him to become a ruler in his absence, he had to assume that responsibility. Nothwithstanding this, basically he remains a slave. He can never think that the power he is holding is due to his own ability and competence. He understands quite well that when the master returns and asks him to clean the latrine he will have to do that. Now it becomes clear that, although the

slave is officiating as a ruler, yet he realizes his real worth and position as a mere slave, having no authority, whatsoever.

A "servant's" position is below that of a slave

The position of a "servant" (بندہ) is much lower and inferior than a slave so when "Almighty Allah bestows some position upon His servant, he should think that the duty he is discharging is Allah's favour. He is a "servant" of Allah far inferior to the slave whom his master has authorized to work as a ruler. We know from the annals of history how many slaves there have been who ruled over countries, yet the spot of slavery remained sticking to them till the last.

A story full of morals

There was a slave who rebelled against his master, murdered him and took over the reins of the Kingdom. He continued as a King for a long time and princes were born to him. This slave King invited to his court Sheikh Izzuddin bin Abdus-Salam who was a *Wali* (friend) of Allah and a *Mujaddid* of his time. The slave King offered to appoint him Qazi (Chief Justice). The Sheikh replied: The right to appoint a Qazi vests in the rightful Caliph which you are not. You are a slave and have seized power by murdering your master. You have also seized much landed property to which you, as a slave, have no right. A slave cannot own any property. I shall, therefore, not accept any post from you, unless you rectify your position.

In those days goodness prevailed. The slave King had usurped power by murdering his master, yet he had some fear of Allah. The saint's words had also impressed him. He admitted the charges levied against him by the

Sheikh that he was really a slave. He requested the Sheikh to tell him how he could extricate himself from the bonds of slavery. The Sheikh told him that there was only one way: The King as well as his princes should all stand in the market and offer themselves for sale. The sale money should be distributed among the heirs of the deceased master, i.e. the ousted King. Then the buyer should free his purchased slaves. Then the slave King and the princes would become free. How difficult a situation it was! However, some fear of Allah and of the punishment of the Hereafter, as the slave King had in his heart, he accepted to go through this ordeal.

It is a unique event of history that the King and his progeny taken to the market and offered for sale. They were auctioned. A rich man purchased them then set them free in return for an adequate compensation. Thus the Kingdom of the King was regularised. We have in our history such evetns the like of which will not be found elsewhere in any other nation. The lesson to be learnt from this unique event is that just as a slave King realizes that he is basically a slave, in the same way if a man is holding some dignified post, he should believe from the core of his heart that he is a slave of Allah. If man realizes this truth, he can never do wrong to others, while occupying his high and dignified post.

Modesty in Worship

Allah helps you, by His mercy, to become a *Namazi* (worshipper), do not begin to tell others that you are a *Namazi*, nor think, that you have become a very great saint as says the Arabic proverb:

صلي الحـائك ركعتين وانتـظر الوحى

A weaver once offered two *Rak'ats* of prayer and

began to wait for a revelation from above. He foolishly thought that his act of praying was so sublime that he should receive revelation from Allah. You should, therefore, not regard your acts of worship so great that you should anticipate great results immediately, nor should you consider your act so inferior that you may become involved in ingratitude, by thinking that it is totally worthless and condemnable.

It is dereogatory to the sanctity of your prayer to utter derogatory words. You should be thankful to Almighty Allah that with His help you could perform the prayers whatever its worth and level.

You must do two things

Whenever Allah enables you to perform some worship you have to do two acts. Firstly, render thanks to Allah that He enabled you, by His mercy, to worship Him. How many men there are who remain away from this worship. Secondly, seek Allah's forgiveness for the faults you may have committed, and the defects and shortcomings that may have crept into your worship. It is hoped that on account of these two acts Allah shall accept your worship.

Ecstatic experiences and feelings are not the objective

We always feel worried that we find no change in ourselves, nor do we experience any spiritual elation, although we have been offering prayers counting over the beads, rememebring Allah's sacred names alongwith the *Tahajjud* and *Ishraq* prayers. You must bear in mind that these internal feelings of elation are not the objective. The good deeds you are doing, including those mentioned

above, are in themselves a great favour of Allah. The anxiety about the acceptance or non-acceptance by Allah of your good actions, remembrance, prayer, etc. is quite appreciable, yet it should be realized and admitted that they are not in themselves worthy of being offered to, and accepted by Allah. Notwithstanding this you should also hope that when Allah has helped you to do these acts He will, by His mercy, accept them for reward.

A sign to indicate the acceptance of worship by Allah

Haji Imdadullah Sahib رحمة الله عليه was a great Sheikh. May Allah exalt his rank! A man who was a regular *Namazi* asked him if his prayers were accepted by Allah or not. The Sheikh replied, saying: If your first prayer had not been accepted you would not have been allowed the second, then the third then the fourth and so on so forth. When you have done a good deed and Allah helps you to do it again, then it is a clear indication that Allah has accepted the first deed by His infinite mercy. One should, therefore, never consider his praying and fasting to be altogether inferior and insignificant.

An event that occurred with a saint

Maulana Rumi رحمة الله عليه has related in his Masnawi the story of a saint. He was a very religious and pious man who had been offering prayers, observing fasts and remembering Allah and in other forms of worship. One day it occurred to him that he had devoted himself to Allah's worship for such a long period, but he did not receive any response from Allah so far about the acceptance or non-acceptance of his devotion. He submitted this thought to his Sheikh. The Sheikh reprimanded him and explained to him you have

been continuously doing your deeds of righteousness and devotion with Allah's help and this is a response from Allah to you. If Allah had not accepted your devotion and worship, He would not have extended His help to you to continue your prayers and fastings, etc. It is not, therefore, necessary to wait for a response which is already there.

کہ گفت آں اللہ تو لبیک ماست

زیں نیاز دورو و سوزک ماست

The idea contained in this persian couplet is that if a man is rehearsing the names of Allah, then this rehearsal of Allah's name is Allah's response that man is enabled to rehearse the name of Allah again and agian and repeatedly.

The best Example

Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to give a very good example to illustrate how Allah accepts the worship of his servants. Hazrat Dr.Sahib رحمة الله عليه has suggested, saying: Go to a man and speak well of him. Do the same the second day and the third day.If he appreciates this act of yours he shall listen to you and will not forbid you to praise him. On the other hand, if he dislikes this act of yours he may tolerate you the first or the second day, but will surely turn you out the third day and will not allow to praise him. Just like this, when you praise Allah and He allows you to continue this praise of Him, this is a sure sign that Allah appreciates your act, even the act may be of an inferior standard. So, do not look down up this act as worthless, but thank Allah's magnanimity for accepting something which is in fact not worthy of this acceptance.

The gist of the entire discussion

Our respected Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to advise us to continue working in the path of Deen according to the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. In addition, we must render thanks to Allah that He who enabled us to do something good and right, as without His help we could do nothing. Then when we rememebr our fautls, sins and shortcomings we should seek Allah's forgiveness. If we follow this advice, we will be able to do justice to "Modesty" in our conduct, and offer gratitude to Allah and as a result we will be saved from pride.

How to acquire the quality of "Modesty"

In order to acquire the quality of "Modesty" you should regard yourself to be a servant of Allah and think that you are bound to do whatever Allah entrusts to you. If He appoints you to some high post resolve that you shall discharge the duties attached to that post honestly, because you are a slave of Allah and have no discretion of your own in the matter. You must admit that whatever you have been granted is Allah's gift and favour. Such trend of thought will ensure for you the quality of gratitude as well as of modesty.

The respected *Sufis* (mystics) say that the *'Arif* (knower of the ways of Allah) has the ability of combining opposites which are apparently contradictory to each other. On the one hand you should not look down upon your good deeds and on the other hand you should not pride yourself upon them. You should think that, in so far as your acts are concerned, they are worthless, but in so far as Allah's attribute of acceptance is concerned, they are indeed valuable. By adopting such trend of thought you shall attain Modesty as well as the qulaity of gratitude.

Practise gratitude to the best of your ability

Our Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه laid great stress on the virtue of rendering thanks to Allah. The more one renders thanks to Allah, the more easily and quickly he will be cured of his inner and spiritual diseases. Previously we could not grasp the secret of these poitns. Now we have come to know that this virtue of thanks giving is a very effective remedy to cure the inner diseases of our hearts. He رحمة الله عليه used to say that people now-a-days are too weak in body and soul to go through the ordeals of those spiritual exercises and disciplines which the students of spiritual training used to perform in the past under the direct supervision of their Sheikh and underwent great hardships in this path. We have neither time nor strength for this tiring ordeals. Only one way is open for you and that is the way of rendering thanks to Allah as much as possible. This will create in us the virtue of "Modesty" and expel from our hearts the vice of pride. This will also lead us to the path of total cure from the inner diseases.

The meaning of Gratitude

When "thanksgiving" is so important we must understand the meaning of "thanks". Thanksgiving or gratitude is a belief that we are indeed not deserving of anything. Whatever we receive or attain comes to us only through Allah's grant or favour. This is what we call "Modesty". There is neither modesty nor gratitude in the belief that you deserved the success or the grant by dint of your own efforts and labour. Take an example. A debtor pays back his loan to the creditor. The creditor is not bound to thank the debtor for this payment, because the amount was legally and morally due to the creditor. By paying back his debt the debtor did not oblige the creditor

with any favour. Thanks become due where a man receives some benefit or favour which he does not deserve or to which he has no title. At the time of rendering thanks to Allah for a favour you must realize that you did not deserve the favour; it was only Allah's favour and grant. By following such a trend of thought you shall attain the virtue of "Modesty". The Holy Prophet ﷺ has made a promise to a man who practises "Modesty" in the following words:

من تواضع لله رفعه الله

Allah raises him to honour and dignity who practises Modesty for the sake of Allah.

Summary

It should be borne in mind that "Modesty" is a quality of the heart. A man should think in his heart that he is worthless and good for nothing. To be able to preserve this trend in the heart, in actual practice one should think that it is modesty that one should be ready to do anything and should not consider any job below his status and dignity. He should be ready to handle any duty, however, lowly it may be. There should be no vestiges of pride and arrogance in man's sitting, standing, walking, in fact, in any of his movements. His conduct should always reflect modesty and humbleness. This is not total Modesty, yet this too is a means to attain total modesty. In short, a man should take to modesty even in his apparent acts and movements, which in turn will sow the seeds of gratitude and modesty in the heart.

May Almighty Allah create the virtue of Modesty in our hearts-*Aameen*.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi
Date : 18th June, 1993.

JEALOUSY - A FATAL DISEASE

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله تعالى عنه ان النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم قال:

" ايا كم و الحسد، فان الحسد ياكل الحسنات كما تاكل النار الحطب، اوقال: العشب" (ابو داود، كتاب الادب، باب فى الحسد، حديث نمبر ٤٩٠٣)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and seek his forgiveness and believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our souls and the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom He guides and there is

none to guide him whom He lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah the only One Who has no partner. I also bear witness that our master, our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah shower His mercy on him, his household and his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم and bless them in great abundance.

"Jealousy" is an Inner Diseasae

We are aware that among our apparent acts Allah has appointed some as *Farz* (obligatory duty), some as compulsory and some as sins. Exactly in the same way among our inner acts, many are *Farz*, and many others are sins and totally forbbidden. To refrain from these inner sins is as imperative as to refrain from our apparent major sins. Some of these have already been discussed. Today I want to dsicuss a very dangerous inner disease which is "Jealousy". In the Hadith recited before you just now, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has mentioned this disease. The Hadith may be translated as follows:

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: Refrain from jealousy, because it consumes the good deeds of man just as fire consumes wood or grass. The narrator is doubtful whether the Holy Prophet ﷺ had used the word "wood" or "grass". The Hadith means that just as fire totally eats up dried grass or dried wood, in the same way the disease of jealousy eats up the good deeds of the jealous persons.

The Fire of Jealousy remains in flames

There is a kind of fire which destroys everything in a matter of minutes. There is another kind of fire which burns without flame but slowly and slowly eats away things in bits, till it consumes the entire wood. Likewise is jealousy which, just burns without fire, and annihilates man's good deeds stealthly and does not even feel this hidden process of loss. That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ has emphatically warned against this disease.

It is an obligatory duty to refrain from Jealousy

If we make a survey of the conditions prevailing in our society, we shall see that this disease of jealousy has encircled the entire society. There are a very few servants of Allah who are safe from it. Jealousy is so insidious a disease that somehow it finds access to the hearts. At the same time it is an obligatory duty to refrain from it at all costs. As for ourselves, we take no notice of this dangerous situation and do not even feel that we are suffering from this disease. It is, therefore, highly imperative to be cautious against the onslaught of this disease.

First of all we should try to understand the reality of jealousy, its categories, its causes and the remedy to cure it. These four issues are the topic of today's discussion. May Almighty Allah make today's discourse instrumental to the eradication of this disease.

The Reality of Jealousy

A man sees that another man is in possession of some blessing whether of this world or of the Hereafter. A grudge and ill-will springs up in him against the man gifted with the blessing. He begins to desire that the blessing of the other man may be snatched away from

him. This is the reality of jealousy.

Take an example. Allah has bestowed upon some man wealth, good health, fame, honour or learning. A burning feeling crops up and starts imagining as to why this blessing was granted to him and that the blessing should better be taken away from him. It pains him to see another man in possession of one or many of these blessings and he is happy if some of these blessings are lost or snatched away from him.

Keeping in view this reality of jealousy if you reflect a bit you will feel that the jealous person raises objection to Allah's Decree as to why He bestowed that blessing upon another person, instead of him. It is a very serious sin that he is taking exception to the Omnipotent Providence and is at the same time wishing that the blessing granted by Allah to the other person may be seized from him which is too grievous a sin.

To 'envy' is lawful

Sometimes a man sees that another man is in possession of some blessing. A desire arises in his heart that he may also get that blessing. This desire is not jealousy; it is 'envy' for which the Arabic equivalent is غبطه. Sometime this word حسد is also confessed with the Arabic (Jealousy). For example, a man sees that a fellow man is in possession of a nice house, a lucrative post or erudite knowledge. Now he desires that he should also acquire these blessings. This desire is not jealousy; it is "envy". When this desire is accompanied by a desire that these blessings possessed by others may be seized from them, then it becomes the sin of jealousy.

Three Degrees of Jealousy

There are three degrees of jealousy. The first degree is the springing in the heart of a desire that you may get the like of a blessing which another person possesses. It is better that you may get the blessing without depriving the other person of his possession. If this is not possible, then the blessing of the other person may be taken away from him and given to you. This is the first degree of jealousy. The second degree of jealousy is that the blessing in the possession of some other person may be snatched away from him and given to you. This degree consists of two aspects. Firstly, the blessing may be taken away from its owner and secondly, that it may be given to you. The third degree of jealousy is in the desire that the blessing may be taken away from its owner along with the status and honour which he is enjoying by virtue of this blessing, whether that the blessing is passed on to you or not. This is the worst and most heinous degree of jealousy. May Almighty Allah protect us all from this. *Aameen*!

The First soul that committed the sin of Jealousy

The first to take resort to the sin of Jealousy was Iblis (Satan) when Almighty Allah created Hazrat Adam علیه السلام He announced that He was going to appoint him His vicegerent. Thereafter He commanded the angels to prostrate themselves before Adam علیه السلام. Iblis felt offended at this command and refused to obey the command of prostration. Satan was thus the first to commit the sins of jealousy and pride.

The inevitable consequences of Jealousy

It is an inevitabel consequence of jealousy that if the victim of jealousy suffers from some harm or loss or faces

grief, the jealous person exults over the victim. Conversely, if the victim happens to receive some blessing in the form of money or success or in getting some important job, the jealous person feels annoyed and sad. Feeling pleasure at the distress of someone is called in the Arabic language (شماتت)

This is also a kind of jealousy. The Qur'an and the Ahadith have condemned this vice at many places. The Qur'an says:

اَمْ يَحْسُدُوْنَ النَّاسَ عَلٰى مَآ اٰتٰهُمُ اللّٰهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهٖ (سورة النساء: ٥٤)

This means: Or are they jealous of mankind because of that which Allah has bestowed upon them out of His bounty?

See how the jealous feels angry at Allah's grant and favour.

Two causes of Jealousy

There are two causes of the birth of this inner disease in a man. The first is the love of worldly wealth and property and status. It is a natural wish of a man to see himself in a respectable and dignified position. If another man supersedes him in the acquisition of wealth, property or status, the jealous fellow tries to bring him down. The second cause is hatred and malice. A man harbouring hatred and malice against anyone feels joy if the latter is afflicted with some distress, but feels offended and sad when the latter has some occasion of joy and satisfaction. A heart filled with these two vices must generate jealousy.

Jealousy leads to ruin both in this world and in the Hereafter

Jealousy is so dangerous an inner disease that not only does it destroy man's Hereafter but it also leads to destruction of man's interests and affairs in this world. Obviously a man wishing ill of others is always afflicted with mental torture and suffocation, particularly when he finds someone advancing towards success and happiness, which affects the health of the jealous person adversely.

The Jealous man keeps burning in the fire of his jealousy

Jealousy is just like fire. It is a natural property of fire that it eats up its fuel like wood or grass as long as it is available. When this fuel is exhausted, the fire begins to eat its own other parts until the fire gets extinguished. Exactly like this is the fire of jealousy. The man addicted to jealousy first tries to harm others with his jealousy, when he is unable to harm others, he perishes by burning internally in the fire of his own jealousy.

Remedy for the disease of Jealousy

The man suffering from the diesease of Jealousy should realize the truth that Almighty Allah has distributed His blessings in the world according to His wisdom and dispensation. If He has granted the blessing of wealth to one person, He has granted the blessing of good health to another eprson. Again, if He has granted the blessing of honour and dignity to one person, He has granted the blessings of beauty and charm, peace and tranquillity to other persons. There is no man in this world who has not been granted some blessings to enjoy or has not been afflicted with some distress and diseases

from which he is suffering.

The Three Worlds

Almighty Allah has created in this Universe three worlds. One world is the world of Paradise which is full of endless bliss, joy and luxuries. There is no place in Paradise for distress, pain disease, worry and sorrow. May Allah admit all of us into it *Aameen*!

The second world is totally opposed to Paradise and that is Hell. It is full of grief, distress torment and all forms of torture and punishment. It has no trace of ease and comfort. May Allah protect us all from this world of torture, trial and tribulation. *Aameen.*

The third world is the world on which we live. It is a world which is a combination of the first and the second worlds. It has in it happiness as well as sorrow, comfort as well as trouble, and honour as well as disgrace. There is none in this world who can say that he has never had in his life any difficulty or trouble. There is also none here who can claim that he has never tasted in his life ease and comfort, joy and bliss. In this world every joy is tampered by sorrow and every sorrow is seasoned with a taste of joy. Totally pure and unmixed comfort and joy or distress and sorrow cannot be conceived in this world.

Who enjoys real comfort?

Almighty Allah has created this world with His wisdom and His own scheme of dispensation. He has distributed in this world different bounties to different persons, out of wealth, health, respect and honour, etc. Now the wealthy man is jealous of the healthy man and the latter is jealous of the former, grudging each other's gift. This distribution is indeed according to Allah's

Decree and depends on divine decision. Nobody can say who is really happy and who is sad; who is at ease and who is in trouble. We see that there is a mill-owner, possessing many bungalows, luxurious cars, servants and workers. On the other side there is the poor labourer who labours hard from morning till evening for scanty wages with which he makes both ends meet with great difficulty. This labourer will covet the luxurious life of the mill-owner. If we peep into the inner lives of the two we shall find that all is not gold that glitters and the reality is quite different from what it appears. For example, the mill-owner with all his wealth, bungalows, cars and attendants cannot sleep in his bed without taking sleeping pills. He has all the delicacies of food beautifully arranged on his dinning table, but he is not able to enjoy even a few morsels, because he is sufering from ulcer and has been advised by the physicians to abstain from rich foods. Now see, a rich man having all the comforts and luxuries of life can enjoy neither food nor sound sleep. As compared with this mill-owner, the poor labourer who, having worked hard for eight tedious hours, eats his fill the coarse food available to him and falls into sweet sleep. He gets up from his sleep after eight or ten hours. Now consider which of the two is happy and comfortable? Who is enjoying true and peaceful comforts? If you look closely into this situation, you will see that, while Allah bestowed upon the mill-owner all worldly resources and luxuries, He bestowed real peace and comfort upon the poor labourer. As already pointed out, these are all dependent on Allah's Decree and dispensation.

Sustenance is one form of blessing and to benefit by it is another form

My respected father, Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه once advised us to recite the following *Du'a* (supplication) after taking meals:

الحمد لله الذى اطعمنى هذا ورزقنيه من غير حول منى ولا قوة، غفرله ما تقدم من ذنبه (ترمذى شريف، ابواب الدعوات، باب مايقول اذا فرغ من الطعام، حديث نمبر ٣٥٢٣)

This means: All praise is for Allah Who has made me eat this food and has provided it for me without any effort and labour on my part. All his past sins (i.e. the minor ones only) will be forgiven who recites this *Du'a* after taking meals. (Tirmizie .... Hadith No: 3523)

Thereafter, my respected father رحمة الله عليه told us that in this narrative the Holy Prophet ﷺ has uttered two words, each separately. The one is رزقنيه (He has granted me this sustenance) and the other اطعمنى (He has made me eat it) When both the words have almost the same meaning, a question arises as to why they have been mentioned separately. Then he himself answered the question. He said that availability of sustenance is one independent blessing and the ability to eat that sustenance is another independent blessing. Sometimes all sorts of delicious foods are available in the house together with choicest fruit, but there is no appetite because of indigestion and because the physician has advised against eating anything. In such a situation رزقنا (He has granted me the sustenance) holds good but اطعمنا (He has made me eat it) does not hold good. Allah has granted sustenance but has not gratned the ability to eat it, as there is disorder in the digestion.

Anyway, Allah has distributed His bounties among His creatures, differing from individual to individual, not at random but according to a pre-planned scheme and measure.

Allah's Decree

To get rid of the sin of jealousy, the jealous person should consider calmly that if Allah has gratned some valuable blessing to a man which is the cause of jealousy, how many blessings the jealous person has been granted which the other person has not been granted. It is just possible that the jealous person has been granted better health or beauty and charm which the other man has not been granted. Allah's dispensation and providence are not at random; they are based on a pre-ordained divine plan. Thinking on these lines will mitigate the pressure of jealousy.

An Urdu proverb

There is a very common proverb of the Urdu language which means: Allah does not provide finger-nails to a bald-headed, so that he may not injure his head by scratching it with the nails. Likewise, it is just possible that if a man was given wealth in a large measure, he was liable to expose himself to punishment by the misuse of that wealth. If Allah does not grant anyone the blessing of wealth, this is in view of some justification known to Allah. Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا مَافَضَّلَ اللّٰهُ بِهٖ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلٰى بَعْضٍ (سورة النساء:٣٢)

And do not covet the bounties in which Allah has made some of you excel others. (4:32)

The reason for the command that you should not

covet the blessings which Allah has granted to some and withheld from some others is that it is Allah alone Who Knows the wisdom of His dispensation. It is quite possible that if you are granted what you wish, it may not be beneficial for you and may be harmful to you. You should, therefore, always think that the distribution of blessings made by Allah is according to the Divine Decree. To be jealous of anyone for what he has been gratned is to challenge Allah's Decree. This is due to ingorance. It is quite possible that the jealous person may have some blessing which the other person may not have been granted.

Look at the blessings in your possession

The cause of this vice lies in man's tendency to look at others instead of looking into his own position. He does not take into account the many blessings of Allah granted to him nor does he render thanks to Allah for these grants. Instead, he looks with a jealousy on what has been granted to others. If man forms the habit of looking at the countless bounties being showered upon him from morning till evening, he will have no jealousy.

Look of those who are below and inferior to you

Now in our society people have become very fond of making research and investigation in respect of others' affairs. For example, we are always trying to find out how such and such person is receiving large amounts of money, is building a large house and purchasing a car and so on so forth. As a result of this investigation if we find something attractive with someone, the instinct of jealousy is excited. To ward off such a situation, it is necessary to follow the maxim which has been mentioned earlier and is reproduced below.

"In worldly matters always look at those who are below you and inferior to you. In matters relating to Deen (Faith) always look at those who are above you and superior to you."

Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه and comfort

Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه has related that he lived for a long time in the sector of the rich and had neighbourly relations with them. During those days none was more dejected and sorrowful than myself. Everyone that he saw he found that his clothes, carriage, house, etc. were much better than those of his own. This had placed me in an inferiority complex. Afterwords I changed residence and shifted to the sector of the poor. I lived among those poor people and had intimate dealings with them. This change brought relief to me. Here the situation was just the opposite. I saw that everyone else in that sector was below and inferior as regards clothes, conveyance and house, etc. were concerned. Consequently Allah granted me heartv comfort and satisfaction.

Desires are endless

Remember that if anyman desires to collect the resources of the world, there will be no end to his desire. The more he collects the more he will hanker for them, as says the Persian line:

کارِ دنیا کسے تمام نہ کرد

There is none who has been able to satisfy his desires for the worldly resources.

Go to the richest man of the world and ask him if he has acquired all his desired objects. He will reply that he requires a great deal more. He will desire to add more and

more to his worldly possessions. The famous Arabic poet Mutanabbi has said something very wise about this world:

وما قضى احد منها لبانته
ولا انتهى ارب الا الى ارب

(ديوان متنبى. قافية الفاء، قال يرثى اخت سيف الدولة صفحه ٤٨)

This means: So far nobody could fill his belly with worldly riches. As soon as a wish is fulfilled, another wish arises.

This is because every wish gives rise to another wish. Similarly, every need gives rise to another need.

This is Allah's Dispensation

How far and how long will you go on committing the sin of jealousy at the blessings and possessions of others? You are sure to find men around you who are superior to you in one blessing or another. The best course open to you is to reflect that this is Allah's dispensation which Allah has made according to His wisdom and expedience which we cannot understand. Our range of reflection and thinking is very much limited as compared to Allah's wisdom. It encompasses the entire universe. It is He who decides how to distribute the bounties among the people; whom to grant a beauty and from whom to withhold it. If man reflects on this, the tendency to jealousy will be eradicated.

Another remedy for the disease of jealousy

There is another very efficacious remedy for the disease of jealousy. The patient of jealousy should think that his desire that someone's blessings should be snatched away from him has always the opposite effect. On the other hand the victim of jealousy stands to gain in this world as well as in the Hereafter. When you have made him your enemy he

will, by the law of nature, be happy at your grief and distress. When you are in trouble and grieved on account of your jealousy, your enemy will be pleased with your sad plight. This is your enemy's gain in this world. As regards his gain in the Hereafter, the more you are jealous of him the more the balance of his good deeds will increase in the Record of his Deeds. As he has been wronged by your jealousy, his rank in the Hereafter will be raised. It is an inevitable characteristic of jealousy that it incites man to backbiting, finding fault, slandering and many other grievous sins. The result is that the good deeds of the jealous person are snatched away from him and credited to the balance of deeds of the victim of jealousy. Thus, the more you are jealous of him, the more you add to his good deeds. If a jealous man commits jealousy throughout his lifetime, he will lose all his good deeds to the benefit of the victim of jealousy.

An event that happened with a saint

Once a visitor told a saint that such and such person was speaking ill of him. The saint kept quiet and did not say anything in reply. At the end of the meeting when the saint went home, he arranged to send a valuable gift to the man who was reported to have spoken ill of him. The people asked the saint to tell them the reason for this strange dealing. The saint satisfied them by saying: He is my well-wisher, spekaing ill of me he has enhanced the balance of my good deeds. Thus he has done me good and I should repay that good. He has helped me in the Hereafter by increasing my good deeds and I have compensated him for this in this world by sending him some gifts.

Imam Abu Hanifah's refraining from Backbiting

It is well-known that none could commit backbiting in the assemblies of the Imam رحمة الله عليه. The Imam neither himself indulged in backbiting, nor did he listen to backbiting. His asemblies always remained free form this sin. One day Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه was explaining to his pupils the vices of backbiting. He told them that backbiting is such a grievous sin that it results in the transfer of the good deeds of the backbiter to the account of the victim of backbiting. That is why, said the Imam, he did not backbite anyone. If he were to backbite anyone he would backbite his own parents, so that the parents could receive benefit from the Imam's good deeds.

In this account, there is an indication that according to his belief the backbiter is wishing ill of others, but he is actually benefitting the victim of his backbiting in this world as well as in the Hereafter. At the same time he is causing harm to himself and putting at stake his own interests. How foolish is it then to indulge in backbiting!

Another event concerning Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه

Hazrat Sufyan Sauri رحمة الله عليه was a contemporary of Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه. Both used to hold assemblies to deliver lectures and sermons. Once someone asked Hazrat Sufyan Sauri رحمة الله عليه of his opinion about Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه. Hazrat Sufyan Sauri رحمة الله عليه told him that the Imam was a great miser. The man said with surprise that the Imam was renowned to be a very generous saint. Hazrat Sufyan Sauri said: the Imam is so miserly that he is not ready to pass on any of his good deeds to others, yet he secures for himself the good deeds of others. How does it happen? People backbite him and

speak ill of him. As a result, their good deeds are transferred to the Imam's account. As for himslef, neither he backbites, nor does he listen to anyone's backbiting. Thus he does not forego any of his good deeds in favour of others. So, from the point of the Hereafter, there is none more miser than he رحمة الله عليه

In fact the man who backbites, or is jealous of anyone is transferring his good deeds to the victim of his backbiting and jealousy by depleting his own stock of good deeds.

Who is a real Pauper

It occurs in a Hadith that once the Holy Prophet ﷺ asked his Companions رضی الله عنهم: Who is a pauper. The Noble Companions رضی الله عنهم replied: A pauper is one who has no money. He ﷺ said: He is not a real pauper. A real pauper is one who leaves this world with a large collection of good deeds including prayers, fasts, Allah's rememberance, etc. When on the Day of Judgment he shall stand before Allah to render accounts, he shall find a large crowd of men demanding compensation from him for thier rights which this man had usurped. As is well-known, there will be no currency note in the Hereafter to pay off debts. The currency of the Hereafter is the good deeds of a man. Allah shall command that the good deeds of the man may be passed on to the claimants. As a result of this command, one man will take away his prayers, another one his fasts, someone will take away his remembrance and rehearsals, etc., and all his good deeds will beocme exhausted, yet their claims against this man will still remain unpaid. In such a situation Allah will command that the claims of the creditors may be paid off by adding to his account the sins of the claimants. When he appeared on the scene his Record of Deeds was full of

good deeds, but at the time of leaving the place not only is the bag of his good deed emp , but he is taking with him the burden of sins committed by others. Therefore, this man is a real pauper. (Tirmizi..... Hadith No: 2533)

If Allah bestows, by His mercy upon anyone a heart clean and spotless like a mirror, altogether free from the filth of jealousy, malice, grudge and backbiting, he will be raised to a very high rank, even though he may not have in his Record of Deeds many optional prayers and virtues of remembrance and rehearsal, etc.

Glad tidings of Paradise

Hazrat Abdullah bin Amr bin al-As رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that once they were sitting in the Prophet's mosque with the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He ﷺ said: The man who will enter the mosque from this side will be an inmate of Paradise. When they looked that way, a man soon entered the mosque, while ablution water was dripping form his face and he was holding his shoes in his left hand. The Companions رضی اللہ عنہم very much envied him that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had given the glad tidings that he shall enter Paradise. At the end of the assembly Hazrat Abdullah bin Amr bin al-As رضی اللہ عنہ desired to see from a near distance the fortunate man. He wanted to find out his actions on account of which the Holy Prophet ﷺ had given the glad tidings that he would enter Paradise. So when the man was returning home Hazrat Abdullah رضی اللہ عنہ also followed him. On the way Hazrat Abdullah رضی اللہ عنہ asked the man for permission to live with him for two or three days. The man gave him permission. At night when Hazrat Abdullah رضی اللہ عنہ went to his bed he did not sleep at all, in order to observe the actions of that man. He saw that he did not get up at night for the *Tahajjud* prayer; he got up only for the *Fajr* prayer. Even in

the day he did not do any particular act in the form of *Nawafil* (optional prayers) remembrance, etc. He, however, used to resort to the mosque for his five time regular prayers. Hazrat Abdullah رضی اللہ عنہ did not observe any particular act from him. However, he told him how the Holy Prophet ﷺ had given for him glad tidings for Paradise. He was glad to hear this and admitted that he did not devote himself to any special act of worship. He, however, told Hazrat Abdullah رضی اللہ عنہ that he never harboured any hatred, malice or jealousy against anybody. It occurs in certain narratives that it was Hazarat Sa'd bin Waqas رضی اللہ عنہ who had been given advance information about their being inmates of Paradise.

His gain and My loss

You have seen that there was nothing special in the actions of the Companion رضی اللہ عنہ mentioned above. He had no *Nawafil* and acts of remembrance in his record. He, however, maintained his heart clean like a mirror, free from all traces of jealousy malice and grudge, etc. So far as jealousy is concerned, the jealous person should think that the victim of his jealousy is considerably gaining, while he is going in great loss. This trend of thought is expected to diminish the malady of jealousy.

A third remedy for the disease of jealousy

As has already been mentioned, the root cause of jealousy lies in the love of the world and of worldly power and pelf. The third remedy, therefore, consists in man's banishing from the love of the world and of worldly power and pelf, pomp and show. To be able to do this man should keep in view that this world is short-lived and transitory and he may die any time without prior notice. He shall enter the

world of the Hereafter, leaving behind all his wealth, honour, dignity pelf and power, pomp and show. His salvation will depend only on his good deeds and freedom from visible sins as well as inner. These are the three remedial steps by which man can get rid of this malady.

Two kinds of jealousy

An important point to be noted here that after Knowing the vices of jealousy, sometimes it occurs to the mind that the malady of jealousy is born in the heart unintentionally. When a man sees that some of his colleagues, friends or companions are promoted and made to supersede others, then an urge of jealousy and grudge arises spontaneously that the man has risen in status and remuneration. This happens all of a sudden and quite innocently without any pre-planning. How to ward off such a situation?

Note carefully that one kind of jealousy is that the jealous person desires that the blessing which a person has been granted may be taken away from him. Along with this desire, the jealous person speaks ill of the person concerned and tries to find fautls with him in meetings of his friends and colleagues. He does this in orer to degrade his victim in the sight of others. He also desires in various ways that the victim of jealousy may be deprived of this blessing. This kind of jealousy is totally unlawful and forbidden.

Sometimes an urge to jealousy arises in the heart, but the jealous person does not express this urge to anyone, either by words or by signs or actions, nor does he speak ill of the victim nor backbite him. He also neither desires nor acts that the blessing may be snatched from its owner. He only feels a pinch at the grant of the blessing to his colleauge. In reality this too is the sin of jealousy, but

it can be overcome with a little care.

Seek pardon atonce

When the pinch of jealousy is born, one should at once condemn it as something too heinous and seek Allah's pardon for it. It should be attributed to the seduction of the self and Satan and considered as an evil. Thus, when the urge of jealousy is accompanied with the pinch of its evil also, the sin will be washed off.

Pray for the victim of jealousy

Our saintly elders have advised when you get jealous and envious on someone's blessing, pray to Allah in favour of the victim of his jealousy. No doubt you will find it very painful and piercing to indulge in such a prayer, yet it must be done without prejudice. At the same time you must pray to Allah for yourself that may Allah relieve you of the evil of jealousy. In short, one must do these three things:

1- Condemn exclusively the pinch you get at one's blessing and the desire that it may be lost from its owner.
2- Pray in favour of the victim of jealousy that Allah may preserve his blessing and grant him more.
3- Pray to Allah in your own favour that He may, by His mercy, purify your heart from the sin of jealousy.

Even after taking these three steps, if the urge to jealousy is felt unintentionally and spontaneously, it is hoped that Almighty Allah shall not call you to account for this. On the other hand, if you do not condemn the urge as an evil, nor do you try to resist it and atone for it, the sin may not be pardoned.

A clarification about usurpation of Rights

It has been repeatedly mentioned that it is easy to discharge those rights which are due to Allah. Pardon for them can be obtained by repentance and seeking forgiveness from Allah. As regards rights due to the servants of Allah and wrongs done to them, they cannot be excused merely through repentance, unless the claimants excuse them or the wrongs done are made good.

If you express by your tongue the urge of jealousy against anyone and backbite the victim of jealousy or do something to harm him, this will beocme an offence and a wrong against a servant of Allah. The offence of the wrong will not be remitted, unless the victim pardons it. On the other hand, if a man feels jealous of anyone but keeps it in his heart and does not disclose it to anyone, nor does he take any practical steps to deprive the victim of his blessing, then in such a situation the sin of jealousy is between the jealous man and Allah. It can be forgiven by Allah after repentance. The jealous person should, therefore, understand that as long as the sin remains concealed, it is easy to have it pardoned and made good. If the sin crosses this limit, then it becomes an offence against the servant of Allah and it becomes almost an impossibility to secure forgiveness for it.

It is also not good to go on envying anyone too far

As has been mentioned just now, if there is no desire in the heart that someone is deprived of his blessing, but the jealous man only desires that he too may be granted that blessing, then this is called envy. Although this does not come within the definition of jealousy. Yet to ponder over it too much leads one to jealousy gradually. If anyone envies another person for his wealth and property, this too is not

desirable, because "envy" sometimes begets in the heart a lust for wealth and property and thus "envy" turns into jealousy.

It is good to envy anyone in the matter of *Deen*

If the urge to envy is born on account of enthusiasm for *Deen* (Faith), this is desirable. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith:

"لا حسد الافی اثنتین، رجل اتاه الله مالا فسلط علی هلکته فی الحق ورجل اتاه الله الحکمة، فهویقضی بها ویعلمها" (صحیح بخاری کتاب العلم، باب الاغتباط فی العلم والحکمة، حدیث نمبر ۷۳)

(Jealousy) has been used in this Hadith in the sense of envy. In fact envy is permitted in two things. It is good to envy that person whom Allah has favoured with wealth and he spends it in the path of Allah and deposits the reward for the sake of his salvation in the Hereafter. This man is worthy of being envied for his righteousness. The second is that man whom Allah has favoured with knowledge and he is spreading the light of his knowledge and learning with his speeches and writings. He is himself doing good deeds and is including others to do the same. Those who are impressed by his preaching and teaching and begin to follow *Deen* will thus reform themselves. Their reward for all good deed will also be added to the account of this second man. It is desirable to envy a righteous man in his righteousness and try to surpass him.

Envy is not desirable for the sake of the world

It is, therefore, not desirable to envy anyone, because he has much wealth and property and worldly honour and dignity. Envying one another too much in such worldly pelf and power ultimately creates lust which

may in turn, give birth to jealousy. This trend needs to be discouraged. If such a thought ever occurs this should be dismissed by recollecting that if one person has been granted one blessing another person has been granted another blessing and Allah's dispensation is based on wisdom and justice. If you have not been granted some bounty it is in your own interest, although you may not uderstand the secret of it which is known only to Allah. If that blessing had been bestowed upon you, it is not unlikely that it might have brought to you some misfortune.

May Allah help us understanding these poitns and principles about jealousy and save us from its curses. *Aameen*!

A Shaikh and Guardian is needed

As I have mentioned repeatedly, it is necessary to secure the services of a spiritual physician or a Shaikh to get rid of the inner diseases like immorality, pride, jealousy, etc. The physician examines his patient and explains to him the nature of fever, its causes and the medicines to cure it. The patient may preserve these details in his memory when the patient has an attack of fever can he treat his fever with the medicines and the method of treatment he has preserved in his memory? Certainly he cannot do so. The symptoms differ from time to time and from patient to patient and he may misjudge in the selection of the medicines.

Just like the open physical diseases, are the inner spiritual diseases like hypocrisy, jealousy, malice, and pride. You have been told the reality of these diseases. When a man catches any one of these inner diseases he should submit himself for treatment to an experienced physician of inner diseases and tell him frankly the details of his disease

to enable him to prescribe the correct treatment.

Sometimes it so happens that a man has no disease, yet he thinks that he is a patient, suffering from some disease. Conversely, sometimes a man thinks that he is hale and hearty, but in reality he is a sick person. Sometimes the sick person takes a wrong treatment other than the treatment needed to cure his disease. Basically it is necessary to seek the services of a Shaikh for the treatment and cure of his inner disease and follow his advice in the minutest details.

May Almighty Allah help us all in taking the right course. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi
Date : 24th September, 1993.

THE VALUE OF DREAMS IN THE LIGHT OF *SHARI'AH*

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم، بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم.

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لم يبق من النبوة الا المبشرات قالوا: وما المبشرات قال الرؤيا الصالحة

(صحيح بخارى، كتاب التعبير، باب المبشرات حديث نمبر ٦٩٩٠)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him. We seek His help and His pardon. We believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our selves and from the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom He lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god except Allah, the One. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our master, our authority, our Prophet and our sire, Muhammad ﷺ, is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah send mercy on him, his household and his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم and bless them and salute them all a great deal.

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: The chain of Prophethood has terminated for ever and nothing of it has remained, except the "*Mubash-shirat*" (مبشرات). The Companions asked: O Messenger of Allah! what are *Mubash-shirat*? The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied, saying: True dreams - they announce glad tidings and form a part of Prophethood. The Holy Prophet ﷺ also said in another Hadith that a believer's dream is one forty-sixth part of Prophethood.(Sahih Bukhari ..... Hadith No: 68987)

True Dreams are a part of Prophethood

When the time of the Holy Prophet's ﷺ commission as a Prophet drew near, in the beginning he ﷺ did not receive any *Wahi* (Revelation) for about six months. During this period he had only true dreams. It occurs in the Ahadith

that whenever he ﷺ had a dream during this period, it came true and clear as day light. This continued for about six months till he began to receive the *Wahi* (Revelations). After his appointment as a Prophet he ﷺ lived in this world for twentythree years. Out of these twentythree years, the period of the first six months was a period of true dreams only. By multiplying twentythree by two (23x2), we get fortysix (46). In other words if we divide the period of Prophethood by fortysix, we get six months during which the Holy Prophet ﷺ had only true dreams, and no *Wahi*. On this hypothasis the Holy Prophet ﷺ said that a believer's dream forms the forty-sixth part of Prophethood. There is also an indication that this process would continue after him ﷺ. The believers will have true dreams containing glad tidings. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has also said in a Hadith that during the period close to the Day of Judgment, the Muslims will generally have true dreams. All this goes to prove that dreams too are a blessing of Almighty Allah through which men receive glad tidings. So, if anyone receives some glad tidings through a dream he should render thanks to Almighty Allah.

Two opinions about Dreams

In our society people entertain extreme opinions about dreams. There are some who do not believe in the existence of true dreams,nor do they believe in the truth of their interpretation. This is not right.You have just now learnt that, according to a Hadith, true dreams form fortysixth part of Prophethood and that they are announcers of glad tidings. On the other extreme there are men who attach great importance to dreams and regard them as a means to salvation and superiority. Men place their trust in a person who happens to have a true dream. Sometimes the

person having true dreams thinks about himself that he has become a great saint. These dreams come upon men during sleep. Sometimes Almighty Allah shows his servants some sights during their waking time. In the mystic terminology this is "*Kashf*", meaning ability to see hidden things through spiritual light. If someone by chance has "*Kashf*" the common people think that the man is a great saint, even though this man may not be following the path of the *Sunnah* during his waking hours. Bear in mind that the criterion of a man's superiority and righteousness does not lie in dreams and "*Kashf*". The real criterion for this depends on whether or not a man's living is according to the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. If a man's living during his waking hours is not according to the *Sunnah*, if he is not refraining from sins, nor is he obeying Allah, he is not a righteous person, whatever the numbers of supernatural feats displayed at his hands. Nowadays people have become awfully misguided in this matter. This display of miraculous or supernatural feats is considered an inseparable part of the mystic system of spiritual education and training. Ignorant men are always hankering after true dreams, disclosure of hidden secrets (*Kashf*) and supernatural performances.

The status of Dreams

Hazrat Muhammad bin Sireen رحمة الله عليه has been one of the most dignified *Tabi'een* (followers of the Companions). He was considered as Imam in the art of interpreting the meaning of dreams. There is no equal in this field among the entire Muslim *Ummah*. He had been endowed by Allah with an outstanding faculty for the interpretation of dreams. Many wondedrful feats are related about him in this field. A very small and meaningful sentence from him about interpreting dreams

is worth remembering. He رحمة الله عليه has said:

الرؤياتسر ولا تغر

This means: Dream is a phenomenon which should be pleasing but it should not throw anyone into deception.

If a man has a true dream, he should not be tempted to think that he has become a very accomplished saint, so as to become, in turn, unmindful of the duties to be discharged during his waking hours.

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه and interpretation of Dreams

Many persons visited Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه to inquire of him the interpretation of their dreams. In reply Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه generally recited this Persian couplet:

نہ شبم نہ شب پرستم کہ حدیث خواب گویم
من غلام آفتابم ہمہ ز آفتاب گویم

"I am neither the night nor the worshipper of the night that I should tell things about dreams. I am the slave of the sun (the Holy Prophet ﷺ) and can speak only about the sun. If a man has a true dream with some glad tidings he should be grateful to Allah, because he may possibly get the blessing of the dream. One should, however, not take dreams as a criterion for superiority and saintliness."

Hazrat Mufti Sahib رحمة الله عليه and *Mubash-shirat* (that brings glad tidings)

There are many persons who used to have dreams about my respected father رحمة الله عليه. They used to intimate their dreams in writing. My respected father رحمة الله عليه had all these dreams recorded in a register. On the first page of this register he had himself written in his own handwriting

the following paragraph.

"In this register I am recording those dreams which the righteous servants of Allah have seen about me. I am recording them because they contain glad tidings and good omen. May Allah correct me by virtue of these dreams. I am, however, warning all readers that they are not a criterion for superiority and righteousness. No decision should be taken about me on the basis of these dreams. The real criterion is the acts and dealings of man during his waking hours. Men should not fall into deception on account of these dreams.

The intention from recording this was to save people from falling into deception. This is the reality of dreams. When a man has a happy dream, he should thank Allah and pray to Him to turn the dream into reality and favour to him. He should have no misunderstanding about the dream either in his own favour or in the favour of any other person. This is all that a dream really means. There are two or three more Ahadith concerning dreams of which the people are not aware.It is useful to study these Ahadith also.

Satan cannot assume the image of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

عن ابی هریرة رضی الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم:

من رآنی فی المنام فقدر انی لایتمثل الشیطان بی

(صحیح مسلم، کتاب الرؤیا، باب قول النبی صلی الله علیه وسلم: من رآنی فی المنام)

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: Whoever sees me in a dream does really see me, as Satan cannot assume my image (Saheeh Muslim).

It is a great blessing for a man who sees by the grace of Allah the Holy Prophet ﷺ in a dream. A man who sees

the the Holy Prophet ﷺ in a dream in the image and form which have been described and stand proved in the Ahadith, surely sees only the Holy Prophet ﷺ and nobody else. Satan canot deceive anyone, because he cannot assume the Prophet's image. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has mentioned this as a special peculiarity concerning his ﷺ image and appearance before anyone in dream.

It is a great fortune to have a glimpse of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

By His grace, Almighty Allah grants many persons the good fortune of seeing the Holy Prophet ﷺ in dreams. Our elder saints have had different attitudes towards this blessing. The attitude of one group is that special efforts are made to get this opportunity by going through various spiritual exercises and disciplines which have been devised and prescribed for this purpose. For example, rehearsal of the sacred *Darood* so many times and certain other exercises on Friday nights are considered effective in this matter. There are other exercises and practices in vogue among the public for winning this fortune. If anyone indulges in these exercises and disciplines to win this blessing, there is no objection.

Where is the qualification for this "meeting"

There are some other saints who take a different attitude towards this issue. A gentleman used to visit my respected father رحمة الله عليه. Once he expressed to my father his burning desire to see the Holy Prophet ﷺ in a dream and asked him for some spiritual exercise for this. My father said to him: My dear brother, you are indeed a very ambitious man that you have this auspicious desire. I do not have the courage to entertain this desire, because I

think that I do not deserve this honour, I, therefore, never thought of learning and doing such exercises and disciplines to have a meeting with the Holy Prophet ﷺ in a dream. Even if I am graced with such a meeting how can I do full justice to the required etiquettes? That is why I did not aspire for the honour of this meeting. If Almighty Allah Himself graces me with this meeting it will be His great favour to me. In that case He shall teach me the requisite etiquettes also. However, just like any other believer, I too bear a desire for this. Anyway there have been varying attitudes towards this matter.

Hazrat Mufti Sahib and a visit to the sacred shrine of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

I have related to you this incident of my respected father even before. He told us that he could never approach the metallic network around the Prophet's shrine. He would not face the network but would stand close to a pillar in front of it. If there was a man he would stand behind him. One day he told us:

"Once it occurred to my mind that perhaps I was a callous-hearted man that I could not dare approach the sacred network of the Prophet's shrine, when the majority of the visitors reach it and thus attain nearness to the Prophet's ﷺ soul, which is a great blessing and honour. Thereafter, I felt as if I was hearing this voice coming from the shrine:

He who follows my *Sunnah* is close to me, even though he may be thousands of miles away from me. On the other hand, he who does not follow my *Sunnah* is far away from me, even if he is sticking to my network.

It is the deeds done during the waking hours that count

The real worth lies in following the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The true blessing consists in following the path of the *Sunnah*. This is the true criterion for nearness to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It is an act of audacity to go near and stick to the nets and be heedless of the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It is not good to hanker after these dreams, yet it is a blessing from Allah if they prove auspicious and bring some glad tidings. The main source of success and salvation depends on following the *Sunnah*. These dreams do not help in raising the rank of anyone nor do they help in earning reward of the Hereafter. So we should ameliorate, and take care of, our actions, conduct and behaviour during waking hours.

Let not a good dream deceive you

If anyone has a dream in which he finds himself strolling in the gardens of Paradise, it is a good omen, but he should not think that he has got a passport to Paradise and that he has been exempted from doing anything. This is a misleading notion. If after having a dream a man becomes more active in following the *Sunnah*, this is an indication that the dream was true and messenger of glad tidings. On the other hand if he becomes slack in his actions, he has been deceived by the dream.

What should be done if the Holy Prophet ﷺ commands in a dream to do something

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that, if anyone sees him ﷺ in a dream he truly sees him ﷺ, because Satan cannot assume the Prophet's image and form. If the Holy Prophet ﷺ commands during a dream for doing any deed

which does not contravene the injunctions of the *Shari'ah*, then the command should be obeyed with due care and attention. This dream should be regarded as genuine and true. To ignore the instructions received in this dream may prove to be inauspicious and harmful.

A dream does not serve as a proof in the matter of the *Shari'ah*

If in a dream the Holy Prophet ﷺ commands to do something which does not fall within the jurisdiction of the *Shari'ah*, it must be noted carefully that such a command received through a dream must not be acted upon. Almighty Allah has not ordained things seen in dreams to serve as proofs in issues concerning the *Shari'ah*. As regards the Ahadith which have come to us through authentic sources, the injunctions contained in them must be obeyed. It is not necessary to comply with injunctions received through dreams. It is right that Satan cannot assume the image of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, but sometimes the things seen in the dream get mixed with the dreamer personal thoughts or are distorted on account of his weak memory, so dreams do not serve as proofs.

A strange event concerning a dream

There was a Qazi (Judge) who used to decide cases referred to him for judgment. A case was submitted to him for decision. The Qazi heard the case, examined the witnesses and made up his mind about the final judgment to be announced in a day or two. In the meantime in the night he saw the Holy Prophet ﷺ in a dream. The Holy Prophet ﷺ did not, so felt the Qazi, concur in the Qazi's judgment but advised him to change his judgment. When the Qazi awoke from sleep and reconsidered the details of the case

thoroughly, he felt convinced that the Holy Prophet's judgment did not fit with the framework of the *Shari'ah*. The issue took a very serious turn. The Qazi could not decide what to do.

The Qazi called on the Caliph and told him in detail his predicament due to this strange dream. In order to resolve the difficulty, a meeting was arranged of all the Ulama of the capital and the problem was put before them. The Ulama feeling convinced of the genuineness of the dream were inclined to decide the case according to the direction of the Holy Prophet ﷺ received through the dream. A great savant and learned man of his age Hazrat Izzuddin bin Abdus Salam رحمة الله عليه was also present in the meeting. He was regarded as a *Mujaddid* of his time. He stood up and addressed the meeting as follows:

It is my considered opinion that the case should be decided according to the provision of the *Shari'ah*. I am in favour of a judgment which is according to the *Shari'ah*. I take all the responsibilities for the sins, if any, invovled in this judgment. It is not lawful to decide a case in the light of indications contained in a dream. We are required to obey only those directions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ which have come to us through reliable authorities. So, the case should be decided according to the injunctions of the *Shari'ah*, and not to the directions received in a dream.

Injunctions of the *Shari'ah* about Dreams and "*Kashf*", etc.

It requires a great courage of conviction to say: I take all responsibilities for sins, if any, invovled in this judgment. Allah, however, sends such brave and dauntless souls for the protection of His *Deen*. If it is accepted even once that the injunctions of the *Shari'ah* can be changed

through dreams, then the *Shari'ah* would go with the wind in no time. How many ignorant "*Pirs*" (guides) and "Professors" there are who claim miracles! The term "*Kashf*" means bringing to light hidden secrets by spiritual insight, but its authenticity is not recognized in the *Shari'ah*. So, the rules of the *Shari'ah* cannot be replaced or amended through these processes.

An event that happened to Hazrat Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jilani رحمة الله عليه

The Head of the saints, Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jilani رحمة الله عليه was one night busy with his worship. It was *Tahajjud* time. At this time a very dazzling light shone from one side and a voice emerged from it saying: O Abdul Qadir! you have done full justice to My worship. Now you have reached such a high station that from now onwards you are exempt from all sorts of worship for My sake. You are now exempt from *Prayers*, *Fasting*, *Hajj* and *Zakah*. Now do whatever you please. We have reserved Paradise for you. No sooner did Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jilani hear these words, than he replied to the voice in these words: Get lost! O accursed fellow. Neither the Holy Prophet ﷺ, nor his Noble Companions رضى الله عنهم were exempted from this prayer. How can I get exemption from it? With these words the Sheikh expelled Satan from his presence. A much brighter light shone in the wake of the earleir light from which His voice emerged: O Abdul Qadir! your learning came to your rescue today, otherwise with this strategem I have ruined many grand saints. If you had not possessed this learning you too would have been ruined to day. The Sheikh retorted, saying: O accursed Satan! you are deceiving me again! It was Almighty Allah and not my learning that saved me. The learned have observed that the second Satanic strategem

was more dangerous than the first one. In the second one Satan wanted to deceive him by trying to create in him the pride of learning. The Sheikh, however, was saved from this attack by Allah's mercy.

It is not lawful to refute a Hadith with a Dream

This is a very dangerous trend of a conduct. Nowadays people have become very fond of dreams, '*Kashf*', supernatural feats, revelations, etc. They do not care to know the requirements of the *Shari'ah*. Quite educated and religious persons have begun to claim that they have come to know by means of '*Kashf*' that such and such Hadith is not right and that certain Ahadith of Bukhari and Muslim were forged by the Jews. If '*Kashf*' is attained and interpreted in this way the very foundation of *Deen* shall be jolted. May Almighty Allah shower His mercy on those Ulama who were entrusted with the task of protecting our *Deen* and they proved true to the task. They are the protectors and defenders of *Deen*. These Ulama have declared in clear terms that neither dreams, nor '*Kashf*' nor supernatural feats can be regarded as proofs in matters concerning *Deen*. The basis of proof are those injunctions and directions which are proved to have been received from the Holy Prophet ﷺ during his waking hours and through authentic narratives. It is advised that we should not rely on dreams, '*Kashf*', revelations and supernatural feats. Hazrat Maulana Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has said that '*Kashf*' is a phonomenon which is sometime seen coming from madness and even infidels. So, we should never be deceived by experiences like beholding some light, "running" of the heart or its pulpitation, etc., etc. These things have absolutely no place and credence in the *Shari'ah*.

What should a Dreamer do?

Hazrat Qatadah رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: A good dream is from Allah and a bad dream is from Satan. So, when a man has a bad and undesirable dream he should make a spitting gesture on his left side three times and recite this:

اعوذ باللہ من الشیطٰن الرجیم

He should also change the side on which he was sleeping, while having the dream. Then this undesirable dream will do him no harm - God wiling. Some times man has a frightening or otherwise some disgustful dream. At such a time he must follow this advice of the Holy Prophet. If he has a pleasant dream with a promise of some worldly or spiritual promotion or gain he may inform his kins and wellwishers such dream and not to others. A careless stranger may give an incorrect interpretation and it is said that the first interpretation generally comes true which may turn harmful. The dreamer should, therefore, disclose the dream only to his well-wishers and should thank Almighty Allah for all that.(Sahih Bukhari..... Hadith No: 6986)

To pray for the man who has a dream

When anyone informed the Holy Prophet ﷺ of his dreams, it was his ﷺ routines practice to recite this *Du'a*:

خیراً تلقاہ وشراً توقاہ، خیرلنا وشرلا عدائنا

This means: May Allah grant you the good of this dream and protect you from its evil. May this be good for us and bad for our enemies.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has combined in this *Du'a* many good things. If anyone comes to you and tells you his dream, pray for him in these words. If you do not remember the

Arabic words you may recite it in your own mother tongue.

In short, these are the etiquettes, values and possible effects of dreams which should be kept in mind. We should keep away from false notions about dreams which are prevailing among the people.

May Almighty Allah save us all from these vices and help us to take the right course of *Deen. Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد للہ رب العالمین

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi
Date : 24th September, 1993.

SMARTNESS - A REMEDY FOR LAZINESS

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه، ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم، بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

والذين جاهدوا فينا لنهدينهم سبلناط وان الله لمع المحسنين (العنكبوت، ٦٩)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and seek his forgiveness and believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek

refuge with Him from the evils of our souls and from the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom He guides and there is none to guide him whom He lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah the One who has no partner. I also bear witness that our sire, and our authority and our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him, his household and his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم and bless them and salute them all in great abundance.

"As for those who strive in Us, We surely guide them to Our paths. Allah is indeed with the righteous. (29:69)

Cure Laziness with "Courage"

Recently I have been on tours to different cities of Burma. During these tours I had to address many gatherings, sometimes at the rate of five per day. By chance tomorrow I am booked for a visit to the Haramain Sharifaiyn (the two sacred Mosques). As a result of tiredness it occurred to me that there was no harm in missing my address on one Friday more when I had already missed it the last Friday on account of my foreign tours. At the same time I remembered an advice of Hazrat Doctor Abdul Hai Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. Once he said:

When you are feeling laziness in carrying out some routine practice, that is the very time of man's test. There are two alternatives. Surrender yourself to the feeling of tiredness and obey your self's demand. In such a situation you will become used to surrendering yourself to the demand of tiredness and laziness, until you become a

habitual sluggard.

The other alternative is that man should resist the attack of laziness with courage and do the job which he is inclined to put off on account of his laziness. As a result of this blessed effort on his part Allah will help him to carry out all his routine duties with ease and regularity.

These two Principles are the essence of *Tasaw-wuf* (Mysticism)

On such occasions Hazrat Dr. Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ used to read to us a statement of Hazrat Thanawi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ which is worth rememebring. Hazrat Thanawi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ often said:

"When you feel lethargic in obeying some command resist the lethargy and obey the command. Similarly, when you feel tempted to commit a sin, resist that temptation and refrain from that sin. This is the essence of *Tasaw-wuf* (mysticism). When you reach this stage nothing more is needed. This creates in the heart "relationship with Allah", then strengthens it and develops it.

Anyway, there is only one way of getting rid of laziness and that is to resist it with courage. It is wrong to think that the Sheikh shall prescribe for you some formula to cure laziness. Resistance is the only remedy to cure laziness.

Tempt the "self" to do the right work

Hazrat Dr. Abdu Hai Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ used to say that we should tempt and induce our "selves" to work. Thereafter, he related to us an incident of his own. He said: One day when I got up at night for the *Tahajjud* prayer, I felt very much depressed and lethargic. I was inclined to think that being advanced in age, indolent and tired there was no harm in missing the *Tahajjud* prayer,

one night, when it was neither obligatory nor compulsory. As against this, the Sheikh also thought: Although these excuses seem to be quite plausible, yet it is the blessed time when Allah accepts the supplications of his servants. When one-third of the night has passed, Allah's mercy descends on the earth and an announcement is made on behalf of Almighty Allah: Is there anyone to beg forgiveness that I may forgive him? I, therefore, thought that it was not proper to waste such precious hours. Then I addressed my "self" in this way. All right, do not offer the prayer, but get up and make some supplication, sitting on the bed, then fall into sleep again. I at once got up from sleep and began to make the supplication. During supplication I again tempted my "self" in this way: When you have disturbed your sleep, go to the latrine, clean yourself then sleep comfortably. After coming back from the latrine and cleaning myself I was disposed to perform ablution as supplication with ablution is more likely to be accepted by Allah. I, therfore, performed ablution, sat on my bedding and started *Du'a*. Then I told my "self" : The bedding is not a fit place for *Du'a* there. With this argumentation I dragged the "self" to the prayer-cloth. Then I made "intention" for two *Rak'ats* of *Tahajjud*.

The Sheikh told that in this way the "self" has to be tempted to take the right course and do its work. He advised further: When the "self" plays tricks with you, you should also play tricks with it. It is hoped that by the blessing of this strategem, Almighty Allah will assist us to take right course.

What will you do, if you receive a call from the President?

Hazrat Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to advise us on this issue in the following style:

You have drawn up a programme for your reciting the Qur'an and for the *Nawafil* (optional prayers), etc., but sometimes you are tempted to violate this programme on account of laziness . On such occasions you should try to train your "self". One way of doing this is to argue with it, saying: All right, this time you are feeling lethargic and you are not inclined to get up from your bed, but what will you do if you receive a message from the President of the country to call upon him, only because he wants to grant you a valuable prize or appoint you to a high post. Will you take the plea of laziness and tiredness on such an ocasion? Will you refuse to respond to the call, because you are feeling sleepy? There is hardly a man who will not be overjoyed at such an invitation and will not shake off his laziness to rush to receive the President's favour.

If the "self" responds to the Presidential call with the promptitude, it only means that there is no genuine excuse to respond to the call of Allah. You should consider for a while how promptly you are preparing to respond to the call of a worldly dignitary, i.e. the President, who is inviting you to receive a prize or a post, although he is himself extremely weak and helpless. On the other hand, the King of Kings, the Omnipotent, Creator, Nourisher, Provider, Giver and Snatcher is inviting you and you are making false excuses of laziness and tiredness to turn down His call. How unjust it is! If you try to cure the malady of laziness by thinking in this way, you can get rid of it.

Do not put off till tomorrow what you can do today

Sometimes a man feels inclined in his heart to do a good deed, but his "self" deceives him by suggesting that the good deed may be done "tomorrow". Beware that this

is the seduction of the "self". "Tomorrow" will never come. It is, therefore, necessary that you must do it today, rather immediately, what you propose to do tomorrow. It is not certain that you will get time or there will be the urge for doing the work tomorrow. None knows whether the circumstances will be favourable or you will be alive tomorrow. Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

وَسَارِعُوْٓا اِلٰى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمٰوٰتُ وَالْاَرْضُ ۙ

(سورۃ آل عمران:۱۳۳)

Rush to the forgiveness from your Lord and for a Paradise as wide as the heavens and the earth (3:133)

I was telling you that I was feeling tired today, but when I remembered these directions of my Sheikh رحمة الله عليه, I became active and courageous to present myself here before you.

I attend these meetings for my own gain

I come here for my own gain. Allah's servants assemble here with good intentions and desires. I too receive blessings from them. In fact, when the servants of Allah get together for the sake of *Deen* (Faith) at a place, they receive reflections of blessings from one another. I always attend these meetings with the intention of receiving my share of the blessings radiating from these pious men.

What is the use of those moments?

When Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه was confined to his death-bed, his physicians had strictly forbidden him to see, or talk to anyone. One day when he was lying down on his bed with his eyes closed, he suddenly looked up and desired to see Maulawi Muhammad Shafi

Sahib رحمة الله عليه ie., my respected father. Hazrat Thanawi Sahib رحمة الله عليه had entrusted to my father the compilation of "Ahkam-ul-Qur'an" in the Arabic language. When my father appeared before him رحمة الله عليه he said: you are compiling the "Ahkam-ul-Qur'an". Just now it has occurred to me that a certain injunction can be deduced from a certain verse of the Holy Qur'an which I have not seen anywhere earlier. When you come to that verse, you should include this injunction also. After having said these words he closed his eyes and lay down. Look here! The Sheikh is lying down on his death-bed, yet his mind is occupied with the Holy Qur'an and the explanation of its verses. After a short while he again opened his eyes and called for another person. When he came the Sheikh asked him to do something. When this process continued for sometime, the manager of the *Khanqah* (monastery) and a close friend of the Sheikh reminded him of the strict instructions of his physicians not to indulge in conversation. In reply the Sheikh said:

You are right, but I consider those mometns of life which are not spent on some body's service - are a waste.

Worldly High offices and Positions

The office of "serving humanity" is something very wonderful. May Almighty Allah create in us love for service. Try to become a public "servant" and serve humanity. Create in yourself an urge to serve others. Hazrat Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to explain the dignity of service by an example. It is very difficult to succeed in attaining a position you desire. It is not in your power to become the President of the country, or its Prime Minister, an Assembly member or any other similar high office. You cannot secure with ease a good post, unless you cross so many hurdles, like submitting applications, giving

written and oral tests, facing interviews and passing through so many other hurdles. If after crossing successfully all these hurdles you succeed in securing a post, you have to face the jealous eyes of many, their enmity and conspiracies, so that you may be deprived of the post secured with so many tests, trials and torments. Thus, it is neither in your power to attain a position, nor to maintain it.

Hazrat Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه offered to tell his disciples a high office which is easy to secure and also to maintain it. None shall be jealous of you, nor will anyone dispute with you about it, nor can anyone suspend or discharge you from it. It is the office of a خادم (servant). It is in your power to secure this office for which no application, no voting and no election is needed. None will envy you for this, nor dismiss you from this offie. So become a "servant" of your household, your wife, your children, your friends, acquaintances neighbours, and the pious men. Whatever you want to do, do it with the intention of service. If you are delivering a sermon, composing or compiling a book or doing any other work of general utitlity, do it with the motto of "service". The entire difficulty lies in being حاكم (the Master) but there is ease and comfort in being a 'servant'. The Sheikh himself claimed to be a 'servant' a servant of wife, children, disciples, and acquaintances. This is an 'office' which is to a great extent free from the whisperings of Satan. Self-esteem, pride and superiority complex are born in respect of offices which are regarded as grand from the worldly point of view. As regards the office of a 'servant', it has no trace of superiority and glamour. Therefore, try to secure this unprecedental 'office'.

The benefit of attending on Saints and Sheikhs

I was telling that today I was feeling tired and a bit indisposed. However, I suddenly remembered the directions of my Sheikh and I gathered courage to say something before this honourable gathering. This is one of the benefits of establishing and maintaining contacts with the pious saints. Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to favour us with his valuable advice on his own free will without any request from us. Now those directions are proving beneficial to us on one or the other occasion with suitable timings.

That topic become your property

Hazrat Dr Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say: some people want to commit to memory every word that is spoken in assemblies, but this is not always posisble. Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه related to his own case in the following words:

Whenever I was present in the assemblies of Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه I desired to write down the sayings of the Sheikh. Some persons did so, but I could not do that, because I was slow in writing. One day I complained to Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه that I could not write down his sermon nor could I commit them to memory. To this complaint of Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه replied: There is no need to write down my speech. Why do you not begin yourself to dictate your saying ? Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه was very much upset to hear this remark, as he did not feel that he was qualified for that Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه went on saying: If there is something true and is based on sound understanding and thinking which your heart has accepted then that becomes your property. It does not matter if you are not able to retain it in your memory word by word. It will recur to your memory in the nick of time and by the mercy of Allah you will be enabled to act upon it.

It is desirbale to attend meetings of righteous elders and to listen to their sermons. They pour into your ears useful and wise point of guidance and righteousness, which impress human mind and are revived in the memory on proper occasions.

To thrust points of advice into the ears

My respected father, Hazrat Dr. Shib and Maulana Masihullah Khan رحمة الله عليه were righteous God-fearing men. I had contacts with them. By virtue of my contacts with these saints of Allah I have been greatly benefitted. They thrust into my ears points of wisdom and piety of their own free will without any demand or request from my side. Thereafter, good points are revived to my memory on occasions when they are badly needed. It is a great blessing to attend meetings of elders and to listen to their sermons. Today these pious saints are not living amongst us but they have left behind their sermons, advices and directions in the form of written books. It is highly beneficial to study these books.

May Allah help us in maintaining our spiritual contacts with these godly men. *Aamen*

Difference between "Excuse" and "Laziness"

I advise you to resist laziness whenever it overpowers you and to complete your daily routine and acts of devotion at all costs. There is a difference between "Excuse" and "Lethargy" or "Laziness". If one misses some routine practice on account of some genuine excuse, there is nothing to worry. When Almighty Allah Himself does not take us to tasks for missing some routine practice on account of some genuine excuse or reason and has allowed concession for this omission who are we to impose any

compulsion in this behalf. So, if a routine is missed owing to a genuine excuse, there is no cause to regret.

For the sake of whom were you fasting?

While quoting a statement of Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه, Dr. Abdu Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه once said: A man fell sick during the month of Ramazan and had to give up fasting because of his sickness. This omission made him very sad. The Sheikh said that there was no occasion for sorrow and regret, as the man was not fasting for his own pleasure but was fasting for the pleasure of Allah. Allah has Himself given leave that fasting may be given up during sickness and compensated later on according to the rules of the *Shari'ah*.

It is possible to miss the Ramazan fasting or some other routine acts on account of genuine excuses recognized in the *Shari'ah*, e.g. sickness, journey, menses in women, or any other handicap arising from an injunction of the *Shari'ah*, e.g. attendance on parents during their sickness. There is no cause of regret in such situations. It is, however, not good to miss routine practices of *Deen* on account of carelessness and laziness.

The Remedy for Laziness

The only possible remedy for laziness is to resist it with courage. Leave no loop hole to overpower it. If we succeed in eradicating the disease of laziness and lethargy from our lives and become active and smart, we have done half the job. We have then to work hard to complete the other half.

May Almighty Allah assist us in facing and resisting laziness with courage. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram
Darul-Uloom,
Karachi

Date : 25th Ramadhan
After Zuhur Prayers

PROTECT YOUR GLANCES

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرحيم، بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

قُلْ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ يَغُضُّوْا مِنْ اَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوْا فُرُوْجَهُمْ ذٰلِكَ اَزْكٰى لَهُمْ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ خَبِيْرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُوْنَ. (سورة النور: ٣٠)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم وصدق رسوله النبى الكريم ونحن على ذالك من الشاهدين والشاكرين والحمدلله رب العالمين

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and seek his forgiveness and believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our souls and from the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom He guides and there is none to guide him whom He lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah the One who has no partner. I also bear witness that our sire, and our authority, our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him, his household and his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم and bless them and salute them all in great abundance.

(O Prophet!) Tell the believers to lower their glances and protect their private parts. This is purer for them. Indeed, Allah is Aware of what they do! (24: 30)

Casting evil glances a deadly disease

In this verse Almighty Allah has mentioned a deadly disease. This is a disease fraught with many vices. Many have become addicted to this sin from among those who sit in the company of Ulama and godly men, also religious men regular in their prayers and fasting. Today the situation has deteriorated to such an extent that when you go out, you find it very difficult to protect your eyes from evil glances. Wherever you turn, you will find captivating scenes from which it is difficult to shield the eyes.

The Reality of "evil glances"

"Evil glances" mean casting glances at women who are not closely related to you, particularly when the glances are amorous and lustful or are intended for enjoyment. It is also a sin to cast such covetous glances even at the pictures and photos of those gazing at whom falls within the definition of "evil glances". The sin of casting evil glances is a great hindrance in reforming human soul. Of all the conceivable sins it is the most damaging to man's spiritual and inner soundness. The reform of the inner self of man is almost inconceivable, unless control on glancing is attained. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith:

النظر سهم مسموم من سهام ابليس (مجمع الزوائد، ج۸ص ٦٣)

The glance is one of the poisoned arrows of Iblis. If anyone is hit by this poisonous arrow and fails to ward it off, it becomes very difficult for him to ameliorate his inner self. Of all the factors of destruction, the evil glances of the eye is the most effective.

You shall have to take this bitter dose

I have heard my Sheikh Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة اللہ علیہ saying: An evil glance is a fatal poison. If anyone desires to reform his inner self he will have to protect his glances from being misdirected. This is, however, a very difficult task, as you cannot find refuge anywhere. Wherever you turn you find violation of *Purdah*, nudity, lewdness, etc. It is very difficult for anyone to protect his eyes from forbidden glances. However, you have to take this bitter dose, if you want to taste the sweetness of *Eeman* and establish nearness with Almighty Allah and win His love to purify your inner self. You can make no headway in this field without taking this bitter dose. The dose is bitter only

in the beginning. When you get used to it, its bitterness turns into sweetness which you cannot afford to miss.

The coffee of the Arabs

The Arabs are very fond of coffee which they take in small cups specially made for it. When I was a small boy, an Arab Sheikh visited Karachi. My respected father went to see him and I also accompanied my father. It was the first time that I saw coffee which was served in small coffee-cups to all the guests. I thought that it might be sweet and tasteful drink, but as soon as I sipped a little of it I found it very bitter. As I could not spit the draught out in that meeting, I had to gulp it down with difficulty when it went down the throat, I felt its activating effect. Later on I had an opportunity to take it in one or two other meetings. Gradually I got used to it and now I find it very tasteful.

You will find it sweet and tasteful

Just like coffee which tastes very bitter in the beginning, but becomes very tasteful when one has become used to its exhilarating effect. May Almighty Allah grant all its sweetness. *Aameen.*

In the same way casting evil glances is also a very formidable task in the beginning, but when one gathers courage to protect himself, the task becomes easy and enjoyable. The taste of protecting the eyes from this sin becomes more enjoyable than that of polluting them by casting evil glances on forbidden scenes.

The eyes are a great blessings

Our eyes are a natural optical machine which Almighty Allah has conferred upon us by His mercy, without any request from our side. This is a blessing which we have

received from Allah free of charge and without any labour and cost. That is why, we do not value this invaluable blessing. If you want to get an idea of this God-given blessing go and ask those who are born blind or have lost their eyes or eyesight through some disease or accident. If something adverse happens to the eyes, the unfortunate victim will like its restoration at any cost. This is indeed a very delicate machine the like of which none has invented so far.

Seven miles' journey in one moment

I had read in a book that the pupil of the eye expands in darkness and contracts in light. When a man goes into darkness or enters light the pupil expands or contracts respectively during this process of expansion and contraction the muscles of the eye travel at the speed of seven miles per moment, but man does not feel this tremendous speed. So these eyes are such a wonderful blessing of Allah.

Right use of the eyes

If you put this blessing of the eyes to its right use, Allah has promised to reward you. For example, if you cast on your parents loving glances, you will, according to a Hadith, get recompense equal to that for performing one *Hajj* and one *Umrah*. It occurs in another Hadith that when a husband enters his house and he and his wife both east on each other loving glances then Almighty Alalh casts on both of them His glance of mercy. When the eyes are put to the right use then not only does Allah grant joy and happiness, but He also grants them reward and compensation in the Hereafter. On the other hand, if they use their eyes in looking at forbidden scenes and objects then the torment for this is also very severe. In addition,

this evil act destroys the integrity of man internally.

Remedy for recovery from the disease of casting evil glances

There is only one way to get rid of the vice of casting evil glances. Be firm and courageous to resolve and you shall never cast your glances at forbidden scenes and objects. Having so resolved, stick to it with fortitude:

آرزوئیں خون ہوں، یا حسرتیں برباد ہوں
اب تو اس دل کو بنانا ہے ترے قابل مجھے

This Urdu couplet means: I have resolved firmly that I shall make my heart worthy of Allah, however, seriously this resolution may frustrate my wishes and aspirations

Save the eyes from the sin of casting evil glances with courage and firm resolution. If you do this you will receive Allah's assistance in your resolution. Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has suggested some measures to save ourselves from the sin of casting evil glances. He رحمة الله عليه has said:

If a man comes across a woman and the "self" incites him to cast a glance at her, because you will not go beyond this glancing. It should be understood well that this is a deception of the "self". Safety lies if the "self" is not obeyed. (Aufas-e-Eesa, Pt-I, P-142)

To think that there is no harm in casting a glance is Satan's deception. The only remedy is to resist this temptation and deception and turn the glance away from forbidden scene.

Remedy for the cure of lustful thinking

Once Hazrat Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه advised us to banish from our minds lustful thoughts in this way. When a very strong urge is born to cast an evil glance on some forbidden scene or object, imagine that your father is

watching you. Would you dare to commit this sin even then? Or would you commit this sin, if your Sheikh or your own children are watching you? Certainly you would not do that, despite your urge to commit the sin.

These persons whether watching or not watching you at that moment does not affect your life in this world or the life in the Hereafter. You should think that Allah, the King of all Kings, is certainly watching you Who has the power to punish you for this sin. By virtue of this trend of thinking there is every hope that Almighty Allah will protect you from this sin.

What will happen if the film depicting your life is shown?

I also remember a speech of Hazrat Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه in which he asked us to imagine Allah making this proposal:

All right, I shall save you from Hell on one condition. I shall run a film depicting the details of your entire life, of your childhood, your youth, your old age till death which will be shown to people including your parents, your brothers, sisters, your own sons and daughters, your pupils, your teachers and your relatives, friends and acquaintances. If you approve this proposal I shall spare you from Hell.

In such an awkward and humiliating situation said the Sheikh, a man will probably tolerate the punishment of Hell instead of the disclosure of the secrets of his life before all his near and dear ones.

Now for a while consider that when you will not like to be exposed and disgraced before your relations and so many other people how will you tolerate the disgrace of being so exposed before Almighty Allah.

The Heart's insistence on, and an inclination to a sin, is not a sin

In another speech Hazrat Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه has said:

"Casting an evil glance is a matter of inclination which is an unintentional act and is not accountable. The next stage is to act upon the demand of this inclination and it is accountable. (*Anfas-e-Eesa*).

The inclination of the heart means its great desire and a pressing urge to see some forbidden scene or object. It is not accountable, because it is unintentional and it is, therefore, not a sin. The next stage, as indicated above is that the demand of this unintentional inclination is acted upon by casting a glance at a forbidden scene. This is intentional and will be subject to accountability. There is another aspect of the issue. If a man's glances fall at a forbidden object unintentionally, but he intentionally lets his glance remain fixed on the object, this becomes a sin and is accountable. Thus, the first inclination, being unintentional is neither a sin nor accountable. However, the second stage being intentional is a sin and is also accountable.

It is forbidden to seek pleasure through imagination

"This imaginary act includes glancing at something intentionally and to think about it. It may be remedied by applying a check to the "self" and to lower down the eyes."

To seek pleasure, in imagination, from a forbidden woman is as unlawful as to cast a glance at a woman with sinful intention. To get rid of this evil it is suggested to control your "self" and keep looking downwards. Do not look all around rather keep your eyes low towards the ground.

While walking, let your glances point downwards

Hazrat Dr Sahib رحمة الله عليه said that when Almighty Allah expelled Satan from Paradise, then he prayed to Allah to grant him a respite till the Day of Judgment and Allah did grant him this respite. Having succeeded in receiving this resptie he proudly said, as reproted in the Holy Qur'an:

لَاٰتِيَنَّهُمْ مِنْۢ بَيْنِ اَيْدِيْهِمْ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ وَعَنْ اَيْمَانِهِمْ وَعَنْ شَمَآئِلِهِمْ ؕ

(سورة الاعراف: ١٧)

This means: I shall come upon them from before them and from behind them and from their right and left hands.. (7: 17)

As you see, in his prayer Satan mentioned only four directions i.e., the front, the back, the right and the left. This means that Satan launches his attack only from these four directions. He omitted the two directions "above" and "below" which are immune from Satan's attack. During walking we cannot look upwards for fear of stumbling against some hurdles in the way. We can however, point our glances donwards, as far as possible, to be safe from Satan's attacks with Allah's mercy. So while walking you should not look unnecessarily right and left and at the back, but you shuld look downwards. If you follow this advice you shall see how Allah's help and protection come to you. Almighty Allah has said in the Qur'an:

قُلْ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ يَغُضُّوْا مِنْ اَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوْا فُرُوْجَهُمْ (سورة النور: ٣٠)

That is: (O Prophet !) Tell the believers to lower their gaze and guard their modesty. This is purer for them. (24:30)

Thus, in this divine command there is an injunction to lower your glances which will result in protecting the purity of your private parts.

This Distress is less severe than the Distress of Hell

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has further stated:

One should pluck up courage to act upon these (two) injunctions, though they may prove very distressing. This Distress will, however, be less severe than the Distress of Hell.

The severity of the Distress of Hell cannot be imagined which is endless and eternal, but the trials and tribulations of this world, however severe, are shortlived.

Pluck up courage

If you follow this formula for a few days with courage, this inclination (to cast evil glances) will be diminished. This is the only remedy and the last remedy.

Almighty Allah has made a promise for those who take pains and strive hard in His way:

والذين جاهدوا فينا لنهدينهم سبلنا. سورة العنكبوت:٦٩)

We surely guide on to Our path those who strive hard in Us. (29 : 69)

So in compliance with this divine command take pains in keeping your glances downwards and as a result Almighty Allah shall reduce the temptation to the sin of casting evil glances. This is the only available remedy for this disease. The people wrongly think that the Sheikh shall prescribe for them some formula of sacred words or blow over the patient after rehearsing something that will bring cure to them of this disease. You should all know that firm resolution accompanied with unyielding courage is the only solution to the problem.

Do Two things

Resolve to do two things. Firstly, pluck up courage to resist the temptation, to the best of your ability. Secondly, turn to Almighty Allah for assistance. Turning to Allah means that you should at once seek Allah's help and seek refuge with Him as soon as you are face to face with a situation in which Satan may involve you in this heinous sin. Thus, you should have full confidence that none except Allah can rescue you from the dangerous situation.

Adopt the character of Hazrat Yusuf عليه السلام

We are all well aware of the story of Hazrat Yusuf عليه السلام, as related in the Holy Qur'an. When he عليه السلام was caught in the severe trial, he عليه السلام too took resort to the formula of using his courage and resolution. When Zulaikha, the King's wife locked all the doors and invited Yusuf عليه السلام to sin, he عليه السلام saw that there was no way out. However, he عليه السلام ran towards the doors which had been locked. He did whatever he was able to do and become entitled to pray to Allah to help him out of his difficulty and distress, as he himself could do no more. Allah then did His part of the job by breaking the locks and opening the doors. Maulana Rumi has expressed this incident beautifully in his Persian couplet:

گرچہ رخنہ نیست عالم را پدید
کیرہ یوسف وار می باید دوید

You are not getting a way out of the vices of the world, nor a refuge from them. You should try to the best of your ability to save yourself from them, just as Hazrat Yusuf عليه السلام had done to save himself.

If one does these two things, viz., try his best to save himself from the grip of sins and seek Allah's help to save you by His mercy from the critical situation. If you follow

this formula, you are sure to succeed.

Take the course of Hazrat Yunus عليه السلام

Our Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه said about Hazrat Yunus عليه السلام, as we also know, that Almighty Allah imprisoned him عليه السلام in the belly of a fish for three days. Hazrat Yunus عليه السلام had no way to get out of this prison. Darkness was on all sides. He himself had become qutie helpless and could do nothing to save himself. In such a critical situation he besought Allah in the following words:

لا اله الا انت سبحانك انى كنت من الظلمين

There is no God, except You. Be You glorified.
I have indeed been a wrongdoer, (21;87).

Almighty Allah responded to this prayer in the following words whereby He accepted his عليه السلام prayer:

فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ وَنَجَّيْنٰهُ مِنَ الْغَمِّ ؕ وَكَذٰلِكَ نُنْجِي الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ(سورة الانبياء:٨٨)

Then we heard his prayer and saved him from the anguish. And thus do We save the believers. (21:88)

Thus, he came out of the belly of the fish after three days. That is how Almighty Allah comes to the rescue of His believing servants.

Dr. Hazrat Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه has invited us to consider the real meaning of these verses in which Allah has said: And thus do We save the believers. Does it mean that a believer will first have to get into the belly of a fish and will call Allah from there, and then Allah shall come to his rescue? This is not the meaning of the verse. It really means that just as Hazrat Yunus عليه السلام had been imprisoned in the darkness of the belly of the fish, you too may be imprisoned in the darkness of some other kind. There also your refuge is the same personality as that of

Hazrat Yunus عليه السلام, viz., call Allah in these words:

لا اله الا انت سبحنك انى كنت من الظالمين

That is, when you pray to Allah in these words, He shall rescue you from whatever darkness you may have fallen into.

Call Me

So, when you are surrounded by the darkness of the demands of your 'self', and of the environments, etc., then call Allah for help against these darknesses and for rescue from their evils. If you make such a supplication with sincerity and from the core of your heart, your supplication is sure to be accepted by All Compassionate Allah.

To pray to Allah for worldly gains and objectives

Sometimes a man prays to Allah for worldly gains and objectives, e.g., health, wealth, some post or high office. It is Allah's mercy that He accepts all reasonable prayers of His servants, although the mode of acceptance differs from prayer to prayer and man to man. Sometimes Allah grants exactly the same object which his servant desires, e.g. health, wealth or post, etc. Sometimes Almighty Allah Knows - and who can know better than He that the object of the prayer is not in the best interest of the man. For example, by getting wealth or a high office the man will become proud or tyrant like Pharaoh and will destroy his Hereafter. So the object desired in the prayer is not granted. Instead, Almighty Allah grants the man a substitute that is better for him in this world as well as in the Hereafter.

A Prayer for some gain of *Deen* (Faith) is sure to be granted

Sometimes a sincere man prays to Allah to guide

him on to the path of *Deen* and the *Sunnah*, protect him from sins, from going astray and from disobedience. As there can be no better substitute for such requests, Allah grants them by His mercy. So while asking Allah for some boon, the petitioner must feel sure that his petition shall find acceptance with Merciful Allah.

What to do if a sin is committed after prayer?

Hazrat Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه pointed out that if you pray to Allah to save yourself from sin and yet you happen to commit a sin, does it mean that your prayer had not been accepted. If a prayer for some worldly gain is not accepted it was pointed out that Allah shall grant the applicant some better substitute. Is it possible to say the same thing in the case of a prayer for protection from sin? Can there be a better substitute than saving the suppliant from sins? Certainly not. Then what is the answer?

Allah grants an opportunity for repentance for sins

You must note it carefully that the prayer was granted by Allah, but if, in some rare case, the man again commits the sin, Allah grants him an early opportunity to turn to Allah in repentance and seek His pardon. Sometimes true and sincere repentance after the commission of a sin raises a servant's rank to a height hardly conceivable. A servant's remorse after committing a sin and offering hearty repentance are very valuable in the sight of Merciful Allah.

Then I shall raise you to a high station

Dr. Hazrat Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say that, if by chance you commit a sin after this prayer, do not mistrust Allah that He did not grant your prayer. You do

not know anything about Allah's intention about the height to which He wishes to raise you. When by chance you happen to commit a sin, Allah grants you an opportunity for repentance and shall make you a recipient of the benefits emanating from His attributes as the veiler of sins, being All-Merciful and All-Forgiving...so never think that your prayer has gone waste. Persist in doing these two things, i.e. pluck up courage and seek Allah's bounties with your prayers and wait for the miraculous results.

There is only one formula for safety from sins

I have mentioned a few points about the sin of casting evil glances. May Allah help us by His mercy to act upon these points of advice. *Aameen*! It is not imperative only for the sin of casting evil glances but for all other sins that these should be resisted with repeated and renewed courage and by turning to Allah with repentance and prayer. Only one of the expedient will not do; both are necessary. Using only one of the two expedients may be likened to a man desiring to go westward, but running Eastward. How is it possible? Take the right direction and then hope to reach your desired destination. Anticipate the acceptance of your prayer after it has been directed in the right manner and in the right direction.

So turn to the right direction, pluck up courage, then go ahead and beg of Allah your boon. This is the only formula for refraining from sins. This is also the formula for attaining all other virtues, devotion and righteousness. May Allah help us, by His mercy, to act upon these pieces of advice. *Aameen*.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi
Date : 22nd July, 1993.

ETIQUETTES OF TAKING MEALS

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

عن عمرو بن ابى سلمة رضى الله تعالى عنهما قال: كنت غلامافى حجر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم. وكانت يدى تطيش فى الصحفة، فقال لى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: يا غلام سم الله، وكل بيمينك وكل مما يليك (صحيح بخارى، كتاب الاطعمة، باب التسمية على الطعام، حديث نمبر ٥٣٧٦)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and seek his forgiveness and

believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our souls and from the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom He guides and there is none to guide him whom He lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah the One who has no partner. I also bear witness that our sire, and our authority and our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him, his household and his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم and bless them and salute them all in great deal.

Hazrat Amr bin Abi Salmah رضی اللہ عنہما has narrated: I was a boy in the Prophet's house. Once, while taking meals with him ﷺ, my hand was moving here and there in the plate. The Holy Prophet ﷺ then said to me: O boy! Pronounce Allah's name and eat with your right hand and from the side that is near you.Bukhari..... Hadith No: 5376)

There are Five branches of *Deen* (Faith)

I have repeatedly stated earlier that the injunctions that have been imposed on us can be divided into five branches, viz., basic beliefs, worshp, transactions and dealings, social life and the ethics. These five branches make up what is called *Deen*. If any of these five branches is omitted then *Deen* is incomplete. Therefore the demands of each of these branches should be fully met, i.e. our beliefs, worship, dealings with the people and business transactions, our social living and our ethical conduct and character should all be complete and up to the mark.

Deen is incomplete without reforming the social life

So far we have discussed and studied the subject of ethics. Imam Nuwa-wee رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has framed a new chapter "*Mu'asharah*" (co-living with other men) and has cited Ahadith concerning this branch. This considers how we should eat, drink, live in the house or the neighbourhood with others. All these activities form part of "Mu'asharah" i.e. social life.

Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ used to say: Nowadays people have excluded "*Mu'asharah*" from definition of *Deen*. They do not accept that the injunction concerning *Deen* also apply to this important subject that is "*Mu'asharah*". This is the stand even of those people who are very punctual and sincere in other activities of *Deen*, e.g. prayers, fasting, *Tahajjud*, remembrance etc. As a result, their *Deen* is incomplete.

It is, therefore, necessary to know and act upon the injunctions and teachings which Allah and His Prophet ﷺ have issued on the subject of "*Mu'asharah*". May Allah help us all to act upon these injunctions and teachings.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught us everything

Allamah Nuwa-wee رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has commenced the first chapter on "*Mu'asharah*" with the etiquettes of drinking and eating. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has given us very important directions on drinking and eating as he ﷺ has given directions on other walks of life. Once a polytheist raised an objection to Islam and said to Hazrat Salman Farsi رضی اللہ عنہ:

انی اری صاحبکم یعلمکم کل شئی حتی الخراء ة قال: اجل، امرنا

ان لا نستقبل القبلة ولا نستنجى بايماننا الخ(ابن ماجه كتاب الحجاره باب الا ستنجاء بالجحارة)

That is: Your Prophet ﷺ teaches you everything, even the way of easing yourself in the latrine.

The polytheist said this by way of finding fault with Islam that the Prophet ﷺ taught the Muslims such insignificant things of life like the use of the urinal and the latrine. Hazrat Salman رضی اللہ عنہ replied to him saying: We consider your objection as insignificant. In fact it is a matter of pride for us. Our Prophet ﷺ has taught us everything of life, including the etiquettes of sitting in and using the toilet. He ﷺ has taught us just as the parents teach their children every big and small things of life, if children were not taught these aspects of life they would never know them to become polished and civilized members of the society. Being kinder to us than our parents, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught us such nice etiquettes about drinking and eating that by following them our drinking and eating become an act of worship entitled to recompense.

Three etiquettes of taking meals

In the Hadith which has been quoted above, Hazrat Amr bin Salmah رضی اللہ عنہما has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said to him: At the time of eating pronounce the name of Allah i.e. بسم اللہ (*Bismillah*) and eat with your right hand and from that part of the plate which is nearer to you. Do not extend your hand to take the food from any other part of the plate. Thus in this Hadith three etiquettes have been mentioned.

The first etiquette is to pronounce بسم اللہ (*Bismillah*)

Hazrat 'Ayesha رضی اللہ عنہا has narrated another Hadith in which the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: When anyone of you begins eating he should pronounce the name of Allah. If by chance anyone forgets to pronounce Allah's name then on remembering he should pronounce these words later:

بسم اللہ، اولہ و آخر(ابو داؤد، کتاب الاطعمة، باب التسمیة علی الطعام، حدیث نمبر ۳۷۶۷)

"I begin with the name of Allah in the beginning as well as in the end."

Do not provide for Satan's lodging and fooding

Hazrat Jabir رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated a Hadith saying that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: When anyone pronounces Allah's name on entering his house and at the time of eating, Satan feels frustrated and informs his companions that they have in that house neither place to pass the night nor food to eat, because the owner has pronounced the name of Allah at the time of entering the house and at the time of eating the food. When Allah's name is not pronounced on entering the house, Satan tells his companions that they can pass the night in that house. When the man does not pronounce the name of Allah at the time of eating, Satan informs his companions that they can take their meal also in the house. (Abu Dawood.... Hadith No: 3765)

This shows that when Allah's name is not pronounced, as mentioned above, Satan gets an opportunity to interfere with the affairs of the house. He can now seduce and misguide you as he likes and incite you to commit sins with his whisperings. Satan's interference in the matter of food means that, there will be no blessing and spiritual light in it.

Du'a (supplication) to enter the house

In this Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has emphasized two points i.e. to pronounce Allah's name when one enters one's house. It is still better to recite this *Du'a* which the Holy Prophet ﷺ is reproted to have taught his *Ummah*:

اللهم انى اسئلك خير المولج وخير المخرج، بسم الله ولجنا وبسم الله خرجنا، وعلى الله ربنا تو كلنا (ابو داؤد، كتاب الاداب، باب مايقول اذا خرج من بيته، حديث نمبر ٥٩٦)

It was the routine practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that he recited the *Du'a* at the time of entering his house which is translated as follows:

"O Allah! I beg You to grant me the best entry and the best exit. With the name of Allah we have entered and with the name Allah we have gone out and we have put our trust on our Lord."

When a man enters his house he does not know what happened in his house during his absence and he may hear something undesirable on entry. So, it is necessary to seek Allah's help and blessing before entering one's house. Similarly, the help and blessings of Allah should be sought at the time of going out of the house. This is to ward off trouble and distress at both these times, by virtue of this *Du'a*.

In order to ensure that you do not omit to recite the *Du'a*, write it on a piece of paper and hang it on the door of the house. This *Du'a* is halpful and effective in keeping distress and mishaps away and it is a means to earn reward in the Hereafter. It is not possible for Satan to stay in a house where exit and entry is controlled by this *Du'a*. So, Satan departs murmuring that there is no place for him in this house.

The elder should be the first to begin the meal

Hazrat Huzaifah رضى الله عنه has narrated that when they took food with the Holy Prophet ﷺ they did not extend their hands towards the food until the Holy Prophet ﷺ had started eating.

The jurists have deduced from this Hadith the injunction that when elders and youngers both are eating together, the rule of etiquette demands that the youngers should wait for elders to start eating.

Satan wants to make the meal lawful for him

Hazrat Huzaifah رضى الله عنه has narrated that once they were sitting with the Holy Prophet ﷺ for a meal but had not yet started eating. In the meantime a little girl came running. It seemed that she was awfully hungry. When she extended her hand towards the food, the Holy Prophet ﷺ caught hold of her hand and stopped her from eating the food. Shortly after, a villager also came and rushed towards the food. The Holy Prophet ﷺ caught hold of his hand also and stopped him from eating the food. Then addressing all the companions رضى الله عنهم present there the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

ان الشيطان يستحل الطعام ان لا يذكر اسم الله تعالى عليه وانه جاء بهذه الجارية ليستحل بها، فاخذت بيدها، فجاء هذا الا عرابى ليستحل به، فاخذت بيده، والذى نفسى بيده، ان يده فى يدى مع يدها (صحيح مسلم كتاب الاشربة باب آداب الطعام والشراب واحكامهما. حديث نمبر ٢٠١٧)

That is: Satan desired to make this food lawful for him by ensuring that Allah's name was not pronounced upon it. He wanted to do this by means of this girl, but I caught hold of the girl's hand. Thereafter, Satan watned to make the food

lawful for him through this villager, but I caught hold of his hand also. By God, Satan's hand is in my hand along with the hand of this girl.

Look after the children

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has indicated in this Hadith that if a minor begins to eat food in the presence of elders without pronouncing Allah's name, it is the duty of the elders to warn the child against this and should, if necessary, catch hold of his hand to stop him from eating, and ask him to pronounce (*Bismillah*) before eating.

Today we sit on the dining-table or the dining-cloth along with our children, but we do not mind at all if they have no regard for the Islamic etiquettes of dining. In this Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has drawn our attention to this state of affairs and advised that the elders should be watching the behaviour of the minors and correcting them as and when necessary to preserve the blessing of the foods being eaten.

Satan vomited the food

Hazrat Umayyah bin Mahshi رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that once the Holy Prophet ﷺ was sitting, a man started eating food before him ﷺ without pronouncing the name of Allah and finished the meal, except that only one morsel was left. While taking this last morsel to his mouth the man remembered that he had not pronounced before starting eating his meal. When he remembered the injunction of the Holy Prophet ﷺ for this occasion he pronounced the words بسم اللہ اولہ واخرہ (with the name of Allah in the beginning and at the end of it). On seeing this the Holy Prophet ﷺ smiled and said: Satan was also sharing the food with the man. When he pronounced the words

Satan vomited whatever he had eaten. Satan thus lost his share of the food by virtue of this short phrase. The Holy Prophet ﷺ smiled on seeing this scene. By this incident He ﷺ indicated that if a man forgets to pronounce Allah's name in the beginning, on remembering this omission he should pronounce the words بسم اللہ اولہ و اخرہ (with the name of Allah in the beginning and at the end of it). This action will protect the blessing of the food from being lost.(Abu Dawood..... Hadith No: 3768)

The meal is Allah's bounty

It appears from these Ahadith that the sacred words بسم اللہ الرحمن الرحیم (in the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Beneficent) should be pronounced before beginning the meal. It looks to be a very simple act but it is in reality a magnificent form of worship. On the one hand it becomes a form of worship deserving reward. On the other hand if a man pronounces the words with due attention, the wide door to the knowledge of Almighty Allah will be opened for him. It is because the scared words of the Qur'anic verse بسم اللہ الرحمن الرحیم invites man to realize the truth that the food made available to him is not the product of his own labour, but it is a gift of Giver that is Almighty Allah.

How did the food reach you?

Your pronouncing the words "بسم اللہ" invites your attention to the fact that countless sources of power and efforts of the universe have been harnessed to the process of making this one morsel of food which you have swallowed down your throat so easily and comfortably in a moment. Just think a bit how this piece of bread has reached you. A farmer put in long and arduous hours of labour in ploughing the field and rendering it worthy of cultivation. Then he

sowed it with seeds and watered it. Then the forces of nature viz., the wind, sun, the moon, the rains etc. worked on the field. Then sprouted from tiny seeds tiny and tender seedlings too feeble to bear a little touch. This seedling is raising its head by tearing the hard crust of the earth. Gradually and wonderfully it grows into a plant, then into a tree. The tree then blossoms, brings out small blades of grain which grows to maturity and ripens. Then so many men, animals are crushing and winnowing machines work to bring out of the chaff smooth and clean grains. That grain through the intervention of so many small and big businessmen reached the market of your city. A large number of wholesale and retail dealers work hard to make the bags of grain accessible to grinding mills and from there to the market. You purchase the flour and bring it for yourself and your family. After going through different stages the bread is cooked and is before you for eating.

Now consider a bit. Was it possible for you to assemble together all these various powers of nature to the making of a loaf of bread, to bring down the rain water from the sky or to attract the sun rays to ripen the grains? Moreover, was it within your power to pierce the seeds and bring out the sprouts? Almighty Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

أَفَرَءَيْتُم مَّا تَحْرُثُونَ ۝ ءَأَنتُمْ تَزْرَعُونَهُۥٓ أَمْ نَحْنُ ٱلزَّٰرِعُونَ (سورہ واقعہ:٦٣)

"Have you seen the seed that you sow, Is it you that cause it grow or is it We Who make it grow? (56:63-64)

This is to say that you could not get even a small morsel of food in spite of all your resources put in the work. It is only Allah's infinite mercy that He is feeding you and all His creation with the choicest of foods. If you take your food with this admission of gratefulness

acknowledgement of divine benevolence, then your entire eating will become an item of worship deserving of recompense from Almighty Allah.

The difference between a believer's and non-believer's eating

Our Dr. Abdul Hai رحمة الله عليه used to tell us that *Deen* is the name of a change in the viewpoint. On effecting a little change in the viewpoint the world becomes *Deen*. Take the example of your food. If you take it without prouncing the words بسم الله and without admitting that it is a blessing granted by Allah, then in so far as eating is concerned, there is no difference between you and an infidel. You and an infidel both take food. This food will appease your hunger and afford you some taste, but it is purely a worldly affair, having nothing to do with your *Deen*. You are satisfying your hunger by taking food. The animals like cows, buffaloes, goats, etc. are also taking their foods. So there is no difference between you and these animals.

It is no credit to eat too much

During the time of Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Qasim Sahib Nanotawi رحمة الله عليه the Hindus of the Arya Samaj (a new Hindu sect) had raised a great hue and cry against Islam. To highlight the truth of Islam Hazrat Nanotawi رحمة الله عليه used to debate on religious topics with the leaders of the Arya Samaj. One day he went out for a debating programme against a Hindu Pandit. The debate was to begin after taking the meal. Hazrat Nanotawi رحمة الله عليه got up after taking only a few morsels but the Hindu Pandit ate his fill. After the meal was over the host complained to Hazrat Nanotawi رحمة الله عليه that he had eaten very little. Maulana's reply was that he had eaten

according to his desire. The Arya Samaji Pandit was also sitting there. He tauntingly said: Maulana! In the eating competition you have been defeated. This is a bad omen for you. You may also lose the debate in the matter of arguments. Hazrat Nanotawi رحمة الله عليه replied, saying: If the intention was to hold an eating competition, a buffalo or a bullock would have been the right rival. I have come here to take part in a debate with arguments and not to take part in an eating competition.

The difference between an animal and a man

In his reply referred to above Hazrat Nanotawi رحمة الله عليه has pointed out that there is no difference between a man and an animal in the matter of drinking and eating. Both take food to keep themselves alive with Allah's sustenance. Sometimes Allah provides better sustenance to the animals. To distinguish yourself from animals you must pronounce the name of your Nourisher, Allah, before beginning to eat your food.

Hazrat Sulaiman عليه السلام, invited Allah's creatures to a feast

It is written in books that when Almighty Allah conferred on Hazrat Sulaiman عليه السلام the Kingdom of the entire universe, the Prophet عليه السلام, requested Almighty Allah to allow him to feast His entire creation for a full one year as an expression of gratitude to Allah. Allah told him that the project was n within his capacity. He repeated his request for one month's feast. Allah again told him that this too was not within his capacity. Then Hazrat Sulaiman عليه السلام repeated his request for one day's feast. Allah told him that this too was not within his power, As he عليه السلام was insisting on his request, Allah granted his request for one day. On receipt of

this permission Hazrat Sulaiman عليه السلام began to make preparations for this tremendous project of feasting with the help of the services of men and jinn. This took many months. At long last a huge dining - cloth was spread on the sea-shore and the food was placed on it. He عليه السلام commanded the wind to continue blowing over the food so that it might not get bad. Thereafter, Hazrat Sulaiman عليه السلام requested Almighty Allah to send some of His creation. Allah told him that He would first send a fish to partake of his feast. So, a fish came out of the sea-water and asked the Prophet عليه السلام about the feast. Hazrat Sulaiman عليه السلام welcomed and invited it to the feast. The fish started eating from one side and ate up the entire food to the other side and asked the Prophet Sulaiman عليه السلام for more. Hazrat Sulaiman عليه السلام complained that it had exhausted the entire food. The fish replied: Is a guest answered in this way? I have been eating my fill ever since I was born. On account of your feast I have remained hungry. Almighty Allah, provides for me every day two times with double the quantity that you have provided. Today I could not eat my fill.

Hazrat Sulaiman عليه السلام realized his delusion, prostrated himself and begged pardon for this. (Nafhatul-Arab, P-110)

Thank Allah after taking meals

Almighty Allah is providing everyone of His creation with sustenance, in the bottom of the sea and its darkness or wherever one may be. He has said in the Qur'an:

وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى اللهِ رِزْقُهَا (سورة هود:٦)

"And there is not an animal on the earth, but its sustenance depends on Allah." (11:6)

Allah has taken upon Himself to provide everyone

of His creatures with sustenance, and there is no difference between men and animals in the matter of sustenance. Let animals alone Allah is providing sustenance to his disbelieving enemies also who deny even Allah's existence. They are ridiculing and insulting Him and are making a fun of His *Deen*. So far as eating is concerned, there is no difference between a Muslim and a non-Muslim, except that the non-muslim eats only to appease his hunger and enjoys the taste of the dishes and he does not care to pronounce Allah's name before eating. As a Muslim, you are advised to pronouncing Allah's name before eating and thank him for the sustenance He has provided for you. By so doing your act of eating will become and an act of *Deen* and are act of worship.

Change the viewpoint at the time of doing every act

Dr. Hazrat Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to tell us that he practised this principle for years and years and explained by saying:

I am sitting on the dining - cloth. The food is there, I am hungry too. I refrain from eating for a moment and think that I would not eat the food. The very next moment I realize that the food before me is only Allah's bounty and not the result of any effort on my part. It was the practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that when food was placed before him ﷺ he ate it with Allah's thanksgiving. I too will eat the food placed before me in compliance with the Prophet's *Sunnah*. Thereafter, I begin eating with the name of Allah (بسم الله).

I entered the house and felt happy to see the playful, lovely baby. I felt an urge to take the baby in my lap and fondle him with love. Yet I kept back for a moment and thought that it was not good to take the baby only for the sake of my liking. The very next moment I remembered that the

Holy Prophet ﷺ loved children very much and took them in his lap. Now following his ﷺ *Sunnah* I will also pick the baby in my lap. With this notion I picked the child in my lap. After relating to us this practice he recited this couplet:

جگر پانی کیا ہے مدتوں غم کی کشا کشی میں
کوئی آسان ہے کیا خوگر آزار ہو جانا

This means: It is not an easy job to make oneself used to grief and distress (in love). This is achieved by putting up with the tensions of grief and pain for a long period.

He went of saying: I have attained this by the grace of Allah, by constant practice and I hardly miss the opportunity. Whenever, some blessing of this kind comes before me, I feel at once that it is from Allah and thank Him and after pronouncing بسم الله I do the job. I have now become used to it. This is what I call " a change in vision" As a result of this change, a worldly act becomes an act of *Deen* and an act of worship.

The Food - A Blessing of Allah

Once I had an opportunity to atttend a feast with Hazrat Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه. When the food was brought we began eating it. Hazrat Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه began to point out the various blessings present in that food. Firstly, the food is in itself an absolute blessing. If a man is dying of hunger he will jump at anything worth eating to save his life, even if it may be of the worst quality. He shall eat it as one of the greatest blessings of Allah. As man appeases his hunger with it, the food is in itself an independent blessing.

A tasteful food - The second blessing

The second blessing is that the food is very tasteful and agreeable to one's palate and desire. A hungry man will even eat a tasteless food to satisfy his hunger, but here he finds the food tasteful and appetising. Thus, a tasteful food is another blessing of Allah.

Availabiity of food with honour - the third blessing

The third blessing about food is that the host is serving the food to the guests or the invitees with honour. If tasteful food was provided but it was not served to the guests with honour or was served as is served to beggars and menial servants, the taste and quality of the food would be meaningless and disgusting, as someone has said:

اے طائر لاہوتی اس رزق سے موت اچھی
جس رزق سے آتی ہو پرواز میں کوتاہی

"O celestial bird (i.e. man), death is better than the sustenance which retards the freedom of flying."

Thus, if anyone is providing you with food in a manner which is insulting and degrading, then there is no blessing and taste in that food. Praise be to Allah that the provider is providing food with honour and grace.

To have appetite for food - the fourth blessing

The fourth blessing consists in the presence of appetite and desire for food. The food is available, it is tasteful and has been served with honour. If there is no appetite due to indigestion, even the food of the best quality and standard is useless. Praise be to Allah that we are getting our sustenance which is tasteful, served with honour and there is also a good appetite.

Peace and security at the time of eating - the fifth blessing

It is the fifth blessing in respect of food that we are eating it with peace and ease without anxiety and fear. Good and tasteful food is available with grace and honour, but there is some worry torturing the mind like some mishap or bad tidings. In such a situation even the best kind of food becomes repelling and disgustful. Praise be to Allah that we are getting our food in a peaceful and congenial atmosphere.

To take food in the company of friends - the sixth blessing

It is the sixth blessing that we are taking our food in the company of our best friends. To take food all alone despite all the foregoing blessings is very much different from taking the same food in the company of our friends. Taking food in the company of friends and relations has a distinctive pleasure which is not available in eating it alone or in the company of strangers. Food is indeed a great blessing and this blessing is accompanied with so many other blessings. You must then be grateful to Almighty Allah for all these blessings.

This food is a combination of various forms of worships

When you take food with the belief that Almighty Allah has granted you so many blessings, you must render thanks to Allah. Taking food after pronouncing بسم الله (*Bismillah*) is indeed a worship. However, remembering all the blessings available in the act of eating and expressing thanks to Allah for all the blessings concealed in this one blessing becomes composite worship. Now this food which is a worldly gift, becomes a gift of the Hereafter by

becoming a form of worship. On the one hand you are enjoying taste, satisfaction of hunger and health for your body and on the other hand you are adding to your good deeds. This is what is called "Change of viewpoint". This "change of viewpoint" has the effect of changing your world into *Deen*. Hazrat Sheikh Sadi رحمة الله عليه has said in Persian couplet:

ابرو بادو مہ و خورشید و فلک در کار اند
تا تو نانے بکف آری و بغفلت نخوری

(گلستان سعدی)

The clouds, the winds, the moon, the sun and the sky are all doing their respective jobs, so that you may earn your bread. You should therefore, not eat this bread carelessly (and without rendering thanks to Allah).

You have already been advised that you should always begin eating with the name of Allah بسم الله If you by chance ever forget then pronounce these words

بسم الله اوله و آخره

when you remember during course of eating.

How to compensate for an optional act?

Relying on this Hadith regarding the omission of saying بسم الله, Hazrat Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه has said that if a person forgets to do some optional worship at its appointed time, he should not think that the time having passed, it is no longer necessary to compensate for it. He should do that optional worhsip later on as and when he gets time for that. Once we were going in the company of Hazrat Dr. Sahib to attend some gathering which was scheduled to be held after the *Maghrib* prayer. We set off from our place late and had to offer the *Maghrib* prayer on the way. In order to save time Hazrat Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه

offered only the three *Rak'ats* of the *Farz* (obligatory) prayer and the two *Rak'ats* of the *Sunnah*, omitting the two *Nafl Rak'ats*. We also did the same and rushed to reach the destination. On arriving there we joined the assembly, listened to the lectures and set off on the return journey after offering the *'Isha* prayer there at about ten p.m. At the time of returning the Sheikh asked us about the six *Rak'ats* of the *Aw-waabeen* prayers (*Nafl* prayer after Maghrib). We told him that these were missed for want of time. He said that, by the grace of Allah, he offered all his usual *nafl* (optional) prayers along with his *'Isha* prayer. He added that in this way he compensated for the missed six *Rak'ats* of the *Aw-waabeen* prayers.

Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه further said: You are maulawis. You will rule that no compensation is required for missed *Nafl* prayers, because this is necessary only in the case of *Farz* and *wajib* (obligatory and compulsory) prayers and not *Sunnah* and *Nafl* prayers. You will, therefore, take objections to my act of compensating for the missed six *Rak'ats* of the *Aw-wabeen*.

He رحمة الله عليه continued: Did you not read the Hadith in which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that if you forget to pronounce Allah's name (بسم الله) when beginning to take your food, you should pronounce the words "بسم الله اوله و اخره" when you remember the first omission during your eating or at the end of it. On the analogy of this Hadith Hazrat Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه has advised that if anyone misses some *Nafl* worship, it should not be abandoned altogether. In order to add to the record of our good deeds for the benefit of the Hereafter, we should compensate for these omissions as far as possible, no matter you call it Qaza or something else.

These are some of the fine points which one needs to learn from the learned Sheikhs. It is true that according to

the books of *Fiqh* (jurisproudence) there is no *Qaza* (compensation) for missed *Nafl* prayers. However, as advised by Hazrat Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه, there is no restriction in compensating for these missed prayers. This will add to the balance of our good deeds. May Almighty Allah enhance the status of our Sheikh رحمة الله عليه. *Aameen.*

Du'a at the time of folding up the dining-cloth

عن ابى امامة رضى الله عنه ان النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم كان اذا رفع مائد ته قال: الحمد لله كثيرا طيبا مباركافيه، غير مكفى ولا مودع ولا مستغنى عنه ربنا (صحيح بخارى، كتاب الاطعمة باب مايقول اذا فرغ من طعامه، حديث نمبر ٥٤٥٨)

Hazrat Abu Amamah رضى الله عنه has narrated that when the dining-cloth was folded up at the end of the meal, the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to recite this *Du'a* which means: O our Lord! Abundant praise is for You for this clean and blessed food (which You provided) which is neither insufficient nor unwanted nor dispensable.

This is a unique *Du'a* which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught, keeping in view the human nature and temparament. When man is hungry, he feels a great longing for food to appease his hunger. As soon as his hunger is appeased he becomes disgusted to see the same food of which he was so keenly desirous a few minutes earlier. That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ taught this wonderful *Du'a*, lest having satisfied his hunger man should become indifferent to Allah's blessings and grow ungrateful to Him particularly when he will require these blessings again and again, throughout his life. This *Du'a* also implies an appeal to Almighty Allah to grant his sustenance again and again.

Get your sins pardoned after reciting this Du'a at the end of your meal

عن معاذ بن انس رضى الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: من اكل طعاما فقال! الحمد لله الذى اطعمنى هذا ورزقنيه من غير حول منى ولا قوة غفرله ما تقدم من ذنبه (ترمذى، كتاب الدعوات باب مايقول اذا فرغ من الطعام، حديث نمبر ٣٤٥٤)

It is narrated by Hazrat Ma'az رضى الله عنه who has reported that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: The past sins of him are pardoned who says after taking his food: All praise is for Allah Who provided for me food to eat and granted me this food without any effort and labour on my part. (Tirmizi..... Hadith No: 3454)

Just think what a generous grant of reward and recompense for such a small and easy act! How merciful and Benevolent is Almighty Allah!

A small deed yielding a great reward

Please note that I have already mentioned this point that when it is mentioned in a Hadith that by doing a certain act sins are forgiven, the sins imply only minor sins. As regards major sins, they are not forgiven without repentance. Likewise sins involving usurpation of the rights or dues of the servants of Allah cannot be forgiven, unless the claimants write off their claims in favour of the liable persons. If a person recites this *Du'a* after food, Almighty Allah shall forgive all these minor sins. So small an act and so great its reward! Hazrat Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه frequently said about this *Du'a* that in the form of this *Du'a* the Holy Prophet ﷺ has given us an elexir of life. A man becomes entitled to blessings and the virtue of gratitude, whether he recites this *Du'a* loudly, in low voice or

in his heart. May Almighty Allah help us all to observe these etiquettes. *Aameen*!

Do not find fault with food

عن ابی هریرة رضی الله عنه قال: ماعاب رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم طعاماقط، ان اشتهاه اکله، وان کرهه ترکه (صحیح بخاری، کتاب الاطعمة باب ماعاب النبی صلی الله علیه وسلم طعاما حدیث نمبر ۵۴۰۹)

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ never found fault with any food. If he liked,he ate the food, but if he did not like, he left it.

We learn from this Hadith that all sorts of food are a gift from Allah and it is our bounden duty to respect and value the sustenance granted by Allah which is a great favour to us from Him.

None is bad or worthless in the Universe

There is nothing in this world which Almighty Allah has not created with some wisdom and expedience. Everything found in the world has some benefit and utility. The famous Urdu Poet, Dr. M. Iqbal has very aptly said:

نہیں ہے چیز نکمی کوئی زمانے میں
کوئی برا نہیں قدرت کے کارخانے میں

This means: There is nothing worthless in this world and there is nothing bad in the workshop of Nature.

Allah has, in His infinite wisdom created things which have some definite use, although we may not know the purpose of the creation of those things. We count snakes, scorpions, etc., among deadly reptiles, yet they too possess some advantage and use in the overall scheme of

Universe, no matter we know it or are in dark about it.

The story of a King and a Fly

It is related about a King that one day he was sitting in his court with all pomp and show when a fly sat on his nose. You might have seen that some flies are very obstinate. They sit on your body again and again, however, forcibly you may try to drive them away. The fly that sat on the King's nose also belonged to that category. On seeing this the King raised objection to Allah's creation of flies which, in the King's opinion, were a troublesome creature. A saintly person present in the King's court heard this objection and could not help replying to the King in these words: One wisdom in the creation of this fly is that it is defying an arrogant despot like you, Allah has demonstrated that you are too helpless to save yourself from the distress you are suffering on account of this fly. You cannot underrate the expedience and widom of the creation of this small fly.

A strange incident about a Scorpion

Imam Razi رحمة الله علیه has been a famous saint and an expert theologian who compiled the renowned commentary of the Holy Qur'an under the name *Tafsir Kabir*. It is such a detailed commentary book that the commentary on the Surah Fatiha alone covers two hundred pages. Writing the commentary on the first Surah of al-Fatihah he has related an incident on the direct narration of another saint who lived in Baghdad. The saint said that while taking a walk along the side of the River Tigris, he saw that a scorpion was also going along the riverside in front of him. The saint thought that being a creation of Allah, it was also created for some purpose.

We decided to follow the scorpion to find out its destination. After covering a long distance, the scorpion turned towards the river and stopped at the riverside. The saint also stood there. A little later the saint saw that a tortoise was swimming towards the scorpion when it reached the shore the scorpion jumped on the back of the tortoise. In this way Almighty Allah provided a boat for the scorpion to cross the river. As he had resolved to know the final result he also hired a boat and set off in the direction of the tortoise and the scorpion. When the tortoise reached the other side of the river the saint again started chasing it. After some time he saw that a man was sleeping under a tree. He thought that the scorpion was going to sting that man. The saint went near the sleeping man to wake him up and inform him of the scorpion's sting, but he saw that a poisonous snake was there spreading its hood over the man and ready to bite him. The scorpion quickly got on the snake and stung it so hard that the snake writhed and died instantly. The scorpion moved away in another direction. All of a sudden the sleeping man awoke from sleep and saw that a scorpion was creeping away nearby. He ran to kill the scorpion with a stone. The saint at once caught hold of the man's hand and told him that the scorpion had saved his life . The scorpion was the man's well-wisher because Allah had deputed it to kill the snake and save the man's life. The saint has said that on that day he observed the wonderful Omnipotence and power of Almighty Alalh. This incident shows that there is some wisdom and purpose in everything which Allah has created in this universe.

The worms that are born in filth

I have also seen another incident, although I am not sure of its genuineness. If it is a genuine incident it is full of morals. While sitting in a latrine a man saw there very small white worms which are some times also born in man's intestines. While admitting that Allah has created everything for some purpose and with wisdom he felt no doubt about the secret and wisdom of creating those useless worms.

After some days that man suffered from some eye disease. He did all that was possible for him to recover from that disease but all in vain. At last he came across an eye physician who told the patient that only one treatment was available which sometimes proves effective. He told the patient that a paste prepared from the worms that are found in man's stomach had sometimes been found to be efficacious in such a disease. When I heard this story I became fully convinced that Almigty Allah has created everything for some purpose, even though we may not be able to grasp the use and wisdom of that creation

Likewise, there is a wisdom and some purpose in the cration of that food which we do not relish and refuse to eat. At any rate, all food items are forms of sustenance granted to man by Almighty Allah whcih we must value and respect. If you do not like any food do not speak ill of it, nor try to find fault with it. This is dishonouring Allah's benevolence and blessing which is no doubt very bad indeed.

Do not disparage food

This is also a very valuable advice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that we should value and respect Allahs' sustenance. This is an Islamic etiquette but it is being badly violated in our society. We are initating the non-Muslims in this matter as we are doing in other

matters. We have no respect for Allah's sustenance. We throw away the superfluous food in dustbins. Sometimes our hearts shudder to see this disrespect to food which is being shown by the Muslims. Particularly in hotels and marriage feasts large quantities of valuable food dumped in dustbins and garbage heaps. According to the teachings of our *Deen* we should value even a small piece of bread we find lying anywhere, we should pick it up and place it at a raised ground, so that an animal or bird may eat it.

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه
and the value of sustenance

I have heart Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه relating an anecdote of Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه. Once Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه felt sick and during his sickness someone offered him milk to drink. Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه drank that milk. A little of it remained which he placed under his bed and fell into sleep. When he awoke from sleep he inquired about the left over milk. He was told that it had been thrown away as it was hardly a drought. Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه got very much displeased. He scolded the man for having thrown away Allah's sustenance. He رحمة الله عليه said that if he could not drink that milk someone else could have drunk it or it could have been offered to a cat or a parrot, so as to help with it some creature of Allah. After this he رحمة الله عليه mentioned a principle:

It is binding on man to value and respect the small quantities of those things from large quantities of which he receives benefit in his ordinary life.

For example, man eats a large quantity of food to appease his hunger. If a small quantity is left over, man is duty-bound to value and respect that left over quantity. It is not lawful to waste it. This too should be put to some use.

The Right way of shaking off the dining-cloth

Sayyid Asghar Husain Sahib رحمة الله عليه, known as "Mian Sahib" was a teacher in the Darul-Uloom Deoband. He was a unique saint. His life recalls to our memory the days of the Noble Companions رضى الله عنهم. My respected father told us that once he called upon him رحمة الله عليه. As it was meal time the saint invited my father to dine with him. Accordingly, my father sat with him on the dining-cloth. When they had finished eating my father began to fold up the dining-cloth so that he might shake it off to clean it. Mian Sahib asked my father: Do you know how to shake off and clean a dining-cloth? My father replied: Hazrat, it does not require any special knowledge or art nor any special training. I shall take it out and shake it off. Hazrat Mian Sahib رحمة الله عليه said: That is why I asked you this question. Now it appears that you do not know the job. This is also an art. My father requested Mian Sahib to teach him that art.

Mian Sahib then reopened the dining-cloth and separated the bones from the food scraps, etc. He sorted out the bones which had some pieces of flesh sticking to them, and the big and very small pieces of bread. Addressing my father he said: See, these are four different things and in my house each is kept in a different place. The meat bones with some flesh have a different place which is known to the cat. The bones without flesh have a different place known to the dogs of the area. As for these pieces of bread I place the bigger ones of them on this wall for birds, like kites and crows. As for the very fine pieces of the bread, these are placed near a hole of ants. He added saying: This is Allah's sustenance; no part of it should be laid waste. This, my respected father رحمة الله عليه was convinced that the act of shaking off and rolling up

the dining-cloth was also an art.

Our plight today

What do we do now? We shake off the dining-cloth on the dustbin or the dust-heap, without thinking that this is disparaging Alalh's sustenance. Do you not see these countless creatures for whom Almighty Allah has produced this sustenance. If you cannot eat a thing yourself, keep it for some other creature of Allah. In olden days children were taught to value and respect Allah's sustenance. If a piece of bread was lying somewhere they were taught to pick it up and keep it with due regard at some raised place. As the western civilisation is gaining ground in our society, our Islamic values sand etiquettes are disappearing gradually. It is an injunction of the Holy Prophet ﷺ: If you like a food, eat it; if you do not like it, leave it, but neither speak ill of it, nor find fault with it nor disparage it. It is imperative to revive this *Sunnah*. These things are not being mentioned by way of story-telling and for enjoyment. They are for action in all sincerity. We should value and respect the sustenance granted to us by Almighty Allah. We should also observe the etiquettes taught by the Holy Prophet ﷺ about it. These form part of our *Deen* and are its distinctive features. We must at the same time do our best to get rid of the vices which the western civilization has imposed on our soceity.

Vinegar is also a sort of 'Salan' (Curry)

عن جابر رضی اللہ عنه ان النبی صلی اللہ علیه وسلم سئل اهله الادم، فقالوا: ماعندنا الاخل، فدعا به، فجعل یاکل، ویقول: نعم الادم الخل، نعم الادم الخل. (صحیح مسلم، کتاب الاشربة، باب فضیلة الخل، والتادم به، حدیث نمبر ۲۰۵۲)

Hazrat Jabir رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that once the Holy Prophet ﷺ asked the inmates of his house to fetch him some curry (*Salan*), (bread was available). They told him ﷺ that they had nothing except vinegar. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said: Bring it. Hazrat Jabir رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ ate bread with the vinegar, repeatedly saying: The venegar is a very good curry.

The condition of the Household of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

It is stated about the household of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that he ﷺ used to provide for his sacred wives one year's provision. Despite this nothing was available there to serve as curry (*Salan*). After all they were the wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. They spent most of their resources in the path of Allah. According to a Hadith narrated by Hazrat ʿAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا fire was not lighted in her house for cooking for periods of three months continuously. They lived only on two items, dates and water. (Sahih Bukhari.... Hadith No: 2567).

The Holy Prophet ﷺ valued and respected a blessing

It appears from this Hadith that the Holy Prophet ﷺ greatly valued and respected a blessing which he ﷺ was granted by Allah, and he rendered thanks for that. In the society in general vinegar is not used as a curry; it is used only as a pickle to change the taste of the food and to make it more palatable. See how not only did the Holy Prophet ﷺ eat his bread with it, but he also repeatedly praised it as a very nice and delicious curry.

We should praise the food

On the authority of this Hadith the Muhadditheen (scholars of Hadith) have said that if anyone uses vinegar with the intention that the Holy Prophet ﷺ ate and praised it, he will receive reward for this. Another point that can be deduced from this Hadith is that a man should say something in praise of the food which pleases him. Praising the food implies gratitude for Allah that he granted the food. It also implies an appreciation of the cook who cooked the food. It is very improper on the part of a person that he satisfies his hunger and enjoys the food but does not say a word of gratitude and praise. The cook deserves a few words of praise and encouragement for the pains he has taken in cooking food for you. He is a great miser who cannot utter a few words of praise for someone.

The cook should be praised

Hazrat Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه once related this anecdote that occurred with him. He said that a gentleman used to call upon him from time to time. He and his wife both were among his disciples for spiritual training. One day they invited him to a feast at their house. He called on them and took his food there. The food was very delicious and had been nicely cooked. It was the habit of Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه that whenever he took food at any place, he praised that food and also praised the cook who cooked it. He did this by way of expressing gratitude for Allah and praise and encouragement for the person who cooked the food. When Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه had partaken of the food, that housewife came near Dr. Sahib from behind the curtain and bade "Salam" to him رحمة الله عليه. Dr. Sahib uttered a few words of praise for the food and for her who had cooked it so nicely. On

hearing these words of praise she began to weep and Dr. Sahib heard her sobbings. Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه was astonished at this and thought that perhaps she was offended at some of his words. On being asked the reason for her weeping, controlling herself with some difficulty she said that she had been living with her husband for about forty years, but during this long period of association she never heard from her husband a word of praise about her cooking. She said that on hearing from the Sheikh a word of praise about the food, she was moved to tears. As her husband was a disciple of the Sheikh, the latter reprimanded him on his miserliness in the matter of saying a few words of praise about his wife's cooking in order to please her. The moral we learn from this anecdote is that after taking food we should praise the food as well as the cook who cooked it. This ensures rendering thanks to Almighty Allah as well as pleasing the cook.

To praise a gift

When a gift is presented to anyone the reciver of the gift generally utters a few formal words like this: It was not at all necessary. Why did you take this trouble, etc. Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه followed a different way of receiving a gift when it was presented to him by some of his close friends with due respect and love. He would show much fondness for that gift and his appreciation as if it was something which he badly needed.

Once I presented to him a piece of cloth. while accepting the humble gift, he said:

I was in search of such cloth. The colour of the cloth is particularly appealing to me.

About gifts he advised that the affection of the giver

of the gift should be acknowledged with a few words of appreciation and praise. There is a Hadith " تها دوا تحابوا " meaning, increase love among yourselves by exchange of gifts. This increase of love will materialize only when you receive the gifts with a few words of happiness and appreciation.

Express gratitude to the people also

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith:

من لم يشكر الناس لم يشكر الله (ترمذی، کتاب البر والصلة، باب ماجاء فی الشکر لمن احسن الیك، حدیث نمبر ۱۹۵٤)

This means: One who does not thank man does not also thank Allah.

That is to say, you must render at least verbal thanks to a man and praise him who behaves with you with love and sincerity and provides you with some benefit. This is an act of the *Sunnah*, based on the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. If we follow these directions we shall soon see the birth of love and betterment of mutual relations among families and individuals in the society, resulting in the end of enemities, hatred and malice, etc.

May Allah help us to follow the right course. *Aameen*!

The Holy Prophet ﷺ teaching his stepson good manners

Hazrat Amr bin Salmah رضی الله عنهما has narrated this Hadith which has already bee cited.

عن عمروبن ابی سلمة رضی الله عنهما قال: کنت غلامافی حجر رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم، وکانت یدی تطیش فی الصحفة، قال لی رسول الله سلی الله علیه وسلم: یا غلام، سم الله وکل بیمینك، وکل ممایلیك

(صحیح بخاری، کتاب الاطعمة باب التسمیة علی الطعام، حدیث نمبر ٥٣٧٦)

Hazrat Amr bin Salmah رضی الله عنهما narrated this Hadith which has already been cited. The narrator Hazrat Amr رضی الله عنه was a stepson of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Hazrat Abu Salmah رضی الله عنه was Hazrat Umm Salmah's رضی الله عنها first husband. After his death the Holy Prophet ﷺ married Hazrat Umma Salmah رضی الله عنها After this second marriage the son also came to the house of the Holy Prophet ﷺ alongwith his mother, Hazrat Umma Salmah رضی الله عنها. The son, Hazrat Amr رضی الله عنه, thus came under the direct training of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He رضی الله عنه has said: When I was a child and under training of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, I once sat with him ﷺ to take food. During eating my hand moved in the plate on all sides. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ observed this, he ﷺ said: O boy, pronounce Allah's name, بسم الله before beginning the meal and eat with your right hand from part of the plate which is before you.

It is a rule of etiquette to eat from one's front

In this Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has mentioned three rules of etiquettes. Firstly ,begin eating after pronouncing the words بسم الله . Secondly, eat with your right hand. Thirdly, eat from the part of the plate which is facing you and not from all sides. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has laid great emphasis on observing this etiquette for obvious reasons. While eating food facing you if some food is left, it will not look clumsy someone shall eat it without feeling any disgust, otherwise the food will have to be thrown away.

Blessings descend on the middle of the food

According to a Hadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ blessings of Allah descend on the middle of a food when it is served. If the food is eaten from the middle of it, the blessings will disappear. These divine blessings prolong, if the food is eaten from the sides. A qeustion arises about the meaning and significance of these blessings. What are they? How do they descend on the middle of the plate only? The answer is that we cannot grasp these divine secrets with our limited knowledge and intellect. These are the wisdom and expedients of Allah best known to Him and His Prophet ﷺ. It is also not necessary for us to involve ourselves in this issue. We have been taught to eat food facing us and not from the middle of the plate. (Tirmizi..Hadith No: 1806)

If there are many items on the plate we can extend our hands to other sides also

The foregoing rule of etiquette is applicable only when there is only one item of food on the plate. If there are many items of food, it is permissible to extend one's hand from side to side to pick up the item of one's choice. Hazrat ʿAkraish bin Zaeeb رضی اللہ عنہ who is a companion رضی اللہ عنہ has said: Once I called upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ who was going to attend some feast. He took me also with him ﷺ when we reached the place of the feast "Sareed" was placed on the dining-cloth. (Sareed is prepared with crushed pieces of dried bread soaked in curry. The Holy Prophet ﷺ was very fond of this dish and he ﷺ has spoken about its excellence). When I started eating I omitted pronouncing the words بسم اللہ. The Holy Prophet advised me to pronounce these sacred words before taking food. In addition to this, I picked up the morsels from different sides of the plate. Seeing me do this the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

يا عكراش، كل من موضع واحد، فانه طعام واحد

"O ʿAkraish, take the food from one place because the food is of one kind.

So I began to eat from one side. Thereafter a very big plate was placed before us with different kinds of dates. According to the common saying that "once bitten twice shy", I began to eat the dates from one side, as the Holy Prophet ﷺ had advised me earlier. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ saw that I was picking up the dates from one side only he ﷺ said:

يا عكراش، كل من حيث مئشت، فانه غيرلون واحد

That is O ʿAkraish, eat from wherever you like because the dates are of different kinds.

Through this Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught that when the food is of one kind it should be eaten from the front of the person eating it. If the food is of different kinds, there is no harm in eating it by extending the hand to different sides to take up the morsels. (Tirmizi, Book of foods..... Hadith No: 1849).

It is not lawful to take food with the left hand

وعن سلمة بن الا كوع رضى الله عنه ان رجلا اكل عند رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بشماله فقال كل بيمينك قال لا استطيع قال لا استطعت ما منعه الا الكبر فما رفعها الى فيه (صحيح مسلم، كتاب الاشربة، باب آداب الطعام والشراب، حديث نمبر ٢٠٢١)

Hazrat Salmah bin Akwaʿ رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that once a man sitting with the Holy Prophet ﷺ was eating with his left hand. The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked him to eat with the right hand. He replied, saying: I am unable to eat with the right hand. (Apparently he was a hypocrite who was telling a lie). It is a very serious sin and crime to tell a lie to a

Prophet of Allah and to insist on one's mistake and sin. Allah does not like this audacity. The Holy Prophet ﷺ cursed him saying: لااستطعت (May you never have the ability to eat with your right hand). The curse of the Holy Prophet ﷺ had its effect. It occurs in a narrative that thereafter the man was not able to raise his right hand to his mouth. May Almighty Allah save us from such a trial. *Aameen*!

If one commits a mistake, one should admit it and seek pardon for it

If a man commits a mistake on account of his weakness as a man, but admits his mistake and expresses regret and remorse for it and asks for forgiveness then merciful Allah forgives him. It is a heinous sin to deny the mistake committed and to insist on it, particularly before the Prophet ﷺ of Allah.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ hardly cursed anyone. He ﷺ did not curse even his enemies. In respect of his arch-enemies he ﷺ prayed:

اللهم اهد قومی فانهم لا یعلمون

O Allah! Guide my community, because they do not know me.

As regards this hypocrite, the Holy Prophet ﷺ was informed through a revelation that he was refusing to eat with the right hand because of his hypocrisy and enmity, and that there was no disability with him. Due to this the Holy Prophet ﷺ cursed him which was at once accepted by Almighty Allah.

It is not right to insist upon one's mistake

Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say: If a man calls upon saints and godly men in a state that he is addicted to bad habits and is a sinner, there is no harm. It is,

however, very serious and harmful to tell lies to these saintly men and to insist upon their sins. To tell lies to the Prophets of Allah is much more dangerous and heinous. Sometimes Allah discloses the secrets of such men to the successors of the Prophets علیهم السلام. To illustrate this Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه related an incident concerning Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه. Once Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه was delivering a sermon. In the gathering a man was sitting in an arrogant style, supporting his back against the wall and spreading out his legs. To sit in a gathering in such a style is against the etiquettes of assemblies. In order to correct the eprson, Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه took objection to the man and told him that it was against the etiquettes of an assembly to sit in that way and that he should sit with due regard and discipline. Instead of doing the needful, the man said that he was suffering from pain in his waist. Perhaps by this reply he wanted to say that it was wrong to warn him, as the Sheikh رحمة الله عليه was not aware of his pain. Hazrat Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه told us that Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه bent down his neck for a while and closed his eyes. then raising up his neck he said to the man: you are lying. You have no pain in your waist, you should get up and leave the assembly. It appears that sometimes Allah informs His righteous servants of hidden things and conditions. It is, therefore, very dangerous to tell lies to, and deceive saintly men. Instead, if by chance a sin is committed the sinner should regret the sin and seek repentance. Allah will by His mercy, forgive that sin or mistake.

People contacted the man who had been turned out of the assembly and asked him to tell the fact. He admitted that he had no pain in his waist; he had told a lie to the Sheikh to justify his sitting. What the Sheikh said was true.

Refrain from being audacious to saintly men

Look! who is there in the world who does not commit a sin, a mistake or some shortcoming. Man, by dint of his very nature, does commit mistakes or sins. If anyone is not following the course appointed by these Sheikhs and saints, even then Allah sometimes helps him to repent for his sins and take the right course. However, to behave disrespectfully and rudely with the saints, to speak ill of them or to insist upon one's sins and to try to prove them right are such a grievous curse that sometimes it jeopardises the very '*Eeman*' of a person. Never mind, if you do not appreciate something in a saint, do not be insolent and disrespectful towards them, lest Almighty Allah should become displeased and may prove harmful to a man's *Eeman* (belief). May Almighty Allah protect us from this. *Aameen*!

Nowadays people have become addicted to disowning their faults. They have become so bold that they commit sins and try to prove that what they have committed is not a sin. For example, to allege that a certain saint is a worldly-wise man, he is neither a Sheikh nor a saint is something very dangerous. Refrain from this yourself and advise others to refrain from such misconduct.

Do not eat two dates together

عن جبلة بن سحيم رضى الله عنه قال اصابنا عام سنة مع ابن الزبير، فرزقنا تمرا، فكان عبدالله بن عمر رضى الله عنهما يمربنا ونحن ناكل، فيقول: لا تقارنوا، فان النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم نهى عن القران، ثم يقول، الا ان يستادن الرجل اخاه (صحيح بخارى، كتاب الاطعمة باب القران فى التمر، حديث نمبر ٥٤٤٦)

Hazrat Jabalah bin Saheem رضى الله عنه has narrated that

during the caliphate of Hazrat Abdullah bin Zubair رضى الله عنه famine occurred in the land. During this hard time Allah favoured them with a quantity of dates. When they were eating those dates, Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضى الله عنه passed by them and forbade them to eat two dates together. The act of eating two dates together is called قران in the Arabic language. All who were eating the dates were equally entitled to share the available dates. It was therefore not right that some should take only a single date and some others two dates together. That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ forbade people to eat two dates together. Eating two dates together when others were eating only one is not just.

This Hadith teaches that it is not fair to usurp othes' rights.

How to use things of common use and joint ownership

In the above Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has also taught the principle that a man should not try to derive more benefit than others from something which is a common property meant for the benefit of all. By disobeying this principle one appropriates more than one's share, violating the rights of others. This is not lawful. Not only does this principle apply to dates, but it also applies to all common and public properties that are meant for the benefit of all on equal terms.

For example the system of self-service is in vogue nowadays in the marriage or other dinners. The invitees help themseles by taking their shares of the food themselves from the common pool. All invitees have equal right to the food. Now if a man takes in his plate more than his due share, depriving others of their shares - and this is what actually happens - he does something unlawful and commits the sin

involved in the Arabic word "Qiran" (قران).

Take out the food in your plate with due care

This principle has been stated to teach the *Ummah* that it is a Muslim's duty to make sacrifice for his other Muslim brothers and not to usurp their rights, irrespective of that the rights may be significant or insignificant in value. It is, therefore, necessary for every man to safeguard the rights of others instead of being selfish.

My respected father Hazrat Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه once explained the same principle while sitting on the dining-cloth. He رحمة الله عليه said: when the food has been served on the dining-cloth, count the men sitting round the cloth and if the food is equally distributed among them how much of it will fall to your share. Then eat only your share. If you eat more it will fall within the definition of *Qiran* (قران) which is unlawful.

It is not lawful to occupy sitting space in a Railway compartment more than your due share

Once my respected father رحمة الله عليه explained to us a point concerning sitting arrangements in a Railway compartment. He pointed out that it is written for information in every compartment that there is sitting capacity for 22 passengers only. A passenger enters the compartment earlier and reserves for himself three or four men's seats and spreads thereon his bedding to lie down, compelling three or four men to remain standing. This too comes within the definition of قران . This is absolutely unlawful, because he had the right to take only one man's seat. By occupying more than one seat he has committed two sins. Firstly, he purchased only one ticket for himself

but occupied two or three seats without paying for them which he had no right. Secondly, by occupying unrightfully the seats of others he violated their rights. Thus, he committed two sins. By the first sin he violated a right of Almigty Allah and by the second sin, the rights of the servants of Allah.

The Rights of companions on a journey

It is a right of Allahs' servants and it is very difficult to have it pardoned. The rights and dues of men cannot be forgiven unless the claimants or the creditors forgive their rights or dues. If at anytime Almighty Allah creates in you an urge to repent for your sin, how can you search for the passenger who travelled with you whose right you had usurped? Now there is no way out for you to clear the liability lying on your shoulders. It is, therefore, very imperative for you to be cautious about these pitfalls. The Holy Qur'an has given comands on many occasions about this point:

وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجَنْبِ (سورة النساء:٣٦)

Literally the words "صاحب بالجنب" mean "And the companion by your side." He is the person who has by chance taken his seat by your side, while travelling on a bus, railway train or an aeroplane. He too has some rights which you should not usurp. You should do some sacrifice for his sake. The journey is short and shall end very soon. If you commit some sin it shall remain on record in the roll of your deeds for the whole of your lifetime. It will be very difficult for you to have it pardoned.

It is compulsory to maintain proper accounts in a partnership business

It is a common practice prevailing nowadays that a few brothers are carrying on a partnership business, yet they maintain no accounts. They think that, being brothers, accounting is not necessary among them; it is necessary for outsiders. In the absence of this accounting none knows the share of each brother in the assets of the business, the profits and the capital invested. Everything is being done at randoms. Matters remain smooth in the beginning but, misgivings and suspicions agianst one another develop gradually later on. This mutual relations get bitter and end in litigation and closure of the business which causes loss to all.

All this happens, because we have remained away from the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It is binding on every Muslim to keep proper accounts of common enterprizes and transactions. If no accounts are maintained the person responsible for this is himself committing a sin and is also involving others in such a sin. Remember that mutual reliance and confidence in business due to brotherly relationship continue for sometime and develop into mistrust and hatred later on. All this ultimately leads to endless litigation and quarrels. This is happening everywhere and everyday in the society.

Distinction among the properties of one another is a requirement of the *Shar'iah*

Distinction in ownership of properties is very necessary. It is necessary that there should be clear-cut definition of, and distinction between, properties of relatives like father and son and husband and wife, etc. Hazrat Ashraf Ali Thanawi Sahib رحمة الله عليه had two wives who had each a house of her own. He رحمة الله عليه said that his property and

those of his wives were quite distinct and different from each other. The properties in the house of the senior wife belonged to her and those in the house of the junior belonged to her. The properties and goods in the *Khanqah* (a Muslims monastery) belonged to Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه himself. He said that the ownership of these properties and goods were so defined and clear-cut that if he passed away he would have nothing to advise anyone about these.

Hazrat Mufti Sahib's clarification about ownership of property

My respected father Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه also followed the same principle of defining and segregating properties of one another. During the closing days of his life he had a bed placed in his room on which he lay day and night. We all attended on him in that room. When we brought to his room something from another room, my father insisted on returning that thing after it was no longer necessary. He felt offended and became displeased if it was delayed.

Sometimes I thought that it was hardly necessary to return the thing so hurriedly. One day my respected father رحمة الله عليه himself told us the reason. He said: I have mentioned in my will that whatever there is in my room is my property and whatever there is in the room of my wife is her property. When something belonging to other person comes to my room, I fear lest it should remain in the room and regarded as my property as mentioned in my will, when I have passed away. That is why I take special care that things belonging to others should be returned without loss of time.

All these topics are a part of *Deen*, although we have excluded them from *Deen*. These things need to be learnt from our saintly elders. All these points are deduced from

the basic principle taught by the Holy Prophet ﷺ that we should refrain from قران (i.e. joining together two things).

How to use common properties and goods?

My respected father used to tell us that there are things of common use in a house which are used by every inmate. These are kept at specific places. It is necessary to keep each such article in its specified place after using it. It is a major sin to misplace such things, because a person not finding it in its specific place will be subjected to inconvenience and distress. To cause distress to a Muslim is a major sin. It had never occurred to me earlier that it is a major sin. I thought that it was only a worldly affair and an administrative problem of the household. Note it carefully that there is not a single aspect of life which is not covered by an injunction of *Deen*. We should all think if we are following this principle of placing every article of common use in its proper place. This is a very trifling matter still on account of our inattention and indifference we are committing sins. Why is it so? It is because we attach no importance to matters concerning *Deen* and have no fear that one day we shall be called upon by Allah to render accounts. Another reason is that people are generally ignorant of these matters.

Anyway, all these topics fall within the definition of *Qiran* (قران). In short, everything by which the right of another person is violated or causes distress is a case of قران.

How to use a common Latrine?

There are certain acts for which man feels shy to talk about. For example, after using the latrine the excrement is not flushed out. This causes disgust to others. It is a major sin to cause distress and inconvenience to another

Muslim. We should all refrain from such acts.

The non-Muslims have adopted Islamic modes of living

Once I had the opportunity to accompany my respected father in a journey by air to Dacca (Bangladesh). During the flight I felt the need to go to toilet. You may have seen in the toilet a notice above the washbasin to this effect:

After having used the wash-basin kindly clean it with the cloth and dry it so that those coming later may not feel disgusted.

After I returned from the toilet my father رحمة الله عليه said to me: The notice written above the wash-basin means the same warning which I have been giving you off and on that it is a part of our *Deen* to save others from distress and inconvenience. The non-Muslims have adopted this principle and Almighty Allah has bestowed upon them success and progress in this world. We, on the other hand, have excluded these principles from *Deen* and have confined *Deen* only to prayers and fasting etc. We have totally ignored the rules and etiquettes of social living or "*Mu'asharah*". The result is that we are going back to deterioration and failure. Allah has planned the affairs of this world on the principle of cause and effect. Therefore, the results, good or bad, depend on man's deeds. This is a law of nature which according to Allah's Decree, applies to all, whether they are believers or non-believers.

An incident relating to an English Lady

Last year I had to go to London. From there I was going to Edinburgh by train. On the way I felt the need to use the toilet. When I reached the toilet I saw that an

English lady was standing there. I concluded that the toilet was engaged and the lady was waiting for her turn. I came back to my place. A long time passed neither anyone came out of the toilet nor the lady went in. I again went and saw the sign of 'vacant' on the toilet door. I asked the lady to use the toilet if she wants to. The lady told me that she was waiting for the train to move. It is the law of the country neither to flush nor use the toilet while the train is stationed. No sooner the train leaves the platform she will flush the toilet which she forgot earlier.

Now think that a lady was waiting only to flush the toilet which she could not do earlier. She is not flushing it presently because the law of the Railway stands in her way. At that time I remembered the advice of my father رحمة الله عليه that it is a part of *Deen* to take care of such small matters as flushing toilets and latrines, so that the omission may not be a cause of inconvenience and disgust to those who come to use the facility later. Our behaviour in such matters is just the opposite. We have formed the habit of looking to our own comfort and convenience, leaving others to mind their own business.

Why are non-Muslim Nations making progress

Bear it in mind that Almighty Allah has, in His wisdom, planned the affairs of this world on the principle of cause and effect. Following this divine principle, the non-Muslims began to work hard and reap the benefit of their labour according to the divine law of nature. They have no share in the blessings of the Hereafter because of their disbelief, yet by following the principles and etiquettes taught by the Prophet of Allah Muhammad ﷺ, they have made themselves entitled to the blessings of success and progress in this world. Being Muslims and believers we feel

jealous of them for their success and progress in this world, but we do not compare our ways of dealings with theirs. These non-Muslims do not tell lies in business, nor do they betray trusts, nor are they lovers of ease and comfort. They work hard with honesty and self-sacrifice and reap the fruits of their labour according to Allah's dispensation. The Muslims have given up these manly traits of conduct and have confined *Deen* only to the four walls of the mosques and *Madrasahs* (religious schools). We have excluded from *Deen* other walks of life. In this way we have suffered a double loss - remoteness from *Deen* as well as disgrace and humility in the worldly life. In spite of the fact that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught us all the principles and formulas effective in attaining success in matters relating to this world as well as to the Hereafter. If we find ourselves backwards and disgraced, the fault is our own. This chain of discussion started from the rule of etiquette "not to eat two dates together", but how many important principles have emerged out of this simple rule of etiquette!

May Almighty Allah help us see things in their right perspectives - *Aameen.*

It is against Sunnah to take food, while supporting one's back against something

عن ابی جحیفة رضی الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله علیه وسلم : انی لااکل متکئا

(صحیح بخاری، کتاب الاطعمة، باب الاکل متکئا، حدیث نمبر ۵۳۹۸)

Hazrat Abu Juhaifah رضی الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: I do not take food while supporting my back against something.

In another narrative Hazrat Anas رضی الله عنه has said:

رأیت رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم جالسا مقعیا یأ کل تمرا

(صحیح مسلم، کتاب الاشربة، باب استحباب تواضع الاکل، حدیث نمبر ۲۰۴۴)

"I saw the Holy Prophet ﷺ eating dates, in squatting position.

It is an act of *Sunnah* to eat in squatting position

Some misunderstanding prevails among the people about the pose of sitting, while taking food. It is necessary to clarify the position. In the light of the Ahadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, the best posture of sitting considered '*Mustahab*' (desirable) is the posture should ensure respect for the food as well as modesty. It should not be indicative of arrogance and pride. The common notion prevalent among the people that the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to eat in squatting position is not correct. I could not come across any narrative to prove such a notion. The posture described in the preceeding Hadith of Hazrat Anas رضی اللہ عنہ means that, sitting on the ground, the Holy Prophet ﷺ had placed both his knees standing erect in the front. The Hadith does not suggest squatting position. It is however, quite correct that his posture of sitting, while taking food, indicated modesty and total absence of any vestiges of pride, arrogance or haughtiness. Instead, it indicated complete "servitude" (عبدیت).

The best posture for eating

A Companion رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that once he called upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ and saw that he ﷺ was taking food like a slave. What the Ulama have concluded from the collection of Ahadith is that a man should eat while squatting on the knees. This posture ensures modesty as well as respect for the food and it checks gluttony. A man sitting at ease with the legs spread wide is likely to eat more. The saintly elders have stated that sitting with one leg erected and the other spread on the ground is also regarded

as a desirable posture ensuring modesty. In this posture there are benefits of this world as well as of the Hereafter.

It is also lawful to eat, while sitting cross-legged

While taking food, it is also lawful to sit cross-legged. It involves no sin but it is not as near to modesty as to other two postures mentioned above. It is much better to form a habit to eat, sitting in the above-mentioned two postures. However, if anyone feels some inconvenience he may eat sitting cross-legged. It is wrong to say, as some people allege, that it is unlawful to eat sitting in this posture. After all, the first two postures are preferable, as they allow for better respect for the food and more modesty.

To use tables and chairs for dining

To take food sitting round dining tables and on chairs is also lawful and it involves no sin. Taking food, sitting on the ground is nearer to the Prophet's *Sunnah* and ensures reward for following the *Sunnah* style. Sitting on the ground for taking food is much more preferable as already emphasized, but it must be noted that using dining tables and chairs is quite lawful and it involves no sin.

It is an act of *Sunnah* to eat, sitting on the ground

The Holy Prophet ﷺ used to take food, sitting on the ground for two reasons. Firstly, in those days the people led simple lives and the use of table and chairs was not in vogue. So, they used to sit on the ground. Secondly, to eat, sitting on the ground ensures greater modesty and deeper respect for the food eaten. You may experiment it for yourself that the state of the heart, while eating sitting round dining tables and on chairs and that eating, while sitting on the ground are widely different from each other. Taking food, while sitting on the

ground ensures more modesty, humbleness, meekness and submissiveness. This advantage is not available in taking food, while sititng round the dining tables and on chairs. If by chance a man has to take food, sitting round a dining tabel, this is quite lawful. It is, therefore, wrong to condemn this way of taking food as unlawful and sinful.

Provided this *Sunnah* is not ridiculed

I have mentioned just now that it is nearer to the *Sunnah* much better and entitled to more recompense to take food, sitting on the ground. This is, however, subject to the condition that action on this *Sunnah* is not made a laughing stock. If it is feared that sitting on the ground to take food may be laughed at, then one should not insist. Once while taking his class, my respected father one day told us a story saying:

One day I and some of my friends went to Delhi from Deoband. There we went to a hotel to take food. Two of us refused to eat on the dining table as it was against the *Sunnah*. They therefore, decided to take food in the hotel sitting on the ground. My father stopped them from this act and advised them to take food, sitting round the dining tables and on the chairs like the rest of the party. They seemed to be adamant in their decision. My father explained to them that this act of their would expose the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ to ridicule which was a very heinous sin. Moreover, this sin may sometimes take man to the boundary of *Kufr* (infidelity).

An incident full of morals

On this occasion my respected father told them another story. There was a very pious saint, known as Sulaiman ʿAmash. He was a teacher of Imam Abu Hanifah

رحمة الله عليه All the books of Ahadith are full of his narratives. The Arabic word اعمش (*A ʿmash*) means blear eyed. The eyes of a blear-eyed man become dazzled on account of light. A student came to him to study who was اعرج i.e. lame. He was a student who always remained attached to his *A ʿmash* teacher and accompanied him wherever he went. When both passed through the market the people ridiculed the two by remarking: "Look at the blear-eyed teacher and the lame student." The Imam *A ʿmash* رحمة الله عليه one day forbade his lame student to accompany him, because the people made fun of both of them. The student replied:

مالنا نوجرو يأ ثمون

We should not mind their jokes, because we receive reward and they earn sins.

Imam Aʿmash رحمة الله عليه replied saying:

نسلم ويسلمون خير من ان نوجرويأ ثمون

They and we both should become safe from sinning is much better than that we earn reward and they earn sins by our present practice. The best policy is that in future you should not accompany me to the market.

Do not mind being ridiculed at such times!

If people ridicule you for avoiding a sinful act, never mind their ridicule. You should remember that it is not lawful to commit a sin to avoid people's ridicule and derision. Similarly, it is not lawful to give up an obligatory or compulsory duty lest the people should make fun of you. However, if you have to choose between something which is only lawful and permissible and something which is superior and preferable, there is no harm in accepting what is only lawful and permissible and in rejecting what is superior and

preferable, if thereby you can save people from committing sins.

Do not use dining tables and chairs for eating unnecessarily

Once Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه was compelled by circumstances to take food sitting round a dining table and chairs. Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه admitted that eating on table and chair was not unlawful, yet it had some similarity to the mode of eating adopted by the English infidels. In order to avoid this similarity Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه ate his food on the Table placing his legs on the chair. In this way he eliminated the possibility of similarity to the English style of eating.

Anyway, it is quite lawful to take food sitting round dining tables and chairs. There is no sin involved in it. It should, however, be noted that the nearer a man's actions are to the *Sunnah*, the greater will be the blessing in the actions and the reward for them. It is not good to make it a regular habit to eat sitting round dining tables and chairs unnecessarily. It is better to eat sitting on the ground as far as possible. The dining table and chair may be used for this purpose only in very compelling circumstances. One must take care not to support his back against something while eating. He should stoop the body forward. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has declared it a style of the arrogant to take food while supporting the back against something. This style must be avoided.

To take food, sitting on a cot

It is lawful to take food on a cot; it is better than eating, sitting round a table and on a chair. That style of eating is better in which the food and the man eating that

food are on the same level, than the style in which the food is at a higher level.

The best style is to eat food sitting on the ground. It ensures more modesty, greater reward and it is nearer to the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

May Allah take us nearer to the *Sunnah* of His Prophet ﷺ - *Aameen*!

To indulge in conversation during meals

A wrong belief is prevalent among the people that it is not lawful to indulge in conversation, while taking food. This has no basis in the *Shari'ah*. It is quite lawful to talk during eating, if necessary. This is proved from the Ahadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has, however, suggested that the conversation during eating should be light and not on topics requiring serious thinking. The food also has a right that it should be taken with due attention and regard. Occasional light discourses of a recreative nature are quite lawful.

It is lawful to wipe the hands with something after eating

عن ابن عباس رضى الله عنهما قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: اذا اكل احد كم طعاما فلايمسح اصابعه حتى يلعقها او يلعقها.

(صحيح بخارى، كتاب الاطعمة، باب لعق الاصابع ومصها، حديث نمبر ٥٤٥٦)

Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbas رضى الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: When anyone of you has taken food, he should not clean his fingers unless he has licked them himself or has got them licked by someone else.

The *Ulama* have said that two principles are deducible from this Hadith and it states two rules of etiquette. The first is that after taking food it is lawful to

wipe the hands with a piece of cloth or tissue paper in case water is not available or is available but cannot be used on account of some disease. It is, however, much better to wash the hands with water after licking the fingers.

It is an act of *Sunnah* to lick the fingers after eating

The second principle which is the main objective of narrating this Hadith is that the fingers should be licked before washing or wiping the hands. This was the sacred practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself that after eating he ﷺ used to lick his fingers, so as to take in the small particles of food sticking to them. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has disclosed the wisdom of this practice in another Hadith, saying: You do not know which part of the food contains the blessing. It is possible that Almighty Allah may have endowed with blessing these last particles of the food sticking to the fingers which may not be found in the rest of the food. So do not waste this part of the food, thinking that its worthless.

What is this (blessing)

The world of today which is drowned deep in materialism is hankering after material things from morning till evening. It has lost the ability to peep into what lies beyond the stratum of this materialism. That is why the people do not understand what is "*Barkat*" or blessing. You should know that "*Barkat*" or blessing is such a comprehensive word which includes the prosperity and success of the world as well as of the Hereafter. This blessing is a gift of Allah which you may have seen in your life several times. Sometimes man collects countless resources to acquire someting, yet he fails to receive any benefit from them. For example, you may have collected in your house all the means of comforts and luxuries, most

modern and costly furniture along with numerous servants and attendants, yet you cannot sleep at night. This means that there is no blessing (*Barkat*) in these possessions and pomp and show. Are these resources in themselves an objective and an end ? They are only a means to some end and that is comfort and peace. They have failed to provide this comfort and peace, because these are a gift from Allah. You can have comfort and peace only when Allah bestows them upon you and not otherwise. So, we come to the whole truth that the only and exclusive source of peace, ease and comfort is Allah's grant and nothing else.

Material resoruces are not peace and comfort

Let everyone make a survey of the resources he possessed about forty years ago and those which he is possessing now. Surely the result of the survey shall disclose to you that a considerable increase has taken place in the resoruces during these years. They have now a better house with better furniture and amenities. Yes, but have they acquired more peace and comfort? If not, then it means that Almighty Allah has not granted the owner "*Barkat*" (blessing) through these costly properties and goods. It is said that such and such things contain blessings. This means that the benefit expected from these things is being received. Conversely, the things are devoid of "*Barkat*", if the benefit expected from them is not received.

Peace and comforts are gifts from Allah

Note carefully that comfort, peace and ease cannot be purchased from the market with money. They are exclusively Allah's gifts which He bestows upon whomsoever He wills. On account of the mercy and benevolence of Allah people having little money and

worldly resources enjoying more peace, comforts and ease than those who possess more worldly wealth and resources.

For example, there is a millionaire possessing all the worldly resources, factories, cars, fancy furniture, servants and attendants and all kinds of delicacies of food. He cannot, however, enjoy any of these, because he is suffering from indigestion. This is called absence of "*Barakat*" or divine blessing.

Now, look at the other side of the picture. There is a poor labourer who could earn only one hundred rupees after hard labour. He purchased coarse food from hotel and ate it. In this way he satisfied his genuine hunger. He found full enjoyment from his coarse and rough food. Then he lay down on his broken wooden cot and fell into deep and sweet sleep which he enjoyed for about eight peaceful hours. Thus, this poor labourer enjoyed the taste of the food he ate and the peace of deep sleep, except that he has no pomp and show around him. It is a convincing illustration of "*Barkat*" placed by Allah in little cheap articles, not traceable in precious articles of luxuries.

What is the meaning of "*Barkat*" in food?

Look! The food you are eating is not an end in itself. It is a means to generate energy in the body, appeasing hunger, affording pleasure for the palate, etc. All these advantages can be obtained from food only when Almighty Allah is pleased to grant them. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has mentioned in this Hadith that, may be, the last remnants of the food sticking to the fingers may have the divine "*Barkat*" and the main part of the food may be devoid of it. The main part of the food which you ate, being devoid of "*Barkat*", was not absorbed by the body and failed to generate the energy that was expected from it.

The influence of food on the inner self of man

Whatever has been discussed in the foregoing pages belongs to externally palpable effects of food. People whom Allah has granted inner insight can look into things much farther and deeper. They can easily find out by the light of their spiritual intuition which foods have salubrious effect on the emotions and thoughts of man and which darken the inner soul of man leading to the birth of dirty thoughts and urging him to commit sins. Some foods are so full of blessings (برکت) that they please and elate the inner personality of man and provide nourishment to the soul which induces him to do good deeds. We, however, do not perceive this fine difference between one food and another and thier enlightening or darkening effects. During these days of material race we have become blind to the real qualities and inner properties of things.

An incident illustrating the influence of food

Probably this incident relates to Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Yaqoob Nanotawi رحمة الله عليه who was the Rector of Darul-uloom, Deoband (U.P. India) and a teacher of Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه. Once a man invited the Sheikh to dinner. He رحمة الله عليه went to the place of invitation and began eating. After putting only one morsel into his mouth he realized that the income of the man who had invited him was not lawful. He atonce left the food and came back. He said that he felt for about two months the darkness of the one morsel he had swallowed. He felt during these two months an urge to commit sins. The experience related by the Sheikh appears to us to be incredible, because our chests are filled with darkness. Take the example of a white-sheet of cloth full of spots. If one more spot is added it will make no difference. On the other hand even if a small spot is put

somehow on a spotless white cloth sheet, it can be easily seen from a distance. Such is the similitude of the hearts of saintly men. So it is not at all surprising that Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Yaqoob Nanotawi رحمة الله عليه instantly felt the adverse effect of the unlawful morsel which created in his pure heart an urge to commit sins. This was due to the darkness spread by that unlawful morsel. There is something which is called inner "*Barkat*" by virtue of which man develops in him spiritual integrity and ameliorates his conduct, character and thoughts.

We are caught in the mire of materialism

Today we are caught in the mire of materialism and are hankering after money, worldly comforts and luxuries and show. As a result the inner essence of everything has gone out of our minds and talks about these matters appear to be alien to us. We neither understand the meaning of "*Barkat*", nor do we attach any importance to it. If someone says that Rupees one thousand will be paid for eating food in this way we shall hurry to do that but if it is promised that eating in such and such style contains "*Barkat*" or blessings we shall pay no attention to this promise, because we do not know what is "*Barkat*".

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has guided us through his Ahadith to the sources of "*Barkat*" and has also warned us against the ways which have no "*Barkat*". We cannot understand nor can we attain "*Barkat*" unless we follow sincerely the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. In this Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has laid emphasis on licking the fingers after taking food because the small particles of food sticking to the fingers may have "*Barkat*" in them.

Is it against the rules of etiquette to lick the fingers?

We are living today in an age of fashions. The people have invented for themselves new rules of etiquette. If they are taking food on a dining-cloth along with others, they consider it a violation of etiquette to lick their fingers to clean them of the traces of curry sticking to them. They do not lick their fingers for fear of being dubbed as ill-mannered and un-civilized.

Good manners and civilized behaviour lie in following the *Sunnah*

Remember that good manners and civilized behaviour consist in following the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. What the Holy Prophet ﷺ has defined as mannerliness is acceptable as good etiquette and not that which this fashion -ridden modern society has invented. These fashions are changing from day to day and have no stability. Something which is in fashion today may go out of fahsion tomorrow.

It is unmannerliness to take food, while standing

Now it has become a fashion to take food in standing posture. A man holds the plate with one hand and eats with the otehr hand. Bread, curry, salad and all other items are dumped in the same plate. When the guests approach the dining tabels there is a competition among them to snatch the foods and fill their plates in quantities which they cannot eat. Nobody objects to this way of eating, although in the past this style of eating was condemned as being out of etiquette and unmannerly. The change of fashion is deplorable. The human style of eating is to eat while sitting comfortably.

Do not be a slave to fashion

So do not be a slave to fashion, because fashion is changing from day to day. It is not at all reliable. Reliable is the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ which guides us to "*Barkat*". The *Sunnah* way of eating is a source of "*Barkat*" In this world as well as in the Hereafter. If you unfortunately give up this blessed way of living you will expose yourself to anxieties, worries and failures. There will be darkness instead of light in your heart. In order to reap "*Barkat*" you must lick your fingers after eating as emphasized in this Hadith.

It is an act of *Sunnah* to eat with three fingers

It was a regular habit of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to take food with three fingers, i.e. the thumb, the index fingers and the middle finger. He generally picked up the morsel with these three fingers. The ulama have pointed out that one reason for this habit was that in those days the meal used to be very simple; there were not many items on the dining-cloth, as is today. The second reason is that the morsels taken up with three fingers are small and easy to digest. Another reason is that it is not expressive of greed as are large morsels of food. Small morsels picked up with three fingers are expressive of contentment. That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ generally used only three fingers in eating, although, in rare cases he has employed four fingers also. It occurs in certain narratives that once he ﷺ used all the five fingers in taking food. Thereby he ﷺ has taught his *Ummah* that it is also lawful to take food with four and five fingers.(Sahih Muslim.... chap. eating Hadith No: 2031)

Observance of an oder in licking the fingers

Look at the love and concern of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, that they

have preserved and left behind for our convenience every movement of the Prophet ﷺ of Allah. They رضی اللہ عنہم have, thus, infromed us of the order in which he ﷺ used to lick his fingers. The order was firstly the middle finger then the Index finger and in the last the thumb. When the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم met and sat with one another, they talked about the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and induced one another to folow the *Sunnah*. There is, however, no sin in not licking the fingers, except that the man loses the much deserved Barkat.

How long will you fear being laughed at?

You may think that if you lick the fingers after eating, the people will laugh at and dub you as uncivilized and ill-mannered. Remember that you cannot stop the people from laughing at you, you have to ignore them and take a firm resolve to follow the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ at all costs. It is this weakness and shyness on our part that today we find ourselves totally transformed into the western way of life, culture and dress. Has this aping earned for you any respect in the eyes of the westerner? No, even today they look down upon you and do their best to harm you. Why is it so? It is, because you have given up the blessed path of the *Sunnah* to please your western masters. Despite that they consider you to be outmoded, fundamentalists, conservatives and retrogressive.

These taunts are the legacy of the Prophets علیہم السلام

You must make a final resolve to ignore the ridicules and taunts of the people in order to follow the *Sunnah* of the Prophet of Allah. It is an old habit of the people to laugh at those who follow the true path. What to say of you, do you

not know that the Prophets of Allah had to face the same taunts and jokes from their people? The Qur'an says:

ما نراك اتبعك الا الذين هم اراذلنا بادى الرأى (سورة هود:٢٧)

(The polytheists said): We see that only the mean and depressed among us follow you who have no power to think (11:27)

If you are believers and followers of the Prophets of Allah you must remember that these taunts and ridicules are also among the legacies you have inherited from them. Face these pinching taunts with courage and welcome them with open hearts. Remember that unless you pluck up courage and ignore these taunts, you cannot escape them, as the unbelievers will not stop from laughing at you. An urdu poet has very nicely expressed this idea in a couplet:

ہنسے جانے سے جب تک تم ڈرو گے
زمانہ تم پر ہنستا ہی رہے گا

This means: The people of the world will not refrain from laughing at you as long as you are afraid of their laughter.

Do not care for what the world is saying about you, but care for what the Holy Prophet ﷺ has exhorted you to do vide his sacred *Sunnah*. Try to follow the *Sunnah* and you shall soon see how honour, prosperity and success are attracted towards you.

The announcement of a Great Glad Tidings for following the *Sunnah*

As a recompense for following the *Sunnah* Allah has announced the greatest of glad tidings in the Holy Qur'an:

قل ان كنتم تحبون الله فاتبعونى يحببكم الله (آل عمران:٣١)

(Say, O Muhammad !) If you love Allah follow me: Allah will love you, and forgive

you your sins. (3:31)

The verse means to suggest that it is not in your power to love Allah as He should be loved, but Almighty Allah will Himself love you if you act upon the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Hazrat Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say that a man becomes the beloved of Allah at the time he is following the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It is an act of *Sunnah* to recite:

اللهم ان اعوذبك من الخبث والخبائث

before entering the latrine and enter it by putting first one's left leg. The moment you put your left leg in the latrine in compliance with the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ you become a beloved of Allah.

Allah will make you His beloved

Similarly, when you are licking your fingers after eating, as this is a *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, you become a beloved of Allah. What have you to do with the people, when the Creator and Master of all is loving you? when He appreciates this act of yours why should you worry about others and what they think of your actions? You should, therefore, try to make the *Sunnah* a part of your life without caring the jokes and taunts of the people.

People say that it is very difficult to follow *Deen* in these times. It is not the times but we ourselves who have created these imaginary difficulties. Just consider, who is standing in your way and what hindrance do you experience in your ease and comfort or what loss of wealth and property do you incur in licking the fingers after eating? Who Knows that by following a small *Sunnah* Allah may bestow upon you a great reward? May Allah help us to follow the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ *Aameen*!

It is lawful to have the fingers licked by others

This Hadith offers another advantage by the words. The *Ulama* have stated that sometimes a man is not able to lick his own fingers on account of some handicap. In such a situation he may have his fingers likced by someone else, say, a child, a cat or a bird. The intention should be to prevent Allah's sustenance from being wasted.

To lick the plate after eating food

عن جابر رضى الله عنه ان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم امربلعق الاصابع والصحفة، وقال: انكم لا تدرون فى اى طعامكم البركة (صحيح مسلم، كتاب الاشربة، باب استحباب لعق الاصابع، حديث نمبر ٢٠٣٣)

Hazrat Jabir رضى الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has commanded (the *Ummah*) to lick the fingers and the plate, saying: You do not know which part of your food contains "*Barkat*" (Blessings). Thus, the command requires that the fingers as well as the plate both should be licked. To avoid wastage of food only as much food should be taken in the plate as one can easily eat. By chance if some food in the plate which you cannot eat, leave it in the plate neat and clean on one side of the plate, so that it may be eaten by another person without feeling any disgust. A wrong impression prevails among the people that the food taken in the plate must be eaten in full by the person concerned. This is wrong. The *Shari'ah* hs not imposed any such compulsion.

The spoon should be licked

Sometimes men take their food with spoons and forks. How can such men follow the *Sunnah* of licking the fingers? In such a situation they should lick the spoons to

secure the "*Barkat*" of the food sticking to the spoon. Some *Ulama* have said that this too shall, God willing, secure the "*Barkat*" of licking the fingers.

The morsel which drops down from the hand should be picked up cleaned and eaten

وعن جابر رضى الله عنه ان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: اذا وقعت لقمة احد كم فليأ خذ ها فليمط ماكان بهامن اذى وليأ كلها، ولا يدعها للشيطان، ولا يمسح يده بالمنديل حتى يلعق اصابعه، فانه لا يدرى فى اى طعامه البركة (صحيح مسلم، كتاب الاشربة، باب استحباب لعق الاصابع، حديث نمبر ٢٠٣٣)

Hazrat Jabir رضى الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: If anybody's morsel drops down from his hand, he should pick it up clean it of any dirt or dust that may have stuck to it and then eat it, instead of leaving it for Satan. He should also not wipe his hand with a handkerchief, unless he has licked his fingers. This is because he does not know which part of the food contains "*Barkat*"

This Hadith teaches us the Islamic etiquette that if a morsel or any other eatable article drops down it should be picked up, cleaned and eaten, unless it has become too much soiled in dirt to be eaten. Some people feel ashamed to do this but this is not proper. The advice given by the Holy Prophet ﷺ in the Hadith ensures due respect for Allah's sustenance and for availaing the "*Barkat*" contained in it. The same reason for fearing people's taunts and jeering is at work here also. The incident related below will be helpful in understanding the importance of this Hadith.

An incident concerning Hazrat Huzaifah bin Yaman رضی اللہ عنہ

The Hazrat Huzaifah bin Yaman رضی اللہ عنہ was one of the most devoted Companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He the was known as being a confident of the Prophet ﷺ. At the time when the Muslims attacked Khosran's Empire of Iran, Iran was a world Super Power with a most advanced and sophisticated civilization. The other great power was the Roman Empire but Iran was superior to it in many respects, particularly of its advanced and highly devel. ped culture and civilization. When Iran was invaded the Emperor of Iran, Khosran, invited the Muslims to a reconciliatory negotiation. Hazrat Huzaifah and Hazrat Rub'ee bin 'Amir رضی اللہ عنہم accepted the invitation.

We shall not give up our dress

When Hazrat Huzaifah and Hazrat Rub'ee bin 'Amir رضی اللہ عنہم proceeded for the negotiation and were entering Khosran's Palace, they were putting on their simple Arabic dress which might possibly have become dirty during the journey. Seeing them in that condition, the gate-keeper stopped them, objected to their poor clothes and offered them gowns to put on for appearing before the Royal Court. Hazrat Rub'ee bin 'Amir رضی اللہ عنہ said to the gate-keeper if it was compulsory to wear this gown they were not prepared to attend the Emperor's court. They would meet the Emperor in the dress they were wearing or would go back without meeting him.

You have seen the sword, now see the arm also that will wield it

The gate-keeper sent words to the court authoriteis telling them that strange men had arrived who were not

accepting the gowns offered to them to wear for attending the court. In the meantime Hazrat Rub'ee bin 'Amir رضی اللہ عنہ was re-arranging the scraps of cloth with which the broken part of the sword had been unrapped. The gate-keeper wanted to see the sword closely. It was given to him. When he examined it he said tauntingly: Are you going to conquer Iran with this sword ? Hazrat Rub'ee bin 'Amir رضی اللہ عنہ replied: so far you have seen only the sword; you have not yet seen the arm that will wield it. The gate-keeper desired to see the arm also. Hazrat Rub'ee bin 'Amir رضی اللہ عنہ asked the gate-keeper to get the strongest shield available there to ward off the stroke of his sword. Then a steel shield was brought and a man held it before Hazrat Rub'ee bin 'Amir رضی اللہ عنہ struck the shield with his sword with such might that the shield was cut in two. All present were stunned to see that scene. The gate-keeper then sent words to the court that the new-comer had cut the strongest shield in two. Then they were called in.

Should I give up the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ for the sake of these fools?

When they went in, food was served to welcome them and they started eating it. While eating, a morsel dropped down from his hand. There is a Hadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that on such occasion the morsel should be picked up, cleaned and eaten as a mark of respect for Allah's sustenance and to save it from being wasted. Hazrat Huzaifah رضی اللہ عنہ remembered this Hadith and held down his hand to pick up the fallen morsel. A man sitting by his side hinted to him not to do that in the court of an Empire that was regarded as the Super-power of that age. That action would degrade them in their eyes. The occasion was, therefore, not appropriate to follow that

Sunnah. Hazrat Huzaifah رضی اللہ عنہ replied saying:

اترك سنة رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لهؤلاء الحمقى؟

"Should I give up the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ for the sake of these fools? I cannot give up the *Sunnah*, whatever these infidels thought of us or how contemptuously they laughed at us. So he picked up the morsel, cleaned it and ate it.

These are the conquerors of Iran

It was the custom of Khosran's court that, while he was sitting on his throne, the rest were standing in their respective places. Hazrat Rub'ee bin 'Amir رضی اللہ عنہ told Khosran that they followed the teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ who had forbidden that, one man should be sitting and the rest standing before him as is the custom in his court. They were, therefore, not prepared to take part in the negotiations in that way. So, either they should be provided to sit down or the Emperor should also stand before them. Khosran felt his insult in meeting this demand. He refused to talk to them and ordered that they should be sent back with a basket full of earth placed on their heads. Hazrat Rub'ee bin 'Amir رضی اللہ عنہ placed that basket on his head. While leaving the court, he رضی اللہ عنہ said: O Khosran! Rememebr that you have bestowed upon us the earth (i.e. land) of Iran. The Iranians were very superstitious people who took this event as an ill omen. Khosran, therefore, sent some of his men to overtake them and get back the basket of earth. They could not find Hazrat Rub'ee bin 'Amir رضی اللہ عنہ who quickly escaped with the basket of Iran's earth.

The Pride of Khosran was levelled with the dust

Now consider a bit! Did they attain any honour by their pride or are we attaining any honour today by renouncing the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ? It is the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم who attained honour by eating the fallen morsels in compliance with the *Sunnah* and turned to disgrace the pride of the arrogant Emperor of Iran Khosran. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had already said in a Hadith:

اذا هلك كسرى فلا كسرى بعده

After this Khosran has perished there will be no Khosran again.

The Hadith proved true cent percent and Khosran's name was effaced forever. We must, therefore, strictly follow the *Sunnah* of licking the fingers after eating and eating a fallen morsel after picking it up and cleaning it.

It is not lawful to give up a *Sunnah* for fear of being ridiculed

I have already mentioned that it is lawful to ignore a *Sunnah* if it is feared that some careless and the so called advanced Muslims will reidcule the followers of that *Sunnah* and involve themselves in infidelity and apostacy by this ridiculing. It is lawful to suspend on such an occasion action on this *Sunnah*. For example, it is nearer to *Sunnah* to take food sitting on the ground. If you are taking food in a hotel or a restraurant furnished with dining tables and chairs, you should not insist on taking food there on the ground, in compliance with the *Sunnah*. This may lead to ridicule the *Sunnah*. In such a situation it is better to ignore the *Sunnah* and take food, sitting round dining tables and chairs as a matter of expedience.

This concession holds good only in such situations

in which it is lawful to abandon this *Sunnah*. It cannot be abandoned for fear of being ridiculed or laughed at, where it is neither lawful nor permissible to abandon it under an injunction of the *Shari'ah*. Again, there is a difference between the Muslims and the unbeleivers in this matter. There is a possibility that by ridiculing a *Sunnah* a Muslim may lose his *Eeman* (Faith). As regards the unbelievers, they are already deprived of Eeman and it makes no difference if they laugh at the Muslims for following this *Sunnah*.

What to do, if a guest arrives at the time of taking food?

وعن جابر رضى الله عنه قال: سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: طعام الواحد يكفى الاثنين، وطعام الاثنين يكفى الاربعة، وطعام الاربعة يكفى الثمانية (صحيح مسلم، كتاب الاشربة، باب فضيلة المواساة فى الطعام. حديث نمبر ٢٠٥٩)

Hazrat Jabir رضى الله عنه has narrated that he heard the Holy Prophet ﷺ saying: One man's food is sufficient for two, and two men's food is sufficient for four and four men's food is sufficient for eight men. (Sahih Muslim)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has advised in this Hadith, saying: If you are taking food, and a guest or a needy person suddenly arrives, do not turn him away out of fear that one man's food will not suffice for the new comer. He ﷺ has assured that one man's food will be sufficient for the other man also. Therefore, share your food with him and Almighty Allah shall create blessing in the food that is available. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has also explained in the Hadith that one man's food becomes quite sufficient for two,

two men's for four and four men's for eight men.

Do not turn away a beggar with a menace

A strange custom has developed among us that we regard as our guest only that person who is on an equal footing with us or is a friend or a relation of ours equal to us in status. If a helpless, poor man arrives none accepts him as his guest, but he is regarded as a beggar. In fact, he too is a guest sent to you by Allah. As a Muslim it is your responsibility to welcome this man also as a God-sent guest and share your food with him, if you are taking your food. If a beggar calls on you at this time, it is not good to turn him away dejected. Give him something, then let him go. Care should be taken in all circumstances not to turn a beggar away with a scolding. Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

واما السائل فلا تنهر (سورة الضحى)

Do not, therefore, turn away the beggar. (93:10)

When the Holy Qur'an itself is warning us against turning away a beggar, we should be careful not to let such an occasion arise. This is to avoid harmful and dangerous repurcussions.

An incident full of morals

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has related in his printed sermons the story of a very rich man. Once he was going to take food with his wife. The food was nicely cooked and he sat at the dining-cloth with a great desire and fondness. In the meantime a beggar called at the door. He felt offended at the arrival of the beggar and turned him away with a stern scolding and contempt. Sometimes a man's action attracts Alah's wrath. After sometime enmity developed between the couple which ultimately led to divorce. The divorced wife passed the period of her *'Iddah'* (the prescribed period of

waiting) with her parents and after its expiry married another rich man. One day she was taking food with her new husband when a beggar knocked at the door. The wife told the husband that a sad event had happend with her in the past, so she must give something to the beggar to ward off Allah's wrath. The husband agreed to the proposal. When she went out she saw to her great surprise that the beggar was her first divorced husband. Thereafter she related to her present husband the old story in detail.

This second husband told his wife that he had to relate a still more surprising story. He told his wife that the beggar who had called at the door of the wife's first husband was he (the second husband) himself.

Take warning, O, men! see how Almighty Allah transferred the wealth of the first husband to the second one and the latter's poverty to the former.

May Almighty Allah by His mercy protect us all from bad times, *Aameen*!

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has sought refuge with Allah from such ups and downs:

اللهم انی اعوذبك من الحور بعد الكور

Anyway, try to avoid scolding a beggar, as far as possible. Sometimes occasions do arise when it becomes necessary to scold a beggar. the *Fuqaha* (Jurists) have allowed to scold beggars on rare occasions. It is, however, much better to get rid of a beggar by giving him something.

This Hadith has a second meaning. Do not make the quantity of food you eat fixed and unalterable. In times of need you should be prepared to reduce the quantity you eat. That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ has stated that one, two and four men's food becomes sufficient for two, four and eight men respectively.

The advice of Hazrat Mujaddid Alf Sani رحمة الله عليه

Most acts of *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ concerning the etiquette of taking food have been discussed in the foregoing pages. All that is wanted is that we should resolve firmly to act upn them from today. By acting upon these minor items of the Prophet's *Sunnah* you will receive the spiritual light and other wonderful benefits which Allah has palced in following the *Sunnah.*

What Mujaddid Alf Sani رحمة الله عليه has said in this behalf deserves to be noted with rapt attention. He رحمة الله عليه has said:

Almighty Allah taught me all the external courses of knowledge and granted me perfection in them. Then it occurred to me that I should also know what the respected *Sufis* (mystics) say and what knowledge they have with them. I, therefore, turned to them and acquired knowledge from them. The respected *Sufis* have four orders of *Tasaw-wuf* (Mysticism), i.e. the *Suharwardiyah*, the *Qadriyah*, the *Chistiyah* and *Naqashbandiyah.* I wanted to know what knowledge every one of these, imparted of its disciples. I joined everyone of these, learnt and practised their disciplines and went through all their usual exertions and exercises. As a result, Almighty Allah bestowed upon me such a status that the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself put on my body the robe of honour. Thereafter, Almighty Allah raised me up to such an elevated station that if I disclose its reality, the *Ulama* of the external knowledge will issue against me their rulings of *Kufr* (infidelity), and the *Ulama* of the internal knowledge issue their ruling of *Zandaqah* (Heresy). Even so, Almighty Allah has granted me, by His mercy, all these spiritual ranks. Now I address to Allah a prayer. He will-God willing - receive salvation who joins me in this *Du á* by uttering "*Aameen*".

O Allah, help me to act upon the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ-*Aameen.*

O Allah, let me live on the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ - *Aameen.*

O Allah, let me die on the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ - *Aameen.*

Act upon the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

We have gone far enough in our survey of these topics. At the end we come to the conclusion that if we want to acquire good, we can acquire it only by following the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and again what Hazrat Mujaddid Alf Sani رحمة الله عليه has said: I have come to this conclusion after traversing all these places and you will arrive on it the very first day that you can acquire your heart's desire only by following the *Sunnah* and, not otherwise. So resolve firmly just today to act upon all the *Sunnahs* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This will give you light, peace and a happy life. The happiness of life does not lie in disobedience and sins. Inquire about the enjoyments of life from those who have moulded their lives on the pattern of the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Hazrat Sufyan Sauri رحمة الله عليه has said that if the Kings of the world come to know the enjoyment and pleasures of life which Almighty Allah has bestowed upon us, they will wage a war against us in order to snatch from us our privilege. Anyone can achieve this honour and advantge of acting upon the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Just by this easy formula of elixir and see the result.

May Allah help us all to act upon the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ - *Aameen*!

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi
Date : 6th August, 1993.

ETIQUETTES OF DRINKIG

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيراكثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم، بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

عن انس رضى الله عنه ان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم كان يتنفس فى الشراب ثلاثا يعنى يتنفس خارج الاناء (مسلم كتاب الاشربة باب كراهة التنفس فى نفس الاناء)

وعن ابن عباس رضى الله عنهما قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لاتشربوا واحدا كشرب البعير ولكن اشربوا مثنى وثلات وسموا اذا انتم شربتم وا حمد وا اذا انتم رفعتم (ترمذى، كتاب الاشربة، باب

ماجاء فی النفس فی الاناء)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and seek His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our souls and from the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom He guides and there is none to guide him whom He lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah the One who has no partner. I also bear witness that our sire, and our authority and our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him, his household and his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم and bless them and salute them all in great abundance.

The first equiette of drinking water

The Ahadith mentioned so far dealt with the etiquettes of taking meals. The Ahadith being mentioned today deal mostly with the etiquettes of drinking water. The first of these was narrated by Hazrat Anas رضی اللہ عنہ who said: The Holy Prophet ﷺ used to drink water or any other beverage in three breaths and that during drinking he ﷺ breathed after taking the pot away from his mouth.

The other Hadith was narrated by Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ He has reported that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: If you have to drink anything, do not drink it all at once, (in one breath) like a camel but drink it in two or three breaths. Begin drinking with Allah's name and praise Him after taking off the pot.

My father Hazrat Mufti Muhmmad Shafi Sahib رحمۃ

اللہ علیہ has compiled a small treatise, titled "The virtues of (Bismillah) and the rules about it. It is a very comprehensive writing having enlightening directions about drinking anything. In this treatise my respected father رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has advised us to think how and wherefrom the water comes to us.

Miracle of the Divine water-supply system

Almighty Allah has made the oceans a reservoir for water. He had made the huge quantity of water so stored up saltish. If the water was made sweet it would become putridified after sometime. It is on account of these sea-salts deposited in the sea-water, that the water remains fresh and pure. How could man get even this salt-water from the far off seas? To solve this difficulty Allah raises the monsoon clouds from the surface of the seas, so miraculously that they absorb in their bodies the sea-water leaving the salts in the sea. Thus, the clouds rise up laden only with sweet, potable water. Then in His infinite wisdom

Almighty Allah did not rain down the entire world's requirement of water in one instalment, asking men to store up this huge quantity with them. This was only impossible, as men could not procure such a huge reservoir for this purpose. All-compassionate Allah has Himself solved this difficulty also. He has said in the Holy Qur'an :

فَاَسْكَنّٰهُ فِی الْاَرْضِ (سورۃ المؤمنون:۱۸)

That is : We sent down from the sky water in a measure, then we stored it up in the earth.

(23:18)

In storing the water in this way under the earth, Allah first sent the rains on the high mountains and

stored water there in the form of ice-blocks. Melting slowly and slowly, the water reaches the plains through rivers and rivulets. From there it is taken to fields where it is required for irrigation. This is not all. Some volume of water sinks down into the bottom of the earth running through subterranean canals from which it is raised up to the surface of the earth through wells and other mechanical devices. Praise to Allah! how wonderfully He has stored the water in a huge underground reservoir and has provided a supply-line to enable His servants and creatures to obtain their requirements almost free of charge. It was not possible for the most sophisticated and advanced technology of artificial hydraulic engineering to provide such an unfailing water-supply system. Now think; after passing through so many stages a glass of water has reached you? This is why you are being advised to pronounce the words *Bismillah* (بسم الله) before drinking water.

The entire Kingdom is hardly worth a glass of water

Caliph Haroon Rasheed was once wandering in a forest on a hunting spree. By chance he lost his way. He had also no food with him. While wandering hither and thither, he became very thirsty. At last he came across a hut and asked the dweller for a glass of water. The man provided water to the Caliph. When the Caliph held the glass to drink the water, the man requested him to wait for a moment. He addressed the Caliph, saying: What price would you pay for this glass of water, if the water was not available free of charge and your thirst had the same severity? The Caliph said as it was the question of saving life he would purchase it for the half of his Kingdom.

Hearing this answer the man allowed the Caliph to drink the water and the Caliph drank it. The man then asked Caliph, saying: If the water you have drunk just now is blocked up in your body and you become unable to urinate what would you spend for its remedy? The Caliph replied that the blockade of the urine was a more serious and fatal malady. He would offer the remaining half of the Kingdom to get rid of the malady. After hearing this reply the man said: The price of one glass of water is your entire Kingdom. Have you ever considered how many glasses of water you drink from morning till evening and what a great blessing is this water!

The command that you should drink water after pronouncing the words بسم الله (*Bismillah*) is to make you realize this great blessing of Almighty Allah. In addition, it is a form of worship deserving of a reward to pronounce this sacred name of Allah.

Cool water is a great blessing

Hazrat Haji Imdadullah Sahib رحمة الله عليه once asked his disciple, Hazrat Thanawi, saying: O Ashraf Ali, whenever you feel thirsty, always drink cool water, so that every pore of your body may feel grateful to Almighty Allah. When a believer satisfies his thirst with cool water, he is sure to feel grateful to Allah spontaneously. That is why cool water was one of the favourite objects of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

We do not find any narrative to show that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had a special choice for any food. He ﷺ was, however, fond of cool water. There was a well named Ghars at a distance of two miles from Madinah which was noted for its cool water. Arrangements were made to provide water for the Holy Prophet ﷺ from that well. He ﷺ had also left a will that after death the water of that

well should be used for giving bath to his ﷺ sacred body. The ruins of this well can still be seen, although it is now a dry well. The Holy Prophet ﷺ was fond of cool water, because it induces man to express gratitude to Allah.

Water should be drunk in three breaths

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught us in these Ahadith the etiquettes of drinking water. One of them is that a man should drink water in three breaths. The *Ulama* have pointed out that drinking in three breaths is better and nearer to the *Sunnah*, but it is also lawful to drink water in two and four breaths. It is, however, not appropriate to drink it in one breath. It is also injurious medically to do so. Any way, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has forbidden to drink water in this way. The *Ulama*, however, agree that it has not been declared to be a sin to drink water in one breath; it is only a violation of the *Sunnah* and it is undesirable.

The different capacities and positions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

In fact, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has different capacities and positions in relation to his ﷺ *Ummah*. In his capacity as a Messenger of Allah, he ﷺ was entrusted with conveying to the people the message of Allah - Islam. If he ﷺ has forbidden something in his capacity as a Messenger that thing will become unlawful (*Haram*). Another capacity of him is that of a kind guide. If he ﷺ has forbidden his *Ummah* from some action out of kindness and well-wishing, it only means that the action is not good nor profitable; it does not mean that it has been declared unlawful and a sin. If a man does an action in violation of such advice, he will not become a sinner. It should be borne in mind that not only will a person who bears in his heart some love for the Holy Prophet ﷺ give up

all that has been declared unlawful but he ﷺ will also shun those acts which the Prophet of Allah ﷺ did not appreciate or approve.

Drink water and earn recompense

I have clarified above that it is neither unlawful nor a sin to drink water in one breath. It is, however, a fact that a true lover of the Holy Prophet ﷺ will not go near such acts which the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not like. It is, therefore, the bounden duty of a Muslim not to do, as far as possible acts which did not please the Holy Prophet ﷺ, even though such acts may not be sins. Why should then a man drink water only in one breath instead of the approved and desirable way of drinking in three breaths? This way of drinking is a *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ which will earn you spiritual light and blessings and Allah's love. Why should you then lose such invaluable gains which cost you nothing except a little care and attention?

The Distinctive mark of a Muslim

Every religion and community has some distinctive mark by which it is recognized. This way of drinking water in three breaths is one of the distinctive marks of a Muslim. In the past children were taught to drink water in three breaths. However, the values have changed now. The children are left unbridled to go the way they like. They are not checked if found violating the rules of Islamic etiquettes. Some lovers of the Holy Prophet ﷺ have been seen drinking water in three breaths even if the quantity of the water was hardly sufficient for one breath.

While breathing, remove aside the glass from the mouth

عن ابي قتاده رضى الله عنه ان النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم نهى ان يتنفس فى الاناء (ترمذى، كتاب الاشربة، باب ماجاء فى كراهية التنفس فى الاناء)

Hazrat Abu Qatadah رضى الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has forbidden to breathe into the pot.

This means that, if one has to breathe while drinking water one should breathe after removing the pot or the glass away from the mouth. It has been narrated in another Hadith that a man called upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ and complained to him ﷺ that while drinking water he had to breathe many times. Then he asked how he should breathe. The Holy Prophet ﷺ advised him that while breathing, he should remove the glass away from his mouth. It is against the *Sunnah* and out of etqiuette to breathe into and blow over the glass, while drinking water.

Only one *Sunnah* act may earn the reward of many acts of *Sunnah*

Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to tell us that to act upon the *Sunnah* carries reward so generously that they may be compared to a windfall. If you make the intention to comply with all the acts of *Sunnah* involved in a single act, you shall reap the benefits of all these *Sunnah* acts. For example, when going to drink water, make the intention to drink it in three breaths, to remove the glass away from your mouth on each breath and so on. Here you reap the reward for two *Sunnah* acts only in one act, along with the spiritual lights and blessigns attached therewith. By acting upon the *Sunnah* a man becomes a beloved of Allah. So you to shall receive this divine love. Why should one not

earn such benefits and blessings by bestowing a little care and attention on these easy acts of the *Sunnah*?

Distribute thigns from the right side

عن انس رضى الله عنه ان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم اتى بلبن قد شيب بماء، وعن يمينه اعرابى، وعن يساره ابوبكر رضى الله عنه، فشرب، ثم اعطى الاعرابى. وقال: الايمن فلا يمن (ترمذى، كتاب الاشربة، باب ماجاء ان الايمن احق بالشراب)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has mentioned in this Hadith another important rule of etiquette which is a distinctive feature of the Muslim *Ummah*. This rule is also being widely ignored in our society. The rule has been stated in the Hadith with reference to an event. A man brought to the Holy Prophet ﷺ a mixture of milk and water. (This mixing of water with the milk was not by way of adulteration. Milk diluted with water was considered among the Arabs more nourishing and digestive). The Holy Prophet ﷺ drank some portion of the milk and desired to distribute the rest among those present there. On the Prophet's right side was a bedouin and on his left side was Hazrat Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه. The Holy Prophet ﷺ passed on the left-over milk to the bedouin who was sitting on the right side, ignoring Hazrat Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه He ﷺ at the same time said: الايمن فلا يمن i.e. distribution should begin from the right side.

The status of Hazrat Siddiq Akbar رضى الله عنه

The Holy Prophet ﷺ attached so much importance to this order of distribution that he ﷺ ignored in this matter a godly personality like Hazrat Siddiq Akbar رضى الله عنه - the highest and most honoured personality in the sight of Allah on the surface of the earth, after the Prophets of Allah عليهم

السلام. Hazrat Mujaddid Alf Sani رحمة الله عليه has given an idea of the status of Hazrat Siddiq رضى الله عنه by an example. He رحمة الله عليه has said: If a Prophet of Allah stands before a mirror, then the personality standing before the mirror is the Propeht عليه السلام and his image reflected inside the mirror is the "*Siddiq*". Thus a "*Siddiq*" is a complete reflection and copy of Prophethood. He رضى الله عنه is a vicegerent of the Prophet عليه السلام in the true sense of the word. Hazrat Umar Farooq رضى الله عنه once said about Hazrat Siddiq رضى الله عنه : If Hazrat Siddiq Akbar رضى الله عنه exchanges with me all the good deeds of my entire lifetime for one act of his of passing that one night with the Holy Prophet ﷺ in the cave of "*Saur*", while migrating to Madinah Munaw-warah, the bargain will be cheap for him (i.e. Hazrat Umar Farooq رضى الله عنه . Notwithstanding this highly elevated station of Hazrat Siddiq Akbar رضى الله عنه , the Holy Prophet ﷺ passed on the cup of milk left-over to the bedouin sitting on the right side, ignoring Hazrat Siddiq Akbar رضى الله عنه . This was in compliance with the principle, "الايمن فالايمن" because at the time of the distribution of something the man on the right has a preference.

The right side contains blessings

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught us in this Hadith that at the time of distributing something, e.g., food, water, dates, etc., the distribution should be commenced from the right side. The Arabic word "يمين" means the right side and this word also means "blessed." Beginning work from the right side brings blessings. That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ has commanded that we should eat, drink, put on shoes with the right hand or from the right side. When walking alongside a road, we should also take to the right side. Following this principle the Holy Prophet ﷺ combed

his hair from the right side, then from the left. To begin, things from the right side is an act of *Sunnah* and a means of earning blessings.

Importance of the right side

There is another Hadith dealing with the same topic.

Once some beverage was presented to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He ﷺ drank a portion of it, leaving the rest of it. At that time a young boy was sitting on the right side of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. On the left were people grown up in age and senior in learning and experience. Feeling regard for the people sitting on the left on account of their age and accomplishments, the Holy Prophet ﷺ asked the young boy to forgo his right to take the drink first in favour of his seniors sitting on the left. The boy was intelligent. He replied, saying: O Prophet of Allah, if there had been something else, I would surely have preferred these respectable men to myself. Here the question is of sharing a drink which has remained after your drinking. So I request you to favour me with it, if it is my right. The Holy Prophet ﷺ, therefore, handed over the drink to the boy. This young boy was Hazrat Abdullah bin 'Abbas رضى الله عنه . (Muslim the Book of Drink, etc...)

Note the great importance the Holy Prophet ﷺ attached to the right side by favouring a young boy with the drink, although many elders and seniors were sitting on the left side, and even the Prophet ﷺ himself desired that the elder persons should be favoured with the gift of the drink. He ﷺ however, did not violate the principle of starting things from the right side. Everyday we find occasions on which we have to distribute things, gifts, e.g., food, sweets. On these occasions, if we follow the principle of commencing distribution from the right side

with the intention of complying with the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, we shall soon realize the blessings and lights emanating from this act of *Sunnah*.

Drinking water by mouth from a big water-container

عن ابی سعید الخدری رضی الله عنه، قال:نهی رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم عن اختناث الاسقیه، یعنی ان تکسر افواهها ویشرب منها (مسلم، کتاب الاشربة، باب آداب الطعام والشراب)

In this Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has mentioned another rule of etiquette regarding drinking water. Hazrat Abu Saeed Khudri رضی الله عنه has narrated: The Holy Prophet ﷺ has prohibited drinking water by putting the mouth on the openings of big water containers like pitchers and water skin-bags, commonly in use in those days.

Two reasons for this prohibition

The learned men have mentioned two reaosns for prohibiting this way of drinking. Firstly, such containers hold large quantities of water. This water may possibly contain something harmful and may have become injurious for health. This happens when some animal (rats etc) falls into such containers and renders the water poisonous, or polluted from the Shara'ee point.

Secondly, they have pointed out that when a man drinks water direct by mouth from such a large water containers quantity of the water may get down into his stomach and damage his normal water absorption system leading to serious repurcussions.

The kindness of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to his *Ummah*

As I have already mentioned, the prohibitions which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has imposed on his *Ummah* are of two kinds:

(i) Those which are unlawful and involve sin and

(ii) Those which are neither unlawful nor a sin, yet they are indcedent and contrary to the rules of etiquette.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has sometimes himself done such things only to show that they are not sins, yet being against the rules of etiquette, they should better be avoided. Thus, it occurs in the Ahadith that on rare occasiosn the Holy Prophet ﷺ has himself drunk water by putting his sacred mouth on the openings of skin water-bags. The *Ulama* have explained that this prohibition applies to all big water containers like skin-bags, large earthen pots and other metallic cans. There may, of course, be some exceptions to this rule which are dealt with in the next Hadith.

Drinking water with the mouth placed on the opening of skin Water bags

وعن ام ثابت کبشة بنت ثابت، اخت حسان بن ثابت رضی الله عنه وعنها قالت: دخل علی رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم، فشرب من فی قربة معلقة قائما، فقمت الی فیها، فقطعته (ترمذی، کتاب الاشربة، باب ماجاء فی عن اختناث الاسقیة)

Hazrat Kabshah, daughter of Hazrat Sabit and a sister of Hazrat Hassan bin Sabit رضی الله عنه has narrated, saying: Once the Holy Prophet ﷺ called at our house. A skin water-bag was hanging in the house and he ﷺ stood up and drank water from it with his sacred mouth. By this act he ﷺ showed that it was not unlawful to drink water

by putting the mouth direct on to the water-bag. The prohibition was imposed only as a matter of kindness and advice. Hazrat Kabshah رضی اللہ عنہا has narrated that after, the Holy Prophet ﷺ had left her house, she cut off the part of the bag on which he ﷺ had placed his mouth and preserved that piece of skin as a sacred relic of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

How sacred becomes the spot that comes in contact with the Prophet's sacred lips!

All his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم had a burning love for the Holy Prophet ﷺ, ever ready to sacrifice their lives for the beloved Prophet ﷺ. An example of this ardent love and regard is in Hazrat Kabshah رضی اللہ عنہا who took care to preserve the piece of the skin-bag which the sacred lips of the Holy Prophet ﷺ had touched. She cut off that rare piece from the bag and preserved it in her house as an invaluable relic from the Prophet of Allah ﷺ.

This hair became sacred

Hazrat Abu Makhdoorah رضی اللہ عنہ is a companion whom the Holy Prophet ﷺ had appointed as a *Muazzin* in the Holy city of Makkah. He embraced Islam at a very tender age. The Holy Prophet ﷺ placed his sacred hand on the boy's head, as people generally do with small boys to show their affection. Hazrat Abu Makhdoorah رضی اللہ عنہ said that he never in his lifetime shaved the hair on that part of his head that had come in direct contact with the sacred hand of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He used to mention proudly that the hair on that spot had become sacred by coming in contact with the sacred hand of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

The nature of sacred Relics

These incidents provide a proof that there is no objection to preserving as sacred relics some thing belonging or related to the Holy Prophet ﷺ or for that mater, to a Companion رضی اللہ عنہ, *Tabi'een* or *Wali* or a saint. Nowadays people have become extremists about this issue. Some men become irritated to see some relic and regard this attitude as a form of *shirk*, while there are others who regard these relics as everything. The truth lies in between the two extremes. One should not place so much faith in these relics as to touch the boundary of shirk. Likewise, one should not disregard these sacred relics, so as to become disrespectful to them. We should realize that Allah showers down His mercy on relics that come from His-beloved servants. You have just now seen the regard of Hazrat Abu Kabshah رضی اللہ عنہا for the piece of the skin-bag touched by the sacred lips of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

The sacred Dirhams

Once the Holy Prophet ﷺ offered to Hazrat Jabir رضی اللہ عنہ a few silver Dirhams. Hazrat Jabir رضی اللہ عنہ did not spend these Dirhams the whole of his lifetime, but preserved them as precious and sacred relics from the Prophet of Allah. He left a will for his successors and sons asking them not to spend those Dirhams but preserve them in the house as sacred relics of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. As such, those Dirhams contained to be handed down from generation to generation in his family for a long time. They were however, lost during some disturbance.

The sacred Sweat of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

Hazrat Umme Sulaim, رضی اللہ عنہا a lady Companion, has related that she once saw the Holy Prophet ﷺ sleeping at a place during the severely hot summer of the Arab land. Sweat was flowing down his sacred body. She, therefore, collected and preserved some of the Prophet's sweat in a phial. That sweat was, she admitted more fragnant than musk and saffron. She preserved the phial of the Prophet's sweat in her house and mixed a few drops of it with the scent in her use.

The sacred Hair of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

A lady Companion رضی اللہ عنہا got from somewhere a hair of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. She said that she preserved that hair by putting it in a phial filled with water. Whenever anyone of her tribe fell sick, she would put a drop of the water in the phial with her into some water and give that water to the sick person as a medicne. By virtue of the Prophet's hair Allah brought cure to the patient.

This is how the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم treated with regard and respect the sacred relics of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

The Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم and the sacred Relics

Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ has said that there are many places beteen Makkah Mukarramah and Madinah Munawwarh at which the Holy Prophet ﷺ halted during his journeys between these cities. Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ used to get down at each of these places to offer two Rak'ats of Nafl before proceeding ahead.

In this way the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم took great care in collecting and preserving the sacred relics of

the Holy Prophet ﷺ. However, these Companions رضی اللہ عنہم were also well aware of the reality of these relics. They did not indulge in exaggeration nor were they extremists in this regard. They did not regard these relics as a means of working miracles, bringing cure or solving difficulties. They never made these relics a cause of Shirk, as people do now.

The origin of Idolation

Idolatry took its origin in Arabia as a result of exaggeration in dealing with relics. The mother of Hazrat Ismael علیہ السلام, Hazrat Hajirah علیہ السلام stayed near the House of Allah in Makkah Mukarramah. Thereafter there was a battle between Bani Jarham and some other tribe. As a result of this battle the other tribe expelled the people of Bani Jarham from Makkah Mukarramah who were forced to migrate from there. While leaving Makkah Mukarramah, they took with them some soil, stone and the like to serve as relics and some other memorials of the House of Allah and the Holy city of Makkah. When they settled at another place, they protected and preserved these relics with great care and regard. With the passage of time, when none remained to guide them to the right path the later generations made out of these relics some idols which they began to worship as their gods. It is from this incident that Idol worship took its origin in Arabia.

Moderation is necessary in the matter of sacred Relics

If moderation is not maintained in the respect and regard paid to these relics, this gradually leads to *shirk* (Idolatry). It is, therefore, imperative to be cautious in this matter. We should neither treat them with so much regard

as to touch the boundary of *Shirk* nor take them too lightly and carelessly so as to slight and disgrace them.

The right course is that we should preserve them with due regard for the sake of virtue and blessing which they may contain, because they are related to some spiritual guide or saint. Maulana Jami رحمة الله عليه ha said:

I have regard even for a dog belonging to the city of Madinah Munaw-warah, because that dog is related to the Propeht's city. All these emotions emanate from true love. Anything having the slightest connection with the belief attracts respect and regard. Allah grants recompense to him who has respect for the connection that exists between a Wali and Allah, provided he maintains the due limits and does not transgress them. Despite all this people go to the extremes in these matters and suffer from distress and inconvenience.

May Almighty Allah help us in maintaining moderation. *Aameen*!

It is an act of sunnah to drink water while sitting

عن انس رضى الله عنه عن النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم انه نهى ان يشرب الرجل قائما (مسلم، كتاب الاشربة، باب كراهية الشرب قائما)

Hazrat Anas رضى الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has prohibited drinking water while standing. The learned have advised in compliance with this Hadith that as far as possible people should not drink water while standing. It was the general practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to drink water while sitting.

It is also lawful to drink water while standing

It should be borne in mind that when the Holy Prophet ﷺ prohibited something, even though that is not a sin, he ﷺ himself sometimes ignored that prohibition. This was to

show that the act prohibited was not a sin. That is why there were occasions on which he ﷺ drank water, while standing. You have seen just now how the Holy Prophet ﷺ drank water from the skin-bag of Hazrat Kabshah رضى الله عنها, while standing and with his sacred mouth placed on the opening of the bag. The *Ulama* have, therefore, advised that there is no objection to drinking water standing when one cannot drink it while sitting. As demonstrated by the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself, this is neither unlawful nor a sin. Hazrat Nizal bin Sabrah رضى الله عنه has narrated that once Hazrat Ali رضى الله عنه went to the Rahbah Gate (باب الرحبه) in *Kufah* and there he drank water while standing and said:

انى رأيت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فعل كما رأيتمونى فعلت (صحيح بخارى، كتاب الاشربة، باب الشرب قائما)

That is: I saw the Holy Prophet ﷺ doing the same as you have seen me doing, that I drank water standing. (Bukhari).

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has, by his own action, shown that no sin is involved in this.

The excellence of drinking while sitting

The etiquette which the Holy Prophet ﷺ taught his Ummah, emphasized it and which he ﷺ himself followed the whole of his lifetime is that he drank water, while sitting as far as possible. This way of drinking water thus became one of the most important acts of his *Sunnah*. For the sake of compensation and reward and its blessings every Muslim should try to act upon it himself and teach others to do the same. The children, in particular, should be instructed to drink water while sitting, as there is no inconvenience in following this *Sunnah*. In addition, it is a means of earning divine reward and blessings. Why should we lose the

virtues, lights and blessings of this *Sunnah*?

Form the habit of acting upon the *Sunnah*

Once Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه related the following incident:

"Once I entered a mosque for prayer and was feeling thirsty. I took out water in a pot from the earthen jar provided in the mosque. According to my habit I sat down to drink the weter. A man who was standing nearby objected to this way of my drinking and told me that I could have as well drunk the water while standing. I told him that it was my habit to drink while sitting. The man retorted, saying that it ws a great virtue and honour to form the habit of something which is a *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The man was quite right. When a man is prone to form many habits he should try to form habits which are acts of the Sunnah and which are expected to earn for him great rewards and blessings from Almighty Allah.

The Idea of doing a good Deed is a "guest" from Allah

Hazrat Maulana Maseehullah Khan Sahib of Jalalabad رحمة الله عليه has said when an idea is born in the heart of doing some good deed, this idea in the terminology of the mystics is called "*Warid*" meaning a spontaneous urge. They say that the "idea" is in fact a guest sent by Allah which should be welcomed and honoured. For example, drinking of water while standing you are reminded suddenly that you should follow the *Sunnah* of drinking while sitting and then you sit down to drink. Now this "*Warid*" or the "Idea" will come to you again and again and urge you to follow many other acts of the *Sunnah*.

Thus, you will go on increasing your good deeds. On the other hand if you do not welcome this "divine guest" but turn it away you shall be a loser. For example, you are drinking water standing but you fail to correct yourself when you are reminded that you should drink while sitting, on the ground that thereby you are not commiting a sin. This act of yours is tantamount to turning away the "divine guest". When you repeat this apathy on your part the "Divine Guest" will naturally forsake you. This will result in the hardening of your heart. Instead of the "Idea" to do good deeds, "Ideas" to do bad deeds and commit sins will visit your heart.

The moral we draw from this discussion is that whenever an urge occurs in the heart to act upon the *Sunnah* the opportunity should be seized atonce and the urge should be satisfied by immediate actions. A little practice on this line will put you on the right tract of the *Sunnah*.

How to drink *Zamzam* water?

عن ابن عباس رضى الله عنهما قال: سقيت النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم من زمزم، فشرب وهو قايم. (صحيح بخارى كتاب الاشربه)

Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbas رضى الله عنه has narrated, saying: Once I offered *Zamzam* water to the Holy Prophet ﷺ to drink. He ﷺ drank the water, while standing.

Some *Ulama* think on the basis of this Hadith it is better and more virtuous to drink *Zamzam* water standing instead of sitting. It has, therefore, become a widely known belief that there are two kinds of water which should be drunk while standing - the *Zamzam* water and the water left after performing ablution (*Wudu*). This is because it is

"*Mustahab*" (desirable) to drink the water left after ablution. There is, however, a class of *Ulama* who are of the opinion that it is better to drink both these kinds of water while sitting. They argue about the Hadith of Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ that the Holy Prophet ﷺ drank the *Zamzam* water because the well being crowded with men and surrounded with mire and mud on all sides, there was no place for the Holy Prophet ﷺ in the vicinity to drink while, sitting. Therefore, this Hadith does not make it a binding that *Zamzam* water should be drunk while standing, and that this way of drinking is better and more virtuous.

It is better and more virtuous to drink, while sitting, *Zamzam* and *Wudu* (Ablution) water

On the basis of a research carried out by him my respected father, Hazrat Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ came to the conclusion that it is better to drink both *Zamzam* as well *Wudu* water, while sitting. It is, however, lawful to drink these waters while standing like any other kind of water, when there is some handicap in drinking while sittting.

Taking food while standing

عن انس رضی اللہ عنہ ان النبی صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم انہ نھی ان یشرب الرجل قائما:قال قتادہ: فقلنا لانس: فالا کل؟ قال: ذلك اشرا واخبث (صحیح مسلم، کتاب الاشربۃ، باب کراھیۃ الشرب قائما)

Hazrat Anas رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated, saying: The Holy Prophet ﷺ has forbidden to drink water, while standing. Hazrat Qatadah رضی اللہ عنہ said to Hazrat Anas رضی اللہ عنہ : What about eating while standing ? The reply was : It is worse and more hateful. (Sahih Muslim).

In other words, to eat while standing is more hateful than to drink standing.

On the basis of this Hadith some *Ulama* have said that to drink while standing is only disgustful but to eat while standing is prohibited in the *Shari'ah*.

Avoid eating while standing

There are people who argue on the basis of a Hadith of Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ that it is lawful to eat while standing. Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ has said in this Hadith that during the time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ they ate while walking and drank water while standing. The people, therefore, ask why they are being forbidden to eat while standing when the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم were free to do so.

You have just now heard the Hadith of Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ , saying: that it is worse and more hateful to eat while standing. In other words it is unlawful to eat while standing. This Hadith refers to the meals eaten regularly two, or three times daily. The other Hadith of Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ refers to small bits of eatables, like chocolates almonds and dates etc., which can be eaten while standing and walking. As for the regular meals dinners and lunches, it is totally unlawful to eat them while standing and walking. The system of eating while standing has become very popular in the feasts arranged now. This must be condemned and abolished, because this is not human. It is a beastly way of eating. My respected father described this way of eating as a form of 'grazing' and not as human eating; snatching the food from here and there. This is sheer incivility and also insulting to the guests. For God's sake give up this way of eating. Only a little care is needed to get rid of this beastly system.

Some people justify this by alleging that this ensures economy in expenditure. Only a small space is needed and the heavy cost of furniture is saved. This is meaningless. What about the costly chairs arranged in the marriage hall and the decorative costly lights? In addition, huge amounts are wasted on useless customs, the preparation of video films and so many other sinful practices. Where is the idea of economy? The fact remains that all this is due to the craze of a blind following of fashion and nothing else.

Only a little resolution and courage are needed. Resolve today that you shall entertain your guests with food on dining chairs and tables or on the ground furnished with clean sheets, irrespective of the costs involved. Once you have taken a firm decision to do away with this beastly way of eating and entertaining, Allah will help you in abolishing this inhuman style of feasting.

May Almighty Allah help us all in getting rid of this bad custom. *Aameen*!

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi
Date : 9th July, 1993.

ETIQUETTES OF INVITING GUESTS TO A FEAST

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه، ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيدنا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم اذا دعى اجد كم فليجب فان كان صائما فليصل وان كان مفطرا فليطعم

(ترمذى، كتاب الصوم، باب ماجاء فى اجابة الصائم الدعوة)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and seek His forgiveness and believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our selves

and from the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom He guides and there is none to guide him whom He lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god except Allah the One who has no partner. I also bear witness that our sire, our authority, our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him, his household and his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم and bless them and salute them all in great abundance.

It is the right of a Muslim to accept Invitation

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: When anyone of you is invited to a feast, he should accept the invitation. If he is fasting he should pray for the inviter by calling at his house. If he is not fasting he should go and dine with him.

In this Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has emphasized that a Muslim's invitation should be accepted. He ﷺ has enjoined that to accept an invitation is the right of a Muslim. He ﷺ has said in another Hadith:

حق المسلم على المسلم خمس، ردالسلام، تشميت العاطس، اجابت الدعوة، اتباع الجنائز، وعيادة المريض (صحیح بخاری، کتاب الجنائز، باب الامرباتباع الجنائز)

This means: A Muslim has five rights due to him by another Muslim (i) to respond to سلام (salutation) (ii) to say "یرحمك اللہ" if anyone sneezes; (iii) to accept an invitation; (iv) to accompany a funeral; and (v) to call on a sick person to inquire after his health.

Thus the Holy Prophet ﷺ has granted a Muslim these five rights due to him by another Muslim. The

acceptance of an invitation is one of them. He ﷺ has, therefore, emphasized that the invitation must be accepted.

The objective of accepting an invitation

An invitation should be accepted with the belief that it is from a brother who has invited his brother with affection. This affection should be acknowledged to please the inviter. To accept an invitation is an act of the *Sunnah* which carries recompense and reward from Allah. It is very bad that the act of acceptance should depend on the standard of the food which may be high or low. It should be accepted at any rate because the exclusive purpose is to please the inviting brother. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in another Hadith:

ولودعيت الى كراع لقبلت (صحیح بخاری، کتاب الهبة، باب القلیل من الهبة)

This means: I shall accept an invitation even if it is for eating a goat's leg.

In these days a feast of goat's trotter is regarded as a very nice and attractive dish but in the Prophet's days it was considered to be worthless. An invitation to a feast must be accepted with the intention of pleasing a brother. No distinction should be made between a rich and a poor inviter. On the contrary, it is better and more virtuous to accept the invitation of a poor man.

There is a spiritual light in a feast in which only boiled rice with *Dal* (curry of cereals) is served

I have heard this story many times from my respected father رحمۃ اللہ علیہ about a grass-cutter of Deoband (India) who earned a living by cutting and selling grass. He did not earn more than six pice a week. Being a single person he spent two pice on his food, two pice on charity and retained the remaining two pice as a saving. After

every one or two months he entertained with this saving some saintly professors of the Darul-Uloom (university) of Deoband. The entertainment consisted only of boiled rice and *Dal*. My father told me that at that time Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Yaqoob Nanotawi Sahib رحمة الله عليه was the Rector of the University. He said that he anxiously waited the whole month for the entertainment of the grass-cutter. The reason was that the spiritual light and satisfaction which he received from that simple food could not be obtained from the best of rich dishes generally served in rich banquets.

The reality of a feast lies in the expression of "Affection"

The reality of inviting persons to a feast and of accepting the invitation lies in the expression of affection. It was the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that he ﷺ never turned down an invitation, however poor and lowly the inviter was. Sometimes he ﷺ walked miles to attend a feast. So the reality of an invitation lies in the fact that it should be issued with affection and sincerity and it should be accepted with the same feelings of affection and sincerity. Only then will a feast contain and radiate spiritual light and fetch to both the parties reward and recompense.

Invitation to feast or invitation to enmity

Today our feast and banquets are subjected to useless customs and formalities. To accept or reject an invitation to such feasts is a difficult matter. In either case, there are suspicions and complaints. That is why Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه said that an invitation to a feast should not lead to enmity. A feast should not be made a cause of

inconvenience and distress. Some people issue invitations and insist on its acceptance without considering the difficulties and loss of time the acceptance and attendance may entail. This is no feast; it is a source of distress. If you are to gain someone's affection through arranging a feast, you should first think about providing comfort to the guest and avoiding inconvenience to him.

The best form of a Feast

Hakimul-Ummat, Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه used to say that there are three categories of feasts-viz., the best, the middle and the lowest. During the present conditions of the society, the best form of feast is to present some cash to the guest invited. This will cause no inconvenience to him and he will be free to spend the amount according to his need and choice. This way of arranging a feast is more comfortable and beneficial to the guest and free from any inconvenience to him.

The middle-category of a Feast

The seconed category of a feast consists in sending the food to the invited guest at his house. In such a case the guest has no alternative but to partake the food sent to him. He has been thereby saved from all sorts of inconveniences and discomforts as he was provided with the food at his own house.

The lowest category of a Feast

The third and lowest category of a feast consists in requesting the guest to call at your house to take the food. This is very inconvenient and expensive too. Nowadays people lead a busy life, live at long distances of thirty to forty miles. The acceptance of invitation to such a feast

means spending at least two hours and fifty rupees for attending the feast. This is no feast, but an attempt to cause inconvenience and financial loss to the guest. It could be more convenient to the guest if cash was presented to him or the food sent to him at his house.

A strange way of arranging a Feast

Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Idris Kandehlawi رحمة الله عليه was one of my father's most intimate friends. He lived at Lahore. Once when he came to Karachi he also came to the Darul-Uloom Korangi, to see my respected father رحمة الله عليه. My father was highly pleased to see him. He visited the Darul-Uloom at about 10 (ten) a.m. When asked about his stay at Karachi, he said that he was staying at Agra colony and was due to go back to Lahore the next day. After having some conversation he was preparing to leave the Darul-Uloom my father رحمة الله عليه expressed his wish to invite him to a feast in his honour. At the same time my father said to him that it would be very inconvenient and troublesome for him to visit the Darul-Uloom again from such a long distance for partaking of the feast, specially when he was leaving for Lahore the next day. In lieu of the feast my father رحمة الله عليه presented to the honourbale guest a 100-rupee note an humble gift. Maulana Muhammad Idris Sahib رحمة الله عليه placed that note on his head, saying: This is a great blessing from you that I have been honoured by your feast without undergoing any inconvenience and discomforts. He then took leave to depart.

Affection demands that ease and comfort should be provided

This is an example of avoiding undue formality and providing comfort. If there had been some person other

than the Mufti Sahib رحمة الله عليه he would have insisted on the guest to visit the host's house again for the feast. If there had been a guest other than Hazrat Maulana Idris Sahib رحمة الله عليه he would have rejected the 100 rupee note, saying: Am I hungry and a beggar that you are offering me money to spend it on food?

Bear it in mind that the first demand of affection is that ease and comfort should be provided for the person loved, liked and invited instead of causing inconvenience and distress. My elder brother Zaki Kaifi رحمة الله عليه used to compose very nice poetry. One of his beautiful couplets is as follows:

میرے محبوب میری ایسی وفا سے توبہ
جو تیرے دل کی کدورت کا سبب بن جائے

This means: O my beloved! I forsake such faith as may become a cause of displeasing your heart.

When my late brother recited this couplet I told him that thereby, he had dismissed all forms of '*Bid'ah*' (innovation). All innovations take rise from this tendency of a man that he invents from his own mind new ways of showing faith and loyalty. He hardly thinks that this way of showing loyalty only creates displeasure in the beloved's heart.

It is an art to invite a guest to a feast

Any way, it is an art to arrange a feast and invite guests to it. The aim should be to provide comfort and ease, instead of inconvenience and distress. Secondly, the main aim of arranging feasts is to express affection and to meet the demands of this affection. This has nothing to do with customs. For example, feast, are arranged on the occasions of *'Aqiqa*, or the third, tenth and fortieth days of

someone's death. Remember, that these formal feasts have nothing to do with the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Indeed a feast is that which is arranged with an open heart without any condition and customs, whatsoever.

The foregoing observations are about arranging a feast. As regards the matter of accepting the invitation to a feast, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said, that it is the right of a Muslim to accept the invitation of the inviter. However, the meaning of accepting an invitation is that the man accepting the invitation should have love and affection for the inviter. An invitation should not be accepted for the reason that its non-acceptance will cause dishonour and disgrace to him in his family circle. Acceptance of an invitation with this idea is not in compliance with the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It will be in conformity with the *Sunnah* only when an invitation is accepted with a desire that the acceptance will pelase the heart of the inviter.

The condition to accept an invitation to a Feast

The *Shari'ah* has imposed a condition on accepting an invitation to a feast. This acceptance will become an act of *Sunnah* only when this does not involve the guest invited in some sin. It is not an act of *Sunnah* to accept an invitation where major sins are being committed as generally happens in the functions held nowadays. It is written on the marriage invitation cards وليمه مسنونه (a feast according to the *Sunnah*). The people know that it is an act of Sunnah to arrange a *Walimah* (mariage feast), but they do not know how to make this feast according to the *Sunnah*. In such feasts there is a violation of the purdah system. There are mixed gatherings of both the sexes and major sins are freely committed.

How long shall you go on surrendering yourself to this situation?

Why is all this happening ? It is happening, because we are passively surrendering ourselves to the vices. This has resulted in the spreading of the sins in the society e.g disobedience, indulgence in prohibited acts and lewdness, etc. If on the occasions of such feasts some members of the family had refused to attend the feasts and gatherings such vices would not have spread so fast. If the people are advised not to participate in a mixed gathering of males and females, they say in reply that by so doing they shall be expelled from the family and the soceity. It is suggested that it is much better that a man gets expelled from the clan and the society for the sake of saving himself from displeasing Allah. A man inviting should also abide by your principles and preferences. If he does not do this it is none of your respnsibility to accept his invitation.

The guests invited should take a strong stand in this matter and tell the members of their families and their relatives in clear cut words that they shall not attend a feast in a mixed gathering of men and women. They shall attend a feast where there is a separate arrangement for men and women. They will find that after sometime the vice will be stopped, as it has not yet gone beyond control. The difficulty is that religious-minded people feel ashamed to take this stand, that for the fear the people will dub them as conservative, backwards, fundamentalists and extremists. As against this, those who take the path of faithlessness and unbridled freedom, invite the people without any hitch and hesitation to shamelessness and lewdness. This vice has gone so far that young girls have begun to dance before men. Despite all this people are taking part in such marriage parties. Think a bit for God sake how long will you drift in

this flood and cooperate with the members of your family? If this trend continues for sometime more, it is not unlikely that the vices and curses of the western civilization will overpower our society. There must be a limit at which you must halt. It is, therefore, necessary that you should try to stop this flood of obscinity and absurdity. Therefore, resolve just now that you shall not participate in a function in which sins are committed and men and women sit and eat together. If you resist this ugly situation with courage and determination it is still possible to stop this flood of ever-increasing custom of shamelessness and lewdness.

The *Purdah* observing ladies become untouchable, in such mixed gatherings

On hearing these comments some hosts say that only a few *purdah* observing ladies attend these functions and separate arrangements can be made for them. Do you want to treat these ladies as utouchables? If a purdahless woman sits away from the men what does she lose? On the other hand, if a woman in *purdah* is compelled to appear without purdah before the male guests she spoils her religion. There is no difficulty in making separate arrangements for men and women. Only a little care and courage is needed to achieve this goal and eradicate the evil.

The injunction of the *Sharee'ah* to accept an invitation

The Islamic *Sharee'ah* enjoins that it is not lawful to attend a feast when it is known that some of the major sins will be committed there and there is a possibility that the person invited shall also be involved in these sins. It is, however, permissible to attend a feast in which there will be sin, but the guest will manage shoehow to keep himself

aloof from those sins. This permission is applicable to persons belonging to the general public and not to those important persons whom people raise their eyes for guidance. This is an important principle of accepting an invitation, that the guest does not beocme involved in a sin by his acceptance of the invitation to the feast.

To abandon an optional fast for the sake of a Feast

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has also mentioned in the Hadith quoted in the beginning that if the guest who has been invited cannot partake of the food, because he is fasting he should pray for the host. The Jurists in the light of certain Ahadith, have gone to the extent that, if the man invited is observing an optional fast he has permission to break his fast and accept the invitation in order to please the host. He should compensate for that fast later on. If he does not feel inclined to break the fast, he should at least pray for the host.

An uninvited guest

عن ابی مسعود البدری رضی الله عنه، قال: دعا رجل النبی صلی الله علیه وسلم لطعام صنعه له خامس خمسة، فتبعهم رجل، فلما بلغ الباب قال النبی صلی الله علیه وسلم: ان هذا تبعنا فان شئت ان تأذن وان شئت رجع، قال: بل اذن له یا رسول الله (صحیح بخاری، کتاب الاطعمة، باب الرجل یدعی الی طعام فیقول: وهذا معی)

Hazrat Abu Masoodal-Badri رضی الله عنه has narrated that a man invited the Holy Prophet ﷺ to a feast along with four other persons with him ﷺ. Those were the days of simplicity, so when a man invited the Holy Prophet ﷺ he would permit him ﷺ to take with him three or four persons to share the feast. In the present case the host had invited five persons, including the Holy Prophet ﷺ. When

the Holy Prophet ﷺ was going to the feast a sixth person joined these five. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ reached the door of the host he ﷺ informed him that a sixth person had followed him who had not been invited. If the host permitted him he would enter the door, otherwise he would go back. The host gladly allowed the uninvited person to enter the house and partake of the food.

That man is a thief and a plunderer

In this Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught us that when we are going to attend a feast and by chance an uninvited person follows us to the house of the host, it is our duty to inform the host about this uninvited person. If the host allows this uninvited person, only then he can attend the feast. It occurs in a Hadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that the person who attends a feast without invitation enters the feast as a thief and leaves it as a plunderer.

Some rights of the Host

This teaching of the Holy Prophet ﷺ points out a very important principle which we have forgotten. We have impressed upon our minds that a guest has many rights due to him by his host, e.g.,due respect, provision of comfort and nice food, etc. In this Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught that just as there are rights due to a guest by his host in the same way there are rights due to the host by the guest. If the right due to a host that the guest should not take with him uninvited persons to burden the host, as is the habit of certain *Pirs* and *Faqirs* who do not attend a feast unless there is a platoon of disciples and attendants to accompany them to the venue of the feast. At the sudden appearance of such a crowd the host gets nervous and upset. How to accommodate so

many unexpected arrivals? That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that an uninvited person enters a feast as a thief and gets out of it as a plunderer. There is, however, an exception, when the guest and the host are on very intimate and friendly terms the guest may take a few common friends with him, feeling that the host will be pleased with this addition. In case the addition is likely to cause the slightest inconvenience to the host his prior permission must be obtained.

The Host must be informed in advance

Likewise, it is a right due to the host that his guest must give him advance information about his visit. The guest should visit the host, so as to allow him sufficient time to arrange for his food conveniently. If a guest visits his host at an odd hour it will be difficult for the latter to arrange for the lodging and fooding of the guest. This is a right of the host.

A guest should not observe fast without the permission of the host

May our lives be sacrificed for the Holy Prophet ﷺ that he ﷺ has mentioned in a Hadith that it is not lawful for a guest to observe fast without telling his host that he is fasting. This is becausae the host will arrange for the guest's breakfast and dinner etc., and he does not know that the guest is fasting. if the guest tells him at a late hour about his fasting all this labour of the host will be lost, along with the amounts spent on food, etc. By his behaviour the guest has also caused him mental torture. Therefore, the guest as well as the host have both their respective rights.

The Guest must be present at the meal time

The host appoints a time for serving the food but a guest is absent at this time and the host is searching for him. He himself cannot take food alone without his guest. The Islamic etiquettes demand that if a guest is not inclined to take food or will be late for the meal time, he must inform the guest of his intention and programme, so that the host may be saved from the inconvenience of searching and waiting.

It is a major sin to cause distress to a host

Deen (Faith) is not confined only to prayers, fasting and rehearsing the various sacred words. These rules of etiquette also form part of *Deen*, which in the Islamic terminology are called *Mu'ashrat* (social living). It is seen with regret that even great religious persons who are very particular in the matter of their routine prayers, do not care for these rules of '*Mu'ashrat*'. This carelessness involves them in sins. If, by ignoring these rules, you cause distress to your host, you incur the major sin of causing distress to a Muslim. You must be careful about it.

My respected father Maulana Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say that to cause distress to a Muslim by one's words or acts is a major sin, like that of drinking wine, committing theft or adultery. Thus, if by any of his acts a guest causes distress to his host, he in fact causes distress to a Muslim and commits a major sin. All these points are included in the principle which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has very mercifully mentioned in the Hadith referred to earlier.

May Almighty Allah help us all in complying with these injunctions. *Aameen*!

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi
Date : 13th August, 1993.

ISLAMIC *SHARA'EE* (LEGAL) PRINCIPLES ABOUT DRESS

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

يٰبَنِيٓ اٰدَمَ قَدْ اَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُّوَارِيْ سَوْاٰتِكُمْ وَرِيْشًا ط وَلِبَاسُ التَّقْوٰى ذٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ ط (الاعراف:٢٦)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم، وصدق رسوله النبى الكريم، ونحن على ذالك من الشاهدين والشاكرين. والحمد لله رب العالمين.

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and seek His forgiveness and believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our souls and from the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom He guides and there is none to guide him whom He lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god except Allah, the One and the only. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our sire, and our authority and our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him, his household and his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم and may He bless them and salute them all in a great deal.

That is: O children of Adam! We have revealed to you raiment to conceal your shame and (have also revealed) splendid vesture, but the raiment of righteousness, that is better. (7:26)

Introduction

As I have already mentioned the Islamic teachigns encompass within its orbit every branch of life. It is concerned with every part of social living and social activities without any exception. Dress is also an important aspect of human life. That is why it finds a detailed account in the Holy Qur'an and the *Sunnah*.

The present day propaganda

Nowadays a propaganda campaign is being launched that Dress is something which is related to the specific conditions of every nation and community. It is, therefore, a

matter of narrow-mindedness to involve the rules of the Sharee'ah therein and apply them in cases in which men prefer dresses in accordance with their choice and their environment. People are frequently heard saying that these Molvis have imposed conditions and restrictions on *Deen* which is something very easy and simple. Almighty Allah and His Prophet ﷺ did not prescribe these restrictions in *Deen*. These mullahs have imposed self-styled restrictions. Due to their short-sightedness they themselves have avoided many restrictions and are involving others.

Every type of dress has its specific impact

Bear in mind that the question of dress is not so simple, that a man may choose for him whatever style of dress he prefers without being affected in his *Deen*, his conduct and character, his life and his behaviour, by the dress he adopts. It is a fact admitted not only by the *Sharee'ah* but by the scientists as well as the Psychologists that the style of dress does have its impact on the behaviour, conduct and character of man. The dress is not only a few pieces of cloth sewn together. It is something which deeply affects the thinking, mentality and sentiments of man.

The effect of his gown on Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ

It has been narrated about Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ that once when he came to the Prophet's mosque to deliver a *Khutbah* (sermon) he was wearing a very magnificent gown. After having delivered the Khutbah when he went back home, he put off that gown with the resolution that he would not wear it again, because it created in him a sense of pride and superiority. The gown in itself was something

neither prohibited nor unlawful. Those who have been granted by Almighty Allah crystal-clear hearts are able to realize the slightest of vice in their inner selves. This may be illustrated by the example of a piece of cloth full of dirty spots. If one more spot is added to it, it will make no noticeable difference. The example of our hearts is like the example of the spotted cloth, full of countless spots of sins. We do not, therefore, at all realize in our hearts the bad effects of the sins we commit from time to time. Contrary to this, the hearts of the righteous are like spotless cloth. If a spot appears on it, it is clearly visible. The incident of Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ demonstrates that the dress-style of man does have an impact on his conduct, character and trend of thought. One should, therefore, realize the importance of dress and obey the injunctions of the *Sharee'ah* about it.

Another propaganda of the present day

Remember that the injunctions of *Deen* are applicable equally to the soul and the body, the inside as well as the outside. The Qur'an says:

وَذَرُوْا ظَاهِرَ الْاِثْمِ وَبَاطِنَهٗ (سورۃ الانعام: ۱۲۰)

This means: Forsake the outwardness of the sin and the inwardness thereof. (6:120)

Almighty Allah has commanded His servants to give up the open as well as the hidden sins. Mind well that it is a deception of Satan to think that the inside of man is quite sound, notwithstanding the unsoundness of his outside. Remember that the outside becomes spoiled only when the inside is spoiled. The soundness of the outside depends on the soundness of the inside.

A beautiful example

One of our saints used to give an example to illustrate this point. When a fruit gets rotten in its inside the effect of this rottenness appears on its outside in the form of ugly spots. If the fruit is not rotten in its inside, the outside remains sound and sightly. Similarly, if the outside of a man is unsound, it is a sign that his inside is also unsound to a certain degree. It is therefore, not correct to claim that our inside is all right, no matter what is the condition of the outside.

Attention is paid to the betterment of the outside also in our worldly affairs

People take care to improve their inner as well as their outer appearance in the matters of their worldly affairs. It is a paradox to say that the btterment of the outside is not needed in the matter of "*Deen*". Take an example. While building a house, you have raised the structure with its covered walls and then the walls are plastered. The walls as well as its doors and windows and decorate them with paints to render its external apperance attractive. Now when the main structure which is the inside of the house is safe and sound what is the use of decorating and beautifying its exterior? In the matter of your house or your car you are not satisfied with the soundness of its inside but spend large amounts on decorating its outside. Why do you not apply the same principle in the matter of *Deen* about which you say that when its inside is safe and sound, there is nothing to worry about its outside condition.

This is a Satanic deception

The notion that it is not necessary to take care of the outside as long as the inside is all right is a Satanic

deception. It is necessary to ameliorate the inside as well as the outside. The outside requiring amelioration conists of your "Dress", food, conduct and character in the society. Their soundness has a bearing upon the soundness of the inside which is the soul. Those who do not think on these lines have really no real understanding of *Deen*. If matters had been as these ignorant persons presume, the Holy Prophet ﷺ would not have issued so many injunctions about dress, as he ﷺ has done. In principle he ﷺ has issued his kind injunctions in matters in which people are likely to go astray. It is, therefore, necessary to hear and obey these valuable principles and teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

The *Sharee'ah* has not specifically prescribed any dress

The Islamic *Sharee'ah* has been very moderate in the matter of dress-style. It has not prescribed any specific form and style to be adopted by all Muslims. It would be against Islam to disregard the prescribed pattern of dress. Being a *Deen* of nature, Islam does recognise that styles of dress worn by the people may differ from place to place, according to the conditions, climates, seasons, customs and the needs of different regions. Islam has, however, prescribed only some basic principles of dress which must be understood well and adhered to strictly.

Four basic principles of dress for Muslims

Mentioning the four basic principles of dress Almighty Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

يٰبَنِيْٓ اٰدَمَ قَدْ اَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُّوَارِيْ سَوْاٰتِكُمْ وَرِيْشًا ؕ وَلِبَاسُ التَّقْوٰى ذٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ ؕ (الاعراف:٢٦)

This means: O children of Adam! We have revealed to you raiment to conceal your shame and (have also revealed) splendid vesture, but the raiment of righteousness that is better. (7:26)

Almighty Allah has endowed these three sentences with a world of meanings.

The first basic principle of dress

The first basic principle as revealed in the verse is that the dress should conceal your hidden, private parts. The Arabic word سواة means that part of the body by showing or talking about which a man feels a sense of shame. (the concealable part) is meant here. Thus, the basic aim of dress is to conceal this سواة Allah has described some parts of men and women as سواة that which must be kept concealed from view. This concealable part in a man is what lies between the navel and the knees. It is not lawful to bare this part, except when it becomes unavoidable to bare it before a physician for medical treatment. As regards a woman her entire body is ستر (concealable), except the face and the hands up to the wrists. It is not lawful to open any part of this concealable part in a woman.

The basic aim of a dress is to cover the parts which the *Sharee'ah* has enjoined to be covered. A dress which does not meet this requirement is not recognized by the *Sharee'ah* as a dress. Indeed it is no dress at all.

Three defects in a dress

There are three aspects in which a dress does not fulfil the basic principle concerning "dress":-

i) It is so short that it leaves some of the concealable parts bared.

ii) The dress is large enough to cover two

concealable parts, yet it is so and thin that the concealed parts are reflected throught it.

iii) The dress tight-fitting that the depressions and projections of the body can be easily viewed. This also violates the rules of covering the ستر.

It is, therefore, necessary to cover the body with such thick cloth as does not reflect the concealed parts. It should not be of tight-fitting but of loose-fitting to conceal fully the internal parts. The same three principles are applicable to the female dress also.

The present naked garments

The fashion of the present age has totally defeated the aim of dress. Today such half-naked garments have been introduced among men and women as do not ensure which parts of the body are covered and which are visible to the eyes. Such funny garments are not recognized by the Islamic *Sharee'ah* as dress. There are women who wear very fine and tight-fitting garments which reveal the depressions and projections of their bodies to others. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said about such women :-

كاسيات عاريات (صحيح مسلم، كتاب اللباس، باب النساء الكاسيات)

Those women will be naked even in their garments. (Sahih Muslim)

By wearing such garments the basic aim will not be fulfilled for which Almighty Allah has revealed dress. This trend has spread among women of today like an epidemic and shame and modesty have lost their meaning. Garments and dresses have been designed by professional designers which instead of concealing help to reeal the body. We should for God's sake realize this and ban such garments at least in our houses, as they violate these

injuctions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

May Allah create, by His grace, this feeling among all of us. *Aameen.*

Women should conceal these limbs

Hardly a Friday passed on which our respected Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه did not say something on this topic to draw our attention to the importance of the matter. He used to insist upon us to do some thing to stop this scourage which has become a common fashion. Women are attending public meetings and functions with their heads, arms, chests and bellies bare to view. The injunctions about concealing the body lay down that it is not lawful for a man to open his concealable parts before another man. Similarly, it is unlawful for a woman to open her concealable parts before another woman. For example a woman cannot appear before another woman with her chest, belly, arms, etc. bare, far less her appearing in this half-naked condition before men. These limbs are among her concealable parts.

Harmful results of sins

Just attend a marriage party of these days and see for yourself what is happening there. In these functions women appear before men in half-naked dresses without any hitch, hesitation or shame. This is only a way of inviting Allah's curse and wrath by flagrantly flouting the commands of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The disturbances, murders, thefts and dacoities we see around us every day are due to these sins and acts of disobedience. The Holy Qur'an has said:

وَمَآ اَصَابَكُمْ مِّنْ مُّصِيْبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ اَيْدِيْكُمْ وَيَعْفُوْا عَنْ كَثِيْرٍ

(سورہ الشوری: ۳۰)

Whatever misfortune befalls you, it is due to

what your (own) hands have earned. And He forgives much. (42: 30)

We, therefore, appeal to you earnestly to banish this scourage and sin at least from your houses.

The state of women during the age near the Day of Judgment

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has drawn in a Hadith such a vivid picture of the contemporary societies that we would have been at a loss to understand its meaning, if we had not seen the conditions with our own eyes. In those olden days it was not possible to visualise these conditions. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said: During the age near the Day of Judgment women will be naked, even though they will be putting on garments. The hair on their heads will be like camel humps. The modern fashion of our age has corroborated the predictions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It seems as though he ﷺ made this prediction after seeing these women. (Sahih Muslim).

Next he ﷺ said:

مميلات مائلات

Those women will attract others towards them by their gait, decorations, make-up.

They will come riding on thrones and get down at the doors of the mosques. The commentators of Ahadith were at a loss to interpret this Hadith. The conditiosn obtaining in our times have clarified the meaning of this Hadith that women will move about sitting on cars. The situations we are facing today are due to an open rebellion by the people against the injunctions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Those who are committing sins openly

It should be noted that there are two kinds of sins. In the first kind of sin man commits a sin secretly and not openly. Sometimes he feels ashamed at his sins and repents for them. In the second category man commits sins openly above board and with pride. This is a very dangerous matter. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith:

كل امتى معافى الا المجاهرين(صحيح بخارى، كتاب الادب، باب ستر المومنين على نفسه حديث نمبر ٦٠٦٩)

It is hoped that all the sinners in my *Ummah* shall be forgiven by the grace of Allah, either by repentance or by Allah's own mercy.

There are those who commit sins openly, feel proud of their sins and more than that regard their sins as good deeds. They are ready to defend themselves by arguments. They want to go with the age and do not want to displease the society. There is no hope, God-forbid, of forgiveness for such hardened sinners.

Relinqish the society

Just consider! Is it not a very good bargain that by relinquishing your society, you straighten your relations with Allah? How long will this society cooperate with you and for what? Note that after entering the grave there will be no companion except the good deeds you sent before hand from your life in the world. Your society will leave you alone at the grave. It will not come to your rescue in the grave. At such a critical juncture there will be none except your deeds to save you from the troment of Allah. About the horrors of that time Allah has said:

مَالَكُمْ مِّنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ مِنْ وَّلِيٍّ وَّلَا نَصِيْرٍ (البقرہ: ١٠٧)

This means: .... and you have not, beside

Allah, any friend or helper. (2:107)

In other words on that hectic day there will be none to save you except Almighty Allah.

An event that is full of morals

In surah 37-Saffat of the Holy Qur'an there is an event relating to a person whom Allah will, by His mercy admit into Paradise and bestow upon him all the blessings of Paradise. At such an auspicious time he will remember a friend of him who used to incite him in the world to sins and bad deeds. He used to delude him by describing the conditions and demands of the society. This inmate of Paradise desired to see and find out the fate of his ill-advised friend. He, therefore, began to peep into the Hell to search for the latter. The Holy Qur'an says:

فَاطَّلَعَ فَرَاٰهُ فِيْ سَوَاۗءِ الْجَحِيْمِ ۝ قَالَ تَاللّٰهِ اِنْ كِدْتَّ لَتُرْدِيْنِ ۝ وَلَوْلَا نِعْمَةُ رَبِّيْ لَكُنْتُ مِنَ الْمُحْضَرِيْنَ (الصافات: ۵۵ تا ۵۷)

These verses mean:

Then he looked down and saw him in the depth of the Hell. He said: By Allah you had indeed almost ruined me. and had it not been for the favour of my Lord I too would have been among those brought forth (to doom). (37: 55-57).

Anyway, the affairs of this society appear to be very pleasant and attractive to those who have no *Eeman* (Faith) but those who have *Eeman* in Allah, the Last Day and the Day of Judgment should not be beguiled by the charms of the society. If you firmly beleive that one day you have to appear before your creater Allah, and render your accounts to Him, then you must turn to the commands of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ and put up, with a smiling face, with the taunts and jeerings of this society. Do not mind at all if the society dubs you as backward,

outmoded and an extremists. So, take up courage and tell this society frankly that you are as the society describes you, yet you do not care at all for this errant and bewildered society and that under no circumstances you are prepared to take the path to Hell.

These taunts are a blessing for the Muslims

The Prophets of Allah علیهم السلام had also been subjected by the infidels to taunts. A man who wants to take the path of *Deen* has to tolerate these taunts. However, rememebr that you cannot succeed unless you declare these taunts to be a matter of pride for yourself. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a narrative:

اکثرواذ کر اللہ حتی یقولوا "مجنون" (مسند احمد ج۳ ص۶۸)

Indulge in Allah's remembrance so intensely that the people may take for a madman.

Do not follow the society blindly, but take the opposite direction and try to change the direction of the society's current. It is seen that people dub him as a madman who is honest and trustworthy in his work. They say that the man is crazy. Thus, those who refrain from taking or giving bribe, avoid interest-bearing transactions' and unlawful acts and obey the injunctions of Allah in the matter of dress deserve these taunting remarks. Note that such degrading titles from the society are glad tidings for you from the Holy Prophet ﷺ and a cause of pride too. This is the title which he ﷺ has himself conferred on you. You should, therefore, offer two *Rak'ats* of thanksgiving prayers to Allah and express joy on the day these titles are directed to you. Allah has in this way elevated you on this day to the high position which his Prophet ﷺ has appointed for a *Mu'min* (believer). So, there is nothing to

fear and worry about. How nicely Maulana Zafar Ali Khan رحمة الله عليه has expressed this idea in a couplet:

توحید تو یہ ہے کہ خدا حشر میں کہہ دے
یہ بندہ دو عالم سے خفا میرے لئے ہے

Tauheed (Monotheism) is that on the Day Ressurrection Allah Himself declares. Look! This servant was angry with the two worlds for "My sake!"

If by turning your eyes from the entire world you establish firmly your relations with Allah it is not a bad and cheap bargain. This worldly life is too shortlived. The day you pass away from this transitory life to the everlasting life of the next world, you shall be given a warm reception. You shall see that on the Day of Judgment those who used to taunt and jeer at you in the world are weeping. How long will you go on cooperating with, and surrendering yourself to this society? How long will you follow it blindly? Just take courage and resolute firmly to eradicate nakedness and nudity from the society. May Allah help us all in this matter. *Aameen*!

Allah has mentioned the first principle concerning dress which is to conceal ستر (concealable parts of the body). A dress that does not meet this requirement is no dress; it is a form of nudity.

The second principle concerning dress

Almighty Allah has mentioned the second principle of dress by using the word ریش (vesture), a sort of decoration and decency for you. A man's beauty lies in his dress. A dress should, therefore, be well designed and sewn so that the man wearing it should feel ease and happiness. It should not be ill-designed nor ill-fitting to

disgust the people. It should be decent and attractive in some degree.

To wear costly dresses to pleasae one's heart

Sometimes a man finds himself in a state of doubt about the dress he should put on. If he wears a costly dress it may be prodigality. If he chooses an ordinary dress, how ordinary should it be ? The learned saint Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has advised us about a dress that it should fully cover the ستر (concealable parts) and should at the same time provide some comfort to the body. There is no harm in wearing such dress. For example it is quite lawful to put on a dress made of thin cloth for the sake of comfort. In the same way a man purchasaes a garment at the rate of Rs 15/- per yard instead of Rs 10/- per yard, because the cost is within his means and he thinks that in addition to being comfortable it also pleases his heart. This comes neither within the definition of prodigality nor is it a sin. It is quite lawful to wear such dress.

A rich man should wear a decent dress

It is not good for a wealthy man to wear a very lowly and third-grade dress. It occurs in a Hadith that a man called on the Holy Prophet ﷺ who was in a very shabby wornout and unsightly dress. He ﷺ asked him, saying:

الك مال؟ قال نعم، قال: من اى المال؟ قال قد اتانى الله من الابل والغنم والخيل والرقيق، قال: فاذا اتاك الله مالا فلير اثر نعمة الله عليك وكرامته

(ابو داؤد "كتاب اللباس" باب غسل الثواب، حديث نمبر ٤٠٦٣)

Have you got some property ? He replied: Yes. The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked him : What kind of property is it? He replied: Allah has granted me all sorts of properties out of camels, goats, horses and slaves. The Holy Prophet ﷺ

said: When Allah has granted you property, the effect of this grant should appear from your dress also.

In other words, it should not happen that a man enjoying Allah's gifts should appear as a pauper and beggar. In a way, it is showing ingratitude towards the favours of Allah. Thus, it is no sin, but quite lawful to purchase a dress out of Allah's grant which should provide comfort and pelase the heart of the person wearing it.

Sometimes the Holy Prophet ﷺ has worn costly dresses

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is generally called by the common people "the Prophet ﷺ with the black blanket" and the poets have in their poems given great publicity to this attribute. It is quite true that he ﷺ for the most part of his sacred life preferred simple living. It is narrated about him ﷺ that he ﷺ used to put on generally garments of coarse cloth and wore thick sheets. Likewise, it is also narrated about him ﷺ that once he ﷺ put on a gown which valued about two thousand Dinars. As every act of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was going to become a *Sunnah* and a part of the *Sharee'ah* for the *Ummah* his advice for weaker people like us is that it is quite lawful to put on costly dress for one's comfort and for the expression of decency. One is quite free to do so.

Ostentation and show are not lawful

It may be the intention by acquiring and putting on a costly dress to display to the people that the man is putting on such a costly dress and he is a very rich man and is superior to others. He may do this to impose his greatness and superiority on others. All these trends come within the definition of "ostentation and show" and are totally

forbidden and are unlawful.

A Sheikh (spiritual guide) is needed

There is a very imperceptible difference between the two points, viz., whether costly dress has been put on to pelase one's own heart or to make a show of superiority to others. Who should decide on this very fine difference. It is not everybody's job. A reformer and guide is needed here. He will tell whether the costly dress has been put on really to please one's heart or it is a deception of Satan. It is the spiritual guide (*Pir*) who will guide correctly on such occasions of doubts and suspicions. This point is involved not only in the matter of dress but in all other personal matters, like food, shoes, houses, etc. Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has given us a golden formula to find out the difference.

Refrain from prodigality and pride

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has mentioned a very fine principle in this behalf in the following Hadith:

كل ماشئت والبس ماشئت ما اخطئتك اثنتان: سرف ومخيلة

(صحيح بخاری، کتاب اللباس، باب نمبر ۱)

This means: Eat and wear whatever you like but refrain from two acts: prodigality and pride.

In other words, the intention is to say that prodigality comes in the picture when a man dresses himself with the intention of making a show of his dress. So, one should refrain from putting on a garment that creates pride. However, a spiritual guide is needed to say which dress leads to prodigality and which to pride.

We are discussing the second principle of dress which is decency and decoration. Decency and decoration have their limits. Remaining within these limits decorate yourself as you like. Keeping that decency and decoration

beyond the prescribed limits are unlawful (*Haram*).

Do not run after fashion

People have formed a strange habit of going after the fasion of the day, irrespective of that the garment in fashions suits or does not suit their own choice and convenience. The criterion before them is to accept what is in fahsion and discard what goes out of fashion. For example, once long and flowing shirts had become a fashion with the result that not only did everyone wear it but also began to praise its many qualities. When shorter shirts came into fashion, it displaced the longer shirts and people accepted it as something unique, forgetting their fancy for the longer shirts previously in fahsion. It is not right to decide upon the suitability or unsuitability of something on the basis of fashion. Subject to the permission of the *Sharee'ah* you are free to wear whatever pleases you and suits your fancy and convenience.

Eat and wear whatever you like

There is a popular saying in Hindi :

It means that you should eat what you like, but wear what the world (the general public) likes.

The Islamic *Sharee'ah* does not recognize this principle. Instead, it enjoins upon you to eat what you like and wear what you like. The Islamic *Sharee'ah* has allowed you to eat and wear what you like, keeping within the limits prescribed by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It is not at all lawful to wear a dress which has become a fashion and which is intended to be shown to others. It is totally forbidden (*Haram*).

Women and love of fashion

The mentality of our women is particularly in need of reform and guidance. They think that the garment is not for them, but it is for others to see and appreciate, so that they may declare it to be in accordance with the latest fashion and realize that the woman wearing it belongs to a rich family. As a result in their own houses they are generally seen ill-dressed before their near and dear ones and their husbands. However, when they have to go out to attend a function, they take every care to ensure that the dress should be attractive and according to the ruling fashion and design and that the people may believe that they are ladies of the privileged class. For each function they have a different suit of clothes. They will not wear in another function the suit which they have worn in an earlier. The love of show and display and not thier own choice or preference is the root-cause. This spree of exhibtion is unlawful and a sin. there is no sin if a woman changes her suits from day to day not for show but to please her ego.

Hazrat Iman Malik رحمة الله عليه and a new suit of clothes

Some of our own saints are known to be fond of fine dresses. Hazrat Imam Malik رحمة الله عليه is one of them. He lived at Madinah Munawwarah and was known as the Imam of Darul-Hijrah. It is related about him that he used to put on a new suit every day. This means that every year three hudnred and sixty suits were prepared for him, as after having put on a suit once he did not wear again. Someone objected to this, saying that it was prodigality on his part. The Imam رحمة الله عليه replied to this objection as follows:

I am unable to avoid this. At the commencement of

every year a friend of mine brings me three hundred and sixty suits, requesting me that I should put on a new suit every day. If I do not accept his gift, this will displease him, and if I do not put on a suit every day this will be defeating the purpose of the gift. So I change my clothes every day and hand over the cast off suit to a poor man. Thus, many poor men receive benefit from this practice."

Anyway, this act of Hazrat Imam Malik رحمة الله عليه was to please his own heart and the heart of the donor and not to show and display his richness and finery.

An event of Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه

It is an event full of morals which I heard from my respected father رحمة الله عليه, Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه had two wives, one being senior and the other junior. The senior wife being an old-timer wanted to serve and please her husband to the best of her ability. The Eid festival was near at hand. She thought of presenting the Maulana a gown made of fine cloth as an Eid gift. She got from the market a piece of costly cloth of bright colour and began to sew the gown. She did not inform the Maulana beforehand with the idea that it would be more pelasing to present the gift as an Eid surprise. After hard labour when the gown was ready, it was sent to the Maulana on the night before Eid, she advised him to proceed to the prayer-ground with that gown on his person. The gown, made of a piece of bright colour, was far from being to the liking of the Maulana رحمة الله عليه. The Maulana was indeed in a fix. What to do? He wanted to please his wife who had put in so much toil during the whole of Ramazan in the preparation of that gown. He, therefore, put on that gown and conducted the Eid prayer with the gown on his body. At the end of the prayer a man came to the Maulana and told him that the gown did not suit

him. The Maulana accepted is remark then putting off the gown gifted it to that man.

To please the hearts of others

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه related this event to my father Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه and told him tht while going to the prayer-ground in that gown his heart was undergoing great torture, as he had never in his life worn garments of bright colours. I took upon myself this torture and some tautns too, only to please the heart of my wife who had taken so much pains in preparing that gown with her own hands.

There is no sin if a man puts on best dresses to please his own heart and the hearts of his near and dear ones in the family including the heart of the donor of a gift. It is, however, a cause of punishment and totally forbidden to put on costly dresses with the intention of show and display of his richness and superiority to the people.

The third principle concerning dress

The third principle mentioned by the Islamic *Sharee'ah* concerning dress is that it should not resemble the dresses of other nations and communities. This practice has been called in the *Sharee'ah* تشبہ (imitation). It is a great sin to put on a dress with the intention of imitating the member of another nation, irrespective of that the dress put on is good on bad, likeable or unlikeable. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has expressed in a Hadith a great warning on those who put on a dress for the only purpose of imitating some other community:

من تشبہ بقوم فھو منھم (ابو داؤد، کتاب اللباس، باب فی لبس الشھرہ. حدیث نمبر ٤٠٣١)

It means that a man who puts on the dress of

another community with the express intention of mimicking that community is one of them, as if he is not from among the Muslim community. (chap: Garments, Abu Dawood).

This act of imitating another community in dress etc. is an indirect way of expressing love for it. Such a man will be raised up in the Hereafter with the community he imitated. How terrible ! May Allah save us all from this! *Aameen.*

The reality of تشبہ (Imitation)

It should be understood well when this (Imitaion) comes into play and when it is forbidden. Firstly imitation is forbidden (*Haram*) in an act which is in itself a vice and against the principles of the *Sharee'ah.* Secondly, the act in itself is not unlawful, but it is permissible. A man is, however, doing that act with the intention of imitating the member of that alien community and to appear as one of them. In a situation like this even permissible act becomes unlawful.

To put a *Zunnar* round the neck

The Hindus wear a *Zunnar* (a sacred thread) round their necks. If a Muslim also wears a *Zunar* only by chance, it is not unlawful but it is only permissible for him. If he wears a *zunnar* with the intention of imitating a Hindu, it becomes unlawful and forbidden (*Haram*), as it comes within the meaning of تشبہ (imitation)

To put on mark made by Hindus on the forehead

Hindu women put on a red mark on their foreheads. If the Hindu women did not do this and a Muslim women puts

this mark on her forehead as a mark of decoration this practice is in itself permissible, it is neither unlawful nor forbidden. On the other hand if a Msulim woman puts on her forehead a red mark only to mimic the practice of the Hindus and to resemble them, this becomes unlawful and forbidden. We are given to understand that this fashion of putting on *Qashqah* (Mark) has started in Pakistan also. If so, our women are doing so to imitate the Hindu women. This is unlawful. If an act is in itself lawful and permissible, but it is done to mimic a non-Muslim community it comes within the definition of تشبہ (imitation) and becomes unlawful and forbidden.

It is not lawful to imitate other nations

On the basis of this principle it can be said that it is unlawful and prohibited to adopt and imitate the dress of a nation which has beocme the specific mark and a distinction of that nation by which it is recognized and distinguished from other nations. For example, nowadays it has become a common fashion among men to wear trousers and jackets. Some aspects of this dress are unlawful, irrespective of that this dress may or may not involve (imitation). One defect in it is that it is worn below the ankles. No dress which covers the ankles is lawful for men. Another drawback is that if the trousers are of tight-fittings it does not provide the ستر (cover) which is the basic purpose of a dress, because the depressions and projections of the body are quite visible. For these two drawbacks. it is not lawful to put on trousers and jackets. However, if anyone takes care that the trousers reach up to the ankles and are loose enough not to show the contours of the body, then in itself it is permissibel to put on this dress.

To wear Trousers

If anyone puts on trousers to imitate the English and to become like them, then it is unlawful to adopt this dress, because it comes within the definition of تشبہ (imitation). If imitation is not intended and care is also taken to see that it does not cover the ankles and is also loose enough, then in such a situation it has not been declared borbidden to wear it. Even so, it is not good to wear it, as it is not free from being disgustful. Why is it so? Try to understand this point carefully.

The difference between تشبہ (imitation) and مشابہت (resemblance)

These are two different acts quite distinct from each other. تشبہ (imitation) means that a man intentionally tries to imitate some other community to become like them. This is entirely forbidden. As for مشابہت (resemblance) the act of resemblance is not deliberate but it takes place spontaneously. This is not forbidden. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has however, advised against (resemblance) when it is not at all necessary. He ﷺ has advised his *Ummah* to keep themselves distinguished from the other nations, as far as possible. There should be a distinctive mark of the Muslim nation so that there may be no doubt in recognizing a Muslim from a non-Muslim. It is not permissible to change one's identity so that it may become difficult to recognize whether the person is a Muslim or a non-Muslim and whether to bid him the Islamic (salute) or not.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ took care to refrian from مشابہت (resemblance)

It is a matter of great virtue to fast on the ʿAshoorah Day (the 10th of the month of Muharram). When the Holy

Prophet ﷺ migrated to Madinah Munawwarah, in the beginning fasting on the ʿAshoorah Day was obligatory. By that time the Ramazan fasting had not been prescribed as an obligatory duty. When the Ramazan fasting was made obligatory, the obligatory nature of ʿAshoorah fasting was cancelled. After this cancellation it became optional and permisisble only. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ came to know that the Jews also fasted on the ʿAshoorah Day, he ﷺ said that if he ﷺ remained alive, the next year he would add another day to ʿAshoorah for fasting, i.e. he ﷺ would fast also either on the ninth or the eleventh day of Muharram, so as to fast two days to avoid imitation of the Jews. (Musnad Ahamd vol. I, P. 236)

See how the Holy Prohet ﷺ did not like the (resemblance) with the Jews even in a worship like fasting. That is why he ﷺ asked his *Ummah* to add to the ʿAshoorah either the nineth or the eleventh day of Muharram to make the fasting days two instead of one to avoide resemblance with the Jews. Thus,تشبہ (imitation) is quite unlawful, but (resemblance) too is not desirbale. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has advised us to avoid it as far as possible.

Oppose the *Mushrikeen* (polytheists)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith:

خالفوا المشرکین(صحیح بخاری، کتاب اللباس، باب تقلیم الاظفار، حدیث نمبر ۵۸۹۲)

Oppose the polytheists in all matters as far as possible and create for you your own modes of life as distinguished from those of the *Mushrikeen.*

He ﷺ has said in another Hadith:-

فرق ما بینا وبین المشرکین العمائم علی القلانس (ابو داؤد کتاب اللباس، باب فی العمام، حدیث نمبر ٤٠٧٨)

That is our putting on caps under our turbans makes us distinguished from the polytheists, because they do not wear caps under their turbans.

That is why we have been asked to put on caps under our turbans in opposing the polytheists. It is not an unlawful act to put on turbans without caps, but the advice to put on caps is only to avoid resemblance to the polytheists. It is not desirable to make ourselves resemble other non-Muslim communities. It is better to refrain from this act as far as possible. The Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم took great care not to resemble the non-Muslim communities.

The Muslims are a distinguished nation

You should know that Almighty Allah has created you as a separate nation and included you in His Own Party under the name of حزب اللہ (Allah's party). You stand in isolation quite distinct from the entire world. The Holy Qur'an has said that basically there are only two groups in the entire world:

خَلَقَكُمْ فَمِنْكُمْ كَافِرٌ وَّمِنْكُمْ مُّؤْمِنٌ (سورہ التغابن:۲)

Allah has created you in two groups, one of you being disbelievers and the other being believers. (64:2)

The group of the believers should, therefore, never mix up with that of the disbeleivers. The beleivers should stand distinguished from the disbelievers, by their dress, their behaviour and life in general. Everything concerning the believers should have an Islamic stamp on it. This purpose is defeated if the Muslims adopt the ways of other commnities.

Just see for yourself how everyone, Muslim or non-Muslim, is putting on the same dress. If you go to an assembly of men it will be very difficult for you to know

either from their dress or from their behaviour and conduct who is a Muslim and who is a non-Muslim It is difficult to decide whether to bid them the Islamic Salam or not, and on what topic one should talk to them. To forestall these vices the Holy Prophet ﷺ has advised us to avoid تشبہ (imitation), because it is totally un- lawful and also مشابہت (resemblance) which is neither likeable nor desirable.

It is shamelessness

How shameless it is that you should wear the dress of a nation that enslaved you for long, tyrannized, you in different ways, conspired against you and killed you in great numbers. It left no limit in torturing and disgracing you. How shameless it is indeed that you are adopting the dress and ways of such a tyrant nation?

The narrow-mindedness of the English

People say that it is narrow-mindedness to stop them from using the dress of the disbeleiving English people. Do you not know or have you forgotten the narrow-mindedness of this English community when they occupied India ? They made the flowing gowns, Shalwars and turbans of the Mughal, a uniform for their menial servants, like gate-keepers, peons, butlers and waiters. Why did they do so ? They did so only to disgrace the Muslims and to show them that they attired their low-grade servants in the dress of the Muslim Kings. As against all this the broad-mindedness of we Muslims is that we are putting on the dress of these tyrants with great gusto and pride. What a shame! If anyone tells them that it is against honour and self-respect to put on such dress they retort by saying: "This is narrow-mindedness".

خرد کا نام جنوں رکھ دیا جنوں کا خرد
جو چاہے آپ کا حسن کرشمہ ساز کرے

On account of the miraculous beauty of the beloved madness has been named wisdom and wisdom madness.

In this attitude lies the worst kind of shamelessness, in addition to the fact that it is undesirable in the light of the *Sharee'ah*.

May you change all your ways, yet..... !

Note it very carefully that, however, much you may change your ways by wearing their dress and adopting their life-style, yet you cannot find for you any respect in their eyes. The Holy Qur'an has clearly stated:

وَلَنْ تَرْضٰى عَنْكَ الْيَهُوْدُ وَلَا النَّصٰرٰى حَتّٰى تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمْ

(سورة البقرة: ۱۲۰)

And the Jews will not be pleased with you, nor will the Christians, till you follow their creed.

(2:120)

The Jews and Christians will not be pleased with you, however, much you may adopt their dress and take to their life-style, unless you accept their creed. You have changed yourselves from head to foot on the pattern of their living, yet they have always hated you and tried to ruin you. You have seen this attitude on their part and are seeing it now more vividly. They will never accord you any honour and resepct for your putting on their dress.

Dr Iqbal's comments on the Western civilization

Late Dr. Iqbal has sometimes said very sensible and wise things in his poetry. While commenting on the Western dress and life-style he has said:

قوت مغرب نہ از چنگ و رباب
نے زرقص دختران بے حجاب

نے زسحر سامران لالہ روس
نے زعریاں ساق، نے از قطع موش

Dr. Iqbal elaborates further:

قوت افرنگ از علم و فن است
از ہمیں آتش چراغش روشن است

The idea expressed in these couplets may be summarised as follows:

The power of the west does not lie in music, nor in the dance of their unveiled daughters, nor in the atraction of the tulip-faced beauties nor in the naked legs and short hair-locks on their heads.

Iqbal goes on to say further:

The secret of the power and supremacy of the west lie in their hard work in the field of art and science. Their advancement, progress and superiority all are due to their devoted research and experiment.

In the end he has said:

حکمت از قطع و برید جامہ نیست
مانع علم و ہنر عمامہ نیست

Wisdom, art and science do not depend on any particular style of dress. The eastern dress consisting of the gown and the turban too is not the cause of backwardness. It is nothing but hard work in the field of knowledge and science is needed.

You did not acquire from the west what would have really helped you viz. knowledge and technology, but you

relied on imitating their dress, life-style. In this way you disgraced yourself. The world honours and respects those who have regard and love for their own way of life. So the world shall accord no credit to you for this habit of mimicking others.

Refrain from تشبہ (imitation) and مشابہت (resemblance) both

I have already mentioned the injunction of the *Sharee'ah* that تشبہ (imitation) is unlawful and a sin, because it is practised deliberately. As regards مشابہت (resemblance), if this intention is not involved, but some similarity occurs spontaneously without intention and attempt. It is neither a sin nor unlawful, yet it is not free from disgust and repulsion. However, it is totally against honour and self-respect. Therefore, it is necessary to avoid both as far as possible.

The fourth principle regarding dress

It is unlawful to put on a dress by which a feeling of pride and superiority is born, even if that dress may have been prepared from jute-cloth. For example, a man wears such rough and coarse dress with the intention that such a dress will make him look in the sight of the people like a great saint and Sufi, then this may create a sense of greatness and superiority and lead him to look down upon others. In this condition that jute-cloth dress also becomes a cuase of pride and arrogance and is, therefore, unlawful. Hazrat Sufyan Sauri رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has said that pride is not created by a dress; it is born by looking down upon others. Sometimes a man thinks that he is putting on an humble and ordinary dress, yet his heart is full of pride.

It is not lawful to cover the ankles

Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: Almighty Allah will not look at a man with an eye of mercy on the Day of Judgment who drags down his garment on the ground with pride. (Sahih Bukhari....Hadith No: 5791)

In another Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that the portion of a man's lower garment (trousers, etc) which covers and goes below the ankles will enter Hell.

This shows that it is not lawful for men to wear a dress (trousers, sheet, etc) which covers and goes down the ankles. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has mentioned two warnings for this. Firstly, the portion of the dress that covers and reaches beyond the ankles will be in Hell. Secondly, on the Day of Judgment Allah will not cast a glance of mercy on this sinner. Now see that it is a very simple matter to let your lower garment remain above the ankles. What harm is there if one wears his trousers, etc. so as to remain an inch or so above the ankles? On the other hand, you will save yourself from the displeasure of Allah and attract His glance of mercy. This is a tasteless sin in which the entire nation is involved and none cares about it.

It is a sign of pride to cover the ankles

The Holy Prophet ﷺ was sent to the world with his mission as a Prophet during the Days of ignorance. In those days it was a common fashion to cover the ankles and let the lower dress reach beyond them. It was even considered better if the dress dragged on the ground while walking. A book of Arbaic peotry (Hamasah) حماسہ is taught in the Arabic schools to students of the famous *Dars-e-Nizami* course. It contains poetry composed during

the Days of ignorance. In this book a poet expresses his thoughts with pride:

اذا ما اصطبحت اربعا خط میزری

When after drinking four glasses of wine I go out in the morning, my lower dress gets dragged along, drawing lines on the ground.

Now see how this poet has described this action of his as a proud performance. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ came with his mission, he abolished this custom as he abolished many other customs of the Days of ignorance. He ﷺ commanded that the lower dress should be worn above the ankles as it gives rise to pride and feelings of superiority to let down the dress to cover the ankles.

This also refutes the propaganda which is being spread widely nowadays that the Holy Prophet ﷺ adopted many of the customs, dresses and styles which were common among the Quraish. What is the harm, they ask, if they adopt some of the modes and customs which are in vogue in our times?

Bear in mind that the Holy Prophet ﷺ never adopted the modes and styles which were common during his days. On the other hand, he ﷺ declared them to be unlawful and amended them to conform to the Islamic ways. Not only are the people nowadays committing this sin but they raise objection and ask what is the harm in it. They should know that the harm lies in the fact that this practice invites Allah's wrath and shall take the sinner to Hell.

At the bidding of the English man they have bared their knees too

A saintly person late Hazrat Maulana Ihtishamul Haq Thanawi رحمة الله عليه once said in a lecture that when the Holy Prophet ﷺ has asked us to keep the ankles open as it is not

lawful to conceal them, we are not prepared to obey the Prophet ﷺ in this matter. On the other hand, when the English asked us to open the knees we at once obeyd them by putting on knickers. How shameless it is! If we have any love for the Holy Prophet ﷺ, that love has a claim on us. How is it possible for a Muslim to appreciate something which the Holy Propeht ﷺ has disapproved?

An event relating to Hazrat Usman Ghani رضی الله عنه

On the occasion of the treaty of Hudaibiah Hazrat Usman Ghani رضی الله عنه was going to Makkah to negotiate terms with the disbelievers. His cousin who was accompanying him pointed out to him that his trousers were above the ankles and the dignitaries of Makkah with whom you are going to negotiate look down upon a man whose trousers remain above the ankles. He, therefore, advised Hazrat Usman Ghani to cover his ankles by lowering his trousers. Hazrat Usman Ghani رضی الله عنه replied:

لا، هكذا ازرة صاحبنا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم

"I cannot do this as the trousers of my master were like this I have nothing to worry about what these infidels think of me. I must follow the ways of the Holy Prophet ﷺ".

These are our ancestors who compelled the world to bow before them, while we are afraid of the world and are feeling ashamed to follow the ways of Islam and the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. We are simply hankering after fashion. Kindly for God's sake reform your ways and inculcate in your heart an enthusiasm to act upon the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Is it permissible to cover the ankles, if there is no involvement of pride?

Some people think that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had commanded not to cover the ankles to forestall pride and arrogance. There should be no harm in covering the ankles, if no pride is invovled. They support their claim with the Hadith regarding Hazrat Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ.

Once Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ complained to the Holy Prophet ﷺ that his trousers frequently slipped down the ankles. What should he do ? The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied: The slipping down of your trousers is not due to pride but it is due to disability. You are, therefore, not among them. (Abu Dawood..... Hadith No: 4085).

On the basis of this Hadith people say that they too do not lower their trousers on account of pride, so this should be lawful for them. Now who is going to decide whether you are covering the ankles with or without pride? Just think who can be more away from pride than the Holy Prophet ﷺ , and yet he never covered his ankles at any time in his lifetime?

The permission given to Hazrat Siddiq Akbar رضی اللہ عنہ was due to some disability in his body in the presence of which trousers slipped down his ankles oft and on. Is there any disability with you also? As regards the question of pride, no proud person ever thinks that he is proud. The Islamic *Sharee'ah* has issued its injunctions in the light of the indications and symptoms. In this particular case the injunction does not say that if there is pride keep the trousers above the ankles, otherwise keep them down. Despite the command of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to keep the trousers above the ankles, you are lowering them down. This means that you are doing so on account of pride. This practice is unlawful in all circumstances.

The correct decision of the Research Scholars

There are learned men who have said that if the trousers are lowered to cover the ankles on account of pride, the act is unlawful. If it is not due to pride then the act is repulsive and abominable. Research Scholars, however, agree that lower the trousers to cover the ankles is unlawful in all circumstances. It is not an easy job to find out the presence of pride in each and every case. The only way to save oneself from this sin is to keep the trousers above the ankles and eradicate pride from its very roots.

May Allah help us, by His mercy, to act upon these injunction. Aameen.

Anyway, these are the four principles of "Dress":

(i) It should cover the entire coverable parts of the body

(ii) It should be a means of decorating the body, within the limits of the *Sharee'ah*.

(iii) It should not resemble the dress of a non-Muslim.

(iv) It should not indicate pride and arrogance.

Now we mention below a few Ahadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ about "Dress" in general.

White Dresses are desirable

عن ابن عباس رضی اللہ تعالی عنہما عن النبی صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم قال:

البسوا من ثیابکم البیاض، فانها من خیر ثیا بکم، و کفنوا فیها موتا کم

(ابو داؤد، کتاب الطب، باب فی الامر بالکحل، حدیث نمبر ۳۸۷۸)

Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbas رضی اللہ عنہما has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: Wear white dresses as they are better and shroud your dead therewith. It appears from this Hadith that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has approved white dresses for men, although it is neither unlawful nor forbidden to wear dresses of other colours. It is proved

that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has himself worn sometimes dresses of other colours. Generally he ﷺ wore white dresses. If a man puts on white dress with the intention that the Holy Prophet ﷺ generally wore white dresses and he ﷺ approved them for others he will earn reward for acting upon the Sunnah. It is allowed for men with certain conditions to put on dresses of other colours. It is not unlawful to do so.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has put on red striped garments

عن براء بن عازب رضى الله عنه قال: كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم مربوعا، وقد رايته فى حلة حمراء مارايت شيئا قط احسن منه

(صحيح بخارى، كتاب اللباس، باب الثوب الاحمر، حديث نمبر ٥٨٤٨)

Hazrat Barrau bin Azib رضى الله عنه has narrated, saying: Once I saw the Holy Prophet ﷺ putting on a red dress and then I did not see a more beautiful person than he. It is probably Hazrat Jabir bin Sumrah رضى الله عنه who has narrated: Once on a fourteenth moon-lit night the Holy Prophet ﷺ was sitting with a red garment on his body. At that time I sometimes looked at the full moon and sometimes at the Holy Prophet ﷺ. At last I decided that the Holy Prophet ﷺ looked far more beautiful than the moon.

These Ahadith prove that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has put on red garments also.

Dresses of pure red colour are not lawful for men

It should be noted that the dress was not totally red in colour. In the light of other Ahadith, the *Ulama* have said that in those days red striped sheets came from Yemen. They were not fully red. Those sheets were

regarded as very valuable and of high class. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have put on a suit made of these sheets of Yemen. The Holy Prophet ﷺ put on that suit to show to the *Ummah* that it was quite lawful to put on dresses of that type and colour. It is not lawful for men to wear dresses totally red in colour. Similarly, it is not lawful for men to put on dresses which are specifically meant for women, to avoid تشبه (imitation) with women, as it is not lawful.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has also put on dresses of green colour

عن رفاعة التيمى رضى الله عنه، قال: رايت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وعليه ثوبان اخضران (ابو داؤد، كتاب اللباس، باب فى الخضرة حديث نمبر ٤٠٦٥)

Hazrat Rifa'ah Taimi رضى الله عنه has narrated that he saw the Holy Prophet ﷺ wearing two garmetns of green colour.

It appears from this Hadith that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has sometimes put on a green suit. Thus by wearing garments of other colours, he ﷺ has shown that it is quite lawful to do so. However, the Prophet's favourite wear was white garments.

The colours of the Turbans of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

وعن جابر رضى الله عنه، ان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم دخل عام الفتح مكة وعليه عمامة سوداء (ابو داود، كتاب اللباس، باب فى العمائم، حديث نمبر ٤٠٧٦)

Hazrat Jabir رضى الله عنه has narrated that when in the year of the victory of Makkah the Holy Prophet ﷺ entered Makkah, he ﷺ had a black Turban on his head. It is

proved from various narratives that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has worn white, black and sometimes green Turbans also.

How long should be the sleeves?

وعن اسماء بنت يزيد رضى الله عنها قالت: كان كم قميص رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم الى الرسغ (ابو داؤد، كتاب اللباس، باب ماجاء فى القميص، حديث نمبر ٤٠٢٧)

This means: The sleeve of the shirt of the Holy Prophet ﷺ reached up to the wrists. It is, therefore, an act of *Sunnah* for men to keep their sleeves up to the wrists. Sleeves shorter than this are also lawful but not according to the *Sunnah*. It is by no means lawful for women to keep the parts above the wrists open; it is totally forbidden (*Haram*). So far as women are concerned the entire wrist above the palm forms part of ستر (concealable). This is totally unlawful to keep if open. It has now become a fashion among women to wear half-sleeve garments and sometimes the entire arms are bare. Once the Holy Prophet ﷺ called his wife's sister Hazrat Asma رضى الله عنها and told her that when a girl comes of age, no part of her body should remain open except the palms of the hands and the face. If the sleeves are short, it means that the portion to be covered ستر has been left bare on a permanent basis, and such women are committing the sin of opening their ستر (concealable parts). Women should save themselves from this sin. It is also the duty of men to guide their women on the right path of the *Sunnah*.

May Almighty Allah help us tc earnestly follow the path of the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi

Date : Friday 31th December, 1993.

REPENTANCE - AN ANTIDOTE OF SINS

الحمدلله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهدان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا و سندنا ونبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كيثرا

اما بعد!

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him, seek His help and forgiveness and believe in Him. We rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and from the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom He guides and there is none to guide him whom He let go astray. I bear witness that there is no god except Allah, the One and the only. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our sire, and our

authority, our Master and our Prophet, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah shower His mercy on him, on his household and on his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم and salute and bless them all in great abundance.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ recited Istighfar (to seek forgiveness) one hundred times

وعن الاغرالمزنی رضی اللہ عنہ قال سمعت رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم یقول انہ لیغان علی قلبی حتی استغفر اللہ فی الیوم مائة مرة (صحیح مسلم کتاب الذکر باب استحباب الاستغفار والاستکثار منہ حدیث نمبر ۲۷۰۲)

It is narrated by Hazrat Aghar Al-Muzni رضی اللہ عنہ that he heard the Holy Prophet ﷺ, saying: Sometimes a cloud like thing settles on my heart also, so I seek Allah's forgiveness one hundred times.

Look! These are the words of our Holy Prophet ﷺ whom Allah created innocent of all sins. It was not possible for him ﷺ to commit any sins. In case, he ever committed some lapses being a human being and through forgetfulness. Almighty Allah was kind enough to declare in the Holy Qur'an:

لِيَغْفِرَ لَكَ اللّٰهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْۢبِكَ وَمَا تَاَخَّرَ (سورۃ الفتح ۲)

That Allah shall forgive you (O Muhammad) of your sin that which is part and that which is to come. (48:2)

In spite of the fact that all his past and future sins, if any, stand forgiven vide this divine declaration, the Prophet of Allah ﷺ said that he ﷺ sought Allah's forgiveness by reciting *Istighfar* one hundred times every day. It should be noted that the figure of one hundred used here only means that the Prophet ﷺ recited *Istighfar* in large numbers and not exactly

one hundred times. This is how some *Ulama* have interpreted the figure of "one hundred" used in the *Hadith*.

Everyone suffers from suspicions and doubts about sins

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has also mentioned in this *Hadith* the cause of his reciting *Istighfar* in such a large number. It was because sometimes some thing like a cloud (suspicions about sins) settled on his heart also. After all a Prophet علیہ السلام is also a human being and may feel in his heart whisperings and suspicions about sins. However God-fearing and righteous a man may be, he cannot remain immune from reflections and shadows of sins. It is difficult to find a single saint, *Wali* (friend of Allah) or a favourite of Allah who remained safe from the attack of sinful suspicions and misgivings or Satanic seductions. However, the difference between ourselves and these men of God is that we promptly yield to these suspicions and commit sins. These favourite personalities of Allah steer clear of these suspicions and get rid of them by virtue of their devotion and obedience to Allah and His Prophet ﷺ. They seldom succumb to these Satanic suggestions and are not an easy prey.

The Holy Qur'an says about Hazrat Yusuf علیہ السلام:

وَلَقَدْ هَمَّتْ بِهٖ وَهَمَّ بِهَا (سورہ یوسف: ۲۴)

She surely desired him and he desired her, but that he saw the evidence of his Lord. (12:24)

In other words, they were both inclined to commit the sin, but Almighty Allah deterred him from it.

This is a wrong notion

One should not think that after attaching oneself to the disciplines of a mystic order or the practical following of the *Tareeqah* (the practical disciplines of the *Shari'ah*), the natural temptations to commit sins and the inherent tendencies to vices and deprivities can be eradicated altogether, and the urge to sins will not be there in the heart. This is not possible. The man concerned only suppresses and obtains control over the promptings and temptations to sins. In such a situation man is able to kick aside these Satanic whisperings and save himself from falling into the trap of sins. This is a great success of a man. It is quite wrong to think that after undergoing these spiritual and mystical disciplines. the urge to sins will never enter man's heart -- being human is not possible.

Take to repentance while still young

Almighty Allah has created in man the urge and temptation to commit sins. He has said in the Holy Qur'an:

فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُوْرَهَا وَتَقْوٰهَا (سورة الشمس ٨)

And He inspired it (with the conscience of what is wrong for it and (what is) right for it. (91:8)

Allah has mentioned in this verse that He has created in man the urge to vices as well as to righteousness. In this lies a test for man. If there had been no capacity of sin in man, there would have been no credit in him in remaining innocent and totally free from sins and vices. In such a state there was no need to struggle against the temptations of the self and Satan. What could then entitle man to Paradise which is a reward for struggling against the urges of sins and keeping oneself pure and free from their pollutions? Almighty Allah has created Paradise for those who fear Him

and fear the horrors of the Hereafter and who refuses to obey the insinuations of his self and Satan. The renowned persian mystic poet Sheikh Sa'di رحمة الله عليه has said:

وقت پیری گرگ ظالم مے شود پرہیزگار
در جوانی توبہ کردن شیوہ پیغمبری

It is quite easy to understand that even the most ferocious and dangerous wolf becomes righteous in its old age. At this last stage of its life it has no capacity to kill and harm anyone. What is really creditable and a characteristic of the Prophets عليه السلام is that a man should repent for his sins and take to righteousness while he is still young and possesses the capacity and power to commit sins, but he restrains himself from the path of sins and vices for fear of Allah.

Influence of the company of the pious

There are some wishful thinking people that thinks God-fearing saints may cast on them such a glance as will fill their hearts with divine light and purge them of all urges to sins and vices. This is impossible. The man thinking in this way is deluding himself. If this were correct, there would be no disbeleivers on the surface of the earth, as all would be converted to Islam by the miraculous glance and attention of these pious saints who are found every where.

Once a man called on Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه and requested him for advice. The Maulana obliged him. At the time of departing that man requested the Maulana to impart to him from his chest some spiritual light (نور) to make the problems of the Hereafter easy for him and to eradicate from his heart the temptations of sins. The Maulana replied: What should I

grant you from my chest? It is full of phlegm. You may take it, if you like. Anyway, it is totally a wrong notion that these pious saints can change the life of a man by their miraculous glance.

ایں خیال است و محال است و جنوں

This is only wishful thinking and madness. It is true that the company of the holy saints does have auspicious effects on men's life. Yet those who want to gain something must strive in the path themsleves and should not wait for miracles.

Keep a watch over yourselves every moment

A man may attain elevated status, he cannot attain total immunity from the suspicions and whisperings about sins. It is only posisble by sincere work to suppress and control them and weaken their virulence. It is possible for a man that by keeping company with saintly men he may attain piety, fear of Allah, relationship with Him and so many other spiritual accomplishments. Notwithstanding all this, it is necessary to keep a strict watch over his self at every step and every moment. It is quite misleading to think that after attaining all these qualities and a certificate of proficiency from the Sheikh, a man becomes a Sheikh himself. Now he is free to go which way he likes. It is true that the attention of the Sheikh has helped to weaken and suppress the disciple's instinct to sin, yet constant watch over the self and against Satan's seduction is required at all times. Beware that the urge to commit sins may get revived again at any time:

اندریں رہ مے تراش و مے خراش
تادمِ آخر دمے فارغ مباش

It is necessary in the path of Allah to be on one's

guard and be correcting and reforming oneself continuously. This is necessary till the last moments of life. This self and Satan may deceive you at any time and at any stage.

The story of a wood-cutter

Maulana Rumi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has related in his famous book, the Masnavi, the story of a wood-cutter who used to cut and bring wood from the forest. Once it so happened that a big serpent got entangled and tied up with the bundle of his wood. The wood-cutter was quite unaware about the serpent. When he opened the bundle in his house he saw that a dead serpent was also among the sticks of the wood and paid no attention. When the serpent received heat it began to crawl slowly till it reached the wood-cutter and bit him. The inmates of the house were stunned to see this mishap. How could a dead serpent bite anyone as it had bitten the wood-cutter?

Man's self is also a serpent

After having related this story Maulana Rumi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has compared man's self to a serpent. When a man undergoes spiritual exercises, disciplines and drills under the care and supervision of a Sheikh, his self beocmes very weak and looks as if it is dead, but in reality it is still alive. Like the serpent it can bite and kill a man when it finds its victim unwary. The Maulana has explained the same idea in another persian couplet:

نفس اژدھا است مردہ است
ازغمے بے آلتی افسردہ است

The above couplet means that self of man is like a serpent, which seems to be dead but it is alive. It paralysed

and benumbed on account of the shocks and blows it has received from the spiritual exercises and disciplines. It may become revived and may bite anyone at any time.

One should not, therefore, become negligent about his self at any moment. He should always be cautious.

Taubah (repentance) and *Istighfar* (seeking forgiveness) are antidotes to sins

Allah has created two deadly poisons in the forms of Satan and the human self that are always attacking and damaging man's religious and spiritual integrity. At the same time, Allah has also created two very effective antidotes to these two archenemies of man. Those antidotes are *Taubah* (Repentance) and *Istighfar* (seeking forgiveness). Whenever you feel that you are in danger of being bitten by this serpent of self, you are advised to take resort to these antidotes, i.e. Taubah and Istighfar and recite these words:

استغفر الله ربی من کل ذنب واتوب الیه

This *ISTIGHFAR* or antidote will instantly counteract effectively the poisons of the serpent of self or Satan.

A wonderful marvel of nature

Once I was on a Railway journey in South Africa around Cape Town. The trian stopped in a hilly track. We got down from the train to offer prayer. I saw a plant which was very beautiful and attractive. So charming to the eyes that I could not help extending my hand to pluck a few of its leaves. No sooner did I extend my hand to reach the plant, my guide cried loudly to stop me from what I was going to do. So I held back my hand. He told

me that it was a very poisonous plant, although it looked so beautiful and charming. If anyone touched it he would be poisoned just like the poison of a scorpion's sting. I was saved from its poison as a result of this timely warning, yet an ignorant man is always exposed to this danger.

On this my guide showed me something more exciting than this. There is another plant to counter the effects of this poisonous plant. This would be the antidote to the poison of that poisonous plant. If someone touched the poisonous plant and was affected, by touching the others plant, the poison could be instantly countered.

The same is the case of our sins and of Repentance and *Istighfar*. As soon as you feel that the poison of your sins is increasing, you should counteract it at once by taking resort to Repentance and *Istighfar*.

Allah appointed man his vicegerent and fortified him with antidotes

Our Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله علیه once told us that Almighty Allah placed in man the faculty of committing sins and then sent him to this world as His vicegerent. On the other hand, there is another creation of Allah the Angels whom He did not consider fit for the honour of being His vicegerent as they did not possess the faculty of committing sins. To afford a sample and practice He let the first man commit a fault. When Almighty Allah lodged Hazrat Adam علیه السلام, the first man in Paradise, he commanded him not to approach such and such tree. Satan, however, beguiled Hazrat Adam علیه السلام on account of which he علیه السلام ate the fruit of the forbidden tree and committed a sin. Hazrat Adam علیه السلام was in fact, induced to commit the sin, as this fault could not have been without the will of Almighty Allah. Once Hazrat Adam علیه السلام

had committed this fault, he felt ashamed and he sincerely repented for that. Thereupon Almighty Allah taught him these few words and asked him to recite them:

رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَـآ اَنْفُسَنَا ۖ وَاِنْ لَّمْ تَغْفِرْلَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الْخٰسِرِيْنَ

(الاعراف:٢٣)

Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If you do not forgive us nor have mercy on us, surely we shall be among the losers. (7:23)

There is an important point to note. It was possible for Allah to grant Hazrat Adam عليه السلام forgiveness without teaching him these words and seeking through them Allah's forgiveness. He could have told Hazrat Adam عليه السلام direct: All right, I grant you My pardon. But Almighty Allah did not do so. Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه has said that the intention of Allah was to teach Hazrat Adam عليه السلام that the latter will have to face such mishaps in the world where he was going. There will be Satan and the human self to misguide him and induce him to commit sins off and on. It would not be possible to live in the world a clean and contented life without the antidotes of *Istighfar* or *Taubh*. Almighty Allah therefore, sent Hazrat Adam عليه السلام equipped with these. Only speak with your tongue with repentance in your heart, the words استغفر الله، توبه (I seek Allah's pardon) and the sin will be pardoned-Allah willing-at once.

Repentance is a combination of three elements

For *tauba* two words are generally used - (i) *ISTIGHFAR* (seeking forgiveness) and (ii) *TAUBAH* (Repentance). The main word is *TAUBAH* (Repentance) and the word *ISTIGHFAR* refers to the path that leads to TAUBAH. *Taubah* consists of three elements which must be present to make Taubah materialize and effective.

These three elements are:

1. To feel ashamed at the sin committed.
2. To give up the sin committed at once without any hitch and hesitation.
3. A firm resolve not to repeat that sin in the future under any circumstances.

To resort to Repentance in this way the sinner becomes purified from his sin. It occurs in a *Hadith*:

التائب من الذنب كمن لاذنب له (ابن ماجه، كتاب الزهد، باب ذكر التوبة، حديث نمبر ٤٣٠٤)

One who repents for his sin is like
one who has committed no sin at all.

By repentance the entire trace of sin is effaced from the Register where the sin was recorded. How infinite is the mercy of Allah! There will be no trace and reference to this sin in the Hereafter.

Of the two recording Angels (كراما كاتبين) one is head and the other is his subordinate

I have not read this in any book but have heard it from my Sheikh رحمة الله عليه that every man is accompanied by two Angels who are called Kiraman Katibeen and who have been appointed by Allah to record in a Register the deeds of men. The Angel on the right side records good deeds and that on the left records bad deeds. My Sheikh رحمة الله عليه told us that the Angel on the right side is incharge of the Angel on the left side. This is in conformity with Allah's command that when two men are engaged on a job, one of them should be the incharge and the other his subordinate. When a man does a good deed the Angel on the right side records that deed without delay. Being incharge, he is not required to consult the Angel on the left side for this recording. On the other hand when a man does some bad deed, the Angel

on the left side has to record this deed in the Register of Deeds but before recording, he has to consult the Angel on the right side who is the Incharge. The Angel on the right side asks his subordinate Angel on the left side to delay recording this sin and to wait for some time more in anticipation of the sinner's repentance for the sin. If the man does not repent, the Angel on the left side consults his incharge again and again, until it is the third time. If the sinner has not repented even this third time the Angel incharge permits his subordinate to record the sin in the Register of Deeds.

Never mind if you have violated your *Taubah*
A hundred times. Come back and repent again

It is an infinite mercy of Almighty Allah that He allows respite to His sinning servant again and again, so that the sin he has committed may not have to be recorded in the Register of Deeds. If this unfortunate sinner does not offer repentance, the sin is at last recorded against him. Even after this recording the door to *TAUBAH* remains wide open till the last moments of the man's life. The door to *TAUBAH* remains open till the time the throes of death have not overtaken him. How kind and Merciful is Almighty Allah!

باز آ باز آ هر آنچه هستی باز آ
گر کافر و گبروبت پرستی باز آ
ایں درگہ ما درگہ نو امیدی نیست
صد بار گر توبہ شکستی باز آ

These persian couplets express the same infinite mercy of Allah in accepting the repentance of His sinning servants. Allah's Court is not a court of despondency. Allah is ready to accept repentance even from such a servant as

has violated his repentance for hundreds of times.

Repent for your sins before going to bed

There was a saint among us named Hazrat Baba Najam Ahsan Sahib رحمة الله عليه who was a Khalifah (spiritual successors of Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه. He was a saint endowed with wonderful ways, habits. sense and insight. One day he was speaking on the subject of *TAUBAH* and I was also sitting by his side. A young man visited him at that time for some purpose. Addressing that young man Baba Sahib رحمة الله عليه said: The people think that this *Deen* (Islam) is very complicated. I say that it is very easy, sit before Almighty Allah every night and repent before Him for your sins and misdeeds. This is the essence of our *Deen*.

The fear of sins is not contrary to resolve

When that young man had departed, I told Baba Sahib رحمة الله عليه that "this *TAUBAH* is immensely wonderul", yet I had some doubts about it. I told him رحمة الله عليه that this *TAUBAH* materializes on the fulfilment of three conditions:- (i) There should be a feeling of remorse and shame (ii) One must give up sin at once and (iii) A firm resolve that in future the sinner shall not commit the sin again. It is easy to fulfil the first two conditions. The third condition appears to be very difficult - that there should be a firm resolve not to commit the sin again and feel sure about the firmness of the resolve. If the resolve is not firm the *TAUBAH* will also not be true and as such, the sin concerned may remain unpardoned. This is a casue for anxiety. In reply to my misgivings Hazrat Baba Sahib رحمة الله عليه said:

"Resolve means that a man shall not commit such and such sin in the future. If inspite of this the man does not feel

sure that he shall remain true to his resolve, then he should know that such a doubt or misgiving is not contrary to the resolve made. This does not affect the *TAUBAH* in any way, if the resolve made is firm so far as the man's intention is concerned. As regards the doubt arising in this behalf, it may be remedied by submitting a prayer to Almighty Allah in this way:

O Allah! I have taken resort to repentance with a firm resolve, yet being too weak and helpless, I do not know whether I shall be able to remain firm on this repentance and resolve. You Alone have the power to keep me firm on this resolve. After making this supplication, the doubts and misgivings in this regard will vanish by the mercy and will of Allah."

I must confess that the moment Baba Sahib رحمة الله عليه expressed this clarification,all my doubts disappeared and I was fully convinced and satisfied.

Do not lose heart

Hazrat Sri Saqti رحمة الله عليه was one of the most renowned saints of his time. He was also the Sheikh of the famous wali (Allah's friend) Hazrat Junaid Baghdadi رحمة الله عليه. He has advised that there is no justification for you at all to give way to dejection and become hopeless, as long as you are afraid of sins and feel shame and regret after committing a sin. It is, however, very dangerous when the fear of sins vanishes from the heart, and the heart become devoid of any sense of shame and regret after a sin is committed.

In addition, he becomes bold on sins and tries to argue that what he has done is quite lawful. However, there is no justification at all for despondency when remorse for the sin is born in the heart. My Sheikh

frequently recited this couplet:

سوئے نو امیدی مرو کہ امیدہا است
سوئے تاریکی مرو کہ خورشیدہا است

Do not proceed in the direction of despondency, because the avenues of hopes are open before you. Similarly, do not proceed in the direction of darkness when so many illuminating suns are available for you. Just take to repentance to give the final blow to your sins.

Satan creates despondency

As already clarified, there is no place for despondency, as long as Almighty Allah has kept the doors to *TAUBAH* open. It is you who create despondency in your hearts by brooding in your minds that you are a great sinner, and a condemned fellow unable to do any good. This is Satan's weapon of cunning with which he creates despondency and dejection in you and makes you idle. Do you not see how Merciful and Compassionate Almighty Allah is Who has kept the door to *TAUBAH* open till the last moments of a man's life? He has also declared that He shall efface the sins of His servants who has repent for their sins. Is there any occasion to give way to dejection and despondence? There is of course none. What is needed is that a servant should present himself before Allah in all humility and submissiveness and seek forgiveness for his sins. All his sins will surely be forgiven.

Woe to my sins

What is the reality of these sins which vanish in a few moments by virtue of the antidotes of Repentance and Istighfar? Hazrat Baba Sahib رحمة الله عليه referred to earlier, was also a very good poet who used to compose very

enlightening and encouraging poetry. In one of his couplets he has said:

دولتیں ملی گئیں ہیں آہوں کی
ایسی تیسی میرے گناہوں کی

Almighty Allah has granted me the wealth of warm sighs (to repent) which procure for me His forgiveness. Why should I care for my sins in the presence of this forgiveness?

You should, therefore, note very carefully that there is no justification for dejection as long as the door to *TAUBAH* is open and as you know it shall remain open till the last moment.

The meaning of *Istighfar*

You have already seen that *TAUBAH* (Repentance) has three conditions without which the fulfilment does not materialize. The other term in relation to *TAUBAH* is *Istighfar* (seeking forgiveness). This term is commonly used as compared with *TAUBAH*. The term *Istighfar* means seeking Allah's forgiveness. According to Imam Ghazzali رحمة الله عليه there are three conditions present in *TAUBAH* that are not present in *Istighfar*. Anyone may indulge in *Istighfar* or seeking Allah's forgiveness at any time and in any circumstances. When some suspicion or misgiving is born in the heart, some default occurs in worship or when some sin is committed. While seeking divine forgiveness one should utter these words of *Istighfar* with full confidence in their acceptance:

استغفر الله ربی من کل ذنب واتوب الیه

I seek forgiveness of Allah, my Lord, from all sins and turn to Him in repentance.

Should such a man lose heart?

Hazrat Ghazzali رحمة الله عليه has advised that the main door open before a believer is that he should resort to *TAUBAH* (Repentance), fulfilling all its three conditoins and give up all the sins to which he is addicted. There may however, be a sin sticknig to him which he is not able to give up in spite of his best efforts, should such a person become dejected and lose his confidence in *TAUBAH* and sit idle in utter hopelessness? What should such a man do?

What should a man earning unlawful income do?

For example, a man is employed in a Bank and Bank employment has been declared forbidden (حرام), because Banks flourish on interest-bearing transactions. The bank employee has given up all his sins and has become punctual in pryaers, fasting, payment of *Zakat*, etc. and has moulded his life on the pattern of the *Shari'ah*. He however, finds himself baffled about his source of living which is not lawful according to the *Fatwa*. What should he do, when he is not in a position to leave his bank service and become unemployed? He is, indeed, doing his best to search for some lawful employment, but he is not successful. Is there any way out for this man to get out of the predicament in which he has been entangled?

Not *Taubah*, but *Istighfar* is the right course for such a person

Imam Ghazzali رحمة الله عليه has said that a way out is available even for a man in such a predicament. He should make his best efforts to find out a lawful employment, and should not resign his existing employment. He should continue it till he succeeds in getting an alternative, lawful

job. The man cannot resort to *TAUBAH*, because one of its conditions is to give up the sin involved and he cannot fulfil this condition. The only way now open before him is to ask for Allah's forgiveness (*Istighfar*) and help for success in his efforts to find an alternative, lawful employment. Imam Ghazzali رحمة الله عليه has said that one who takes this path will find sooner or later an opportunity to get a lawful job and get rid of the bank employment. The Imam has supported his argument with this *Hadith*:

ما اصر من استغفر (ترمذی، کتاب الدعوات، باب نمبر ۱۱۹، حدیث نمبر ۳۵۵٤)

He who seeks Allahs' forgiveness for a sin is not counted among those who insist on their sins.

Almighty Allah has mentioned the same point in a verse of the Holy Qur'an :

وَالَّذِيْنَ اِذَا فَعَلُوْا فَاحِشَةً اَوْ ظَلَمُوْٓا اَنْفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللّٰهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوْا لِذُنُوْبِهِمْ ۫ وَمَنْ يَّغْفِرُ الذُّنُوْبَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ ۣ وَلَمْ يُصِرُّوْا عَلٰى مَا فَعَلُوْا وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُوْنَ (آل عمران ۱۳۵)

And those who, when they do an evil thing or wrong themselves, remember Allah and implore forgiveness for their sins - Who can forgive sins except Allah only? - and will not knowingly repeat (the wrong) they did". (3:135)

So resorting to *Istighfar* is inevitable at all costs, even when a man is not able to give up a sin. Some learned saints have suggested that this should be done on the same spot on which the sin is committed. The secret of this suggestion lies that when a sin is being done that spot will testify to that a sin committed was on it, it will also testify to the *Istighfar* recited on for the forgiveness of that sin.

The best words of *Istighfar*

May our lives be sacrificed for the Holy Prophet ﷺ who has taught his *Ummah* such words of *Istighfar* as no man could think of despite his best efforts. For example, take these words:

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ وَارْحَمْ وَاعْفُ عَنَّا وَتَكَرَّمْ وَتَجَاوَزْ عَمَّا تَعْلَمْ فَاِنَّكَ تَعْلَمُ مَالَا نَعْلَمُ اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ الْاَعَزُّ الْاَكْرَمُ

The Holy Prophet ﷺ used to utter the words of Istighfar between the two green signals, while performing his *Sa'ee* between the rocks of Safa and Marwah. These words may be translated as:

"O Allah, forgive us, have mercy on us, excuse us and pardon us for the sins which You know and which we do not know. You indeed, are the most Honourable, the most Respectable".

There are many sins which people do not feel that they are sins, nor do they know that they are sins. The number and varieties of sins are so vast that they can hardly be counted or comprehended. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has solved this problem by including in his sacred *Hadith* the words which "You know and which we do not know".

The master *Istighfar*

It is much better to memorize سید الاستغفار (*Master Istighfar*) and recite it as a matter of daily routine. It runs thus:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَنْتَ رَبِّيْ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اَنْتَ خَلَقْتَنِيْ وَاَنَا عَبْدُكَ وَاَنَا عَلٰى عَهْدِكَ وَوَعْدِكَ مَااسْتَطَعْتُ اَعُوْذُبِكَ مِنْ شَرِّمَا صَنَعْتُ اَبُوْءُ اِلَيْكَ بِنِعْمَتِكَ عَلَيَّ وَاَبُوْءُ لَكَ بِذَنْبِيْ فَاغْفِرْلِيْ ذُنُوْبِيْ فَاِنَّهٗ لَا يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوْبَ اِلَّا اَنْتَ (صحیح بخاری کتاب الدعوات باب افضل الاستغفار حدیث نمبر ٦٣٠٦)

This may be translated as follows:

"O Allah ! You are my Sustaining Lord. There is none worthy of worship except You. You created me and I am a slave of You. As far as possible I abide by the undertaking and promise I have made with You. I seek refuge with You from what (sins) I have done. I turn to you (in gratitude) with the blessings You have granted me. I also turn to You in repentance for my sins. So forgive my sins, as there is none except You who can forgive sins".

It occurs in a *Hadith* that if a man recites this Master *Istighfar* in the morning with full faith and conviction, and if he dies during that day he shall enter Paradise direct. Similarly, if anyone recites it in the evening and dies during that night he will enter Paradise direct. Let everyone make it his daily routine to recite this *Master Istighfar* every morning and evening or still better, after every prayer, because the Holy Prophet ﷺ has himself named it سید الاستغفار (*Master Istighfar*).

Almighty Allah has taught His Prophet ﷺ these sacred words and the latter (he) ﷺ has, in turn, taught his *Ummah* the same words. This goes to prove that Almighty Allah desires to forgive His servants through this *Master Istighfar*. It is, therefore, recommended emphatically that all should include it in their daily routine. If you so desire, you may also memorise the following brief words of *Istighfar*:

اَسْتَغْفِرُ اللّٰهَ رَبِّیْ مِنْ کُلِّ ذَنْبٍ وَّاَتُوْبُ اِلَیْهِ

There is also no harm if only the words استغفر اللہ (I seek Allah's forgivenes) are rehearsed, as they too contain the essence of Istighfar and are effective.

The best *Hadith*

عن ابی هریرة رضی الله تعالی عنه قال:قال رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم:والذی نفسی بیده لولم تذنبوا لذهب الله تعالی بکم،ولجاء بقوم یذنبون فیستغفرون الله تعالی فیغفرلهم" (صحیح مسلم، کتاب التوبة، باب سقوط الذنوب بالاستغفارحدیث نمبر ۲۷۴۹)

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: By that personality in Whose hands is my life (the Holy Prophet ﷺ always spoke on oath about important issues) if you do not commit sins at all, Almighty Allah will take you away and bring (in your place) another community who will commit sins, will seek forgiveness and will be granted forgiveness. (Sahih Muslim)

Allah has created in man the faculty of committing sins

This *Hadith* contains in it an indication about Allah's wisdom in creating man. If it had been the intention of Almighty Allah to create a community that had no ability to commit sins, He would not have created man at all. The Angels were enough for that. The Angels are a community that are always engaged in worshipping Allah and in rehearsing His sacred names. This community of Angels is deprived of the ability of committing sins, it cannot commit sins even if it desired to do so.

On the other hand, man is a creation who has been endowed with the faculties of both doing good and committing sins. It was Allah's will that man should refrain from sins, despite his inherent ability to commit sins and should at once seek forgiveness. If he ever committed a sin, it would thus defeat the very purpose of creating man.

We should remember that when Almighty Allah

created man to live on the earth as Allah's vicegerent the Angels objected to this scheme, because such a creature would create disturbances and would shed blood on the earth. They said that they were always busy with singing Allah's praise and glorifying Him. Almighty Allah dismissed their objection by saying:

اِنِّیۡۤ اَعۡلَمُ مَالَا تَعۡلَمُوۡنَ (سورۃ البقرۃ)

Surely, I know what you do not know (2:30)

This is no credit of the Angels

It is not creditable if the Angels are not committing any sins, because they have not been endowed with the ability to commit sins. The credit goes to that community which possesses the ability to commit sins, yet it keeps itself away from sins.

For example, there is a blind man who does not see undesirable and obscene sights, including films and filthy pictures. There is no credit of his in these abstinences, because he has no eyesight. On the other hand, there is a man who can see, has ambitions and feelings to enjoy the charming scenes around him, yet he avoids casting glances on undesirable and unlawful objects and sights. This God-fearing man is occupying a position for which Almighty Allah has promised Paradise.

The pleasures of Paradise are reserved only for man

Although the Angels are residing permanently in Paraidse, yet they cannot enjoy its tastes and pleasures, because they have not been granted the ability for such enjoyments. Almighty Alalh has created the pleasures and enjoyments of Paradise for such a creature (man) whom He has granted the ability to commit sins as well as the

ability to take to the path of piety and righteousness. Who can interfere with the supreme wisdom and unquestionable will of Almighty Allah? It is in response to this wisdom that He created this unique universe, so that He may raise a creature having the ability to commit sins, yet he would at the same time avoid these sins to the best of his ability. He would also seek Allah's forgiveness, if he ever happened to commit a sin by chance. As a result of this *Istighfar*, he becomes a point of attraction for Allah's grace, mercy and forgiveness. How could Allah's attribute of mercy be demonstrated, if man did not commit sins?

Creation of *Kufr* (infidelity) too is not free from wisdom

The learned saints have said that everything in this universe has some wisdom and purpose behind it. A most repulsive trait like *KUFR* (infidelity) has also some wisdom at its back. Maulana Rumi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has thus said in a couplet:

در کارخانہ عشق از کفر ناگزیر است
آتش کرا بسوزد گر بولہب نباشد

In this universe *Kufr* (infidelity) has also its purpose. Whom should the Fire of Hell burn if a *Kafir* like Abu Lahab did not exist?

Thus, it is not difficult to understand that sins too form part of Allah's will. The temptation to commit sins has been placed in man's nature, so that he may strive to crush this temptation. The more a man suppresses and crushes this temptation for sins, the more will he attain the blessings and a high place of righteousness.

Worldly desires and sins are like fuel

Maulana Rumi رحمة الله عليه was, by the grace of Allah, an adept in conceiving and setting apt examples. In one of his couplet he رحمة الله عليه has said so nicely:

شہوت دنیا مثال گلخن است
کہ ازو حمام تقوی روشن است

This means that these worldly desires, pleasures, enjoyments and sins possess an advantage in them, because Almighty Allah has created them to serve as fuel, so that by burning this fuel you may light the warm-bath of righteousness تقوی.

You may be facing a situation in which irresistible temptation is rising in your heart; your heart is being overwhelmed with an urge to commit a sin too tempting for you to resist it. What should you do in such a situation? In order to please Allah, crush this sinful desire and control your defiant self. If you do this the light of righteousness تقوی will illumine in you. If this urge to sin had not existed how could you warm up the bath of *Taqwa*?

The sweetness of *Eeman* (belief)

It occurs in a *Hadith* that once a strong desire arose in the heart of a man to cast an unlawful glance at a strange woman. This man, however, suppressed this sinful desire for fear of Allah. In such a critical situation when a man restrains his desires for no other reason but for the fear of Allah, Allah grants him the sweetness of *Eeman* (belief) the likes of which he could never get by satisfying his lustful desires. Now consider how this desire to commit a sin became a means of attaining the sweetness of *Eeman*. How

could this be possible if there was no urge and no desire for sin?

The wisdom of creating sin

Now a question arises why Almighty Allah has created sin when it is neither His will nor His pleasure that His servants should commit sins. The reply to this question is that Allah has placed in the creation of sin two aspects of wisdom. The first is that when a servant of Allah does his best to refrain from a sin, he receives the light of *Taqwa* (Righteousness) and the honour of nearness to Allah. The more a man keeps himself away from sins, the higher he rises in status and dignity in the sight of Allah. Almighty Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

وَمَنْ يَّتَّقِ اللّٰهَ يَجْعَلْ لَّهٗ مَخْرَجًا (الطلاق:٢)

And whosoever fears Allah, Allah will appoint a way out for him (65:2)

Rise to higher stations by means of *Taubah* (repentance)

As a human being man does sometime fall into sins in spite of all his efforts to shun them. In such a situation it is expected of him to turn to Almighty Allah in repentance with deep feelings of regret and remorse. He should recite the following words of *Istighfar*:

استغفر الله ربی من کل ذنب و اتوب الیه

I seek forgiveness of Allah, my Lord, from all sins and turn to Him (in repentance).

As a result of the expression of this feeling of shame and regret in seeking forgiveness, his status will be raised. He will thus become a point of attraction for Allah's mercy and forgiveness. This is the second aspect of wisdom in

creating sins.

These are very delicate and subtle points. May Almighty Allah protect us form falling into error about their right interpretation. A man should never be bold after committing sins. However, if by chance a sin is committed there is no cause for becoming dejected. Almighty Allah has opened the doors of *Taubah* and *Istighfar* for such occasions to save his servants from falling into dejection and despondency.

A man commits a sin and feels ashamed, then turns to Allah in repentance with profound regret and shamefulness sometimes elevates him to a position of righteousness which he could not attain without committing that sin.

An account of Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ

Hakimul Ummat Hazrat Maulana Thanawi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has related an event concerning Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ. Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ used to get up every night for the Tahajjud prayer. One night he رضی اللہ عنہ could not get up in time and missed his *Tahajjud* prayer. As it was the first time that he رضی اللہ عنہ had missed *Tahajjud* prayer, he رضی اللہ عنہ was grieved to such an extent that he spent the entire day in weeping. The next night at *Tahajjud* time an elderly man approached and awoke him رضی اللہ عنہ for the prayer. Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ got up promptly and asked the man who he was. He replied that he was the same notorious Iblees. Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ asked him why he was advising him to offer the prayer when it was his duty to misguide the servants of Allah. Iblees tried to avoid answering this question but when he was pressed by Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ he divulged the secret, saying: The last night I had kept you away from the prayer and

you had missed it. As a result of this ommission you spent the entire day weeping and sobbing. This resulted in the increase of your status which you would not have attained by offering the prayer. I feel that I was a great loser. I, therefore, awoke you for the prayer so that you may not attain promotion in your status.

Replacement by another creature

The learned saints therefore, say that a man after having committed a sin must repent for the sin and seek Allah's forgiveness with feelings of shame, remorse and sorrow. Sometimes the status of such a repentant sinner is raised very high, beyond ones imagination. These *TAUBAH* and *ISTIGHFAR* are great blessings. That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in this *Hadith* that "if you do not commit sins at all, Almighty Allah will take you away and bring (in your place) another community who will commit sins, will seek forgiveness and will be granted forgiveness".

Through this *Hadith*, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught us a practical lesson. If we ever commit some sin, we should not feel dejected, frustrated or hopeless. We should take resort to *Taubah* and *Istighfar* to attract Allah's forgiveness. We should, however, not commit a sin intentionally. We should do our best to refrain from sins at all times and in all circumstances.

It is a prescribed obligatory duty to refrain from sins

By experiencing the blessings of *Taubah* and *Istighfar*, one may think that it is hardly necessary to refrain from sins which Allah, by His mercy, forgives so promptly and easily. Bear in mind that it is a prescribed obligatory (فرض) duty imposed on everyone that he should

protect himself from sins at every step in his life. However, as a human being, if he by chance commits a sin, he should not give way to dejection and hopelessness but should turn to repentance. If a man is committing a sin and it is not possible for him to give up that sin, as in the case of a Bank employee, he should be on the look out for an alternative, lawful employment as sincerely and desperately as does a person who is out of employment. In the meantime he should also indulge in *Taubah* and *Istighfar*, as needed.

Promotion in status on account of sickness

You may have heard this *Hadith* that on account of sickness the sins of the sick person are forgiven and his status is raised in proportion to the severity of the sickness. Does this *Hadith* mean that man should pray to Allah to inflict him with sickness or should he try to fall sick intentionally in order to reap the benefits and blessings of sickness? Certainly not. None can desire sickness by any means. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has himself taught his *Ummah*, through his *Ahadith,* to seek from Almighty Allah health not sickness. However, if sickness befalls you suddenly, then take it as an act of Allah's will meant for increasing your status. Just like sickness the case of sin should be shunned at all costs. However, if surrounded by unfavourable circumstances a man commits a sin only by chance and not by choice, he has no alternative but to take resort to *Taubah* and *Istighfar*. This will lead to the promotion of his status. This is the reality of *Istighfar*.

There are three categories of *Taubah* and *Istighfar*

There are three categories of *Taubah* and *Istighfar*, viz.

1- Repentance and seeking forgiveness for sins.

2- Istighfar for the sake of defaults in devotion and worship.

3- *Istighfar* for defaults and carelessness committed in the matter of *Istighfar* itself.

Perfection of *Taubah*

The first category viz., *Istighfar* for sins is an obligatory duty imposed on every individual without any exception, whatsoever. Everyone is required to repent and seek forgiveness for his sins. That is why in (تکمیل توبہ) Islamic mysticism and *Tareeqat* (the practical application of the Sharee'ah) perfection of *Taubah* is regarded as the first step on which are based all other steps. When anyone calls on a Sheikh for his spiritual reform, the latter directs him to make his *Taubah* perfect in all respects. Imam Ghazzali رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has said:

هو اول اقدام المريدين

It is the first step of a person who submits himself to a Sheikh for his reform and guidance.

The undertaking (بیعت) that is made at the hands of the Sheikh is also an undertaking for perfect *Taubah*. At the time of this undertaking the disciple repents for all his past sins and resolves and undertakes not to commit any sin in the future. Thereafter, the Sheikh assists him in completing his *Taubah*.

***Taubah* in breif**

The Sheikhs say that the process of perfection of *Taubah* consists of two stages - *Taubah* in brief (توبہ اجمالی) and *Taubah* in detail (توبہ تفصیلی). In *Taubah* in brief, a man is required to review all the sins of his past life in brief and to repent for them all in the presence of Almighty Allah. The

best way of performing *Taubah* in brief is to offer two *Rak'ats* with the intention of *Salat-e-Taubah*. Thereafter, he (repentant) should resovle to give up once and for all each and every sin whether it is major or minor, whether it relates to the usurpation of a right of Allah or that of His servant. This in short is *Taubah* in brief (توبہ اجمالی).

Taubah in detail

The resolve made in *Taubah* in brief does not mean that a man has become quite clean and sinless and has nothing more to do. The next comes the second stage of *Taubah* in detail (توبہ تفصیلی). In this second stage of *Taubah*, the repentant should start making good all his sins and lapses as far as possible. Unless this is done, his *Taubah* will not be complete. For example, he has missed obligatory (فرض) prayers. It is compulsory (فرض) for him to compensate for these missed prayers before his death. The first step in reforming one's self is to complete one's *Taubah* in this way. This is inevitable for the perfection of *Taubah* and, in turn, for the reform of the self.

Make a calculation of your prayers

Prayer (*Salat*) occupies the first place in *Taubah* in detail. You have to calculate the number of prayers you have missed from the day you attained maturity till this day. Attaining maturity means in the case of a boy, the age at which he begins to have nocturnal emissions. In the case of a girl, it is the age at which she starts her menses. If there is anyone in whom these symptoms do not appear in time, it should be understood that the boy or the girl has attained maturity at the age of fifteen years. From this age the obligations of prayers, fasting and other religious duties fall due and become effective.

A disciple has therefore, to calculate the number of all his missed prayers since the day he/she attained maturity till the day. Among them there will be men who were fortunate enough to be born and brought up in the homes of religious parents and were put on the straight path of *Deen* (religion). Thus, such fortunate persons will have no liability of oustanding prayers, since they attained matuirty till the day. Such a situation is most welcome.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has advised that a boy should be instructed about prayers at the age of seven years. At the age of ten years, he should be forced to offer prayers and may be given light beating, if necessary. In case some prayers have been missed even after attaining maturity on account of negligence, it is an obligatory duty to compensate for them. How to do this? This may be done by making an accurate calculation of the prayers missed during life. If it is not possible to make a very accurate calculation of the number, it may be estimated with care but be liberal in your estimation so that it may be more, but not less, than the prayers actually missed. It may be recorded in a register in this way:

Today, dated (date) I am liable to compensate for (number) prayers. I am commencing these compensatory prayers from today. If I am not able to compensate for the missed prayers during my life, I hereby leave a will that compensation money for the prayers not compensated may be calculated and paid out of my legacy. Signature and date.

Draw up a Will

It is necessary to draw up a will in writing, because if the liable person dies before discharging this liability, then in the absence of such a will the *Shari'ah* does not bind the inheritors to discharge this liability. If he makes a will in writing to this effect, then according to *Shari'ah*, the inheritors

will be duty-bound to pay the compensation money for the missed prayers to the extent of one third of the total legacy.

> The Holy Prophet ﷺ has advised that if a man who beleives in Allah and the Last Day and has anything to write by way of a will then it is not lawful for him to pass even two nights without writing this will. (Jami Tirmazi)

If a person has to compensate for missed prayers he must draw up a will to this effect in the light of this *Hadith*. Consider how many of us have written our wills ? It is a permanent sin not to wirte a will and the sin will continue as long as the will remains unwritten. We should, therefore, draw up our will just now.

How to compensate for lifelong missed prayers

Thereafter, he should commence compensating for the prayers missed throughout his lifeline. These are called قضاء عمری(compensation for lifelong missed prayers). This may be done by offering a compensatory prayer along with the currently due prayer. If one has time to spare, one may offer more than one compensatory prayer along with the currently due prayer. This is to ensure the discharge of this liability as early as possible. It is better to offer these compensatory prayers in place of the optional prayers attached with the currently due prayers. No optional prayer is lawful after the *Fajr* (Dawn) prayer and the *Asr* (later afternoon) prayer, but it is lawful to offer compensatory prayers during these intervals. This is a facility provided by Almighty Allah and we should take advantage of this facility. The number of compensatory prayers offered and the number outstanding should be noted in the record maintained for this purpose.

It is not right to offer compensatory prayers in place of *Sunnah* prayers

Some people inquire if they can ignore the *Sunnah* prayers and utilize the time so saved for offering compensatory prayers. The answer to this question is that it is not right to ignore and miss the affirmed *Sunnah* (مؤکدہ) prayers. It is, however, quite lawful to offer compensatory prayers in place of optional prayers.

Calculation of missed Fasts and writing a Will about them

Likewise, you should examine the position about your fasts. Have you missed any obligatory Fasts from the time you attained maturity till this day? If you are liable for any missed Fast during the period of your attaining maturity then make a calculation and record the details about these fasts as follows :

On this day dated..... I am liable for .... (number) missed fasts for which I am beginning to compensate one by one. If I am not able to discharge this liability during my life, compensation money for the outstanding Fasts should be paid from my legacy. Note in your record the number of fasts compensated and the number outstanding. This is to keep the account quite clear and free from any doubt. Signature and date

Calculation of *Zakat* due for payment and its record in the Will

In the same way, you should examine the position in your *Zakat* account. *Zakat* falls due as an obligatory duty after a man attains maturity. At this age, if a man had properties assessable for *Zakat* but did not pay it, *Zakat* should be calculated separately for each year and the

outstanding amounts paid as accurately as possible. In case exact and very accurate calculation is not possible, make a liberal estimate of the liability which should be more, but not less, than the amount due for payment. Thereafter, commence payment and enter each payment and the balance outstanding in the record maintained for this purpose. Try to discharge this liability as soon as possible.

In the same way it is obligatory to perform Hajj once in life. If it has fallen due but has not yet been performed, do this now or as early as possible. These are all rights due to Almighty Allah which form part of *Taubah* in detail (توبہ تفصیلی).

Discharge the rights of the servants (of Allah) or get them waived

After the rights due to Almighty Allah, examine the position of your liability towards the servants of Allah. Not only does it include financial liabilities, but it also includes actions or sayings whereby you may have displeased or harmed a person. It is necessary to have the wrongs done by you pardoned by the victims. It occurs in a *Hadith* that once the Holy Prophet ﷺ made this announcement in an assembly of his Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم about himself:

> I request you to pardon me, if I have caused to anyone of you any distress or any grief or if anyone's right is outstanding against me. Today I am standing here before you. The claimant may either take revenge on me or pardon me.

When the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself has sought pardon for his own sake, where do we stand? It is therefore, necessary to establish contact personally, in writing or as convenient with all your relations, friends, school and office

colleagues, and business partners, etc. to whom you may be owing some amount or whom you may have harmed, insulted or displeased in any way. After contact pay their dues to them or have them waived by them. Similarly, request them to pardon you for any wrong, distress or pain caused to them. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in another *Hadith*:

> If any man has wronged another man in any way financially, mentally or physically, he should seek pardon of the man wronged. He should have his liabilities cleared by payment of gold or silver, before the arrival of a Day when there will be no Dirhams nor Dinars, and neither will gold or silver be of any avail.

Accounts of those who were worried about their Hereafter

Those whom Almighty Allah has granted fear and anxiety about their Hereafter, approach all their creditors and claimants, one by one, and discharge their rights or beg them to condone their dues. In view of the importance of this issue, Hazrat Thanawi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ wrote a pamphlet titled العذر والنظر (Al-uzr wan-Nazr) and circulated it among all his friends, acquaintances and colleagues. In this pamphlet he رحمۃ اللہ علیہ addressed an appeal to all of them to receive from him or to condone and pardon whatever amounts, dues or liabilities might be outstanding against him رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. Similarly, my father, Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ addressed a letter titled تلافی مافات (compensation of past liabilities) to all his elders, friends and acquaintances requesting them to condone their rights and pardon the wrongs, if any, done to them.

What to do when some rights of the servants of Allah remain undischarged?

The rights of Allah are forgiven by Him through *Taubah*. As for the rights that are due to the servants of Allah, they cannot be wiped of unless they are paid to the claimants or the latter condone them. Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has mentioned by way of an example, a case in which a man could not discharge the rights due by him to a servants of Allah. Later on, Almighty Allah reminded him of the lapses on his part and also guided him to repent for his sins. As a result of this turning point in his life, he began to search for his creditors and claimants and pay their dues. Death, however overtook him before he could clear his liabilities in full, by payment or by getting them condoned. Now is there any way out for such a man to save himself from the punishment of the Hereafter? Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has said that even such a man should not despair of rescue and salvation, as he had resorted to repentance and started discharging his liabilities and was doing his best on this behalf. It is hoped that by virtue of his sincere striving Allah will make his claimants condone their claims against this man and forgive him, by His grace and intervention.

A wonderful example of Allah's forgiveness

In support of his opinion, Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has cited a famous incident narrated in the *Hadith* about a murderer who had commutted ninety-nine murders. After having committed these horrible sins, he became worried about the punishment of the Hereafter. In order to find a way out of this predicament he visited a Christian Monk and informed him about his sin of ninety-nine murders. He asked him if there was any way out for him. The Monk told

him that there was none and that he had totally ruined himself. This reply added to the man's dejection. In his great dejection he killed this Monk also, thus raising the number of his murders to one hundred. As the man was determined to find some way out for himself, he called upon another godly saint and related to him his harrowing tale. This saint convinced the murderer that there was nothing at all to feel dejected for. He advised the sinner first to repent for his sins, leave the place for another village and stay there, as it was the abode of righteous men. Their company would benefit him. As he had repented for his sins, he set off for that village, as he had been advised to do.

While he was still on the way, death overtook him. It occurs in narrative that even in his struggle for life and death, he tried to take himself nearer and nearer to the place of his destination by dragging himself in that direction on his chest. At last he died and the Angles of mercy and the Angels of punishment both reached the spot to get hold of the man's soul. A dispute arose between the two. The Angels of mercy argued that they would take the man's soul with them, as he had repented for his sins and was going to the village of righteous men. The Angels of punishment argued that it was their right to get the man's soul, as he had murdered one hundred men and had not yet been granted forgiveness. To settle this disptue Almighty Allah decided that it should be seen whether at the time of death the man was nearer to the village from which he had started or to the village of the righteous men to which he was going. When the distance travelled was measured it was found that he was nearer to the village to which he was going. His soul was therefore handed over to the Angels of mercy. Almighty Allah forgave the sin of murdering one hundred men, by virtue of his sincere effort

for salvation. (Sahih Muslim.. .. *Hadith* No: 2766)

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has further said that although the man had rights of the servants of Allah outstanding against him, yet Allah granted him salvation by virtue of the sincere efforts he made for it. This story contains the analogy of a man who offers repentance and starts his efforts to pay the rights of the servants of Allah outstanding against him, but in the meantime death overtakes him. It can be said on the basis of this analogy that Allah will, by His mercy, grant salvation even to such a murderer and make his claimants satisfied and agreeable to forgo their rights against the man. This will come to pass on account of Allah's infinite mercy.

Thus, it is necessary to offer these two categories of *Taubah*. (i) *Taubah* in breif (اجمالی) and (ii) *Taubah* in detail (تفصیلی).

Forget your past sins

Our Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to advise us that after having offered these two categories of *Taubah* : *Taubah* in brief and *Taubah* in detail, we should forget our past sins. To remember the sins after having once repented for them is to disregard and under-rate Allah's attribute of forgiveness. Almighty Allah has promised that He shall accept our *Taubah* and *Istighfar* and forgive our sins and efface the entries of the sins made in the Register of Deeds. This trend of recalling to the mind the past sins which have already been forgiven is an act of disparaging Allah's attribute of mercy. You should note that brooding over the past sins sometimes proves a veil and hindrance in your way.

Offer *Istighfar* on remembering your past sins

There is a great difference between a specialist and a non-specialist. A non-specialist sometimes shows the opposite path. A friend of mine was a very righteous man, regular in his prayers, fasts, etc. He told me that his Sheikh had advised him to bring back to memory all the past sins at *Tahajjud* time and feel sorry for them with tearful eyes. On the other hand our Dr Sahib رحمة الله عليه did not appreciate such practice. Not only has Almighty Allah accepted our *Taubah* and forgiven our sins, but He has also erased them from the Register of Deeds. By insisting on reviving the memory of these past forgiven and obliterated sins, do you want to insist that you will not let them be forgiven and erased? This is disregarding and disparaging Allah's attribute of mercy. So forget those sins once and for all. However, if ever they recur to your memory unintentionally, get rid of them by reciting *Istighfar*.

Reform your present

What a valuable piece of advice has my Sheikh, Dr. Sahib رحمة الله عليه given us! He has advised us that, when we have once repented, we should give up brooding over the past. We should hope that Allah has accepted our *Taubah* and Allah fulfil His promise. We also should not think of the future. We should pay attention to the present and do our best to ameliorate it and pass it in obeying Allah and His Prophet ﷺ.

Presently we are passing our days in brooding over the past and feeling afraid of the consequences of the sins committed in those days. This attitude breeds despondency and has an adverse effect on our present conditions. Some of us are prone to think in advance about the future and what it has in store for us. What can we gain by such trend

of thinking? We always say "future will take care of itself". Why should we worry about it now? We should concentrate our attention on the present because in due course of time, this present will become the past and the future will become the present. We should, therefore, take care to ameliorate the present which we have in hand. In fact, it is Satan who is beguiling us and drawing our attention to the past and the sins we have committed in it and to the future which we may spoil by similar sins. By bringing before our eyes the past and future he is bent upon ruining our present. So do not be misled by this cunning Satan and take care to ameliorate our present which is before us.

May Almighty Allah grant us the right trend of thinking. *Aameen.*

عن ابی قلابة رحمه الله تعالی قال ان الله لمالعن ابلیس سئله النظرة فانظره الی یوم الدین قال وعزتك لا اخرج من قلب ابن ادم مادام فیه الروح قال الله تعالی وعزتی لا احجب عنه التوبة مادام الروح فی الجسد

The best age

Hazrat Abu Qalabah رحمة الله عليه is one of the most dignified Tabi'een. If anyone had the honour of seeing Holy Prophet ﷺ in a state of having Eeman (belief) in him ﷺ, he is called a Sahabi (Companion). A believer who saw a Companion رضی الله عنه is called a Tabi'ee, while a believer who saw a Tabi'ee is called a Taba'-Tabi'ee. These are the three ages which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has described as the Best ages. He ﷺ has thus said in a *Hadith*:

خیرالناس قرنی ثم الذین یلونهم ثم الذین یلونهم (صحیح بخاری، باب فضائل اصحاب النبی صلی الله علیه وسلم)

The best people are those who are living in my age, then those who will come after them and

then those who will come after the latter.

The Tabi'een too had been granted by Almighty Allah a very high status by virtue of the auspicious company of the Noble Companions رضی الله عنهم. Hazrat Abu Qalabah رحمة الله عليه is one of the Tabi'een. He did not have a direct contact with the Holy Prophet ﷺ, yet he had the honour of meeting many of the Noble Companions رضی الله عنهم. He was a favourite pupil of Hazrat Anas رضی الله عنه.

The precaution and fear exercised by the Tabi'een

Hazrat Abu Qalabah رحمة الله عليه has narrated this *Hadith* as a saying of his own, yet in reality it possesses the characteristics of a *Hadith*. He did this, because he could not say such a thing on the authority of his own intellect. He has narrated this as a saying of his own because the Tabi'een were afraid of attributing anything to the Holy Prophet ﷺ, lest they should commit a fault in so doing and be held accountable for that. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a *Hadith*:

من کذب علی متعمدا فلیتبوأ مقعده من النار (صحیح بخاری، کتاب العلم، باب اثم من کذب علی النبی صلی الله علیه وسلم)

A man who attributes a lies to me intentionally should make Hell his final resort. (Sahih Bukhari)

The Noble Companions رضی الله عنهم, therefore, shuddered with fear at this severe warning, when they narrated any *Hadith*.

Great precaution should be taken in narrating a *Hadith*

A Tabi'ee رحمة الله عليه has stated about a Sahabi (Companion) that when the latter narrated before him any

Hadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, his face turned pale and sometimes he shuddered with fear, lest he should commit some mistake in his narration. In order to be cautious while narrating a *Hadith*, some Companions رضی اللہ عنہم took care to add these words "The Holy Prophet ﷺ said something like this or that." They did all this as a precaution against the possibility of attributing to the Holy Prophet ﷺ something which he did not say. We should all learn a lesson from this. Sometimes we open our mouth to narrate a *Hadith* without due care and authority. None should narrate words as *Hadith*, unless one is sure of the exact words of the *Hadith*. Just see how in this very narrative Hazrat Abu Qalabah رحمۃاللہ علیہ has not narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said this or that. Although what he narrated is a *Hadith*, yet as a precaution he has narrated the words as a saying of his own.

He رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has said that Almighty Allah expelled Iblees from His Court for disobeying His command to prostrate himself before Hazrat Adam علیہ السلام. Every Muslim is well aware of this story, as related in the Holy Qur'an.

Iblees was right, but.....

Apparently it seems that what Iblees alleged was perhaps not so objectionable. It would hardly seem to be incorrect and objectionable if in reply to the divine command Iblees had said: This forehead is reserved for You. It cannot bend before anyone other than You. Why should I prostrate myself before this figure made of clay which You have shaped with Your hands? My prostration is for You alone. Although, the argument looks apparently quite plausible, yet it is quite fallacious and wrong, because Almighty Allah Himself commanded Iblees to bow before Hazrat Adam علیہ السلام. After this command there was no alternative left for Iblees but to obey it without any

hesitation, instead of putting forward frivolous excuses.

It is quite true to say that man does not deserve that another man should bow down before him. When the last Ummah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was raised on this earth the final command was issued that it was unlawful for a man to bow in prostration before another man. This was the original command about prostration. Here when the Authority issuing this command is Allah Himself who is asking someone to bow down before another man or before his figure, there is no room for disobedience on the dictates of one's intellect. This was Satan's first fault in relying on his intellect in disobeying Allah's command.

I am superior to Adam علیہ السلام

The second fault Satan committed was that in refusing to prostrate himself before Adam علیہ السلام he did not justify his disobedience by saying that his forehead was reserved for Allah alone. He argued that Adam علیہ السلام was created from clay while he (Satan) was created from fire. As fire is superior to clay so he could not prostrate himself before Adam علیہ السلام. As a result of his pride and disobedience, Almighty Allah turned Satan out of His court condemned, cursed and rejected him for all times.

Iblees obtained respite from Allah

When Almighty Allah condemned Iblees and turned him out, he asked Allah for resptie and said:

اَنْظِرْنِی اِلٰی یَوْمِ یُبْعَثُوْنَ (الاعراف: ۱٤)

Grant me respite till the day when they are raised (to life). (7:14).

Thus, he appealed for life till the Day of Judgment and his appeal was granted.

Satan possesses great knowledge

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has mentioned that it appeared to him from this event that Satan has great knowledge about Almighty Allah. See how at a time when he was being cursed, condemned, turned out and exposed to Allah's wrath, he succeeded in appealing for respite which he was granted. He knew it very well that Almighty Allah is never overpowered by wrath and that He grants requests even during such moments of anger and displeasure. Thus Satan was able to receive respite.

I shall remain beguiling him till death

Almighty Allah said in reply :

إِنَّكَ مِنَ الْمُنْظَرِيْنَ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْوَقْتِ الْمَعْلُوْمِ (الحجر:٣٨)

Certainly, you are of those granted respite till an appointed time. (15:38).

Thus, when Satan got respite till the Day of Judgment, he addressed Almighty Allah saying" I swear by Your honour that I shall not get out of the son of Adam, as long as there is soul in his body, i.e. as long as he is alive. I shall be seducing this man and sowing in his heart the seed of wrongs and misleading thoughts. On account of whom I have been expelled from the Divine Court. It shall be my duty to incite him towards all sorts of sins, crimes and lewdness, as long as he is aliver.

I shall be accepting *Taubah* (Repentance) till the Day of Judgment

Almighty Allah also swore by His honour and said: "By My honour, I shall not close the door of

repentance on the sons of Adam عليه السلام as long as they are alive. You swear by My honour that you shall not get out of them and I also swear by My honour that I shall not close the door of *Taubah* (repentance) on them. After a man has offered his *Taubah*, then by virtue of that *Taubah* I shall wipe off instantly all the traces of your seductions, your deception and your frauds."

Thus, Almighty Allah declared a general amnesty and His mercy in favour of the sons of Adam عليه السلام. He also advised man not to think that in the shape of Satan Allah has imposed on man some supernatural power from which man cannot save himself.

Satan is a trial

Allah has said that He has created Satan as a trial and test for men. It is He who created him and granted him the power to misguide and seduce human being. He, however, did not grant such power as you cannot resist and overpower. Allah has clearly declared in the Holy Qur'an:

إِنَّ كَيْدَ الشَّيْطٰنِ كَانَ ضَعِيْفًا (النساء:٧٦)

Surely, Satan's strategy is ever weak. (4:76).

It is Allah's assertion that the treacherous schemes, conspiracies and frauds which Satan fabricates for deluding His servants are very feeble. They fail and give way to a little resistance offered by the beleivers against this cobweb of Satan. This treacherous Satan overpowers only those who are coward and do not pull courage to stand before this enemy, nor do they want to give up their sins. Even for such coward persons who cannot stand against Satan's strategy, Allah has created the antidotes of Taubah (repentance) and

Istighfar (Seeking forgiveness). By taking advantage of these antidotes the poison of Satan's seduction is rendered ineffective and powerless at once. So feeble and transitory is Satan's network of treachery and seduction!

Become the best sinner

This heading seems to be a queer paradox, yet it is not so. The truth contained in it is confirmed by another *Hadith* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ which runs thus:-

كلكم خطاؤن و خير الخطائين التوابون (ترمذى، صفة القيامة، باب المومن يرى ذنبه كالجبل فوقه)

This means: You are all great sinners, but the best sinners are those who offer repentance. The word (خاطى) is an Arabic word, meaning one who commits mistakes. The word exaggerated form, meaning one who commits greater and more serious mistakes. By using the word (خطاء) in the exaggerated form, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has pointed out that you are all great wrongdoers, but the best wrongdoer is one who offers repentance for his mistakes and wrongs and seeks forgiveness from Allah. This contains an indication that this world is a place of charms and temptations in which people will be induced to commit sins and indulge in vices. Even so they should not surrender themselves so easily to these forces of evils and vices. They should stand against these forces with a little courage. In case they commit some sins, they should at once take to *Taubah* and seek forgiveness. Here also the exaggerated form (توّاب) (a great seeker of repentance) has been used instead of the ordinary word (تائب) (one who offers repentance). The intention is to say that it is not enough to offer *Taubah* only once or twice, but it should be made a general practice to resort it as often as sins are

committed. Offering repentance regularly and frequently will frustrate Satan's strategy and man will become protected from his attacks.

Allah's mercy has one hundred parts

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله عنه قال سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول جعل الله الرحمة مائة جزء فامسك عنده تسعة وتسعين وانزل فى الارض جزء واحدا فمن ذلك الجزء يتر احم لخلائق حتى ترفع لدابته حافر هاعن ولد ها خشية ان تصيبه (صحيح مسلم كتاب التوبة باب فى سعة رحمة الله تعالى)

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه has narrated that he heard the Holy Prophet ﷺ, saying: Allah has divided His mercy into one hundred parts. He has retained with Him the ninety-nine parts and has sent down to this earth only one part. On account of this one part, living beings deal with one another with kindness and mercy, as do parents with their children, brothers and sisters, friends and relations, etc. At the time of suckling its young one a quadruped raises up its leg to protect its young one from harm. This is also due to this one part of mercy. Almighty Allah has retained the ninety nine parts of mercy to shower them on His servants in the Hereafter. This gives only a faint idea of the infinite mercy of Allah.

Never despair of Allahs' mercy

By means of this *Hadith* the Holy Prophet ﷺ has insisted upon us that we should never despair of the mercy of Allah Who has reserved with Him ninety-nine parts of His mercy for distribution among His servants in the Hereafter. Will He then deprive you of His mercy here or there? No never ! The only condition for you to deserve this mercy is that you should attract His mercy by means

of *Taubah* (repentance) and *Istighfar* (seeking forgiveness). The more you turn to Allah in repentance and to seeking His forgiveness, the more will you qualify yourself for His mercy and this will bring you salvation in the Hereafter.

Only wishful thinking is not enough

However, this mercy will fall only on such of Allah's servants as have sincere desire for it and are ready to do something to attract it. If a man does not have any desire for mercy and spends his entire life in idle pursuits, in the hope that Almighty Allah will shower His mercy on him because He is All-Merciful, then such a man is deceiving himself. It is about such persons that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a *Hadith*:

العاجز من اتبع نفسه هوا ها و تمنى على الله (ترمذى، صفة القيامة، باب نمبر ٢٦)

The *Hadith* means: A helpless and capable person is one who is hankering after his desires and entertaining hopes from Allah that, being All-Merciful, He shall forgive everything.

Allah's mercy will, of course, overtake and fall here as well as the Hereafter on whom who works hard to qualify himself for this mercy.

A strange account of a man

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه has narrated another *Hadith* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ which contains an account of a man belonging to the ancient communities which runs as under:

There was a man who had wronged himself a great deal by committing very heinous sins and had done no good deeds. When the time of death approached him, he

called his near and dear ones around him, admitted his sins to them and asked them to burn his corpse, grind finely its remains, then scatter the ashes in the wind in different directions. He told his family the reasons for this strange will. He thought that in this way he would escape from the terrible punishment which Allah would inflict on him for the heinous sins he had committed during his disobedient life in this world.

When this man died the members of his family acted upon his will and disposed of his corpse exactly as he had desired, so that nothing remained except very fine particles of ashes flying in the wind in far off corners of the world. It was very foolish on the part of the man to think that Almighty Allah would not be able to gather the particles of his burnt corpse to raise him to life again for punishment.

No sooner did this happen than Almighty Allah commanded that the man's remains be gathered together, re-assembled and the man revived to life. This was done instantly. The revived man was then produced before Allah. He was asked the reason for his strange will. In reply he said:

خشيتك يا رب

"O Allah! it was due to Your fear,

He was sure that his sins would bring on him the worst kind of torment in the Hereafter."

Almighty Allah replied: "As you did all this on account of My fear, I forgive you."

This account is based on a *Hadith* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ which is available in Sahih Muslim with authentic authority. (Sahih Muslim... Book of *Taubah*)

Now think a bit about this foolish will which had a trace of disbelief in it. The man thought that by the disposal of his corpse, as he had desired, Almighty Allah would not be able to raise him to life and punish him for his sins - God

forbid. Almighty Allah, however, forgave him on account of these points in his will :

He had fear of Allah; he believed that Allah was his *RABB* (Sustainer). He confessed that he had disobeyed Allah; He felt ashamed of his disobedience; and he had expressed this remorse and regret before his death.

The essence of this *Hadith* is to declare that Allah's mercy demands from His servants that they should express regret at thier sins from the cores of their hearts and do everything possible for them by way of *Taubah* and seeking forgiveness. Almighty Allah will then accept their *Taubah* (repentance) and grant them forgiveness out of His infinite mercy.

May Almighty Allah help us all to take resort to *Taubah* in the true sense of the word and thereby make us qualified for His mercy. *Aameen*!

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

THE EXCELLENCES OF *DAROOD*

الحمدلله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهدان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له ونشهدان سيدنا ونبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد!

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطٰن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ وَمَلٰٓئِكَتَهٗ يُصَلُّوْنَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ ط يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا صَلُّوْا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوْا تَسْلِيْمًا (سوره الحزاب ٥٦:٣٣)

وقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يحسب المومن من البخل اذاذ كرت عنده فلم يصل على (كتاب الزهدلابن مبارك: ٣٦٣)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help; we believe in Him, and rely on

Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom Allah guides, and there is none to guide him whom He let go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the One Who has no partner. I also bear witness that our Sire, our Prophet, and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ, is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah shower His mercy on him, on his household and on his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم and bless and salute them all a great deal.

The verse means:

"Surely, Allah and His Angels shower blessings on the Prophet. O you who beleive: Ask blessings on him and salute him with a worthy salutation." (33:56)

The greatest benefactor of humanity

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in this Hadith: "It is enough for a believer to be regarded as a miser that, when I am mentioned before him, he does not offer *DAROOD* (blessings, mercy) on me."

The reason for this remark of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is quite understandable. He ﷺ is the greatest benefactor and well-wisher of the believers on the surface of this earth. His kindness and obligations are the greatest and heaviest on the necks of those whom Allah has favoured with the wealth of belief (*Eeman*). The state of the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself was, that he ﷺ was pining day and night for the sake of the good of his ﷺ *Ummah.* Describing this state of the Holy Prophet ﷺ a Companion رضی اللہ عنہ, once said:

كان دائم الفكرة متوا صل الاحزان

He was always drowned in deep thought and remained constantly in a sad and pensive mood.

The learned saint have explained that this thoughtfulness and worry were not due to loss in some worldly business or property; they were indeed due to his anxiety to save his ﷺ Ummah from the Fire of Hell and to enable it to receive the pleasure of Almighty Allah.

I am saving you from the Fire

In another Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said: "My example and your example are like a man who has kindled fire and moths and insects are rushing to that fire. The man is trying to keep these moths and insects away from the fire to save them from being burnt. Just like this man, I am dragging you away from the fire, although you are trying to escape from my grip and heading fast towards the Fire of Hell."(Sahih Muslim).

The Holy Prophet ﷺ spent his entire life in the anxiety to save his Ummah from Hell-fire. For all this kindness and anxiety of the Holy Prophet ﷺ for his Ummah, should a member of his Ummat be so miserly as not to offer *DAROOD* at least once on hearing the Prophet's sacred name? Apart from the benefit which the Holy Prophet ﷺ will receive, the reciter of the *DAROOD* himself will stand to gain a great deal from this act.

Almighty Allah Himself is a partner in this act

Almighty Allah has adopted in the Holy Qur'an a unique style in commanding His servants to send

DAROOD on the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This He says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَـٰٓئِكَتَهُۥ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ ۚ يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا (سورہ الحزاب ٣٣:٥٦)

Surely, Allah and His Angels shower blessings on the Prophet ﷺ. O you who believe: Send blessings on him and salute him with all respect. (33:56)

Just realize the uniqueness of Allah's style in His divine address. He has not commanded his servants to "send blessings..." Instead, He has first told His servants that He Himself and His Angels too are showering blessings on the Prophet ﷺ. This style contains two important indications. Firstly, the Holy Prophet ﷺ does not stand in need of our *DAROOD*, when Allah and His Angels are already busy with the act of offering *DAROOD*. Secondly, this act of sending *DAROOD* is unique and distinctive in that there is no other act, except *DAROOD*, in which Almighty Allah is also engaged along with His Angels - and servants. For example, Allah is not engaged along with His servants in acts of worship like *Salat* (Prayer), *Saum* (fasting), *Zakat* (the obligatory charity), *Hajj* (pilgrimage to the ka'ba), etc. It is only *DAROOD* that stands out in this unique distinction, that Allah, His Angels and His servants are all engaged in offering *DAROOD*.

How should the servants offer *Darood*?

It should however be noted that the ways of offering *DAROOD* to the Holy Prophet ﷺ by Allah and His servants are quite different from each other. Allah's act of offering *DAROOD* means that He is showering mercy and blessings on the Holy Prophet ﷺ direct. As regards a servant's act of offering *DAROOD*, it means that he is praying to Allah for

showering His mercy and blessing on His Prophet ﷺ. It occurs in a Hadith that when this verse was revealed the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم asked the Holy Prophet ﷺ:

"O Prophet Allah! In this verse there are injunctions for us that we should offer to His Prophet ﷺ (i) *DAROOD* and (ii) *SALAM*. We know the way of offering *SALAM*, as we bid you *SALAM* when we call on you ﷺ by saying: السلام علیکم ورحمة اللہ وبرکاتہ. You have also taught us the way of reciting *SALAM*, as we recite it in the *Tashah-hud* (تشہد) in the sittings after the second the third and fourth Rak'ats in *Salat*. What is the way of offering *DAROOD* on you ﷺ?

The Holy Prophet ﷺ taught them that they should offer *DAROOD* in these words:

اللهم صل على محمد وعلى آل محمد كما صليت على ابراهيم وعلى آل ابراهيم انك حميد مجيد

O Allah, send *DAROOD* on Muhammad and on the household of Muhammad as You sent *DAROOD* on Ibrahim and on the household of Ibrahim. You are indeed Highly praised, Magnificent (Sahih Muslim).

This contains an indication that the servant of Allah is helpless and too incompetent to offer *DAROOD*. He cannot do full justice to this job on account of his own incompetency, on account of the enormity of the obligations lying on the Shoulder of the kindness, mercy and sympathy of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and his ﷺ own high status, attributes, accomplishments and nearness to Almighty Allah. The servant should, therefore, confess his helplessness at the very outset and pray to Allah to offer *DAROOD* to His beloved Prophet ﷺ.

It is Almighty Allah alone who knows the status of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

The renowned Urdu/Persian Indian poet Mirza Ghalib was a free-thinker. Despite that, he has composed in his poems couplets dealing with religion-spiritual issues so nicely and realistically that it is not unlikely that one of these couplets may procure for him Allah's forgiveness: He has said in a Persian couplet:

غالب ثنائے خواجہ بہ یزداں گزاشتیم
کاں ذات پاک مرتبہ دانِ محمد ﷺ است

The poet has said in this couplet that:

He has left to Almighty Allah the question of praising His beloved Prophet ﷺ. This is because it is only Almighy Allah Who Knows the qualities and attributes of the Prophet ﷺ.

We are too ignorant to know the status and station of the beloved Prophet ﷺ.

We have, therefore, been taught through the words of the *DAROOD* to confess the fact that neither we can know the attributes of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, nor can we express gratitude commensurate with the favours we have received from him ﷺ, nor have we the necessary competence to offer *DAROOD*. The only thing we can do in this regard is to pray to Allah to send *DAROOD* to His beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

There is cent per cent certainty that this *Du'a* (supplication) shall be granted

The Ulama have said that there is no *Du'a* (supplication) in the entire universe about which it can be said with cent per cent certainty that it shall be granted. The only exception however, the *SACRED DAROOD* about

which there is cent per cent certainty that it shall be granted. Why is it so? It is because Almighty Allah has declared in advance:

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ وَمَلٰٓئِكَتَهٗ يُصَلُّوْنَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ ؕ

Allah and His Angels are sending *DAROOD* on the Holy Prophet even before submitting our *Du'a* (*DAROOD*) to Allah.

Therefore, there is not the slightest doubt in the acceptance of the *Du'a* of *DAROOD*.

The etiquette of submitting a *Du'a*

Our saints have, therefore, taught us to recite *DAROOD* at the beginning and end of every *Du'a*. It is certain that *DAROOD* shall be accepted. It is inconceivable about Allah's infinite benevolence and mercy that He shall accept the *Du'a* submitted in the form of *DAROOD* at the beginning and the end and reject the Du'a submitted by His servant in the middle. Therefore, Almighty Allah shall grant a *Du'a* which begins with *DAROOD* and ends with *DAROOD*. For submitting a Du'a to Allah we have been taught to open the Du'a by praising Allah, then sending *DAROOD* on the Holy Prophet ﷺ, then stating the objects desired and lastly by concluding the Du'a with *DAROOD*.

Reward and recompense for Sacred *Darood*

Moreover, Almighty Allah has appointed great rewards and recompense for reciting *DAROOD*. It has been declared that for every single recitation of *DAROOD* Allah sends down ten 'mercies' to the reciter. According to a narrative ten sins are forgiven and the station of the reciter is raised by ten degrees (Nasai).

Hazrat Abdur Rahman bin 'Auf رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated

One day the Holy Prophet ﷺ went out of the township to a date-palm garden and fell down in prostration, while I sat down, waiting for him ﷺ. The prostration was so long that I suspected if he ﷺ had - God forbid - breathed his last during the prostration. I thought of moving his hand to find out what had happened. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ rose from the prostration after a long interval. I saw on his face signs of joy. I said to him ﷺ: O Prophet of Allah ﷺ, I have seen to day a scene which I had not seen earlier. Today you ﷺ fell down in a prostration which was the longest and I suspected if you ﷺ had -God- forbid - passed away. What is the reason?

The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied, Hazrat Jibrael عليه السلام called on me and told me that he had a glad tidings to announce to me : Allah has said that He shall send down mercy on him who offers *DAROOD* for me once and shall send *SALAM* (salutation) on him who sends *SALAM* to me. I made this long prostration for this glad tidings and this gift.

Sacred *Darood* is a combination of virtues

The SACRED *DAROOD* is a form of worship which includes "*Zikr*" (remembrance), a confession of favours of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, the virtues of a *Du'a* and other countless virtues. When this *DAROOD* is full of so many virtues and blessings, how is it possible for a Muslim to become so miserly as not to recite *DAROOD* even once, when the sacred name of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is mentioned before him? That is why he ﷺ has said that it is enough for a Muslim to be regarded as a miser who does not recite *DAROOD* when his ﷺ name is mentioned before him.

A warning for not reciting *Darood*

Once the Holy Prophet ﷺ came to his Mosque to deliver a sermon. When he put his foot on the first step of the pulpit, he ﷺ pronounced *Aameen* He pronounced the words '*Aameen*' each time he put his foot on the second and the third steps. When he ﷺ got down from the pulpit after having delivered the sermon, the Noble Companions رضی الله عنهم asked him ﷺ why he pronounced the words '*Aameen*' while getting on the pulpit, when he ﷺ had recited no *Du'a*. The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied: When I was going up the pulpit Hazrat Jibrael عليه السلام came to me and submitted three *Du'as* (supplications). At the end of each *Du'a* I pronounced the words *Aameen*. They were in fact not supplications but were curses. Just think ! The place of the *Du'a* was the Prophet's Sacred Mosque; the day was probably Friday, and was the Friday sermon time which is a very auspicious time for the acceptance of Du'as. Then the maker of the *Du'as* is Jibrael عليه السلام and the person pronouncing '*Aameen*' is no less a person than the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself. What greater guarantee can be given for the grant of a *Du'a* in which so many favourable factors combine?

The first *Du'a* by Hazrat Jibrael عليه السلام was: May that person perish who gets his parents in their old age, but fails to get his sins forgiven to win Paradise, by rendering them good service. Sometimes the parents are pleased with their children only for their trifling services and pray for them and their prayers earn for their children Paradise. Hazrat Jibrael عليه السلام recited this *Du'a* and the Holy Prophet ﷺ supported it with the words '*Aameen*'.

The second *Du'a* was: May that person perish who finds the whole month of Ramazan, yet he does not care to have his sins forgiven during this sacred month. Allah's infinite mercy seeks excuses to forgive sinners and their

sins.

The third *Du'a* was: May that person perish before whom 'my name' is mentioned and he does not recite *DAROOD*. In view of such a stern warning, a Muslim must take care to recite *DAROOD*, when the sacred name of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is mentioned before him. (Bukhari's Tareekhul-Kabir, P-220).

The shortest *Darood*

The genuine *DAROOD* is *DAROOD IBRAHIMI* which I have just now recited and which is also recited during our prayers (*salats*). There are also *DAROODS* composed of other words. All the Ulama are however unanimous that *DAROOD IBRAHIMI* is the best which the Holy Prophet ﷺ had himself taught His Companions رضی اللہ عنہم. It is, however, difficult to recite this *Darood* everytime the Holy Prophet's name is mentioned. They have, therefore, composed this brief and convenient *DAROOD*:

صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم

May Allah send on him ﷺ *DAROOD* and *SALAM*.

This composition contains both the compliments. To pronounce these words while hearing, or to write them while writing, the name of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is enough to secure the virtues and blessings of *DAROOD*.

It is not right to use the abbreviations ﷺ (*Salam*) or only ص (SAD)

There are persons who consider even this shorter *DAROOD* to be long and avoid writing the words: ﷺ. Instead, they write abbreviations like صلم or ص only. This is very undesirable and it means a loss of the virtues

contained in pronouncing or wirting the words of the above mentioned shorter *DAROOD*. (صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم).

The reward for writing *Darood*

It has already been mentioned that according to Ahadith, for reciting *DAROOD* only once Almighty Allah sends to the reciter ten "mercies." and adds ten virtues to his Register of Deeds and also forgives ten of his sins. As regards writing *DAROOD* on some document or in a book, it occurs in a Hadith that the Angels send the writer *DAROOD* as long as the writing lasts. (Zadus-Saeed. Hazrat Thanawi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ.

This shows that the writer of the words "ﷺ" will also get the reward of those who read this *DAROOD* as written on the document or in the books. It is therefore, a matter of miserliness and great loss to utter or write only abbreviations like صلم or ص.

The Scholras of Hadith (*Muhadditheen*) are favoured servants of Allah

The Ulama have written in the books on the science of Hadith and on the biographies of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that both the students and the teachers of the science of Hadith get opportunities frequently to recite *DAROOD*, saying صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم. Such persons engaged in learning and teaching Ahadith are favoured servants of Allah, because they have to offer more *DAROOD* to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. How virtuous is this recitation of *DAROOD*! May Almighty Allah help us realize this truth and get benefit from it. *Aameen*.

The Angels offer *Du'a* for mercy

عن عامربن ربيعة رضى الله عنه قال سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول من صلى على صلاة صلت عليه الملائكة ماصلى على فليقل عبد من ذلك اوليكثر (ابن ماجه ابواب اقامة الصلاة باب الصلاة على النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم)

Hazrat 'Amir bin Rabi'ah رضى الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: The Angels pray for mercy for a man as long as he offers *DAROOD* for me. It is now up to the man to decrease or increase the *Du'a* of the Angels.

Ten 'mercies' and ten tranquillities

وعن ابى طلحة رضى الله عنه ان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم جاء ذات يوم والبشرٰى يرى فى وجهه فقال انه جاء نى جبرئيل فقال اما يرضيك يا محمد ان لا يصلى عليك احد من امتك الا صليت عليه عشرا ولا يسلم عليك احد من امتك الا سلمت عليه عشرا (سنن نسائى كتاب السهو، باب فضل التسليم على النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم)

Hazrat Abu Talha رضى الله عنه has narrated that one day the Holy Prophet ﷺ came while there were signs of joy on his sacred face and he ﷺ said: Hazrat Jibrael had called on me and told me: O Muhammad ﷺ! Almighty Allah wishes to know if it is not enough for you to feel pleased that He shall send down ten 'mercies' on one of your Ummah who recites *DAROOD* on you and shall send down peace and tranquillity ten times on him who sends *SALAM* to you?

Angels engaged in conveying the sacred *Darood*

عن ابن مسعود رضى الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ان لله تعالى ملائكة سياحين فى الارض يبلغونى من امتى السلام (سنن نسائى، كتاب

السهو، باب السلام على النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم)

Hazrat Abdullah bin Mas'ood رضى الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: There are many Angels of Allah who remain touring round the world. When they find anyone of my Ummah bidding me *SALAM*. they convey his *SALAM* to me.

It occurs in another Hadith also that when any servant of Allah recites *DAROOD* on the Holy Prophet ﷺ, that *DAROOD* is conveyed to the Holy Prophet ﷺ telling the name of the person and that of his father, that the gift of *DAROOD* is from him. How fortunate it is for a man that his name should be mentioned in the assembly of the Holy Prophet ﷺ!(Kanzul-Ummal. Hadith No: 2218).

I Myself hear *Darood*

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith: When a member of my Ummah recites *DAROOD* on me from a distant place his *DAROOD* is conveyed to me by the Angels. When he recites *DAROOD* at my grave and says:

then I myself hear his *DAROOD* and *SALAM*.

((Kanzul-Ummal. Hadith No: 2218).

Almighty Allah has granted the Holy Prophet ﷺ a special kind of life in his grave by virtue of which he himself ﷺ hears that *SALAM*. That is why the Ulama have advised that *DAROOD* at his grave should be recited in the following words:

الصلاة والسلام عليك يا رسول الله

Those who recite *DAROOD* from a distance should recite *DAROOD IBRAHIMI*.

Recite *Darood* in sickness and distress

My Sheikh, Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه once said that when a man is in distress or is in some pressing need he should pray to Almighty Allah to relieve him of that sickness or distress and to fulfil his need. He added I tell you a way by virtue of which Almighty Allah will certainly grant your prayer. In times of sickness, pain anxiety and distress you should increase the recitation of *DAROOD*. By the blessing of *DAROOD* Almighty Allah shall grant you relief, cure and shall remove your distress.

Try to get the benefit of the *Du'as* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

It is written in books on the Prophet's sacred biography that when anyone presented a gift to the Holy Prophet ﷺ, he ﷺ tried his best to compensate the man who presented the gift with some better gift. The Holy Prophet ﷺ followed this principle throughout his sacred life. This *DAROOD* is also a gift presented by its reciter to the Holy Prophet ﷺ through the Angels. It is therefore hoped that the Holy Prophet ﷺ shall accept this gift of *DAROOD* and compensate the giver with a better gift which will be in the form of an appeal from the Holy Prophet ﷺ to Almighty Allah to relieve the man of all his distress and anxieties and fulfil all his needs. This Prophetic appeal will indeed be as an acknowledgement of the gift of the *DAROOD*.

As the Holy Prophet ﷺ is not now among us there is no way to call on him ﷺ and make a direct and Personal appeal for *Du'a* Now the only way open before us for this purpose is to increase recitation of *DAROOD*. In return for which the Holy Prophet ﷺ shall oblige us with his *Du'a*. We should all take advnatage of this *DAROOD*. This has been the practice of saints and pious men during times of distress, anxieties and

pressing needs. It is necessary for this purpose to recite *DAROOD IBRAHIMI* at least three hundred times, or to save time some shorter *DAROOD* like this one:

اللهم صل على محمد النّبيّ الأُمّيّ وعلىٰ اٰله واصحابه وبارك وسلم

You are also at liberty to recite this still shorter *DAROOD*:

اللهم صل على محمد وسلم

or

صلى الله عليه وسلم

Make it a point to recite the *DAROOD* at least one hudnred times. This act shall accumulate for you a good provision for the Hereafter and will also provide for you in this world freedom and relief from distress disease, worries and wants.

What should be the words of *DAROOD*?

This recitation of *DAROOD* is both a form of worship and a *Du'a* which is being submitted in compliance with a command of Almighty Allah. It is therefore necessary that the same words of *DAROOD* should be adopted which Allah and His Prophet ﷺ have taught us. On this topic the Ulama have compiled permanent books on *DAROODS* which were proved by the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Hafiz Sakhawi رحمة الله عليه has written a book in Arabic called القول البديع فى الصلاة على الحبيب الشفيع.

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has also written a book in Urdu "Zadus-Saeed" (زادالسعيد). The *DAROODS* included in these books were proved by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The virtues and qualities of *DAROODS* have also been mentioned in them.

Do not recite *Daroods* that are not genuine

In spite of the fact that so many *DAROODS* have come down to us from the Holy Prophet ﷺ, there are men who are fond of composing their own *DAROODS*. Thus, some one has invented *DAROOD TAJ* and another one *DAROOD LAKHI* and each has enumerated the virtues of his composition. These *DAROODS* cannot be traced to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Moreover, they contain words and phrases which suggest Shirk (polytheism). So we should recite only such *DAROODS* as are authentic and narrated from the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Everyone should keep in his house a copy of Hazrat Thanawi's book of *DAROOD*, Zadus-Saeed.

A sketch of the sacred Shoes of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and its virtues

In his book 'زادالسعید' Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has favoured us with a very useful and blessed object. This is a sketch of the sacred shoes of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The saints have advised, on the basis of their own experience, that if this sketch is placed on the chest of a person, Almighty Allah shall cure all his diseases and solve all his difficulties and problems by virtue of this sketch. This book should be available in every home. Sheikh-ul-Hadith Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Zakariya رحمة الله عليه has also compiled a booklet, viz., "فضائل درود شریف" on the virtues of sacred *DAROOD*. This too, should be kept and studied in every home. *SACRED DAROOD* should be a regular rehearsal of everyone.

The injunctions about sacred *Darood*

All the Ulama of the *Ummah* are unanimous on this point that it is an obligatory duty on every Muslim to recite

DAROOD at least once in his liftime. It is an obligatory duty, just as Prayer, Fasting, *Zakat* and *Hajj* are obligatory duties, which is in confirmity with this Qur'anic verse:

إِنَّ اللهَ وَمَلٰٓئِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّوْنَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ ط يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا صَلُّوْا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوْا تَسْلِيْمًا (سورہ الحزاب ٥٦:٣٣)

Apart from this, it is compulsory (واجب) to recite *DAROOD* at least once on hearing the sacred name of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in an assembly or on writing it in one sitting. It is a sin to avoid reciting *DAROOD*, as advised.

The difference between *Wajib* (compulsory) and *Farz* (obligatory) duties

There is no difference between the two duties, in so far as action is concerned. It is binding to act upon both. He who fails to perform either is a sinner. However, there is a very fine difference between the two that one who denies the obligatory nature of *Farz* becomes a *Kafir* (disbeleiver). The denier of *Wajib* is a sinner but he does not become a *Kafir* (disbeliever). For example, one who says that Prayer or Ramazan fastnig is not *Farz*, he at once becomes a *Kafir* (disbeliever). By denying a *Wajib* one becomes a great sinner, but not a *Kafir*. The exmaple of *Wajib* is the *"Witr"* prayer after the *Isha* (عشاء). As already mentioned, in so far as action is concerned there is no difference between the two.

Sacred *Darood* should be recited on every occasion

In issuing its injunctions, the Islamic *Shari'ah* has always conceded that the injunctions should be practicable. So, it has prescribed that if the name of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is mentioned in an assembly repeatedly, it is *Wajib* to recite *DAROOD* only once. However it is expected from a good

Muslim that he should recites *DAROOD* every time he hears the sacred name of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, even if the *DAROOD* is the shortest one, "صلى الله عليه وسلم".

To recite *Darood* while performing *Wudhoo* (Ablution)

There are times, like the time of performing *W'udhoo* (Ablution) when it is *Mustahab* (desirable) to recite *DAROOD* and it is better to recite it repeatedly. Therefore, it is worthy of a good Muslim to keep reciting *DAROOD* during ablution. The Ulama have declared it as *Mustahab*.

When the hands or the feet become benumed

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has advised in a Hadith that if the hands or the feet of anyone beocme benumbed or paralysed he should recite on him ﷺ this *DAROOD*:

اللهم صل على محمد وعلى أل محمد كما صليت على ابراهيم
وعلى أل ابراهيم انك حميد مجيد

When the Holy Prophet ﷺ has himself advised us to recite *DAROOD* it means that the recitation of *DAROOD* is a remedy for this malady. It is hoped that by virtue of *DAROOD* Almighty Allah shall by His grace, cure this condition.

Recitation of *Darood* on entering and leaving a mosque

Similarlity, it is *Mustahab* (desirable) to recite *DAROOD* while entering and leaving a mosque. The Masnoon (based on the *Sunnah*) *Du'a* on entering a mosque is اللهم افتح لى ابواب رحمتك (O Allah, open for me the doors of your mercy. The masnoon *Du'a* on leaving mosque is اللهم انى اسئلك من فضلك (O Allah I beg You to grant me Your bounty). It occurs in narratives that a *DAROOD* should also be added to these

Du'as. Thus the following *Du'a* should be recited while entering a mosque:

بسم الله والصلاة والسلام على رسول الله اللهم افتح لى ابواب رحمتك

Recite the following *Du'a*, while leaving a mosque:

بسم الله والصلاة والسلام على رسول الله اللهم انى اسئلك من فضلك

Thus, it is *Mustahab* (desirable) to recite *DAROOD* on both these occasions.

The wisdom contained in these *Du'as*

Almighty Allah has given us these two wonderful *Du'as* for reciting while entering and leaving a mosque. Allah has commanded that while entering a mosque, we should pray to Him to open for us the doors of His mercy. While leaving a mosque, we should pray to Him for His bounty. The learned saints have said that in the light of the Qur'an and the Ahadith the word رحم (mercy) generally refers to the blessings of the Hereafter. That is why we call for Allah's mercy for the dead by saying (May Allah have mercy on him, or فضل (May Allahs' mercy be upon him). On the other hand, the word فضل (bounty) generally refers to the blessings of this world, e.g. money, property, wife and children, means of earning livelihood and other lawful gains. So, while entering a mosque you should pray to Allah to open before you the doors of His mercy, i.e. the blessings of the Hereafter. After you have entered the mosque Pray to Him that He may help you to devote yourself to such worship and Allah's remembrance as may entitle you to the blessings of the Hereafter.

On coming out of the mosque a man will either go home, to his office or his shop for earning a living. So, on this occasion Allah has taught us to pray that He may open before you the doors of His bounty, i.e. the blessings of

this world.

Just think that if Allah grants these two *Du'as* of a man, one for blessings in the Hereafter and the other for blessings in this world, what more can he desire? May Allah grant us all these two *Du'as*. When submitting your *Du'as*, you must recite *DAROOD* on Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, because as *DAROOD* already stands granted your *Du'as* will also be granted along with *DAROOD*. When these *Du'as* are accepted you receive blessings of this world as well as of the Hereafter. We must, therefore, make sure to recite the *Du'as* on entering and leaving a mosque.

Open some important topic with the recitation of *Darood*

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has advised that while saying or writing something important, a man should praise Almighty Allah and then recite *SACRED DAROOD*, thereafter, he should commence his speech or writing. You might have noted that in the beginning of a speech a breif sermon is addressed to the audience. This sermon includes Allah's praise and a reference to His Oneness, *DAROOD* on the Holy Prophet ﷺ and a statement about his prophetic mission. For the sake of brevity and to save time only these wores may be pronounced:

نحمده ونصلی علی رسوله الکریم

We praise Allah and offer *DAROOD* to the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

As an alternative the following words may be spoken:

الحمد لله وکفی وسلام علی عباده الذین اصطفی

This too is a form of short *DAROOD*. So, before saying or writing any thing, Allah should be praised and

DAROOD on the Holy Prophet ﷺ be recited. The practice among us before making a formal speech is to say these words: نحمده ونصلی علی رسوله الکریم

When the Noble Companions رضی الله عنهم had to say anything on a topic relating to Deen or some worldly affair like business, cultivation, relationship, etc., it was their practice first to praise Allah, then to recite *Darood* on the Holy Prophet ﷺ. A glimpse of this may still be seen among the Arabs. When they assemble to discuss some matter, they first praise Allah and then recite *DAROOD*. This important *Sunnah* is gradually disappearing from our society. It needs to be revived.

To recite *Darood* when excited with anger

The learned saints have advised that when a man is excited with anger, he should recite *DAROOD*. This will subdue his anger, so that he may not get beside himself with rage, disobey the *Shari'ah* abuse someone, commit some excess nor become violent with someone. By reciting *DAROOD*, the anger will subside, matters will not go beyond control and nothing untoward shall happen.

A very good custom is still prevalent among the Arabs that when two persons fall out with each other, a third person intervenes between them and says to them صل علی النبی that is, recite *DAROOD* on the Holy Prophet ﷺ. In response to this the other person recites *DAROOD*, saying:

اللهم صلی علی محمد وعلی آل محمد

Their passions get at once pacified and complete peace is restored between the enraged parties. This nice custom should also be introduced in our society.

To recite *Darood* before going to bed

The Ulama have likewise, advised that when a man lies on his bed, he sholud first recite the *Masnoon Du'as*, then begin reciting *DAROOD* until he falls into deep sleep. In this way the last words of a man during his wakefulness will be the *SACRED DAROOD*. These are easy things which cost neither labour nor time. In addition, you are doing something which will ensure for you a blessed end. We should therefore, make this a regular habit and include it in our daily routine.

To recite *Darood* three hundred times daily

Some saints have advised that *DAROOD* should be recited at least three hundred times from morning till evening daily. Hazrat Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رحمة الله عليه used to advise his disciples to recite *DAROOD* at least three hundred times daily. Thereby, they could be counted among those who recite *DAROOD* in a large number. The number should in no case be less than one hundred.

***Sacred Darood* - A means to enhance love**

We have read about the reward a man will receive in the Hereafter for reciting *DAROOD*. The reward for *DAROOD* in this world is that the more a man offers *DAROOD*, the more shall be his love for the Holy Prophet ﷺ. As a result of this increased love, the doors of success and prosperity will be opened before the reciter of *DAROOD*.

It occurs in a Hadith that once a Companion رضى الله عنهم asked the Holy Prophet ﷺ, O Prophet of Allah! When will the Day of Resurrection arrive? The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked him? What preparation have you made for it? He

replied: O Prophet of Allah ﷺ! I do not have to my credit many optional prayers, nor optional fasts, yet I have love for Allah and His Messenger. The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied to him, saying:

المرء مع من احب (ترمذى، كتاب الزهد، باب ماجاء ان المرء مع من احب)

In the Hereafter a man will be with the person whom he loved in the world.

Thus, in the Hereafter Allah shall grant him the company of the Holy Prophet ﷺ who loves the Prophet ﷺ in this world. A worldly gain of reciting *DAROOD* is that there will be an increasae in the reciter's love for the Holy Prophet ﷺ. There is no believer whose heart is vacant of the Prophet's love, yet the love varies from man to man, according to the quantity of *DAROOD* recited by men. This is not an insignificant gain reaped by the reciter of *DAROOD*.

By reciting *Darood* one may get a vision of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

The saints have said that another worldly benefit of reciting *DAROOD* in large numbers is that Almighty Allah shall show the reciter a vision of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Allamah Jalaluddin Suyuti رحمة الله عليه is one of the most accomplished scholars who has compiled a book on almost every branch of worldly and religious sciences, viz., Tafseer, Hadith, Fiqh, Eloquence, Grammar, Mathematics etc. He has written three books on the subject of Tafseer (Qur'anic Interpretation). One of these named 'Majma'ul Bahrain.' مجمع البحرين consists of eighty volumes. The second and the third Tafseers are 'Dur-e-Mansoor' and 'Jalalain' respectively. If anyone desires to read all his books a whole lifetime will be necessary for this. He رحمة الله عليه wrote all these books up to

the age of forty years and devoted the remaining years of his life to the worship of Allah.

To be favoured with a vision of the Holy Prophet ﷺ during wakefulness

It is written about him رحمة الله عليه that Almighty Allah bestowed upon him the wealth of seeing the Holy Prophet ﷺ during wakefulness thirty-five times. To see the Holy Prophet ﷺ during wakefulness is a kind of (seeing by spiritual light what is hidden from others). Someone inquired of him about this distinction and asked him about his deeds which brought him this unique honour. In reply the Sheikh said: I do not rememebr any special deed, except that Almighty Allah has by His mercy enabled me to recite *DAROOD*, standing, sitting, lying, sleeping, waking and walking about, throughout my life. This may be the cause of my being favoured with this honour.

The way to get a vision of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

The saints have advised that if a man desires to have a vision of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, he should on a Friday night offer two Rak'ats of optional (نفل) prayer. In each Rak'at he should recite after Surah Fatihah the verse Kursee (2:255) eleven times and also Surah Ikhlas eleven times. After bidding the closing *Salam* he should recite the following *DAROOD* one hundred times:

اللهم صلى على محمد النبى الامى وعلىٰ اٰله واصحابه وبارك وسلم

If a man works on this formula for a number of times, Almighty Allah may confer on him the honour of having a vision of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This is indeed subject to the condition that the man has a genuinely true

longing for this honour and refrains from all sins.

The Modesty of Hazrat Mufti Sahib رحمة الله عليه

A man called on my father Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه and asked him for some Wazifah (rehearsing formula) by virtue of which he might have a vision of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. My respected father رحمة الله عليه said to him: My brother, you are a very ambitious person that you are desiring to have a vision of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. As for myself I dare not entertain such a wish, as I consider myself hardly fit for this honour. Even if I ever get this honour, I cannot do full jsutice to the dues and etiquettes of the honour. I therefore never made any endeavour in this behalf, nor did I ever learn the way by following which I may be favoured with a vision of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It will of course be a different matter if Almighty Allah Himself grants me this honour. In that case He shall also teach me the necessary etiquettes for the honour of this blessed vision.

Hazrat Mufti Sahib رحمة الله عليه at the Sacred Tomb of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

Whenever Hazrat Mufti Sahib رحمة الله عليه visited the tomb of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, he never tried to touch its network. It was his regular practice to stand by one of the pillars in front of the network. If anyone was already standing there, my father رحمة الله عليه would stand behind that man.

One day Mufti Sahib رحمة الله عليه himself said about himself: "Once it occurred to me that perhaps being hard-hearted I dared not approach the network, but other servants of Alalh were trying to approach and embrace that. It is a great blessing to be as near the Holy Prophet

ﷺ as possible. What am I to do? My feet do not step forward. The moment I thought in this way I felt as if a voice was coming from the Sacred Tomb:

> Convey this message from me to the people that he who acts upon my *Sunnah* is near to me even if he may be living thousands of miles away form me. The man who does not act upon my *Sunnah* is far away from me although he may be sticking to the network of my tomb.

As this voice contained a command "Convey this message to the people from me", my father رحمة الله عليه used to mention this message to the people in his sermons and addresses, without telling that this had happened to himself. Instead, he said that a visitor heard this voice from the Sacred Tomb. However, he informed us in private that this had happened to him.

Acting upon the *Sunnah* is the crucial point

It is a fact that the main problem relates to acting upon the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. A man who acts upon the *Sunnah* is Allah willing, enjoying nearness to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. If a man is not acting upon the *Sunnah* he is far removed from the Holy Prophet ﷺ, although he may get admission into the very inner part of the Prophet's tomb.

May Allah help us all to act upon the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, *Aameen*.

To invent new forms of *Darood*

Reciting *DAROOD* as much as possible is an excellent engagement. However, Allah and His Prophet ﷺ approve an act only when it is done according to the way and procedure prescribed by them. Allah and His Prophet ﷺ are not pleased with an act which a man does according

to his own way and choice. Nowadays, people have invented new styles of reciting *DAROOD* other than those taught by Allah and His Prophet ﷺ. They think that by acting upon their own innovations they are doing good, but they are only deceiving themselves, because their actions are not according to the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*.

This is a *Bid'ah* (Innovation)

This days, certain parties have invented a style of reciting *DAROOD* and *SALAM* while on loud-speakers, standing in a group, and in artistic and musical tones. They recite in this way the following:

الصلاة والسلام عليك يا رسول الله

These parties believe that this is the only way of presenting *DAROOD* and *SALAM* to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. They do not appreciate the action of a person who offers *DAROOD* and *SALAM* quietly and sitting in a corner. The styles now invented by them cannot be traced in the lives of the Noble Companions رضى الله عنهم although everyone of them was an embodiment of *DAROOD* and *SALAM* and remained engaged in this pious act from morning till evening.

What is more, if anyone does not join their so-called *DAROOD* and *SALAM* party, they taunt him and accuse him that the fellow is devoid of love of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and that he does not believe in the virtues of *DAROOD* and *SALAM*. Please try to understand that no way of reciting *DAROOD* and *SALAM* can be better than the way which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has himself taught his *Ummah*. What is that way? A Companion رضى الله عنهم requested the Holy Prophet ﷺ to tell him the way of reciting *DAROOD*. In reply, the Holy Prophet ﷺ recited *DAROOD IBRAHIMI* and pointed

out that it was the way of reciting *DAROOD*.

The style of reciting *Darood* during Prayers

Also note that Almighty Allah has made the *SACRED DAROOD* a part of the prayer. The Surah Fati 'hah followed by another Surah or part of a Surah is recited while standing. As for *DAROOD*, it is recited after Tashahud (تشهد), while sitting in all sincerity and submission. It is quite lawful to recite *DAROOD*, while sitting, standing or lying down, but it is not right, nor desirable to specify a particular pose or posture for reciting *DAROOD*. This is simply wrong and baseless.

Does the Holy Prophet ﷺ visit places where *Darood* is recited?

The matter has become even worse when it is believed that the Holy Prophet ﷺ or his soul arrives at the place where *DAROOD* is recited. In response to this belief, the *Darood* parties stand up in honour of the supposed visit of the Holy Prophet ﷺ or his soul.

How can you prove that the Holy Prophet ﷺ arrives on such occasions in his person or in his soul? Can you support this belief, with verses of the Qur'an, some Hadith or the saying of a Companion رضی اللہ عنہم? If you reflect a bit on the Hadith I have quoted earlier, you will be able to understand the truth. The Hadith runs:

ان للہ تعالی ملائکۃ سیاحین فی الارض یبلغونی من امتی السلام

Hazrat Abdullah bin Mas'ood رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: There are many Angels of Allah who remain touring round the world. When they find anyone of my *Ummah* offering me *SALAM* and reciting *DAROOD*, they convey these gifts to me.

In this Hadith, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has only mentioned that the Angels of Allah convey to him ﷺ *DAROOD* and *SALAM*. There is no Hadith in which he ﷺ has said that he ﷺ himself arrives at the place where *DAROOD* is recited.

The etiquette of presenting a gift

Think about *DAROOD*. What is it? This is a gift which is being presented to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. When some gift is presented to a dignitary, is he asked to visit the gift-maker's house to receive the gift or is the gift sent to him with due respect and honour? If you have some respect and regard for your elder and senior, will you ask him to call on you at your place to receive the gift? The right etiquette is that either you will personally present the gift to him, or depute some representative to convey the gift to the receiver with due respect and regard. For conveying the *DAROOD* from a member of the Ummah to His Prophet ﷺ, Almighty Allah has appointed Angels who convey the gift of *DAROOD* to the Prophet ﷺ in the reciter's name. What is your way? Just compare.

This is quite a wrong belief

Moreover, we have invented a style of ours that we shall not ourselves convey the gift of *DAROOD* and *SALAM* to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The latter ﷺ should himself call at our mosque to receive the gift. This attitude is against the rules of etiquette, more so when the greatest and the last of the prophets علیہ السلام is directly concerned.

There is a section of men who believe that when they recite *DAROOD*, the Holy Prophet ﷺ) himself visits the place to receive this gift. As such it is their bounden duty to stnad up in his honour. This trend of thought and action is

below the dignity of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It is basically wrong. We should follow the in way which Almighty Allah and His Prophet ﷺ had taught us.

Recite *Darood* in a low voice and with due regard

The Holy Qur'an says that when you have to submit some *Du'a* (supplication) to Allah or rehearse Allah's name, it is better to do so as quietly and humbly as possible:

اُدْعُوْا رَبَّكُمْ تَضَرُّعًا وَّخُفْيَةً (الاعراف:٥٥)

(O mankind!) Call your Lord humbly and secretly. (7:55)

In view of this Divine command, how can it be appropriate to call Allah so loudly on loud-speakers, "O Allah send blessings on Muhammad ﷺ ....?" So, it is better to recite *DAROOD* as quietly and humbly as possible. If anyone invents his own ways and styles of reciting *DAROOD*, they will not be acceptable to Allah and His Prophet ﷺ.

Think with an unprejudiced mind

The scourge of sectarianism is on the increase everywhere in these times. People do not give ear even to reasonable suggestions and advice. I am saying this not by way of fault-finding but by way of sympathy and from the depth of my heart. It is necessary to understand the truth, instead of taunting others and accusing them of being devoid of love for the Holy Prophet ﷺ. If they lend their ears to words of advice and reflect calmly on the matter, they can find out easily for themselves what the love of the Holy Prophet ﷺ demands of them.

You are not calling a Deaf Personality

Once the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم were going somewhere in the company of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The Companions رضی اللہ عنہم suddenly began to rehearse Allah's name and pray to Him loudly.. The Holy Prophet ﷺ stopped them from this and asked them to call Allah and pray to Him in low voice.

انکم لا تدعون اصم ولا غائبا

You are not calling a deaf personality, nor one who is absent.

You are calling Allah Who is hearing everything and even those ideas and thoughts which are hidden in your hearts. It is not therefore necessary to raise the voice in calling Him. Call Him quietly and with due submission. This is the etiquette of calling Alalh which the Holy Prophet ﷺ taught his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم.

May Almighty Allah help us all to follow this way and recite *DAROOD* with due regard to its etiquettes injunctions and its *Mustahabat*. *Aameen*.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد للّٰہ رب العالمین

Venue : Masjid-e-N'umaan
Lasbella Chowk
Karachi

Date : 6th August, 1993.

ON UNFAIR TRADING

الحمدلله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهدان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له ونشهدان سيدنا ونبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد!

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

وَيْلٌ لِّلْمُطَفِّفِيْنَ ۝ الَّذِيْنَ اِذَا اكْتَالُوْا عَلَى النَّاسِ يَسْتَوْفُوْنَ ۝ وَاِذَا كَالُوْهُمْ اَوْوَّزَنُوْهُمْ يُخْسِرُوْنَ ۝ اَلَا يَظُنُّ اُولٰٓئِكَ اَنَّهُمْ مَّبْعُوْثُوْنَ ۝ لِيَوْمٍ عَظِيْمٍ ۝ يَّوْمَ يَقُوْمُ النَّاسُ لِرَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ (سورة المطففين: ١:٦)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم، وصدق رسوله النبى الكريم، ونحن على ذٰلك من الشاهدين والشاكرين، والحمد لله رب العالمين

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help; we believe in Him, and rely on Him.

We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom He let go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the One Who has no partner. I also bear witness that our Sire, our Prophet, and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ, is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah shower His mercy on him, on his household and on his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم and bless and salute them all a great deal.

Woe to the defrauders; those who, when they take the measure from mankind, demand it in full. But if they measure to them or weigh for them, they cause them loss. Do such (men) not consider that they will be raised (to life) again to an Awful Day, the Day when (all) mankind shall stand before the Lord of the worlds? (83:1-6)

It is a great sin to give short weight

My respected Sires and dear Brothers!

I have recited before you a few opening verses (1 to 6) of Surah 83-Mutaf-fi-feen in which Almighty Allah has invited our attention to a great sin. That sin consists in giving short measure and short weight. It means that, while selling anything to a customer the seller weighs for the former less than his due. The Arabic word to express this meaning is تطفیف (Tatfeef). This word has a very wide sense and is not confined only to business transactions. If we do not discharge in full anyone's right outstanding against us, whatever right it may be, this comes within the meaning of this word.

Translation of the verses

As translated earlier, it is woe to those who give short measure and short weight. Almighty Allah has used the word ویل (woe) which has two meanings: (i) woe and (ii) painful punishment. In the light of this second meaning, the verse connotes that they deserve painful punishment who do not discharge others' rights in full, as they give their customers short measure and short weight. They are men who receive their own rights from others in full, but they give less when they measure or weigh for their customers. Next, Almighty Allah has said: Do they not think that they will be raised (to life) again on an Awful Day - a Day when all mankind will be brought before the Lord of the worlds. On that Day all our deeds, big or small will be produced before us and nothing will remain hidden. The little gains they make in this world by defrauding in this way will cause them to be thrusted into Hell. That is why, the Holy Qur'an has repeatedly condemned the sins of giving short measure and short weight and has urged the people to save themsleves from these grievous sins. It has also referred to the conduct of the community of Hazrat Shoaib علیہ السلام.

The crimes committed by the community of Hazrat Shoaib علیہ السلام

When Hazrat Shoaib علیہ السلام was sent to his community, they were drowned in many crimes and sins, like disbeleif, and idolatry. In addition, they were notorious in defrauding their customers in their business transactions in the matter of measures and weights. Another crime they committed was to attack and rob travellers on thier ways. Hazrat Shoaib علیہ السلام tried to stop them from these crimes and invited them to the path of *Tauheed* (Oneness of Allah) and good conduct and deeds. However, the ill-fated community did not listen to

Hazrat Shoaib عليه السلام and put to him this question:

اَصَلٰوتُكَ تَاْمُرُكَ اَنْ نَّتْرُكَ مَا يَعْبُدُ اٰبَآؤُنَآ اَوْاَنْ نَّفْعَلَ فِيْٓ اَمْوَالِنَا مَانَشٰٓؤُا ط (سورة هود: ٨٧)

(O Shoaib)! Does your prayer command you that we should forsake the worship which our fathers practiced or that we should give up handling our wealth as we desire? (11:87)

In other words, they thought that they were quite free to worship that which they liked and to earn and spend their money as they pleased. They did not like anyone to interfere with them in these matters. Hazrat Shoaib عليه السلام did his best to reform them, but in vain. At last they met the same fate which is in store for those who disobey Allah's Prophet ﷺ. Thus, a most devastating torment was sent to them.

The torment sent to the community of Hazrat Shoaib عليه السلام

The details of the torment is that they were exposed to extreme heat for three consecutive days, as if the earth was ejecting embers of fire. At the end of these three days the inhabitants suddenly saw that a piece of cloud was heading fast towards the township accompanied by refreshing cool winds. As it was a pleasant change, the inhabitants assembled under the cool cloud for relief. Almighty Allah had however, chalked out a different plan. When they had all gathered together under the refreshing cloud, embers of fire suddenly began to rain on them and the entire community was burnt to death. The Holy Qur'an has referred to this event in the following words:

فَكَذَّبُوْهُ فَاَخَذَهُمْ عَذَابُ يَوْمِ الظُّلَّةِ (سورة الشعراء: ١٨٩)

they denied him (Shoaib) so the punishment of the Day of overshadowing gloom seized

them. (26:189)

There is another verse:

فَتِلْكَ مَسٰكِنُهُمْ لَمْ تُسْكَنْ مِّنْۢ بَعْدِهِمْ اِلَّا قَلِيْلًا ط وَكُنَّا نَحْنُ الْوٰرِثِيْنَ (سورة القصص: ٨٥)

Yonder are their dwellings which have not been inhabited after the mal but a miserable few. And We are their heirs. (28:58)

They used to think that they were increasing their wealth, by right or wrong means, but it all met an ignoble end. Their wealth did not come to their rescue; in fact it led to their ruin.

These are Embers of fire

A few coins that you earn by defrauding others by giving them short measures and short weights are in reality embers of fire which you devour in your bellies. The Holy Qur'an has described such unlawful earnings in the following words:

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَاْكُلُوْنَ اَمْوَالَ الْيَتٰمٰى ظُلْمًا اِنَّمَا يَاْكُلُوْنَ فِيْ بُطُوْنِهِمْ نَارًا ط وَسَيَصْلَوْنَ سَعِيْرًا (سورة النساء: ١٠)

Those who devour the wealth of orphans wrongfully do but swallow fire into their bellies and they will be exposed to burning flames. (4:10)

In other words, the money which they are swallowing is money only in appearance; it is in reality embers of fire, as it has been earned by disobeying Allah's commands. they shall lead to ruin in this world as well as in the Hereafter.

It is a sin to pay less wages than due

The sin of giving short measure and short weight is not confined only to business transaction. It has a much

wider scope. Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ who is the leader of the commentators of the Qur'an has said, while explaining the opening verse of Surah Mutaf-fi-feen:

شدة العذاب يومئذ للمطففين من الصلاة و الزكاة والصيام وغير ذلك من العبادات(تنوير المقباس من تفسير ابن عباس: سورة مطففين)

> On the Day of Judgment severe punishment will be awarded to those also who do not do full justice to their Prayers, Zakat, Fasts and the like. It also comes within the meaning of "Tat-feef": not to indulge in these forms of worship in full and with due regard to etiquettes prescribed for them by the *Sharee'ah*.

Pay the wages of a wage-earner without delay

There is an employer who takes full work from his employee without allowing him any concession. He, however, hesitates in paying the employees their wages in full and in time. All this is unlawful and comes within the meaning of "Tat-feef". The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said:

اعطوا الا جيرا جره قبل ان يجف عرقه(ابن ماجه ابواب الاحكام، باب اجر الا جراء حديث نمبر ٢٤٦٨)

> Pay the wages of the labourer before the sweat on his forehead dries.

When the labourer has done his job, it in unlawful to delay the payment of his wages.

What quality of food should be given to a servant?

Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi Sahib رحمة الله عليه has said:

You have engaged a servant on a monthly salary and

with two meals every day. At meal times you enjoy the best dishes and offer the servant only some scraps from your dining-cloth which no reasonable man would like to eat. This too falls within the definition of *"Tat-feef"* According to the terms of employment the employee must receive from you food in adequate quantity and of a reasonable standard. It is unfair to the servant to offer him residue and remnants from the food you ate.

Not to devote the full working hours to one's duties

A man has been engaged to work in some office for eight hours. Thus, he has sold his eight hours to his employer in return for an agreed amount of salary per month. If this employee draws his full salary, but does not put in full eight hours of work, because he remains idle for some time or spends some time in his personal work, then he too comes within the definition of "Tat-feef" and commits a sin. This is because he is drawing his full salary every month but is not giving full work in return for his salary.

You will have to account for every single minute

There was a time when the employees used to do their private work during the office hours secretly and not openly. Now the times have so changed and the employees have gone. The trend today is that they do their private work during office hours openly over board. They are ever ready to put forward their demands for increase in their salaries, other facilities and allowances. For this purpose they indulge in strikes, take out processions along roads and streets to express their agitation, launch campaigns to protest against the authorities in favour of their demands.

They hold public demonstrations in various ways and raise slogans. They however, do not care to think how far they are honest in putting in sincere eight hours' service for which they are paid in full. There are warnings of severe punishment for such employees who are not honest in their dealings. When they are brought before Almighty Allah they will have to render account for every single minute, without any concession whatsoever.

The Professors of Darul-Uloom Deoband

You must have heard the name of Darul-Uloom Deoband (India). Allah has made this Religious University during these later times a beacon of light and candle of mercy for the Muslim Ummah. This university produced such godly men as refreshed the memories of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم. I heard from my respected father رحمۃ اللہ علیہ accounts of the conduct of the Professors of the Darul-Uloom during its early days. My father told us that when someone called on them during the teaching hours the professors would note the time spent in this way. At the end of the month they would put in writing to the Administration the time so spent, requesting them to deduct from their salaries the amount relating to such interviews and meetings.

The salary will become unlawful

We hear today appeals for increase in salaries, but never hear from any quarters requests to deduct a portion of the salaries relating to times spent on private work. Such a request can come only from such a person who believes that one day he will have to stand before Almighty Allah to account for his deeds. Let every worker, employee and wage-earner consider calmly how far they are discharging

their duties honestly and conscientiously. Just peep into an officer's air-conditioned room . He is busy in gossiping while drinking after cup of tea with his friends. The needy public is standing in long queues, perspiring owing to the heat. This condemnable behaviour involves two grievous sins - the sin of receiving unlawful salary and the sin of causing distress to the helpless servants of Allah.

The state of affairs in Government Offices

A responsible officer of a Government Department related to me this story:

It is my duty to mark attendance of the employees and submit to the higher officers the statements of their attendance on the basis of which the monthly pay-bills are prepared. A large number of the employees in my department consist of violent young men who generally do not attend the office and, if they attend at all, they do so for short hours. During this attendance they hardly work for an hour or so and spend the rest of the time gossiping over cups of tea and coffee. Once I marked some of them absent. This enraged them and they pointed their pistols at me. What am I to do in such a condition? If I mark them present I commit the sin of lying, and if I mark them absent I expose myself to their violence and revenge.

Default in discharging the rights of Almighty Allah

The rights of Almighty Allah are most imperative and pressing. Failing to discharge these rights fully also falls in the category of short weight and measure. For example, the Prayer (*Salat*) is a right due to Allah. If we discharge this right haphazardly, ignoring the prescribed injunctions about its various items and movements, e.g. *Qiyam* (standing, recitation) *Ruku'* (genuflexion), *Sajdah*

(prostration), etc., we simply fail in discharging fully this right of Allah. It occurs in a Hadith that when a Companion رضی اللہ عنہ observed a man offering his prayer carelessly and hurriedly, he رضی اللہ عنہ remarked: Tat-feef in your Prayer and thus you did not discharge in full Allah's right.

Note carefully that if a right is not discharged fully and with due care it also comes within the meaning of short measures and short weights, irrespective of whether the right belongs to Almighty Allah or to His servant. The defautler will expose himself to all the warnings and punishments mentioned in the Holy Qur'an regarding defrauding in measures and weights.

Adulteration is a case of usurpation of rights

Selling adulterated goods also comes within the meaning of "Tat-feef". For example, a shopkeeper sells a kilo of wheat-flour after mixing it with some base material half and half. This results in passing on to the customer only a half kilo of flour, although the latter has paid the price of full one kilo. It is quite obvious that this too is a case of usurpation of a right.

What if the wholesaler commits adulteration?

Some traders allege that they sell goods as they receive them from the wholesaler. If the goods are adulterated, it is the wholesaler and not the retailer who is responsible for this. Even so, the retailer is responsible to tell the customer that if there is any adulteration in the goods, he is not responsible for that. If the reatailer has any knowledge about the percentage of the adulteration, he must inform his customer.

It must be clarified to the customer

Certain goods are sold in our markets which are not available in pure conditions. Almost all are aware that they are adulteraeted. In this situation a shopkeeper who has purchased the goods from a wholesaler is not responsible to inform every customer about this, as it is a matter of common knowledge. However, if the customer is not aware of this the shopkeeper should inform him of this state of affairs.

Inform the customer about that defect
If there is some defect in the goods

If the goods offered for sale have some defect, tell the customer about it, so that he may purchase the defective goods or leave them. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith:

من باع عيبا لم يبينه لم يزل فى مقت الله ولم تزل الملائكة تلعنه (ابن ماجه، ابواب التجارات، باب من باع عيبا فليبينه)

> If a man sells a defective article without informing the customer, he shall remain exposed to Allah's wrath permanently and the Angels will remain cursing him. (Ibn-e-Majah)

A cheat is not from amongst us

Once the Holy Prophet ﷺ went to the market and saw that a man was selling wheat. The Holy Prophet ﷺ put his sacred hand into the heap of the wheat and turned it upside-down. He ﷺ saw that the wheat on the surface was good and that inside the heap was wet and soiled. The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked him: Why did you not place the soiled wheat on the top of the heap, so that the buyer could see the defective wheat and could purchase or leave

it? The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked the seller not to do that. Thereafter, he ﷺ said:

من غش فليس منا (صحيح مسلم، كتاب الايمان، باب قول النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم: من غش فليس منا)

A man who is a cheat and deceives others is not from amongst us. (Sahih Muslim).

In other words, a man who sells adulterated and defective goods by fraudulent tricks or is giving short measure or weight is committing fraud and he is not "from amongst us". That is, he is not from Amongst the Muslims. What a terrible warning it is from the Holy Prophet ﷺ! It is, therefore, necessary to tell the customer the defects of the goods being sold, instead of keeping him in dark about it. These fraudulent dealing does not suit the conduct and character of a Muslim or a believer.

The Honesty of Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه

We are the followers of Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه who was a great cloth merchant. He رحمة الله عليه was, however, so honest in his trade that he رحمة الله عليه sacrificed his greatest profit in acting upon the injunctions contained in this Hadith. He had in his stock a roll of cloth which was defective. He had instructed the salesmen working in his shop to inform the customer of the defect of the cloth. It so happened that a salesman sold that defective cloth and forget to tell the customer about its defect. After sometime the Imam رحمة الله عليه inquired about the defective cloth. He was told that it had been sold When he asked the salesman about the defect in it the salesman regretted that he had forgotten to inform the customer the defect in the cloth. Hazrat Imam Sahib رحمة الله عليه was very much upset. He therefore began to search for the buyer. When he found him,

he informed the buyer of the defect of the cloth and asked him to return that defective cloth or if he so preferred, he could retain it of his own free will.

What are we today

As for ourselves, we do not disclose to the customers the defects in our goods, rather, we try to assure them by telling lies that the goods are free from all defects and are of a high quality.

Presently we are caught in a divine torment. The entire society is exposed to the worst type of lawlessness, restlessness, anxiety and mental torture. Nobody's wealth, life and honour are safe. This is a punishment from Allah which has befallen us because we have forsaken the ways of life taught by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Dishonesty, fraud, adulteration have become the distinctive mark of our society today.

Default in discharging the rights of a wife is a sin

We see that the husbands are receiving all their rights from their wives. These include full obedience in preparing food, managing the affairs of the household, bringing up the children. The wives should not displease in any form. Husbands are receiving all these rights, but they default in discharging their own liabilities and dues to their wives. Almighty Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

وَعَاشِرُوْهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ (سورة النساء: ١٩)

Treat them (the wives) with kindness). (4:19)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has also said in a Hadith:

خياركم خياركم لنسائهم (ترمذى كتاب الرضاع، باب ماجاء فى حق المراة على زوجها)

The best of you are those who are best towards their wives (Tirmizi)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in another Hadith:

استو صوا بالنساء خيرا (صحيح بخارى، كتاب النكاح، باب المدارة مع النساء)

Deal with women kindly (Sahih Bukhari).

Allah and His Prophet ﷺ are laying so much stress on discharging in full the rights of women, but we are not inclined to do that. All this comes within the meaning of giving short measure and short weight and is strictly forbidden (حرام) in the *Shari'ah*.

It is the usurpation of a wife's right to have the amount of her dower waived

The only right which a wife has over her husband during her entire married life is the amount of the dower. The husband does not discharge to his helpless wife even this right. What happens is that when the husband is on his death-bed about to die he asks his poor wife to waive his liability for the amount of the dower. In such a critical moment the wife has no alternative but to forgo her right in favour of her dying husband. Just note how the husband received all his rights from his wife but did not discharge even this insignificant right of his wife.

It is a usurpation of the wife's right to allow her inadequate cost of living

What has been said above relates to dower. As regards the cost of living, according to the law of the *Shari'ah*, an adequate allowance should be paid to the wife with which she can pass her life with freedom and peace. If the allowance is inadequate this too will come within the meaning of short measures and short weights. This is totally unlawful. In short, all rights due to one by another should be discharged in full. If this is not done the defaulter shall deserve the punishment against which

Almighty Allah has warned in these verses.

This is a curse of our own sins

When we hold meetings and sit therein to discuss the existing deplorable conditions of the society, we complain against absence of peace and security, restlessness, robberies and plunders, insecurity of property and life, and a fast deterioration of the general economic conditions. Despite all these comments, there is none to find out a remedy to eradicate these curses from the society. We conclude the meetings without any useful resolutions and decisions.

What we do not realize is that there is a cause for what is happening around us and that can be traced to the Creator. Nothing, big or small, can happen in this world without the will of Omnipotent Allah. Thus whatever is happening around us in the form of want of peace and security is happening by Allah's will and sanction. All these killings, robberies and disturbances are taking place by Allah's will. Why is it so? It is a torment sent to us from Allah. The Qur'an says:

وَمَآ اَصَابَكُمْ مِّنْ مُّصِيْبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ اَيْدِيْكُمْ وَيَعْفُوْا عَنْ كَثِيْرٍ (سورة الشورى: ٣٠)

Whatever of misfortune strikes you, it is what your (own) hands have earned; and He forgives a great deal. (42:30)

At another place the Holy Qur'an has said:

وَلَوْ يُؤَاخِذُ اللّٰهُ النَّاسَ بِمَا كَسَبُوْا مَاتَرَكَ عَلٰى ظَهْرِهَا مِنْ دَآبَّةٍ (سورة الفاطر: ٤٥)

If Allah took mankind to task by that which (sins) they deserve, He would not leave a living creature on the surface of the earth. (35:45).

Being All-Forgiving, Almighty Allah forgives by

His mercy many of our sins. However, when we transgress the limits, He sends torment to us in this world to warn and reform us. This is to ameliorate the remaining days of our lives and our Hereafter. If we, even now do not reform ourselves, then in addition to the torment of this world, the torment of the Hereafter is most severe.

The result of ill-gotten money

Today everybody is hankering after money. He wants to earn a few chips as soon as possible, whether by fair or unfair means, by defrauding and deceiving someone or even by picking someone's pocket or robbing someone at gun-point. You however, do not know what a tremendous loss of money and property these few ill-gotten chips will cause you. On account of these unlawful coins you will never get peace and tranquillity in this world. This is because you did not earn them by fair means, rather, you earned them unlawfully robbery. bribery and by taking undue advantage of someone's helplessness and weakness. These few ill-gotten coins can never afford you a peaceful and respectable existence. A thief or robber will relieve you of your money as you have relieved some of your own fellowmen of their earnings; by deception, telling lies or by bribery, etc. This is what is actually happening in the markets. On one hand you earned money by practising adulteration, defrauding, etc, and on the other two or four armed dacoits entered your shop and deprived you of your wealth at gun-point, even at times killing you if you put up a resistance. This is happening everyday. Now think calmly, does these few coins you earned by unlawful means proved useful or harmful for you? If you had not earned these coins by unlawful means, and had maintained your affairs with

Almighty Allah in the light of His injunctions and the *Sunnah* of His Prophet ﷺ, your lawful money however scanty would have been a source of peace and prosperity for you and for your household.

It is the sins that attract punishment

Some men complain that they had earned their money by honest and lawful means, yet their shop was looted and the entire money, including valuables, was forcibly seized by the robbers. This is your version of the incident. If you reflect deeply, you will come to know that you did commit some sin and displeased Allah. This cannot be incorrect because Almighty Allah has Himself said, "Whatever misfortune strikes you it is what your (own) hands have earned....." It is possible that you may have not paid the *Zakat* or may not have paid it in full or may have committed some other sins which you do not remember. May be that these sins have brought upon you this punishment.

This torment will encompass all

Sometimes a sin spreads in the society like an epidemic and there is none to check the spread of that sin. In such a condition when Almighty Allah sends a punishment it seizes everyone of the society and makes no difference between those who are committing that sin and those who have refrained from it. In this situation the punishment is of general impact and it engulfs everyone. This, the Holy Qur'an says:

وَاتَّقُوْا فِتْنَةً لَّا تُصِيْبَنَّ الَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْا مِنْكُمْ خَآصَّةً ج (سورة الانفال:٢٥)

And guard yourselves against a punishment which must not fall excluslively on those of

you who are wrongdoers. (8:25)

In other words, the punishment will fall on those also who were not among the wrongdoers because they did not try to stop their fellow-men from the sin. It is not therefore, right to think that they were carrying on their business quite honestly, still they faced robbery and plunder, but because you failed in your duty to stop your fellow-men from the wrongs they were doing before you.

The reason of the progress and prosperity of the non-Muslims

There was a time when the Muslims were renowned for fairplay and honesty in their business dealings. They never took resort to fraud and deception. Today the Muslims have given up these qualities of honesty in business and trading. The English, the Americans and other western communities (all non-muslims) have adopted these qualiteis in their business and trading with the inevitable result that they have earned a fair name in their commercial activities and have prospered by leaps and bounds. Now it is they who are controlling the world trade. My respected father Hazrat Mufti Muahmmad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه always used to say that falsehood and fraud can never prosper. The Qur'an has said in clear-cut words:

إِنَّ الْبَاطِلَ كَانَ زَهُوقًا

Surely, falsehood is bound to vanish. (17:81)

If you happen to see at any time and place falsehood is prospering you must be assured that the falsehood contains some element of truth and it is the miracle of the mixture of the truth that has made falsehood look prospering. These faithless people who do not believe in Allah, the Last Day nor in the last Prophet of Allah, ﷺ

Muhammad ﷺ. They really deserve to be disgraced in this world as well as in the Hereafter, yet we find them progressing. No doubt they have adopted some good morals like trust and honesty which the Holy Prophet ﷺ had taught us. We ignored these teachings but these faithless disbeleivers accepted and acted upon them. As a result Almighty Allah has granted them supremacy in the world of trade and today they are controlling the entire world. As for ourselves we relinquished the golden principles of trust and honesty for the sake of little gains and followed the path of fraud and cheating. We did not care that this path would lead us to ruination in the commercial field.

The distinctive mark of Muslims

There was a time when the Muslims were renowned to be fair and honest in trading. They never resorted to unfair means like cheating and defaulting in measures and weights and the like. The Holy Prophet ﷺ presented to the world a social living and a society crowned with these qualities. In the form of his Noble Companions رضى الله عنهم the Holy Prophet ﷺ raised such a society of honest men who endured most grievous losses, but did not take resort to falsehood, fraud or dishonesty. The natural result of all this was that Almighty Allah granted them success in the fields of business as well as politics. The world had to accept their supremacy and leadership. Let us examine not only ordinary Muslims but those Muslims who are quite punctual in their five-time Prayers, yet they forget all the injunctions of the *Shari'ah*, as if the *Shari'ah* was confined only to the boundaries of the mosque and the Muslims were free to do whatever they liked outside the mosques. For Allah's sake, do away with this in

difference. Take care to apply Islam in all walks of your life.

Summary

In short, the word *"Tat-feef"* includes in its meaning all such cases in which a man tries at all times to get in full all his dues and rights, but tries to avoid discharging the liabilities he owes to others. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith:

لایؤمن احد کم حتی یحب لاخیه ما یحب لنفسه(صحیح بخاری، کتاب الایمان، باب من الایمان ان یحب الاخیه ما یحب لنفسه)

None of you can be a believer unless he likes for his brother what he likes for himself. (Bukhari)

This contains a severe warning against the practice of a Muslim having a separate measure or weight for himself and quite another for others. When you do wrong to someone you should realize how would you feel if the same treatment was meted out to you. We should, therefore, be fair to all and never be dishonest to anyone.

We should take a stock of our day to day actions to find out on what occasions and on whom we have played tricks by defrauding in weights and measures, adulteration, and selling defective goods. All these malpractices and tricks are strictly forbidden (حرام) in business and are included in the meaning of "Tat-feef". It is these misdeeds that are attracting Allah's wrath and chastisement.

May Almighty Allah keep us on the path of righteousness and help us in discharging our liabilities and rights towards others in full and in all fairness. May He save us from the torment of "Tat-feef". *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi

Date : 31st January, 1992.

AN EASY WAY TO BROTHERHOOD

الحمدلله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهدان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له ونشهدان سيدنا ونبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله

اما بعد!

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

اِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ اِخْوَةٌ فَاَصْلِحُوْا بَيْنَ اَخَوَيْكُمْ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُوْنَ

(الحجرات:١٠)

آمنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم وصدق رسوله النبى الكريم ونحن على ذلك من الشاهدين والشاكرين والحمد لله رب العالمين

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him, seek His help and His forgiveness. We believe in Him, and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of ourselves and the vices of our

deeds. There is none to misguide him whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom He let go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the One Who has no partner. I also bear witness that our Sire, our Prophet, and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ, is His servant and His Messenger.

The beleivers are brothers of one another. Therefore, make peace among your brothers and fear Allah, that you may perhaps be shown mercy. (49:10)

The meaning of the verse

The verse which I have just now recited to you means that all the Muslims are brothers among them. If there is any difference and dispute between two brothers, Allah commands you to establish peace between them. After doing this you should fear Allah, so that you may become entitled to Allah's mercy.

Mutual quarrels cause harm to *Deen* (Faith)

By reflecting on the injunctions in the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*, it becomes quite clear that Allah and His Prophet ﷺ do not approve in any way quarrels and disputes among Muslims. If any quarrel, dispute, hate or tension ever occurs between the Muslims it is commanded that this state of hate and tension should be removed somehow. While talking to the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم the Holy Prophet ﷺ once asked them: Should I not tell you something which is better than prayer, fasting and almsgiving? Then he ﷺ said:

اصلاح ذات البین فساد ذات البین الحالقہ(ابو داؤد کتاب الادب باب فی اصلاح ذات البین)

It is a virtue to establish peace among the Muslims. Hatred, tension and quarrels among them are very harmful for *Deen* (faith).

These feelings of enmity, malice and hatred among them suppresses the fervour in their hearts to obey Allah and His Prophet ﷺ which ultimately results in the destruction of the foundation of *Deen* (faith). That is why we have been commanded to refrain from and eradicate mutual quarrels, hatred and tension, etc.

The vice that destroys the inner 'SELF'

The most effective in damaging the inner morality, character and integrity of men are mutual quarrels, malice, hatred and tension among the Muslims. A man may be regular in his prayers, fasts, optional prayers and his daily routine rehearsals of sacred names and other like actions. Notwithstanding all these virtuous engagements, if he unfortunately involves himself in mutual quarrels, malice, hatred, etc. he strikes at the very root of his inner 'SELF' and moral stability. Malice, in particular, is a vice which does not let man abide by the rules of justice and fairplay. Such a man does not hesitate in usurping others' rights and committing all sorts of excesses.

Man's deeds are put up before Allah

There is a Hadith in the Sahih Muslim in which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that the deeds of all men are put up before Almighty Allah on every Monday and Thursday and the doors of Paradise are flown open. This is also a known fact that Allah is well Aware of the deeds of everyone at all times. He is also Aware of the secrets of the hearts and the hidden thoughts and feelings of man. What is therefore meant by the words of the Hadith that

the deeds of everyone are put up before Allah? The answer to this question is that, inspite of His being All-Knowing and All-Seeing, Allah has appointed a set programme for everything. According to this programme the deeds are put up before Him, so that He may take a decision about who should go to Paradise.and who to Hell.

That man shall be detained

When it becoems known about a man in the light of his deeds, that he has passed this week as a believer in Allah, without attributing any partner to Him, Almighty Allah announces forgiveness for that man. The intention of this announcement is that such a man will not abide in Hell for ever, but he will surely enter Paradise at one time or another. So Allah orders the doors of Paradise to be opened for him. At the same time, there is also another announcement in a Hadith on this issue:

الامن بينه وبين اخيه شحناء فيقال انظروا هذين حتى يصطلحا(ابو داؤد

كتاب الادب، باب فيمن يهجر اخاه المسلم)

However, those two men will be detained who harbour malice and hatred in their hearts against each other. The decision about their admission into Paradise is held in abeyance until they establish peace between themselves.

Malice and hatred may lead to *Kufr* (infidelity)

A question arises why the decision about the entry of this man into Paradise has been held in abeyance. As we have been informed, according to the general rule everyone will be punished for his sins, but subject to *Eeman*, he will in the end enter Paradise after serving his term of punishment in Hell. This is because, so far as other sins are

concerned, they are not likely to lead to *Kufr* (disbelief) and will be forgiven after *Taubah* (repentance) and *Istighfar* (seeking forgiveness). In case he does not repent for his sins he will go to Paradise after serving his term of punishment.

As regards the sins of malice and hatred, they may lead to *Kufr* (disbelief). The decision about their admission into Paradise is held in abeyance until they settle their disputes and make peace between them. You can very easily realize how abhorrent are hatred and tension between two Muslims in the sight of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ!

They shall not attain salvation even in the *Shab-e-Bara'at*

All of you might have heard the Hadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ about *Shab-e-Bara'at* (The night of salvation) in which he ﷺ has said:

> In this night Allah's mercy turns to mankind and Almighty Allah grants salvation to men equal to the number of hair on the bodies of the goats of the Tribe of Kalb. However, two men shall not be granted salvation even on this night - one who harbours malice and hatred for his fellow men. He will be deprived of Allah's mercy even on this blessed night of mercy. The other person is that one who lets his trousers down so as to cover his ankles.

The reality of malice

The reality of malice is that a man desires the loss, distress, disgrace and dishonour of another person or that the other person may be afflicted with some disease or misfortune. This is called malice or hatred. As against this

malicious fellow, there may be another man who has been misbehaved and has suffered torture from another man. It is but natural that feeligns of enmity and hatred shall rise in the heart of this aggrieved person with the intention to defend himself against someone's torture and excesses. On such a situation Allah has allowed the aggrieved man to take revenge on the wrongdoer and to defend himself against the latter. In such a case the man wronged and oppressed will naturally not appreciate this act of illdoings, yet he should not harbour any malice against the person, nor should he bear ill-will against him. This act of the person wronged will not come within the meaning of malice.

The best remedy to cure malice and hatred

Malice is born from the feeling of ill-will against another person that the latter has superseded the other person in certain fields. This creates a pinching hatred in the heart of the malicious person who begins to desire that the man who has superseded him may suffer some loss or failure.

The first way of getting rid of malice is to eradicate ill-will from one's heart. The learned saints have mentioned as a remedy for malice that the malicious person should pray for the good of the person hated and despised. It is indeed very trying and difficult to pray for the good of a person for whom there is hatred in the heart. However, one must take this bitter pill and try to mould himself on this theory by hook or, by crook. This is a very effective remedy for eradicating ill-will. When ill-will has vanished from the heart, malice too will vanish. Every one should therefore search his heart. If he finds ill-will and malice for anyone he should pray for the good of the latter

at the end of his daily five-time prayers.

To have mercy on enemies is a Prophetic character

Just see how the polytheists of Makkah strived in torturing and tyrannizing the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم. They even planned to kill the Holy Prophet ﷺ and announced that anyone who would arrest him ﷺ would be awarded a prize of one hundred camels. On the occasion of the battle of Uhud, they shot at him ﷺ a volley of arrows which wounded the sacred face of the Prophet ﷺ and broke one of his teeth. Even at such a provocative occasion the following supplication was on the Prophet's ﷺ tongue:

اللهم اهد قومی فانهم لا یعلمون

O Allah guide my people (on the right path), because they do not know who I am.

Now see that these polytheists were arch-enemies of the Propeht ﷺ, but even then he ﷺ did not entertain any feeling of ill-will and malice against them. It is a great *Sunnah* and quality of the Holy Prophet ﷺ not to retaliate ill-will with ill-will, but to pray for the good of the wrong-doers and the tyrants. This is the best remedy to cure ill-will and malice.

These quarrels, disptues and tensions among one another breed ill-will and hatred. All this ultimately leads to the damage of the inner soul and ruination of the heart. This will in turn deprive man of Allah's mercy. We have, therefore been advised to keep away from mutual quarrels, disptues and bickerings.

Quarrels destroy the light of learning

Imam Malik رحمة الله عليه has said that one type of quarrel is physical in which the limbs of the body are used. "Another type of quarrel is that of the educated and learned persons which is called warfare of words, debates and verbal controversies. For example, a scholar expresses an opinion and another scholar opposes it and thus an endless chain of charges and coutner charges start. The learned saint do not appreciate even this form of argumentation. This destroys the light of the inner soul of man. Hazrat Imam Malik رحمة الله عليه has said:

المراء يذهب بنور العلم

The habit of academic debates destroys the light of learning.

For example, a scholar offers his view on some academic issue for discussion and clarification with other scholars and the issue is settled amicably and peacefully. This is called مذاكره (discussion). This is a very useful pursuit. On the other hand, a scholar launches a campaign of opposition and adverse propaganda against another scholar, circulates defamatory advertisemetns and pamphlets agaisnt him and consumes his energies in indulging in opposition for the sake of opposition. This is called (mutual quarrelling) - an activity which our learned saints and the veterans of *Deen* do not approve.

The power of speech of Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه

Almighty Allah had granted Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه a unique power of speech and argument. If any one dared to debate with him on any issue the Maulana رحمة الله عليه would convince and silence the opponent in a few minutes. Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib

رحمة الله عليه once related to us an anecdote about Hazrat Thanawi's talent. Once the Sheikh was sick and was lying on his bed when he said:

> Praise to Almighty Allah. I say this relying on His mercy, that if all the wise men assemble to raise objection to any point concerning Islam, I shall dismiss their objections and arguments in a matter of a few minutes. I am an ordinary student whereas the learned scholars have a much higher status.

It was a fact that if anyone called on Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه to discuss with him some point he would stand before the Maulana, but only a few minutes, not more.

In general, debates do not prove useful

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has himself related about himself that when he graduated from Darul-Uloom, Deoband in the Dars-e-Nizami course, he was very fond of debating with groups, professing false creeds and tenets, like the Shi-ites, Barelwis, the Hindus and the Sikhs, etc. Being a new entrant to this field, he took keen interest and showed great enthusiasm in these debates. Later on he gave up this debating zeal. He changed his mind because he felt that not only were they not useful, but they also affected adversely his inner peace and tranquillity. He therefore decided to give up for good this craze. We see that our reverend saints did not like to indugle in debates and discussions on the subject of truth vis-a-vis falsehood. How could they enter upon this field to satisfy their personal desires on purely worldly subjects involving possibilities of quarrels and enmity.

Guarantee for a dwelling in Paradise

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith :

ومن ترك المراء وهو محق بنى له فى وسط الجنة(ترمذى باب ماجاء فى المراء ج ٢ ص ٢٠)

"I am responsible for the allotment of a house in the middle of Paradise to a person who forgoes some right due to him only to avoid quarrels and disputes".

In other words, he is ready to forgo his right simply to avoid quarrels and enmity. You may easily realize from this how anxious the Holy Prophet ﷺ was to put an end to mutual quarrels and controversies. There is, however, an exception to this. If the matter has gone too far and has crossed the limits of toleration, the person wronged has permission to defend himself against the wrongdoer and he may also take revenge on the oppressor. However, he should endeavour to put an end to the quarrel and make peace as far as possible.

Consequences of quarrels and disputes

Quarrels, disputes, controversies and litigation have plagued our society. This has led to the spread of distress and misfortunes and total absence of blessings from our households. In such a situation we hardly feel the light of our worship and devotion. Wherever we turn our eyes, we see disptues and differences on trifles among neighbours, families, brothers and sisters, between husbands and wives, friends and relatives. What is more, religious leaders and patrons are quarrelling and fighting among themselves with the inevitable result that the light of Deen has disappeared from the society.

How to put an end to quarrels

A question now arises how to put an end to these quarrels and disputes which have poisoned our society. On this topic, I am reading to you a written speech of Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه which contains a golden principle. If people act upon this principle, it is hoped that causes of quarrels and disputes will be eliminated at least to the extent of seventy-five percent. That principle is as under:

"Do not entertain any hopes from the people of the world. If you act upon this advice the idea of quarrels and controversies will not bother you".

People generally complain against others that they did not pay proper regard to them or did not compensate for the good turns done to them or so many other defaults on their part. On recalling such lapses, a natural feeling of hatred and malice is born which ultimately leads to tension and strained relations. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has advised that if such complaints ever arise against anyone, then the matter should be settled by personal contact with the person concerned, instead of harbouring feelings of malice against him which ultimately leads to enmity.

Do not entertain hopes from anyone

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has advised to uproot quarrels and disputes by ensuring that you entertain no hopes from anyone. After all, what is the use of expecting anything from your fellow men? The source from which you can hope something good and desirable is Almighty Allah and not these worldly-wise men. From them you should expect only harm and distress. If by chance you receive something good from them, thank Allah for that. In case you encounter some evil from them, then think that you

expected nothing but evil. As a result of this trend of thought neither malice, nor enmity, nor hatred will be born in the hearts.

Do not intend to take revenge

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has also advised another principle in this behalf. If you do some good turn to anyone, like helping him, showing him due regard, recommending him to someone or the like, always think that you have done only for the pleasure of Allah and to ameliorate your own Hereafter and for no other purpose. If you do some good to anyone with this intention, you will not expect any compensation from him. In such a situation, if you have done some good to anyone and he does not acknolwedge that good, nor does he compensate you for that, you will harbour no ill-will against that person, because whatever good you did to him you did it only for the pleasure of Almighty Allah. If we act upon these two principles, we shall succeed in uprooting all the whims of quarrels and disputes from the society. In this way we shall also be acting upon the Hadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ or that he ﷺ has taken upon himself the responsibility of the allotment of a house in the middle of Paradise to one who forgoes some right only to avoid mutual quarrels and disputes."

A great sacrifice of Hazrat Mufti Sahib رحمة الله عليه

I have seen with my own eyes that my respected father, Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه that he acted upon this Hadith during his whole life. He abandoned very valuable rights of his only to avoid quarrels and disputes. I am relating to you an event concerning him which will hardly be regarded as credible. The Darul-Uloom of Korangi was first opened in a small

building in Nanakwara. With the expansion of the Darul-Uloom the building was inadequate. A large plot of land was requried. With the help of Allah a very large and spacious plot became available in the middle of the city on which stands today the Islamia College and in which also lies the grave of Hazrat Allamah Shabbir Ahmad Usmani رحمة الله عليه. This spacious plot was allotted for the Darul-Uloom, its possession was taken over and a room was construced on it and the relevant papers relating to this plot were also obtained. A telephone connection was also installed. On the occasion of its foundation-laying ceremony an assembly was held in which renowned Ulama from all over Pakistan participated. During this assembly, some people created a quarrel and claimed that the plot should not be allotted for the Darul-Uloom. They had raised this objection along with certain respectable personalities for whom my respected father رحمة الله عليه had great regard. My father tried his best to settle this dispute, but he did not succeed in his efforts. He رحمة الله عليه thought that there would hardly be any blessings in an institution which started with a quarrel and dispute. He, therefore, decided to abandon that plot.

I do not see any blessing in it

The Administration of the Darul-Uloom did not appreciate this decision. They said that it was not wise to leave that valuable plot in such a suitable site when all its rights had been legally transferred to the Darul-Uloom and its possession had also been taken legally. My respected father رحمة الله عليه said that the Managing committee of the Darul-Uloom, having become the owner of the plot, he could not force it to abandon it. If it so desired it could construct the building of the Darul-Uloom on the plot, but

he could not be a party to it. He told them that a Madrasah opened on a disputed plot could not be a source of blessing. He رحمة الله عليه also mentioned to them the Hadith in which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has assumed responsibility for the allotment of a house in the middle of Paradise to a person who forgoes a right due to him to avoid quarrel and controversy. It is difficult to cite in these days an example of a man who has abandoned such a valuable plot to avoid quarrel and litigation. This sacrifice is possible only from one who has firm belief in the truth of the Hadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Thereafter, very soon, by the grace of Allah, a plot many times larger than the disputed plot became available on which the Darul-Uloom is standing today. I have mentioned to you this event only as an example, otherwise I have always seen my respected father رحمة الله عليه acting upon this Hadith throughout his life. It is however quite another matter if some other person involves us in a litigation and there is no alternative except self-defence. We have become used to noticing small things and making them an excuse for quarrelling and fighting. Today this trend has ruined our entire society. These quarrels and disputes destroy man's religion, faith and his inner integrity. I therefore, appeal to all to put an end to mutual quarrels and differences and to try establishing peace between two Muslims if they see them quarrelling and fighting to your best capabilities.

It is an act of charity to make peace

عن ابی هريرة رضی الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلی الله عليه وسلم كل سلامی من الناس عليه صدقه كل يوم تطلع فيه الشمس يعدل بين الاثنين صدقة ويعين الرجل فی دابته فيحمله عليها اويرفع له عليها

متاعه صدقة والكلمة الطيبة صدقة وبكل خطوة يمشيها الى الصلاة صدقة ويميط الاذى عن الطريق صدقة(مسند احمد جلد ٢ ص ٣١٦)

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: Man is bound to offer a *Sadaqah* (alms-giving), one for every joint of his body for every day in which the sun rises. (There being three hundred and sixty joint in the human body, it is binding on everyone to offer three hudnred and sixty alms every day). It is a (alms) to make peace between two persons. Similarly it is a صدقة (*Sadaqah*) to help a man to get on his riding animal or to help a man in loading some bundles on his beast of burden. It is also a صدقة *Sadaqah* (alms) to utter a word of solace or a pleasing word to a man in his distress or grief. Every step that you are taking on your way to the mosque is a صدقة *Sadaqah*. It is also a *Sadaqah* to remove from the path something which is a cause of trouble and hurdle to the wayfarers.

The first thing which has been described in this Hadith as صدقة *Sadaqah* (alms) is to make peace between two Muslims. This shows that this act carries a great reward and recompense from Almighty Allah.

A marvel of Islam

وعن ام كلثوم بنت عقبة بن ابی معيط رضی الله عنها قالت سمعت رسول الله صلی الله عليه وسلم يقول ليس الكذاب الذی يصلح بين الناس فينمی خيرا او يقول خيرا (صحيح بخاری، كتاب الصلح، باب ليس الكذاب الذی يصلح بين الناس)

Hazrat Umm-e-Kulsoom رضی الله عنها is a female Companion and a daughter of 'Aqbah bin Abi Mu'eet and the latter was an arch enemy of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and a confirmed Mushrik (polytheist). He was a Mushrik like

Abu Jahal and Umayyah bin Abu Khalaf who always teased and tortured the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He was that person whom the Holy Prophet ﷺ cursed, saying:

اللهم سلط عليه كلبامن كلابك (فتح الباری جلد ٤ ص ٣٩)

O Allah! Impose on him one of your beasts.

Allah accepted this curse of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He was at last killed by a lion. On one side the father was such a deadly enemy of Islam. What a contrast that his daughter Umm-e-Kulsoom رضی اللہ عنہا whom Allah granted the wealth of *Eeman* and she became a Sahabiah (female Companion) of the Prophet ﷺ.

Such a man is not a liar

Hazrat Umm-e-Kulsoom رضی اللہ عنہا has narrated that she heard the Holy Prophet ﷺ saying: That man is not a liar who conveys some remarks from this side to that side or conveys a word from one person to another person in such a way that both are drawn together and the hatred between them is removed. In other words, the man is saying something which does not appear to be quite true, yet he is saying that with the intention of eliminating hatred between two Muslims. Such a peace - maker will not be treated as a liar.

An open lie is not lawful

The Ulama have said that it is not lawful to tell an open lie. It is, however, lawful to say something in an ambiguous way so that its apparent meaning is contrary to the fact, but the meaning conceived in the speaker's heart represents the truth.

Take an example. Suppose Amjad and Aslam are opponents and bitterly hate each other from the cores of

their hearts. One named, Ahmad, calls on Amjad and the latter begins to speak ill of his opponent Aslam. In order to pacify their enmity and hatred and to bring them nearer Ahamd tells Amjad that Aslam is not an opponent of the latter, but is his well-wisher, because he was praying for Amjad's well-being, health and prosperity. Ahmad conceived in his heart that he heard Aslam uttering the words اللهم اغفر للمومنين (O Allah, forgive the beleiver). Amjad too, being a believer he, according to Ahmad, also got included in these words of prayer. This will make Amjad inclined to beleive that Aslam was really his well-wisher. To say such things to make two opponents friends cannot be regarded as lies. Instead, this plan may earn him Allah's appreciation and recompense.

Speak out good words

When a servant of Allah goes out with the intention of making peace between two Muslim brothers for the pleasure of Allah, Almighty Allah inspires into the heart of the peace-maker words which may establish peace between the two opponents. Words which may add fuel to the fire should never be uttered. This is highly abhorrent to the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

The importance of peace-making

You may have heard the well known saying of Hazrat Sheikh Sa'di رحمۃ اللہ علیہ :

دورغِ مصلحت آمیز بہ از راستی فتنہ انگیز

A lie which is told to promote a good cause is better than telling a truth that promotes mischief and disturbance.

It is, however, not the intention that an open lie should

be told. Ambiguous words capable of being interpreted in different ways should be used. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ has allowed to speak such words, you may realise how important it is to establish peace between two Muslims.

The account of a Companion رضی اللہ عنہ

عن عائشة رضی الله عنها قالت سمع رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم صوت خصوم بالباب عالیة اصواتهما واذا احد هما یستوضع الا خرو یستر فقه فی شیءٍ وهو یقول والله لا افعل فخرج علیهما رسول الله صلی الله علیه وسلم فقال این المتالی علی الله لا یفعل المعروف؟ فقال انا یا رسول الله فله ای ذلك احب (صحیح بخاری، کتاب الصلح، باب هل یشیر الامام بالصلح)

Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا has narrated that once the Holy Prophet ﷺ was presnet in the house when he heard the voices of two men who were quarrelling with each other. The cause of the quarrel was that one of them had borrowed money from the other and the lender was asking the debtor to return the loan. The debtor was explaining his inability to repay the entire loan. He was ready to pay a part of it and was requesting the lender to forgo the balance. At this the lender replied that, by Allah, he could not do that. The Holy Prophet ﷺ heard it and came out of his house and inquired: where is the man who is swearing by Allah that he will not do a good turn ? The man came forward and agreed to accept whatever the debtor was able to pay and leave the balance.

The state of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم

See the difference. This Companion رضی اللہ عنہ was not prepared to forgo any part of his loan and had sworn by Allah that he would not allow any concession to the

debtor. As for the Holy Prophet ﷺ, neither he ﷺ commanded the lender to forgo the loan nor did he advise him to do so. He ﷺ only inquired about the man who was swearing by Allah not to do a good turn. This inquiry put an end to the entire quarrel and the lender at once became kind to the debtor. The Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم were so much devoted and obedient to the Holy Prophet ﷺ that they dared not ignore his commands in the slightest degree.

May Almighty Allah bestow on us some part of this enthusiasm by His grace, and put an end to the quarrels, differences and fighting going on among the Muslims and enable them to discharge one another's rights. *Aameen*!

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمین

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi

Day and
Date : Friday, 22nd October, 1993.

THE MANNERS OF VISITING PATIENTS

الحمدلله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهدان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له ونشهدان سيدنا ونبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد!

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم، بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

عن البراء بن عازب رضى الله عنهما قال امرنا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بسبع عيادة المريض واتباع الجنائز و تشميت العاطس و نصر الضعيف وعون المظلوم وافشاء السلام وابرارالمقسم (صحيح بخارى كتاب الاستئذان باب افشاء السلام)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him, and seek His help and His forgiveness. We believe

in Him, and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom He let go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the only One Who has no partner. I also bear witness that our Sire, our authority, our Prophet, and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ, is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah send His mercy on him, his household and his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم and may He bless and salute them all in great abundance.

Seven acts

Hazrat *Barra'a* bin 'Azib رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has commanded us to do seven acts:

1. To visit a sick person;
2. To follow funeral processions;
3. To utter یرحمک اللہ (may Allah have mercy on you) in reply to الحمد للہ (All praise to Allah), by the person who sneezes;
4. To assist a weak person;
5. To assist a person who has been wronged;
6. To spread the salutation (Salam) and
7. To cooperate with a person in the fulfilment of his oath, if he takes an oath for doing something.

All these seven acts which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has included in this Hadith carry great importance. It is therefore, among the etiquettes of a Muslim's life that he should observe carefully these rules of etiquettes. Therefore I am going to

discuss these seven acts in some detail. May Almighty Allah help us all in acting upon them. *Aameen*!

It is a form of worship to visit a sick person

The first act which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has prescribed is to visit a sick person. This is also one of the rights due to a Muslim. This is an act which we are all doing. There may hardly be a person in the world who has not visited a sick person to inquire after his health. This is, however, generally done as a mere formality and as a custom. The people fear that if this formality is not observed, there will be complaints. In such a state, if a man visit a sick person, he does so only to observe a formality and his action has no sincerity in it. The act of visiting a sick person, to which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has referred in the Hadith means that the visit which is paid should be for pleasing Almighty Allah. It should be in all sincerity and with the intention of reaping the reward from Allah. The virtues and excellence promised in the Hadith relate to this way of visiting a sick person. This alone carries reward and goodly return from Almighty Allah.

To visit a sick person in compliance with the *Sunnah*

You are going to visit a sick person with the expectation that the person will pay you a return visit when you fall sick some day. In case he fails to return your visit, you too will not visit him, if he falls sick in future. Such a visit, being a reciprocal visit carries no credits, rewards or recompense. A man who pays this visit only for the pleasure of Allah, does not think of any return. He pays this visit only to please Almighty Allah and to obey the injunctions contained in the Ahadith of the Holy

Prophet ﷺ.

A weapon of Satan

Satan is a great enemy of ours. He has succeeded in destroying our worship and devotion. If we indulge in our worship with sincere intention and will, we shall receive from Almighty Allah great reward which will ultimately accumulate into a great deposit and store for us in the Hereafter. Satan however, does not desire this to happen. He spoils our intentions in many of our acts of worship. For example, it is a matter of great reward from Allah to preserve contacts and nice dealings with our relatives, friends, colleagues and to behave nicely with them and exchanging gifts with them. These activities form a part of our *Deen* (faith) with which Almighty Allah is highly pleased. Allah has promised great rewards for all these social activities. Satan however, intervenes between all these good turns with the result that man starts thinking in terms of return and compensation. For example, why should I send a gift to a man who never sent one to me? Why should I send him a marriage gift when he did not send me any? Indeed I will behave with people as they behave with me. This is Satan's training. Thus, on account of Satan's seductions we have deprived ourselves of the reward and righteousness of exchanging gifts, mutual visits and maintaining cordial relations all acts which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has highly praised and recommended as sources of great reward and recompense. Satan has by his clever strategy, destroyed all these social dealings. We see that exchange of gifts and visits are now based on customs and formalities. This is not the meaning of maintaining true and cordial relationship.

The reality of maintaining blood relationship

صلہ رحمی or maintenance of cordial blood relationship means doing your part of the deed without thinking what the other party is doing to you, The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said on this issue:

ليس الواصل بالمكافى لكن الواصل من اذاقطعت رحمه وصلها

(صحیح بخاری کتاب الادب، باب لیس الواصل بالمکافی)

That man is not doing his duty in maintaining good relationship who looks for similar return and compensation. In fact, a man doing full justice to the virtue of صلہ رحمی (maintenance of good relationship) is the fellow who insists on maintaining good relationship in spite of the fact that the other party is breaking this relationship and misbehaving with his close relatives. Similarly, there is a man who sends gifts and pays friendly visits to some relatives exclusively to please Allah without looking for any return from the other side. This is because, gifts and visits should be exchanged among relations and near and dear ones for no other purpose but for pleasing Almighty Allah and in observance of *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Maintenance of cordial relationship is a form of worship and should be viewed from this angle. It should not be linked with the measure of response from the other side. When we offer prayers, observe fasts, etc. do we care what others are doing? Everyone's deeds will go with the doer. So is the case of cordial relationship صلہ رحمی. You are therefore advised to do full justice to the maintenance of relationship and to visit sick persons without prejudice of whether the others do for you.

The excellence of visiting sick persons

According to a narration of the Holy Prophet ﷺ paying visits to sick persons occupies a very eminent place among the various forms of worship. The Hadith runs thus:

ان المسلم اذا عادا خاه المسلم لم يزل فى خرفة الجنة حتى يرجع

(صحيح مسلم كتاب البر و الصلة، باب فضل عيادة المريض)

When a Muslim visits another sick Muslim brother, he remains in a garden of Paradise as long as he remains with his sick brother and until he parts with him.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in another Hadith:

مامن مسلم يعود مسلما غدوة الا صلى عليه سبعون الف ملك حتى يمسى وان عاده عشية الا صلى عليه سبعون الف ملك حتى يصبح و كان له خريف فى الجنة (ترمذى كتاب الجنائز، باب عيادة المريض)

When a Muslim visits his sick Muslim brother in the morning, seventy thousand Angels pray for his salvation from morning till evening. If he visits the sick person in the evening, seventy thousand Angels pray for his salvation from evening till morning and Almighty Allah appoints for him a garden in Paradise.

Try to secure the prayers of seventy thousand Angels

Is this an ordinary reward and recompense? Your visit to a sick neighbour of yours while sitting with him for a short time can earn you such a magnificent reward. Will you still care to know whether this neighbour visited while you were sick? If he could not secure this magnificent reward, nor the prayer of seventy thousand Angels, nor the garden in Paradise, will you say that you too do not want to obtain

these rewards and blessings? Just see how easy has Almighty Allah made the earning of this reward and recompense! It is a windfall indeed. So make it a regular routine to visit sick persons, without considering whether any of them had or had not visited you when you were sick.

What to do if one is displeased with the sick person?

If you are not on friendly terms with the sick person and do not feel inclined to visit him due to ill-will against him, even then visit him to inquire after his health. This will entitle you to a double reward - a reward for visiting a sick person and another for visiting a person for whom you had some feeling of hatred and avoidance in meeting him. To visit a sick person is not an ordinary act of righteousness. For Allah's sake, do not lose this virtue and its reward for the sake of customs and formalities so widely prevalent in the society now. Make it a point to visit sick people in compliance with the command and *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to seek the pleasure of Almighty Allah.

Let your visit to the sick person be brief

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught us some rules of etiquette for visiting a sick person. There is not a single walk of life about which he ﷺ has not given us detailed injunctions. It is regrettable that today not only have we totally forgotten them but we have also excluded them from our self-made etiquettes of life. On account of this lapse on our part, our present life has turned into a torment. If we revert to the golden rules of etiquette taught by the Holy Prophet ﷺ, our life will soon turn into Paradise. While teaching the etiquette about visiting a sick person, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said:

من عادمنكم فليخفف

If anyone of you pays a visit to a sick person, it should be brief.

The visit may not cause inconvenience to the sick person. Before going to him you should consider if the time of your visit is not the time when the man may be taking rest in his bed or be among his family, or inconvenient to him. You must find out the suitable hours for visiting a sick person.

It is contrary to the *Sunnah*

When you visit a sick person do not prolong your visit. This may be inconvenient to him. By nature man prefers to be informal in his modes of life but he cannot maintian this ease and informality in the presence of visitors. For example, on such occasions he cannot lie down freely on his bed, nor can he talk to his family freely. Your visit to this sick person is to earn reward and the performance of virtuous deed and not to distress him. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has therefore, advised us not to cause inconvenience and distress to the sick. Sit with him for a short interval, inquire after his health according to the way taught in the *Sunnah*, then take leave of him. Do not stick to the sick perosn for long, nor create inconvenience and hindrance in his rest and movements. This kind of visit is contrary to the *Sunnah*. Instead of attracting mercy such a tedious visit may turn into a sin.

An incident with Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه

Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه was one of the great *Sufi, Muhaddis* and *Faqeeh* (Jurists). Once he fell ill.

As Allah had graced him with a very high position, he had to face a large number of visitors during his illness. There was an endless line of his friends and well-wishers who came to see him and went back after inquiring about his health. Among them was a man who stuck to the Sufi رحمة الله عليه and did not like to move from the place. When his stay became inconvenient to the Sufi, he wanted to express his distress to the visitor indirectly. He therefore addressed him, saying:

In addition to the pains I am enduring I have to suffer a great deal at the hands of these visitors who neither choose an appropriate time for their visits nor do they care for the convenience of the sick person. The man still did not understand the Sufi's intention and his indication. In reply that person said: Indeed, these visitors are causing inconvenience and distress to you. If you permit me I should close the door after these visitors. Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه asked him to close the door, not from the inside but from the outside.

There are persons who cause inconvenience to others, but do not at all realize it.

Choose an appropriate time to visit a sick person

Visiting a sick person is indeed a good turn, but it does not mean that thereby one should satisfy his own fancy. The very purpose of the visit is defeated if distress is caused to the sick person. Expression of love requires a little sense and understanding. It is no love but it is enmity to cause distress to anyone in the name of love. It is nothing but teasing and torturing the sick person if anyone visits him at dead of night or at the noon time which is the time when a man takes rest and lies down on his bed. So, before

visiting a sick person use your intellect and avoid giving trouble. The *Masnoon* way of visiting a sick person is when no inconvenience is caused to him. That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ has advised that the duration of the visit should be brief.

A free and intimate friend may remain with the sick person longer

There are some very intimate and informal friends of the sick person in whose presence he finds relief and solace. There is no harm if such friends stay with the sick longer.

Hazrat Mian Asghar Husain Sahib رحمة الله عليه was a teacher of my respected father رحمة الله عليه. Once Mian Sahib رحمة الله عليه fell sick. My father visited him in his sickness in the *Masnoon* way. He saluted him, inquired after his health and after three or four minutes asked for permission to leave him. Mian Sahib رحمة الله عليه asked my father if it was for him that he had learnt the principle of visiting a sick perons, viz. من عادتكم فليخفف (make your visit to the sick brief). Mian Sahib رحمة الله عليه explained to my father رحمة الله عليه, saying: this principle is not applicable to those in whose presence the sick person finds comfort and solace. He then asked my father رحمة الله عليه to stay there longer and the latter obeyed the order.

Anyway, one and the same principle does not apply on every occasion. The visit may be longer or shorter according to the need of the occasion.

Pray for the sick person

The other rule of etiquette for visiting a sick person is that after saluting the visitor should first inquire after the health of the sick person to know in brief his condition. After this inquiry, the visitor should pray for

the welfare and recovery of the sick person, in the words taught by the Holy Prophet ﷺ which are :

لَا بَأْسَ طَهُوْرٌاِنْ شَاءَ اللهُ (صحيح بخارى، كتاب المرض، باب مايقال للمريض)

This sickness will cause you no trouble; it will Allah willing-be a means of purging you of your sins.

This prayer has two aspects. Firstly, it assures the sick person that the sickness will purify him of sins and procure for him reward of the Hereafter. Secondly, it includes a prayer in favour of the sick person that his sickness may become a source of reward and recompense and an excuse for the forgiveness of his sins.

Sickness is a means of purging the sick person of his sins

You may have heard this Hadith in which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that Almighty Allah forgives a sin to compensate every injury, distress or pain a man suffers. That pain May be on account of the pricking of a thorn in his foot. He also raises the status of the sufferer. In another Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said:

الحمى من فيح جهنم(صحيح بخارى، كتاب بدء الخلق، باب صفة النار)

This fever is a portion of the heat of Hell.

(Sahih Bukhari)

The learned scholars have interpreted this in different ways. Some have said that the heat of fever is a substitute for men for the heat of Hell. This interpretation is also confirmed by other Ahadith. The intention is to say that the heat of fever borne by a man in this world will shield him against the heat of Hell which the man would have to bear in the Hereafter on account of his sins. This is confirmed by the prayer which the Holy Prophet ﷺ

used to recite at the time of his visiting a sick person i.e.:

لا باس طهور ان شاء الله

Do not worry; this fever Allah willing will become a means of purging you of your sins.

An act to obtain cure from a disease

It is the third rule of the etiquette of visiting a sick person that the following act should be done, provided that the occasion is appropriate and it is not likely to cause inconvenience to him. Place your hand on the forehead of the man and recite this prayer:

اللهم رب الناس مذهب البأس اشف انت الشافى لاشافى الا انت شفاء لا يغادر سقما (ترمذى، كتاب الجنائز، باب ماجاء فى التعوذ للمريض)

O Allah, the Lord (Rabb) of all the people, the solver of difficulties, bring cure to this sick person. It is only You and none other than You Who can grant cure - a cure which should leave no sickness uncured.

Those who do not remember this prayer (supplication) should memorize it and recite it for the sick person, if the occasion is appropriate.

A cure for all diseases

There is another prayer narrated from the Holy Prophet ﷺ which is shorter and easier to remember and according to the Holy Prophet ﷺ it is highly virtuous and beneficial. The prayer is as under:

اسئل الله العظيم رب العرش العظيم ان يشفيك (ابو داؤد، كتاب الجنائز، باب الدعاء للمريض عندالعيادة)

I beg Allah, the Great, the Lord of the Great Throne to grant you cure (from your disease). (Abu Dawood)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said that if anyone recites this prayer seven times during his visit to his sick Muslim brother, Almighty Allah shall grant cure to this sick brother provided that the appointed hour of his death has not arrived. There is none who can defer the time of death.

While visiting a sick person change your viewpoint

On reciting these prayers (supplications) one receives reward in three ways:

1- A reward that, while visiting the sick perosn, one acted upon the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, by repeating the same words which he ﷺ used to say.

2- A reward for expressing sympathy with a sick Muslim brother.

3- A reward for praying for the sick brother, as this act carries great reward.

Thus, see how virtuous is this small act ! We all pay visits to sick persons from time to time. While so doing, we should change our viewpoint and do this with the intention of acting upon the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and pleasing Almighty Allah. Also observe the etiquettes of visiting a sick person, viz., let your visit be brief and recite the prayers taught by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. By so doing, this small act of visiting a sick person will turn into a magnificent act of worship.

May Almighty Allah help us all to follow this *Sunnah*. *Aameen*!

What is *Deen* (faith)?

Our Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to mention very useful things which is worthy of being impressed

firmly on our hearts. He said: *Deen* (faith) is the name of changing the viewpoint. A slight change in this viewpoint will convert your world into *Deen*; all your worldly activities will turn into worship and secure for you the pleasure of Almighty Allah. This can be attained by doing two things. Firstly, purify and reform your intention. Secondly, in all that you do follow the path of the *Sunnah*. By following this simple formula, all your activities will become *Deen* (faith). This is achieved by attending on the righteous saints who change the viewpoint and the trend of thinking. This, in turn, changes the course of man's deeds and activities in the right direction. What was in the beginning a worldly affair has now become *Deen* (faith) and worship.

To visit a sick person with some gift

A new custom has developed in our society of taking some gift, e.g. fruit, sweets or biscuits, etc. for the sick person. Some consider this formality so binding that they do not visit the sick, if they do not find anything to offer as a gift. They think that their visit without gifts will not be appreciated neither by the sick person nor by his family. This is a custom by which Satan has deprived us of the great reward and recompense of visiting sick persons. It is neither an act of *Sunnah*, an obligatory nor compulsory duty to present some gift to the sick. I appeal to all to give up this custom for Allah's sake and refrain from depriving yourselves of the great reward and return for visiting the sick.

May Almighty Allah grant us all the right understanding of *Deen* and put us on the path of the *Sunnah*. *Aameen*!

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد الله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi

Date : 3rd September, 1993.

ETIQUETTS OF BIDDING *SALAM* (SALUTATION)

الحمدلله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهدان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا و سندنا ونبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله ...صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد!

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطٰن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم

عن البراء بن عازب رضى الله تعالى عنه قال امرنا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بسبع عيادة المريض واتباع الجنائز وتشميت العاطس ونصرالضعيف وعون المظلوم وافشاء السلام وابرار المقسم (صحيح بخارى كتاب الاستذان، باب افشاء السلام)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him, seek His help and His forgiveness. We believe in Him,

and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom He let go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the One Who has no partner. I also bear witness that our Sire, our Prophet, and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ, is His servant and His Messenger. May Exalted Allah send mercy on him, on his household and on his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم and bless them and salute them all in great abundance.

Seven commandments

Hazrat Barra-i bin ʿAzib رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ gave them seven commandments:

1- To visit a sick person ;
2- To accompany a funeral ;
3- To say یرحمك اللہ (May Allah have mercy on you) in response to a man who says (Praise to Allah) on sneezing.
4- To help a weak person :
5- To help one who has been wronged and oppressed ;
6- To spread among the people *SALAM* (salutation); and
7- To cooperate with a man, who swears for something, in the fulfilment of his oath.

We have already discussed by Allah's grace, the first five commandments. The sixth command consists in the virtue of popularising and spreading *Salam* (salutation) among the people and making it a point to bid *Salam* on meeting one another. The style of bidding *Salam* which

Exalted Allah has prescribed for us stands distinguished from those prevailing among other nations of the world. Every community has invented for it some words for this purpose like "hellow", "good morning," "good evening" or "Namaste", "Namashkar", etc. They utter these words on meeting one another. As against these, the words which Exalted Allah and His Messenger ﷺ have prescribed for us are quite distinguished and outstanding from others. They are, السلام علیکم ورحمة اللہ وبرکاتہ (peace be on you and Allah's mercy and His blessings).

The benefits of bidding *Salam*

The words of salutation uttered by other communities on meeting one another carry no benefit for either side, neither for this world nor the Hereafter. On the other hand, if you use the *Islamic* words of *Salam*, you express three good wishes and blessings implied in these beautiful words, for the benefit of the person whom you greet. These are 'peace', 'Allah's mercy' and 'His blessings'. If Allah accepts these words of *Salam* which imply supplication, in favour of a Muslim, his life will become purified of his sins and vices. This will bring to both the parties peace and prosperity of this world and of the Hereafter. This unique advantage is not available in the words of greeting adopted by other communities of the world.

***Salam* is a Divine gift**

It occurs in a Hadith that when Exalted Allah created Hazrat Adam علیہ السلام, He commanded him to bid *Salam* to a group of the Angels sitting there, and to mind carefully the words which the Angels uttered in response to his *Salam*. It was because the words of response by the Angels would

become his *Salam* and the *Salam* of his progeny. Accordingly, Hazrat Adam عليه السلام greeted the Angels with the words, السلام عليكم (peace be upon you) and the Angels returned this greeting by saying وعليكم السلام ورحمة الله (On you also peace and Allah's mercy). In his response the Angels added the words رحمة الله (Allah's mercy). (Sahih Bukhari).

That is how Exalted Allah conferred on us this blessing. The blessings contained in our style of *Salam* are too great and numerous to be imagined or counted. It will be very unfortunate on our part to teach our children "good morning" and "good evening" in imitation of other communities, in preference to the heavenly words of *Salam* taught by Allah. How awfully ungrateful, unfortunate and disappointing it is indeed!

Reward and recompense for bidding *Salam*

Salam will be complete by uttering only the words السلام عليكم, but it is better to utter the complete words السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته. These three words carry more reward and return. It occurs in a Hadith that once the Holy Prophet ﷺ was sitting in an assembly of the Companions رضى الله عنهم. A Companion رضى الله عنهم came and bade *Salam* with the words السلام عليكم ورحمة الله. After responding to this *Salam*, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "Ten". Thereafter, another Companion رضى الله عنهم came and bade *Salam* saying, السلام عليكم. The Holy Prophet ﷺ responded to the *Salam* and said, "Twenty". Then a third Companion رضى الله عنهم came and bade *Salam*, السلام عليكم ورحمة الله, On this the Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "Thirty". The intention of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was to tell the Companions رضى الله عنهم that by saying السلام عليكم a man receives ten virtues, by saying السلام عليكم ورحمة الله twenty virtues and by saying السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته he receives thirty virtues. However, the *Sunnah* of *Salam* is completed even by

saying only السلام عليكم. Just see how these words contain supplication as well as reward and recompense. (Abu Dawood)

It is imperative that while bidding *Salam*, the words of *Salam* should be pronounced distinctly and nicely without distorting them. Some people do not mind this requirement. The words السلام عليكم should, therefore, be pronounced clearly and nicely and quite audibly.

The *Nee'at* (intention) for bidding *Salam*

You should note carefully that the words كلمه taught by the Holy Prophet ﷺ have been used in the plural number. But the words السلام عليك have been used in the singular number, as they are addressed only to one person. The words in the plural number السلام عليكم means: Peace be upon all of you, but the words in the singular number-- mean, "Peace be on you, (one person) only".

The learned scholars have given two reasons for this. Firstly, it carries more respect and regard to greet a person by a word in the plural number. Secondly, the man bidding the *Salam* should form in his mind the intention that he is addressing his *Salam* to three addressees, viz., the person being greeted and the two Angels who accompany eveyone at all times. They are called كراما كاتبين(Kiraman Katibeen). One of them records good deeds and the other records bad deeds. Thus, you will earn the reward for bidding *Salam* to three personalities. Moreover, you will secure the prayers of these two Angels whom Allah has created innocent.

The "intention" for *Salam* for concluding *Salat* (prayers)

The Ulama have therefore advised that, while bidding *Salam* in *Salat* (prayers), the *Namazi* should form

the intention that in his right side *Salam* he is sending peace to all the Muslims and the Angels on his right. Similarly in his left side *Salam*, he is sending peace to all the Muslims and the Angels on his left. It is not possible that the Angels shall not respond to his *Salam*. They shall certainly respond to your *Salam* and in this way you shall become entitled to their prayer for you. Generally we bid *Salam* in our Salat unmindfully and become losers of this great benefit and reward.

Response to *Salam* should be better than the initial *Salam*

It is a matter of great reward to be the first to bid *Salam*. It is in fact an act of *Sunnah* to do so. It is also essential to respond to a Salam. The Holy Qur'an says:

وَاِذَا حُيِّيْتُمْ بِتَحِيَّةٍ فَحَيُّوْا بِاَحْسَنَ مِنْهَا اَوْ رُدُّوْهَا (سورہ النساء:۸۶)

When you are greeted with a greeting, respond to it with a better greeting or (at least) return it (in the same words). (4:86)

The example, if anyone greets you with the words السلام عليكم, you should respond to him with the words وعليكم السلام ورحمة الله وبركاته. This will make your response better than the *Salam*. If you do not do so you must atleast make your respond equal to the *Salam* by saying, وعليكم السلام.

Only one *Salam* is sufficient for a whole gathering

If a man visits an assembly of men, it is sufficient for him to bid only one *Salam*. It is also sufficient if anyone of the assembly responds to this *Salam*. It is not necessary at all that everyone sitting in the assembly should respond to the *Salam* of the visitor separately.

It is not lawful to respond to *Salam* on certain occasions

There are occasions when it is not lawful to respond to *Salam*, viz. when someone is asking another man some question about *Deen* (Faith), and others are attentively listening to the answer; When a man is reciting the Qur'an; or he is engaged in *Zikr* (remembrance of Allah's names). In other words, it is not desirable to bid *Salam* to a person who is busy with some work and it is feared that if he responds to the *Salam* he will be disturbed in his work. Bidding *Salam* has not been approved on such occasions.

To communicate *Salam* through another person

Sometimes *Salam* of one person is conveyed to another person by a third person. This too is an act of the *Sunnah* and a substitute for a direct, personal *Salam*. This too earns the virtues of the act of bidding *Salam*. In such an indirect *Salam*, the person receiving the *Salam* should respond to it by saying: عليهم وعليكم السلام (peace be upon them and upon you). This is the way prescribed in the *Sunnah*. This procedure contains two supplications (*Du'as*), one for each. It is, thus, a source of double reward.

Some men dispose of such *Salam* only by saying, "وعليكم السلام". The formality of responding to *Salam* is discharged, but this is not a correct response. This is because your response is for one person only, but there are two persons involved - one who has brought the *Salam* and the other who has sent it through the former. The right way of returning *Salam* in such a case is to say, عليهم وعليكم السلام (peace on them and on you).

Response to *Salam* received in writing

As for a *Salam* sent in writing in a letter, some learned scholars have advised that it is السلام عليكم ورحمة الله (essential) to accord a response to this *Salam* in writing, as it is essential also to send a reply to the letter. To ignore response to the *Salam* and the reply to the letter is as if someone bids you *Salam*, but you remain silent and made no response to it. Some other learned scholars have advised that it is not واجب (essential) to reply to this letter because it invovles postal charges which a man may not be able to pay. Even so, it is very desirable to reply to the letter. It is, however, واجب (essential) to respond to the *Salam* verbally on reading the words of the *Salam* written in the letter. If a man does not respond to the *Salam* even verbally at the time of reading the letter, nor does he give a reply to the letter, he will commit the sin of omitting a واجب (essential duty). How sad it is that we commit the sin of omitting a واجب, because of ignorance. We should, therefore, make it a point at least to make a verbal resposne to *Salam* whenever we receive a letter and read it.

How to bid *Salam* to a non-Muslim?

The respected Jurists have advised that it is not lawful to bid *Salam* to non-Muslims. However, if there is an occasion on which it becomes unavoidable to greet a non-Muslim, you may greet him with the words which the non-Muslims themselves use for greeting one another. If a non-Muslim greets a Muslim by uttering السلام عليكم you should respond to this by saying "عليهم" only, and should not utter the full Islamic words of *Salam*.

While so doing, you should pray in your heart that Almighty Allah may guide him to embrace *Islam*.

During the days of the Holy Prophet ﷺ a large number of Jews lived in Madinah Munaw-warah. Highly mischievous and malicious as they were, whenever, they faced the Holy Prophet ﷺ or the Noble Companions رضى الله عنهم they greeted them with the words, " السام عليكم", meaning, "Death be upon you and you may perish." Apparently this looked like a *Salam* or greeting, but in reality it was a curse. It was not long when the Noble Companions رضى الله عنهم realized this mischief on the part of the Jews. (Sahih Bukhari).

How a Jew bade *Salam* to the Holy Prophet ﷺ

Once a group of Jews called upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ and greeted him ﷺ with the words, السام عليكم. On hearing these words of curse Hazrat ʿAyeshah رضى الله عنها was highly enraged. She رضى الله عنها replied with the words "عليكم السام واللعنة" (May death and curse befall you). The Holy Prophet ﷺ heard this curt and angry reply of Hazrat ʿAyeshah رضى الله عنها and said: مهلا يا عائشة (O ʿAyeshah, stop-this and be polite).

ان الله يحب الرفق فى الامر كله

Allah loves leniency and politeness in all matters.

Hazrat ʿAyeshah رضى الله عنها replied to this, saying: O Prophet ﷺ of Allah! How impertinent they are that they are addressing you with the words السام عليكم , whereby they are calling upon you the curse of death and destruction. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said: O ʿAyeshah! Did you not hear my response to them? I said: " وعليكم " My reply to them implied a prayer to Allah to accept their curse in their favour. So, we should greet a non-Muslim with the words " وعليكم ". Thereafter he ﷺ said:

يا عائشة:! ماكان الرفق فى شئ الا زانه ولا نزع عن شئ الاشانه

(صحيح بخارى، كتاب الاستئذان، باب كيف يرد على اهل الذمة السلام)

O ʿAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا politeness adds decoration to the thing in which it is found. On the other hand, when it is taken away from that thing, it renders it ugly and defective.

Everyone, even if he is an unbeliever, should be treated with politeness and leniency (Sahih Bukhari).

Be polite as far as possible

Consider a bit how a Jew behaved so impertinently with the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and how Hazrat ʿAyeshah رضی اللہ عنہا paid him in the same coin. Although her رضی اللہ عنہا words were not unjust, yet the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not appreciate those words. He ﷺ advised her رضی اللہ عنہا to take to politeness in compliance with the *Sunnah* and to be brief and to the point, as it was not desirable to behave with anyone harshly and roughly.

Salam is a *Duʿa* (supplication)

Salam is not an ordinary act; it is a very sublime and effective *Duʿa*. It should be bidden and responded to with the intention of a *Duʿa*. If the *Duʿa* of a single man in our favour is accepted, all our problems will be solved because *Salam* possesses all the blessings of this world and of the Hereafter. It is a *Duʿa* for peace, Allah's mercy and His blessings. We should, therefore, always be on the lookout for this *Duʿa* from the people. This may be done with a burning desire and a heartfelt longing that perhaps Exalted Allah shall turn the words of the *Duʿa* into a source of blessings for us.

The state of Hazrat Maʿroof Karkhi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Hazrat Maʿroof Karkhi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ is one of the renowned friends of Allah (ولی) and the grand Sheikh of Hazrat Junaid Baghdadi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. Hazrat Junaid Baghdadi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was a spiritual successor to Hazrat Siri Saqti رحمۃ اللہ علیہ and the latter was a spiritual successor to Hazrat Maʿroof Karkhi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. He always remained deeply absorbed in rehearsing Allah's name (i.e. in *Zikr*). Once, when he was getting his head shaved. At the time of shaving his moustaches, the barber saw that his tongue and lips were in motion. The barber requested Sheikh رحمۃ اللہ علیہ to keep his mouth shut for a few moments to enable him to shave his moustaches. The Sheikh رحمۃ اللہ علیہ asked the barber to do his job. This is how the Sheikh's tongue was always occupied with rehearsing Allahs' name.

An event that happened with Hazrat Maʿroof Karkhi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

It is written about him that when he was going along a road he saw that a water-carrier was supplying water to the people to drink and was at the same time crying: May Alalh have mercy on him who drinks my water. Hazrat Maʿroof Karkhi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ approached that water-carrier and asked him for a glass of water. The man supplied the Sheikh رحمۃ اللہ علیہ water and he drank it. A man who was accompanying the Sheikh reminded him that he was fasting but he broke his fast by drinking water. The Sheikh رحمۃ اللہ علیہ explained his conduct saying: The man was praying to Allah for showing His mercy to him who drank his water. I broke my fast by drinking his water in the hope that, who knows, Allah may accept his *duʿa* in my favour. It was an optional fast which I can compensate later on, but I am not sure if I shall get another chance for

his *Du'a*. That is why I broke my optional fast.

Now consider how such a great Wali, Sufi and Saint broke his fast to avail himself of the *Du'a* of such an ordinary water-carrier. Why was it so? This was because these godly men ever remained on the lookout for *Du'as* in the hope that some may be granted in their favour.

Instead of Thanks one should say جزاکم اللہ
(May Allah reward you)

That is why in our *Deen-ul-Islam,* a *Du'a* has been prescribed almost for every occasion, for example, say :-

یرحمک اللہ(May Allah have mercy on you) in response to a person who sneezes and says

السلام علیکم(peace may be on you) when you meet anyone;

جزاکم اللہ(may Allah reward you) when someone does good to you;

It has become a common custom to say, "Thank you very much," to express gratitude, when someone does some good turn to us. There is no objection to this expression; it is rather desirable. It occurs in a Hadith:

من لم یشکر الناس لم یشکرا للّٰہ

One who does not thank a man, does not thank Allah.

It should however be noted, that it is much better to include some *Du'a* in favour of the person being thanked. This *Du'a* may be of some benefit to him. Do the words, "Thank you very much" provide any benefit and relief to the person being thanked either in this world or in the Hereafter. Of course none! As for the words السلام علیکم, these contain a *Du'a* in favour of the person concerned. As mentioned earlier, Islam has advised its followers to try to

provide for others and secure for themselves *Du'a* at every step. This practice should be made a regualr habit and daily routine. Let everyone learn these useful words of *Du'a* and teach them to his children also.

Response to *Salam* should be made in audible words

A person once put a question; should response to *Salam* be made in loud or low voice. The answer to this question is that response to *Salam*, being واجب (an essential duty), it is مستحب (desirable) and an act of *Sunnah* to make this response so loudly that it may be easily heard by the person who bade the *Salam*. If this response is made in so low a voice that the addressee cannot hear it the واجب (essential duty) will be dis-charged but the مستحب (desirability) will remain undischarged. It is, therefore, necessary to give response to *Salam* in a sufficiently audible voice.

May Exalted Allah help us all to act upon these injunctions. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد للہ رب العالمین

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi

Date : 12th August, 1994.

ETIQUETTES OF HANDSHAKING

الحمد الله نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره ونؤمن به ونتوكل عليه ونعوذبالله من شرورانفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلامضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهدان لااله الاالله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيدنا ونبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله ...صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه و بارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

امابعد!

عن انس بن مالك رضى الله عنه قال كان النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم اذااستقبله الرجل فصافحه لاينزع يده عن يده حتى يكون الرجل هوالذى ينزع ولايصرف وجهه حتى يكون الرجل هوالذى يصرفه ولم ير مقدما ركبتيه بين يدى جليس له (ترمذى، كتاب القيامة،باب نمبر ٤٦)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him, seek His help and His forgiveness. We believe in Him, and rely on Him. We seek refuge with

Allah from the evils of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom Allah guides and there is none to guide him whom He let go astray. I bear witness that there in no god but Allah, the One Who has no partner. I also bear witness that our Sire, our Prophet, and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ, is His servant and His Messenger. May Exalted Allah send mercy on him, on his household and on his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم and bless them and salute them all in great abundance.

Hazrat Anas رضی اللہ عنہ - The personal attendant of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

Hazrat Anas bin Mailk رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated this Hadith. He is the Companion رضی اللہ عنہ who had, by the grace of Exalted Allah, the honour of serving the Holy Prophet ﷺ for a period of full ten years. During this period he remained in the service of the Holy Prophet ﷺ day and night. His رضی اللہ عنہ mother Umm-e-Sulaim رضی اللہ عنہا had left him رضی اللہ عنہ in the care and service of the Holy Prophet ﷺ when he was just a small boy.

He attained the age of sense and sensibility during the period of service under the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He رضی اللہ عنہ himself has admitted an oath that he served the Holy Prophet ﷺ for a period of ten years. During this whole period the Holy Prophet ﷺ neither at any time scolded him, nor beat him, nor did he express anger with him, nor did he ever raise any objection to some work which he did or failed to do. The Holy Prophet ﷺ brought him up with such care and affection. (Tirimizi.....Hadith No: 2016)

The affection of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

Hazrat Anas رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated: Once the Holy Prophet ﷺ sent me out to do some work. I left my house for this purpose, but saw that some boys were playing on the way, (being a small boy) I also joined the boys in the play, forgetting altogether that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had sent me out to do some work. I remembered this long after and became concerned about my default in my duty. When I came back, I saw that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had himself done the job with his own hands. He ﷺ did not even ask me why I had failed in my duty. (Sahih Muslim.....Hadith No: 2309)

Securing *Du'as* (supplications) from the Holy Prophet ﷺ in his favour

Hazrat Anas رضی اللہ عنہ has the good luck of securing *Du'as* and good wishes of the Holy Prophet ﷺ for the services he rendered to him ﷺ. Once putting his sacred hand on his head, the Holy Prophet ﷺ prayed for him, saying: O Allah, bless him in the matter of his life span and his progeny. This prayer (*Du'a*) was accepted in his favour. He رضی اللہ عنہ was the last of all the Companions رضی اللہ عنہما to die. It was he رضی اللہ عنہ who granted countless Muslims the honour of becoming Tabi'een (followers), by meeting and seeing him رضی اللہ عنہ. It was due to his long life that they could become Tabi'een. Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifah رحمۃ اللہ علیہ and Hazrat 'Amash رحمۃ اللہ علیہ each became a Tabi'ee by meeting Hazrat Anas رضی اللہ عنہ. So long did he live in this world ! As regards his pogeny, he رضی اللہ عنہ himself said that his sons and grandsons numbered over one hundred. (Shaih Muslim)

Translation of the Hadith

Hazart Anas رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated in this Hadith: It was the regular habit of the Holy Prophetﷺ that whenever anyone shook hands with him ﷺ, he never withdrew his hands. He ﷺ also did not turn away his face from the visitor unless the latter turned away his face. He ﷺ was also never seen stretching his knees before anyone, when he was sitting with others in an assembly.

The modesty of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

In this Hadith three atrributes of the Holy Prophet ﷺ have been mentioned:

1) In spite of his exalted status he ﷺ was so modest and unassuming in his nature, that if anyone met him ﷺ and shook hands with him ﷺ, he ﷺ never withdrew his hands unless the other person withdrew his hands;

2) The Holy Prophet ﷺ also did not turn away his face from the visitor unless the latter turned away his face, and

3) He ﷺ never stretched his knees in front of anyone.

It also occurs in other Ahadith that if anyone was talking to him, he ﷺ never interrutped the person during his talk and remained attentive to him as long as the man himself did not leave the place. Even if a weak old woman sought his help he ﷺ would not hesitate in going with her to help her in her need.

The style of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in handshaking

We are all duty-bound to act upon the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It is, however, another matter that some acts of this *Sunnah* are easy and some difficult to perform. For example, it looks somewhat difficult to act upon the *Sunnah* relating to withdrawing the hands and paying full

attention to someone in converation. It is difficult for a busy person to do full jsutice to these acts of *Sunnah*, particularly when the other party is inconsiderate and devoid of sense and feelings about the needs and engagements of the other party whom they are boring with their endless idle talk. It is very difficult for a busy man to put up with the behaviour of such fellows. This becomes all the more difficult to tolerate such an embarrassing situation for a responsible personality like the Holy Prophetﷺ who had to bear on his shoulders the responsibilities of both the worlds, holy wars, gudiance and education of the Muslim Ummah, Propagation of Islam as well as looking after the adminstrative and political affairs of the new government established at Madinah Munaw-warah. It can be regarded only as a miracle of the Holy Prophet ﷺ who was able to cope with this situation with success.

It is an act of *Sunnah* to use both hands in handshaking

The first sentence of this Hadith solves two juristic problems. Firstly, it is an act of *Sunnah* to shake hands. The ahadith do not contain elaborate details about this *Sunnah*, but the Ulama have advised that both the hands should be used in handshaking. While dealing with this topic Imam Bukhari رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has mentioned in his Sahih Bukhari that Hazrat Hammad bin Zaid رضی اللہ عنہ shook hands with Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak, رضی اللہ عنہ using both hands. He رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has cited in this behalf a statment of the latter to the effect that a man should use both hands in handshaking.

It is contrary to the *Sunnah* to use only one hand in handshaking

Handshaking only with one hand has become a common fashion in our times as a result of the influence of English culture. On the other hand, the people of Saudi Arabia maintian with due emphasis that handshaking with one hand only is the act of *Sunnah*. This is not quite right. Our learned saints have interpreted the Ahadith to suggest that it is according to the *Sunnah* to use both hands in handshaking. According to them there is no Hadith to indicate that the Holy Prophet ﷺ ever shook hands using only one hand. There are, however, narratives about the etiquette of handshaking with both hands. The learned scholars have, therefore, advised that it is much nearer to the *Sunnah* to perform handshaking with both hands.

Hazrat Abdullah bin Masood رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ taught him "التحیات" in a way in which کفی بین کفیہ (i.e my hands were between the two palms of the Holy Prophet ﷺ). This shows that during the Prophet's time only this style of handshaking was in vogue. It is, therefore, nearer to the *Sunnah* to use both hands in handshaking.

If anyone does handshaking with only one hand, it cannot be said that it is unlawful or the *Sunnah* of handshaking has been ignored, yet the style nearer to the *Sunnah* should be adopted, as has been followed and recommended by the Ulama, Fupaha and the Saints.

Consider the suitability of the occasion before handshaking

Secondly, it needs to be noted that although it is an act of *Sunnah*, yet every *Sunnah* has a proper occasion and a suitable situation in which it can be followed with advantage and can be a source of reward. On the other

hand, if the same *Sunnah* is followed at an improper time and occasion, it may result in a sin and attract punishment. For example, it is not right to shake hands with a person who may be put to some diffifulty and inconvenience by handshaking. It is unlawful to insist on this formality on such unsuitable occasions. Bidding Salam with the words السلام علیکم and responding to it are sufficient on such occasions.

This is not an occasion for handshaking

Take another example, you come across a man whose both hands are engaged with something which he is carrying. If you extend your hands towards him with the intention of handshaking, he will be very much disturbed and inconvenienced. He should he first release his hands by putting down his burden on the ground or what else, what should he do? To do handshaking on such occasions is no *Sinnah*; it is against *Sunnah*. To insist on handshakng on such occasions causes distress to others; this is a sin. This should be avoided.

Handshaking is a way of expressing affection.

This should be done only when it is expected to bring ease comfort and happiness to the person loved instead of causing him distress and inconvenience. Sometimesit so happens that when a righteous saint visits some placea whole army of his devotees rushes towards him to receive the blessings of shaking hands with him. They ignor the fact that this rush may cause him distress and harm. This is highly objectionable and improper.

It is a sin to shake hands on such occasions

This craze of handshaking is very commonly seen among the people in Bengal and Burma. If they attend the sermon of any Shaikh, they consider it imperative to receive the blessing of shaking hands with him.

At the conclusion of the sermon they rush towarads the Shaikh and assail him for his handshake without any consideration that such behaviour on their part may grievously harm th shaikh.

I saw this scene when I went to Bengal for the first time along with my respected father, Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه. My father رحمة الله عليه delivered his sermon to a huge assembly of listners, but at the end of the assembly, this whole assembly almost assailed my father for a hand shake. It was with great difficulty that my father was escorted safe from this unruly crowd of devotees.

This is not love but enmity

Once Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه delivered a sermon in the Surati Masjid of Rangoon (Burma). When the sermon ended, a large crowd of men rushed towards Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه for shaking hands that the Shaikh narrowly escaped from falling down and being injured. This conduct is not a formal show of affection. The emotion of love also requires some intellec, so that the person loved may be meted out a sympatheti dealing that he may remain safe from distress and injury.

An event of extremism in the expression of devotedness

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has related in his collection of sermons the story of a godly man who happened to visit some town. The inhabitants of that town were so sincerely devoted to that saint that they could avail themselves of his blessings for ever. For this purpose they planned to kill him and bury him in a grave in their midst.

Such mad and irrational expression of devotional enthusiasm has nothing to do with *Deen* (faith). Real devotedness is that which provides ease and comfort to the person loved. It should also be kept in view whether or not the occasion is suitable for handshaking. It is more virtuous and rewarding to avoid the observance of this etiquette when the hands of the person concerned are not free for handshaking.

Sins are shed by the virtue of handshaking

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith that when two Muslims shake hands with each other with affection and sincerity, their sins fall off through their hands, by Allah's assistance and mercy. At the time of shaking hands, an intention should be made that through this virtue Allah shall forgive the sins of both the parties. On this occasion there should also be an intention that Exalted Allah may transfer the blessings of the hands of the the person desiring a handshake to the hands of the other person concerned. Such occasions generally arise for us when we assemble to listen to sermons of learned scholars and at the end of these sermons we wish to shake hands with them.

It is worthwhile to remember the advise of Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه for such occasions. He has stated:

I feel highly pleased, when a large number of people assemble to shake hands with me. This is because they are all pious servants of Exalted Allah and, who knows, some of them may be a favourite of Allah. If the hands of this

favourite servant touches my hands, it is most likely that Exalted Allah shall show mercy to me by virtue of the blessed hands of this favourite servants of Allah.

When a large number of men assemble to shake hands with an important man, the latter's mind is likely to be affected by pride and ego. The man is led to think that so many men desire to shake hands with him because of some attractive qualities in him and he has become a godly personality. On the contrary, the entire viewpoint becomes altered when the man welcomes handshaking in the hope that perhaps Exalted Allah shall show mercy to him and grant him salvation by virtue of the blessed hands of those desiring to shake hands. With this change in viewpoint, handshaking becomes a cause of modesty, humility and submissiveness instead of a cause of pride and arrogance. It is, therefore, necessary to form this "Intention" when going to shake hands with anyone.

These are very important points to which should be learned from our wise saints.

A rule of etiquette for handshaking

As has been stated in the next sentence of the hadith that while shaking hands with anyone, the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not withdraw his hands, unless the other man withdrew his first. This provides another rule of etiquette about handshaking. While handshaking, one should not withdraw one's hands first. This is to avoid giving an impression to the other man that one is feeling disgusted with the handshaking or one is considering the other fellow as inferior. Shaking hands should always be done with good cheer happiness and without any show of hurry. You may, however, withdraw your hands, if the other fellow is insenible and is holding your hands for an

unreasonable time.

A rule of etiquette for meeting someone

This Hadith describes another attribute of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that he did not turn away his face unless the other man turned away his face. This is also a *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, although it requires great courage and striving to act upon this *Sunnah*. A man should, however, do his best to follow this *Sunnah*. However, he has permission to ignore it only in unavoidable situations.

A Strange event of visiting a sick person

It has been related about Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه that during his fatal sickness people began to call upon him to inquire after his health. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has advised the Ummah about visiting a sick person as under:

من عاد منكم فليخفف

Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه was lying on his bed when a man came and sat with him. He did not move from his seat, while others came and went away after short inquiries. Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه anxiously waited for his departure, so that the may be free to do certain things with ease and convenience. He did not like to be rude to ask the man to go away. When his stay became unduly long and inconvenient to the Shaikh رضى الله عنه, he expressed his distress indirectly in these words: these visitors have become a source of torture to me and do not leave me free and at ease. The man was too stupid to understand the intention of the Shaikh by these words. Instead of leaving the place he asked the permission to close the door of the room to keep away other visitors. Hazrat

Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه allowed him to close the door not from inside but by going outside the room.

Anyway, sometimes we are compelled to behave in this way with insensible persons who do not mind others' ease and convenience. In ordinary circumsttances, we are called upon to behave with others nicely, so that they should not feel that they are being looked down upon, ignored and treated as inferior.

May Exalted Allah help us all to act upon these injunctions of the *Sunnah. Aameen!*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمدللّٰہ رب العالمین

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi

Date : 10th September, 1993.

SIX VALUABLE PRACTICES

نحمده ونصلى على رسوله الكريم

اما بعد!

عن ابى جُرَيٍّ جابر بن سليم رضى الله عنه قال رايت رجلا يصدر الناس عن رأيه لا يقول شيئاً الا صدروا عنه قلت من هذا؟ قالوا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قلت عليك السلام يا رسول الله مرتين قال لا تقل "عليك السلام" فان عليك السلام تحية الميت قل السلام عليك قال قلت انت رسول الله؟ قال انا رسول الله الذى اذا اصابك ضر فدعوته كشفه عنك واذا اصابك عام سنة فدعوته انبتهالك واذاكنت بارض قفر اوفلاة فضلت راحلتك فدعوته ردها عليك قال قلت اعهدالى قال لاتسبن احدا قال فما سببت بعده حرا ولاعبدا ولا بعيرا ولا شاة ولا تحقرن شيئا من المعروف وان تكلم اخاك وانت منبسط اليه وجهك ان ذلك من المعروف وارفع ازارك الى نصف الساق فان ابيت فإلى الكعبين واياك واسبال الازار فانها من المخيلة وان الله لا يحب المخيلة

وان امرأ شتمك اوعيّرك بما يعلم فيك فلا تعيّره بما تعلم فيه فانما وبال

ذلك عليه (ابو داؤد، كتاب اللباس، باب ماجاء فى اسبال الازار، حديث نمبر ٤٠٨٤)

This is a lengthy Hadith which I have recited before you. Not only to the meanings of these blessed Ahadith contain light but their words also contain light. It is therefore, a ssource of blessings and virtue to recite and listen to Ahadith.

May exalted Allah help us all to understand and act upon them. *Aameen*!

The first contact of a Companion رضى الله عنه with the Holy Prophet ﷺ

In this Hadith Hazrat Jabir bin Sulaim رضى الله عنه has given an account of his first contact with the Holy Prophet ﷺ at a time when he did not even recognize him ﷺ..He has narrated as under:

> I saw a person to whom people turned in every matter and consulted him in every problem of theirs. The People became convinced of the truth of this replies. When I came to know that he was the Prophet of Allah, Muhammad ﷺ. I told myself that he was the Prophet of Allah ﷺ. I went near him and saluted him ﷺ with these words: O Prophet of Allah عليك السلام يا رسول الله (on you be peace). I uttered these words twice. He ﷺ asked me not to say عليك السلام but to say السلام عليك (peace be on you), because the words عليك السلام are meant to salute the dead. In orther words, for suluting the dead the word عليك *Salam* comes after the word (on you).

How to respond to *Salam*?

The Hadith means that to initiate *Salam* one should say السلام عليكم. The Hadith teaches us that to respond to *Salam* the words وعليكم السلام ورحمة الله (and on you be peace and Allah's mercy) should be uttered. That is, in reply to *Salam* the word عليكم should come first. If anyone responds to the words السلام عليكم by repeating the same words السلام عليكم, the reply will be all right, but the response prescribed in the *Sunnah* is وعليكم السلام. Now-adays it has become a common habit to respond to repeating the same words السلام عليكم. This is against the *Sunnah*.

It is essential (*wajib*) for both to make a response

Two men meet and greet each other simultaneously with the words السلام عليكم. In such a situation it is essential for both to respond to the *Salam* with the words وعليكم السلام.

This is because each of them initiated *Salam* at the same time and it became bidning on both to respond to the *Salam*.

The words of the Hadith are also important in the *Shari'ah*

This Hadith points out another basic fact of which the people are not aware. It is that the words and phrases of the Ahadith, as taught by Allah and His Prophet ﷺ are also important as are their meanings and spirit. Just see that the words "السلام عليكم" and "عليكم السلام" both mean one and the same i.e., peace be upon you, but in his ﷺ very first contact with Hazrat Jabir bin Sulaim رضى الله عنه the Holy Prophet ﷺ taught him رضى الله عنه that the correct way of greeting approved in the *Sunnah* is to say, "السلام عليكم." Why did he ﷺ do so? This was to clarify that it is no *Shari'ah* at all to have one's own way in following the *Shari'ah*. *Shari'ah* is the name of following

the path appointed by Allah and His Prophet ﷺ.

Nowadays, people are heard saying that it is the spirit of the *Shari'ah* that really matters and we should not hanker after the words. We fail to understand how they are able to get at this spirit. The spirit as well as the letter both have their importance. Instead of saying السلام علیکم you may utter their Urdu equivalent:

سلامتی ہو تم پر

Peace be upon you

Although the sense and meaning of the Urdu expression are the same, yet the spirit, light and reward contained in the words prescribed by the *Sunnah* "السلام علیکم" are altogether absent in the Urdu expression.

To bid *Salam* is a symbol of the Muslims

Salam is a symbol of the Muslims by means of which they are distinguished from non-Muslims. Once I happened to visit China where a large number of Muslims live. As we did not understand one another's languages, it was not possible to express our feelings and emotions to one another. However, one thing was common between us and that was the words of *Salam*. Whenever I met a Muslim, he greeted me with the words "السلام علیکم ورحمة الله وبرکاته" and with these words he expressed his emotions. This was a blessing of following the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This *Sunnah* has welded together the entire Muslim community and has become a means of contact among them. Thus, the light and blessings of these words are not available in any other words. Nowadays it has become a fashion to greet one another with words like اداب عرض (Due regards) تسلیمات (salutations), سلام مسنون (the *Salam* of the *Sunnah*), etc. You must remember that these words do not

bring you the light and reward of the *Sunnah*. Do you not see in this Hadith how the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not tolerate even a very slight change in the words of the *Salam* prescribed in the *Sunnah*?

An event concerning a Companion رضی الله عنه

The Holy Prophet ﷺ taught one of his Companions رضی الله عنهم a *Du'a* (supplication) and asked him to recite it before going to bed. Its words are:

امنت بکتابك الذی انزلت وبنبیك الذی ارسلت

I believe in the Book which You have revealed
and in the Prophet whom You have sent.

After a few days the Holy Prophet ﷺ asked that Companion رضی الله عنه to recite the *Du'a* he ﷺ had taught him. The Companion رضی الله عنه recited the *Du'a* with a slight change in it, as under:

امنت بکتابك الذی انزلت وبرسولك الذی ارسلت

In this *Du'a* he substituted the word "نبی" for the word "رسول". The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked the Companion رضی الله عنه to recite the same words which he ﷺ had taught him, even though there was not considerable difference between the two words and the word رسول (messenger) is superior to the word "نبی" (Prophet). Nothwithstanding this, the Holy Prophet ﷺ insisted on the Companion رضی الله عنه to recite the words which he ﷺ had taught him.

Reward and recompense for following the *Sunnah*

Our Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله علیه, may Allah exalt his status, used to advise us as under:

You shall experience a world of difference in the effect of doing something according to your own choice and doing the same thing according to the method taught

by the Holy Prophet ﷺ with the intention to follow his *Sunnah*. The light and blessing accruing to you in doing something according to the *Sunnah* will not accrue to you if you do that according to your own way and choice.

Events concerning the Tahajjud prayers of Hazrat Abu Bakr and Hazrat Umar Farooq رضی اللہ عنہم

It occurs in the Ahadith that the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to make rounds on nights to look after the conditions of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم. On one of such nights when he ﷺ passed by Hazrat Siddiq Akbar رضی اللہ عنہ he was offering the *Tahajjud* prayer and was reciting the Holy Qur'an in a low voice. Thereafter, he ﷺ passed by Hazrat Farooq A'zam رضی اللہ عنہ. He was also offering the *Tahajjud* prayer, but he was reciting the Holy Qur'an loudly.

In the morning the Holy Prophet ﷺ sent for both of them. He ﷺ first asked Hazrat Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ why he was reciting the Holy Qur'an in such a low voice. Hazrat Siddiq Akbar رضی اللہ عنہ replied, saying: اسمعت من ناجیت (I recited it to One whom I was entreating), so I was reciting the Qur'an in a low voice. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ asked Hazrat Farooq A'zam رضی اللہ عنہ why he was reciting the Qur'an so loudly he replied, saying: او اوقظ الوسنان واطرد الشیطان (I was awakening those who were sleeping and driving away Satan). After listening to the replies of both, the Holy Prophet ﷺ asked Hazrat Siddiq Akbar رضی اللہ عنہ ارفع قلیلا (Raise your voice a little). He ﷺ then asked Hazrat Farooq A'zam رضی اللہ عنہ اخفض قلیلا (Lower your voice a little).

Follow the ways I have taught you

Commenting on the interpretation of this Hadith, the commentators have written that it was the intention of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to make both these Companions رضی اللہ عنہم act upon this verse of the Holy Qur'an:

وَلَا تَجْهَرْ بِصَلَاتِكَ وَلَا تُخَافِتْ بِهَا وَابْتَغِ بَيْنَ ذٰلِكَ سَبِيْلًا (سورہ بنی اسرائیل: ۱۱۰)

(O Muhammad !) Be not loud-voiced in your worship, nor yet silent therein but follow a way in between. (17:110).

In other words, we have been commanded in this verse to follow a middle course in reciting the Holy Qur'an in our worship. Speaking on this topic, Hazrat Thanawi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has said:

> Apart from what has been stated above, there is a great wisdom in the advice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The intention was to tell both these Companions رضی اللہ عنہم that so far they were following a way oı reciting the Holy Qur'an according to their own choice. The way they were to follow in future would be the way taught by the Holy Prophet ﷺ and that of the *Sunnah*. This would bestow upon them the light and blessings of following the *Sunnah* and entitle them to its reward and recompense.

This Hadith teaches us to mind carefully that when we commence any work, we should follow the way taught by the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, and should adopt, where necessary, the same words and expressions as taught by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It is not enough to undertake some work with the intention that it has to be done in this way or that way, as we like.

I am a Messenger sent by Truthful Allah

Hazrat Jabir bin Sulaim رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that when the Holy Prophet ﷺ taught him the way of bidding *Salam*, he ﷺ asked if he ﷺ was a Messenger of Allah. The

Holy Prophet ﷺ replied to this question, saying:

I am a Messenger of that Allah that if some harm befalls you and you call Him for help Allah shall relieve you of that harm.

During the pre-Islamic days the people worshipped idols as their gods. They had, however, a good quality that when they faced some distress they called only Allah for help. The Holy Qur'an says:

وَإِذَا رَكِبُوْا فِي الْفُلْكِ دَعَوُا اللهَ مُخْلِصِيْنَ لَهُ الدِّيْنَ

When they get on board ship, they pray to Alalh, making their faith pure for Him only (29:65).

In other words, when these polytheists get on board and their ships were caught in sea storms, and found no way out, they forgot their idols; Lat, uzza, Manat, etc. At such a critical moment of danger, they turn to and call Exalted Allah alone for help and safety. In this Hadith the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said:

That he ﷺ is not a Messenger of these false gods, but he ﷺ is a Messenger sent by True Allah. Then he ﷺ further said:

I am a Messenger of that Alalh that when there is famine in the land and you call Allah to remove the famine Allah accepts your prayer and removes the famine. I am a Messenger from that Allah that when you are travelling in some desolate desert and your camel strays and you pray to Allah to bring back the camel, He responds to your prayer and brings back the straying camel.

We should seek advice from our seniors

Thereafter, Hazrat Jabir bin Sulaim رضی اللہ عنہ requested the Holy Prophet ﷺ to give him some advice. That is why

the godly saints has taught us this principle that if anyone calls upon some senior person, particularly one who is well versed in religious matters, he should seek some advice from that saint. Sometimes the advice is very effective which changes the very spiritual trend and direction of the heart and brings a total transformation. The reason for this is not far to seek. When a man seeks advice with genuine sincerity, Allah guides the saint to give such advice to the needy person as is befitting and suitable for him. Remember that it is not the saint or the Sheikh himself who has the capacity to render real help to anyone, but it is only Exalted Allah Who is the genuine and ultimate fountain of goodness. However, genuine and a sincere and keen desire is needed to attract this divine assistance. So it is necessary to seek advice on visiting some godly man.

The first advice

While advising Hazrat Jabir bin Sulaim رضی اللہ عنہ, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

لا تسبنَّ احدا

Do not abuse anyone

It is an advice to refrain from uttering any such words or phrases as come within the definition of abusing or speaking ill of anyone. Mind you, this is the advice given by the Holy Prophet ﷺ in his first meeting with Hazrat Jabir رضی اللہ عنہ. This shows how important it is not to utter words to hurt the feelings and to pinch any person. A Muslim should not therefore commit this grievous sin of rending anyone's heart by uttering abusive words.

An event relating to Hazrat Siddiq Akbar رضی اللہ عنہ

Once Hazrat Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ became angry with his slave and uttered some words of curse and abuse against him. On hearing those objectionable words the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

لَعَّانِيْنَ وَصِدِّيْقِيْنَ كَلَّا وَرَبِّ الْكَعْبَةِ

It is not possible, by the Lord of the Ka'bah that a man should be a curser and Truthful at the same time.

See how sternly the Holy Prophet ﷺ warned Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ in this matter and he رضی اللہ عنہ made good this wrong on his part by setting the slave free.

Hazrat Jabir رضی اللہ عنہ **acted on this advice throughout his life**

It is, therefore, not right to utter abusive words for anyone. Nowadays people have become used to uttering abusive words like خبیث (wicked), احمق (foolish), کمبخت (wretched), etc. Not only is it unlawful to use such abusive words for a Muslim, but it is also not good to use them even for animals. Hazrat Jabir رضی اللہ عنہ has said:

After hearing this advice I never used abusive words either for a slave or a freeman, or for any animal like a camel or a goat.

These were the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم who took it to their hearts when they heard any word of advice and included it in their life routine as long as they lived.

Hate the sin and not the sinner

This advice has another important aspect in its meaning. You are advised not to hate and condemn any man however great a sinner, errant disobedient or an evildoer he

may be. So, you must not hate and condemn him. You do not know what is going to happen to him in the future. It is quite possible that Allah may guide him and put him on the path of righteousness before his death, by means of repentance and by his giving up his sins. It is quite possible that after death he may appear before Exalted Allah as a fully pardoned and purified servant. It is, therefore, imperative that you should not look down upon anyone, not even an unbeliever. Who knows if Allah may convert an unbeliever into a believer and he may become a better Muslim than we. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith:

العبرة بالخواتيم

It is the ends and the final fate that matter.

That is, if a sinner and disobedient man dies as a believer and as a righteous man, he is a favourite of Allah and has superseded us in goodness and piety.

A wonderful account of a herdsman

At the time of the battle of Khaibar a herdsman, who used to graze the goats of the Jews called upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ. When he saw that the Muslims army was camping outside Khaibar, he desired to meet them and hear what they had to say and what they were doing there. Therefore, he went to the camp of the Muslim army and inquired about their commander. The Muslims told him that their commander was Muhamamd ﷺ who was in his tent. At first the herdsman did not believe in what he was told. He wondered how could such a great commander stay in such an ordinary tent. He thought that such a grand commander and ruler must be living in a highly exalted state with great pomp and show. What did he see there? It was a lowly tent erected with mats made of date-palm leaves. He

entered that tent, met the Holy Prophet ﷺ and inquired about his mission and message. The Holy Prophet ﷺ put before him the message of Islam which was beleif in One Allah. He asked: What shall be my fate and status, if I embrace Islam? The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied to his inquiry saying:

> After embracing Islam you will beocme our brother and we shall embrace you.

On hearing this the herdsman said: You are joking. What a poor fellow like me has to do with a great commander like you! I am a black man clad in tattered rags, giving out bad smell. How can you embrace me in such a repulsive state of mine? The Holy Prophet ﷺ told him:

> I must embrace you. Exalted Allah shall change the black of your body into brilliant white. He shall also change the bad smell emanating from your body into fragrance.

Hearing these words he atone, embraced Islam and recited the کلمہ شہادت (the Article of Faith):

اشہدان لا الہ الا اللہ واشہدان محمد ا رسول اللہ

Thereafter, he asked the Holy Prophet ﷺ what he was to do next? The Holy Prophet ﷺ told him:

> You have embraced Islam at a time when neither it is prayer time that I should ask you to pray, nor is it the month of Ramazan that I should ask you to observe Fasting, nor is Zakat due for payment by you. At the moment there is only one worship and that is the Holy war (جہاد) in the path of Allah which is being conducted with the sword.

To this short discourse the herdsman replied: I will

participate in this Jihad, but there are only two alternatives for a fighter - either victory or martyrdom. I request you to offer me some guarantee, if I am martyred in this Jihad. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

> I guarantee that if you attain martyrdom in this Jihad Exalted Alalh shall admit you in Paradise. Further, He shall change the bad smell of your body into fragrance. He will likewise change the black of your body into brilliant white.

Come back after returning the goats

As the goats in the charge of the herdsman belonged to a Jew, the Holy Prophet ﷺ told him:

> The goats under your charge belong to the Jews and are a trust with you. Go and return them to the owners.

Just consider that the properties of those with whom a war is being fought and who are under a siege is مال غنیمت (war-spoils). However, in this case, as the herdsman had brought those goats under a pledge with the owners the Holy Prophet ﷺ asked him to return the goats before taking part in the Jihad. The herdsman, therefore, returned the goats, joined the Jihad and became a martyr.

He was admitted into the Paradise

At the end of the battle the Holy Prophet ﷺ began a survey of the Muslim army. He ﷺ saw that the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم had assembled at a place. He ﷺ went there and asked them what was the matter. Among those martyred in the battle was the corpse of a person whom none recognized. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ saw that corpse, he ﷺ said to the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم:

> You do not recognize him but I recognize him. He is a herdsman. He is that unique servant

who has not made a single prostration in the path of Allah. In spite of this I bear witness that Exalted Allah has admitted him direct into the Paradise of Firdaus. I am beholding with my eyes that the Angels are giving him a bath. The black of his body has turned into white. Similarly the bad smell emanating from his body has turned into fragrance.

It is the end and the final fate that matters

If this herdsman had met death a little before, he would have gone to Hell direct, but he died in a state when he had embraced Islam, and become a slave of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Exalted Allah brought such a great revolution in his life. That is why it has been said: العبرة بالخواتيم (It is the ends and the final fate that matter). That is why great and renowned men of God always remain in fear for their end and pray to Allah for their good end and death on *Eeman* (Faith). There is nothing for a man to be proud and self-conceited, because none knows what is going to happen to him tomorrow. That is why we have been advised not to look down upon anyone.

An event full of morals concerning a pious man

The following is the story of a pious man which my respected father, Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه related to us.

A pious man was going somewhere along the road. Some men cut jokes with him as is the habit of men to ridicule and laugh at Maulawis and Sufis. A man asked that pious man by way of joke: Tell me if you are better or my dog? At this insulting question that pious man become neither angry nor irritated. He remained calm and cool and

replied to that man, saying: I cannot say just now whether I am better or your dog is better, because I do not know in what state I shall die. I shall be better than your dog, if I die on *Eeman* and with righteous deeds. On the other hand, if I meet-God forbid a bad ending, your dog will surely be better than I, because the dog will not go to Hell nor will it be exposed to any punishment. This is how godly men always keep their eyes on their final fate and end. We have, therefore, advised never to despise even the worst of person nor speak ill of them. You may despise the sins a man is committing, but not the person of the sinner, as long as it is not known what is going to be his final fate and this is known only to Almighty Allah.

The extreme modesty of Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه

Maulana Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has said: I consider every Muslim to be better than myself. I also consider every non-believer better than myself as a matter of probability. I consider every Muslim better, because he may- be a better believer than I and may be far ahead of me in righteousness. As regards a non-believer, presently he is devoid of belief, but who knows, Exalted Alalh may bestow on him the wealth of *Eeman* in future and he may supersede me in the matter of *Eeman* (Belief).

When Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has thus confessed about himself, where do we stand?

Three Godly men

Hazrat Dr. Hafeezullah Sahib is a spiritual successor to Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Hasan Sahib رحمة الله عليه and has lived long in the latter's company. Mufti Muhammad Hasan Sahib رحمة الله عليه was a spiritual successor to Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه and was a great lover of the latter. A few

days ago Dr. Hafeezullah Sahib visited Darul-Uloom, Karachi. He related an incident which he had heard from Hazrat Mufti Sahib رحمة الله عليه. He quoted Mufti Sahib رحمة الله عليه as saying:

When we attended an assembly of Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه, a strange sensation and feeling fell on us to this effect: Everyone attending the assembly is better than I and superior to me and has superseded me and I myself have remained far behind. I infromed Hazrat Maulaan Khair Muhammad Sahib رحمة الله عليه of this state of mine. Hazrat Maulana Khair Muhammad Sahib رحمة الله عليه too was one of the spiritual successors of Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه. Hazrat Maulana Khair Muhamamd Sahib رحمة الله عليه replied that he too felt likewise. Therefore, we both called on Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه and informed him saying: ours is a strange state of feeling when we are present in your assembly, we feel that all are better than we and we are inferior to all. Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه told us that he was telling the truth that he too had the same feeling when he was sitting in the assembly that all were better than he and he was inferior to all.

Look at your own shortcomings

If a man has his own shortcomings before his eyes and his heart is impressed with the greatness, fear and awe of Exalted Allah, how can he look down upon and try to find fault with others ? How can a man mind another's sneezing when he himself is suffering from stomach ache. However, this Hadith teaches us the principle that none should be hated and regarded as mean and inferior. If any one is comitting sins and vices, you may hate and decry his bad deeds but you should not hate the sinner. Who knows that Allah may help him to repent for his sins and to do

good deeds? It could be that he supersede you so neither should you consider yourself superior, nor disparage others.

To backbite Hajjaj bin Yusuf

These are all matters relating to *Deen* which we have forgotten. We think that only worship, prayers, fasting and rehearsals on rosaries form part of *Deen* (faith). We have excluded from *Deen* sins like backbiting. We utter about person whatever we desire, although everything is being recorded in the Divine Court. Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

مَايَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ اِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيْبٌ عَتِيْدٌ (سورة ق :١٨)

He does not utter a word but there is an observer ready. (50:18)

In an assembly of Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضى الله عنه a man began to speak ill of Hajjaj bin Yusuf. Who is there who does not know about Hajjaj bin Yusuf that he was a notorious tyrant who killed hundreds of innocent Muslims? Addressing that man Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضى الله عنه said:

Look here, you are backbiting Hajjaj bin Yusuf. Do not think that it has become lawful to backbite him, because he is responsible for murdering hundreds of men. When Exalted Allah shall take revenge on Hajjaj bin Yusuf for murdering hundreds of men, He shall charge you with the sin of backbiting Hajjaj bin Yusuf.

Therefore You should not backbite anyone without justification. The exception would be if you wanted to save someone from loss and injury. You may warn him, saying: Beware of such and such person. It is not at all right to indulge in backbiting and ill-speaking in assemblies by way of recreation.

The conduct of the Prophets عليهم السلام

It has been the conduct of the Prophets of Allah عليهم السلام not to retaliate abuse with abuse, although the *Shari'ah* has allowed tit for tat. The community of a Prophet is addressing its Prophet, as mentioned in the Qur'an, in this way:

إِنَّا لَنَرَاكَ فِي سَفَاهَةٍ وَإِنَّا لَنَظُنُّكَ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ (الاعراف:٦٦)

We surely see you in foolishness and we deem you from amongst the liars. (7:66)

A man like us would have retaliated this impertinence by saying: It is you and your father who are fools, but the Prophet of Allah replied to this in these words:

O my people, there is no foolishness in me, but I am a Messenger from the Lord of the worlds. (7:67)

An event concerning Hazrat Shah Ismail Shaheed رحمة الله عليه

Hazrat Shah Ismail Shaheed رحمة الله عليه belonged to a royal family whom Exalted Allah had granted a burning entusiasm for *Deen*. His heart was always overflowing with genuine eagerness to convey the message of *Deen* to the people. He had launched a *Jihad* (Holy War) against *Shirk* (Polytheism) and *Bid'ah* (innovations). Such reformers have their enemies also. One day when Shah Shaib رحمة الله عليه was delivering a sermon in the Jami Masjid of Delhi (India), a man stood up and cried to the entire audience thus :

O Maulana ! I have heard that you are a bastard.

If there had been some other man, how severely he would have dealt with this man or how mercilessly his followers would have punished him ? Being an heir of the Prophet ﷺ, see how calmly he bore the provocation and how politely he replied to that man:

You are ill-informed; witness to the marriage of my mother are still alive and available in Delhi.

This is an example of prophetic character and conduct that they do not retaliate with abuse even the filthiest type of abuse.

The second advice

Thereafter, the Holy Prophet ﷺ gave Hazrat Jabir رضى الله عنه the second advice:

Do not look down upon any good deed, but do it as and when you get an opportunity for it.

Satan's strategy

By means of this advice the Holy Prophet ﷺ frustrated a great strategy of Satan. When anyone feels inclined to do a good deed, Satan whispers in this way: you have spent your entire life in sins and unlawful pursuits. What will you attain by doing this small good deed? This will not secure for you Paradise. So ignore this small good deed too. Thus does Satan deprive men of such good deeds. This is a great deception of Satan.

To counteract this Satanic deception the Holy Prophet ﷺ has insisted upon his Ummah not to ignore an opportunity to do even the smallest good turns.

Small deeds may also procure salvation

This advice is full of countless points of wisdom. Firstly, who knows that the deed you are ignoring as trifle, may be very important in the sight of Exalted Allah and He may accord it His acceptance. Thus, perhaps this trifling deed may become a cause of your salvation. Examples are available in the Ahadith and the accounts of godly men in which Exalted Allah has been pleased to

grant salvation as a result of very small and insignificant deeds.

The event concerning a prostitute

This event is recorded in a Hadith in Sahih Bukhari:

A prostitute was passing along a path. She saw on the way a dog panting with thirst near a well. It desired to drink water but the water was at such a low level in the well that the dog could not reach it. The woman felt pity on the dog. She thought that the dog too was a creature of Allah and was restless with thirst. She looked for a bucket but it was not available there. She took off one of her leather stockigns from her leg and managed somehow to draw water from the well and was able to quench the dog's thirst. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that Exalted Allah was so highly pleased with this act of the woman that He granted her salvation only for this act.

Consider! If this prostitute had thought that being a prostitute and entitled to Hell, she could get no benefit from helping the dog to get water, what would have been the result? If she had thought in this way, she would have been deprived of this small good deed and, in turn, of the salvation which Exalted Allah was pleased to grant her only for this small deed.

Do not commit sins in anticipation of forgiveness

This event should not delude any one into thinking that he may commit as many sins as he likes, because they will be forgiven by doing some small good deed as providing water to a thirsty dog. Such trend of thinking is quite wrong. On one side is Allah's law and on the other is His mercy. Allah's laws lay down that the sinner will have to bear punishment for his sins. As regards Allah's mercy,

Allah has the absolute power to forgive anyone's sins on account of any one deed of the sinner. None, however, knows when and for which deed this Divine mercy will come down. It is, therefore, not right for any servant of Allah to go on committing sins in anticipation of Allah's mercy that his sins will be forgiven sooner or later by virtue of one or another good deed which he may do. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith:

العاجز من اتبع نفسه هواها وتمنى على الله (ترمذى، باب صفة القيامة، حديث نمبر ٢٤٦١)

A helpless person is he who is hankering after his desires, but is hoping that Exalted Allah shall grant him pardon.

What is the meaning of wishful expectaion from Allah? It means that when you ask anyone to give up his sins he says that Allah is very Merciful and will forgive the sins. This is to say that a man is going to the East in the hope that Allah will take him to his destination in the West. He is following the path of Hell and is hoping that Allah shall take him to Paradise. It is true that sometimes Allah does grant salvation to His servants for some very insignificant deeds by His mercy, but there is no law for such exceptional show of mercy. There is, however, no justification to ignore one's duty and commit sins in anticipation of Allah's exceptional dispensation of Mercy which may or may not fall on the person anticipating it. The truth is that Allah's Mercy does not descend on a person who does not desist from committing sins in anticipation of Divine Mercy.

An event concerning the salvation of a saint

I have heard this event from my Sheikh, Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه, It runs thus:

There was a pious saint who was also a Muhaddith an and had devoted his entire life to the service of Hadith. After his death someone saw him in a dream and asked him how Exalted Allah dealt with him. He replied, saying: it was a very strange dealing. I had devoted my entire life to the service of Hadith, learning and teaching *Deen* and delivering lectures and sermons. I hoped that these acts would earn for me reward and recompense. When I was produced before Exalted Allah I faced a strange situation. Allah told me that He appreciated very much my one action. It was that when I took out my pen from the inkpot a fly sat on its tip and began to sip the ink on it. I felt pity on the fly. As this too was a creature of Allah, I stopped using the pen, while the fly remained sipping the ink. Exalted Allah appreciated this action which, He admitted, I had taken for the sake of His exclusive pleasure. Only on account of this deed Exalted Allah forgave me and favoured me with Paradise of Firdaus.

Just see, we are under the impression that delivering sermons, writing *Fatawa* (Religious Rulings), offering *Tahajjud* prayers, compiling books, etc. are important acts of virtue. On the other hand, the deed of allowing a fly to sip ink is being accepted and rewarded in preference to the other more important and significant deeds of virtue. There is another notable point in this story of salvation. If this saintly Muhaddithan had not taken any notice of the fly, he would still use the pen in writing Ahadith, but his kindness to the fly brought him salvation with which he might not have been favoured if he had not paid attention to this trifling affair concerning a fly.

Thus, none knows which deed is acceptable to Exalted Allah. It is not the price, volume, size or count of a deed, but it is its weight based on sincerity that matters

in the sight of Allah. Deeds large in number but devoid of sincerity have no value. On the other hand, deeds small in number but based on sincerity are more weighty and valuable in the estimation of Exalted Allah. When an urge arises to do some good deed it means that this is due to sincerity. If that good deed is done in time, there is hope that Allah shall accept it. This is a point of wisdom.

Virtue attracts virtue

Another point of wisdom is that when an urge to do a good deed is fulfilled by doing that act, this leads to the rise of another urge for doing further good deeds. This is due to a natural trend that virtue attracts virtue and vice attracts vice. In order to commit a vice sometimes a man has to commit many vices. Thus, when you do one good deed Exalted Allah helps you to do many good deeds. Some time a small good deed transforms man's entire life and works a revolution in it.

The idea of doing good is Allah's guest

My Sheikh Hazrat Masihullah Khan Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say:

Whenever an idea rises to do some good deed in the terminalogy of the Sufis it is called "*Warid*" (spontaneous inspiration). This "*Warid*" is like a "guest" sent by Exalted Allah. If you pay due regard to this "guest" by doing the good deed that had occurred to your mind, then pleased with your regard and entertainment, this "guest" will again visit you and draw your attention to some other good deed. In this way he will go on increasing your good deeds. On the other hand if you do not receive him with due respect and regard but reject him, i.e. you do not do the good deed that had occurred to your mind, then this "guest" will gradually

stop his visits to you. In other words, the urge of doing good deeds will not arise. The Holy Qur'an says:

كَلَّا بَلْ ۜ رَانَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ (سورة مطففين: ١٤)

But that which they have earned (i.e. sins) has settled upon their hearts like rust. (83:14).

It is therefore not right to ignore these smaller good deeds, because ultimately they take men to bigger good deeds.

Satan's second strategy

The third point of wisdom is that when the idea of doing some good deed comes to a man's heart, Satan seduces man by suggesting that the deed is indeed very good, but there is no hurry; you may do it tomorrow or the day after tomorrow. This postponing results in the project being totally abandoned and the urge to do a good deed disappears. Who knows whether, the person concerned shall see tomorrow? Therefore, a good deed should be done the very moment the urge takes rise to do it. For example, while walking along a path you find some hurdle and feel that it should be removed, then remove it at once. Similarly you are drinking water and remember that it is a *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to sit down while drinking, then sit down to drink the water. Again, you are going to take food and rememeber that you should start eating after reciting بسم الله (with the name of Allah), then do it at once. Whenever the idea of doing some good deed comes do that at once.

For this purpose I have compiled a small pamphlet, titled "Easy Good Deeds" which contains these easy and little good deeds which carry great rewards. By doing these little deeds man can accumulate for himself a large treasure of reward and recompense. These little tit bits of

virtue can, Allah willing, work a revolution in man's life. I recommend that everyone should obtain a copy of it and introduce these deeds in his life one by one and try to act upon them. This programme will, Allah willing, take him safe to the final destination.

Do not underrate any sin

Likewise, there is another thing corresponding to it. Just as one should not overlook a good deed because it is small, in the same way, one should not commit a sin because it is very small and trifling. Never approach a sin, however small it may be. This too is Satan's deception. For example, you feel an urge to commit some sin, but you suppress this urge and refrain from the sin. Here Satan comes to you and suggests that, as you have already committed so many major sins, it will make no difference if you commit this one small sin. If it is at all necessary to refrain from sins, then refrain from the major sins and do not mind this small sin. Remember that a small sin becomes a major sin when it is committed deliberately, only because it is small.

Difference between a major sin and a minor sin

The classification of sins has two categories - Major and Minor. This does not mean that there is no harm in committing a minor sin and that you should refrain from major sins only. Both are sins with the only difference that the one is major and the other is minor. Some people are very anxious to find out this difference between sins with the intention that they should abstain from the major sins and may fall into the minor sins. Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has clarified the meaning of this difference as under :

"It may be illustrated by the example of a ball of

fire and a spark of fire. If it is only a small spark of fire, it does not mean that you should keep it in your wardrobe, because it is very small. Remember that the same small spark will burn and turn your wardrobe into ashes in the same way as does the ball of fire. Also remember that a big snake and a small snake are equal in biting their victims. In the same way major and minor sins both involve disobedience to Allah and there is hardly any difference between them."

The Ulama have said that a minor sin becomes a major sin when it is committed with the thought that it is only a minor sin. So do not commit a sin under the impression that it is a minor sin and will do no harm.

A sin attracts another sin

Just as a virtue attracts another virtue in the same way a vice attracts another vice. If you commit a sin today because it is a minor sin, that sin will attract another sin and this sin will attract a third sin and the vicious circle will go on expanding without a stop. A sin means disobedience to Allah. If Exalted Allah were to take a sinner to task for a single act of disobedience this one act is enough to drive the sinner into Hell. So do not underrate any sin.

The third advice

The third advice is as follows:

You should talk to your brother with an open, pleasing countenance and a smiling face. This attitude is also a part of virtue.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a Hadith:

"It is a *Sadaqah* (charity) to meet a (Muslim) brother with a smiling face. This too carries a

great reward and return".

Hazrat Jabir bin Abdullah رضی اللہ عنہ was one of the favourite Companion رضی اللہ عنہ of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He was called یوسف هذه الأمه (The Yusuf of this *Ummah*), because he was very handsome. He has narrated:

Whenever I cast a glance at the Holy Prophet ﷺ I do not remember an occasion on which he ﷺ did not smile. Whenever I called upon him ﷺ I found him ﷺ with a smiling face. He ﷺ had an open, shining face, indeed.

Some people are under the impression that when a man is attracted towards *Deen* (faith) he should become dry and rough with no trace of smile on his face. They consider this attitude as a necessary part of *Deen*. It is not known from where they have got this notion. This is contrary to the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. So when you meet anyone, meet him with a smiling face. Our Sheikh رحمة اللہ علیہ used to say:

Some people are miserly in the matter of money and some are miserly in the matter of smiling. They are never seen with a smiling countenance. This is a very easy and cheap virtue that whenever you meet a Muslim brother, meet him with a smiling face and try to please his heart. This will add a good deed to your Register of Deeds as an act of *Sadaqah* (Charity).

The fourth advice

The Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

Let your lower garment, be it trousers or loin-cloth, hang down to half-lengh of the shin, or at least up to above the ankles. It is a

part of pride to let this garment hang down to reach the ankels and cover them.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ did not say in this Hadith that if you feel pride, do not hang down your garment up to the ankles, but if you do not feel pride you may cover the ankles. He ﷺ prohibited categorically to let your lower garment hang down to cover the ankles. In reply to objection some people raise that they cover the ankles not because of pride but because it has become a common fashion to do so. The prohibition is due to the involvement of pride. Strange how people feel so confident of their being free from pride. If there is anyone on the surface of the earth free from the vestiges of pride, he can be none other than the Holy Prophet ﷺ, yet he never said that he was ignoring this *Sunnah*, because he ﷺ had no pride in him. The fact remains that he ﷺ never in life let his lower garment hang down so as to cover the ankles. If this prohibition had been due to the presence of pride, the Holy Prophet ﷺ must have been exempted from this prohibition. Therefore, banish from your hearts the excuse based on the presence or absence of pride. In this advice the Holy Prophet ﷺ has asked his Ummah in definite words to refrain from this sin, because it is a part of pride and Exalted Allah does not like pride or self-esteem. Self-esteem means considering oneself better than others. Allah does not like this attitude. He appreciates humbleness, submissiveness and modesty. He values and accepts those who possess these attributes. Similarly Exalted Allah rejects those who show pride self-appreciation and arrogance.

The fifth advice

If anyone abuses you or puts you to shame for some defect in you, do not retaliate by putting him to shame for some defect in him of which you are aware.

In other words, you should not retaliate abuse with fault finding. This is because the curse of abusing and fault finding by that person will fall on him for which he shall be punished. If you take revenge you will stand to gain nothing, but if you do not take revenge you will receive a great reward. For example, a man calls you a fool and in turn you also call him a fool. Now you have taken your revenge on him. This act of retaliation is not unlawful, but this brings you no gain neither in this world nor in the Hereafter. On the other hand, if you put up with the situation and the heart-pinching with patience and suppress your anger, then about this Exalted Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى الصّٰبِرُوْنَ اَجْرَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ (سورہ الزمر:۱۰)

Exalted Allah repays without count those who are patient. (39:10)

So earn a reward without count by controlling your tongue and your self. Today it is not possible for us to estimate the volume and quantity of that reward, but we shall come to know in the Hereafter in the presence of Allah the great reward for holding and controlling our tongues.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has given us this valuable advice that we should not retaliate abuse with abuse, although we have a right to do that. It is much better to forgo that right and forgive the sinner. The Qur'an says:

وَلَمَنْ صَبَرَ وَغَفَرَ اِنَّ ذٰلِكَ لَمِنْ عَزْمِ الْاُمُوْرِ (الشوری:۴۳)

It is a deed of great resolution for those who are patient and who forgive (others). (42:43)

At another place the Qur'an says:

اِدْفَعْ بِالَّتِیْ هِیَ اَحْسَنُ فَاِذَا الَّذِیْ بَیْنَكَ وَبَیْنَهٗ عَدَاوَةٌ كَاَنَّهٗ وَلِیٌّ حَمِیْمٌ ۝ وَمَا یُلَقّٰىهَاۤ اِلَّا الَّذِیْنَ صَبَرُوْا ۚ وَمَا یُلَقّٰىهَاۤ اِلَّا ذُوْ حَظٍّ عَظِیْمٍ (سورہ حم السجدہ: ۳۵)

Repel the evil deed with one which is better. Then he between whom and you there was enmity (will become) as though he was a bosom friends. But none is granted it except the fortunate ones. (41: 34-35)

Therefore, form the habit of forgiving, instead of taking revenge. There is a Hadith in which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said:

Exalted Allah says that if a man forgives others, I shall forgive him on the day when he shall be most needy of forgiveness. It is quite aparent that a man will be most needy of forgiveness in the Hereafter.

There are all pieces of advice given by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. If we adopt them for action in our lives all quarrels will come to an end, enmities will vanish and all disturbances will subside.

May Allah help us all to act upon them, *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

WHERE IS THE MUSLIM UMMAH STANDING TODAY?

الحمدلله رب العالمين والصلوة والسلام على سيدنا ومولانا محمد خاتم النبيين وعلى اله واصحابه اجمعين وعلى كل من تبعهم باحسان الى يوم الدين

امابعد !

All praise is for Allah, the Lord of the worlds. Mercy and salutation on our Sire and Master, Muhammad ﷺ the last of the Prophets, on his household and his Companions رضى الله عنهم all of them, and on all who follow them with goodness, till the Day of Judgment.

Respected President, Dr. Zafar Ishaq Ansari and the honourable audience. It is an occasion of pleasure and good luck for me that I am getting an opportunity as a student to participate in an assembly of thinkers held under the auspices of a great Research Institute of the

country. Exalted Allah has provided me here the good fortune of speaking on a subject which is very important for our present and future both. As regards the good opinions which my respected brother, Dr. Zafar Ansari has expressed about me he has done so by way of his affection and his favourable opinions about me. For all this I can only pray to Exalted Allah to grant me the requisite ability to come up to his expectations. *Aameen!*

Two conflicting sides of the Muslim *Ummah*

As you are aware, the subject of today's talk is: "Where is the Muslim Ummah standing today?" This is a multi-sided subject. Where is the Muslim *Ummah* standing in the political field, economic field and the moral field? Thus, this question may assume different forms according to these various fields of application. Every field demands a detailed study and discussion and it is difficult to cover every field in one sitting. I, therefore, want to tackle presently in brief only one field of this question. This relates to the question: Where is the Muslim *Ummah* standing in the field relating to the domain of thought and thinking? Today when we are reviewing the present state of affairs of the Muslim *Ummah,* we come across two conflicting trends of thoughts. One trend is that, the Muslim Ummah has fallen a victim to downfall and deterioration and two, this very environment are talking with great force and favour about the birth of an Islamic awakening.

The first trend relates to a depression and deterioration of the Ummah, wherease the second trend relates to its possible renaissance and revival in the near future. When the first trend breeds dejection and despondency in our hearts the second trend sometimes creates in us undue hopes and complacency.

The "Truth" lies between the two extremes

I beg leave to assert that the Truth lies between these two extremes. There is no denying that as we as an Ummah have fallen a victim to downfall and deterioration and it is also observed that at the same time, a current of resurgence is spurring the Ummah onwards to action and revival. Even so, we should neither succumb to hopelessness and dejection nor should we be impressed by the topic of an under-current of reform and progress, so highly as to become neglectful of the need of putting in our best endeavours in the path of development and progress. The Truth lies between these two extremes. The subject of this address: "Where is the Muslim Ummah standing today?" is, therefore very importnat. As a necessary corollary raises other question, viz. What is the destination of this Ummah? and How does it plan to reach that destination? While on this topic, I am taking the middlle course of the two extremes. I feel encouraged to say that a welcome feeling is perceptible in almost every area and sector of the Ummah that we have to return to our origin; and as Muslims it is our duty to spread the light of Islam throughout the world. This is what is called (الصحوة الاسلامية). It is reassuring that this feeling has spring up, despite the painful realization that the Ummah has been dwindling into a gradual process of downfall and dejection.

An example of deviation from Islam

It is also a token of Allah's Omnipotence that one may get an idea of the deviation of the Ummah from Islam by looking at the conduct and character of those who are holding today the rein of political affairs and below an incident to highlight this deviation from Islam which may

seem to be incredible to others, but it happened with myself.

Once I happened to visit an Islamic country along with a delegation. The delegation decided to present to the Presidetn of that country a gift of the Holy Qur'an. For this purpose it was necessary to obtain permission of the protocol for which an application was made. After the delay of one day we were informed that the proposed gift could not be presented to the President, as it could create a misunderstanding among the non-Muslim subjects of that country and therefore some other gift might be presented. This is an example of the apathy to Islam at official and political levels in countreis called Islamic.

An example of Islamic awakening

In contrast to this sad experience there was another. The same day we visited a mosque to offer our prayer. We found that the mosque was full of young boys. They were more in number than the older men. After the prayer these boys sat in a corner of the mosque and began discussing something in their daily routine after prayers to read some religious book to one another and dicuss religious issues. The people told us that this practice was followed in all the mosque in that country. This is inspite of the fact that there is no formal organisation or association to organise and conduct these sittings.

The overall state of the Islamic world

You can realize from the foretold observations how Islam is being treated at the political and official levels and how intimately the younger generations are seen attracted by and attached to Islam. By considering as a whole the affairs of the Islamic world we come to the conclusion that the attitude to Islam at the official or

political levels is either inimical or at least that of indifference. These governmental and political agencies have no interest in Islam. As against this, a current of resurgence has sprung up among the general public particularly the younger generation. This movement has gained ground in different parts of the world with the aim of applying Islam to our lives and according to a practical implementation.

Sacrifices in the name of *Islam*

It is quite true untold sacrifices have been offered in the path of *Islam*. The lovers of *Islam* have sacrificed their lives and properties for the success of the various movements organised in many countries to apply *Islam* and its *Shari'ah*. We are indeed proud of these freedom fighters in countries like Egypt, Algeria etc. In our own country Pakistan, people have from time to time made great sacrifices of their lives and properties for the application of the *Islamic Shari'ah* in the land. These sacrifices are a cause of pride for the Muslim Ummah. All this goes to show that even today the spark of *Eeman* is present in the hearts.

What are the reasons for the failure of these movements?

Notwithstanding all these sacrifices, efforts and toils, we find with regret that there is not a single movement which reached the final destination of success. Either it failed midway or it was supressed by force or it fell through later on without bearing the expected fruit. What is the basic reason for this situation? Why is it that despite all the sacrifices made, time and labour put into these Islamic Movements, they have remained foiled? Everyone present in this assembly should reflect on this sad state of affairs and

try to get at its root. I want to put before you in this assembly the result of my own reflections on this issue, as an ordinary student. I shall try to disclose the basic reasons for this failure and how we can remedy this situation.

This point I want to express on this topic is indeed very subtle and critical. I also feel that the slightest error or in the enunication of this very subtle point may give rise to misunderstandings. However, taking upon myself the danger of error, I want to draw attention to these two aspects which are, in my opinion, the basic reasons for this situation and on which we should reflect with a sober and calm mind.

The conspiracies of the non-Muslims

Everyone is aware that one reason for the failure of the Islamic Movements is that non-Muslim powers have been doing their best to suppress *Islam* and the Muslims. It is hardly necessary to dilate on it because every Muslim is aware of it. I, however, feel personally convinced that the conspiracies hatched by the non-Muslim to harm the Muslim Ummah can never be successful, unless there is some fault or shortcoming among the Muslim Ummah itself. Foreign conspiracies succeed and become harmful when some defect and weakness finds access to our own body politic. No age has ever been free from the network of conspiracies from the time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ right upto our times.

ستیزہ کار رہا ہے ازل سے تا امروز
چراغِ مصطفویؐ سے شرارِ بولہبی

This Persian couplet means:
The spark of Abu Lahab and the candle of Mustafa ﷺ, i.e. Belief and Unbelief have been

at war with each other ever since eternity till this day.

Thus conspiracy between Islam and *kufr* has neither ever ended nor shall it end. Iblis had been created and was in existence when Allah created Hazrat Adam علیہ السلام. It is, therefore, self-deception to expect that these conspiracies will come to an end.

Reasons for the Success of the Conspiracies

It is now high time for us to think what are those defects and weaknesses on account of which these conspiracies against us are succeeding. It is necessary to reflect on this question. This is because when we talk to anyone about our miseries we put the entire blame on these compspiracies against us and then we sit idle, doing nothing. It is necessary to ponder over the weaknesses and faults we have in ourselves. In this connection I want to point out to you two basic facts which in my opinion are the main causes of these failures.

Neglect of Personality building

The first of these causes that no attention is being paid to the need of personality-building. I mean to say that every educated man knows that the teachings of *Islam* pertain to all walks of life. Some of these teachings are of general impact affecting the society as a whole and some others are of individual impact. Some injunctions of *Islam* are intended for the entire society, while others are intended specifically for individuals one by one. This aspect of the Islamic teachings may be expressed by saying that there is a fine balance between the teachings of collective and individual impacts. An undisturbed maintenance of this balance will ensure a smooth implementation of the Islamic

teachings. If one of these is ignored or is accorded undue preference over the other, it will stand in the way of a right implementation of the Islamic *Shari'ah*. However, by our actions and trend of thinking we have disturbed the balance between collectivism and thereby we have also altered the order of preferences.

Denial of Secularism

There was a time when on account of a propaganda in favour of secularism the people had confined Islam to Mosques, Madrasahs, Prayers, Fasting and Worship. In other words, they had confined Islam to its individual impact. Secularism also advocates the philosophy that religion is concerned with a man's private life. The political, economic and social life of man should not be subject to any religion, but it should be subject to the needs and demands of the time. As a result, a large class of thinkers sprang up in our society to reject and oppose this wrong philosophy and trend of thinking. This class of thinkers contradicted this trend of thinking and rightly asserted that the Islamic *Shari'ah* is not confined only to worship, morality and the private life of man, but it encompasses every walk of life. Islam attaches equal importance to collectivism and individualism.

The result of denying this trend of thinking

In order to deny and refute this trend of thinking we laid so much stress on collective that we put aside and overlooked the injunctions relating to individuals. These injunctions, therefore, lost their importance at least from the paractical side. For example, according to one theory it was claimed that *Deen* (faith) has nothing to do with politics, viz.:

دع مالقيصر لقيصر وما لله لله

Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to Allah what belongs to Allah.

In other words, it is not at all necessary to associate *Deen* (faith) with politics. In this way *Deen* was banished from politics.

We converted Islam into a political issue

The refutation of this viewpoint gave rise to another view which laid so much stress on the political aspect of *Deen* that it seemed as though the only aim of *Deen* was to set up a political system. It is not incorrect to say that in Islam there are specific injunctions concerning politics, but it is not correct to say that *Deen* is in reality the name of politics or the foremost objective of *Deen* is to enforce a political system. This will alter the order of the preferences. The adoption of this trend of thinking will only mean that instead of making politics subservient to Islam we have made Islam subservient to politics. By so doing we have deprived ourselves of the charm and beauty of the individual and private style of life.

The life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in Makkah

We have a beautiful model in each and every branch of the life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The twentythree years of his sacred Prophethood life have been divided in two parts - his life in Makkah covering thirteen years and his life in Madinah covering ten years. If we look closely into the Prophet's life in Makkah we shall find that it was totally free from politics, government, fighting Holy wars(Jihad) and retaliatory actions, whatsoever. The instructions were that if anyone raised his hand to beat a

Muslim, the latter should not raise his hand at his adversary.

وَاصْبِرْ وَمَا صَبْرُكَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

Endure patiently, your endurance is only by (the help of Allah).(16:127)

It is true that at that time the Muslims were very weak, yet they were not so weak as not to show some resistance against their enemy, or a least to stop the enemy from his intention of causing harm. But they were under orders not to retaliate but to endure patiently the excesses of the enemy.

Personality building was done in Makkah

Why this order of endurance and passivity in Makkah? It was because the objective was to train and prepare such personalities as could bear in the future the burden of the Islamic society. It was the intention to cleanse and purify their conduct and character, personality, acts and morals by subjecting them to ordeals of severe work and practical training and discipline. The only work during these thirteen years was to reform their character, belief and actions and to mould them in the pattern of most polished and civilized mode of living. It was to bestow upon them the wealth of best relationship with Allah and to inculcate in them the sense of accountability and responsibility in the presence of Exalted Allah.

What kind of personalities emerged after the process of personality building?

After doing this work for thirteen years in Makkah, a new phase of life commenced in Madinah where an *Islamic State* came into existence and the *Islamic* laws and

punishmemts (*Hudood*) were also enforced. All the provisions necessary for an *Islamic State* were made. As these persons had gone through a severe training course, none ever thought that their objective was only to attain power and authority. This was in spite of the fact that all necessary provisions and facilities had been made available to them at this stage. Despite this power and authority they had maintained their relationship with Exalted Allah and they were occupied with the work and Holy wars. Their conduct and character may be judged from an anecdote recorded in history that during the war at Yarmuk, a non-Muslim soldier thus spoke to his officer, commenting on the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم engaged in that war:

They are unique persons رھبان باللیل ورکبان بالنھار i.e. during the nights they are devoted monks (devoted worshippers) and during the days they are best archers, swordsmen and fighters.

In short the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم adhered in their lives to two attributes-honest work and exertion and close contact and relationship with Allah. These two attributes are inevitable for the life of a Muslim. If you separate one from the other you cannot display a true picture of Islam.

We have leaned in one direction

As we are all aware, by now the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم had launched very dignified compaigns, had commenced Holy wars and were devoting their lives to establish the supremacy of Islam over the entire world. Inspite all these honorific duties and engagements it never occured to them that it was no longer necessary for them to offer the *Tahajjud* prayers, to weep before Allah

in humility and submissiveness and to establish cordial relationship with Him and to turn to Him in repentance. No Companion رضی اللہ عنہ ever thought on these lines. They followed the path of struggle and exertion, while preserving their basic attributes of devotion and sincere faith in Islam and Allah.

As regards ourselves, when we started work to attain political power, we rejected secularism and declared politics to be a part of Islam. We laid so much stress on this that we overlooked the other sides of the issue. We totally ignored the theory or at least in practice, the need of turning to Exalted Allah, establishing relationship with Him and bowing down to Him in submissiveness and humbleness. Instead, we committed the blunder of harbouring the notion that as we were engaged upon a very sublime work it was no longer necessary for us to occupy ourselves with devotional duties on the personal and idividual levels.

We neglected to reform individuals

As already mentioned, we laid too much emphasis on collectivism. As a result, we began to be neglectful, in theory or in practice the injunctions which Exalted Allah has issued for the sake of individual members of the society. That is why in these times movements to awaken the Ummah to enforce the Islamic Sharee'ah are commenced with great sincerity and enthusiasm but they fall through, because the other side of the issue is overlooked. The Holy Qur'an has stated in clear words

إِنْ تَنْصُرُوا اللّٰهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ ۝

If you help Allah, He will help you and will make your foot-holds firm (47:7)

In this verse Exalted Allah has conditioned His help, victory and steadfastness on the word. ان تنصرو اللہ(if you help Allah).

Allah's help descends when man establishes a firm relationship with Allah. If that relationship becomes weak man loses his title to Allah's help.

What emerges from the core of the heart gets into the depth of the heart.

The Islamic teachings prescribed for individuals are intended to prepare every individual to put in sincere and pious efforts to ameliorate his social life. These teachings include worship, good character, and purity and soundness of the heart. If a man gets up to reform the society without complying with these teachings and if he himself has not received adequate training in them his efforts will not bear the desired fruit and it will become frustrated. If a man's character, conduct and morals are not good and up to the mark and he gets up to work for reforming the society, his words of advice will have no weight and effect. On the other hand, if there is a man who has first improved and reformed his own private life, personal conduct and character and then launches his campaign to reform others, his words will penetrate through the ears into the depth of the hearts. If we start this work of reform without having first reformed our own lives, we cannot put up a brave resistance against oppositions and mischiefs. Instead, we shall surrender ourselves and will not display high moral or lofty charcter. As a result we fall an easy prey to the temptation of status and later on leave behind the real objective and become interested only in taking credits somehow. All our activities revolve round this desire only. This, in turn, leads us to take wrong decisions and we fail to reach the desired destination.

First of all try to think of your own reform.

On this issue there is a verse of the Holy Qur'an as well as a Hadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ about which we generally remain in dark. The verse is as follows:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا عَلَيْكُمْ اَنْفُسَكُمْ ۚ لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَّنْ ضَلَّ اِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ ۭ
اِلَى اللّٰهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيْعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ (سورة مائده : ١٠٥)

O you who belive! you should take care of your own souls. If you become rightly guided he who goes astray cannot harm you. To Allah shall you all return; and then He will inform you of what you used to do (in the world). (5:105)

It occurs in the narratives that when this verse was revealed, a Companion رضی اللہ عنہ put a question to the Holy Prophet ﷺ Saying: O Messenger of Allah, this verse is telling us that that we should take care to reform our own selves. If others are going astray their straying will do us no harm. Should we then give up enforcing the right امربالمعروف and forbidding the wrong نہی عن المنکر ? Thus should we stop preaching *Deen*? The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied: No, this is not so, continue preaching *Deen*. Thereafter he ﷺ mentioned this Hadith:

اذا رأيت شحا مطاعاً وهوى متبعا ودنيا موثرة واعجاب كل ذى رأى
برأيه فعليك بخاصة نفسك ودع عنك امر العامة

When you see four vices prevailing in the society; love of wealth being pursued, every man hankering after money, lusts and desires being followed, the world and its charms being preferred, the people neglecting their Hereafter, every man having some opinion, being proud of his opinion and every man thinking that he is all-wise and rejecting others advice then be careful. In such a situation take care to reform yourselves and do not follow the general public.

How should we behave in a spoilt society?

Some Ulama have interpreted this Hadith by saying that a time will come when the advice of one man to another man will have no effect. So at such a time the command of enforcing the right and forbidding the wrong and the duty of Preaching *Deen* will lose their force and become ineffective. At such a time a man should sit in his house, rehearse Allah's names and try to reform himself and he should do nothing else. Some other Ulama have interpreated this Hadith differently. According to them this Hadith is referring to a time when corruption will surround the society on all sides and everyone will become so deeply concerned with his own affairs that he will not lend ears to what others say. At such a time man should take care of himself and ignore the affairs of the public. It does not, however, mean that the injunction implied امر بالمعروف (enforching the right) and نہی عن المنکر (forbidding the wrong) should be abandoned altogether. At such a time more attention should be paid to the reform and correction of individuals rather than the society as a whole. This is because, society is nothing more than a group of these individuals. If the individuals do not react favourably to reform, the society can never be reformed. On the other hand, if the individuals are refomed Society automatically reforms. Therefore, the way of dispelling this corruption is the way of reforming the individuals by means of individual and collective struggles and efforts. This will lead to the building of personalities and this process of personality building will increase automatically the number of righteous persons bearing good moral

conduct and character. This, in turn, will result in doing away with the corruption and vices of the society. According to other commentators, this Hadith is not concealing the injunction of propagating and preaching *Deen* but is suggesting an automatic process for the same end.

An important cause of our failure

I was telling you that in my opinion a major cause of our failure is that in trying to bring a reform among the society as a whole we have ignored the reform of the individual members of this society. Ignoring the reform of the individuals implies that we have totally ignored the requirement including worship, relationship with Allah, purification of character and action upon all the Islamic teachings. So, unless we come back to these teachings, our movements and our efforts will not be crowns with success. Imam Malik رحمة الله عليه has observed:

لَن يَصْلح آخِرُ هٰذِهِ الْاُمّـة اِلاّ بِمَا صَلُحَ بِهِ اَوَّلُـهَـا

The reform of the later generations of this Ummah will take place in the same way as reformed its earlier generations.

In other words, no new fromula can be invented for reform of this Ummah. Reform of the Ummah during the time of the Noble Companions رضی الله عنهم came through the reform of the individuals and the same course will have to be taken even now.

The Afghan *Jihad* is a shining chapter of our History

Today we are quite alive to the need of bringing reforms in politics, economics and in the society, but

organisations to reform the individuals are conspicuous by their absence. That is why our movements launched for this purpose do not succed, and fail at one stage or another. The failures are sometimes due to our own differences and quarrels. A sad example of this lies in the Afghan Jihad which is a very shining chapter of our history. A study of this clearly brings out:

ایسی چنگاری بھی یارب میری خاکستر میں تھی

O Allah! How encouraging it is that my ashes conceal in them a spark like this!

We however, feel ashamed to mention to anyone the deplorable situation obtaining in Afghanistan today after the achievement of this success.

منزل سے دور رھرو منزل تھا مطمئن
منزل قریب آئی تو گھبرا کے رہ گیا

The traveller was quite satisfied and confident while he was yet away from the destination, but he became bewildered when he approached that destination.

The heart of every Muslim is weeping at the civil war raging among our Afghan brothers. Why is it so? It is because we did not fulfil the demands of this struggle. If we had fulfilled these demands it would not have been possible to face the ridicule of the nations of the world at this stage.

All movements of reform stop short at this stage for the only reason that they include no programme of character-building of the individuals nor any scheme thereafter. Therefore, the movements fall through after some time.

The Second important cause of our failure

In my opinion, the second cause of our failure is that either no work is being done to implement Islam in the country or it is quite inadequate. I mean to say that on one hand we bestowed so much importance on collectivism that we practically declared it to be the whole of Islam. On the other hand, we did not give sufficient thought to the question as to what should be the procedure of implementing Islam during the present age. For this purpose neither we gave sufficient thought to the problem, nor did we chalk out some regular programme of work, or, if we did chalk out a programme it was not commensurate with the needs. I do not say-Allah forbid - that it is not possible to implement Islam in this age. The teachings of Islam were not conceived by a human mind. These are the teachings of that All-Powerful and All-Knowing Allah Whose Knowledge and Power transcend and encompass everything in the Universe. As such, a person can go out of the fold of Islam during this age. It will however, be necessary for this purpose to devise and chalk out a working programme. It is regretable that no serious attention is being paid to the question of chalking out a programme for the application of Islam in our land.

In every age there has been a different method for implementing Islam

We have been working for Islam and putting in efforts in its cause; we have also been launching practical movements for Islam. Before conceiving these movements and during their operation every one should be clear about the meaning of implementing Islam, which is the implementation of the laws of the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. In this context it is generally said that we have with us the

Fatawa Alamgir (A famous book of Islamic Religious Rulings). This will help us in taking decisions on various issues. We go ahead with this innocent notion in our minds. It should, however, be borne in mind that it is one thing for some principles to be eternal and quite another thing to implement those principles in different conditions and in different ages. There is no denying the facet that the teachings and injunctions of Islam are eternal and applicable for all times to come, but the needs and requirements for implementing them differ from age to age and time to time. For example mosque are built also today. Previously they were built with date-palm leaves and woooden beams; now they are built with cement and iron bars. We see that the needs and principles of building mosques have remained the same, but the methods and materials of their construction have changed considerably. Again the Qur'an has said:

واعدو الهم ما استطعتم من قوة

Make ready for them all you can of (armed) forces and of horses tethered. (8:60)

The forces of fighting in the olden days consisted of arrows, swords, horses, etc. and now they consist of artillery, fighter planes and modern war weapons, tanks, bombs, and missiles, etc.

What Should be the method of implementing Islam?

Likewise, it will be necessary to decide upon a procedure and course of action for applying the Islamic *Shari'ah* to our present style of living. What should be that course of action? How should we enforce those eternal principles of Islam? So far, we have not been able to chalk

out a well-considered procedure which we may claim to be a firm and final procedure to answer our purpose in this age. Efforts in this direction are indeed being made in the entire Islamic world, including our country, but we cannot claim that these efforts are final. In the absence of such a firm and final procedure of action, serious problems and difficulties will crop up in implementing the Islamic injunctions and principles, even if power and authority are attained as a result of one of these movements.

The point of searching for new interpretations is quite wrong

Some circles are seen advocating the need of searching for new interpretations of Islam for implementing it practically. They argue that we want to implement Islam in the present age which has drastically changed from the past ages. Some circles are making demonstrations in favour of this " New Interpretation " with a sinister mover to obtaining sanctions for what is being practised now, e.g. Islamisation of usury, gambling in the garb of lotteries and betting, drinking wine and mixed gatherings of men and unveiled women, etc. These circles have the audicity to demand that what is unlawful may be declared as lawful on the authourity of these " New Interpreations".

Such a notion is totally wrong and condemnable. All this boils to the conclusion that whatever is being practisd today is all right. In their view the implementation of Islam only means that authourity and power should pass into the hands of the Muslims without effecting any change in what we have received from the western civilisation. If this notion is accepted, the efforts being made to implement Islam will become meaningless and

disastrous.

To seek ways and means to implement Islam in the present age does not mean to subject Islam to an operation and to alter its feature so as to mould it on the western pattern and trend of thinking. In fact, the implementation of Islam means that all the injunctions and principles of Islam will remain intact and unaltered in their places, as indeed they should so remain. All that we have to decide is what should be the practical procedure for the implementation of the Islamic injunctions and principles in this age. All books of Islamic jurisprudence are full of answers to trading and business problems, yet these books may not furnish clear-cut answers to the various trading and business problems arising from day to day. We shall have to search for answers to these problems in the light of the Qur'an the *Sunnah* and the accepted principles contained in the books of Islamic jurisprudence. So far we have made little headway in this direction. Unless we complete this work, we cannot achieve full success in our work. In the same way, Islamic injunctions and principles about politics are available in these books. We have only to find out what shall be their practical shape when the Islamic *Shari'ah* is implemented in our age. In this field also our work is not complete, nor is it up to the standard. Sometimes we fail in our efforts on account of these defects and shortcomings.

Summary

In my opinion, the foretold two causes stand in the way of implementing the *Islamic Shari'ah* and both are concerned with the trend of thinking:

The first cause: Negligence in the reform and personality-building of the individual Muslim, and undertaking social and collective activities without

reforming the individuals.

The second cause: Sincere and thoughtful research work is needed on the subject of implementing Islam and adequate work has not been done in this field also. These are the two causes.

If we succeed in understanding them and eradicating them, we can hope to succeed- Allah willing - in our work.

May Exalted Allah bring the day, by His mercy, when these movements of awakening may be crowned with success in the true sense. *Aameen*!

وآخر دعوانا ان لحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal
Karachi

Date : 27th September 1991

THE PLEASURE OF SIN - A DECEPTION

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه و نستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرورانفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا و سندنا و نبينا و مولانا محمدا عبده و رسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه و على اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

امابعد !

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله عنه ان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال حجبت النار بالشهوات و حجبت الجنة بالمكاره

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and seek His forgiveness and believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our souls and from the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom He guides and there is none to guide

him whom He lets go astray. We bear witness that there is no god but Allah the One Who has no partner. We also bear witness that our sire, and our authority and our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him, his household and bless and salute them all in great abundance.

It is narrated from Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: Hell is concealed under the screen of sensual desires and Paradise is concealed under the screen of adversities and calamities.

Paradise and Hell are concealed under curtains

Almighty Allah had made this world a house of trials and tribulations. These trials and tribulations demand that man should get over them successfully by using his intelligence and understanding. If Hell with all its tortures and torments and Paradise with all its bliss, blessings and pleasures and charming scenes were brought before a man to see them with his own eyes and he was asked to choose between the two and take the path leading to his chosen destination, this would not be a trial and test. Allah, however, created this trial by creating Paradise as well as Hell. Allah covered Hell under a curtain of sensual desires which are driving men to Hell. For example, a desire rises in the heart to commit some sins which lead man to Hell. On the other hand, Allah has concealed Paradise under the curtain of things/acts repulsive and unattractive, e.g., getting up early in the morning, offering the Fajr Prayer, rehearsing Allah's names and giving up sins. In general man dislikes such acts of righteousness

even though Paradise lies concealed behind them.

The buyer of embers of Hell-Fire

The path of hankering after the satisfaction of sensual desires thoughtlessly and irrationaly, particularly, without distinguishing between lawful and unlawful, right and wrong is sure to lead to Hell. For example, a man is very fond of sports and shows which are in our times readily available in every house through the Radio and the Television. These are all sensual desires for the satisfaction of which man spends money and purchases articles of sports and enjoyment by working hard and taking pains. This is, so to say that he is purchasing embers of Hell-Fire in his house to decorate his drawing-room and bedroom for himself and for his children. He is thus preparing for Hell instead of Paradise. He is doing all this, only because there is the curtain of sensual desires between his eyes and the reality. If this curtain is lifted and man's eyes become sharp enough to penetrate into the reality of things, he shall know that all that he is doing presently is nothing but acts to take him to Hell.

The path leading to Paradise

On the other hand, Paradise is concealed under the curtain of repulsive and undesirable acts. Man's soul is averse to worship and devotion and obedience to Allah, but these are the paths that lead to Paradise. There is a man who pulls up courage once to protect himslef from the dirty path of sensual desires and takes the path which is apparently arduous but which leads him to Paradise. This man will to go Paradise direct.

You should not aspire for the fulfilment of every wish

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has warned you, through the Hadith cited above, against being deceived by sensual desires, as they are unlimited. There is none in this world who can claim that whatever wishes arise in his heart are fulfilled. None, whether he is a great capitalist, a powerful King or a man of authority can say that whatever is happening in this world is happening in accordance with his wishes. He too receives shocks and suffers from hardships and mishaps. This world is not a place of lasting comfort and peace. One must suffer from hardships in the world. Now it is up to you whether you cause hardships to your soul by force on your own sweet will or do so only to please Allah and resolve that you shall refrain from this sin becauseAllah has forbidden you to commit it and you must, therefore, avoid it at all costs. The first path of pleasing your own soul leads to Hell and the second path of pleasing Allah leads to Paradise. You should, therefore, give up the habit of insisting upon attaining every wish and feeling dejected when you meet failure in the attainment of your cherished wish. You must give up this habit, because it leads to Hell.

Man's soul is addicted to tastes and pleasures

Our 'self' or the power which urges man to do something has become used to worldly pleasures and enjoyments. It rushes to such acts which offer apparent pleasure and enjoyment. This has become its nature. It goads man to engagements and occupation which afford pleasures and enjoyments. This self creates in man's heart desires. In this situation if man leaves his self unbridled to hanker after the satisfaction his desires and he thus

succumbs to every temptation of the self, then he ceases to be a man and turns into an animal.

There is no peace in hankering after sensual desires

It is the natural tendency of sensual desires that if you hanker after them follow them doggedly and meet their demands then there will be no end to this tendency. Man's 'self' will never say that all his desires stand satisfied and he has nothing more to wish. Such a stage can never materialise because it is impossible for a man's desires to be fufilled in his lifetime. As such, a man can never have peace of mind in his lifetime. Why is it so? This is because no sooner is one desire fulfilled than the 'self' brings forward another desire. It is the specific tendency of a man's self that after enjoying one pleasure he atonce wishes towards another pleasure. As such, if a man wants to attain peace of mind and soul he can never attain peace during his entire lifetime. If anyone so desires, he can make an experiment to verify this truth.

Pleasure and enjoyment know no bounds

Those known as the developed nations of the world have advised not to interfere with the private life of anyone. Let him do whatever he likes and also let him enjoy whatever he wants to enjoy. Do not stand in the way of his pleasure-seeking and merry-making. You see how now-a-days people are unrestrained in the matter of seeking pleasures and enjoyments of life. They have to confront no restriction in their merry-making, neither from the law, nor from the religion, nor from the rules of morality. Everyone is following the dictates of his own choice. If you ask anyone of these merry-makers if they have found satisfaction of all their desires and nothing

more remains to be desired his reply will be in the negative he will admit that he desires more and more. In fact one desire gives rise to another desire and this vicious circle is never broken.

Commission of Adultery openly and above board

If a westerner desires to have inter-course with a strange woman, there is none to stop the couple from this act of fornication in any part of the land. We are seeing with our own eyes the truth of what the Holy Prophet ﷺ predicted in his sacred Ahadith fourteen hundred years ago, namely:

> A time will come when that man will be regarded as most righteous who, on seeing a couple committing adutlery on the mid-road will ask the couple to do so under the cover of a nearby tree. He will not say to them that they are committing a sin.

That time has nearly come now, as this sin of fornication is being committed openly and without the need of any cover, whatsoever.

Why are rapes being committed in America in such large numbers ?

Thus, if anyone takes the unlawful way to satisfy his sexual lust all doors are wide open before him. Notwithstanding this, cases of rapes do not occur so frequently anywhere in the world as they occur in America even though there is no restriction at all in committing the same sin with mutual consent of the couple. Why then commit rapes? This is, because the people have exhausted their pleasure by committing the sin with mutual consent and now they want to experience the pleasure of committing

rapes forcibly. Thus, we see that there is absolutely no end to human desires and they go on increasing and increasing till infinity.

The thirst for Adultery cannot be quenched

You might have heard the name of a disease "Joo-'ul-Baqar" جوع البقر. The English equivalent for this Arabic name is gluttony or voracity. The symptom of this disease is that however much and how often the patient may eat, his hunger is never satisfied. Likewise there is a disease استسقاء i.e. Dropsy in which the patient feels intensely thirsty, but, however, much and how often he may drink water, his thirst is never quenched. The same is the state of man's desires. The more a man succeeds in satisfying his one desire, the more desirous he becomes to satisfy another desire and the process of increase in his desires does not cease at any stage.

An example of the taste of sins

There is no denying the fact that the sins do contain in them taste and pleasure. It is indeed often very tasteful and enjoyable to commit sins. It is a trial in this world that it is very pleasing to cast glances on sinful objects and scenes which irresistably attract and tempt the heart. Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has compared the pleasure in sin to the tickling pleasure of scratching itches/scabbies. If you ask the man suffering from these skin diseases not to scratch the itches he will not stop from scratching on account of the sensation of pleasure in the act of scratching. As a result the malady gets aggravated, causing burning and irritation - pains in comparison with which the false and momentary pleasure of scratching is nothing. In the same way the pleasure and

enjoyment of sins are false, short-lived and only apparent and not real. If Almighty Allah favours a man with the taste and pleasure of His remembrance on a permanent basis, the taste, and pleasure in this righteous deed become lasting and real and so valuable that the false please received from sins is nothing; it is only imaginary and a passing phase.

Endure a little Hardship and Inconvenience

That is why Almighty Allah and His Prophet ﷺ have forbidden men to hanker after the satisfaction of their sensual desires, because this habit will push them down into the abyss of destruction. They have commanded that men should exercise some control over their desires and contain them within the bounds of the *Sharee'ah*. In the beginning man shall find some difficulty in suppressing his desires, say, the urge of viewing the Television and its charming but obsene scenes; this is the demand of the 'self'. In the beginning man shall find himself in a very difficult situation in having to suppress his refractory 'self' from these tempting occupations. These will however, be only a temporary phase and in due course of time these difficulties will disappear giving place to peace and tranquillity.

The 'Self' is like a lion over a weak

Almighty Allah has so created the 'Self' that, in spite of stress, if anyone stands up against it with courage and firmly resolves that happen what may, he shall never relapse into those sinful acts, the grip of his 'Self' will begin to relax and he will find himself freed from that grip. This 'Self' and *Satan* are strong like a lion for the weak who obey them meekly and respond to their demands and ultimatley

overpower them. On the other hand the man who stands with a firm resolution against these forces of seduction with the resolution that he shall never revert to those acts of sin, then the 'Self' as well as *Satan* will both give way and find themselves discomforted and this change in the person concerned will improve gradually for the better. The dispelasure and inconvenience in giving up the sinful acts will ultimately give way to peace, pleasure and satisfaction and the 'Self' itself will become agreeable to this change.

The 'Self' is like a suckling child

Allamah Busiri رحمة الله عليه the composer of the famous Qasidah Burdah (an eulogistic poetical composition) was a great saint who became very famous on account of his Qasidah (eulogy) which is mostly in praise of the Holy Prophet ﷺ . In one of its couplets he has driven at a very wise point:

النفس كالطفل ان تهمله شب على
حب الرضاع وان تفطمه ينفطم

This means:

Man's 'Self' is like a suckling child. If it is left suckling its mother's milk it will continue suckling even when it becomes quite young. On the other hand, if it is weaned from suckling it gives it up (and begins to eat solid food)

When the child is weaned from suckling, it will protest, weeping and crying, yet the child has to be weaned, otherwise it shall go on suckling till youth. This stern action is taken, because in it lies the welfare of the child and the mother. After weaning the child gets used to solid food in a short time. The same is the example of man's 'weaning' from the 'milk' of sensual desires and

lusts. When once this so-called 'weaning' has been attained, man gradually becomes used to the path of right guidance and righteousness (*Taqwa*).

The 'Self' has acquired a taste for sins

Allamah Busiri رحمة الله عليه is quite right in comparing man's 'Self' to a suckling child. It has become used to the pleasure and taste of sins. If you leave it free to behave as it likes, because stopping it from the commission of sins, e.g. from telling lies, backbiting in assemblies is a adifficult task, these sins will continue for ever. The 'Self' has also become used to the taste of usury/interest and many other sins and it will be a troubleous task to interfere with the behaviour of the 'Self'. If the 'Self' is left in this condition it will never get out of the mire of sins nor will it get peace the whole lifetime.

Peace and tranquillity lie in the Rememberance of Allah

Remember well that there is no peace in disobeying Allah. You see that a man has amassed all the resources of the world, yet he has no peace of mind.

I have just now given the example of the western society where there is plenty of wealth, a high standard of education and all the doors of acquiring pleasure and enjoyments of life are wide open and they may enjoy life as they like, yet they cannot sleep without taking sleeping pills. Why so ? This is because they have no peace in their hearts on account of sins which furnish unrest and anxiety. There is only one place where peace is available and that is the Remembrance of Allah:

أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ (سورة الرعد:٢٨)

Surely, in the remembrance of Allah do hearts

find rest and peace (13:28)

It is, therefore, a deception to think that rest and peace will be available in sins and misdeeds. Bear in mind that you can never attain peace and tranquillity, unless you give up the sins.

This peace is a great wealth, rather something more than wealth, which Allah grants those who have in their hearts His love, and whose hearts are saturated with His Remembrance. It is not unlikely that you may come across a person who is apparently poor and is undergoing starvation, but his heart has a treasure of peace. You shall have to renounce these sins and acts of disobedience for the sake of worldly rest and peace, let alone the peace of the Hereafter. The act of renouncing the sins will no doubt require an exertion and a bold stand against the 'Self'

Allah's promise cannot be false

And Allah has also held out this promise:

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا ۚ (سورة العنكبوت:٦٩)

As for those who strive in Us We surely guide them on to Our paths (29:69)

In other words, Allah shows them the path of right conduct who strive in His path after giving up sins and thwarting Satan's seduction.

لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا ۚ

Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has translated these words of the Holy Qur'an in this way: We shall hold their hands and guide them on to Our paths. It does not mean that Allah shall show them His path from a distance. No, He will take them to His path by holding their hands; only a true and sincere desire for gidance is needed on their part. This is Allah's promise which cannot be false.

"Mujahadah" or striving implies that a man takes a firm resolution that he will not commit this sin, whatever may happen ; as a result of this resolution, desires may go to the winds, the heart and the mind may have to undergo untold tortures. According to Allah's promise a man will become Allah's friend and Allah will Himself guide him, catching hold of his hand the day he decides to oppose his 'Self' and takes a strong stand against it.

Now I have resolved to make my heart worthy of Allah's attention

So the first step taken on the path of reform is what is called مجاهده meaning hard striving. Our Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hayee Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to recite this Urdu couplet:

آرزوئیں خون ہوں یا حسرتیں پامال ہوں
اب تو اس دل کو بنانا ہے تیرے قابل مجھے

This means:

I have taken a firm resolve to make my heart worthy of Allah's attention, notwithstanding that as a result of this resolve all my desires, wishes and aspirations may be crushed and frustrated.

As a result of this resolve to banish from my heart all desires and vain hopes, the Divine light shall descend upon my heart dispelling therefrom the darkness of sins. Allah's mercy shall fill my heart and take me on to the path of right guidance.

However, Remember that in the beginning it will be very difficult to work on this resolve on account of a conflict between the forces of right and wrong, good and bad, but later on these very difficulties will become a source of comfort and enjoyment. It is very difficult to

imagine the pleasure the man will receive on thinking that he is suppressing his desires and pretences for no other cause than the cause of pleasing Allah.

Why does the mother face all these troubles in bringing up her infant ?

Look at the condition of the mother. It is severe cold and she is comfortably lying on her bed with her child sleeping by her side. In this condition the child urinates. Her 'Self' whispers to her not to leave her warm bed in that intensely cold night. The mother is thinking in the other way. She thinks that if she leaves the child in this way with its body and clothes soiled and wet with urine, it may catch cold and develop fever. Ignoring the demand of her 'Self' she gets up in that severely cold night and goes out to wash the clothes of the child with cold water and changes the child's clothes. This is not an ordinary torture, yet the mother endures it for the welfare of her child. The mother has in her view the child's health and well-being. That is why sacrificing her comfort and crushing her desires she is taking these pains on a severely cold night.

Love puts an end to hardships and difficulties

I give below an example to explain this reality. There is a barren woman who has a burning desire to be blessed with an issue. She visits medical clinics, visits holy men and requests them to pray to Allah to grant her a baby. She also visits professional soothsayers for talismans to help her in her disappointment. Another woman advises her not to long for a baby, because she will have to undergo great difficulties in brining up the baby, e.g., getting up on sever cold nights to wash the baby's clothes with cold water, and lie awake on nights when the baby falls sick and so many

other hardships. The barren woman condemns this advice with contempt, saying that she would sacrifice the comfort of thousands of such cold nights for the sake of the baby. Thus the desire to have an issue turns all hardships and incoveniences into a pleasure. The worries and discomforts involved in bringing up the baby will become a source of great satisfaction and pleasure for the woman. The mother who has to get up on cold winter nights to wash her baby's clothes with cold water shall, as a rule of nature, face so many difficulties and sufferings, but in her great desire for a baby she has no hitch in crushing her desire for ease and comfort. Maulana Rumi رحمة الله عليه has expressed the same idea in a line of Persian poetry:

از محبت تلخها شیریں شود

Love turns bitterness into sweetness

In other words, difficult tasks which men avoid in ordinary circumstances become a source of comfort and enjoyment to a lover.

The miraculous impact of love explained with the help of love stories

The oriental classical writings are full of love stories. One of them is, the famous love-story of Shirin and Farhad. Relating this story Maulana Rumi رحمة الله عليه has said that the impossible task infatuated by his love for her beloved Shirin, Farhad undertook of digging out a canal of milk, as a condition of getting the hand of his beloved set off for the mountains with his axe in hand. Although this was a herculian, rather impossible task, yet the lover said that the task was easy for him as he was doing it for his beloved Shirin.

The love-story of Laila and Majnu is more popular

and wide-spread than the love-story of Shirin-Farhad. Maulana Rumi رحمة الله عليه has said :

عشقِ مولیٰ کے کم از لیلیٰ بود
گوئے گشتن بہر او اَولیٰ بود

The value and intensity of Allah's love canot be less than those of Majnu's love for his beloved Laila. The love for Allah is so precious that it is much better that the lover becomes a ball to be kicked and tossed about again and again.

Thus, the tortures a lover endures for the sake of love become a source of enjoyment and pleasure.

The employee loves his salary

An employee is sleeping comfortably on a cold night wrapped up in a warm quilt, but he gets up from this warm bedding and prepares to leave for the place of his employment. His 'Self' was tempting him to enjoy the comfort available in the house with his wife and children, but leaving all these comforts, he proceeds to his place of work, where he works hard and comes back home late in the evening. There are many workers who leave their houses very early in the morning, leaving their children sleeping and come back very late in the night when their children have gone to their beds to sleep. If anyone asks such a person to give up his job, because it is so strenuous, the reply will be that he got the job with great difficulty and would not think of giving it up. He feels a pleasure in facing all this incovenience and difficulties for the love of the salary he draws for the work at the end of every month. The prospects of this salary has rendered the bitterness of the job sweet and pleasant. If by chance the

job is lost he would feel deeply aggrieved and would remember with fondness the odds of the job. He is in search of recommendation and assistance so that he may be reinstated in his lost job. If anyone falls in love with any thing, all bitterness and hardships become pleasant and tasteful in the path of that love.

In the same way there is hardship in renouncing sins, but this is felt only in the beginning. when once a man pulls up courage and takes a firm stand against the sins and their charms Allah's help comes to the man's rescue and what seemed difficult becomes easy and the man gets a pleasure in Allah's worship.

Try to acquaint yourself with the pleasure of Allah's worship

Once our Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hayee رحمة الله عليه told us a very wonderful truth on this point. He said that by nature man's 'Self' hankers after pleasures and enjoyments. In fact it lives on pleasures and enjoyments, even though it has no preference for any particular category of pleasure and enjoyment. It only wants some pleasure whatever its form. We have made the 'Self' used to an undesirable form of pleasure. We should try once to make it used to the pleasure of obeying and worshipping Allah. If you have succeeded in accustoming the 'Self' to this type of enjoyoment it will stick to it on a permanent basis.

An observation of Hazrat Sufyan Sauri رحمة الله عليه

Hazrat Sufyan Sauri رحمة الله عليه is one of the greatest Muhaddith and saint. He has observed:

Allah has granted us, by His mercy, the taste of knowledge, worship and remembrance of Allah and the rehearsal of His sacred name. If the news of this taste

reaches the Kings, Emperors and the capitalists, they will attack us with their drawn swords to snatch from us this taste and pleasure. They, however, are quite in dark about the taste of this enjoyment. They are, therefore, under a misconception that taste and enjoyments lie only in sins and misdeeds. The real taste and pleasure consist in Allah's worship and remembrance the charm of which Allah has bestowed upon His saints and devotees.

I desire a state of ecstasy all day and night

There is a very famous line of poetry composed by the renowned Urdu poet of the Indian sub-continent, Ghalib. Our Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hayee رحمة الله عليه has given a unique interpretation of this line:

مے سے غرض نشاط ہے کس روسیاہ کو
اک گونہ بے خودی مجھے دن رات چاہئے

I have nothing to do with the intoxication of wine. What I desire is the pleasure of ecstasy all day and night.

I am enjoying this pleasure of ecstasy in wine, because you have made me used to wine. If you had made me used to Allah's remembrance and obedience to Him. I would have received this pleasure in these acts of devotion. It is, therefore, your fault that you have made me used to wine instead of these acts of devotion.

You shall find enjoyment in crushing the 'Self'

Likewise, this مجاهده (striving) in the path of Allah appears to be very difficult in the beginning, because we are being taught to oppose our 'Self' and the desires it raises in our hearts. It is the desire of the 'Self' that we should backbite others in our assemblies as much as possible. The sin of backbiting is so pleasant that it is very difficult to stop

the tongue from backbiting. You should, however, remember that the difficulty is only superficial. If man has taken a firm resolve to renounce it, Allah's help is sure to come. The superficial difficulty you have endured in crushing the charm and temptation of this sin will turn into a pleasure and taste which will be far superior to and more enjoyable than the enjoyment received from the sin of backbiting.

Try to acquire the sweetness of *Eeman* (Belief)

It occurs in a Hadith in which the Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said:

A man felt tempted to a sinful glance on someone, and such occasions do occur to most people. The man fell in a state of fix - whether to cast or not to cast that sinful glance. Still the man feared Allah and saved his glance from falling on the forbidden object. In crushing his desire in this way the man felt very much tortured and injured mentally, but in return for this self control and self-torture Allah shall grant the man a sweetness and taste far more delicious and sweeter than the sweetness enjoyed in casting the sinful glance. This is a promise of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and this is available in the Ahadith.*(Musnad Ahmad, vol-5, Page 264)*

The promise does not exclusively apply to the sin of casting sinful glances; it applies to the virtue of renouncing each and every sin. For example, the sin of backbiting is very pleasant to the backbiter, but when a man addicted to backbiting once gives up this sin for fear of Allah and takes pains in refraining from it, he shall receive an incomparable pleasure. When man takes this path he gradually becomes fond of the pleasure of giving up sins in preference to the false pleasure of committing those sins. He is graced with

Allah's love and a relationship is established between him and Allah.

The essence of *Tasaw-wuf* (Mysticism)

Hazrat Hakimul Ummat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has said something very instructive about *Tasaw-wuf*; which is worthy of being preserved in the memory. The essence of *Tasaw-wuf* consists in this simple point: when a person feels laziness in some act of worship, e.g. proceeding to the mosque for offering prayer in time, he should give up his laziness and proceed to the mosque without hesitation. Similarly, if one is hesitant in refraining from a sin, this hesitation should be resisted and the sin should be given up. This habit and practice will help establish to a relationship with Allah which shall continue developing and deepening. One who is fortunate enough to attain this quality becomes independent of all other qualities. Thus, when a man by opposing and resisting his sensual desires succeeds in crushing them altogether, then his 'Self' becomes worthy of receiving Allah's reflection. This is the essence of Islamic mysticism.

The Heart is meant for being broken

My respected father Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi' رحمة الله عليه used to set an example. He told us that in the olden days physicians provided medical treatment, using eastern medicines. For this purpose they prepared Oxcides of gold, silver and other metals. One important ingredient in their prescriptions was some Oxcide. These Oxcides were prepared by burning the metals ashes. A very small quantity of an Oxcide was believed to add great vitality to the human body. Just as this effective curing agent is obtained by burning gold to fine ashes, in the

same way if the human 'Self' is subjected to pressure and hardship and is crushed to pieces, it becomes worthy of Allah's attention and a receptacle for His attention, love and mercy. The more you break your heart in this way, the sooner will you become beloved in the eyes of Allah.

Late Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, the poet of the East has very beautifully explained this point in an Urdu poetical couplet:

تو بچا بچا کے نہ رکھ اِسے کہ یہ آئینہ ہے وہ آئینہ
جو شکستہ ہو تو عزیز تر ہے نگاہِ آئینہ ساز میں

your heart is like a mirror. You should not protect it from breaking, because the maker of the mirror (Allah) loves more and more a broken mirror (the heart).

In fact the maker of the heart has made it that it should be broken again and again. The central idea of the couplet is that the heart should be kept neat and clean of the filth of sensual desires and lusts and made a receptacle for containing Allah's love and mercy.

Our Dr. Sahib used to recite off and on this Urdu couplet:

یہ کہہ کے کاسہ ساز نے پیالہ پٹک دیا
اب اور کچھ بنائیں گے اسکو بگاڑ کے

The couplet means:

The maker of the cup struck the cup against the ground, saying that he would make another cup better than the broken one.

The idea expressed in this couplet is similar to the idea expressed in Dr. Iqbal's couplet. One should not think that by supressing and crushing one's desires and lusts he is deprived of a pleasure and enjoyment. This is

not so. When by sacrificing the false and temporary pleasures of committing sin a man has purified his heart, the heart becomes a centre of attraction for Allah's love, the charm of His remembrance and devotion. The pleasure received from the commission of sins will be nothing as compared with the pleasure, enjoyment and spiritual contentment received from the bliss and blessings of this change of heart and mental attitude.

May Almighty Allah grant us all this wealth, reform our understanding and help us take the right course. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمدللّٰہ رب العالمین

Venue : Masjid Aqsa
J. Area, Korangi
Karachi

Date : 26th May 1994

MIND YOU OWN BUSINESS

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه و نستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرورانفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهدان لا اله الاالله وحده لا شريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا و سندنا و نبينا و مولانا محمداً عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه و على اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليماً كثيراً كثيرا

اما بعد!

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطٰن الرجيم بسم اللّٰه الرحمن الرحيم

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا عَلَيْكُمْ اَنْفُسَكُمْ ۚ لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَّنْ ضَلَّ اِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ ؕ اِلَى اللّٰهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيْعاً فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ (سورة المائدة: ١٠٥)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم و صدق رسوله النبى الكريم ونحن على ذلك من الشاهدين والشاكرين والحمد لله رب العالمين

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek

His help and seek His forgiveness and believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our souls and from the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom He guides and there is none to guide him whom He lets go astray. We bear witness that there is no god but Allah the One Who has no partner. We also bear witness that our sire, and our authority and our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him, his household and bless and salute them all in great abundance.

O you who believe guard your souls. He who has gone astray cannot harm you, if you are rightly guided to Allah will you all return; and then He will inform you of what you used to do (5:105)

Action upon one verse

This is very short verse of the Holy Qur'an. It is a wonderful miracle of the Holy Qur'an that if a man acts even upon a short verse after understanding its meaning, then that action is enough to ameliorate his life. This short verse also possesses this distinction. This verse discloses a wonderful reality and it contains guidance for the entire Muslim *Ummah*. If we take this guidance to our hearts and resolve to act upon it, then I can say that this shall put an end to all our troubles and calamities.

Cause of the sad plight of the Muslims

Before giving the meaning and explanation of this verse, I draw your attention to an important question which occurs to many of us off and on. You are beholding

that the entire Muslim *Ummah* is facing many problems, wherever it is residing in the world. It is surrounded by worries and calamities.

In one place the Muslims of Bosnia are being subjected to oppression and wrongs, in another place the Muslims of Kashmir are undergoing torture and tyranny. The Muslims in India are suffering from untold excesses and torments perpetrated on them by the Hindus and other infidels. In Somalia the Muslims are involved in a civil war. In Afghanistan the Muslims are fighting against each other.The Muslims are facing all these problems. Those who have some *Eeman* (Faith) in their hearts say after giving some thought that the cause of these failures and disgraces lie in the fact that we have become totally unmindful of *Deen*, have given up acting on the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and have forsaken service to Allah, have stopped from obeying the injunctions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and are, above all, drowned deep in disobedience and misdeeds. These vices have brought on us these calamities. What has been said above is quite true because Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

وَمَآ اَصَابَكُمْ مِّنْ مُّصِيْبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ اَيْدِيْكُمْ وَيَعْفُوْا عَنْ كَثِيْرٍ (سورة الشورى: ٣٠)

Whatever misfortunes strike you are due to your own (bad) deeds and (Allah) excuses many (of the sins). (42 : 30)

Thus, you yourselves are responsible for your misfortunes and distresses. Being All-Compassionate, Allah forgives many of your sins. Some misdeeds and sins are such as they are requited in this world in the form of misfortunes and calamities. There is hardly a sitting or assembly in which we do not admit lapses and misdeeds on

our part. We confess in these our meetings that our calamities are due to our own negligence towards our *Deen*.

Why do the efforts remain fruitless?

Despite all the atempts made to arrest the deterioration and bring improvement in our conduct and behaviour, we see no improvement at all in our sad plight. It seems that the flood of our indifference to our *Deen* is increasing and intensifying instead of diminishing, as some poet has said:

یہ کیسی منزل ہے کیسی راہیں
کہ تھک گئے پاؤں چلتے چلتے
مگر وہی فاصلہ ہے قائم
جو فاصلہ تھا سفر سے پہلے

What kind of a destination is it that we get tired in our journey towards it, but the distance remains the same as it was at the start?

You begin the work of reform on others

The verse I have recited just now points out the tendency that when you embark upon a reform campaign, you begin the work of reform on others, thinking that all defects, shortcomings and excesses through bribery, interest, etc., are found in others who need to be purified from these sins. On the other hand you totally forget your own self that perhaps some of these vices and misdeeds are lurking in your own souls.

You have no thought of reforming your ownselves

This idea seldom occurs to a person that he too, is

addicted to some of those defects, weaknesses and vices which he is trying to look for in others and that it is his first priority to reform his own soul. It is incumbent upon a man first of all to care about his own reform and betterment before taking care of others. This has become a general trend that those who stand up for doing reform work are worried about the amelioration of others. They seldom think that they themselves may be suffering from some vices and shortcomings which need to be eradicated first.

The sermons delivered remain ineffective

When a Preacher or a Reformer is suffering from some shortcomings and has no worry to remedy them, then the words of advice which he directs to others have no effect on the addresses. His words of advice will have weight only when he sincerely admits that he himself has in him so many vices, defects and sins. If he thinks about himself in this way he will not be mindful of, and worried about, the weaknesses and shortcomings of others. In the absence such a negative attitude, the sermons delivered, however attractive, prove ineffective and fall flat.

Everyone is accountable for his own deeds

The Holy Qur'an has said in the verse quoted above: O believers be mindful of your reform. If you have reformed yourself and taken the path of right guidance, the sins and vices of those who have gone astray from the straight path will do you no harm. You have all to return ultimately to Allah and Allah shall tell you what you have been doing in the world. This verse tells in clear terms that every one will be accountable for his deeds. The deeds of one person shall not be charged against another person.

No, this will not happen. Everyone will have to account for his own deeds. It is, therefore, necessary that you should first of all take care of, and reform your own deeds and conduct. When you are in the presence of Allah what explanation shall you give for your deeds and conduct ? You should, therefore,. be mindful of your own self before turning your attention to what others are doing. Everyone must make a critical survey of his own actions, conduct and character, to find out what sins and wrongs he himself is committing. If he has any, he should give up these sins and misdeeds and try to reform himself. It should not happen that he should become engaged in reforming others and be neglectful of his own reform.

There is a Hadith in which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said:

من قال هلك الناس فهوا هلكهم (صحيح مسلم، كتاب البروالصلة، باب النهى عن قول هلك الناس)

He, who says that all the people have perished, is himself the most perished one of all. This is because he has an eye on the sins and vices of others who have in his opinion perished on account of their sins, etc., but the man who so thinks does not look into his own sins and vices. If a man begins to make a survey of his own faults and shortcomings, he will feel that he is the worst of all and he will, therefore, not pry into the affairs of others.

An incident that happened with Hazrat Zunnoon Misri رحمة الله عليه

Hazrat Zunnoon Misri رحمة الله عليه was a friend of Allah (saint) of a very high status the height of which we can hardly imagine. It is written that once famine occurred in his city and there were no rains. The people were very much oppressed and perturbed and were praying to Allah to release the rains. Some people approached Hazrat Zunnoon Misri رحمة الله عليه and informed him how the cessation of the rains had caused severe famine. neither men nor animals had water to quench their thirst or to water their fields. Therefore, they requested the saint to pray to Almighty Allah to send down the rains. He promised to pray to Allah, but told them that whatever misfortunes and calamities descend on men are due to their own misdeeds and sins. The cessation of the rains means that they were all engrossed in evils and misdeeds on account of which Allah had withheld the rains. It was, therefore, necessary to find out the greatest sinner among them. After taking a stock of his own personal life, the great saint thought that he was the greatest sinner of the place and his stay there was the real cause of the cessation of the rains. In order to attract divine mercy in the form of the rains, the saint decided to leave that place. Thus did the saint plan to bring down the rains.

The saint had his eyes on his sins

Look here! A great Wali, a righteous servant of Allah and an accomplished spiritual servant thinking that he was the greatest sinner on the surface of the earth and if he left the place, the rains would descend by Allah's mercy. Now think! Was the saint lying or did he display this humbleness out of modesty? A Wali like Hazrat Zunnoon رحمة الله عليه could never tell a lie. The fact is that he really and truly thought that he was the worst sinner. Why did he think so? It was because he had his eyes always fixed on his own defects and shortcomings and thought of ways and means to get rid of them.

None remained bad in his eyes

During this age Almighty Allah has made Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه a model of action and righteousness.One of his successors has related the following incident :

Once I said to him : When you are delivering a sermon and I am in your assembly, I feel that in that assembly there is none more wretched than I: I am the worst sinner; in comparision with others I feel that I am like an animal.

In reply Hazrat Maulana Thanawi رحمة الله عليه said:

Really I also feel about myself the same as you have described about yourself. When I deliver a sermon I feel that I am the worst of all and the others are better than I.

Why was it so ? It was so, because they were always anxious to discover their own shortcomings and sins and how they should get rid of them. How should man attain Allah's pleasure? If man begins to look for his own sins, he cannot care for the shortcomings of others. In such a situation man begins to feel worried about reforming his own affairs instead of worrying about others.

The last Mughal monarch, Bahadur Shah Zafar رحمة الله عليه has expressed this idea very beautifully in the following lines of poetry:

تھے جو اپنی برائی سے بے خبر
رہے اوروں کے ڈھونڈتے عیب و ہنر
پڑی اپنی برائیوں پر جو نظر
تو نگاہ میں کوئی برا نہ رہا

I was unaware of my own shortcomings and was looking for the shortcomings of others. However, when I knew that in reality all are

free from defects and shortcomings, while I alone am full of sins and defects.

You must remember that nobody can be aware of the vices of others better as he is aware of his own vices. Man knows quite well what he thinks about himself and what ideas he harbours in his heart and how diverse intentions and thoughts occur to his heart from time to time. Notwithstanding, this he takes no notice of these ideas and thoughts only because he remains occupied most of the time searching for the faults and vices of others.

Look ! How anxious man becomes about his own sickness !

Suppose that a man has got severe stomach-ache and is restless on that account. Will this person be making a survey of the various maladies from which others are suffering, forgetting his own stomach-ache? No, he shall become totally concerned with his own malady and will pay no attention to the maladies of others and will try first of all to get medical treatment for his own stomach-ache. You will not find in this world a single man who will care for the simple ailments of others neglecting his own serious ache.

An event of a lady that is full of morals

One of my relative ladies once suffered from severe gastric pain which made her restless. She was affected Psychologically and began to think that she was seriously ill. I took her to a Hospital for medical check up and treatment. When we took the lift to go up, we saw that another lady was there sitting on a wheelchair whose entire body was burnt with fire and somebones were also broken. Her skin was also burnt at many places. By way of providing cofmort and solace to my relative lady and

palliating her feeling of sickness, I said to her: Look! How seriously afflicted is this lady and how painful a torture she is enduring? Hearing these words and casting a cursory glances. my relative lady said; yes she is undergoing painful suffering, indeed, but she is not suffering from gastric pain. Now Look! One's own comparatively mild sickness is being felt more acutely than the torture of another patient whose entire body is burnt and many bones are broken.

Through this incident Allah inspired into my heart a desire if such thinking was created in our hearts about *Deen* (Faith) and our own inner diseases might totally occupy our care and thoughts instead of our searching for the weaknesses, fautls and shortcomings of the others.

Hazrat Hanzalah رضی اللہ عنہ become obsessed with the idea that he had become a hypocrite

Once Hazrat Hanzalah رضی اللہ عنہ called on the Holy Prophet ﷺ and said: O Messenger of Allah! I am perished and destroyed. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said: What is the matter? He رضی اللہ عنہ said that he had become a hypocrite. On being asked how this happened the Noble Companion replied, saying: O Prophet of Allah, when I am present in your assembly, nice ideas and emotions rise in the heart, Allah's remembrance is refreshed, I think of reforming myself and I am reminded of the blessings of the Hereafter. However, when I return to the world of action and its affairs and am among the wife and children, the earlier sublime condition of the heart disappears. Attention to Allah, the thought of self-reform and the thought of the Hereafter and of Paradise do not linger. This is a sign of Hypocrisy that apparently I am a Muslim but very bad and heinous ideas rise in the heart. That is why I have become a hypocrite. O Prophet of Allah ﷺ, tell

me how I can get rid of hypocrisy.

Look here ! A Noble Companion رضی اللہ عنہ of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is making complaint like this and the entire *Ummah* is unanimous on this that الصحابة کلهم عدول all the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم are just and it is not possible that anyone of them should be a sinner, yet one of them is suspecting about his having turned a hypocrite. Pacifying his anxiety, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: You should not feel disturbed by the change in your thoughts on going home, because thereby a man does not become a hypocrite. Such changes do take place with the change of times. Sometimes a man's heart is overwhelmed by Allah's remembrance causing more gentleness and softness of the heart, but there are times when these emotions are absent or are not so intense. So a man does not become a hypocrite by such changes in the conditions of the heart. (*Sahih.....Muslim*) This Companion رضی اللہ عنہ did not feel worried that such and such a man turned a hypocrite. His worry was that perhaps he himself had turned a hypocrite.

Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ suspected Hypocrisy in himself

Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ is the second Caliph of the Muslims about whom the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

لو کان بعدی نبیًا لکان عمر

If there had been a Prophet after me, Umar would have been that Prophet (but there will be no Prophet after me).

So high a status Allah had granted him رضی اللہ عنہ, yet hear his problem. Hazrat Huzaifah bin Yaman رضی اللہ عنہ was a Companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ who was known to be his confident, because the Holy Prophet ﷺ had confided to him the names of the hypocrites of Madinah

Munaw-warah and under some policy he ﷺ had not disclosed their names to any other Companion رضی اللہ عنہ. When anyone died the people would watch if Hazrat Huzaifah رضی اللہ عنہ joined the funeral prayer of the deceased. The participation of Hazrat Huzaifah رضی اللہ عنہ in the funeral prayer of a person was a sure sign that the deceased was not among the hypocrites. If he did not participate in the funeral prayer, it was concluded that the deceased was among the hypocrites.

Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ used to call on Hazrat Huzaifah رضی اللہ عنہ and ask him if "Umar's" name was not in his list of the hypocrites. Just see! This question is being put by a personality like Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ who had heard with his own ears the Holy Prophet ﷺ say: عمر فی الجنۃ (Umar shall be in Paradise). As already mentioned, the Holy Prophet ﷺ also said that:

لو كان بعدى نبيًا لكان عمر

If there had been a Prophet after, me Umar would have been that Prophet.

See, such a godly personality is feeling so much worried, lest he should be among the hypocrites. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has also said that whoever recites the *Kalimah* لا اله الا الله shall enter Paradise. Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ thought that one who recites this *Kalimah* shall indeed enter Paradise, yet if anyone's deeds become vicious before his death that person shall not be entitled to this glad tidings. Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ feared lest his deeds should become vicious to make him a hypocrite. It is true that when a man makes a survey of his faults and sins, he becomes worried about his reform and betterment. When a man begins thinking in this way, he does not find fault into others as he does with his own self. (*Al-bidayah wan-Nihayah*- Vol. 5, P-19)

Extreme Ignorance of *Deen*

Today our affairs have just reversed. If we speak today anything about *Deen*, our speech is generally devoid of reformative aspects. It is seen that these speeches either contain sectarian colours, political topics or theoretical issues which have nothing to do with the practical life of man. All this has resulted in a general depletion of knowledge of *Deen* in our society. Today highly educated Muslims are ignorant of matters concerning *Deen* which were well known to young boys in the olden days. If some problem concerning *Deen* is mentioned to them, they feel surprised and say: Oh, is it a point of *Deen*? We did not know that. The reason for all this ignorance is that the desire of self-reform has disappeared from our minds. The Holy Qur'an has clearly declared that, however numerous unions and associations you may establish, it will not be possible to reform the society unless everyone creates in his heart a desire to reform himself.

This is our plight

Banners in hands, we take out processions uttering slogans in favour of reform and betterment, but when an occasion of accepting bribe arrives, we do not lag behind anyone, we do refrain from taking money from others by fraudulent means. We cry hoarse against the usurious system, but when an opportunity comes for dealing in usury, we quietly take advantage of this. Such being the situation, how can reform of the society be possible? We are not tired of finding faults with others and condemning fraudulent and sinful deeds, but we do not lag behind when it becomes advantagious to tell lies, submit false and forged medical certificates to extend leave. Do we ever think on such occasions that all these are heinous sins by

which we attract Allah's displeasure? When we are not prepared to give up all these vicious practices and sins, what is the use of uttering slogans and taking out processions in favour of reform of the society? Likewise, I taunt others on their aversion to *Deen* and on their indifference to the injunction of *Deen*, yet our assemblies are not free from backbiting and slanders, etc. As the Holy Qur'an has mentioned, one who backbites others is like one who eats the flesh of one's own brother. How, then, can a man addicted to these heinous sins reform the society. Indeed he cannot.

The way of Reforming

It is possible to reform the society, when I give up lying, backbiting and defrauding others, taking bribe and refrain from violating the rules of Pardah, shunning nudity and lewdness, etc. We cannot impart the idea of reform and amelioration to others, unless we create them in our own hearts. That is why the Holy Qur'an has said:

عَلَيْكُمْ اَنْفُسَكُمْ ۚ لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَّنْ ضَلَّ اِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ ۚ (سورة المائدة: ١٠٥)

(O, you who believe), guard your own souls. He who has gone astray cannot harm you, if you are rightly guided. (5: 105)

How did the Holy Prophet ﷺ train the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم

The Holy Prophet ﷺ came to this world in which he lived 23 years after being commissioned to the status of Prophethood. He appeared on the scene at a time when the entire Arabian Peninsula was drowned in the darkness of ignorance and no ray of hope shone, nor was there any light of guidance. At such an inopportune time, the Holy

Prophet ﷺ came to this world and he ﷺ was commanded to change the entire society and revolutionise it altogehther.. After 23 years when he ﷺ left the world infidelity and polytheism had been totally uprooted from the Arabian Peninsula. The community which had been drowned in heresy and ignorance emerged after 23years as a model for the world.

Out of these 23 years, 13 years were spent in Makkah. During this period of 13 years the Muslims had no orders to wage *Jihad*, nor was there any state or government, nor any constitution. Moreover, if the infidels tortured them, as they did, the Muslims were not allowed to take revenge and they had to bear the torture patiently and passively.

وَاصْبِرْ وَمَا صَبْرُكَ اِلَّا بِاللّٰهِ ۚ (سورة النحل: ١٢٧)

Endure patiently with the help of Allah. (16:127)

They were strictly forbidden to retaliate, even though they were not so helpless. Hazrat Bilal رضی اللہ عنہ was being made to lie on burning sand and stone slabs were placed on his chest and he was asked to reject the *Kalimah* لا اله الا الله (There is no god but Allah). Hazrat Bilal رضی اللہ عنہ could avenge the torture inflicted on him by dealing a slap on the enemy, but at that time the Muslims had no orders to take revenge by raising either their hands or their swords.

The Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم turned into Gold

Why was all this tyranny to be borne so patiently? It was because, by subjecting them to all these trials and tribulations, they had to be made pure and steadfast in the Faith like burnished god; that they may endure the torture with patience without a word of complaint. Is there a man

who will take beating and insult without being provoked and enraged ? But the Muslims are being commanded to suppress their anger and irritation for the sake of Allah, as this control over anger and provocation was, in turn, to generate in them the power to sacrifice their personal desires and preferences in obedience to the commands of Allah and for the sake of attaining His pleasure. The Divine Order for the Muslims to follow the 13 years of the Makkah life was not to retaliate and take revenge in any circumstances. They were commanded during this period to devote themselves to the worship of Allah and to turn to Him and remember Him and visualise the Hereafter, Paradise and Hell and reform their conduct and character. When during this training period of 13 years, the Noble Companions رضی الله عنهم became pure like gold after passing through so many trials and tribulations, then commenced civic life in the Propeht's city of Madinah. In that sacred city the Holy Prophet ﷺ laid down the foundation of a State and a system of Government the like of which was seen neither before it nor after it. Having become fully absorbed in the thought of one's own reform everyone had made himself sincere and pure like pure gold. It is, therefore, your duty first of all to think of your own reform. A man shall succeed, by the grace of Allah, in reforming others, if he has first reformed himself. That is why triumph and victory was the fate of the Noble Companions رضی الله عنهم, because they had been trained by the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself.

As for the present days it seems that all attempts made at reforming the society are being wasted as a whole without leaving any visible impact on the society. This is because we have totally neglected our own reform. We have become unmindful of the fact that one day we shall have to render account in the presence of Almighty Allah

of our deeds. We have also overlooked to make a search of our own lives to find out what shortcomings lie hidden in ourselves and what should be done to remedy them.

Let us make our own survey

The gist of my address is that at the day's end everyone should try to find out where and in what matters he has disobeyed Allah's commands from morning till evening. Islam is composed of five branches of beliefs and acts:

1- The beliefs should be sincere true and right.
2- Items of worship, viz. *Salat*, *Fasting* during Ramadhan, the *Hajj*, Payment of *Zakat* should be rightly practised and observed.
3- Dealings in trading should be lawful and free from fraud.
4- Social living with one another should be strictly according to the injunctions of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ.
5- Morality, i.e., conduct and character should be sound. Man should be free from the vices of hatred, pride, jealousy, enmity, etc. He should be adorned with good qualities, like modesty, reliance (on Allah), gratitude and patience.

Man's religion becomes complete only when he fulfils the demands of all these five departments of religion. A man becomes a true Muslim when he has completed with the requirements of all these branches. In other words he should satisfy himself as to the following questions:

1- Are my beliefs correct and sound?
2- How many of the five-time obligatory *Salat* do I offer? Do I miss any of them?

3- Do I have lawful earnings?
4- Are my dealings in sales and purchases fair and honest?
5- Do I possess good moral character?
Do I behave with others amicably?
Am I guilty of telling lies, backbiting, and hurting others? Do I tease or trouble others?

Everyone should examine his conduct and character in the light of the above observations. If one finds that he is deficient, he should try his best to make up the deficiency as far as possible.

For example, he should find out how many lies he has told in the day and he should give up immediately. He should start working on this line to reduce his sins one by one by way of reforming himself. If the thought of reforming our life is born in our heart this change shall, God willing - enlighten our lives. Do not think that if only one life is reformed, what difference will it make?

One lamp lights another lamp

Bear in mind well that what we call society is composed of individuials, you, he and I. If one man's life is reformed, he gives up a few sins and he begins to obey the injunctions of Allah, this may be regarded at least as one candle lighted. A lamp, however, small may it be, is sure to spread its light in the space around it. It is quite likely that seeing a lamp burning another man may light his lamp. Thus the process of one lamp lighting another lamp may gradually enlight the entire environment and in this way the entire society may one day become enlightened. On the other hand if there is a man who keeps his lamp unlighted but desires to light the lamps of others with his unlighted lamp, this is impossible. It is

quite obvious that an unlighted lamp cannot light other lamps. The same truth applies to the reform of human beings. A man who has no care to reform himself cannot succeed in guiding others. May Almighty Allah create in our hearts the thought of reforming our own selves first of all!

How to create the thought of self-Reform?

The question now arises how to create the thought of self-reform. One way to answer this question is this. Just as in this session we have talked about and heard the problem concerning self-reform which has stirred in us some urge to solve this problem, the same talk and discussion should be projected and heard in different sessions and assemblies again and again. This practice will - god willing rouse in our hearts the thought of self-refrom. Just see that the words واقيموالصلوة (Establish the *Salat*) has been repeated in the Holy Qur'an sixty two times, even though only one Divine Command to this effect was enough. This is because it is man's nature that it is not impressed by an idea unless it is repeated off and on; ideas get settled when they are stamped on the mind again and again. A single impression does not prove lasting. It is, therefore, imperative that we should arrange to hold, and participate in, such gatherings in which the topic of self-reform is discussed. this practice will create in us the thought of reforming ourselves before aspiring to reform others.

The Reformative meetings are held in Darul Uloom.

The Darul-Uloom, Karachi is not far from you where three weekly meeting are held. Hazrat Maulana Mufti Muhammad Rafi' Usmani, who is the President of

the Darul Uloom, addresses these meetings on every Wednesday between the ʿAsr and the Maghrib Prayers. Men as well women attend these meetings. Hazrat Maulana Subhan Mahmood Sahib, who is the Sheikhul Hadith and my reverend Ustaz, addresses these gatherings on every Sunday between the ʿAsr and the Maghrib Prayers. Hazrat Maulana Mufti Abdur Raoof Sahib, an Ustaz of the Darul Uloom and an authorised successor to Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه, addresses these meetings on every Tuesday between ʿAsr and Maghrib Prayers.

In the same way three other meetings are held in the Darul Uloom. These meetings are also devoted to the problem of promoting the thought of self-reform.

There is no dearth of gatherings, assemblies and meetings, but the objective of the meetings held in the Darul Uloom is to create in the minds of the audience the thought of reforming themselves. If you are able to spare only one hour a week between the ʿAsr and the Maghrib prayers to attend these meetings, it will help to create the thought of reforming yourself and you will be able to find out the spots of your faults and shortcomings. It is a pity that we are ignorant of the spots in our lives where our faults and shortcomings are lurking. By attending these meetings you will come to know these hidden spots and the way to rectify these faults and shortcomings.

May Almighty Allah assist us, by His grace, to work on the right lines and to reform ourselves - *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمدللّٰه رب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal
Karachi

Date : 6th September 1996

HATE THE SIN AND NOT THE SINNER

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه و نستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرورانفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا و سندنا و نبينا و مولانا محمدا عبده و رسوله... صلى الله تعالى عليه و على اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد!

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم:

مَنْ عَيَّرَ اَخَاهُ بِذَنْبٍ قَدْ تَابَ مِنْهُ لَمْ يَمُتْ حَتَّى يَعْمَلَهُ (ترمذى. كتاب صفة القيامة، باب رقم ٥٤)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and seek His forgiveness and believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our souls and from the

vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom He guides and there is none to guide him whom He lets go astray. We bear witness that there is no god but Allah the One Who has no partner. We also bear witness that our sire, and our authority and our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him, his household and bless and salute them all in great abundance.

The curse of condemning a Sinner

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that if a man condemns his Muslim brother for a sin of which he has repented, the condemner shall not die unless he himself becomes addicted to that sin. The reason is quite obvious. A man who repents of his sin becomes as if he did not commit that sin at all and the sin is erased from the man's Register of Deeds. The act of taunting a man for the sin which has been forgiven and which he has forgotten is abhorrent in the sight of Allah.

The Sinner May Be Compared To A Sick Person

What has been mentioned above relates to a person who has repented of his sin. There may be a sinner about whom it is not known whether or not he has repented of his sin, although it is very likely about a believer that he may have repented or may repent of his sin in the near future. There is no right for anyone to condemn even such a person. It is the sin and not the sinner that deserves to be condemned. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has not taught us to hate the sinner. The sinner is in fact suffering from a serious disease and deserves pity and sympathy just like a sick

man, the sinner should be helped that he may get rid of the sins to which he has become addicted.

It Is *KUFR* (unbelief) And Not The *KAFIR* (unbeleiver) That Deserves To Be HATED

If a person is an unbeliever, he should not be hated and condemned. He should, instead, be helped with prayer to Allah that he may give up his unbelief and become a believer. You may recall how cruelly the unbelievers dealt with the Holy Prophet ﷺ. They pelted at him ﷺ stones, shot at him their arrows and wounded his sacred body, yet the Holy Prophet ﷺ calmly bore the tyranny and spoke out only the following words:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اهْدِ قَوْمِیْ فَاِنَّهُمْ لَا یَعْلَمُوْنَ

O Allah guide my community on the right path. (They reject me because) they do not know me.

See how, instead of hating and taking revenge on them, he ﷺ prayed to Allah to favour them with right guidance. So, when you see anyone involved in sin and disobedience, then instead of condemning him you should pray to Allah for his guidance that he may repent of his sins. You Should remember that by virtue of repentance he may get rid of all his sins and may become better than you.

Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه Regarded Others to be Better Than Himself

Both my respected father Mufti Muahmmad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه and Dr. Abdul Hayee Sahib رحمة الله عليه narrated a state of Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه who said: I consider better than myself a Mumin in his present state of *Eeman*

and an unbeliever as who knows he may possibly turn a Muslim in the future and attain a better position as a Muslim than I occupy. As regards the Muslims; his end may be better than mine. Keeping these possibilities in view I consider both better than myself. Anyway, it is not lawful to hate and condemn anyone on account of his sins.

Who Are Those Who Suffer From This Disease (of superiority complex)?

The disease of looking down upon others generally afflicts those who come back to the path of *Deen* from a life of indifference to religion. Such new comers to religion begin to offer their *Salat* regularly in the mosque, with the Jama'at (congregation), put on proper dresses, as prescribed in the *Shari'ah*. They mend their ways in conformity with the injunction of the *Shari'ah*. Satan exploits this change to make them proud of their apparent righteousness and as a result they begin to look downupon, and find faults with, others. They begin to indulge in self-esteem and to hate others. This trend and behaviour destroys man's virtues and good deeds. Those acts of virtue are acceptable in the sight of Allah for which man expresses gratitude for Allah. If a man has changed the course of his life and taken to the path of piety and righteousness, it is praiseworthy, but this change does not confer on him a right to hate anyone whether a beleiver or an unbeliever.

On seeing a sick person one should recite this supplication

It occurs in a Hadith that when a Muslim sees a man suffering from some disease or in a pitiable condition, he should recite this *Du'a*: (Supplication)

الحمدلله الذى عافانى مما ابتلاه به وفَضَّلَنِى علٰى كثير ممن خلق تفضيلاً (ترمذى كتاب الدعوات، باب مايقول اذا رأى مبتلى)

All praise is for Allah Who has bestowed upon me protection from that (disease or trouble) with which He has inflicted him and that He has made me superior to many of His creation.

The meaning is quite clear and it is a gift from the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه has said: that whenever he passed by a Hospital, he recited this supplication and at the same time he also prayed for quick recovery for the patients in the Hospital.

This *Du'a* (Supplication) should be recited also on seeing a Sinner

A professor of mine told me that he recited this *Du'a*, whenever he came across a person committing some sin. For example when he saw cinema-goers standing in a queue to purchase tickets, he recited this *Du'a* and thanked Almighty Allah for saving him from this humiliating sin. He believed that the sinners deserve sympathy rather than despise. He felt that these sinners may in future give up their sins, take to a life of piety and obedience and become superior to him. There was nothing for him to take pride. Man should, however, be grateful to Allah for saving him from these sins and misdeeds. He should also pray to Allah to grant speedy cure to those suffering from the malady of sins. There is also no cause for despising the sinners. They should be advised with kindness and love to give up their sins.

Hazrat Junaid Baghdadi رحمة الله عليه kissed the feet of a thief

My respected father Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه related an event of Hazrat Junaid Baghdadi رحمة الله عليه. The Sheikh was passing by a street when he saw that a man was hanged on the gibbet with each one of his hands and legs cut off. On enquiry he was told that the man was a habitual thief. When he was caught for the first time one of his hands was cut off, when he was caught for the second time one of his legs was cut off. He was caught stealing the third time, so he was being hanged on the gibbet. Hearing this the Shaikh stepped forward and kissed his leg. The people were very much surprised at that action and inquired of him the reason for kissing the feet of such a notorious and habitual thief. The Sheikh replied that no doubt the man was a great thief and a notorious criminal for which he was being hanged, yet he possessed the great quality of "steadfastness" even though he applied this quality in the wrong place. He remained steadfast in the sin of stealing which he had made his life work. He did not part with it when one hand was cut off, nor when his one leg was cut off until he was going to be hanged. This is to impress that righteous men do not hate their fellow men but hate their vices and sins. Their good qualities need to be emulated and their vices to be shunned and the sinners to be reformed as far as possible. Men addicted to some sins need to be sermonized with love and sympathy and never to be blamed, censured, ridiculed or taunted.

One believer is like a mirror for another believer What is the meaning of this maxim?

There is a Hadith declaring:

اَلْمُؤْمِنُ مِرْاٰةُ الْمُؤْمِنِ (ابو داؤد، كتاب الادب، باب فى النصيحة)

If a man's face is stained with some ugly spot, he beholds with his own eyes that spot when he stands before a mirror. Just like the mirror, a believer reflects the defects and fautls in another believer by disclosing them with love and sympathy to the believer concerned. This is exactly in the same way that when we see a man some insect or some dirty object we let that man know, so that he may shake the insect or the dirty object off his person. Likewise, if a believer has some error in him another believer should try to reform the erroneous person with love and sympathy. This is how this maxim is interpreted.

Do not disclose the vice of one man to another

Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has observed that this Hadith advises that if you find a vice in a person you should disclose it to the person concerned, but should not disclose it to others. This is implied in the simile contained in using the word Mirror, because the mirror discloses the ugly spot on a man's face only to the person standing before the mirror and not to any other person. Accordingly, if a believer happens to find some defect or vice in another believer, he should disclose it to the person concerned and not to any other person. Disclosing the defect to others will mean that a selfishness of your own is involved in your action and it is not based on any consideration of service to *Deen*. Our *Deen* demands that the defect should be disclosed only to the person concerned with love and sympathy with the sole

intention of reform.

May Almighty Allah help us all to understand the requirements of the Faith and to act accordingly. *Aameen*!

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمدللّٰه رب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Darul Uloom
Karachi
Date : 29th December 1994

THE SIGNIFICANT ROLE OF 'MADRASAHS'

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه و نستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهدان لا اله الاالله وحده لا شريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا و سندنا و مولانا محمداً عبده و رسوله ... صلى الله تعالى عليه و على اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيراً كثيرا

اما بعد!

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and seek His forgiveness and believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our souls and from the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom He guides and there is none to guide him whom He lets go astray. We bear witness that there is no god but Allah the One Who has

no partner. We also bear witness that our sire, and our authority and our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him, his household and bless and salute them all in great abundance.

Respected Scholars, My dear class-fellow students, and the Honourable Audience

السلام علیکم و رحمة اللّٰه وبرکاته

INTRODUCTION

It was hardly proper for me to speak after the lessons imparted by my respected teacher, Sheikhul-Hadith, Maulana Subhan Mahmood Sahib - may his blessings increase, as his lessons are quite comprehensive and exhaustive. However, my respected teacher has himself ordered me to speak something on this occasion. It has also been the usual practice that my elder brother Hazrat Maulana Mufti Muhammad Rafi Usmani, the Rector of Darul-Uloom , who is presently on a tour, used to deliver a closing address at the end of the lessons of *Bukhari*. My brother, therefore, ordered me to say something in his behalf on this auspicious occasion. This is because something is better than nothing.

گندم اگر بہم نہ رسد جو غنیمت است

A Persian saying meaning:

If wheat is not available one should accept barley as a possible substitute.

I am, therefore, present before you in obedience to my respected brother's order.

It is an infinite mercy of Almighty Allah, for which it is impossible to thank adequately, that He has helped us,

by His vast mercy, to complete the academic activities of the Darul-Uloom. This is the last blessed lesson which Almighty Allah has enabled all of us to attend. This was the last lesson from the *Sahih-Bukhari*. The most authentic book on the surface of the world after Allah's Book, the Holy Qur'an, is this book, compiled by Imam Bukhari رحمة اللّٰه علیه. The respected teacher, taught the students this sacred book all the year round from the beginning till the end of the book. Today is the day on which this blessed course of study has been completed for which we praise Allah. With this has ended also the academic year of the Darul-Uloom. In the beginning of the year when this study commenced none could say for certain who would be able to participate in the completion ceremony of the course. It is a great favour and mercy of Almighty Allah that He enabled me to take part in this ceremony. Infinite thanks are due to Him for this favour.

Countless are Allah's blessings

The Creator of the Universe has bestowed upon man endless blessings. Just see this one single blessing of breathing what a sublime blessing it is! Shaikh Sadi رحمة اللّٰه علیه, the renowned Persian Sufi poet, has explained this point in a very subtle way thus:

When a man breathes, he enjoys two blessings of Allah Almighty, viz., breathing in and breathing out. If a man is not able to take in the air while breathing or is not able to breath out the air taken in then this means instant death in either case. Thus, one breath contains two blessings and thanks are due to Allah for each blessing. In other words, Allah deserves two thanks for each breath. Thus, man cannot render thanks to Allah for the blessing of breathing, let alone thanksgiving for other blessings.

The blessings of Allah are falling down on man like the showers of rains, which none can count.

The Greatest blessing

The blessing of *Eeman* (Belief in Allah) is the greatest of all blessings. Exalted Allah has favoured us with the blessing of *Eeman*, in His great mercy. We do not value this great blessing for the reason that we have inherited this blessing from our parents as a free gift without having to put in any labour or without offering any sacrifice for it. That is why we do not realize its trimendous value. Enquire its value from Hazrat Bilal of Ethiopia. Hazrat Suhaib of Rome and Hazrat Zaid bin Harisah who suffered great and untold tortures and offered great sacrifices to attain the blessing of the Article of Faith:

لا اله الله محمد رسول الله

There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.

As for ourselves, we do not realize the value of this priceless blessing for the only reason that we were born in a Muslim household and got the unique blessing of *Eeman* without having to put in any labour or sacrifice for it, although it is undoubtedly the most sublime of all blessings. Next to the blessing of *Eeman* in value and sublimity is the blessing of the knowledge of the duties and obligations which the blessing of our *Eeman* imposes on us. In other words, the knowledge of the essential duties and responsibilities which fall on our shoulders as being Mumins (believers). This knowledge is the greatest blessings after *Eeman* (Faith).

Religious schools and propaganda against them

Some godly men established this Institution or Darul-Uloom in their sincerity to spread the light of the same knowledge. The Darul-Uloom which has completed its academic year today has been traversing the same path. Unfortunately these Religious schools and Institutions are being subjected today to various forms of adverse propaganda and bitter criticism, as if a flood of objections and taunts has been let loose against them. These objections emanate partly from those opponents who are enemies of the *Faith* (Islam) and deadly set against the supremacy of the Law of Allah on the surface of the earth. They indulge in adverse propaganda against the Religious schools. It is seen that sometimes religious minded persons also fall victim to this propaganda. Willingly or unwillingly adverse opinion spring up in their hearts also about these religious schools.

Objections are raised to all activites of *Molvis*

My late respected father رحمة الله عليه sometimes used to say in a jolly mood:

"This class of the *Molvis* is a class of the blameworthy."

He رحمة الله عليه meant by this witty remark to say that whenever some vice arises anywhere in the world, the people try to attribute it to the *Molvis*. They try to find one fault or another with whatever the *Molvi* does. If the poor *Molvi*, sitting in seclusion is rehearsing Allah's name or is imparting lessons to his disciples from the Qur'an and the Hadith, the people raise objections to him saying that he is ignorant of what is happening in the world and what turns its affairs are taking. He has no time to get out of the closed dome of بسم الله (In the name of Allah) On the other

hand if a *Molvi* comes out of his secluded corner for the sake of some reformatory or social work, they object to the Movlis action by saying that the best occupation for a *Molvi* is to rehearse the name of Allah sitting within four walls of the Madrasah, but today he is involving himself in politics and governmental affairs. If there is a *Molvi* hard pressed for financial resources and has fallen a victim to poverty and starvation, the people blame him saying that he has made no arrangements for financial resources for his students by way of making them financially independent of others, when they leave the school the next day. How shall such students earn their living when they leave the school? If a *Molvi* by chance happens to be a rich man, possessing sufficient money, they taunt him with affluence and richness. In short, this poor *Molvi* is spared in no circumstances. Thus he belongs to the blameworthy party.

This class of *Molvis* is a shield for Islam

There are people who are indulging in well-planned propaganda with the objective of spreading suspicion and misconception about the Islamic scholars and students. This is enmity against Islam. This is because the enemies of Islam very well know that it is this group of teachers and their students squatting in their schools on mats spread on the ground which forms a shield for protecting Islam. These opponents of Islam know it fully well that, as long as the *Molvis* exist on the surface of the earth it is impossible to efface Islam from the surface of the earth. It is a matter of common observation that the face of Islam was badly distorted in places from where this poor and humble class of *Molvies* had been expelled or annihilated and how the conspiracies to efface Islam succeeded in

these places.

With the help of Almighty Allah, I have travelled widely in the world. I have seen such parts of the Islamic world from where the very base of these schools has been uprooted, but what is the reslut? It seems as if the shepherd has been killed and the sheep have been left to the carnage of the wolves. From the point of religion this is the plight of the Muslims in many parts of the Islamic world.

The search for a Religious school in Baghdad

I have had the opportunity of visiting Baghdad. This is the city which had been the capital of the Islamic world for centuries. The world has seen there the splendour and grandeur of the Abbasid Caliphate. All sorts of arts and sciences developed and flourished there.

When I arrived there, I enquired from someone the address of some religious schools or the centre of religious knowledge and learning. I wanted to visit some of them. I was told that there was no trace of such religious institutions: all these have given place to modern schools and colleges. Now it is the University faculties where religious education may be acquired. Religion is taught in these faculties. By looking at the dress, etc., of the Professors, it is difficult even to acknowledge that they are Muslims, let alone their being Alims of the Islamic *Shar i'ah* and *Fiqh*. These Institutes follow the co-education system, i.e. both sexes study there together. Islam has become only a theory which is taught as a historical philosophy. This system of education has no effect on the lives of the students. Their study of Islam in these Universities is like that of the orientalists. Today Islam is being taught in Universities in America, Canada

and in other European cities and the courses of study include *Hadith* (Traditions), *Fiqh* (Jurisprudence) and commentary of the Holy Qur'an. If you read their articles and research papers on Islam, you will come to know the names of books about which our naive *Molvis* are quite in dark. Apparently great research work is being done there on Islam. Any way, what is the good of a system of teaching, Islam which fails to equip men with the wealth of *Eeman* (True Belief)? All this research and intensive study day and night remain fruitless and the students thirst for understanding Islam in its true perspective remains unquenched. No doubt there are faculties of *Shari'ah* and the Principles of *Deen* in these Universities of the West-but the studies in these western Universities have no impact on the lives of the students. This is because the essence of these sciences and courses of study has been totally annihilated.

Then I asked the people the names and addresses of some scholars having the older pattern of teaching and learning. I was told that there was a *Maktab* (Religion school of the classical type) attached to a mosque near the tomb of Hazrat Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jilani رحمة الله عليه where a teacher of the old pattern of teaching lived and who had received education on the older system. I called upon that Ustaz and found that he was really trained and educated on the older system and curricula. My contact with him made me feel that I had really met a righteous God-fearing saint. He had received education in the lowly old-type schools, sitting on mats and leading a hard life of want and scarcity. I could observe on his face the light of the sciences of the Islamic *Shari'ah*. From this interview I received spiritual inspiration and satisfaction; I felt as if I had been transported to the gardens of Paradise.

Never tolerate the abolition of the Madaris running on the classical pattern

After formal introduction that saint asked me about my country and I told him that I had gone there from Pakistan. Thereafter he put to me a few questions about my Darul-Uloom and its curriculum. After I had given him some details about the Darul-Uloom he inquired of me about some of the books taught in the Darul-Uloom. When I told the names of some of the books, he felt deeply impressed to hear the names of those books and expressed grief for having been deprived of the blessings contained in them. He said that those are the book that produce godly men and sincere Muslims. He asked me to convey a message from him to the scholars of Pakistan exhorting them never to abolish in any circumstances these schools. This is because the enemies of Islam are aware that it is impossible to extinguish the fire of *Eeman* burning in the hearts of the Muslims as long as these highly simple and unsophisticated Madaris are in existence. That is why the enemies of Islam are concentrating their entire force of propaganda on the elemination of these Religious schools from the society.

A Remedy to save Religious Fervour and Zeal from cooling down

It is well-known about the late poet of the East, Dr. Muhammad Iqbal that he used to make sarcastic remarks about the typical Mulla, except that from time to time he also said things disclosing the truth to the people. Referring to the attitude of the English and the enemies of Islam, he has written at one place in a couplet about Afghanis:

افغانیوں کی غیرتِ دیں کا ہے یہ علاج
ملاّ کو ان کے کوہ و دمن سے نکال دو

If you want to eleminate the religious fervour of the Afghanis, then expel the Mulla from the hilly country, that is Afghan. As long as the Mulla is there the love and fervour of the Afghanis for their *Deen* (Islam) cannot be effaced from their hearts.

Objections raised against the *Madaris* (schools)

A violent propaganda campaign has been launched against the religious schools, that their origin dates back to 1400 years ago. The administrators and the teaching staff are outmoded and old-fashioned. They are retrogressive, unaware of the modern trends and developments of the world. They do not know how to live in this world according to the modern demands of life, nor have they equipped themselves with the modern scientific and atomic technology. These retrogrades want to revolve the wheel of the Muslim *Ummah* in the reverse gear. Such slogans have been raised from time to time. Their echo is again being heard in our country in full volume.

New force has been added to these slogans by alleging that these religious Madaris have turned into terrorist shelters and they are averse to progress. They are being defined variously with titles like fundamentalists, narrow-mindedness, retrogrades and many other blames are showered on this poor *Molvi*. The *Molvi* however, is firm and adamant in his stern attitude and stand.

The *Molvi* is a Die-Hard

My respected father used to say that this *Molvi* is a die-hard. He is ready to tolerate all taunts, however severe and pinching they may be. He is able to put up with all types of adverse situations. This is because one who enters the field of religious life and Islamic activities, he girds up his loins to bear all hardships and taunts from all quarters. He, therefore, enters this thorny field of *Deen*, prepared to welcome with a good grace all pleasant and unpleasant situations that confront him in the path of *Deen*.

جس کو ہو جان و دل عزیز اس کی گلی میں جائے کیوں

The idea contained in this line of Urdu poetry is that the path of Allah is difficult and only that person will walk on it who has the courage to face difficulties and give up ease and comforts of life.

A man gifted with an eye capable of seeing realities will readily recognize that these adverse remarks and taunts are in the nature of an ornament for one who preaches the way of Truth. These are taunts that were directed to the Prophets of Allah عليهم السلام and their successors and followers. These taunts will not stop, but will continue till the Day of Judgement.

May Allah maintain us, by His mercy, on the straight path, grant us sincerity and a desire to seek His pleasure. We should all know that these taunts have no reality. A day must come when these *Molvis* will be in a position to say:

فَالْيَوْمَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا مِنَ الْكُفَّارِ يَضْحَكُوْنَ (المطففين : ٣٤)

This is the day when those who have believed shall laugh at the non-believers. (83:34)

May Allah grant honour and grace to the class of people who are today being disgraced.

وَلِلّٰهِ الْعِزَّةُ وَلِرَسُوْلِهٖ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ (المنافقون : ٨)

And honour belongs to Allah, to His Messenger and the believers. (63:8)

Notwithstanding the storm of these oppositions and taunts, the religious schools and Institutions are, by the grace of Allah, serving the *Ummah* and the cause of Islam and they will be carrying on their mission as long as it is the will of Almighty Allah. The treacherous taunts and oppositions of the enemies of Islam can do no harm to them.

Give up worrying about the means of livelihood for these *Molvis*

Voices are being raised today in our society that these religious schools should be closed. There are men who lend support to this demand, not out of opposition and enmity, but out of sympathy and by way of reform.

Sometimes people suggest that these *Molvis* should be trained for some jobs for earning their livelihood, e.g., carpentary, ironmongery and some such arts to earn their bread and butter. Therefore, people come forward with vicious proposals, including the establishment of workshops for the benefit of these *Molvis*.

My respected father رحمة الله عليه used to advise that anxiety about the livelihood of these *Molvis* should be given up, because the *Molvis* shall themselves solve the problem of their livelihood. You can, he said, cite no case in which a *Molvi* ever committed suicide on account of starvation. My father said: I can give the examples of many Doctors of Philosophy and Masters of Arts who committed suicide on account of financial difficulties. There are also many who hold these degrees, yet they are not finding employment. This cannot be asserted about a

Molvi that he is facing unemployment.

Almighty Allah the Creator and Sustainer by His infinite mercy, looks after the livelihood of His creatures much better than others.

Condemn this world

My student colleagues! Try to fully understand that it is a peculiarity of the world that the more a person hankers after it the more the world runs away from him, and the more a man runs away from the world, the more the world hankers after that person. This may be explained by the example of the shadow. If a man begins to run after his shadow, shadow will also continue moving ahead of him and the man will not be able to catch the shadow. On the contrary if a man runs with his back turned back his shadow, the shadow shall run after the man. This is exactly the behaviour of the world. The more a man desires the world, the more the world remains away from that man and the vice versa is also true. You may have observed that those servants of Allah who putting trust in Allah and devoted their lives to the service of *Deen* and kicked away the world for the sake of Allah, Allah brought the world right under the feet of those servants of Allah to the envy of others. In this way it is the practice of Merciful Allah to display to the world the dignity and honour which the men of Allah enjoy among their fellow-men.

May Allah grant us sincerity, choose us for His service and for the service of His *Deen* (Islam) and help us to sacrifice our lives for the cause of Islam. If we are fortunate enough to make this sacrifice, we shall be losers neither in this world nor in the Hereafter.

So, do not worry at all about the livelihood of the

Molvi, because Allah is the Best Sustainer. When Almighty Allah provides for the dogs, the assess, and the swines, why should He not provide for the helpers of His *Deen* (Islam)?

Do not make *Molvi* an Ironmonger or a Carpenter

It is indeed necessary for an efficient and successful preacher of *Deen* that he should also be acquainted with some worldly sciences and arts. A *Faqih* (Jurist) is really one who has a knowledge of the conditions and trends of his times. Whatever he learns and teaches with this intention is a part of *Deen*. But you must remember that if you have once made *Molvi* a Carpenter or an ironmonger, then he shall become totally devoted to these professions. My respected father said that if a *Molvi* thought that he should devote his major time to carpentary or ironmongery and should devote his spare hours to his free service to *Deen*, then this was not practicable. This trend of thought would turn him into a full-fledged carpenter or ironmonger and he would put in no service in the way of *Deen*.

An Instructive Event

My respected father once related the following event:

Hazrat Sahool Usmani رحمة الله عليه was a renowned professor of Darul-Uloom Deoband. He was one of the favoured students of Hazrat Maulana Mahmoodul Hasan رحمة الله عليه. He was very efficient and well-versed in the field of literature. Once it occurred to him that teaching religious subjects in return for salary was wage-earning and no service to *Deen* which should be rendered without

any return. He, therefore, began to think of some occupation, e.g., delivering speeches, writing *Fatawa* (Religious Rulings), etc., so that he could serve *Deen* in the spare time without any return. In the meantime he received an offer from a government school to take up a teacher's job there under such and such terms and conditions. You know that to be a teacher in a Government school is a very easy job, where the teacher has not to do much preparatory work and has to take only two or three classes during the whole working period. In a Darul-Uloom the Ustaz has to teach classes about five hours and this teaching work of five hours he has to do after about ten hours of preparatory work. Such hard and long work is not demanded in colleges and Universities. He thought that it was a God-given opportunity to take up the offer, and he could be able to serve *Deen* free of charge. He asked Hazrat Sheikhul Hind to permit him to take up the Government job and the Sheikh accorded him permission for that. When after about six months Maulana Sahool came to Deoband and met Hazrat Sheikhul Hind رحمة الله عليه the Sheikh asked him this question: During this period how many books did you compile, how many sermons did you deliver and how many *Fatawa* did you write? Hearing these questions the Maulana burst into tears and said: It was only Satan's deception. Although there was much spare time, yet the service to *Deen* during this time was not even half of what I was able to do, with the help of Allah, while staying in the sacred precincts of the Darul-Uloom.

After relating this event my respected father used to say:

Almighty Allah has graced the atmosphere of these institutions with a peculiar blessing and light which

enable a man side by side to serve *Deen*, while living in the shade of that atmosphere. As regards the scanty salary one draws for service in these Deeni Institutions is not a remuneration for the work done; it is only a subsistence allowance. Allah grants grace and blessings for working for *Deen* on this scantly allowance.

The blessings of the teaching Profession

Now I am relating to you an experience of my own. I hope all my colleagues will support me about the truth of my statement. When I am busy with my classes, I am able to do more extra-curricular work than during the vacation of the Darul-Uloom. We all do chalk out programmes for work but we fail to complete the programmes during the vacations. I believe that this is by virtue of the blessed work of learning and teaching.

Student life ameliorates the Hereafter

This year two thousand eight hundred and fifty students are on the rolls in the Darul-Uloom. In addition, the number of students studying in the Qur'an schools in the city is over six thousand. In the *Hadith* classes there were one hundred and fifty-eight students who are now being awarded Degrees on the completion of their courses this year. Praise be to Almighty Allah that the honour of عالم (graduate) is now being conferred upon them. The people are now asking where shall all these *Ulama* (graduates) be accommodated? This reminds me of an event.

An event concerning
Hazrat M'aroof Karkhi رحمة الله عليه

Hazrat M'aroof Karkhi رحمة الله عليه was one of the most dignified friends of Allah who lies buried in the city of Baghdad. I have also had the honour of paying a visit to his tomb. It is related about him that once, when he was going along the bank of the River Tigris with his companions, a boat passed that way, on that boat were sailing some carefree young men. They were merry-making and enjoying music. When their boat passed by Hazrat M'aroof Karkhi رحمة الله عليه they cut jokes with the saint and his companions and directed ridiculing remarks against them. One of the saint's companions felt offended at the misbehaviour of these youngsters and requested the saint to curse them. Hazrat M'aroof Karkhi رحمة الله عليه raised his hands up and prayed thus for the merry-makers:

> O Allah! You have granted these young men the pleasures of the world. O Allah! Grant them the pelasures of the Hereafter also

On this the saint's companion began to say : O Sire ! Instead of cursing them you have prayed in their favour. In reply the saint observed: what have I lost? I have prayed in their favour for the pleasures of the Hereafter which shall come to them only when they have become Muslims and righteous in the true sense.

In short, those who come to the Madaris to receive religious education are in fact acting upon the policy of Hazrat M'aroof Karkhi رحمة الله عليه, that Allah may ameliorate the Hereafter of the other Muslim brothers just as He has ameliorated their world. These students come to these schools for the betterment of their own Hereafter and that of others. This is their career and these are their future

prospects. Allah does not spoil their future, so none need worry about them. We should, however, be anxious about our remaining firm and steadfast on our *Eeman* (belief). May Allah help us discharge the obligations which our *Eeman* imposes on us. *Aameen*!

The Income and expenditure of the Madaris

The annual expenditure of this Darul-Uloom runs into millions of Rupees for which no budget is prepared. I challenge you to show an establishment, other than Religious schools, incurring such huge expenditure which prepares no budget. Budget is prepared in establishments which have sure means of income. Budget forecasts are made with reference to the income. As for ourselves, we do not know what shall be our income during the ensuing year. So far we have never done anything on the basis of Budgets. People often ask what is the income to meet such huge annual expenditure of the Darul-Uloom. We have no permanent and sure means of income, except some bequeasts in the form of few houses the total annual rent of which amounts to Rupees 50 or 60 thousands only. Then the people ask about the source of the remaining expenditure. In reply we show our ignorance about it. This is the reality that we do not know how the expenditure is met.

So far this Darul Uloom is concerned, it does not resort to advertisements, nor any appeals addressed to the public. Even telephonic appeals are not made to any parties for financial help.

About fifteen days ago when I was setting off on a tour I was informed that the balance available is not sufficient for the month of Sha'ban. Even in that situation no complaint about it was made to anyone to suggest

financial assistance.

We depend on, and seek help from, Allah only

My respected father has, however, taught a very valuable lesson that if we are in financial difficulties we should seek Allah's assistance. Praise be to Allah that we follow this advice. I did not iniquire about the financial position even after my return, but by Allah's grace everything was going on smoothly. This is a charitable gift from my respected father and my Sheikh Hazrat Dr. Abdul Haiyee Sahib رحمة الله عليه.

We claim no credit for this. In fact if we depended on our own efforts, it would be impossible to run such a big Institution. It is Almighty Allah Who is running the Darul Uloom by His mercy and by virtue of the sincerity and the hearty supplication of these righteous and God-fearing saints.

This is a Deeni Madrasah and not a shop

My respected father had warned us saying: We have not opened a shop for which it is necessary that it should be going on profitably and continuously. Try to maintain and run it as long as you can do this according to the principles of honesty and the injunctions of the *Sharee'ah*. If you feel that in continuing the Institution further you will have to violate the principles of the *Sharee'ah* and disgrace our *Deen*, you should close it down. This is how our respected father advised us about it. Praise be to Allah that He has been running the Darul Uloom quite smoothly and successfully. You will not find this example in any other Institution of the world. This is a miraculous feat of Allah which anyone can see with his own eyes. It is, however, another matter that we are always prepared to

accept suggestions and proposals for the improvement and betterment of the Darul Uloom.

We are, therefore, not prepared to accept a proposal to change the existing pattern and programme. This can never happen as long as we are alive. If pressure is brought to bear upon us from any quarters in this behalf, there will be no alternative for us but to close it down. We, however, feel quite confident that such a crisis shall not come to pass and Exalted Allah shall run and maintain the Darul Uloom on its settled path and programme till the Day of Judgement.

It was necessary to bring to your notice this aspect concerning the Darul Uloom.

Know your worth

My dear student colleagues,

Mind carefully that after leaving the Darul Uloom, you shall enter a world which will welcome you with showers of taunts and pinching adverse remarks. However, you must remember that you are soldiers of the Army of the Holy Prophet ﷺ : you must fight your way to success as He ﷺ did with the help of Allah.

I advise you to imprint on your hearts a wise phrase which my elder saint Hazrat Sheikhul Hadith Maulana Muhammad Zakariya رحمة الله عليه uttered while sitting in this very mosque:

"طالب علمو! اپنی قدر پہچانو"

"O students ! Gknow your worth

Almighty Allah has favoured you with the wealth of knowledge and has chosen you for the service of His *Deen* (Islam).

These blessings and these honours are weightier

than the entire world. If you have in your heart the honour of your *Deen*, none can efface it, however, violently the worldly-wise ones may raise objections to you. When you enter upon your new worldly career with this firm belief, honour and success will greet you, provided that you first apply to your own lives the knowledge which you have acquired here and spread its light all over the world.

May Almighty Allah open for you at every step the gate of success and may He help us all to be steadfast on our *Deen* and to realize and acknowledge the value of this knowledge. May Almighty Allah be your helper and protector wherever you are. *Aameen*!

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمدللّٰہ رب العالمین

Venue : Jame 'Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal
Karachi

Date : 23th August 1996

SUFFERING, A BLESSING IN DISGUISE

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه و نستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرورانفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهد ان لا اله الاالله وحده لا شريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا و سندنا و نبينا و مولانا محمدا عبده و رسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه و على اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد!

فقد قال النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم:

اَشَدُّ النَّاسِ بَلاَءً اَلْاَنْبِيَآءُ ثُمَّ الْاَمْثَل فَالْاَ مْثَل

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and seek His forgiveness and believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our souls and from the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom He guides and there is none to guide

him whom He lets go astray. We bear witness that there is no god but Allah the One Who has no partner. We also bear witness that our sire, and our authority and our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him, his household and bless and salute them all in great abundance.

Glad tidings for the miserable

This *Hadith* contains good tidings for them who are facing various troubles and difficulties, yet they maintain their relationship with Allah and try to get rid of troubles and difficulties through supplications addressed to Allah for help and relief. The glad tidings in this *Hadith* for men concerned is that Almighty Allah has inflicted on them these troubles and difficulties out of His love and mercy and not out of His displeasure and anger.

There are two categories of miseries

Man becomes miserable and troubled on account of sickness, poverty, indebtedness, unemployment or household worries. These and all other troubles that assail man are of two categories. The first category of worries and troubles are those that fall on man by way of punishment and torture from Allah. Man shall taste the real taste of punishment for his sins and misdeeds in the Hereafter. However, sometimes Allah punishes the sinners in this world also. It has been said in the Holy Qur'an:

وَلَنُذِيْقَنَّهُمْ مِّنَ الْعَذَابِ الْاَدْنٰى دُوْنَ الْعَذَابِ الْاَكْبَرِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُوْنَ

(سورة السجدة : ٢١)

And surely We make them taste the lighter

punishment (of the world) before the heavier punishment (of the Hereafter), that they may perhaps return (to righteousness). (32:21)

In other words, Allah inflicts on the sinners only token punishments in this world also as a timely warning that they may give up their sins and take to piety and righteousness.

The second category of troubles and tortures are those which Allah inflicts on man with the intention of elevating his status and granting him reward and recompense in return for his troubles and worries suffered in this world.

Some "Troubles" descend from Allah on man as punishment

How to distinguish one category of troubles from the other category? Each category has its distinctive symptoms. There is a man who, while suffering from these troubles and worries, does not turn his attention to Allah. He begins to curse his destiny and gives up some of his routine rehearsals of Allah's names. Sometimes, he misses some of his daily *Salat*. He takes resort to all the necessary worldly measures to get out of his troubles and difficulties, but he does not turn to Allah in repentance and with supplications for relief. These symptoms are a clear indication that the man concerned is under Allah's displeasure and anger. May Allah save us all from this woe. *Aameen*!

"Troubles" are also due to Allah's mercy

There is a man who, in spite of his difficulties and worries, there is repentance to Allah, acknowledges his helplessness and prays to Allah in all sincerity and

humbleness for mercy and help. He has no grudge, and acutely the stroke of the mishap under which he is labouring, yet instead of cursing his fate, he turns to Allah with repentane and remembrance. He offers his *Salat* with greater sincerity, regularity and concentration. In the case of such a person these troubles, miseries and worries are a source of reward; they attract Allah's mercy; they are a sign of divine love and sympathy.

No man is free from Troubles and Worries

The natural phenomenon is that when a person loves anyone he tries to please his beloved and provides for him ease, comfort and happiness. According to this common formula Allah too shall provide ease and comfort to the person He loves. How is it that Allah inflicts with troubles, difficulties and worries the person whom He loves and befriends? The answer to this question is quite obvious. There is no one in this world, not even a King, a Prophet, a Sufi or a millionaire who is immune from these troubles, worries and hardships. Almighty Allah has so created and planned this world that, grief and joy, comfort and discomfort, health and sickness, etc. go together. This world is not a place of unmixed ease and joy nor a bed of Roses. Pure joy and happiness will be avilable only in Paradise. It has been said in the Holy Qur'an لاخوف عليهم ولا هم يحزنون i.e., (In Paradise) they will have neither fear nor grief. As regards the world, Allah has so created it that sometime a man will have joy and comfort and another time he will face grief and hardships. In the same way in this world there is alternations of hot and cold, shade and sunshine and similar vicissitudes of life. It is, therefore, impossible that a man should remain in this world free from worries and adversities. This is against the law of

nature and Allah's will.

A story full of morals

Hakeemul-Ummah Hazrat Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has related in one of his sermons the story of a man who happened to meet Hazrat Khizr عليه السلام He requested Hazrat Khizr عليه السلام to pray for him that he might remain safe and secure in his life from all sorts of grief, troubles, mishaps and hardships. Hazrat Khizr عليه السلام told the man that he could not suplicate to Allah for such a boon, as worldly life was full of such troubles, worries and grief. He, however, advised the man to go round the world to find out a person free from all the thorns of life and enjoying blissful existence. If he came across such a fortunate person then he (Hazrat Khizr عليه السلام) would supplicate to Allah to make the applicant like that fortunate person.

The man made a round of the world and his eyes fell upon a handsome jeweller rolling in gold, silver and precious stones. He had a well-decorated shop, a magnificent mansion and highly sophisticated means of comforts and luxuries. In addition, the jeweller had healthy and beautiful sons and daughters playing before him. Enchanted by the apparent pomp and show of this jeweller, the man desired to become like him. Before leaving the place it occurred to the man that he should ask the jeweller if he had any internal diseases, worries or troubles. The man, therefore, called upon the jeweller and explained to him his problem.

The jeweller took the man aside and told him that he was the most unfortunate man in the world. He then related to the stranger the sad story of his immoral wife and said that the handsome sons and daughters were illegitimate

issues. The jeweller said that he was the most wretched and tortuous existence of which not a single moment was free from inward fretting. The jeweller, therefore, advised the man not to become like him. The man then concluded his wandering, went back to Hazrat Khizr عليه السلام and told him that he could not find in the entire world a single soul free from troubles, hardships and worries whom he could desire to emulate. Hazrat Khizr عليه السلام repeated his earlier statement that none in this world was free and exempt from troubles, grief and worries. He, however, prayed that Allah would favour that man with peace, prosperity and contentment in life.

Allah has granted different types of wealth to different men

It is impossible for anyone in this world to be free from grief, troubles and hardships. Everyone is suffering from one worry or another in varying degrees. Almighty Allah has planned the affairs of this universe in such a way that upon one person He has bestowed the wealth of worldly riches and upon another the bounty of health. Someone is well-off economically, but care-ridden mentally and inwardly. These instances of afflictions peculiar to, and different in, each individual case can be multiplied. It has already been explained that it is up to man to turn these hardships and troubles into torments or blessings according to his attitude towards them.

Why should a favourite servant of Allah be burdened with cares and worries?

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said in a *Hadith*:

اذا احب الله عبدا صب عليه البلاء صبا

When Allah loves some servant He showers on him torrents of calamities and trials.

When the Angels inquire from Allah the cause of this strange treatment of His favourite servants, Allah replies to them, saying: Let him remain in this condition, weeping and seeking for help, as I like this begging and suplications from him. This *Hadith* is weak in its authority but there are many *Ahadith* to the same effect.

According to another *Hadith*, Allah asks His Angels to go to His servant and entangle him in some trial because He is pleased with his weeping and crying for mercy and help. The secret of this strange treatment of Allah with His beloved servant lies in the fact that Allah desires to convert the troubles and trials of His servant into everlasting peace and comfort and elevate his status in the Hereafter by purging him of the filth of his sins committed in the worldly life.

Prizes for those who are patient and forbearing

None can be dearer to Allah in this world than His Prophets عليهم السلام there is *Hadith* saying:

اشد الناس بلاء الا نبياء ثم الامثل فالا مثل

The most severely burdened with calamities (in this world) are the Prophets عليهم السلام, then those who come next to them in righteousness and Prophetic conduct.

Just look at Hazrat Ibrahim عليه السلام, bearing the title of *Khalilul-laah* (Allah's friend). Trimendous calamities and huge misfortunes fell on him. He was flung into fire, was commanded to kill his son (Hazrat Ismael عليه السلام) and abandon his family in a dry, desolate territory. In short, he

was subjected to great trials and triublations. He was afflicted with these hardships and calamities that his status may be elevated. When the people will receive their rewards and prizes from Allah on the Day of Judgement they will realize that the trials and tribulations they suffered in the world were nothing as compared with these prizes and returns. The people will forget the hardships they endured in the world. It occurs in a *Hadith* that when Allah shall compensate in the Hereafter those who suffered tortures and troubles with patience in their worldly lives, others beholding these prizes and awards will desire if their skins had been cut to pieces and they had endured their ordeals with patience in order to become entitled to those prizes and grants.

A most suitable example of hardship

Hazrat Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has compared these sufferings to some ailment in a person's body for the cure of which the Doctors have advised surgical operation. The patient is well aware that the Surgeon shall make incision in his body with a lancet on account of which he will suffer great pain and discomfort. Notwithstanding this the patient requests the Surgeon for performing an operation without delay for which he is ready to pay the Surgeon handsome fees. Why is he doing this? The patient knows that the pain he will suffer on account of the operation is nothing as compared with the expected cure which will relieve him permanently of the tortures he has been enduirng. Thus, the Surgeon ready to cut his body with his lancet is a benefactor of the patient, as his action apparently cruel, is expected to bring relief and cure to the patient.

Exactly in the same way when Allah afflicts

someone with troubles, worries and hardships, He is performing an operation on him in order to cure him of his sins, so that he may appear before Allah in the Hereafter, pure and purified.

Another example

You may have a beloved whom you have not met for a long time and are anxious to see him. He suddenly comes and grasps you from the back and squeezes you with force-with such a force that you feel pain in your ribs. You want to get rid of his hold but the person who is your beloved tells you that he is your beloved and, if you feel pain by his grasp, he is going to relax his grasp and grasp someone else. If you are true in your love, you will desire your beloved to grasp you even with a greater pressure, because you had been waiting for him for a long time. On this occasion you will recite this Persian couplet:

نہ شود نصیبِ دشمن کہ شود ہلاک تیغت
سرِ دوستاں سلامت کہ تو خنجر آزمائی

The idea expressed in this couplet is that:
A true lover will never like that even the tyrannies perpetrated by the beloved should be the lot of anyone other than the lover.

Those who recite انا لله (We belong to Allah) when afflicted with hardships

When some hardship falls on a servant from Allah He elevates his status, if he turns to Allah in repentance and submission. Almighty Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوْعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْاَمْوَالِ وَالْاَنْفُسِ
وَالثَّمَرٰتِ ط وَبَشِّرِ الصّٰبِرِيْنَ ○ الَّذِيْنَ اِذَآ اَصَابَتْهُمْ مُّصِيْبَةٌ قَالُوْٓا اِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَاِنَّـا

اِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُوْنَ ۝ اُولٰٓئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوٰتٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ ۖ وَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُوْنَ ۝ (سورة البقرة: ۱۵۵ : ۱۵۷)

And surely We shall try you with something of fear and hunger, and loss of wealth and lives and crops, and give glad tidings to the steadfast, who say when misfortune falls on them: We belong to Allah and we shall indeed return to Him. Such are they on whom are blessings from Allah and they are the rightly guided ones. (2:155-157)

Anyway, it must be noted that it is Allah's system and practice that sometimes He inflicts His righteous servants with hardships and misfortunes with the intention of elevating their status and position in the Hereafter.

We put to trouble our friends

My respected father Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to recite this Persian couplet in a state of deep enthusiasm:

ما پروریم دشمن و ما می کشیم دوست
کس را چوں و چرا نہ رسد در قضاءِ ما

Almighty Allah says that sometimes He cherishes the enemy and kills the friend. There is none to take exceptions to His decree.

It is becuase Alah alone Knows the expedients of His actions and decisions.

A Unique story

Hazrat Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has mentioned in one of his sermons that there were two persons in a city lying on their death-beds. One of them was a Muslim and

the other a Jew. The Jew desired to eat fish which was not available in the vicinity. The Muslim desired to eat olive oil. Allah called two Angels and commanded one of them to procure fish for the Jew that he could satisfy his desire. As regards the dying Muslim, sufficient quantity of olive oil was available. Allah commanded the other Angel to go and destroy the olive oil. The Angels proceeded on their missions, but both happened to meet each other and inquired about their respective missions. They were each at a loss to understand why each had been sent on an opposite mission. Anyway, each discharged his mission.

When they came back after having discharged their missions, they requested Allah to let them know why the desire of the Muslim who was an obedient believer was not fulfilled although olive oil was available with him, whereas the desire of the Jew was fufilled by procuring fish for him. Almighty Allah told the Angels that they did not know the wisdom underlying His actions. Allah explained to them that He treated the infidels and the Muslims differently. The infidels also do good deeds in this world in the form of charity, opening schools and building asylums. Their good deeds are not acceptable in the Hereafter, but they are repaid for their good deeds in this world. As regards the believers, Allah desires to punish them for their sins in this world, so that they may face Allah in the Hereafter free from sins and vices.

That is why, said Allah, the Jew was compensated for his good deeds in this world. Only one good deed remained to be compensated which was compensated by fulfilling his desire to eat fish. As for the Muslim, all his sins had been washed off during his sickness. only one sin remained against him which was washed off by refusing to fulfil his desire to eat olive oil at the time of his death

so that he should appear before Allah free and purified from all sins.

Who can find out the wisdom underlying Allah's actions? Our intellectual capacity is too limited to understand the secret and wisdom at the back of Allah's acts and decisions. Almighty Allah is running the workshop of this vast universe with His wisdom and prudence which is not possible for man to understand and envisage.

The calamities coming down from Allah are forced *Mujahadat* (strivings)

My Sheikh, Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hayee Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say that in the olden days when a disciple surrendered himself to spiritual guide for spiritual training and reform, the disciple was subjected to very hard *Mujahadat* (strivings) and disciplines which were not compulsory but were optional. Now such strenuous and hard disciplines and exercises have been abandoned. Allah has, however, not deprived these disciples of the benefit of such *Mujahadat*. Such trainees are subjected to forced and compulsory disciplines. The progress made under these *Mujahadat* is quicker, more lasting and effective. Compulsory disciplines are imposed by Allah Himself in the shape of difficulties, worries, hardships and sickness, etc. The progress made under these forced *Mujahadat* is quicker, more lasting and effective.

There were no optional *Mujahadat* in the lives of the Noble Companions رضى الله عنهم. For example, they did not have to resort to intentional starvation, self-denial or self-torture, but we find in their lives frequent forced *Mujahadat*. As a punishment for reciting the Article of Faith لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله they were forced to lie on burning sand, blocks of stones were placed on their chests. They

were subjected to untold tortures and tyrannies for cooperating with and supporting the Holy Prophet ﷺ. All these ordeals were forced *Mujahadat* on account of which the status of the Noble Companions رضى الله عنهم was elevated to such heights that a non-companion cannot even dream of approaching them. So forced *Mujahadat* are conducive to speedier achievement of success. Thus, these troubles, hardships and worries which we take as calamities and misfortunes are really forced spiritual disciplines and they reflect Allah's mercy and love for His servant.

A third example of hardships

Take the example of a small child who feels afraid of being given a bath or having his hands and face washed, because he experiences discomfort in cleaning and washing operations. The mother, however, performs these hygienic operations on her child, in spite of his protests, because she knows that cleanliness is indispensable for the child's health. On the other hand in his ignorance, the child feels that the mother is torturing him. At this moment the child, in his innocence feels disgusted with the mother's handling of him so roughly, but later the child will feel with gratitude that the mother's actions were in the best interest of his well-being and good health and her behaviour with her innocent child was based only on affection and pure love. So does Allah subject His servants to cleaning operations.

A fourth example

The parents of a small child get his child admitted to a school and take care to send him to school regularly, even the child frets and protests vehemently against this drill which is undesirable to him and regards the school as

a jail. It is, however, in the best interest of the child that he should be sent to school even by force, if necessary. After getting the age of sense and understanding he will realize that if his parents had not taken pains in sending him to school for education he would not have found himself today among the educated and respectable class of the society.

In the same way, as these examples show, Allah sends down on his servants hardships, misfortunes and worries to raise up their status provided he turns during these trials to Allah in repentance and gratitude for these afflictions. Thus, these hardships and troubles are Allah's mercy in disguise.

The ordeals that fell on Hazrat Ayyub عليه السلام

Just consider for a while the sufferings of Hazrat Ayyub عليه السلام. To what a horrible disease he was subjected ! Satan visited him in this condition and told him that the malady was due to his sins which was inflicted on him because of Allah's displeasure. In addition, he put forward his proofs in support of his allegations. On this occasion he debated with Hazrat Ayyub عليه السلام.

Hazrat Ayyub عليه السلام counteracted Satan's argument by saying: It is wrong to allege that this disease is due to Alalh's displeasure on account of my sins. In fact, the ordeal of the disease is a token of love and favour towards me from my Allah. I do invoke Allah to cure this disease, but I do not complain against Him for the disease. At the same time I do not object to the disease which has been sent down to me by Allah, nor do I ask why my Allah has inflicted me with this disease. I always turn to Allah in repentance and submit to Him the Qur'anic *Du'a* (Supplication).

أَنِّي مَسَّنِيَ الضُّرُّ وَأَنتَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ (سورة الانبياء : ٨٣)

(And Job, when he cried to his Lord, saying):
O my Lord adversity has touched me; indeed, and You are the Most Merciful of all who show mercy. (21:83)

Hazrat Ayyub عليه السلام added saying:

My invoking Allah is a favour from Him. When He has caused me to turn to Him in repentance, it is quite clear that this misforune too is a sign of His Mercy and love.

The sign to indicate that a particular hardship is a Mercy from Allah

In the ordeal of Hazrat Ayyub عليه السلام there are signs to indicate which hardship comes as a punishment due to Allah's anger and displeasure and which one is a favour and mercy from Allah. In the first case the man afflicted with the hardships begins to murmur and complain and raise objections to Allah and does not turn to Him in repentance. In the other case the man's conduct is just the opposite. He prays to Allah to relieve him of the hardship which is too severe for a weak and helpless man like him to bear.

So at the time of a suffering when a man is enabled to turn to Allah in repentance for help he should believe that the hardship is a mercy from Allah and ultimately it will be a source of goodness for the sufferer in this world as well as in the Hereafter. If the hardship had struck the sufferer as a sign of Allah's displeasure and anger, he would not have been enabled to turn to Allah in repentance with submissiveness.

Whenever a man becomes inclined to turn to Allah in times of hardships and calamities, the calamity should be regarded as a mercy from Allah.

The sign of the acceptance of a *Du'a* (supplication)

Sometimes it so happens that a hardship falls on a man and on that account the afflicted man turns to Allah, praying for relief but the hardship is not lifted from him and his prayer for relief appears to have been ignored. How is it so ? The reply to this question lies in the fact that when a man is enabled under very pressing circumstances to turn to Allah, begging recovery and relief then this is a sign that the *Du'a* (supplication) has been accepted. In the case of rejection of the supplication the sufferer would not have been enabled to turn to Allah with this supplication for relief. In such a situation the sufferer shall get two rewards - a reward for his suffering and another for submitting his supplication to Allah. In addition to this he shall get a reward for each repetition of his supplication. Maulana Rumi رحمة الله عليه has very aptly expressed this idea in the following line in Persian:

گفت آں "اللہ" تو لبیک ماست

When My servant utters My name "Allah" then his very uttering of My name is a sign that I have accepted his call.

Thus, being enabled by Allah to put forward to Him an appeal for help is a sign that the appeal has been granted. It, however, depends on Allah's wisdom and prudence how long He should let the hardship last and when be lifted. By nature man is hasty and wants prompt relief, but the delay in relief is elevating his status in the sight of Allah. He should, therefore, refrain from murmuring and complaining against his suffering. He should, however, remain praying to Allah for relief till the trouble is lifted from him.

An event that happened to Hazrat Haji Imdaduallah Sahib رحمة الله عليه

Man should never desire that he should be tried with hardships, but when they befall him, he should accept them with patience without making complaints against them. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has himself sought refuge with Allah from hardships. In one supplication he ﷺ has said: O Allah, I seek refuge with You from serious diseases and ailments. When diseases actually fell on him, he ﷺ took them as a favour for him ﷺ, but prayed to Allah for relief from the disease. Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has related a story in one of his sermons about Haji Imdadullah Sahib رحمة الله عليه that once the latter was speaking in his assembly on this topic. He said that all hardships that come down from Allah are mercy and bounty, provided the person concerned recognises the value of the hardships and turns to Allah in repentance and humble submission. A man came to the assembly who was suffering from leprosy which had made his body rotten. The man requested the saint to pray to Allah for cure from the heinous disease. Haji Sahib رحمة الله عليه had just then told the assembly that all sufferings are mercy from Allah. They wondered what reply Haji Sahib was going to give to the man. Haji Sahib raised up his hands for supplication and spoke out the following words:

> O Allah, the disease with which this man has been afflicted is also a sign of Your mercy. but on account of our weakness we are not able to bear this form of your mercy. So O Allah, I pray to You to convert the blessing of this disease into the blessing of cure and health for this man.

This supplication reveals the understanding of *Deen* which is acquired from the company of Godly men.

The essence of the *Hadith*

Any way, the essence of this *Hadith* is that when Allah loves anyone of His servants He subjects him to some trial, as He appreciates his bewailing, weeping and crying for Divine help. Thereafter, in return for this ordeal Allah elevates his status and forgives his sins. It is our duty in the first instance to seek refuge with Allah from such ordeals, hardships and sicknesses and if ordeals, hardships fall on us we should seek help from Allah and turn to Him in repentance and submission.

When a hardship befalls anyone the victim should display humbleness

It is related about some saints that when they were afflicted with hardships they groaned and expressed the pains they suffered from their sufferings. This attitude indicates apparently the show of impatience and complaint against their afflictions, although such attitude has been forbidden. The answer to this objection is implied in the *Hadith* itself. The righteous and favoured servants of Allah do not murmur and complain against their hardships. They claim that they have been afflicted with hardships so that they could express before Allah their helplessness, servitude and their humbleness and they should also groan in their suffering. They do so, because they realize that Alalh tries them with the hardships in order to hear groans and see their depressed condition and their wailing. They say that it is not right to express courage and defiance on such occasions.

The account of a righteous man

My respected father Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه related to us the account of a righteous man

who fell sick and another righteous man called on him to inquire after his health. He saw that the patient was rehearsing the words الحمد لله ، الحمد لله (Praise be to Allah). The visitor said: It is very nice that you are expressing gratitude to Allah, but it is also necessary that you should groan during your sickness; you cannot recover from the sickness unless you give vent to your suffering by your groans. Allah has afflicted you with this sickness that you may bewail your sickness and express your helplessness before Him. Servitude demands that a man should not display before Allah his boldness and defiance. He should rather show his helplessness and pray to Alalh to grant him cure, as he was weak and unable to endure the impacts of the sickness. My late elder brother Zaki Kaifi used to compose good poetry. He has expressed this idea very beautifully in one of his couplets:

اس قدر بھی ضبطِ غم اچھا نہیں
توڑنا ہے حسن کا پندار کیا

when some hardship falls on man from Allah it is not good to suppress the pain and grief to such a degree that the effect of the suffering is not visible from his face and his behaviour. This is the display of a sort of boldness before Allah, as if the sufferer was throwing a challenge to Allah.

The best policy is to express on such occasions one's helplessness and humbleness before Almighty Allah.

An event full of morals

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has related the account of a pious man from whose mouth the following sentence

escaped, while addressing Allah:

لیس لی فی سواك حظٌ

فکیف ماشئت فاختبرنی

O Allah : I am not interested in anyone other than You. You may test this claim of mine in any manner You like.

This is, as if this man is throwing a challenge to Allah to test him as it pleases Him. As a result, the passage of his urine was blocked and his bladder was puffed up with urine. He remained in this painful condition for many days. At last he felt the nonsense of his claim. His profession was to teach small children. In this condition he asked his pupils to utter these words: اُدعُوا لِعمّك الکذّاب Pray for your liar uncle that Allah may relieve him of this disease, because he had made a false claim. Almighty Allah showed him that the man's claim that he had no interest in anything, except Allah was false as his interest lay in the urine and not in Allah. All should know that expression of boldness and bravery do not stand before All Powerful, All-Knowing Allah.

The golden mean, therefore, consists in the principle that when hardships and worries fall on a person he should neither make complaint against them, nor should he make a show of boldness and defiance. This is the principle of the *Sunnah*.

The conduct of the Holy Prophet ﷺ during periods of distress

Hazrat A'yishah رضی اللہ عنہا has narrated that when the Holy Prophet ﷺ was on his death-bed he frequently put his sacred hand into water and rubbed the wet hand on his blessed face and at the same time he ﷺ expressed the torture he was undergoing. Seeing her father ﷺ in this

condition Hazrat Fatimah رضی اللہ عنہا uttered these words:

واکـــرب ابـــاه

Oh, how distressed is my father !

The Holy Prophet ﷺ re-acted to this, saying:

لا کـرب ابـیـك بـعـد الیـــوم

Your father will face no distress after this day.

Now see that the Holy Prophet ﷺ gave vent to his distress, yet he did not make any complaint against it. Instead, he ﷺ indicated thereby the everelasting peace and comfort of the Hereafter.

When the son of the Holy Prophet ﷺ Hazrat Ibrahim رضی اللہ عنہ passed away, he ﷺ expressed his grief, saying:

انا بفراقك یا ابراهیم لمحزونون

O Ibrahim, we are very much grieved on occount of your separation.

It is narrated that the Prophet's daughter, Hazrat Zainab's child was in his lap when the child was dying. Drops of tears rolled down his cheeks. This conduct of the Holy Prophet ﷺ reflects an expression of servitude and total surrender to Allah and unqualified faith in the Truth and inevitability of the Divine Decree. The Holy Prophet ﷺ did realize that Almighty Allah subjects His servants to trials, tribulations, troubles and worries that they may express their humbleness and helplessness before Allah by weeping and shedding tears.

The *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ lays down that on being inflicted with hardships, difficulties and worries the sufferer should display neither complaint nor boldness. He should, instead, address Allah in the following words:

O Allah relieve me of this trouble and misfortune, by Your grace.

In a nutshell, this is the correct interpretation of the *Hadith*. May Allah grant us a correct understanding of this point and help us to act upon it. *Aameen*!

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame 'Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi
Date : 17th May 1996

STICK TO HALAL (LAWFUL) SOURCE OF INCOME

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه و نستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرورانفسنا ومن سيئات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهدان لا اله الاالله وحده لا شريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا و سندنا و نبينا و مولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله ... صلى الله تعالى عليه و على اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

امابعد:-

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم:

من رزق فى شَيْءٍ فليلزمه مَنْ جُعِلَتْ معيشة فى شَيْءٍ فلا ينتقل عنه حتى يتغير عليه(كنزا لعمال حديث نمبر ٩٢٨٦). اتحاف السادة المتقين ٤:٢٨٧)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and seek His forgiveness and believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with

Him from the evils of our souls and from the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom He guides and there is none to guide him whom He lets go astray. We bear witness that there is no god but Allah the One Who has no partner. We also bear witness that our sire, and our authority and our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him, his household and bless and salute them all in great abundance.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in this *Hadith*:

A man should stick to the job from which he is earning his livelihood. He should not give up that job with his own will and option without any justification, nor seek his livelihood from any other job. He is, however, free to change his job when the circumstances become unfavourable to him or the job is lost for no fault of him.

The Means of Livelihood Depend on Allah's Dispensation

When Almighty Allah has appointed a man, his means of livelihood and he is engaged on that, he should not give it up without any justification. He must pursue it unless it slips out of his hands by itself or unfavourable circumstances arise under which it becomes difficult for him to continue the job. As the job a man is doing has been specially allotted to him out of so many jobs, it should be regarded as a gift of Allah and should not be given up without justification.

The systems of employment and livelihood are linked with Divine dispensation

Just see that Almighty Allah has appointed a wonderful system of employment and livelihood for His creation. Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

نَحْنُ قَسَمْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ مَعِيْشَتَهُمْ فِى الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا ج (الزخرف: ٤٣)

We have apportioned among them their livelihood in the worldly life. (43:32)

For apportioning the livelihood among the people in this world, Allah has created the natural law of Demand and Supply. Man stands in need of diverse necessaries and comforts of life which cannot be enumerated. It ws not possible for the Economic experts of the world to create a class of suppliers to estimate and supply the untold needs of the consumers and maintain the law of Demand and Supply in Equilibrium. It is indeed Allah's miraculous and wonderful sustaining power and ability that as soon as a man needs anything he finds a supplier in the market waiting for customers. So, if the needy customer has the necessary money in his pocket he can purchase his requirements from the market on paying the price. This is a divinely oriented system which man could never invent.

An Astonishing instance of apportionment of sustenance

My late brother Mr. Zaki Kaifi - may Allah forgive him - had benefited by the company of Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه. He said one day that sometimes Allah displays in the business sphere such miraculous and wondrous work of His Personality as a sustainer and provider that man cannot help bowing before Him in gratitude and admiration.

My late brother was keeping in Lahore a book-shop of

religious books under the name of "Idara-e-Islamiat". One day when he intended to go to his shop, he found that it was raining heavily and he thought that it would be useless to go to the market and open the shop on that rainy day when normal life had become awfully upset and disturbed and no cutstomer would be expected to call at the shop for shopping at such an inopportune and inconvenient time. Moreover, books are not a necessity of life and particularly religious books. Man thinks of purchasing books only when he has satisfied all his other needs of life.

In the meantime it occured to him that Allah had made the shop the means of his livelihood and it was, therefore, his duty to open it, irrespective of that any customer visited the shop or not. He, therefore, took his umbrella and made for the shop, opened it and began to recite the Holy Qur'an. He was surprised to see that many customers putting on their rain-coats visited that shop and purchased books which could be studied only at ease and in spare times. The result was that the sale on that rainy day was almost equal to the sales on other normal days. How could this happen? An inner voice seemed to whisper to my brother that it was Allah, the Sustainer Lord, Who inspired my brother to open the shop and inspired the customers to visit his shop and purchase books therefrom. Thus, the party needing money and the party needing books both came in contact with each other. This is only Allah's doing and man has no hand in it. No scheming or planning can work such a miracle.

It is The Divinely Set system that the Night is for rest and the Day is for work

My respected father Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه asked us to consider how all men fall into sound

sleep in the nights and are up and doing work in the days. Was this cycle of sleeping in nights and working in days devised in some international conference held by men of all nations. No, it could never be so. It is Allah's command to rest in nights and work during days and in confromity with this. He has moulded man's nature and temperament. He has said in the Holy Qur'an:

وَجَعَلْنَا الَّيْلَ لِبَاسًا ٥ وَّ جَعَلْنَا النَّهَارَ مَعَاشًا (سورة النبأ ١٠-١١)

We have appointed the night as a covering; and have appointed the day for (earning) livelihood.(78: 10-11)

The word covering used in the verse stands for darkness during which men as well as many animals and birds are by nature disposed to fall into sleep. If the sleeping and working hours had been left to the discretion of men there would have been a great confusion and chaos in life, some sleeping and some working at the same time. As a result, there would be neither concerted hours of sleep nor concerted hours of work. The result of this topsy-turvy condition of life can better be imagined than described. In such a hopeless state of affairs the civilisation of the world would not have been as we see it today. Allah has done a great favour to His creation by creating night and day for rest and for work respectively.

Do not close upon yourself the door of livelihood

Likewise, Almighty Allah has Himself planned the system of man's livelihood and has allotted to everyone some job to earn his livelihood. If the income is lawful and is accruing to you with peace and ease do not give it up without justification, because it is a gift from Allah and, may be, that the livelihood of many others is linked

with your job and you may be an important part of the machinery of living and livelihood. You are, therefore, advised not to give up your existing job of your own sweet will. However, if unfavourable circumstances arise that no income accrues to you despite all efforts made, there is no harm in giving up that unprofitable job.

That is a gift from Allah

My Sheikh Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to recite this couplet frequently:

چیزے کہ بے طلب رسد آں دادہ خدا است
او را تو رد مکن کہ فرستادۂ خدا ست

When anything comes to you without asking for it, it is a gift from Allah. So, do not turn it down because it has been sent down to you by Almighty Allah

In short you should stick to the job from which you are presently earning your livelihood, unless adverse and unbearable conditions arise which you cannot cope with.

Allah is the fountainhead for every thing

Explaining the meaning of this *Hadith* Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has said:

This is how the learned saints have interpreted the events that occur to a servant of Allah by Allah's will. The reality underlying these events becomes known from the event themselves. After receiving this knowledge about the reality, the learned saints do not try to effect any change in the events on their own accord. So far as the people are concerned these events are like self-evident, rather like tangible facts which they take into consideration in their dealings and affairs.

Whatever has been mentioned in this *Hadith* is directly concerned with the question of livelihood. Yet the saints have interpreted it to mean that a man should not try to effect any change in whatever Allah has granted him in the form of knowledge, dealings with the creatures of Allah or the like. He should accept these grants with grace and stick to them to the best of his ability.

Why did Hazrat Usman Ghani رضی الله عنه not relinquish the Caliphate ?

The tragedy of the martyrdom of Hazrat Usman Ghani رضی الله عنه is a well known historical event. During the closing period of his Caliphate a storm of opposition was stirred against him. Hazrat Usman Ghani رضی الله عنه has himself related the events, saying:

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has informed me that Allah shall put on me a shirt. He ﷺ has advised me not to put off that shirt of my own sweet will. The shirt predicted in the *Hadith* is the seat of the Caliphate and I shall not relinquish this seat.

That is why Hazrat Usman Ghani رضی الله عنه neither relinquished the seat of Caliphate nor did he take up the sword against the rebels, nor did he issue orders to uproot them totally. He ﷺ took this stand, notwithstanding the fact that he رضی الله عنه was the Commander of Faithful امیرالمؤمنین and the Ruling Caliph with a large Army under his command. If he had so willed, he could have taken up the sword against the rebels, but he did not do so, because the rebels and those posed to attack him رضی الله عنه were also Muslims. He did not want to become the first man to take up the sword against the Muslims. That is why neither he relinquished the seat of the Caliphate nor did he fight against the rebels. As such, he preferred to be confined

within the bounds of his house until he became a martyr. He accepted the honour of becoming a martyr but he did not relinquish the seat of Caliphate. This is the point to which Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has drawn attention saying: When Almighty Allah has entrusted to you a job, hold fast to it and do not give it up of your own free will.

The attribute of service to Humanity is a Divine Gift

If Almighty Allah has prescribed for you some path for serving the *Faith* without your asking for it, that path should not be abandoned without justification, because being a gift from Allah it contains light and blessing. Likewise, it is the duty of the learned saints to accept with open hearts whatever events and incidents descend to them from Allah. Sometime Allah bestows some special honour and status on a saint or a religious scholar to whom the public turns for cooperation, help or advice in a worldly or religious problem. This is an honour and status which has been granted to him by none but Allah. So the fortunate saint should not discontinue this service of his own sweet will rather continue it as a duty entrusted to him by Allah.

For example, sometime Allah confers on some member of a clan a leading position to whom the other members of the clan refer their differences for settlement and difficulties for solution or seek his advice on important issues confronting them. The leader should not feel disgusted with the responsibility placed on his shoulders. He should discharge his responsibility as a duty entrusted to him by Allah and this is a very honourable status. This idea has very aptly been expressed in this Urdu couplet:

جا کے جسے عالم اسے جا سمجھو
زبانِ خلق کو نقارۂ خدا سمجھو

The idea of the couplet may be expressed by saying that the opinion formed about someone by the majority of a community should be regarded as a divine declaration.

Thus, this is a very honourable status which should be accepted with grace and the responsibilities attached to it should be discharged as a matter of honour and dignity and as a duty entrusted to the trustee by Almighty Allah.

An account of the ordeal of Hazrat Ayyub عليه السلام

Once Hazrat Ayyub عليه السلام was taking bath when all of a sudden gold butterflies began to fall down. Giving up the bath, Hazrat Ayyub عليه السلام began to collect the gold butterflies. Seeing this Almighty Allah asked Ayyub عليه السلام: O Ayyub! Did I not made you rich by granting you wealth and money? Why are you collecting these gold buterflies? Hazrat Ayyub عليه السلام answered the questions, saying: Yes , O Allah! You have bestowed upon me wealth in such abundance that I find it impossible to render thanks for this grant adequately. I cannot, however, close my eyes on wealth which has come to me from You in the form of gold butterflies without my asking for it - O Allah, when You are granting me something of Your own sweet will, it is my bounden duty to rush to it like a needy person.

In fact, Hazrat Ayyub عليه السلام was not interested in the gold that was raining down from the heaven in the form of the gold butterflies. His eyes were concentrated on the divine hand from which that wealth was coming down. This anecdote provides a useful moral for all of us that when some gift comes to us from a Great Merciful Personality, we must accept it with gratitude and humble

submission like needy persons.

An event of demanding more money as Eid Gift

My respected father, Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to distribute Eid-money among all his sons on the occasions of Eid festival. It was our habit to demand increase in the amount of the Eid money owing to the increase of dearness in the country. As a reaction to this demand my father would say by way of jest: You are all dacoits!

Just see! we were all earning members, quite well off, yet we demanded increase. Our eyes were not concentrated on these few chips, but were concentrated on the auspicious hands through which they came. When this attitude is adopted towards a scanty gift from a father what should be our attitude torwards the Monarch of Monarchs? Being His most humble servants we should submit our requests to Him as humble needy beggars and when anything comes to us from Him without our asking, we should receive it with due submission and gratitude like needy beggars without showing any indifference and pride. Consider the meaning of this Persian couplet:

چوں طمع خواہد ز من سلطان دیں
خاک بر فرقِ قناعت بعد ازیں

When Allah, the King of *Deen* desires that His servant should display greed (for His gift), then fling away the attribute of contentedness.

To sum up the discussion, hold fast to the job which Allah has entrusted to you and do not give it up on your own accord, as it is a gift from Allah. However, if unfavourable circumstances arise which compel you to relinquish the job or some elderly righteous person from your relations or well-wishers advises you to give up that

job, you may accept his advice and give up the job. This is a very important turn in your life, so you should not take a hasty decision on this issue.

Summary

If you get anything without asking you should beleive that it is a gift from Almighty Allah. You should never make light of this Divine Gift. This important, rather very important, point has been expressed very beautifully in the following Persian couplet:

چیزے کہ بے طلب رسد آں دادۂ خدا ست
او را تو ردّ مکن کہ فرستادۂ خدا ست

This Persian couplet has been cited earlier also. It means: When anything comes to you without your asking for it, it is a gift from Allah. So do not turn it down because it has been sent down to you by Almighty Allah.

Such God-given gifts must be accepted with gratitude provided that it is lawful. Degrading it and turning it donw may involve you in grievous curse and woe. Likewise, if Allah has entrusted some job to anyone, you should stick to it and should not give it up, unless compelled by unavoidable circumstances over which you have no control. If Almighty Allah favoured you with a leading position in your community and the people look to you for cooperation, advice and help, do not disappoint them, but serve them with a good grace with the belief that Allah, has, in His Mercy, chosen you for this position of trust and dignity.

May Allah help us all in understanding *Deen* rightly and act upon the injunctions of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, accordingly. *Aameen*!

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد للہ رب العالمین

Venue : Jame' Masjid
Orlando, Florida
U.S.A.
Date : 24th April 1992

THE EVIL OF INTEREST-BASED ECONOMY

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه و نستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهد ان لا اله الاالله وحده لا شريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا و سندنا و نبينا و مولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله ..صلى الله تعالى عليه و على اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد!

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطٰن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

يَمْحَقُ اللّٰهُ الرِّبٰوا وَيُرْبِى الصَّدَقٰتِ (سورة البقرة:٢٧٦)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم وصدق رسوله النبى الكريم ونحن على ذلك من الشاهدين والشاكرين والحمد لله رب العالمين

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and seek His forgiveness and believe

in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our souls and from the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom He guides and there is none to guide him whom He lets go astray. We bear witness that there is no god but Allah the One Who has no partner. We also bear witness that our sire, and our authority and our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him, his household and bless and salute them all in great abundance.

Allah has blighted Usury and made almsgiving fruitful (2: 276)

The Holy Qur'an has declared that Usury is the most heinous of all sins, saying : "And if you do not (give up Usury), then be warned of war (against you) from Allah and His Messenger." Such severe declaration of war has not been by Allah against any other sin, e.g., such declaration has not been made against drunkards of wine, eaters of pork, those who commit adultery or against thieves and robbers. As regards the eaters of Usury, a war has been declared against them from Allah and His Messenger ﷺ.

The difficulties which the Muslims of the Western world are facing

My respected brothers and sisters!

The topic selected for this session of today is concerned with Usury (interests). In the Urudu language it is called سود (sood) and in English it is called Interest or Usury. This subject has been chosen because the usurious system is in vogue in the entire world, but most

transactions are based on usury in the Western world where you are living. The Muslims are, therefore, confronting this problem at every step as to how they should get rid of usury or interest in their transactions.

Apart from this all sorts of misunderstandings are being spread among the people that the interest that has pervaded our economic activities and dealings is not in reality forbidden, because this, as they claim is not included in the Usury which has been defined and forbidden in the Holy Qur'an. I have, therefore, been called upon to place before you the basic facts about interest in the light of the Qur'an and the *Ahadith* and the existing conditions in the society.

Declaration of war against those who are involved in Usurious dealings

The first thing to note clearly and understand it well is that Almighty Allah has declared Usury as the worst of all sins. The very stern words used in the Holy Qur'an for usury have not been for drinking wine, eating pork, adultery, etc. The Qur'an says:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَذَرُوْا مَا بَقِيَ مِنَ الرِّبٰٓوا اِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ o فَاِنْ لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوْا فَاْذَنُوْا بِحَرْبٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهٖ (سورة البقرة: ٢٧٦)

O you who believe be God-fearing and give up what remains (due to you) from usury, if you are believers. And if you do not do so, then be warned of war (against you) from Allah and His Messenger. (2: 278-279)

As mentioned earlier Allah has not declared war in respect of any other sin, but a war has been declared from Allah and His Messenger against those who are involved

in usurious dealings. Why has such a stern warning been issued against the eaters of usury? Details will be furnished soon.

What is the meaning of Usury?

Let us first try to understand the meaning of usury. At the time usury was forbidden by the Qur'an, usurious transactions were widely in vogue among the Arabs, At that time usury was that amount which was settled to be paid in addition to the amount of a loan given to a borrower. For example, I lend someone a sum of Rs. 100/- today on the Condition that the borrower shall repay me a sum of 102/- after a month. Now this additional amount of Rs. 2/- is usury or interest.

Giving something more without a prior agreement to this effect is not usury

For example, when I lend to the borrower a sum of Rs. 100/- without any agreement that he will pay me Rs. 102/- instead of Rs. 100/-, but the borrower pays me Rs. 102/- of his own sweet will, then this is not interest and is therefore, not forbidden. It is quite lawful.

A nice procedure of repaying a loan

It stands proved from the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself that once when he repaid a loan on the demand and of the lender he added something to the amount of the loan, by way of pleasing the lender. As this excess amount was not due to a previously agreed condition it was not interest. In the terminology of *Hadith* it is called "حسن القضاء" (A good way of repaying a loan). This may be a goodwill amount; it is not interest that is forbidden and made unlawful so sternly. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has gone

to the extent of saying:

ان خیارکم احسنکم قضاء (صحیح بخاری، کتاب الاستقراض، باب حسن القضاء حدیث نمبر ۲۳۹۳)

The best among you is he who repays his loan with a good grace. (*Bukhari*)

On the other hand, if at the time of lending money the lender settles with the borrower that at the time of repayment he shall take from the borrower something more than the amount lent, then this will be called interest which has been forbidden in the Qur'an in very stern words, as already pointed out. Nearly two sections of *Surah al-Baqarah* have been revealed, emphasizing the unlawfulness of interest.

Which kind of Interest has the Holy Qur'an forbidden and made unlawful?

Sometimes it is said in our society that the kind of interest forbidden and made unlawful in the Holy Qur'an was something quite different. During the Prophet's time the borrower used to be a very poor and needy person. He had no money to purchase food to satisfy hunger, nor to purchase medicine to cure his sickness. If someone of his family died, he had no money to purchase a shroud for the dead and to arrange his burial. At such a critical time the poor fellow had no alternative, but to borrow money on interest. It was a grievous tyranny and a grave sin not to lend money to such a needy person without charging interest. That is why on such occasions Almighty Allah made interest unlawful in very stern words as occurs in the Holy Qur'an.

They argue that in our times, those who carry on interest-bearing transaction, particularly with the banks are not poor men or beggars; at times they are very rich

businessmen and capitalists. Anyone of them does not borrow money, because he has nothing to eat; has no clothes to wear; he wants money for his medical treatment. Instead, he is borrowing money to invest in his business so as to earn profit. As the money lender knows this quite well, what is the objection if the lender asks the borrower an interest of ten percent on the money lent to the borrower. The borrower also finds no difficulty in paying to the lender this small increase. This is not the interest which the Holy Qur'an has declared unlawful in very stern words. Objections like this are raised in various parts of the world to the prohibition of interest in the Holy Qur'an.

Commercial loans were in vogue even in the earlier days

They raise another objection by arguing that this commercial interest and commercial loans did not exist during the Prophet's time. In those days money was borrowed only to meet personal needs and personal expenditures. Therefore, they ask how can the Holy Qur'an prohibit interest which did not exist in those olden days. Some people say that the interest which the Holy Qur'an has declared unlawful was that which was charged from the paupers and beggars, so they claim that the other form of interest is commercial which is not unlawful or prohibited.

The reality does not change with the change of form

It should be noted that firstly, it is not necessary for a substance to be unlawful that was available in its specific form also in the Holy Prophet's time. When the Holy Qur'an declares something to be unlawful it does so

on the basis of its reality at the time it is declared unlawful, whether any specific form of that reality existed or did not exist during the Holy Prophet's time. Take an example. The Holy Qur'an has declared wine to be unlawful, and wine is a substance that causes intoxication. It will not be right to say that Whisky, Beer and Brandy are not unlawful, because they were not found during the Holy Prophet's time. Although these brands of wine were not found during the Holy Prophet's ﷺ time, yet the reality and essence of these brands namely, their intoxicating property did exist during his time which the Holy Prophet ﷺ had declared unlawful. Thus the essence or reality of wine became unlawful and prohibited for all times whatever its form and whether one calls it whisky, brandy, coke or beer. An intoxicant is unlawful by any name.

It is, therefore, not at all correct to say that interest on commercial loans is not unlawful, because these loans did not exist at that time.

A pleasantry

I remember a pleasantry. Once an Indian musician proceeded on the *Hajj* Pilgrimage. After performing the *Hajj* in Makkah he set off for Madinah. As was the practice in those days, the *Hajj* caravan halted at a place to pass the night. In that caravan there was an Arab musician who began to sing in Arabic. The musician had not a good voice. The Indian musician did not appreciate at all the song of the Arab musician. He got up and declared:

Today I have come to know why the Holy Prophet ﷺ had forbidden music and declared it unlawful. It was because he ﷺ listened to the music of these Bedouins who were bad singers. If he ﷺ had listened to my music he

would not have declared music unlawful.

The trend of today's thinking

Today the people have become accustomed to say about everything that during the Prophet's time this was done in this and that way, so it was declared to be unlawful. Today it is not done in that way, so it is not unlawful. They go even to the extent of saying that pork was made unlawful, because in the olden days pigs grew up in filthy environments and ate filth and faeces, whereas these days they are raised in very hygienic and clean environments in high-standard piggeries. So, there is no reason why pigs should be treated as unlawful now.

A principle of the Islamic *Shari'ah*

Bear in mind well that when the Holy Qur'an declares something unlawful, it does so on the basis of the essence and reality of the object concerned, even though their forms and external aspects may change or the process of their manufacture may change from time to time to any extent. The essence or its reality remains unaffected and it is that which forms the basis of the injunction of the *Shari'ah*.

A misconception about the Prophet's ﷺ time

It is also not correct to say that commercial loans were not in vogue during the time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and that all sorts of loans were taken only to meet personal needs. My respected father, Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه has written a book on the subject "The Issue of Interest" and I have written its second part. In this part I have given some examples of commercial loans taken during the time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

When it is said that the Arabs were Bedouins, leading a desert life, it occurs to the mind that the society in which the Holy Prophet ﷺ lived must have been a very backward society, too primitive to admit of any trading activities, except the simple barter system dealing with wheat and barley and that too of a very insignificant value. But for this, there could have been at that time no commerce and trade worth the name.

Every tribe was a Joint-Stock company

The conception formed about the time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is not correct. During the time when the Holy Prophet ﷺ appeared on the scene with his Prophetic Missions, the fundamental bases of all the modern systems of commerce were present in one form or another. For example, it is claimed that the Joint Stock system of companies is a discovery of the 14th century, but this is not correct. When we read the history of the Arabs, we find that every Arab Tribe was an independent Joint Stock company. Every tribe contributed some coins to a common Fund and the Fund so collected was sent to Syria for purchasing merchandise through commercial caravans. This has also been indicated in a Qur'anic verse:

لِإِيلٰفِ قُرَيْشٍ ۝ إِيلٰفِهِمْ رِحْلَةَ الشِّتَآءِ وَالصَّيْفِ (سورة قريش ١-٢)

For the alluring of Quraish; for their alluring (we cause) the caravans to set forth in winter and summer (106:1-2)

As indicated in these Qur'anic words, theseArabs toured to Yemen in the winter season and to Syria in the summer season and these were their business tours. They took with them merchandise for sale in Yemen and Syria and purchased merchandise in these countries for sale in

their own homeland. Some time an Arab borrowed money from his tribe to the tune of one million Dinars. He could not take such a big loan for his domestic needs; it was certainly for commercial purposes.

The first amount of Interest to be remitted

While announcing the prohibition of interest on the occasion of the Farewell Pilgrimage, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

وربا الجا هلية موضوع واول ربا ا ضع ربانا ربا عباس بن عبد المطلب فانه موضوع كلـــه (صحیح مسلم، کتاب الحج باب حجة النبی ﷺ، حدیث نمبر ۱۲۱۸)

And interest accruing from the Days of Ignorance is annulled and the first interest that I remit is the interest due to Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib which stands effaced. (*Sahih Muslim* -Hadith No: 1218)

It occurs in narratives that the interest so remitted amounted to ten thousand miskal - (1 miskal = 4.88 g). But this amount of ten thousand miskal was not the principal amount; it was only the amount of interest on the principal amounts lent to the borrowers.

This proves that the huge amounts borrowed must have been for commercial purposes and not for domestic needs.

An example of Banking during the time of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم

Hazrat Zubair bin Aw-waam رضی اللہ عنہ is one of the fortunate ten Companions to whom the glad tidings of Paradise was given in their lifetimes. He was maintaining a monetary system which was like the modern banking system. When people came to him with their moneys to

entrust to him as trust, he would accept the trust as a loan and then invest the amounts in business. His son Hazrat Abdullah bin Zubair رضی اللہ عنہ has said about the loans outstanding for repayment at the time of his father's death.

فحسبت ما علیه من الدیون فوجدتـــه الفی الف ومائتی الف

When I calculated the amount of the loans outstanding against him, they amounted to 2.20 million Dinars. ("*The Issue of Interest*" P-113, Tabaqat - Ibn Sa'ad)

To say, therefore, that in those commercial loan did not exist is against the fact and incorrect. The fact is that interest-bearing commercial loans were common during the Prophet's time. The Holy Qur'an has forbidden and declared unlawful every additional amount that is charged from the debtors on these loans. It is, therefore, absolutely wrong to say that interest on commercial loans is lawful but interest on personal and domestic loans is not lawful.

Simple Interest and Compound Interest are both forbidden and unlawful

Another misconception is being spread among the people that there are two kinds of Interest i.e., simple Interest and Compound Interest, meaning the practice of levying Interest on Interest also. Some persons say that during the Prophet's time the practice was to charge compound Interest which the Qur'an has declared to be unlawful, but simple Interest is lawful, because it was not in vogue in those days nor has the Qur'an declared it as unlawful. It has been said in the Qur'anic verse. I have recited in the beginning of my address:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَذَرُوْا مَا بَقِيَ مِنَ الرِّبٰٓوا (سورة البقرة: ۲۷۶)

O believers ! Fear Allah and give up what remains (due to you) from Usury (2:278)

The divine orders that whatever has remained outstanding out of interest whether it is small or large or whether the rate of interest is low or high. In the next verse it has been said:

وَاِنْ تُبْتُمْ فَلَكُمْ رُءُوْسُ اَمْوَالِكُمْ (سورة البقرة: ٢٧٩)

And if you repent, then you have your principal (without interest) (2: 279)

Thus this divine injunction prohibits receiving anything more than the principal amount of the loan which is the right of the creditor. In the light of these clear injunctions of the Holy Qur'an it is quite wrong to say that Compound Interest is unlawful, but Simple Interest is lawful. Therefore, all forms of Interests are isforbidden and declared unlawful, whether it is high or low, whether the debtor is rich or poor, whether the loan has been taken for personal or domestic needs or for commercial purposes. There is no doubt about the unlawfulness of Interest whatever its nature.

There is consensus of opinion on the unlawfulness of the prevailing Bank Interest

It may be mentioned that questions about the lawfulness or unlawfulness of interest have been raised for the last 50/60 years. As I have already mentioned some say that Compound Interest is unlawful, but simple Interest is lawful or that Interest on commercial loan is not unlawful. The controversy about this question had been raging in the Islamic world for about the last 50/60 years, but this controversy has now ended. Not only the religious scholars, but also the economists and the Muslim bankers of the

entire world have now become almost unanimous on the decision that Banking Interest is unlawful in the same way as it is unlawful like interest on transactions concerning ordinary loans. The latest decision on this problem was taken about 4 years ago in a session of the *Islamic Fiqh Academy* held in *Jaddah*. About 200 leading scholars, including myself, hailing from 45 Muslim countries attended this session. They all unanimously decided that Banking interest is totally unlawful and there is no way open to declare it lawful. The controversy whether this interest is lawful or unlawful has ended once for all.

What vice is there in Interest on Commercial Loans?

Now one thing remains to be clarified. As pointed out earlier, some people say that during the Holy Prophet's time men took loans only for personal and domestic needs. If a man is borrowing money to purchase food to satisfy his hunger or to arrange the burial of a dead body and the lender demands interest for loan for such purposes, then they admit that this is inhuman and unjust; but they argue and ask that if a person lends money to a businessman to earn profit, then what is the harm if the lender takes a small amount out of the profit earned by the businessman?

You will have to take the risk of possible loss

I want to clarify that if you are going to lend money to someone, Islam requires that you must become definite about one of these two alternatives:

i) Do you want to give the borrower only financial help through the money lent to him; or
ii) Do you want to become a partner in his business?

If you are lending him money only to help him, then you shall have no right to demand from the borrower

anything more than the amount of the loan. On the other hand, if you desire to become a partner in the business of the borrower, then you will have to share the profit as well as the loss, if any. It is not possible that you should share only the profit and in case of loss you should leave it to be borne by your partner. If you do not take the risk of possible loss, you should join with him in a Joint Enterprise on the condition that profit and loss will be shared by the partners in the Enterprise or partnership in an agreed ratio, say, 50: 50. You cannot demand from your borrower partner that he msut pay you 15% on the amount invested by you in the Enterprise, whether there is profit or loss in the business. This is totally unlawful and the amount so charged is nothing but pure interest.

The existing system of Interest is fraught with vices and defects

The debtor borrows money from a creditor/bank at a given rate of interest, which he invests in some business. If there is loss, the creditor gets his agreed percentage of interest,but the debtor has to bear the loss. If the debtor earns profit in his business the creditor shall get only the agreed percentage of the interest and will be in a loss as compared with the debtor. I clarify the position with the example given below:

The depositor remains a loser at all costs

For example, a man borrows from a bank a sum of Rs. One Crore (ten millions) and invests it in some business. The amount borrowed from the bank belongs to the depositors or, in other words, it is public money. In this business the man earned profit at the rate of cent percent and now he has with him two crores. Out of this profit the

man pays 15% or 15 Lakh (1.5 million) Rupees to the bank as interest. After deducting its commission and administrative expenses the bank, in turn, pays to the depositors for 7 to 10% on profit. (This is really nothing but interest). The depositors are very happy to receive a profit of only 10% on their deposits, although they should have received 100% on their deposits. This meagre profit of 10% also goes back to the borrower. How does this happen?

The amount of Interest is included in the (indirect) cost of production

The answer to the question posed above is very easy. The businessman who borrowed money from the bank charges the interest paid to the bank, viz., Rs. 15 lakhs to the (indirect) cost of production which is ultimately included in the price of the goods produced. For example if the borrower has manufactured cloth the price of the cloth will be increased by 15%. This means that the depositors who received profit at the rate of 10% only will have to pay it back at the rate of 15% in the form of the price of the cloth when he purchases it from the market. The depositors feel satisfied that their deposit of Rs. 100/- has become Rs. 110/-, but actually it has become Rs. 95/- On the other hand the borrower manufacturer has pocketed a profit of 85% on his manufacturing business.

The advantage of partnership

A partnership may be established between two persons on the condition that the profit will be shared between the financier and the working partner on 50 : 50 basis. In this partnership business the public will receive a profit of 50 instead 15%. In such a situation this profit of 50% is not included in the manufacturing cost, because

the profit is known after the sale of the porducts and only then it is apportioned between the partners. This is because the Interest is invariably included in the cost, but the profit is not so included in the cost. This is, therefore, a form of collective profit sharing..

The profit is enjoyed by one party and the loss is borne by another party

Suppose that the business, which was carried on with the amount of one crore, (ten million rupees) suffers loss and as a result of this loss goes into bankruptcy. Then think, who will be the real losers as a result of the bankruptcy of the bank? The loss will obviously be suffered by the public sector. Thus, this is a system in which in the event of loss the entire loss is borne by the public, but in the event of profit the entire profit goes into the pocket of the borrower manufacturer.

Who are the beneficiaries in the Insurance business?

The businessman who borrowed a sum of Rs. One Crore from the bank for investment in his business has sought another way to make good the loss, if any, incurred in his business and that is the channel of Insurance. Suppose the godown of cotton catches fire and the whole stock of cotton is reduced to ashes. If this stock of cotton had been insured with an Insurance company, then it is the responsibility of the company to make good this loss. Again the money with which the Insurance company will meet its liability is public money which the public is bound to pay to the company in the form of the periodical Insurance premium. A car owner cannot bring his car on the road unless he gets it insured and he is compelled to the

premiums even when neither the car meets any accident nor does it catch fire.

The magnificent Insurance buildings have been built with the money of the periodical Insurance premium paid by the poor public policy-holders. The Insurance companies compensate the losses incurred by businessmen with the deposits of the public. All these complicated and intricate procedures have been devised to ensure that the profits go to the chests of the businessmen, but the losses are borne by the public. The bank deposits belong to the poor depositors or the Account holders. If this huge amount was used rightly and wisely, the profits earned thereon would revert to the depositors. In the existing system of Distribution of Wealth, the wealth rises upwards instead of going downwards. It was on account of these vices that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: Eating Usury/interest is like committing adultry with one's own mother - God forbid. This has been declared as such a heinous sin, because the entire community has become exposed to destruction.

The havoc done by Usury on the Internationl Forum

Previously we regarded "Usury" to be unlawful, because the Holy Qur'an has declared it unlawful and prohibited. We did not care much for the rational causes for this prohibition. It is unlawful, because Almighty Allah has declared it unlawful. However, today we are all beholding its harmful consequences with our own eyes. Today the Usurious system of transactions has overwhelmed the entire world. Your country, America has today attained supremacy in the world and its rival power (USSR) has disappeared from the world with the natural result that it has now no

rival to oppose it. Notwithstanding this, it is facing economic depression, for no other reason than the curse of interest. It is, therefore, not correct to say that during the Prophet's days people borrowed money on account of crushing poverty, so it was made unlawful to demand interest from them. But today if anyone is taking loan on interest for commercial purposes, interest should not be declared unlawful. This view, however, is sound neither rationally nor economically. If anyone studies this system impartially he will come to know that this system has driven the world to the last verge of destruction and a time will come - God willing - when the truth will dawn upon their minds and they shall also then know why the Holy Qur'an had declared a war against usury. This is one aspect of the prohibition of usury which I have placed before you.

Alternatives to the Usurious system

Another very important question is being asked in this respect. Some people admit that Usury/Interest is indeed unlawful and prohibited according to the declarations in the Qur'an and the *Ahadith*, yet if it is abolished, what is its substitute for the smooth operation of the economic and commercial activities of the country? Today the essence of the economic and commercial activities of the entire world is based on interest. If this essence, that is interest, is eliminated, then we see no other alternative wherewith to keep the wheel of these activities and transactions revolving. The people say that there is no other way to fall back upon and, if there is any, it is not practicable. If anyone has a practicable formula, let him come forward with it.

The Islamic *Shari'ah* has not forbidden things which are indispensable

You must believe firmly first of all that if Exalted Allah has declared something unlawful and forbidden, it is impossible that such a thing should be indispensable. If the thing had been indispensable, Almighty Allah would not have declared it to be unlawful and forbidden. The Holy Qur'an says :

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللّٰهُ نَفْسًا اِلَّا وُسْعَهَا (سورة البقرہ: ۲۸۶)

Allah does not place a burden on any soul heavier than it can bear (2 : 286)

A goodly loan free of interest (قرض حسنہ) is not the only alternative to an Interest bearing loan

Some men think that as Allah has forbidden usury, in future loans should be given Interest-Free. They conclude from this that they shall be getting interest-free loans to carry on their trade, construct buildings and build factories. Such thinking is, however, only an empty dream and impracticable. From where shall come the necessary funds to allow interest-free loans to all who desire such loans?

Partnership is an alternative to Interest-bearing loans

You must remember that a goodly loan (قرض حسنہ) is no alternative to interest-bearing loans. The alternative is Partnership (مشارکت). In settling the terms of a loan the creditor can propose to the debtor that the former wants to become a partner in the latter's business on the basis of profit-and-loss sharing in an agreed ratio. In this way the creditor shall become a partner of the debtor in the business. This is an alternative to the Interest-bearing system.

I have already explained the theoretical aspect of "Partnership" viz., in the case of dealings in interest a very insignificant portion of wealth accrues to the depositors. On the other hand if business and investment are carried on the basis of "partnership" a reasonable ratio of the profit earned will accrue to the depositors or the account-holders. In this situation the Distribution of Wealth shall come down-wards instead of going upwards. Thus the financial system prescribed by Islam is that of "Partnership".

Best results have been obtained from the Partnership system

As this system of "Partnership" has not yet been put into practice anywhere in the contemporary world, its advantages and blessings have not come to the fore. During the last twenty-five years the Muslims have tried in diferent places to establish such Financing Centres and Banks as are not based on Interest but are run on the basis of the Islamic *Shari'ah*. Perhaps you may also be aware that presently there are 80 to 100 Banks in the entire world which claim to carry on their business on Islamic principles totally free from interest. I cannot say that this claim is true 100%; there may be some shortcomings and lapses. It is, however, a fact that presently about 100 Banking Institutions are working on Islamic principles. Not only are they situated in Islamic countries but some of them are situated in non-Muslim countries. These Banks and Institutions have started working on the "Partnership" system and better results have been obtained from this system, wherever it has been introduced. I have myself experimented the working of this system in a Pakistani Bank and have inspected it as a member of its "Religious

Supervisory Committee". I have found that sometimes its Account-holders were allowed profit @ 20% under the "Partnership" system. If the system is adopted at a larger scale still better results may be obtained.

Practical difficulties in the "Partnership" system

There is, however, a practical difficulty in implementing this system on account of dishonest persons. Such persons take loans from banks with the commitment that they will carry on business with the amount borrowed and share the profit as well as the loss in an agreed ratio. These persons do not come back to the bank with its share of the profit, but always complain that they incurred loss and bank should bear its share of the loss.

This is a very serious problem being faced in the implementation of this system. It cannot be said that this is due to some defect in the system itself. The defect lies in those who are working on this system; they are neither honest nor men of moral character. The most serious defect in the implementation of this system is that people will continue borrowing money from the bank,but by declaring loss in their business, they shall in turn, caue huge loss to the depositors.

How to surmount these difficulties?

This is not a problem which cannot be solved. It is possible to find a satisfactory solution to it. If the country which has introduced this system of "Partnership" finds that a person is not honest in his dealings and cannot be relied upon such a person should be blacklisted, so that no bank should have any financial dealings with such a blacklisted person.

Even today Joint Stock companies are in action and operation in the world and they are issuing their annual Balance Sheets. Sometimes these Balance Sheets are not prepared quite honestly, yet they declare their annual profits. The difficulty experienced in this respect can be surmounted easily, if the "Partnership" system is adopted throughout the country. Unless this is done, individual organisations, following this system, will find difficulties, except that such individual organisations may work on the "Partnership" system by means of "Selected Negotiations".

The second alternative solution to this problem is the *Leasing* (اجارہ)

Almighty Allah has given us a religion in the form of Islam which offers many Banking and Financing systems other than the Partnership system. One of them is the "*Leasing*" system. It is that a man approaches a bank for loan. On being asked about the purpose of the loan, the man tells the bank that he has to import machinery from a foreign country for his factory. Instead of lending money to the man, the bank itself should import the requisite machinery and rent it out to the man. This method of financing is called "*Leasing*". The method of "*Financial Leasing*", being presently in operation in the banks and the Financing Institutions, does not conform the Islamic *Shari'ah*. Many of its clauses are contrary to the *Shari'ah*. This defect can be removed easily by amending its un-Islamic clauses, so as to conform to the injunctions of the *Shari'ah*. There are many Financial Institutions in Pakistan which are working on a "Leasing Agreement" system in conformity with the *Shari'ah*.

The third alternative is the *Murabaha* (Profit-sale)

"*Murabaha*" may be defined as a system in which instead of advancing a loan to a businessman to purchase, say a machine, the bank itself purchases the machine and sells it to the businessman concerned on profit.

Suppose that a businessman wants to borrow money from a bank to purchase some raw materials for his factory. Instead of advancing a loan to the businessman for this purpose, the bank itself purchases that raw material and sells it to the businessman on profit. This is lawful in the *Shari'ah*.

Some people think that this form of profit-sale system is an indirect way of making a usurious bargaining, because instead of earning money in the name of interest the bank has earned the money in the name of profit. This is not correct because the Holy Qur'an has said:

وَاَحَلَّ اللّٰهُ الْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ الرِّبٰوا (سورۃ البقرۃ: ۲۷۵)

Trade is just like usury, whereas Allah permits trading and forbids usury. (2:275)

The polytheists of Makkah used to argue that usury is just like trading, because both yield profit. Why should, therefore, be a difference between the two ? The answer to this question is contained in the above verse that Allah has made trading lawful but has made usury unlawful. It means that profit cannot be earned on money for money i.e. a man cannot demand Rs 110/- for Rs. 100/- because this excess of Rs. 10/- will be interest. However, if something is sold for more than its cost price, the excess in this case is profit which Allah has allowed. In *Murabaha* (Profit-sale) goods are purchased and sold on profit, so these transactions are lawful and the profit earned is not Interest or Usury.

Which of these alternatives is more desirable?

As I have said, these *Murabaha* (Profit-sale) and *Leasing* system are not ideal alternatives and they do not affect the process of Distribution of Wealth basically. The ideal alternative is indeed the "*Partnership*" system. However, in individual institutions which may be established in future, there is scope to try the *Murabaha* and the "*Leasing*" systems also during the experimental and transitional periods. Even presently some Financial Institutions are working on the basis of these systems.

Anyway, these are my general observations about Usury and on issues related to it.

There is another aspect of usury the echo of which is being heard from time to time. Some people say that the ban on interest bearing transactions is not applicable to non-Muslim enemy countries. It is permissible in such a country to charge interest from non-Muslims. This is totally wrong. It is unlawful to charge interest whether the country is at war دارالحرب or at peace دارالسلام. It is suggested that the common man should keep his money in a bank's current account as interest does not accrue on deposits in currenct accounts. If anyone has deposited his money in a Savings Account on which interest accrues, it is generally advised that the amount of interest should be left to the bank. This advice is, however, not applicable to Bank Accounts in countries in which the unclaimed amounts of interest are spent on propaganda against Islam by preaching in favour of Christianity or Hinduism. Muslim depositors in such countries are advised to withdraw the accumulated amounts of interest in their accounts and spend them in charity like *Zakat*, but with no expectation of reward. Men should not use the amounts of interest for their personal benefits but should get rid of them as

advised.

Financial Institutions working in the present age On Islamic principles of economy and livelihood

It is a somewhat difficult task yet we Muslims should try our best to establish Financial Institutions based on Islamic principles which should work on the lines dictated by the *Shari'ah*. I have just now mentioned that full-fledged schemes of the "*Partnership*", *Murabaha* (Profit-sale) and *Leasing* are available and the Muslims can establish their own Institutions on the pattern of these schemes. The Muslims of this land are intelligent and sensible enough to understand these issues in which lie the solutions to their own problems. They should establish here Financial Institutions. I know that, so far as House Building is concerned, two Institutions are in existence which are working on Islamic principles. One of them is in Toronto and the other in Los Angeles. Now it is time that more such Institutions should be opened by the Muslims. This should, however, be done in consultation with and under the supervision of reliable Jurists and Muftis. I am also ready to offer my humble services, if found necessary. Presently about one hundred Institutions are working on this pattern and I have been serving these Institutions as a consultant for about the last five years.

May Almighty Allah help you in this matter, so as to find out for the Muslims better and lawful channels of work. *Aameen*!

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

ABSTAIN FROM MOCKING AT THE *SUNNAH* PRACTICE

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه و نستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرورانفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهدان لا اله الاالله وحده لا شريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا و سندنا و مولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى اللّٰه تعالى عليه و على اله واصحابه اجمعين وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيراً كثيراً

اما بعد!

عن ابى اياس سلمة بن عمرو بن الأَكْوَع رضى الله تعالى عنه ان رجلا أكل عند رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بشماله فقال كل بيمينك قال لا استطيع قال لا استطعت ما منعه الا الكبر فما رفعه الى فيه (صحيح مسلم، كتاب الاشربة، باب اداب الطعام)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek

His help and seek His forgiveness and believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our souls and from the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom He guides and there is none to guide him whom He lets go astray. We bear witness that there is no god but Allah the One Who has no partner. We also bear witness that our sire, and our authority and our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him, his household and bless and salute them all in great abundance.

The outcome of the least degree of arrogance

Hazrat Salmah bin Akoo' رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ once saw a man taking food with his left hand - a habit common among the Arabs at that time. He ﷺ asked the man to eat with the right hand as this was the Islamic etiquette of eating taught to the *Ummah* by Allah and His Messenger ﷺ.

On hearing the admonition of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, the man replied that he was not able to eat with the right hand. His reply was due to arrogance. He thought that the Prophet of Allah ﷺ had insulted him by asking him to eat with the right hand. The Holy Prophet ﷺ cursed him by saying that in future he could never take food with the right hand. The result of this curse was that the man could not raise his right hand to his mouth throughout his life.

If we had lived during the time of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم

This *Hadith* contains many useful lessons for us. Firstly, sometimes due to our ignorance or foolishness a desire rises that it would have been very good for us if we had been born during the Holy Prophet's ﷺ time. The Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم had the good luck of living in the company of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and of having direct contact with him ﷺ off and on. How fortunate and blissful it would have been for us, if we too had the honour of enjoying the company of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and had been among the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم. Sometimes this desire assumes the dimension of a complaint - God forbid - against Allah for not having raised us in the Holy Prophet's ﷺ time. We are inclined to think that it has become very difficult to follow the path of *Deen* in this fifteenth century. We would not have had to face this difficulty in preacticing on the path of *Deen* in the purified and auspicious environments of the Holy Prophet's ﷺ days.

Allah distributes His bounties according to the capacity of the recipient

Such a wish is born in our hearts but we do not think that Allah's grants and favours are distributed among His servants not at randum but according to the capacity and entitlement of each individual. As regards the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم, they had the requisite capacity and qualifications to be honoured with the company of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. So they were able to discharge the responsibilities that fell on their shoulders by virtue of the company of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It was indeed a very blessed and auspicious age, but it had also its hazards. We have with us today the injunctions of the

Holy Prophet ﷺ which have come down to us through an unbroken chain of authentic reporters. The Ulama have ruled that a person who denies the veracity of a *Hadith* proved genuine through single narration (خبر واحد) and says that he does not accept the genuineness of that injunction, he shall be dubbed as a grievous sinner but shall not be declared an unbeliever (کافر). On the contrary if anyone during the Holy Prophet's ﷺ time, heard any injunction direct from his ﷺ sacred tongue and rejected it, he atonce became an unbeliever. In their times the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم frequently came across such trying situations, but they steered clear of the ordeals. Only Allah knows how we would have fared, if we had been born and had lived in the blessed times of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Just as Hazrat Siddiq Akbar, Hazrat Farooq Azam, Hazrat Usman Ghani and Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہم اجمعین were born in those blessed times in the same way, and in the same environments were born and were living the infidels like Abu Jahl, Abu Lahab, Abdulla bin Ubayyi and other enemies of Islam and hypocrites, but there was a world of difference between the paths followed by each group. It may be concluded that the time and the conditions in which it has been the pleasure of Allah to raise in this world any soul or souls is the best for all. It is, therefore, an act of foolishness for anyone to desire that he should have been born in this or that period of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم. Such a desire implies a complaint against Allah's dispensation and prudence. All should note that whatever blessings and bounties Allah has destined for anyone is in the best interest and according to the capacity and title of the recipient.

Why did the Holy Prophet ﷺ curse the person?

A question arises as to why the Holy Prophet ﷺ cursed that person. He ﷺ was a mercy for the worlds who never took revenge from anyone for his own self, but as far as possible he always prayed for the people, instead of cursing them. The Ulama have explained this exceptional action of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in cursing a person by saying that the unfortunate fellow told a lie out of arrogance that he was unable to eat with his right hand, although he could use his right hand in eating. To turn down a command of the Holy Prophet ﷺ by telling a lie out of arrogance is so heinous a sin that it renders the sinner liable to be thrown into Hell. The Holy Prophet ﷺ cursed him for the only reason that he may be awarded a lighter punishment in this world instead of being awarded the eternal punishment of Hell-Fire in the Hereafter. This is the secret in the Holy Prophet's ﷺ act of cursing the arrogant liar.

Saintly men possess different trends and tendencies

Likewise, it is related about certain saints that if anyone tortured and harmed them, they took revenge from the wrongdoer without losing any time. The resort to revenge was for the same reason that if they did not themselves take revenge from the wrongdoers and left the matter to Allah, He may take a more severe revenge. Once a disciple asked his Sheikh (spiritual guide) to enlighten him on the belief that saintly men possess different thinking and vision. The Sheikh advised his disciple not to trouble himself on such questions, but should mind his own business. The Sheikh then asked the disciple to visit a certain mosque where he would find three pious men engaged in the remembrance of Allah. The Sheikh asked

him to afflict a blow on the waist of each and tell the Shaikh their reaction. The disciple did as he had been advised by his Sheikh and observed different re-actions:

The first saint:

He took no notice of the blow and remained absorbed in his remembrance.

The second saint:

On receiving the blow he turned back and began to rub gently the hand of the wrongdoer out of the sympathy with him

The third saint:

On receiving the blow he took revenge from the wrongdoer by a blow dealing on him with equal force.

The disciple went back to his Sheikh and related the details of the behaviour of the three saints as mentioned above.

The Sheikh told the disciple that what he had experienced by himself about the different reactions of the saint represented the different trends of thinking and tendencies. The Sheikh explained to the disciple these different reactions as follows

The first saint preferred to enjoy the remembrance of Allah to his involvement in seeking revenge from the wrongdoer and this would waste his valuable moments in a useless engagement. The second saint was under an overwhelming influence of mercy and sympathy which he displayed towards the wrongdoer by gently rubbing the hand that had dealt the blow. As for the third saint, he took revenge from the wrongdoer in order to save him from punishment in the Hereafter. This is just how the Holy Prophet ﷺ did with the arrogant fellow who had refused to take food with his right hand.

Commence every good deed from the right side

Anyway, it should be everyone's duty to shield the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ from being slighted. Now-a-days inscrupulous fellow talks disdainfully of the *Sunnah* Practices, like using the right or the left hand for eating, that these are unimportant matters. Remember that no *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is unimportant, although outwardly it may appear to be so. Every command, every *Sunnah*, every act and practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is a model for the world to emulate. He ﷺ has commanded that every good act should be commenced from the right side, i.e. food should be eaten and water drunk with the right hand. If you have to distribute anything among an assembly, commence the distribution from the right side. There is a *Hadith* to this effect :

كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يعجبه التَّيَمُّن فى تنعله وترجله وطهوره فى شانه كلـــه(صحيح بخارى كتاب الوضوء، باب التيمن فى الوضوء)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ liked to commence every act with the right hand. About putting on garments he ﷺ recommended to put first the right hand in the right sleeve then the left hand in the left sleeve and follow the same order in putting on the shoes, combing the hair, applying the antimony to the eyes, washing the hands and in all other clean and positive acts; (but not in entering the toilet into which first the left leg should be put).

Two *Sunnah* acts at one time

All these appear to be very insignificant acts of the *Sunnah*, yet acting upon them is appreciated by Almighty Allah and this earns great rewards. What can be more derogatory to these acts of the *Sunnah*, than relinquishing

these acts and not acting upon them, for no reasons other than irresponsibility and carelessness? It is, therefore, incumbent on a Muslim to take care to do every positive act beginning with the right side. The pious men have observed that these are two acts of the *Sunnah* :-

1- A man should enter a mosque putting his right leg first and should come out of a mosque putting his left leg first.

2- When putting on shoes a man should put his right foot in the right shoe and the left foot in the left shoe.

He should combine these two acts of the *Sunnah* by taking out of the mosque first the left foot and then the right foot. The second act of the *Sunnah* it is that, when putting on shoes man should first put on the right shoe in the right foot and then put the left foot in the left shoe. He should combine these two acts of the *Sunnah* by taking out of the mosque first the left leg and putting the left foot on the left shoe. Then the man should take out of the mosque his right leg and put on the right shoe and then he should put on the left shoe. This will complete action on the two acts of the *Sunnah.*

Every item of the *Sunnah* is sublime

The Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم did not believe that there were insignificant and significant types of the *Sunnah*. Every *Sunnah* was significant and sublime in their eyes. They, therefore, took care to act upon each and every *Sunnah.* In fact a little care exercised in religious matters makes a great addition to the stock of good deeds at the credit of a man. It is therefore, the bounden duty of every Muslim to act upon the *Sunnah* without differentiating between significant and insignificant *Sunnah.*

Every item of the western civilization is just the opposite of the right phase

Hazrat Qari Muhammad Tayyib Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ used to say that everything in the western civilization is just the opposite of the etiquettes of the earlier civilizations. He remarked that in the olden days there was darkness under the candle but now in the western civilization the darkness perches on the upper part of the electric bulb. The cursed western civilization has taken care and pains to change the Islamic values. It is now a fashion in the modern civilization to hold the knife and the fork in the right and left hand and take the food with the left hand.

It so happened many years ago that I was on an air-journey and another traveller was sitting next to me. During the journey we became friendly. When food was brought I saw that my co-traveller as usual took the fork in the left hand and began to eat his food with the left hand. I told him that we were imitating the Englishmen in everywalks of life whereas the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to take food with his right hand. I told him that if he also took his food with the right hand, he would become entitled to great reward. He replied: By hankering after such small matters, our nation (the Muslims) have lagged far behind. These moulvis have entangled our nation in these small things and have thereby blocked the path of progress and we have become backward in higher developments and programmes.

Why the western world is on the path of progress?

I re-acted to his reply, saying : You have been taking food in this progressive style for a very long time; how forward have you gone in the race course of progress and development? How many people have you surpassed? On hearing my reply he remained silent. I then explained to him

that the progress, prosperity and supremacy of the Muslims lie only in acting upon the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. If the Muslims take resort to ways and means other than the *Sunnah*, they can never attain honour and supremacy. The co-traveller re-acted to my observations, saying: You have said something quite surprising that progress and advancement depend on acting upon the *Sunnah*. Do you not see how these western nations are progressing by leaps and bounds even though they eat with the left hand and all their actions and activities are against the *Sunnah* and the principles of the *Sunnah*. Moreover, they are drowned deep in the mire of sins and immorality. They drink wine, they gamble, yet they are on the path of progress and have achieved supremacy over the entire world. I, therefore, hold the view that the nations of the world are on the path of progress, prosperity and development by dint of working against the *Sunnah* and the injunctions of the *Shari'ah*.

The story of a wiseacre

In reply to the trend of thinking of my co-traveller, I related to him the story of a wiseacre بوجھ بھجکڑ.

Once a man climbed up a date-palm tree, but he was not able to get down the tree. He appealed from the top of the tree to the people of the village to help him to get down the tree. The villagers assembled on the spot and thought over the problem, but they themselves could not find a way out. There was in the village a wiseacre بوجھ بھجکڑ supposed to be the wisest man of the village. The villagers called on him and explained to him their problem. He answered them that he could easily solve their problem and there was nothing to worry. He asked the villagers to bring a rope, throw it up to the man on the date-palm tree and ask him to tie the rope round his waist. When the man

had tied the rope round his waist, as he had been advised, the wiseacre asked the villagers to pull down the rope. The villagers pulled down the rope. The man fell down and died instantly. When the villlagers complained about this fatal accident the so-called wiseman replied: I do not know why he died; perhaps he had been destined to die at this moment. Using the same method I have got many persons taken out of well safe and sound.

There is only one way for the Muslims to Prosper and progress

The wiseacre applied to the man on the date-palm the analogy of men who who had fallen into wells and the result of this folly is before all of us. The same analogy is being applied to the problems facing the Muslims. The worldly-wise men are enamelled of the worldly progress of the western nations that they have made progress and advancement, even though they are engaged in sinful and immoral ways of living. We Muslims too can make progress and achievement by leading lives full of sins and disobedience. Such analogy is not true. The Muslims who believe in and recite the Article of faith لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله can never make progress and advancement even if they adopt whole-sole the western ways of living and civilization. The Muslims may make worldly progress, if they renounce their Islam and adopt the western ways of life, then they also may make progress and advancement like the western nations.

The Muslims however, follow a mode of life and code of civilisation totally different from those of the westerner infidels. The only way open to the Muslims even for worldly progress and advancement is to follow the path of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Surrender yourself totally to the servitude of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

This idea has crept into and firmly settled on, our hearts that what the western nations are doing is worth emulation and the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is - God forbid - an ordinary issue, unworthy of being followed. It is rather a hurdle and hindrance in the path of progress. Consider ! What harm will fall on us if we take our food with the right hand? Our malady is that the evil of slavery to the west has over-powered our minds. We have given up slavery to the Holy Prophet ﷺ and become slaves to the western powers, with the natural result that we are living and dying in slavery. We have become entangled in this slavery so badly that we now see no way out of it. The fact, however, remains that we cannot get out of this slavery, nor can we attain honour and superiority in this world unless we accept slavery to the Holy Prophet ﷺ in the true sense and follow in his footsteps.

Cutting joke with the *Sunnah* may result in *Kufr* (disbelief)

'SUNNNAH' is a comprehensive term. It is not confined only to the etiquettes of eating with the right hand and putting on clothes from the right side. *Sunnah* encompasses all the phases and activities of life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. These include the conduct and character of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, i.e., his behaviour with the people, his contacts with them with a smiling face, his endurance with patience of the troubles he ﷺ suffered at the hands of the people. All these aspects are parts of the *Sunnah*. No *Sunnah*, however, deserves to be degraded. A man himself may not be acting upon a *Sunnah*, but he should consider a person superior to himself who is acting upon the *Sunnah*. To degrade that *Sunnah* to make fun of it

and of the man who is acting upon it and to taunt him may - God forbid - involve the taunter and derider of the *Sunnah* in infidelity -, so all should take care not to think as mean even the smallest item of the *Sunnah* in any circumstances.

May Almighty save every Muslims from this sin against the *Sunnah*.

In the next *Hadith* the Holy Prophet ﷺ has given an example of his teachings.

The teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the examples of those who accepted and acted upon them

Hazrat Abu Musa Ash'ari رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

عن ابی موسی رضی اللہ عنہ قال قال رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم ان مثل مابعثنی اللہ من الھُدٰی والعلم کمثل غیث اصاب ارضاً فکانت منھا طائفۃ طیبۃ .....الی آخرہ (صحیح بخاری. کتاب العلم، باب فضل من علم وعلم)

Hazrat Abu Musa رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: My example and the example of the teachings with which I have been sent is like the example of tract of a land on which the rains fell down and the tract of the land is of three kinds:

(1) The tract of the first kind was very fertile. It absorbed the rain water and plants and flowers grew on that tract.

(2) The second kind of the tract, being hard, could not absorb the rain water on account of which the water remained suspended on the surface from which men and animals both benefited.

(3) The third kind of the tract was quite barren. It had neither capacity to grow anything, nor to retain the rain-water on its surface. The result was it could

receive no benefit from the rain-water which was simply wasted.

Three categories of men

The Holy prophet ﷺ further said:

The teachings which I have brought is like rain-water and those who heard these teachings are also of three kinds:

(1) There are some who have absorbed these teachings and benefited by them whereby they reformed their deeds, conduct and character and became righteous men to serve as best models for others.

(2) The second category is of those who grasped my teachings. They themselves benefited thereby and preserved them for the benefit of others. Now they are conveying those teachings to others by teaching them, and spreading them by holding assemblies and preaching.

(3) The third category consists of those who heard my teachings with one ear and got them out from the other ear. Neither they themselves benefited by them, nor did they impart the teachings to others for their benefit.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ indicated by this *Hadith* that the people should take advantage of his sacred teachings in one of the two alternatives, viz., either they should themselves benefit by them and let others also to get benefit therefrom or they should at least themselves take advantage from the teachings. The path other than these two alternatives is the path of ruin. After listening to these teachings they turn their backs on them. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has mentioned the same point in another *Hadith*:

كُنْ عَالِمًا اَوْمُتَعَلِّمًا وَلَا تَكُنْ ثَالِثًا فَتَهْلَك

Either become a religious scholar or a student of religion, but do not take a third course which will lead to your ruin and annihilation.

Invite others to the path of *Deen* (Faith)

The main responsibility of a Muslim towards the *Sunnah* and teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is that he should himself act upon them and convey them to others. If he himself acts upon them but does not convey them to others then there is every possibility that the benefits which he himself has reaped may go waste. This is because if the company around him remains misguided and unreformed, then there is every possibility that this man may go astray at any time. Take an example. A man has become a regular *Namazi*,(One who offers *Salat*) is refraining from sins, but he has paid no attention to the members of his family who are following a different path from his own. As a result he is liable to deviate from the right path he is following. It is, therefore, incumbent on him to try from time to time with love and sympathy to induce the members of his own household to the right path. In addition, he should remain striving to convey the message of *Deen* to his Kith and Kin, his neighbours, his friends and colleagues. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a *Hadith*:

اَلْمُؤْمِنُ مِرْاٰةُ الْمُؤْمِنِ (ابو داؤد، كتاب الادب، باب فى النصيحة)

One Muslim is a mirror of another Muslim (*Abu Daood*)

In other words, if one Muslim is committing a sin, it is the duty of another Muslim to draw the attention of the sinner to the sin he is committing. Such admonitory action

should, however, be taken with love and friendliness, without any vestige of harshness or taunting, calculated to create feelings of defiance hatred and obstinacy.

Some people complain that their efforts do not bear the desired fruit. They should note that their duty is to convey the message and they are not responsible for the result which depends on Allah's will. Take the example of Hazrat Nooh (Noah - عليه السلام) who spent nine hundred and fifty years in preaching the message during which only nineteen men embraced Islam. Despite that the Prophet of Allah did not give up the work of preaching.

One should not feel disgusted with the work of preaching

It is the duty of a *Da'ee* (Preacher) not to feel disgusted nor give way to despondency, but he should continue his preaching, irrespective of his preaching has or does not have the desired effect on his addressees. He should do this with the belief that a word of goodness does have its effect later or sooner. If like the son of Hazrat Nooh (Noah عليه السلام) one is destined to die as an unbeliever, the preacher at any rate shall earn his reward for the work of preaching.

The *Da'ee* (Preacher) should himself act upon the *Sunnah* and teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and seek Allah's forgiveness for his shortcomings. If he moulds his entire life on this pattern, he will-God willing - attain success. Negligence is a great vice against which the Preacher should guard himself. May Almighty Allah save from the evil of negligence and help us all of us in following the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. *Aameen*!

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi.
Date : 1st September 1995

THE BLESSING OF CONTENTMENT

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه و نستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرورانفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهد ان لا اله الاالله وحده لا شريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا و سندنا و مولانا محمدا عبده و رسوله.. وصلى اللّٰه تعالى عليه و على اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيراً كثيراً

اما بعد!

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم احرص على ماينفعك واستعن بالله ولا تعجز وان اصابك شيْئٌ فلا تقل لَوْ انى فعلت لكان كذا وكذا ولكن قل قدَّرالله وماشاء فعل فانَّ " لَوْ" تفتح عمل الشيطٰن (مسلم شريف كتاب القدر، باب فى الا مربالقوة وترك العجز)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and seek His forgiveness and believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with

Him from the evils of our souls and from the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom He guides and there is none to guide him whom He lets go astray. We bear witness that there is no god but Allah the One Who has no partner. We also bear witness that our sire, and our authority and our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him, his household and bless and salute them all in great abundance.

Do not be greedy of worldly resources

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said in a *Hadith*: Covet only those acts which may benefit you, i.e., those acts and deeds which may prove beneficial for you in the Hereafter. Greed is undesirable and man has been asked to refrain from it by shunning greed for money, worldly resources, reputation and ostentation and show, etc. Man has been advised to accept such quantity of these as has been required by lawful means and as is barely necessary for you. Do not desire to have more, because it is not possible for anyone to satisfy all his desires in this world. Even the greatest King or Capitalist cannot claim that all his wishes have been fulfilled. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a *Hadith*: If a man gets a valley filled with gold, he shall desire a second one. If he gets two, he shall desire a third one and so on. Nothing but the earth of the grave can fill man's belly. There is, however, a thing which can fill man's belly and that is "contentment". If man remains contented with whatever Allah has bestowed upon him through lawful and honest sources he should be thankful to Exalted Allah. There is no other way of filling man's belly.

Love for *Deen* (Faith) is desirable

Thus, it is undesirable to long for worldly resources. On the contrary it is desirable to be fond of activities relating to Deen, e.g., righteous deeds, Allah's worship. It is desirable to any a person who is engaged in doing good deeds and posses the blessings of religious fervour. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has, therefore, said in this *Hadith* that man should desire to do such acts as may prove beneficial to him in the Hereafter. Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an: فاستبقوا لخيرات meaning: Try to compete with one another in doing righteous deeds.

Love among the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم for doing good deeds

The Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم were very fond of doing good deeds. They were always anxious to be able to add to their Register of Deeds some act of goodness. Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ son of Hazrat Farooq Azam رضی اللہ عنہ once called on Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ who related to him this *Hadith* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ:

> If anyone joins the funeral prayer of any person he gets an award equal to one Qirat (=0.195 g.). If he takes part in his burial also, he gets an award equal to two Qirats.

In those days Qirat was a weight for weighing gold. The Holy Prophet ﷺ used the word in the *Hadith* only as a token, but he ﷺ himself explained that in the Hereafter a Qirāt will be bigger than the Mt. Uhad. It should not, therefore, be mistaken for the usual Qirat in vogue in the world. Moreover, this does not give a full idea of the reward, as the language in use by men in the world is inadequate for expressing the quantities and values of the Hereafter.

When Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ heard this *Hadith*, he asked Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ to confirm if he had really heard the *Hadith* from the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ confirmed the *Hadith*. On hearing this Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ expressed grief for having lost so many Qirats up to that time, because of the ignorance of the *Hadith*. See how the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم remained always desirous to add some good deed to their Register of Deeds.

Create in yourself this love

We all hear in the sermons about the rewards for different deeds of virtue. These sermons are delivered to create in our hearts a fondness for doing these good deeds. Deeds falling within the definition of optional and desirable acts are neither obligatory nor essential, yet a Muslim should feel a desire to do them.

Those whom Allah has granted a fondness of Deen always remain in quest of some good deeds to add to their Register of Deeds.

An occasion on which the Holy Prophet ﷺ ran a race

It occurs in a *Hadith* that once the Holy Prophet ﷺ was going to participate in a feast along with the mother of the believers, Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا. On the way there was a forest and a tract of open land which ensured full pardah, as there was none to observe what was going on. The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا if she would like to run a race with him ﷺ. Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا replied in the affirmative. The objective of this race was firstly to please Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا and secondly to teach the *Ummah* that it is also not desirable to be too

saintly and righteous and confine onself to a secluded corner in devotion. No, a Muslim should live in this world, leading a normal and active life.

Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا has narrated in a *Hadith* saying:

> The Holy Prophet ﷺ ran a race with me twice. In the first race the Holy Prophet ﷺ was the winner. In the second race I was the winner, because at that time the Holy Prophet ﷺ had become bulky in body so he ﷺ lagged behind. On that occasion He ﷺ said هٰذِهٖ بِتِلْكَ (i.e. both have become equal). In other words the race became drawn between the two.

Just see how the pious men remain in quest of occasions to act upon the *Sunnah*.

Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ acted upon this *Sunnah*

Once Hazrat Thanawi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was going to attend a feast in a village which was situated at some distance from Thana Bhawan. His wife was also with him. They both were walking on foot and were all alone. When they were midway in the forest Maulana considered it to be a God-given opportunity to act upon the Prophet's *Sunnah* of running a race with his wife. On that rare occasion he acted upon this *Sunnah* by running a race with his wife. It is quite obvious that he was not fond of running a race, but he ran this race only for the sake of acting upon a *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This demonstrates the fervour of acting upon a *Sunnah*, by saintly men.

May Almighty Allah inculcate in all of us the keen desire to do good deeds and the longing for earning rewards in the Hereafter.

Seek courage from Allah

Sometimes a desire springs up in a man's heart to vie with a man who is doing some good deed, but at the same time he begins to feel that he is not equal to that task. He is not worthy of the sublime deed the other fellow is doing. When such discouraging ideas deter a man from virtuous deeds he should act upon this *Hadith*: واستعن بالله ولا تعجز i.e., seek Allah's help and do not admit (in you) disability for the deed. Have full reliance on Allah who will make the deed easy for you.

It is related about righteous men that they offer the *Tahajjud* (after midnight) *Salat* and make supplications before Allah at that blessed time of the night. You may also feel a desire to offer the *Tahajjud Salat* and reap its blessings, but at the same time your weakness and inability keep you away from this task. In such a situation you should not surrender yourself to such discouraging thoughts, but should pray to Allah hopefully that He may bestow upon you the necessary courage and strength to offer the *Tahajjud Salat* and reap its blessings.

Either you are helped to do the deed or granted its reward

When a man prays to Almighty Allah for help to do some deed his prayer is sure to bring him one of the two alternative gains. Either Allah will help the man to perform the deed, or He shall grant him the reward for the deed. This is proved by a *Hadith*.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a *Hadith*:

If a man prays with heart-felt sincerity for the honour of martyrdom, Allah grants him, by His mercy, that honour, even if he dies (at home) on his bed.

The incident of an Ironsmith

My respected fatehr, Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه once related this:

After the death of Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه someone saw him in a dream and asked him what happened to him after his death. In reply he said that Allah was very kind to him Who forgave him and granted him a status which he hardly deserved. He added that he could, however, not get the status which was granted to the Ironsmith who lived in the front house.

On getting up from his sleep the person who had the dream felt a desire to find out who that Ironsmith was and what righteous deed he did to supersede Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه in the Hereafter. This man then called at the house of the Ironsmith and related his dream to the wife of the deceased and asked her about her husband's deeds by virtue of which he superseded Hazrat Abdullah bin Muhbarak رحمة الله عليه. The wife replied to this question, saying: My husband did not devote himself to any special acts of worship, yet I saw in him two notable acts:

As soon as he heard the first words of the *Azan* (Prayer-call) الله اكبر, he would stop his work without a moment's delay, even without completing the stroke for which he had raised up the hammar. He would then leave the smithy and prepare himself for the prayer.

The other notable act I noticed in him is that a pious man, Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه lived in the house in front of our house who used to pray on the roof of his house the whole night. My husband used to envy that pious saint and ardently desired that if Almighty Allah had granted him the necessary freedom of time he too would worship Allah like that pious saint.

Hearing this account, the man exclaimed: It is this

regret which placed the ironsmith at a status higher that of Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه. After relating this event my respected father Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say: This is the rare feeling of regret which sometime raises a man to an unimaginable height of superiority. So when a man comes to know that such a person is engaged in doing this righteous deed he should also entertain a desire in his heart to be able to do the same deed.

An idea of the trend of thought of the Noble Companions رضى الله عنهم

It occurs in the narratives that some Companions رضى الله عنهم once called upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ and said to him: O Messenger of Allah we see that many of our Companions رضى الله عنهم are well-to-do persons. We envy them, because we both put in almost the same bodily acts of worship, but they put in financial acts of worship and good deeds like spending money in alms and charity - acts by virtue of which their sins are pardoned and their status is raised, so they will be far above us in the Hereafter and as such we cannot compete with them in the matter of righteousness on account of our poverty.

See! How different is our trend of thinking. When we think about rich men we do not envy them on their acts of charity. On the contrary, we feel jealous of them for their wealth and comfortable living. We begin to desire if we too had money, so that we too could live comfortably like these wealthy persons. This is the difference between the two trends of thinking !

Anyway, in reply to the question put by these Companions رضى الله عنهم the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

I tell you about a deed such reward will exceed the

rewards of those who spend money on alms and charity. None can supersede you in this matter. That virtuous deed consists in rehearsing after every prayer 33 times سبحان الله(Glorified is Allah), الحمدلله (All praise is for Allah) and 34 times الله اكبر(Allah is the Greatest of all), thus completing the count 100.

The desire to do good is a great blessing

A further question arises in this behalf. If the rich men also indulge in the rehearsal of the same sacred names 33/34 times as mentioned above, the question put by the Companions رضى الله عنهم remains unanswered, because the rich persons will still be ahead of the poor class in the matter of doing good.

This question may be answered by saying that the intention of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is to tell that the regret felt by men in not being able to spend money in charity and alms, as the rich do, is a virtue in return for which Almighty Allah shall grant the servants concerned the reward for acts of charity and alms. People should know that this regret felt for the inability to do good is also a great blessing. So when you come to know that such and such person is doing some good deed you should acknowledge to Allah - your inability to do that good deed and seek His help for doing that. In response to your prayer, Allah shall either help you in doing the same good deed or will grant you the reward for the deed. This is an infallible remedy.

The word "IF" is the key which opens the door to Satanic acts

وان اصابك شيئٌ فلا تقل لوانى فعلت لكان كذا وكذا ولكن قل قدَّر الله وماشاء فعل فان "لو" تفتح عمل الشيطان

If some mishap strikes you in the life of this world, do not say, this would had not happened, if I had done this and that. Do not use the word "If" and "if not". You should say: This happened, because it was so destined by Almighty Allah. What Allah willed happened. The word "If" opens the door of Satanic activities. For example, if a relative dies, it is generally said that if such and such physician had treated the patient, he would have been saved. Similarly, when theft or robbery is commtited in anyone's house, it is said that if such and such precautionary measures had been taken, the crime would not have been committed. Such things should not be uttered. All that should be uttered on such occasions is: What has happened was pre-destined by Allah and Allah's destiny cannot be deferred in any way.

The world is a mixture of comfort and discomfort

May Allah let the truth of this wonderful teaching contained in this *Hadith* descend into the recesses of our hearts. Be sure that the only way of attaining peace, safety, comfort and contentment in this world is to have trust in, and reliance on, Allah's destiny along with belief in Allah. There is no man in this world who can claim that he has not been afflicted in this world with some worry, grief or misfortune. This world contains both sides, namely, ease joy and comfort and difficulties, grief and hardships. There is in this world neither unmixed joy nor unmixed grief. All men have to taste the sweetness of joy as well as

the bitterness of hardship. One cannot purchase joy and comfort unmarred by hardships and torments even at the price of the entire wealth of the world.

A man who is loved by Allah faces more hardships

The Prophets عليهم السلام of Allah, who are Allah's beloved and favoured men have had to suffer troubles and hardships even more than the common public. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said:

اشد الناس بلاءً اَلْاَنْبِيَاءُ ثم الاَ مثل فالاَ مْثل (كنز العمال، حديث نمبر ٦٧٨٣)

> The Prophets of Allah are most exposed to misfortunes than those who are similar and nearer to them.(*Kanzul-Amal Hadith No: 6783*)

The world which is free from all misfortunes and hardships is Paradise. It is, therefore, certain that hardships and misfortunes must descend on this world. It is, however, not wise to pine over these misfortunes and take pessimistic views about them, feeling that if this and that measure had been taken the hardships could have been averted. This trend of thinking only intensifies the feelings of grief and regret. This also contains a sense of complaint against the dispensation of the All-Wise Providence. This trend of thinking makes the worldly life tortuous and makes the person concerned liable to punishment of the Hereafter. This may also deprive him-God forbid - of his *Eeman* (Faith).

What can a mean worm know the expedience of things?

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has therefore, advised that whenever something undesirable befalls you, you should think that it is due to Allah's destiny and will and you are not aware of wisdom lying at the bottom of that

undesirable event. If the mishap is so severe that you are moved to tears there is no harm in weeping, provided that this does not arouse in you the slightest feeling of a complaint against Allah, the Author of the misfortune. Weeping has the effect of bringing solace to the grief-stricken heart.

A pious man was moved to tears on account of hunger

It has been related about a pious man that when a visitor called on him he was weeping. On being asked about the cause of this weeping he said that he was feeling hungry. The visitor told the pious man that it is the children who weep on account of hunger and not grown-up men like him. The weeping man said: May be, Allah has made me hungry because He appreciates my weeping. Thus, sometimes Almighty Allah appreciates weeping provided this does not involve a feeling of complaint against Him. In the terminology of the mystics this is called "*Tafweez*" which means entrusting one's affairs and problem to Allah with a confession that the trouble is only apparent and is based on Allah's will Who controls everything pleasant or unpleasant, big or small. Such trend of thinking strengthens *Eeman*, mitigates the severity of the mishap and makes it bearable.

The difference between a Muslim and an Infidel

The relative of an infidel fell sick and was treated by a Doctor, but he died. In this situation there is nothing to bring solace to the infidel. He has no alternative but to blame the Doctor for wrong treatment. If a Muslim faces similar situation, he has something to bring solace to him in his grief. He will think that the inefficient treatment of the

Doctor may be the apparent cause of the death, but the real cause of death was Allah's will and destiny which could not be helped in any circumstances. Even the treatment by the best Doctor could not avert the death which had been destined by Allah to take place at the pre-fixed hour.

Hazrat Abdullah bin Mas'ood رضی اللہ عنہ who is a renowned Companion has narrated saying: It is better for me to place on my tongue an ember of burning fire than to desire about a past event that it should not have happened and to desire an event to happen which has not yet happened.

Be contented with Allah's Decision

When Almighty Allah has taken a decision on some event then it is to express disatisfaction with Allah's decision or destiny to say that it was better if this did not happen or it should have happened in this or that way. It is demanded of a believer that he should yield to Allah's decision and His destiny without the slightest complaint in his heart about that decision and destiny which should be accepted whole-heartedly. In another narrative Hazrat Abu Darda رضی اللہ عنہ has said:

اذا قضی اللہ قضاء احب ان یرضی بقضائہ

When Almighty Allah takes a decision on anything, He desires that His servant should gladly accept His decision.

If the decision is apparently undesirable and a source of inconvenience and grief, it should be accepted without murmur instead of saying that if one had done this or that the event would not have occurred. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has forbidden this attitude with Allah's destiny. This is because what has happened was Allah's destiny which had

to come to pass at any rate and it was not possible to avert it in any circumstances. It is, therefore, not a believer's conduct to pass remarks on the divine decision as this is tantamount to expressing dis-satisfaction.

There is solace in remaining contended with one's destiny

If we look into the matter a bit deeply we shall find that there is no alternative for man but to surrender himself to Allah's destiny. Your dis-satisfaction with the destiny cannot change the event and the grief that has stricken you cannot be averted by your resentment. On the other hand this negative attitude on your part will aggravate your grief by your pining over the event that has already taken place. If looked at from this viewpoint, it will be realized that contentment with Allah's destiny contains a source of solace which Almighty Allah has provided for a believer.

Destiny does not forbid taking preventive measures

The belief in destiny is a wonderful belief which Almighty Allah has granted every believer. It is necessary to understand the full implications of the belief lest people should fall into diverse errors.

Firstly, before the occurrence of some event, this belief should not induce a man to succumb to idleness and inactivity. For example, man should not give up his efforts, thinking that what is destined shall happen and there is no need to take any measures in the matter. Such an attitude is against the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The injunction of the Islamic *Shari'ah* requires that all efforts should be made in attaining one's objective.

After taking the necessary measures leave the result to Allah

Secondly, action on the belief about destiny commences after occurrence of an event. For example, if something unpleasant happens to a believer, should think that he did whatever was necessary to do to get a favourable result. If the result has turned out to be against his expectation, he should think that he had done his best to attain the desired result, but if the result turned out against his expectations it was Allah's decision which could not be helped and he must remain contented with it. It is not the character of a believer to give way to remorse and regret after a result has come out and feel dejected, thinking that if this and that action had been taken the result would have been as desired. This trend of thinking goes counter to the belief in destiny.

Almighty Allah has shown us the right path between these two extremes. It is necessary for a believer to do his best to attain something as long as the destined result remains hidden, because we do not know yet what the fate has in store for us.

An incident that took palce with Hazrat Farooq A'zam رضی اللہ عنہ

Once Hazrat Farooq A'zam رضی اللہ عنہ was on a tour of Syria. On the way he was informed that the epidemic of plague had broken out in the territory of Syria. It was so virulent that its victims died in the matter of a few hours. Many Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم fell martyrs in the plague. The entire graveyard in Jordan near the grave of Hazrat Ubaidah bin Jarrah رضی اللہ عنہ is occupied with the graves of these martyrs. Hazrat Farooq A'zam رضی اللہ عنہ consulted the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم whether he should

pursue his tour or go back. On that occasion Hazrat Abdur Rahman bin 'Auf رضی اللہ عنہ narrated a *Hadith* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, saying:

> If plague breaks out in any territory, then those who are out of that territory should not enter it while those who are already staying in the affected area should not leave it.

After hearing this *Hadith* Hazrat Farooq A'zam رضی اللہ عنہ postponed the programme of his tour to that territory. A Companion رضی اللہ عنہ probably Hazrat Abu Ubaidah bin Jarrah رضی اللہ عنہ, said to Hazrat Farooq A'zam رضی اللہ عنہ:

أتفرُّ مِنْ قدر اللہ؟

Are you fleeing from Allah's destiny? If death has been ordained, it must come. If it has not been ordained it will never come.

In reply to this question Hazrat Farooq A'zam رضی اللہ عنہ said:

لو غيرك قالها يا ابا عبيده

> O Abu Ubaidah! If any other person had said this, I would have considered him to be pardonable. How can you who are well aware of the truth say this?

Thereafter he said:

نعم نَفر من قدر اللہ الی قدر اللہ

> Yes, we are fleeing from Allah's destiny to Allah's destiny.

The intention was to say that until the event takes place we have been advised to take all precautionary measures to attain the desired objective. This is not against the belief in destiny but it is a part of that belief. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has advised us to take all possible precautionary measures. Hazrat Farooq A'zam رضی اللہ عنہ said that, acting upon this advice he was going back. If the affliction with plague has been ordained for us, we cannot avert it, but we must take precautions as far as possible.

The correct concept of Destiny

It is the belief of a believer that after all necessary steps to achieve something have been taken he should leave the result to Almighty Allah, saying: O Allah, I have taken all possible steps in the matter and now I am waiting for your decision. I shall remain contented with your decision whatever it may be. The belief in Destiny should not induce anyone to sit idle and do nothing before the happening of the event as some men make the belief in destiny an excuse for sitting idle under the notion that whatever has been ordained must come out whether one works or does not work to attain the desired result. This attitude is not right. Islam teaches that we should do our best to achieve our objectives, but if all our efforts fail to produce the desired results against our expectation, then we should accept the situation with a good grace. On the other hand if we feel dejected and express dis-satisfaction at the unfavourable results, this will only add to our grief and dejection, because what has happened cannot be averted and there is no alternative for us but to put up with the situation, however unpleasant it may be. We should, therefore, surrender ourselves to the will of Allah and His decision on the very first day.

To feel grief and shock is not against the principle of contentment with Destiny

If some undesirable event takes place or some grief or shock afflicts a person, then it is not against the principle of patience to express that grief or shock by

weeping or lamenting, nor is it a sin. How to reconcile between the two apparently opposite views that it is lawful to express grief and to weep on some undesirable event and on the other hand one has been advised to accept submissively what has been ordained by Allah. Are they not two contradictory views?

Try to understand well that expression of grief and shock is one thing and submission to the Divine Destiny is quite another thing. Submission to Allah's decision and Will implies admission that Allah's decision is based on divine wisdom and we are not aware of this wisdom. This ignorance of the divine wisdom is the source of our grief and shock and the cause of our weeping. However we also know at the same time that what Allah has ordained is quite true and correct and based on Allah's unfailing wisdom and prudence. Thus submission to destimy implies a mental and rational attitude of submission but in actual practice the apparent feeling may be different.

A very convincing example

Suppose, a patient goes to a hospital and requests the Surgeon to perform an operation on him to cure him of some ailment. When the Surgeon starts the operation, the patient starts crying on account of the pain caused by the process of the operation. Notwithstanding this, he pays the Surgeon's fees and pays him thanks for the operation. Why is it so? This is because he feels rationally that the operation the Surgeon is performing on him is to save him from some serious ailment. Likewise whatever hardships and torments befall a man descend from Allah and by His will. This is as if Almighty Allah is performing a surgical operation on His servants. Therefore, if any servant turns submissively to Allah despite the hardships and misfortunes

he is undergoing, this attitude is in his best interests and highly beneficial to him. Thus, if a man rationally feels that whatever comes to him from Allah is in his best interests, then no charge lies on him if he displays any restlessness and discomforts on his apparent sufferings.

Failure in any project is also by Allah's Will and Leave

Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that sometimes a businessman is trying to strike a profitable business bargain; or there is a man who is making his best efforts to get a good job. These two persons are themselves praying and requesting others also to pray to Allah for success in attaining their desired goals. In the meantime Almighty Allah is telling his Angels that if these two servants are assisted to attain their desired objectives, they will fall into errors, commit sins and will become entitled to Hell Fire. So Allah, in His wisdom, does not help them to succeed in their respective projects. Accordingly, some hindrance occurs in the nick of time and they fail to attain their desired aims. On account of this sudden failure, these persons are raising hue and cry and cursing their fates and others for their failures. They are hardly prepared to think that all that has come to pass is by Allah's Will and Leave and for the exclusive benefits of these persons and in their own interests. If they had been successful in their plans, they would have become entitled to Hell.

Thus, this is Allah's providence, destiny and decision which a servant should accept with a good grace and from the core of his heart.

As a *Mu'min* you have put faith in the belief in Destiny

Every believer has full conviction in the belief concerning Destiny. When a man embraces Islam, he acknowledges Allah, His Prophet ﷺ and also the reality of Destiny:

اٰمَنْتُ بِاللّٰهِ وَمَلٰٓئِكَتِهٖ وَكُتُبِهٖ وَرُسُلِهٖ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ وَالْقَدْرِ خَيْرِهٖ وَشَرِّهٖ مِنَ اللّٰهِ تَعَالٰى

The impact of this *Eeman* (Faith) is generally not reflected in a believer's daily life, nor is he conscious of the implications of this Faith. Generally he remains oblivious of all this. That is why he remains worried and care-worn in the world. The learned Sufis have, therefore, advised that when man has once become firm in this belief, he should make it an inseparable part of his life which he should always keep in view and ever fresh in his memory. When something good or bad happens to him he should remember that he has beleived in the destiny ordained by Allah and he is, therefore, honour-bound to remain contented with that. This is the difference between a common man and one who has to apply the trust in destiny to his life under the guidance and training of the learned Sufis and Saints.

Man should, therefore, make the belief in destiny an inseparable and permanent maxim of his life that when something undesirable happens to him he should recite these Qur'anic words انا لله وانا اليه راجعون and surrender himself to the dispensation of Allah without the least demur or hesitation. Some practice is needed before man can reach this state of passive surrender to Allah's decision. When a man reaches this stage, he becomes totally immune from the onslaught of worries and anxieties.

Why these worries?

You should bear in mind that grief and shock are something which befall everyone at one time or another. This makes him worried and disturbed and deprives him of his peace and rest. The reason for this is that mentally he has not surrendered himself to Allah's decision and destiny. How can such a man have peace and rest ? There is however, a man who realises that he has done everything which was within his power and beyond this he is helpless. He has therefore, to accept whatever comes to him from Allah because His decision/judgement is final and none can change the Divine Decision. A man so resigned to his destiny may have to face grief and shocks but he can never face worries and anxieties.

The effect of this *Eeman* (belief) is generally not reflected in a believer's daily life, nor is he conscious of the implications of this belief. He remains generally dormant and oblivious of it.

A sentence worthy of being written with gold water

When my respected father Hazrat Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه died I was shocked with deep grief which I had never before faced in my life. It made me extremely restless. I could not even weep to relieve myself of the deep shock within me. I wrote to my Sheikh Dr. Abdul Hayee Sahib، رحمة الله عليه about my deplorable condition. In reply the Sheikh wrote a short note which continues still imprinted on my heart and which proved to be a panacea for my grief. The sentece was:

صدمہ تو اپنی جگہ پر ہے لیکن غیر اختیاری امور پر اتنی زیادہ پریشانی قابل اصلاح ہے۔

The shock of grief is a natural affair but it is due to an occurrence by the Will of Allah and beyond man's own control which could not be averted. To feel so much grief on an occurrence beyond human control is a violation of the injunction prescribing that one should yield to Allah's decision. The feeling of grief needs to be within reasonable limits.

The moment I read these words I felt as if ice had been placed on my chest and I was awakened to reality.

Let the following advice be imprinted on your heart

On another occasion I wrote a letter to another Sheikh of mine Hazrat Maulana Maseehullah Khan Sahib رحمة الله عليه. In reply to my letter he advised me as under:

"If a man has established a relationship with Allah, there is no justification for him to feel worried or perturbed."

Conversely, the Sheikh means to say that being ridden by worries and anxieties shows that the relationship with Allah is not yet strong enough. Firm relationship with Allah and accumulation of worries do not go together.

So pray to Allah that He may remove your grief and anxieties and you may remain contented with the Divine decision, whatever it is. This if رضا بالقضاء (submission to the dictates of destiny) becomes the nature of a man worries and anxieties can never fall on him.

The secret in the comfort and peace enjoyed by Hazrat Zun Noon Misri رحمة الله عليه

Someone asked Hazrat Zun-noon Misri رحمة الله عليه: Sir, how do you do ? He replied saying: I am quite well. What do you think about the peace and joy of a person without whose pleasure nothing can happen in the universe ? The questioner said: The power and authority to which you have referred is not enjoyed even by the Prophets عليهم السلام of Allah. They could not claim such prerogative as you are claiming. How did you attain this position? The saint replied, saying: I have merged my own wishes and preferences into those of Allah. That is, my own desires and preferences are the same as those of Allah, so I can say that whatever is happening in the world is happening with my choice and preference. Thus when everything in the world is happening according to my choice and pleasure what can you say about my satisfaction and joy? This being the situation how can worries, anxieties and disturbances approach me?

Hardship too is mercy in disguise

That person is secure from worries and troubles whom Allah has granted the wealth of contentment with destiny. This person has sometimes to face grief and hardship, but he is not at all worried at these. He knows that whatever grief or shock falls on him is from, and by the will of, his Master, Allah and is exactly in accordance with His wisdom and destiny and his interest and gain are also concealed therein. Some saints have gone to the extent of declaring;

نشود نصیبِ دشمن کہ شود ہلاک تیغت
سرِ دوستاں سلامت کہ تو خنجر آزمائی

This is a Persian couplet which may be litterally translated thus:

O my beloved ! let not your sword kill the enemy. The lovers are ready to take the stroke of your sword.

The deeper meaning of the couplet is that hardships and mishaps that fall on a person from the side and by the will of Allah should be welcomed as they are nothing but mercy from Allah in disguise, which should better be distributed among the friends rather than the enemies (unbelievers).

An example

Setting an example of this aspect, Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has said: You dearly love a person but you have not been able to see him for a long time. That beloved person suddenly arrives and catches hold of you from behind with a strong grip. The grip is so hard that you try to get out of it and ask who is the person who is torturing you. The answer comes: I am that beloved of yours. If you do not like my squeezing you I am letting you free and doing the same with your rival. If you are a true lover, your reply will be that your beloved should continue his pressure on you and should not turn his attention to the rival, and you will recite this couplet:

نہ شود نصیبِ دشمن کہ شود ہلاک تیغت
سرِ دوستاں سلامت کہ تو خنجر آزمائی

May Almighty Allah make us, by His mercy, understand that these hardships, difficulties and misfortunes contain an element of Allahs' mercy. Being weak, we do not ask for these hardships and difficulties, but when they fall on us they fall with Allah's wisdom and

decision and as such they are good and beneficial for us.

Do not ask for hardships, but endure them with patience when they come

It is not our capacity to ask for these hardships, although those who are aware of the realities of these hardships do sometime demand them. This kind of demand has been related about Sufis. True devotees of Allah have particularly accorded preference to hardships in the path of Deen.

بجرمِ عشقِ تو ام مے کشند غوغا ایست
تو نیز بر سرِ بام آ کہ خوش تماشا ایست

This is a Persian couplet which means:
(Addressing his beloved the lover says)
See, how the people are killing me on the charge of my love for you. You should come to the balcony to enjoy this interesting scene.

Such incidents relate to high-ranking saints. We are weak and not so capable as to long for hardships; we pray to Allah for granting us peace and security. Even hardships too are a blessing in disguise, yet we pray to Allah to keep them away from us and convert them into peace and comfort. Anyway, when discomfort and difficulties fall upon us we should not display anxiety and restlessness. This is what is called رضا بالقضاء (contentment with destiny). This valuable belief should be a permanent feature of our lives. If this is attained we shall feel no worry and no distress, by the grace of Allah.

Some accounts of Righteous men

You may not have seen righteous men and saints of Allah in a state of restlessness, discomfort and anxiety

even when they are facing the greatest hardships and torments of life. The will, of course, feel the pinch of grief and sorrow but will never dispaly signs of restlessness and mental disturbance on that account. This is because they feel quite sure that the grief has fallen on them from, and with the Will of, Allah. It is Allah's decision to which they must yield with belief and submission to رضا بالقضاء (to principle of contentment with Destiny).

So, when some unpleasant and disturbing incident occurs it should be borne with patience with the belief that it is from Allah and is a matter of destiny. This is the only remedy for shocks of grief and anxiety. This has the effect of inculcating in man a very high degree of patience. Patience is a quality which surpasses all other qualities of sincerity and devotion. The Holy Qur'an itself has appreciated this quality:

إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى الصّٰبِرُوْنَ اَجْرَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ (سورة الزمر: ١٠)

The patient ones will indeed be paid their wages without count. (39:10).

There is none in this world who is not facing one or another hardship

Whenever a man is afflicted with some hardship, he should think that there is none in this world who has not faced similar afflications at one or another time of his life, no matter he may have been a great Monarch, a Prophet, a great Wali or a great Officer. You should, therefore, rest assured that you have to face hardships and troubles, whether you like this natural process or not. This world is a place where ease and comfort and worry, grief and joy, and the like go together. There is none who is drowned only in grief or only in enjoyment. This is the unchangeable rule of

nature. Even those who deny the existence of Allah cannot deny that they must have to face hardships and worries in life. Thus, when it is a confirmed truth that hardships and troubles must befall men, then man should decide for himself which hardships he should welcome and which he should avoid. One way is that man should himself try to decide that he can face a particular item of hardship in preference to some other item. However, is it possible for a man to take such a decision ? It is not possible, because he does not know and indeed he cannot know, which hardship will prove easier and more fitting for him than another to get rid of this ticklish question, it is best to leave the problem to Allah's decision. Man should, therefore, entrust the matter to Allah and pray to Him to grant him the necessary strength and courage and patience to bear whatever fate brings to him.

A less severe hardship averts a more severe hardship

The jurisdiction of man's intelligence is limited. He does not know that the hardship that has befallen him may have saved him from some greater hardship. For example, if a man has got fever, he has in view only pains the attendant on that fever. If a man has failed in securing a job for which had been striving hard, he has in view only the dejection due to this failure. If theft has occurred in his house, the grief of the loss suffered on account of this theft is before his eyes. The poor fellow does not know what other and probably more harmful events and greater hardships would have happened to him. As the orbit of man's understanding is very much limited, he is not able to look beyond the scope of his understanding and he begins to pine over his immediate losses or troubles. On such occasions man should better think that his immediate

losses or difficulties have saved him from some more severe and destructive mishaps. This trend of thinking will bring him solace and satisfaction. Sometimes Allah, in His mercy, lets His servant feel how the hardship or the loss that fell on him has proved a great boon for him.

It is a matter of common experience that sometime a man realizes that if his such and such prayer had been granted he would have been put to great loss, but Allah's decision saved him.

Seek help from Allah

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught us this supplication to attain peace of heart and mind:

لَا مَلْجَاَ وَلَا مَنْجَاَ مِنَ اللهِ اِلَّا اِلَيْهِ

There is no shelter and refuge from the anger of Allah except with Allah Himself.

In other words, man must accept, and submit to Allah's decision. At the same time man should remain praying to Allah to relieve him of his troubles and hardships. Maulana Rumi رحمة الله عليه has explained this point by an example. Imagine an archer who has such a huge bow with which he can encompass the entire universe and each part of it is fitted with an arrow. There is no place in the world which is immune from the hitting orbit of this bow. Now a question arises how to be safe from the arrows shot from this bow? The answer to this question is that if anyone wants to be safe from the arrows of this archer, he should take shelter by the side of the archer himself. Likewise, the hardships, troubles and mishaps are arrows of the decision of Allah. There is no protection and shelter from these arrows except that a man should seek shelter from them with Allah Himself. The following supplication should, therefore, be made:

O Allah, do not afflict me with a torment which is beyond my toleration. If you send on me some misfortune, grant me also the necessary patience to bear that misfortune and make it a cause for my pardon and elevation of my status.

Learn a lesson from an innocent child

You might have seen that when a mother beats her innocent child, the child tries to seek shelter from the mother in the mother's lap. Why does the child do so ? This is because the child knows very well that the shelter from the mother's beating lies by the mother's side and nowhere. The child can get love and sympathy only in the mother's lap. So when something unpleasant happens think that it is from Allah and that you can find shelter from it only under the lap of Allah's mercy. With this firm conviction in your heart, seek from Allah relief from the trouble you are in and patience to bear it. This is the meaning of رضا بالقضاء (submission to Divine Destiny). May Allah grant us, by His mercy, this quality.

It is a sign of goodness to submit to Allah's decision

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said in a *Hadith*:

اذا اراد الله بعبدٍ خيراً اَرْضَاهُ بما قسم له وبارك له فيه واذا لم يرد به خيرا لم يرضه بما قسم له ولم يبارك له فيه

When Almighty Allah intends to favour one of His servants He makes him contented with what He has destined for him and also grants him blessing in that destiny. If He -God forbid - does not favour any of His servants He does not make him contented with what He has destined for him, with the result that the servant is deprived

of the blessing of whatever he has been granted. The essence of this *Hadith* is that in submission to Allah's destiny lies Allah's pleasure and this pleasure, in turn, endows with blessings the little that the servant has been granted by Allah.

The sense and meaning of blessing

The contemporary world is a world of calculations in which everything is counted. For example, one man says that he draws a sum of Rs. 1000/- p.m. Another man says that he draws a sum of Rs. 2000/- and a third one says that he draws Rs 10,000/- p.m. None of them tries to estimate the facilities and comforts which he enjoys with the money he is drawing every month. A man may be drawing Rs 50,000/- per month, but his house-hold is beset with diseases, all sorts of worries and the like which have deprived him of his peace and tranquillity. Thus, it can be said that his monthly income of Rs 50,000/- is devoid of blessings. In contrast to him the man drawing only Rs 1000/- p.m. is enjoying peace, happiness and freedom from cares and anxieties. The amount of Rs. 1000/- is small to count as compared with the amount of Rs. 50,000/- but in the matter of peace, comfort and prosperity the man drawing Rs 1000/- is much better off than the man drawing Rs 50,000/- p.m. It means that the salary of Rs 1000/- has more blessings than that of Rs 50,000/- p.m.

The account of a rich Prince

Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has written in one of his sermons that there lived a rich prince in the city of Lucknow (India), possessing large landed property, servants and attendants and other resources. Once when he met Maulana Thanawi رحمة الله عليه he related

his sad story that he could not enjoy his blessings because he had been afflicted with a disease which had disenabled him to eat anything. The only food which his physician had prescribed for him was water squeezed out of boiled minced meat and that too in a moderate quantity.

Just see all the luxuries of life made available to this prince, but he had been forbidden to taste any of them. This only means that Almighty Allah had taken away His blessings from these delicacies and luxuries in so far as this ailing prince was concerned. What a pity, indeed! In contrast to this rich prince there is a poor labourer who has nothing to eat except coarse bread and a little salad, but owing to natural hunger he enjoys and eats his fill this coarse food - the food which generates energy in his body. Now decide for yourself which of the two servants of Allah is the better. The labourer's income is too scanty, yet it is full of Allah's blessings. This is what is called برکت (blessing).

Remain contented with your Destiny

Almighty Allah desires that His servants should submit gladly to what He has ordained for them. This submission to fate or destiny never means that he should give up work and wait for what destiny brings to him. No, they should work their hardest to attain their cherished objectives, but should accept the results with a good grace and believe that whatever has come out is Allah's decision and it contains blessings. If a servant murmurs at the result and expresses ingratitude at it, then he will become deprived of the blessings and joy of the little that he has attained. Murmurring and fretting will not change the destiny. This will only intensify his irritation and deprive him of the blessing of what has come to him.

My cup contains the essence of the entire Tavern

Man's good lies in remaining contented with Alalh's blessings and gifts, whether they are in the form of money, job, physical beauty, etc. with a firm belief that whatever blessing, little or much Allah has granted His servant is better for him. There is an Urdu couplet by our Dr. Abdul Hayee Sahib رحمة الله عليه on this point which is worth memorising:

مجھ کو اس سے کیا غرض کس جام میں ہے کتنی مے
میرے پیمانے میں لیکن حاصلِ میخانہ ہے

It is not my concern to know how much wine others have in their cups. Whatever, little or much, I have in my cup is enough for me, as it is Allah's gift and favour and I feel fully contented with the divine gift. What more should I desire?

Man should try to follow this trend of thought that whatever comes to him from Allah is the best for him. In other words, everyone should inculcate in him the quality of رضا بالقضاء (submission to destiny). This will bring him relief from grief and will soften the pinch of dejection and despondency.

May Almighty Allah grant us this trend of thought and make رضا بالقضاء our second nature. *Aameen*!

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid
Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi.
Date : 14th July 1995

THE SIGNS OF THE AGE OF *'FITNAH'* (TRIALS)

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه و نستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرورانفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهد ان لا اله الاالله وحده لا شريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا و سندنا و مولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه و على اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد!

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطٰن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا عَلَيْكُمْ اَنْفُسَكُمْ ۚ لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَّنْ ضَلَّ اِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ ؕ اِلَى اللّٰهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيْعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ (سورة المائدة: ١٠٥)

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم:

اذا رأيت شحا مطاعا و هوى متبعا و دنيا موثرة واعجاب كل ذى راى برأيه

فعليك يعنى نفسك ودع عنك العوام (ابوداؤد. كتاب الملاحم، باب الامر)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم وصدق رسوله النبى الكريم ونحن

على ذالك من الشاهدين والشاكرين والحمدلله رب العالمين

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and seek His forgiveness and believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our souls and from the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom He guides and there is none to guide him whom He lets go astray. We bear witness that there is no god but Allah the One Who has no partner. We also bear witness that our sire, and our authority and our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him, his household and bless and salute them all in great abundance.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ was commissioned as a Prophet for all peoples of the world till the Day of Judgement

To day I want to say something briefly about such a theme of the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ as is very necessary today but is generally overlooked. Almighty Allah sent the Holy Prophet ﷺ to this world as the last of the Prophets عليهم السلام, thus finalising with him ﷺ the chain of Prophethood. Another distinction which Allah bestowed upon him ﷺ over other Prophets عليهم السلام is that the latter Prophets were sent to some particular people residing in a particular land in a particular age. Their

teachings and preachings were confined to a particular territory. For example, Hazrat Moosa (Moses) عليه السلام was sent to the Children of Israel, living in Egypt and his prophethood was limited only to this community and this territory. As against this, the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was sent to the entire world and entire humanity and for all times till the Day of Judgement. The Holy Qur'an bears witness to this fact:

وَمَآ اَرْسَلْنٰكَ اِلَّا كَآفَّةً لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيْرًا وَّ نَذِيْرًا..... (سورة سبا: ٢٨)

And We have not sent you (O Muhammad), but as a bringer of good tidings and as a warner to all mankind. (34:28)

The words of 'all mankind' imply all men wherever and in whatever age they are living. This clearly shows that his prophethood was not confined only to the Arabian Peninsula, nor to any particular age. His prophethood encompassed all periods and ages till the Day of Judgement.

Prediction about future events

This means that his teachings and injunctions shall remain valid, effective and in force till the Day of Judgement. As already pointed out his teachings are not confined to any particular age. They apply to every walk of life. These teachings consist of two aspects. One aspect prescribes the rules of the *Shari'ah* concerning what is lawful, unlawful, desirable, permissible, etc. The other aspect predicts the events which will confront the *Ummah* in the times to come, and how the *Ummah* should tackle these events.

This second aspect is also a very important part of the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in which, peeping

into the future through the light of his Prophethood, he ﷺ has informed his *Ummah* of many future events and the ways how the members of his *Ummah* should tackle these events, so as to remain on the right path of Deen. Today I want to say something on this second aspect of the Prophet's ﷺ teachings.

Anxiety for the salvation of the *Ummah*

The Holy Prophet ﷺ always remained concerned about the good of his *Ummah*. It occurs in a narrative:

كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم دائم الفكرة متواصل الاحزان

The Holy Prophet ﷺ always remained drowned deep in some worry, grief.

What was the cause of this anxiety and grief? it was indeed not about collecting worldly resources, nor about improving his own honour and status among his community. The grief under which he was pining was about how to save from Hell-Fire the people to whom he had been sent; how to divert them from the path of error and to guide them to the straight path of right guidance. Finding His Prophet ﷺ drowned in such grief Allah has frequently revealed verses to advise the Prophet ﷺ to give up such pining and fretting. Thus, Allah has said:

فَلَعَلَّكَ بَاخِعٌ نَّفْسَكَ عَلَىٰ اٰثٰرِهِمْ اِنْ لَّمْ يُؤْمِنُوْا ..... (سورة الكهف: ٦)

It may be that you will torment your soul that they do not become believers. (18:6)

This verse indicates how concerned the Holy Prophet ﷺ was about the right guidance of his *Ummah* on to the path of *Eeman* (Faith). He ﷺ is reported to have said in a *Hadith*:

My example is like that man who kindles fires and seeing the fire, the moths begin to fall on

the flames. The man tries to keep the moths away from the flames to save them from being burnt in the flames. In the same way I am trying to save you from Hell-Fire by holding you back by your waists, but you are rushing into the Fire.

So concerned did the Holy Prophet ﷺ feel about the right guidance of his *Ummah*, including also those who were yet to come to the world !

What Trials and Tribulations are expected to break out in the future?

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has, therefore, informed the future generations of the events that shall occur in their times. Accrdingly all books of *Hadith* contain permanent Chapters on Trials." In the Chapters all such *Ahadith* have been collated in which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has informed of, and warned the people against, the tribulations expected to occur in the future. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a *Hadith*:

تقع الفتن فى بيوتكم كوقع المطر

In the future trials will fall down into your houses like the falling down of the drops of rain water.

These trials have been compared to the drops of rain water, because the trials will fall down on your houses in an unbroken succession one after another.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in another *Hadith*:

ستكون فتن كقطع الليل المظلم

Very soon trials and tribulations will appear which will be like dark nights.

In other words, just as a man is not able to find his

way in dark nights in the same way during these blinding trials people will not know what to do and where to go. Those trials will encompass the entire society, leaving no place of shelter for the people. The Holy Prophet ﷺ also taught the people a supplication to find refuge with Allah from these trials:

اللهم انا نعوذ بك من الفتن ماظهر منها وما بطن

O Allah, we seek refuge with You from these apparent or hidden trials. This supplication was included in the Prophet's ﷺ daily routine.

What is a Trial?

We should now try to understand the meaning of فتنہ (Trial). We should also try to find out the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ for all of us to obey in order to remain safe from the harms of these trials. We are not aware of the real implications of this term, although we use it from morning till everning. This word has also been used in the Holy Qur'an many times. It has been mentioned in the Holy Qur'an at one place: والفتنه اشدّ من القتل meaning that the creation of a trial is more grievous a sin than murder.

The meaning of Trial

The word فتنہ is an Arabic word the dictionary meaning of which is to find out the purity or impurity of precious metals like gold or silver by melting it on fire. Melting the metal on fire discloses the reality. For the same reason, it is also used to mean testing and examining something. Thus, a second meaning of this word is "trial". When hardships and misfortunes descend on a man his real worth and character are tested by his conduct and behaviour under these trying situations. It is observed whether he bears these trying

hours, days with patience makes a fuss and raises hues and cries. this testing is also called فتنہ (Trial).

The word فتنہ (Trial) as used in the *Ahadith*

The word فتنہ (Trial) has been used in the *Ahadith* to express a situation at any time. When the truth is obscure and it becomes very difficult to distinguish between good and bad, right and wrong and truth and falsehood. When such a situation arises, it is said that it is a time of trial فتنہ. It is also a time of trial when sins, crimes and disobedience become rampant. In the same way to regard falsehood as truth and truth as falsehood and to put forward something as a proof which is not proof; these are forms of فتنہ (Trial). For example, if you tell a person that such an act is unlawful and strictly prohibited, the person shall reply that the entire society, the whole world including Saudi Arabia is doing this act. In our times it has become a common practice that when an objection is raised to any act, the doer atonce replies that he has seen the same act being done in the Saudi Arabia. This is also a فتنہ (trial) to put forward some act or practice as a proof which is not at all a proof. In the same way we find that many groups and parties have sprung up in the city, each with its slogan and tenet and it is difficult to decide which is on the right path and which is on the wrong path. Truth and falsehood have thus become mixed up. All these fall within the definition of فتنہ (Trial).

A quarrel between two parties is a فتنہ (Trial)

It is also a case of trial when two Muslims or two Muslim groups fall out with each other so violently that they are ready to shed blood and commit murder and it is not known which of the two is right and which is wrong.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said in a *Hadith*:

اذا التقى المسلمان بسيفيهما فالقاتلُ والمقتولُ كلا هما فى النار

When two Muslims begin to fight with each other with their swords, the murderer as well as the murdered will both enter Hell-Fire.

One of the Companions رضى الله عنه said to the Holy Prophet ﷺ: O Messenger of Allah ﷺ : It is understandable that the murderer shall go to Hell for murdering a Muslim, but why shall the murdered shall enter Hell? The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied, saying: The murdered will enter Hell because he too had come out to fight with the intention of murdering his opponent but he did not succeed in his intention but his opponent succeeded in his intention. None of the two was fighting in the cause of Allah, but worldly benefit in the form of money or some political benefit. Both will, therefore, enter Hell.

Killing and robbing are فتنه (Trial)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ hs said in another *Hadith*:

ان من ورائكم ايا ما يرفع فيها العلم ويكثر فيها الحرج قالوا يارسول الله ماالحرج؟ قال(ﷺ) اَلْقَتْلُ (ترمذى)

A time will come upon the people when there will be a great deal of "حرج" (confusion/disturbance). On being asked about "حرج" he ﷺ answered: It is killing and robbing, i.e., in those days these crimes will increase by leaps and bounds and human life will become meaner than that of mosquitoes and flies.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in another *Hadith*:

يأتى على الناس يوم لا يدرى القاتل فيم قتل ولا المقتول فيم قُتل فقيل كيف يكون ذلك؟ قال الهرج القاتل والمقتول فى النار (صحيح مسلم)

A time will come upon the people in which the killer will not know why he killed the victim nor will the victim killed know why he was killed.

Look at the conditions obtaining today in the society which fully confirms the truth of the Holy Prophet's ﷺ prediction. This is as if the Holy Prophet ﷺ was seeing these conditions with his own eyes.

In the olden days it was not known who was the killer, but it could be known why the victim was killed, i.e., he was killed by robbers for robbing the victim of his money, or by enemies. Anyway, the cause of the murder became known. What is happening now-a-days? A man is sitting or standing in front of his door, he has no enemies, he is not involved in politics, yet some hooligan shoots at him and kills him without any apparent cause. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has predicted all these events in clear words:

A *Hadith* about the Holy City of Makkah

It is narrated by Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضى الله عنه that the Holy Propeht ﷺ said:

اذا دعيت كظائم وساوى ابنيتها رؤس الجبال فعند ذلك ازف الامر

Until recently the people were not able to understand the real meaning of this *Hadith*, but now the meaning has become quite clear to them. The *Hadith* may be translated as under:

When the belly of Makkah will be cleft open and through it will be dug out river-like passage (i.e. tunnels) and the buildings of the Holy City of Makkah will rise higher than its mountains when you observe these signs, then understand that the time of فتنه (Trial) is near at hand.

The cleaving asunder of the belly of the Holy City of Makkah

This *Hadith* has continued on records of the last fourteen centuries. The commentators of the *Hadith* felt baffled, while explaining this *Hadith* as they could not understand how belly of the Holy City of Makkah could be cleft asunder, nor could they understand the meaning of digging out river-like passages. It was really very difficult to imagine the sense of all these predictions. But by seeing today's Makkah one feels that the Holy Prophet ﷺ made these predictions, as if he ﷺ was actually seeing with his own eyes today's Makkahtul-Mukarramah. Previously the *Muhaddithin* interpreted this *Hadith* by saying that in their times Makkah was a dry and mountaneous city, but in some future age Allah may cause rivers and canals to flow in that city. However today one feels by seeing these tunnels how the belly of Makkah has been cleft asunder:

Rising of building higher than mountains

The other sentence which the Holy Prophet ﷺ spoke out in this *Hadith* is that "the buildings of the Holy City of Makkah will rise higher than its mountains." A few years ago none could imagine that buildings would be built in Makkah which would rise higher than its mountains, as the city was surrounded by mountains on all sides. But go to Makkah and see for yourself how buildings higher than mountains have been built there.

It appears from this *Hadith*, as if fourteen centuries ago the Holy Prophet ﷺ had seen these changes and conditions with his own eyes. All these things had been shown to him clearly through revelations and light of Prophetic knowledge which Allah had granted him The Holy Prophet ﷺ has clearly mentioned one by one what

trials and tribulations the Muslims will have to face in the times to come. He ﷺ has also mentioned simultaneously what the Muslims should do at such a time.

The present era in the light of the *Ahadith*

Every Muslim should keep in view those *Ahadith* in which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has predicted the future events. Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Yusuf Ludhyanawi Sahib رحمة الله عليه has compiled a book titled "The Present Era in the Light of the *Ahadith*". He has tried to gather together in this book all the *Ahadith* about the فتنه (Trials). He has included in this book a *Hadith* in which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has mentioned seventy-two events which will occur during the Era of the Trials. I advise you to read them one by one and see how these events exactly agree to those taking place in our times and in our environments.

Seventy-two (72) signs of Trials and Tribulations

Hazrat Huzaifah رضى الله عنه has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ predicted that seventy-two events shall occur in the period close to the Day of Judgement. These are:

(1) People will begin to miss their prayers and pay no attention to them. If this is said in our times, there will be nothing surprising in it because the majority of the Muslim does not offer their prayers. The Holy Prophet ﷺ made this prediction at a time when Prayers were considered as a line of demarcation between unbelief ایمان and belief کفر. Even the most sinful and vicious person living in that age did not miss his prayers. In his time i.e. fourteen centuries ago, the Holy Prophet ﷺ predicted about the present times that the people will miss their prayers.

(2) They shall begin to betray their trusts. That is, they

will misappropriate the trusts entrusted to them for safe custody.

(3) They will begin to eat usurious income.

(4) They will begin to consider lying to be lawful. Telling lies will become an art.

(5) They will begin to commit murders on ordinary grounds.

(6) They shall construct high-rise buildings.

(7) They shall sell their Deen (Faith)

(8) They shall violate the bonds of relationships.

(9) Justice will become a virtue almost hard to find anywhere.

(10) Falsehood will become truth (and vice versa).

(11) Silk garments will be worn by men.

(12) Oppression and wrongdoing will become rampant.

(13) Divorces will become a common practice.

(14) Sudden deaths will become a common occurrence.

(15) One who betrays his trust will be regarded as trustworthy.

(16) The trustworthy will be regarded as untrustworthy.

(17) The liar will be regarded as truthful.

(18) The truthfull will be regarded as liar.

(19) Calumny will become a common feature, i.e., people will put false blames on one another.

(20) The weather shall be hot despite rains.

(21) Instead of desiring children people will hate them. They will pray to Allah not to favour them with children. This is actually happening as a result of the Family Planning Department of Governemnts are raising the slogan, "Only Two Issues" guarantee Propserity.

(22) The meaner classes will be happy and prosperous.

(23) The respectable classes will be in trouble and cast

out of the society.

(24) The Rulers and the Ministers will become used to lying-engrossed in lies from morning till evening.

(25) The trustworthy will begin to betray their trusts.

(26) The leaders of the people will become wrongdoers.

(27) The scholars of Deen and the reciters of the Qur'an will become lewd and sinners.

(28) The people shall put on skin-garments.

(29) The hearts of the wearers of skin-garments will be more foul-smelling than dead animals; and

(30) They will be more bitter than the aloe plant (with bitter leaves).

(31) Gold will become widely used.

(32) Silver will be in great demand.

(33) Sins will be on the increase.

(34) Peace and security will deteriorate (as we see this at the moment).

(35) The pages and covers of the Holy Qur'an will be lavishly decorated.

(36) The Mosques will be decorated with beautiful writings and designs.

(37) Lofty minarets will rise from the mosques.

(38) Even so, the hearts will remain desolate and empty.

(39) Wine will be drunk freely.

(40) Punishments of the *Shari'ah* will be suspended.

(41) The slave girl shall bear her master. In other words, the daughter shall rule over her mother and behave with her as a master behaves with his slave girls.

(42) The bare-footed, the naked and the uncultured shall become Kings and Rulers. The mean, the untouchable classes and the depressed ones will become Heads of State - (this is what has happened in India).

(43) Woman and man shall be partners in trade, as women are trying to take part in every walk of life side by side with men.

(44) Men will imitate women; and

(45) Women will imitate men. In other words, men and women shall adopt each other's guise and appearance. See what has actually happened today under the frenzy of fashion, so it is difficult to distinguish between men and women from a distance.

(46) The people will swear by names other than Allah's name. It is lawful to swear only by Allah or some attribute of Allah or by the Holy Qur'an. In the later ages people will swear by objects as 'by your head', etc. This is unlawful and strictly forbidden.

(47) In the times to come even the Muslims will bear false witnesses. The use of the word 'even' indicates that the non-Muslims do bear false witnesses freely but a Muslim who is not expected to do so, will also commit this sin.

(48) *Salam* (salute) will be bidden only to those who are known and not to strangers. This is against the injunction of the Holy Prophet ﷺ who has said in a *Hadith*:

السلام على من عرفت ومن لم تعرف

Salam should be bidden to everyone whether you know or do not know the the person.

If you are on a way you must bid *Salam* to every passer-by, except that if the number of the passers-by is very large, you may ignore this formality. However, a time will come when people will avoid bidding *Salam* even when there are only a

few men passing on the road, and the custom of *Salam* will come to an end.

(49) Religious knowledge will be aequired not for the sāke of religion but for the sake of earning worldly resources and worldly honour and status.

(50) Work relating to the Hereafter will be done to earn worldly gains.

(51) مال غنيمت (War-spoils) will be taken as personal estate مال غنيمت has been used here to imply public property which will be enjoyed as personal property.

(52) A trust shall be taken and misappropriated as plundered property.

(53) *Zakat* (the obligatory Islamic tax) will be paid reluctantly, as if it were a penalty.

(54) The meanest man shall become the leader of the community by their consent or votes.

(55) Men will disobey their parents.

(56) Men will misbehave with their mothers.

(57) A man will not hesitate in causing harm to his friends.

(58) A man will obey his wife.

(59) The voices of the wrongdoers will rise in the mosques.

(60) Women engaged in the singing profession (Film Actresses) will be held in great esteem and accorded high status.

(61) Musical instruments will be kept and preserved with care.

(62) Wine will be drunk by road-sides.

(63) Wrongdoing and tyranny will be looked upon as acts of pride.

(64) Justice will be sold (with bribery) in the Courts of Justice.

(65) The number of the Police will increase.

(66) The Holy Qur'an will be recited in a musical style, so as to enjoy the singing tone and its musical cadence. The Qur'an will not be recited for the sake of its *Da'wah* (preaching) for understanding it and for reaping the reward for its recitation.

(67) Beast skins will be used.

(68) The later pepole of the *Ummah* will taunt and curse the former people, i.e. the latter will pass derogatory remarks at the former. As a result of this trend a large section of the people is deriding insolently the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم and are behaving in the same way with the leaders of *Deen* who conveyed to us the message of *Deen*. These elder Doctors of *Deen* are being blamed as being ignorant of the *Ahadith* and the Holy Qur'an whereas the later generations claim to have understood those sources of Islam better than the former. The Holy Prophet ﷺ also said that when these signs appear then:

(69) Red wind-storm may come from Allah, or

(70) Earthquakes may upheave the earth; or

(71) The people's faces may be distorted; or

(72) Stones may rain down from the sky or some other torment may descend from Allah - God forbid. All these signs are proving true of our society one by one. The punishment that has come over us is really due to these misdeeds.(*Durre-Mansoor*, Vol. 4, P-52)

A mountain of misfortune shall fall down

It has been narrated by Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ that the Holy Propeht ﷺ said:

When fifteen misdeeds become common among my *Ummah* a mountain of misfortunes will fall down on them.

When the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم asked: O Messenger of Allah ﷺ! what these fifteen misdeeds are, he ﷺ replied saying:

Who are the thieves of the Public Funds?

(1) When public money is regarded as looted property. See how the public funds are being misappropriated today. This loot is not confined only to the rulers, but influencial men from among the public also plunder these funds as and when they are able to do so. We do many things without thinking that these are also acts of stealing public funds. For example, illegal electric connection, long foreign or local calls without paying the due charges with the unauthorised assistance of some Telephone Exchange employees, ticketless journeys or travelling in a higher class than that for which the tickets were purchased for the purpose.

These are serious cases of theft

The theft of public money is more serious than ordinary cases of theft. If a man commits theft in the house of anyone, it is possible to return the amount stolen, if the thief ever feels inclined to repent of his act of theft, or to get the amount stolen waved by its owner. The thief's crime will thus be washed off, but this is not possible in the case of theft of public money, because it belongs not to one man but to innumerable men of the public in such a case repentance becomes impossible. May Allah protect us from this theft.

(2) When people begin to misappropriate trusts, treating these as plundered booty.

(3) When the people regard payment of *Zakat* (obligatory

tax) as the payment of a penalty.

(4) When a man obeys his wife and disobeys his mother. For example, his wife wants him to do something which is unlawful and his mother tries to stop him from this unlawful act but the man obeys his wife and disobeys his mother.

(5) When a man behaves well with his friends and misbehaves with his parents.

(6) Raising voices in the mosques voices will be raised in the mosques. The mosques have been built for remembering Allah and offering *Salat* and no disturbance should be caused in such devotional acts. However, people disturb these acts of worship and devotion by raising their voices in the mosques. The *Nikah* (matrimonial tie) is performed in the mosques and this is a desirable practice but on such occasion the parties do not maintain the sanctity of the mosques and raise hues and cries which is a sin with no compensatory benefit, whatsoever. This is condemnable.

(7) The leader of the community is the meanest person of it.

(8) A man is held in esteem for fear of his mischief, as when he is not esteemed he may involve his opponents in some trouble.

(9) Wine will be drunk openly.

(10) Silk garmetns will be worn by men.

(11) Singing women in Houses Singing girls and maids will be lodged in the houses and musical insturments will be kept with great care. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has predicted these things at a time when none could imagine them. In his prediction the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said: They shall lodge in their houses singing girls. It is, however, a fact that every man has not the

capacity to lodge and maintain in his house singing girls. What does then the *Hadith* mean? The invention of the Radios, tape-recorders video cassettes and T.Vs has corroborated the truth of the words spoken by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. In the presence of these appliances anyone can enjoy music dancing and see singing girls at his choice and pleasure. For the same reason it is not necessary for anyone now-a-days to purchase musical instruments and keep them in one's house. The appliances enumerated above provide all sorts of audios- videos enjoyments.

(12) The later generations of this *Ummah* will curse the people of the former generation.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ said that when these vices spread in his *Ummah*, torments and misfortunes shall fall on them - God forbid. All the vices which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has enumerated in this *Hadith* are clearly visible in our society today.

Wine will be drunk under the name of a harmless drink

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in another *Hadith* that :

The people of his *Ummah* will make wine lawful by giving it the name of a beverage.

We see that today books have been written on this topic claiming that the wine presently in use is not prohibited and no where in the Holy Qur'an has the word unlawful been used for wine. As regards beer, this is nothing more than barley-water. This is also a beverage like all other beverages. In this way proofs are being invented and offered to declare wine lawful.

This is exactly what the Holy Prophet ﷺ declared

fourteen centuries ago.

Usurious transactions will be given the name of business

A time will come when the people of "my *Ummah* will make usury lawful by declaring it to be a business transaction", as is being done now-a-days. They say that bank interest is the form of a business transaction. If this is declared unlawful, the business activities will be greatly handicapped.

Bribery will be given the name of a Gift

There will come a time when the people of "my *Ummah* will make bribery lawful by giving it the name of a gift". The giver of bribery will give and the taker of bribe will take bribe under the name of a gift, even though the offer is nothing other than bribery. All these sins, crimes and vices are present today in the society.

These four predictions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ fully apply today to our society.(*Kanzul-Amal, Hadith* No: 38497)

To come to mosques, sitting on cushions

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a *Hadith* that:

During the later ages (of trials and tribulations) the people will go to the gates of the mosques on مياسر (*Mayasir*), an Arabic word, meaning very costly and fine silk cloth which the rich men used in those days to cover the saddles of their horses. In the olden days it was difficult to imagine what going to the mosques on مياسر meant. Now it has become very clear that the indication in the *Hadith* point to the comfortable spring-based car seats on which the richer class of the society go to the mosques for *Salat.*

Women will be naked notwithstanding that they will be clad in garments

The Holy Prophet ﷺ next said:

Their women will be naked notwithstanding that they will be clad in garments.

It was difficult to understand the meaning of the *pardah*, (Veil) but today we are seeing own our own eyes the truth of this *Hadith*. Either the women wear finely thin garments reflecting the hidden contours of their bodies or the garments will be of close-fitting and short that parts of their bodies will remain naked. It is seen that the heads of the womenfolk remain naked in 80% cases and according to the injunctions of the *Shari'ah* bare-headed women come under the definition of naked ones. (*Sahih Muslim*)

The hair on the heads of women will be like camel-humps

Thereafter, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

The hair on these women will be buldging upwards like camel-humps.

This is also one of those *Ahadith* whose meaning was not clear to the Ulama of olden days. But today the meaning has become quite clear to us, because the women make their hair buldging upwards by adding artificial wigs to their natural hair.

These are cursed women

The Holy Prophet ﷺ next said:

These women are cursed ones.

Allah has created womenfolk to remain confined within their prescribed injunction. When these women go out of their houses unveiled, then according to *Hadith* Satan begins to gaze and peep at them. When a woman goes out to

the market having applied perfume to her body and clothes, Allah and His Angels both curse her.

The real purpose of garments

The real purpose of wearing garments is to cover i.e. ستر عورت those parts of the body that are 'shame' which must be covered. Almighty Allah has said about it in the Holy Qur'an:

يٰبَنِيْٓ اٰدَمَ قَدْ اَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُّوَارِيْ سَوْاٰتِكُمْ وَرِيْشًا (سورۃ الاعراف: ۲۶)

O children of Adam ! We have sent down to you raiment to conceal your shame and for adornment. (7:26)

So the garment which does not conceal the part of the body that form "shame" defeats the purpose for which it is worn. If the real purpose of the garment is thus defeated, it means that the person wearing that garment is naked. Therefore, for God's sake, we should wear proper dresses. Even God-fearing people who are righteous and regular Namazis do not pay attention to this aspect, as they do not mind at all whether the dress they are putting on fulfils the purpose of covering their bodies properly. The woeful conditions we are facing these days are the results of these lapses on our part. It is our duty to make sure that at least the members of our own households and relatives, etc. put on dresses which conform to the injunctions of the *Shari'ah* in this behalf.

Other nations will eat up the Muslims

Hazrat Sauban رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said in a *Hadith*:

There will c)me upon you a time when the other nations of the world will invite one another to eat you up, as

people sitting round a dining cloth invite others to partake of the food served on that cloth. In the same way a time will come when the stronger nations of the world will invite other nations to eat up the Muslims. (*Abu Dawood*)

Those who are acquainted with the last century's history, i.e. from the first world war till now know quite well how tyrannically the non-Muslim communities have behaved with the Muslims and how they have been dividing the Muslim countries among themselves, saying: Egypt is yours and Syria is mine, Algeria is yours and Morocco is mine, India is mine and Burma is yours, and so on so forth.

The Muslims will become like Straws

When the Holy Prophet ﷺ thus predicted the condition of the Muslims to the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم, some Companions رضی اللہ عنہم asked: O Messenger of Allah! Will the number of the Muslims become so small at that time that that non-Muslims will begin to eat up, and will invite others also to feast upon, the Muslims? The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied, saying: No, at that time your number will be very large (one billion, i.e. about one-third of the total world population), but your example will be like countless straws floating on the surface of flood water. In other words, the Muslims will have no say in any matter; they will go on drifting in the direction in which the world powers want to take them.

The Muslims will beocme coward

The Holy Prophet ﷺ next said:

Almighty Allah shall take away your awe from the hearts of your enemies and weakness and cowardice will find access to your hearts. A Companion رضی اللہ عنہ asked: O Messenger of Allah! What are weakness and cowardice?

The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied, saying: It is weakness that love of the world shall creep into the hearts and the people will begin to hate death and this means that they will dislike meeting Almighty Allah. All their thoughts will be concentrated on earning the worldly resources together with fame and respect, whether by lawful or unlawful means.

The courage of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم

It is narrated that a Companion رضی اللہ عنہم remained all alone in a battle and three or four infidel, stout fighters came in front of that lonely Companion رضی اللہ عنہم. When the Companion رضی اللہ عنہم advanced to fight the infidel fighters some other Companions رضی اللہ عنہم tried to dissuade the former Companion رضی اللہ عنہم from confronting those strong and experienced infidel fighters and advised him to wait for the Muslim forces to arrive there. The Companion رضی اللہ عنہ did not agree to their advice and asked them on oath and without any hesitation not to try to intervene between him and Paradise, as those wrestler fighters were like a path leading to Paradise. This being the condition of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم they were not able to understand the meaning of cowardice and weakness. The fact remains that by virtue of the company of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, Allah had removed from their hearts the love for the world. They had always in view the Hereafter as well as scenes from Paradise and Hell. That is why they were not afraid of death. They rather desired to find access to the Divine Court of Almighty Allah.

The burning desire of a Companion رضی اللہ عنہم **for Martyrdom**

A Companion رضی اللہ عنہم entered a battlefield and found that in front of him a well equipped and armed force of the infidels was ready to encounter him.

Seeing this enemy force, the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم spontaneously recited this Arabic poetical couplet:

غدا نلقی الاحبة محمدا و صحبه

Tomorrow we shall meet friends, i.e. Muhammad ﷺ and his Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم!

Once a Companion رضی اللہ عنہم was hit by an arrow and blood began to gush forth from his wound. At this critical moment he spontaneously uttered these words:

فزت ورب الكعبة

By the Lord of the Ka'bah I have been successful.

They were people who possessed belief and firm conviction. They had full trust in Allah and there was no trace in their hearts of the love of the world.

The first command concerning the period of Trials

What should a Muslim do during such a period? The first injunction which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has issued about this is as under:

تَلْزِمْ جَمَاعَةَ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ وَاِمَامَهُمْ

(At such a time) the major party of the Muslims and their Imam (leader) should be followed.

A Companion رضی اللہ عنہ put this question: O Messenger of Allah! What should the Muslims do when they have neither an organised association of the Muslims nor have they a popular and acceptable Imam ? The Holy

Prophet ﷺ replied to this question, saying:

In such a situation lead a secluded life away from every group and party and stick to your houses like the mats and rugs spread on the floor of your houses and remain confined to the boundary of your houses as far as possible and do not join the disorganised groups. Now what injunction can be more evident and clear than this?

The second command concerning the period of Trials

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in another *Hadith*:

While you are leading a secluded life away from the people and if the Muslims begin to fight among themselves killing one another, do not look at them, because the onlooker of such scenes may be caught in the trial and disturbance من استشرف لها استشرفته (the scene may catch him too who looks at the scene of quarrel). In such a critical time keep to the bounds of the house.

The third command concerning the period of Trials

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in another *Hadith*:

The trial will be such that القائم فيها خير من الماشي، والقاعد فيها خير من القائم one who remains standing during that period will be better than the one who is walking and one who is sitting will be better than the one who is standing.

In other words, during that time of trials, you should take no part in its activities and movements. You should, instead, try to ameliorate your own personal life, sitting quietly at home. Do not involve yourself in the collective trials and tribulations.

The best property of a man during the period of Trials

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in another *Hadith*:

A time will come when the best property of a man will be his goats with which he can go up to the mountain peaks, leaving the hustle and bustle of town life. For his sustenance he should depend on his goats. He will be much safer in the mountains than in the towns where visible and invisible trials are ready to pick him up.

An important injunction to follow during the period of Trials

The Holy Prophet ﷺ wants to advise by means of these *Ahadith* that time will not be suitable for collective and social activities, because all the parties and associations will be unreliable and untrustworthy. It will not be possible to distinguish between right and wrong. So, during such an uncertain period one should engage himself in obeying Allah and safeguarding his *Eeman* (Faith), so as to die as a believer. This is the only way of safety from these trials. The verse I have recited in the beginning lays emphasis on the same point, viz., "you should take care of yourselves" and try to ameliorate your own affairs. If you take the right path, those who have gone astray will do you no harm. When this verse was revealed, the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم put this question to the Holy Prophet. They said:

This verse seems to tell that man should mind his own business without worrying about others. if someone is going astray let him go and do not advise him to do good and refrain from doing wrong. This is one side of the problem. On the other side there are clear injunctions to

enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. How to reconcile these two conflicting injunctions:

Four signs of the period of Trials

While replying to this question the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

The verses which enjoin doing good and forbidding doing wrong are also quite right in their places as they advise the preaching of Deen. A time will, however, come when man will be responsible to take care of, and reform his own self. this will be the time in which the following four signs will appear:

(1) Firstly, it will be the time when a man will be hankering after wealth and will become miserly. From morning till evening he will be engrossed in his lust to increase his balance by hook or by crook. All that he will do will be in the interest and love of worldly gains.

(2) Secondly, people will be drowned at all times in satisfying their desires and lusts. A man will follow the direction towards which his desires push him, without caring what is lawful and what is unlawful and whether the path he is following leads to Paradise, to the pleasure of Allah or to His displeasure. Forgetting all these considerations, he will be running after his desires..

(3) Thirdly, preference will be accorded to the worldly gains over the gains of the Hereafter. The people will be warned against the approach of the Hereafter; arrival of death about which there is no doubt; burial in the grave; attendance before Almighty Allah. The only reply to all these warnings will be: I cannot help, this is the trend of the times.

After all one should follow the affairs of the world also in which one has to pass his life with others. Thus ignoring all these admonitions man will become totally absorbed in earning the worldly resources.

(4) Fourthly, every man will be self-willed, not prepared to heed better advice. He will think that he alone is right and the others are wrong. This is a common observation. Everyone has formed his own opinion about what is lawful and what is unlawful even though he has not spent a single day in trying to study and understand the Holy Qur'an and the sacred *Ahadith*. When some problem of the *Shari'ah* is mentioned before him, he raises objections and begins to project his own misleading notions. Everyone will feel proud of his own opinion.

Anyway, try to seek your own safety when these four signs become apparent, viz:

1) Love of worldly resources;
2) Hankering after one's own desires;
3) Preferring the world to the Hereafter.
4) Taking pride in being self-willed.

As already stated, at such a critical time people should mind their own salvation and safety forgetting what the others are doing. They should keep themselves aloof from the common men and try to reform their own selves. Keeping within the bounds of their houses at all costs. This is the injunction of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to his *Ummah* to follow during the period of trials and tribulations.

The conduct of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم on difference of opinions

After the sad demise of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, the responsibility of guiding the *Ummah* passed to the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم. During this period serious differences cropped up between Hazrat Ali and Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہما which ultimately ended in armed confrontation between their armies. Differences also arose between Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ and Hazrat 'Ayeshah رضی اللہ عنہا. This also resulted in an armed conflict between the supporters of the two sides. Through these differences during the time of the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم and their conduct during the difference Almighty Allah has taught how the future generations should tackle situations arising out of such differences and conflicts. As a result, those Companions رضی اللہ عنہم and their immediate followers (*Ta-bi-'een*), who believed in Hazrat Ali's right conduct acted on that *Hadith* in which the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

تلزم جماعة المسلمين وامامهم

(At such a time) the major party of the Muslims and their Imam (leader) should be followed.

Acting upon this *Hadith*, they sided with Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ whom they regarded as the Imam of the major group. Some Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم and the *Ta-bi-'een* believed that Hazrat Amir Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ was on the right path and was their Imam. So, they sided with him. There was a third group who was not able to find out who was on the right and who was on the wrong path. In pursuance of a *Hadith* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, they decided to dissociate themselves from either party. They, therefore, remained neutral in the conflict between

the two parties and remained with the bounds of their houses.

The conduct of Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ

Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ, the son of Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ, was a Companion and jurist of a very high order. He confined himself to his house when a man called upon him and asked him: Why was he sitting quietly when a battle between right and wrong was raging outside his house between Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ and Hazrat Amir Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ? He should side with Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنہ whom the man considered to be on the right path. Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ replied, saying: that he had heard this *Hadith* from the Holy Prophet ﷺ that when the Muslims fall out with one another and it becomes obscure what was right and what was wrong, then one should confine himself to the four walls of his house and put aside his weapons. As Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ could not distinguish between the right and the wrong in that conflict he remained neutral and did not become a party to any of the opponents.

The man took objections to Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar's stand and invited his attention to the following verse of the Holy Qur'an:

قٰتِلُوْهُمْ حَتّٰى لَا تَكُوْنَ فِتْنَةٌ.....(سورة البقرة:۱۹۳)

And fight them until persecution is no more. (2:193)

Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ gave a very apt reply to this; saying :

قا تلنا حتى لم تكن فتنة، وقاتلتم حتى كانت الفتنة

When we fought against the enemy along with the Holy Prophet ﷺ, Almighty Allah put an end to the persecution. On the other hand, when you took part in the

fight the persecution ، d not stop but it increased and became more violent. That is why, acting upon the advice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. I confined myself to the bounds of my house.

How to conduct ourselves during conditions of peace and disturbance

I was extremely overjoyed when I came across a statement of a *Muhadith* which runs thus:

اقتدوا بعمر رضی اللہ تعالی عنه فی الامن وبابنه فی الفتنة

Follow Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنه during conditions of peace and tranquillity and follow his son during conditions of trials and disturbances.

The meaning of this statement is self-explanatory.

Amicable mutual relations in spite of differences

Almighty Allah showed us all these scenes and situations during the era of Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنهم. Those Companions رضی اللہ عنهم who believed that Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنه was right sided with him, and those who believed that Hazrat Amir Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنه was right supported him. The world witnessed a unique scene, never seen before, that despite hostilities when someone in the army of Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنه died, the army men of Hazrat Amir Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنه joined the funeral prayer of the deceased belonging to the opposite camp and vice versa. The reason for this was that this battle was not fought for the sake of ome selfish worldly gain, honour and position. The ause of the armed conflict was obedience to a Command of Allah as interpreted by each party. In other words, each side was busy acting upon Allah's Command sincerely as it had interpreted the command.

The conduct of Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنه

My late, respected father used to tell us that Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنه was a literate Companion and a religious scholar, busy at all times in studies. During the battle between the two warring Companions رضی اللہ عنهم he used to visit both without taking anyone's side. When there was prayer time he would go to Hazrat Ali's army to pray behind him. When it was meal time he would go to Hazrat Amir Mu'awiyah's رضی اللہ عنه army and take meal with the latter. Someone asked Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنه about this strange conduct of him, he replied :

The prayer behind Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنه was better so he prayed there, but he took meal in Hazrat Mu'awiyah's camp because the food was of a better quality there. Thus the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنهم have taught us how to behave during times of mutual differences and conflicts.

The reply of Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنه to Caesar of Rome.

Just when these two armies stood face to face ready to grapple with each other, a message from the Caesar of Rome came to Hazrat Amir Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنه to the effect:

I have heard that your brother Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنه has done a great wrong to you. He is not taking revenge from the killers of Hazrat Usman رضی اللہ عنه. If you desire, I can send you a huge army to help you, so that you may confront him.Hazrat Amir Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنه at once replied to Caesar in the following words:

"O Christian Ruler! you plan to attack Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنه on account of our mutual differences. Beware! If you have the audacity to cast an evil eye at Hazrat Ali رضی اللہ عنه, the

first man emerging from Hazrat Ali's army to behead you shall be Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ

All the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم are honourable and dignified in our eyes

It is very sad that now-a-days people utter unworthy words for the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم although they are too respectable and dignified. It is impossible for us to understand their status and religious fervour. We begin today to compare their mutual qurarrels and differences to our own, but this is not right. We must understand that Almighty Allah, in His mercy, provided through the quarrels among the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم, a model and code of conduct for the *Ummah* to follow during mutual differences and disputes arising among them in the times to come. Each of them, whether he is Hazrat Ali, Hazrat Amir Mu'awiyah or Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہما has left behind for us a beautiful model to emulate when caught in similar situations. We must therefore, beware of those who speak ill of one or another Companion رضی اللہ عنہ because of their mutual disputes and differences. None can even dream of approaching such high status and station they occupy in the sight of Allah.

The sincerity and Godliness of Hazrat Amir Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ

The people say many undesirable things about Hazrat Amir Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ because he nominated his son Yazeed his heir-apparent. In one Friday during the Friday sermon he made the following supplication from the pulpit:

> O Allah! I assert on oath that in nominating my son my heir-apparent I had nothing in my mind except the good and interest of the *Ummah* of Muhammad ﷺ If I had in my mind anything other than this, then I pray to You to let him die before the implementation of this decision of mine.

Just consider coolly that no father can pray in this way against his son as Hazrat Amir Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ did. This shows beyond any shadow of doubt that his action in nominating his son heir-apparent was based on sincerity. All men, except Prophets علیہم السلام are liable to err. The decision taken by Hazrat Amir Mu'awiyah رضی اللہ عنہ might have been erroneous but it was based on sincerity and it was for the sake of Allah alone.

Retire into seclusion

By acting upon all the *Ahadith* about trials and tribulations the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم have left behind for us examples to follow during such disturbed conditions. When such time comes that the distinction between right and wrong becomes difficult and obscure, there is no alternative but to take to seclusion and retirement as did Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ.

It is a fact that Allah had decided upon a unique plan from the point of His creative scheme. Allah accomplished great jobs and performances through such Companions رضی اللہ عنہم as had gone into seclusion. If they had taken part in the battle many of them would have fallen martyrs, depriving the future generations of their valuable services in the path of Deen (Faith).

Those who dissociated themselves from the world and went into seclusion began to collect and compile the *Ahadith*. Thus, they left behind a great treasure for the future generations in the form of books of *Ahadith* and other literature on Islam.

Take Care of your own reform and well-being

Thus, the command about the period of Trials and tribulation is that one should confine himself to the four walls of his house, devote his time to the rehearsal of Allah's name and keep himself aloof from all sins and wrongs and try to reform the members of his household also. If everyone follows this path and reforms himself this will lead to the reform of the entire society slowly and gradually. This is how one lamp is lighted from another lamp and the darkness of disturbance and chaos is dispelled.

Look into your own weaknesses

The time we are passing through today is a period of severe trials and tribulations. To steer clear of this hectic situation the Holy Prophet ﷺ has advised us not to join any party, but confine ourselves to our houses, try to reform ourselves and search for our own weaknesses and short-comings. Consider seriously if the prevailing trials and disturbances may be due to the ill-omen of our own sins. Everyone of the society should adopt this trend of thinking. Take an example. During a severe famine in Egypt the people called upon Hazrat Zun-noon رحمة الله عليه of Egypt to complain of this calamity. He told the people that this might be due to his own sins. He should, therefore, leave the place, so that his absence might perhaps dispel the calamity and attract Allah's mercy. As for ourselves, we are used to find fault with and attribute all mis-fortunes to others. In these days we hardly find persons who try to look into their own faults and defects. It is, therefore, imperative that everyone should try to reform himself instead of finding fault with others.

Refrain from sins

While thinking to reform yourself, the least you should do is to give up one by one the sins that you commit from morning till evening. You should also turn to Allah every day in repentance and seek His forgiveness. You should also pray to Allah to keep you and your household away from the ill-omen and woes of the period of trials. The words of prayer may be:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنَّا نَعُوْذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْفِتَنِ مَاظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ

O Allah! I seek refuge with You from all apparent and hidden trials.

You should in addition save yourself as far as possible from the following sins:

1- Backbiting
2- Sins due to casting evil eyes
3- Lewdness and nakedness
4- Hurting others
5- Sins of accepting bribe
6- Dealings in Usurious transactions, etc.

If you spent your life in negligence, thoughtlessness and recklessness, then this may - God forbid - result in a bad end and loss of *Eeman* (Faith).

May Allah help us to act upon these injunctions. *Aameen*!

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد للّٰه رب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid
Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi.
Date : 31st May 1996

HOW TO LIVE BEFORE ONE DIES?

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه و نستغفره و نومن به و نتوكل عليه، ونعوذ بالله من شرورانفسنا ومن سيئات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهد ان لا اله الاالله وحده لا شريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا و سندنا و نبينا و مولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه و على اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد!

فقد قال النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم:

مُوْتُوْا قَبْلَ اَنْ تَمُوْتُوْا وَحَاسِبُوْا قَبْلَ اَنْ تُحَاسَبُوْا (كشف الخفاء ٢:٢.٤)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and seek His forgiveness and believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our souls and from the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom He guides and there is none to guide

him whom He lets go astray. We bear witness that there is no god but Allah the One Who has no partner. We also bear witness that our sire, and our authority and our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him, his household and bless and salute them all in great abundance.

This is a *Hadith* its literal meaning is:

Die before death, and subject yourself to reckoning before you are reckoned on the Day of Judgement.

Death is inevitable

There is no doubt, whatsoever, that Death shall certainly overtake everyone. There is no dispute about this truth, nor has anyone denied it. There are and have been persons who have denied the existence of Allah His Messengers but they could and cannot deny death. Anyone who has come to this world must face death one day. It is also unanimously agreed that none knows the time of one's death which may come just now, after one minute, one hour, one day, one week, one month or one year. None knows the time of death. Notwithstanding all its advancements, even science cannot tell when a man shall die.

What is the meaning of "Dying before death"?

As already stated Death is inevitable and it is also certain that the appointed time of death is not known. If a man passes away unprepared and in a state of negligence, how will he acquit himself in the presence of Allah? Man should always remain apprehensive lest he should face Allah's displeasure and punishment. What is, therefore, the

meaning of "Dying before Death", occurring in the *Hadith*. The learned scholars have interpreted the phrase in two ways:

(1) Before facing Death, man should give up all those sensual desires and lusts which are contrary to the Commands of Allah. He should also crush those urges that are arising from time to time to commit sins, indulge in unlawful occupations and to disobey Allah.

I have to face death one day

(2) The second interpretation the learned scholars have given to this phrase is that man should visualise frequently death and its pains and throes before the actual approach of death. He should reflect in his heart that a day will come when he will have to leave this world for good, empty handed, all alone leaving behind wealth, sons and daughters, movable and immovable property, friends and relatives. Let man visualise from time to time this frightening scene. The greatest cause of the sins, crimes and wrongs a man commits is that he has forgotten his death. As long as man enjoys good health, a carefree and easy going life, he thinks that there is none like him, he takes pride, talks highly of himself, wrongs others usurps others' rights - he does all these undesirable things in the prime of his youth and at the height of his power and pelf. He little thinks that one day he has to leave this world weak, poor and awfully helpless. He accompanies the funerals of his own kith and kin, buries them in the graves with his own hands, but he hardly thinks that one day the same is going to happen to him. Thus, does he pass

his life in negligence and thoughtlessness and does not prepare himself for death.

Neglecting two sublime blessings

How beautiful is this sentence spoken out by the Holy Prophet ﷺ:

نعمتان مغبون فيها كثير من الناس الصحة والفراغ (صحيح بخاری، كتاب الرقائق، باب ما جاء فی الصحة والفراغ، حديث نمبر ٦٤٩)

Of the blessings of Almighty Allah there are two bleasings which the people have fallen into great misunderstanding and deception. One is the blessing of good health and the other is the blessing of leisure and freedom. So long as they are enjoying good health they are under the misconception that this blessing of good health is everlasting and as such, they put off doing good deeds from day to day deceiving themselves that they will do the deed tomorrow or the day after tomorrow, but a time comes when their health fails and they become unable to do what they had been putting off.

While the man is young and in good health he can do a lot of good deeds and put in severe *Mujahadat* (striving in the path of Deen) and other deeds of worship and devotion, but he beguiles himself by making false promises that he has sufficient time at his disposal. In this way he goes on postponing the deed until his youth gives way to old age and his health fails him. In this old age of debility and weakness he longs for doing some good deeds for his Hereafter, he is totally unable to do the deed he desires now.

These failures arise for the only reason that man is oblivious of his death. If man rememberd death every morning and evening and that he had to die one day it

would guard him against sins and put him on the path of righteousness. That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ has advised: Die before death actually overtakes you.

An incident of Hazrat Bahlol رحمة الله عليه containing morals

Hazrat Bahlol رحمة الله عليه has been a saint who was a *Majzoob* (one lost in divine meditation). He lived during the Caliphate of Haroon-al-Rashid. The Caliph frequently used to cut jokes with Hazrat Bahlol رحمة الله عليه. Although he was a *Majzoob*, yet he used to say things full of wisdom. Haroon had ordered his gate-keepers to let the saint see him, whenever he desired. Thus Hazrat Bahlol رحمة الله عليه used to call on the Caliph whenever he desired. One day when Bahlol رحمة الله عليه entered the court, he found the Caliph with a stick in his hand. Haroon Rashid said to Bahlol رحمة الله عليه by way of joke : Bahlol Sahib, I am presenting you this stick as a trust. I request you to present this stick as a gift to the person whom you find to be a greater fool than yourself. Bahlol رحمة الله عليه took the stick and agreed to do as he was advised by the Caliph. It was the intention of the Caliph by this joke to tell Bahlol رحمة الله عليه that he was the greatest of fools.

Many years later one day Bahlol رحمة الله عليه came to know that Haroon Rashid was seriously ill and was under medical treatment on his death-bed, but the treatment was not proving beneficial. The eccentric saint Bahlol رحمة الله عليه visited the Caliph to inquire after his health and the following dialogue took place:

Bahlol: Amirul-Mumineen ! How do you do?
Caliph: I am setting off on a journey.
Bahlol: What is the destination of your journey?
Caliph: It is my journey to the Hereafter and I am leaving

the world for good.

Bahlol: If you will not come back, then what armies, soldiers and other sources of comforts have you sent ahead to make your journey comfortable?

Caliph: You are again talking foolishly. None accompanies the traveller in the journey to the Hereafter, neither bodyguards, nor an army, nor soldiers. Man performs the journey to the Hereafter all alone.

Bahlol: It is a very long journey from which there is no return, but you have not sent ahead any army nor soldiers. In all the journeys before this journey, you used to send ahead the army and the soldiers. Why did you not make similar preparations and arrangements for this journey?

Caliph: This is a journey for the sake of which no soldiers or armies are sent ahead.

Bahlol: O Caliph! Your trust of a stick has been with me for a long time. You had desired that I should hand it over to a man who was a greater fool than myself. I searched far and wide for a greater fool than myself, but could not find one except you. The reason for this is that even for a short journey measures were taken by you months before to make it safe and comfortable. Food supplies, tents, armies and body guards, etc. were sent in advance before the commencement of the journey. But I see that there is no preparation whatsoever, such a long journey from which there is no return. I, therefore, do not find in this world a greater fool than you. I am, therefore, returning to you this trust (of the stick).

On hearing this, Haroon Rashid burst into tears and

said: Bahlol, you have told the Plain truth. I have been considering you as a fool, the whole of my life, whereas it is you who have expressed the point of wisdom. It is a fact that I have wasted my lifetime and have made no preparation for the Herafter.

Who is wise?

Whatever Hazrat Bahlol رحمة الله عليه said in based on a *Hadith*. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a *Hadith*:

الكيس من دان نفسه و عمل لما بعد الموت (ترمذی، باب صفة القيامة، باب نمبر ٣٦)

"Clever is he who condemns his self and works for the life after death". (*Tirmizi*)

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has advised in this *Hadith* as to who is really wise. In the present world that man is regarded as wise who earns much money and carries on successful business enterprises. As against this view, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that wise is really that man who controls his 'self' and does not hanker after his wishes and makes his 'self' obedient to the pleasure of Allah and prepares for the life after death, i.e., the Hereafter. If man does not conduct his life on this path, he is a fool. He has wasted his life in senseless pursuits and has made no preparations for the Hereafter where he has to live for ever.

We are all fools

If we look into the issue intently we shall find that what Hazrat Bahlol رحمة الله عليه told Haroon Rashid also applies to everyone of us. We are always busy thinking how to make our lives comfortable by building palatial buildings and equipping them with all possible means of comforts, pleasures and enjoyments. When setting off on a journey we get our seats booked on Railway trains,

aeroplanes and in hotels beforehand and make all other preparations well in advance, even if the journey is short, not occupying more than three days. So for the place where we have to live for ever, i.e., the Hereafter, we take no care whatsoever, as to where and how to bulid a dwelling and how to get our passage booked for the final destination. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that a wise man is really he who prepares himself for the life to come after death. If he does not do this he is a fool in spite of his wealth and capital. To prepare for the Hereafter means that one should reflect on death and its consequences before actually facing death, as a result of which he has one day to leave this life and this world for a place from which there is no return.

How to mediate on death and the Hereafter

Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has advised that you should try to go in seclusion and imagine that your last moments of life have arrived and the Angel has also arrived and has taken out the soul from your body. Your kith and kin have also called on you and are arranging to give you a bath and put the shroud on you. They have taken your dead body to the graveyard. After offering the funeral prayer, they have put your dead body into a grave which they have closed with earth. After doing all this they have left for their homes you are now in a dark grave all alone and the Angels have arrived to interrogate you.

Thereafter again imagine the scene of the Hereafter that you have been raised from your grave in second life after death. The plain of Resurrection has been set up with all human beings. The season is awfully hot, the body is perspiring, the sun has come down very close and every

body is in a state of bewilderment and perplexity. The people have called upon the Prophets عليهم السلام to seek their intercession in their favour that the Prophets may appeal to Almighty Allah to start the reckoning.

In the same way you should try to imagine the Reckoning on the Day of Judgement the Bridge of the Straight Path پل صراط , Paradise and Hell. When you have finished your recitation of the Holy Qur'an, Munajat-e-Maqbool (a book of supplications) and your routine items of rehearsals and remembrance, try to imagine that this time shall arrive one day but it is not known when; it may come jsut today. After concluding this discipline of imagination pray to Almighty Allah thus:

> O Allah! I am going out on my routine worldly affairs. Protect me from falling into activities that may spoil my Hereafter.

Try to perform this exercise of imagination daily. When the imaginary image of Death has been imprinted on the heart then, man will, God willing, become anxious to reform himself and work for his betterment.

Hazrat Abdur-Rahman bin Ni-'am رحمة الله عليه

Hazrat Abdur-Rahman bin Ni-'am رحمة الله عليه was a saint and a Muhadith. During his times it occurred to a man that he should call on the various Ulama, *Fuqaha* (Jurists) and saints and put this questions to them: If you come to know that you are going to die tomorrow and only one day of your life in this world is left, how will you pass that day and what will you be doing? The intention underlying this question was to know the righteous deeds of Deen which these great men of God would like to do on the last day of their lives, this man may also make it the routine of his life to do the same good deeds for the sake

of the Hereafter. Thus, he put this questions to these various pious men and everyone of them gave a different reply. When he called on Hazrat Abdur Rahman bin Ni-'am رحمة الله عليه and put to him this question, the saint replied: I shall do the same deeds which I have been doing as a routine. I have drawn up my timetable and daily routine duties from the very first day under the belief that this day may be the last day of my life and I may pass away today. This timetable is so tight that it can not be changed, I shall, therefore, do the same deeds on the last day of my life as I have been doing every day. What has been said above is the meaning of the *Hadith*:

موتوا قبل ان تموتو

After impressing the image of death on heart and keeping its remembrance fresh in memory, the saint has moulded his life in such a way that he is prepared to welcome death at any time.

Eagerness to meet Exalted Allah

There is a *Hadith* on this topic :

من احب لقاء الله احب الله لقاءه (صحیح بخاری، کتاب الرقاق، باب من احب لقاء الله)

If anyone is eager and anxious to meet Exalted Allah, Allah also is eager and anxious to meet such a person.

People who are really eager to meet their Creator, Allah, remain always waiting to welcome Death, as if they are rehearsing this Arabic couplet:

غدا نلقی الاحبه محمدا وحزبه

Tomorrow shall I meet (my) friends, Muhammad ﷺ and his party, i.e., the Companions رضی الله عنهم.

This meditation on death, life becomes moulded on

the pattern of the *Shari'ah* and the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and, as a result, the Muslims so transformed in their outlook always remain prepared to welcome death. In short, you are all advised to spare a few moments to contemplate on death. It is to come soon to you and to search your hearts and your deeds to see what preparations you have made for this inevitable event.

Take a reckoning of your activities just today

In the second portion of this *Hadith* the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said:

حاسبوا قبل ان تحاسبوا

Let it be your routine to take a reckoning of your activities before you are subjected to suck reckoning (in the Hereafter).

فَمَنْ يَّعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَّرَهٗ o وَمَنْ يَّعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَّرَهٗ

(سورة الزلزال: ٧: ٨)

And who so does an atom's weight of good will see it (then and there) and whoso does an atom's weight of vice shall see it (then and there). (99: 7-8)

How nicely has someone said on this point !

تم آج ہوا سمجھو جو روز جزا ہوگا

It is inevitable that everyone shall be subjected to a severe reckoning on the Day of Judgement. In order to be safe and successful on that fateful day it has been suggested in this Urdu poetical line that everyone of us should take an account of his activities from day to day and from night to night, so that you may be well prepared on the Day of Judgement to explain your conduct and deeds in the Divine Court on that Day.

Make a covenant with your 'self' every morning

Imam Ghazali رحمة الله عليه has proposed a wonderful procedure about this. if we too follow this procedure, it shall prove the prescription of an Elexir of life. The Imam has advised that everyone of us should do every day the following:

Make a covenant with your self on getting up every morning that today from morning till bed-time of night :-

1- I shall not commit any sin, whatsoever;
2- I shall offer all the obligatory, *Sunnahs* and optional *Salat* and discharge all ther obligations due by me;
3- I shall discharge in full all my obligations and responsibilities one by one due by me to Allah and His servants.

If by chance you break this covenant in any item, then inflict some punishment on your self (say, by keeping Fast or spending some money in charity, etc).

This is a form of covenant or agreement which is called in the Arabic language مشارطه (*Musharatah).*

Supplication after the covenant

Our Dr. Abdul Hayee Sahib رحمة الله عليه made an addition to this first item of the covenant by suggesting that after making the covenant one should pray to Allah to help one in abiding by the terms of the covenant and keep one steadfast so that one should not commit a breach of any term of it, as nothing can be done without Allah's will and assistance.

A strict control and supervision all day long over one's deeds

After making the supplication go out for earning your livelihood, whether it is through service or business.

Before starting the work first think if the work you are going to do or the word which is escaping from your mouth is not against the covenant you have made with your 'self'. If it is against the covenant, refrain from it. This is called in the Arabic language مراقبه (*Muraqabah*) and it is the second item of the covenant.

Muhasabah (reckoning) before going to bed at night

You should comply with the third item of the covenant before going to bed at night which is technically called *Muhasabah* (reckoning). You should address your 'self' thus: You had made a covenant in the morning that you shall commit no sins shall follow strictly the injunctions of the *Shari'ah*, discharge all the rights due to Allah and His servants. Now tell me which terms of the covennat you have fulfilled and which ones you have violated. You should, thus, take a stock of all that you do in the day. For example, ask yourself: When I left my house for my place of work in the morning what did I say to that man ? How did I discharge my office duties? Did I follow the lawful or unlawful ways in my business transactions ? How did I discharge the rights of my wife and children and of those whom I happened to meet? These questions are technically called *Muhasabah* (reckoning).

Render thanks to Allah

If your *Muhasabah* reveals that you have successfully fulfilled all the conditions of the covenants you had made in the morning, then render thanks to Allah, saying :

اللهم لك الحمد ولك الشكر

O Allah ! All praise is for You and all thanks

are for You.

The result of this thanksgiving will be the increase which Allah Almighty has guaranteed in this verse:

لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ

If you give thanks I shall give you more (14:7)

Thus, if you render thanks to Allah on this blessing of your abiding by the conditions of your covenant, Allah will surely increase the blessing and give you more reward. This thanksgiving should be practised not only on the fulfilment of the covenant under discussion but on all other blessings and bounties that you receive from Allah which will be enhanced for you.

If there has been a breach repent for it

If this *Muhasabah* reveals that you violated the conditions of this covenant on such and such occasions and deviated from the right path then turn to Allah in repentane at once, saying :

I deviated from the covenant and could not abide by my undertaking on certain occasions, apologise to Your Creator: O Allah I had indeed made this covenant, but I was seduced by Satan and my own 'self' and could not abide by my covenant so I seek Your forgiveness and repent of my lapses. Kindly pardon me.

Now inflict a punishment on your 'self'

In addition to offering your repentance you are advised to inflict a punishment on your 'self' forcing it to offer eight supererogatory Rak'ats. Decide on this punishment in the morning at the time of making the covenant. You may tell your 'self' that for the sake of a little comfort and pleasure it involved me in the breach of

the covenant, I will have to take some punishment for this offence in the form of offering eight *Rak'ats* before going to bed.

The punishment should be appropriate and moderate

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has advised that the punishment should be such as to impose on the 'self' some hardship; it should not be very severe that the 'self' should become frightened, nor should it be so mild that the 'self' should feel no inconvenience therein. For example, when Sir Syed Ahmad رحمة الله عليه opened the Aligarh Oriental College (in India) it was imposed as a duty on the students to join the five-time congregational prayers in the mosque and a fine of one Anna (about 6.5 paisa) was levied on the student who failed to join the congregation. The result of this trifling fine was that well-to-do and irresponsible students used to deposit in advance the fine for the full one month which amounted hardly to about Rs. 9/40, as a punishment for missing the prayers deliberately for the entire month. Maulana Thanawi رحمة الله عليه, therefore, advised that the fine imposed should be neither so paltry nor should it be so high as to make the defaulter give up the entire discipline and become altogether defiant. The fine imposed should be moderate in its impact - neither too light nor too heavy. For example, the punishment of eight *Rak'ats* per day is an appropriate punishment.

Pull up courage

Anyway, it will be necessary to take some pains and endure some hardships in order to reform the 'self' by pulling up courage and taking a firm resolve. Take a resolve that you must offer eight Rak'ats of optional

prayers as a punishment when the 'self' takes a wrong path. This punishment will prove deterrent to the 'self' and it will try to protect you from sins, so as to get rid of the ordeal of these eight Rak'ats of optional prayers. By following this advice and scheme your 'self' will gradually take the right path and will not misguide you.

Do these four acts

The gist of the advice of Imam Ghazzali رحمة الله عليه is that you should make sure to do the following four acts:

1- Make a covenant in the morning;
2- Exercise strict control and supervision on commencing every work;
3- Resort to reckoning (of our acts) before going to bed at night;
4- Inflict a punishment on the 'self' before going to bed at night, if it goes astray.

You shall have to follow this practice continously

It should be borne in mind that one should not be deluded into the belief that after following this practice only for a few days one has reached the goal and become a saint. One shall have to follow this practice continuously. You will see that, while following this practice in the tussel with Satan, one day you will get the upper hand and antoher day Satan will get the upper hand. You should not lose heart and give up the strife when Satan gets the upper hand, because some wisdom and prodence of Allah is concealed in this setback also. Thus, passing through these odds you will - God willing, reach one day your desired destination. On the other hand, after following this practice, if you reach the desired goal the very first day, you will be deluded into the notion that you have become

the Junaid and the Shibli رحمة الله عليه of your time. Thus, in following this practice, sometime you will face success and another time you will face failure. You should render thanks to Almighty Allah the day you attain success, but on the day you face failure you should offer repentance and impose punishment on your 'self' as advised in the foregoing pages and display regret and remorse on your lapses. This feeling of regret and remorse takes man to a very high degree of virtue and accomplishment.

An event that happened to

Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضى الله عنه

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has related a strange experience of Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضى الله عنه. He رضى الله عنه used to get up daily for the *Tahajjud Salat*. One day he رضى الله عنه fell into such a deep sleep that he missed his *Tahajjud Salat*. He رضى الله عنه felt so much grieved at this failure that he wept the whole day and spent his time in repentance and seeking Allah's forgiveness for missing the *Tahajjud*. The next night while he was sleeping, someone came and awoke him from his sleep for the *Tahajjud Salat*. The person being a stranger Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضى الله عنه asked who he was. He replied that he was *Iblis*. Then the following dialogue took place between cursed Satan and Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضى الله عنه :

Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضى الله عنه : If you are *Iblis* then how are you concerned with my getting up for the *Tahajjud Salat*?

Satan : Please get up and offer the *Tahajjud Salat*.

Hazrat Mu'awiyah رضى الله عنه: You stop people from offering the *Tahajjud Salat*. How are you now urging me to offer this *Salat*?

Satan : Last night I caused you to sleep and you missed the *Tahajjud Salat*. This made you so much grieved that you repented and sought forgiveness the whole day long. This elevated your status in the sight of Allah more than what you could have attained by offering the *Tahajjud Salat*. So I thought that it was much better that you had offered the *Tahajjud Salat* instead of missing it. That is why I have come tonight to awake you so that your status may not be elevated many fold.

Regret and repentance lead to elevation of status

Anyway, Merciful Allah grants increase lavishly in the position and status of one who feels hearty regret and remorse on his sins and faults and takes a firm resolve not to commit those sins and faults again.

My Sheikh Dr. Abdul Hayee Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say that if a person turns to Allah in repentance after having committed sin and seek forgiveness, Allah turns to that person, as if saying to him: The sin you have committed has made you a point of attraction for my Connivance, Mercy and Forgiveness and has turned in your favour. It occurs in a *Hadith* that when the Eed-ul-Fitr Day arrives, Almighty Allah says to the Angels, swearing by Himself: Today these people have assembled here to discharge their essential *Eed Salat*. They are calling Me and seeking My pardon and praying for their boons. I say by My Honour and Glory that I must grant their boons and prayers today and convert their vices and sins into virtues and good deeds.

A question now arises how these vices and sins can be converted into virtues and good deeds. This question may be answered by saying, suppose a man commits a sin through ignorance and negligence and realising the seriouisness of the sin he turns to Allah with feelings of

regret and remorse, confesses his sin and prays to Allah in humbleness and with due submission to forgive his sin. Now in such a situation not only does Almighty Allah forgive his sin, but He also raises the status of that person. In this way that sin turns into a virtue in favour of that person. Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

فَأُولَٰئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ (سورة الفرقان : ٧٠)

They are those whose vices Allah shall change into virtues. (25:70)

Let my sins go to Hell

There has been a saintly man named Hazrat Baba Najm Ahsan Sahib رحمة الله عليه who was a disciple of Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه. He was a saint of high order. He also used to compose nice poetry. One of his beautiful couplets which I greatly appreciate and enjoy is as follows:

دولتیں مل گئیں ہیں آ ہوں کی
ایسی تیسی مرے گناہوں کی

The idea expressed in this couplet is that the saint is regretful and repentant of his sins and is sincerely praying to Allah to fogive his sins. The saint feels sure that Allah shall in His mercy, wash off his sins and purge him of the effects of these sins. Almighty Allah has not created anything uselessly. Even the sins are His creation which are not devoid of some benefit and there is some wisdom in their creation. For example, after committing a sin the sinner feels regret on his sin, repents of it takes a firm resolve never to commit a sin in the future, then Allah accepts his repentance and elivates his status to very high levels.

Wage a lifelong warfare against the 'self'

While making a reckoning at bed-time of the deeds done during the day if it comes to light that some sin was committed, resort should be taken to repentance and seeking Allah's forgiveness of the sin committed and turning attention to Allah without giving way to despondency. This life is a continuous struggle in which a warfare is going on between the 'self' and Satan. It is a natural result of this dual fight that success and failure are alternating between the two adversaries. Thus, if in his turn Satan defeats you do not lose heart, but get up to tussle with Satan with new determination and enthusiasm. If you do not lose heart, but stand up again to challenge the opponent seek help from Allah, then it is Allah's promise that ultimately you will be successful in the final round.

وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِيْنَ (القصص: ٨٣)

The ultimate result will be in favour of the righteous. (28:83)

Take a step forward and Allah shall support you

At another place, Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

وَالَّذِيْنَ جَاهَدُوْا فِيْنَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا (العنكبوت: ٦٩)

We shall show our path to those who strive in Us (i.e. in Our Path). (29:69)

In other words, those who struggle Allah's path and and oppose the 'self', and Satan in resisting their seductions and avoiding the path of vices, sins and disobedience and taking the right path, then it is Allah's promise to help such persons in pursuing the right path of Deen.

Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has interpreted this verse thus:

We guide on to Our path by holding their hands those who strive in Our path.

Then the Sheikh explains the meaning of this verse by giving the example of a small child. When the child becomes able to walk his Parents desire that he should walk unaided. They teach him to walk by making him stand at some distance and call him to come to them. If the child takes one step to go to his parents but stumbles at the second step, the parents at once go to him to prevent him from falling down and take him up into their lap and are glad to see that the child made an attempt to walk on his own feet. Likewise, if a man tries to walk and strive in the path of Allah, will Almighty Allah leave him unaided ? No, Allah will not do so. Allah promises in this verse to help him who tries to walk and strive in His path. He, in His infinite mercy, encourages His servants to step forward and not to sit helpless and dejected. Consider the meaning of this Persian couplet:

سوئے مایوسی مرو امیدہا است
سوئے تاریکی مرو خورشیدہا است

There is no place of hpeelessness in Allah's Court which is full of hopes. You should not walk in the dark when there are bright suns spreading their light everywhere.

Therefore, you are advised to resist your 'self' and Satan to the best of your ability. If by chance you commit some sin, do not lose heart but repent for your sins and continue your journey ahead. By the help of Allah you shall succeed one day in attaining your cherished goal.

In short, you should do your part of the job and Allah will surely do His part of the job without any deficiency and slackness. If you step forward doors will be thrown wide open before you to go ahead. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has pointed out in his *Hadith* the same truth:-

موتوا قبل ان تموتوا وحاسبوا قبل ان تحاسبوا

Prepare for death before you are face to face with death and reckon your acts and deeds yourself before your acts and deeds are subjected to reckoning in the Hereafter.

What reply will you give to Allah when He questions you?

Hazrat Dr. Abdul Hai Sahib رحمة الله عليه has given us a very easy and useful procedure of reckoning our deeds and doings, as mentioned below:

Try to imagine that today you are standing on the plain of Resurrection where you are being reckoned about your deeds. All the bad deeds recorded in your Register of Deeds have been brought before you. Almighty Allah is commanding you to explain why you committed the sins and did the bad deeds as entered in your record. Will you give to Almighty Allah the same replies which you give to the Molvis and Reformers of your time. When some of these Reformers ask you not to do such and such deeds, protect your glances, guard yourself against interest-bearing transactions, backbiting, telling lies, viewing obscene and naked scenes on the Television and violating the purdah in marriage parties and ceremonies. In reply to these and like questions you tell the Molvis and the Reformers: What can I do? The entire age has become corrupted. The world is advancing by leaps and bounds in the fields of science. Should we remain backward in this field and cut-off from the world. It is difficult to live in today's social environment without taking advantage of the scientific inventions.

Will you give the same reply to Almighty Allah which you have been giving to the Molvis and the

Reformers? Consider a bit coolly that if such a reply cannot be acceptable in the Divine Court it can also not be acceptable in this world, too.

Pray to Allah to grant you courage and capacity

Can you give such reply to Allah that you were under duress to commit sins under these unfavourable environmental and social conditions of the times ? Now imagine that the following dialogue ensues between you and Allah when you are face to face with Him on the Day of Judgement:

Allah: All right tell me if you were helpless or I too was Helpless.

You : O Allah! I was helpless, but You were not Helpless.

Allah: When, as you admit, I was not helpless why did you not pray to Me to relieve you of your helplessness ? Was I not Able to relieve you of this helplessness? If I was Able you could have begged Me and prayed to Me either to remove your disability and helplessness or you should have requested Me not to take you to task, nor to punish you on that account.

Now say if you have any answer to this question of Allah? If not and certainly not, then make it a routine to pray daily to Allah : O Allah! I am facing this helplessness and inability which I find no courage in me to avoid. You are Omnipotent and You possess the power and ability to remove this helplessness and inability of mine and grant me the courage and capacity of refraining from this sin.

There is no deficiency whatsoever, in Allah's Bounties and Mercy

The long and short of this discussion is that you should appeal to Allah for help in all such situations of helplessness and inability. Day to day experience reveals that Allah does respond to His servant's prayers when respectfully and humbly submitted.

There is, however, no remedy and no way out for him who feels shy of appealing to Allah to help him and solve his problems.

Dr. Abdul Hayee Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to recite frequently this couplet:

کوئی حسن شناس ادا نہ ہو تو کیا علاج
ان کی نوازشوں میں تو کوئی کمی نہیں

The beloved is always scattering his bounties in every direction, but there is no remedy for him who is not able to recognize the secret of this generosity.

Thus, there is no remedy for him who needs help but is not prepared to ask for that help, although the Authority - Allal. - competent to provide it is waiting for the needy to approach Him for help.

If we are regular in acting every morning and evening upon the four acts prescribed earlier, we shall be acting upon the injunctions contained in the *Hadith* cited above.

May Allah forgive all of us and help us to act upon this advice - *Aameen - Aameen*!

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

AVOID IMPRACTICAL QUESTIONING

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه و نستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرورانفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهد ان لا اله الاالله وحده لا شريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا و سندنا و نبينا و مولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه و على اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد !

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله عن النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم قال:

دعونى ما تركتم انما اهلك من كان قبلكم كثرة سؤلهم واختلافهم على انبياء هم فاذا نهيتكم عن شَيْءٍ فاجتنبوه واذا امرتكم بأَمْرٍ فأتوا منه مااستطعتم

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and seek His forgiveness and believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with

Him from the evils of our souls and from the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom He guides and there is none to guide him whom He lets go astray. We bear witness that there is no god but Allah the One Who has no partner. We also bear witness that our sire, and our authority and our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him, his household and bless and salute them all in great abundance.

The result of putting too many questions

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said in a *Hadith*: Spare me and do not put any questions to me until I tell you something about particular problem. It is not necessary to put a question to me about an issue about which I have not advised that it is obligatory, lawful or unlawful. It was the habit of the past communities to put unnecessary questions to their Prophets علیہم السلام off and on and frequently. This was one of the causes of their ruin. The other cause of their ruin was to disobey the injunctions issued by their Prophets علیہم السلام So you should refrain from an act without any hitch and hesitation which I have forbidden you to do and you should act upon what I have commanded you to do, according to your capacity.

Look at the kindness of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that in the matter of our compliance with his orders he ﷺ has imposed the condition of our ability and capacity, i.e. he ﷺ has not placed on us a burden beyond our capacity to bear.

What kind of questions should be avoided?

In the foregoing *Hadith* the Holy Prophet ﷺ has disapproved the habit of putting questions frequently and in large numbers. There are however, some *Ahadith* in which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has pointed out the excellence of putting questions. One *Hadith* says: انما شفاء العی السؤال meaning: The cure of the incapable and ignorant lies in asking question. Both the *Ahadith* are relevant in their places. They seem to be contradictory only apparently, but in reality there is no contradiction between them. When a man doubts about an injunction of the *Shari'ah*, whether a certain thing or act is lawful or unlawful, it is quite lawful, rather imperative; to put a question about the problem to find out the correct position. On the other hand, if a man puts a question about which he is not concerned at all and the knowledge or ignorance of the issue does not affect his life in anyway, it is useless to put questions about such issues. It is such irrelevant questions that have been forbidden in the *Hadith*.

It is Satan's business to involve people in irrelevant questions

Take an example. A man asked me the name of the girl, the rivalry about whom caused the two sons of Hazrat Adam علیہ السلام Habeel (Abel) and Qabeel (Cain) to fight with each other. In this fight Cain killed Abel. Now consider what gain or loss is there in knowing or not knowing the name of that girl. Will a question about the name of the girl be put in the grave? It is, therefore, not right to put irrelevant questions of this nature. It is really a form of Satan's seduction to involve men in such questions in order to keep them away from useful occupations and right thinking.

The tendency of trying to know the reasons for the injunctions of the *Shari'ah*

In the same way it has become a common tendency among the people to try to find out the cause why a particular injunction of the *Shari'ah* has been issued. If they are told that the Islamic *Shari'ah* has made such an act lawful and another act unlwful, they want to know why the acts have been made lawful or unlawful. The intention of the questions seems to be that if a satisfactory reason for the injunction was not furnished he would not obey the injunction. Despite the fact that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has clearly commanded that if he ﷺ has forbidden any act or thing the people should refrain from it and if he has recommended any act or thing the people should adopot and do that thing or act to the best of their ability. It is not their business to inquire why this or that injunction has been issued.

A most convincing reply to questions on the Wisdom underlying religious injunctions

Once a visitor called on Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله عليه and asked him about some problem of the *Shari'ah*, asking why Allah had made such and such thing unlawful. Hazrat Thanawi رحمة الله عليه replied: I am putting to you a question. If you answer this question I shall also answer your question. The visitor asked what was that question? The Maulana رحمة الله عليه said: Why has Allah fixed your nose in front of your face? Why did He not fix it at the back of your face? The visitor could say nothing about this question.

Almighty Allah is running the affairs of this Universe with His wisdom and prudence, whereas man desires to comprehend all this wisdom and prudence in his tiny, brain. Even this atomic age of scientific research and

discoveries, some parts of this human brain remains unexplored and the scientists have not been able to discover how those parts are functioning. With such a tiny brain man aspires to encompass all the divine wisdom and prudence, as to why an act has been made lawful and another unlawful. The fact remains that such irrelevant questions occur to man on account of the ignorance of his own reality and the lack of appreciation in his heart of the greatness of Almighty Allah.

Do not meddle with the Wisdom and Prudence of Allah

Some person may like to know why Allah has prescribed different numbers of *Rak'ats* in the five daily obligatory *Salat*, i.e., two in the *Fajr*, four each in the *Zuhr*, and *'Asr*, three in the *Maghrib* and again four in the *'Isha Salat*. What is the wisdom in appointing these different numbers of *Rak'ats* in the obligatory *Salat*? Someone may suggest on the basis of his faulty thinking that there being longer leisure hours in the morning there should have been greater number of *Rak'ats* in the *Fajr*, *Zuhr* and *'Asr* times, being busy hours, there should have been a lesser number of *Rak'ats*. These are irrelevant questions on matters relating to the *Shari'ah*. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has, therefore, strictly forbidden us to raise such questions.

The Noble Companions رضى الله عنهم never put questions beginning with "Why"

If you ransack the entire collection of the *Ahadith*, you will never find an occasion on which anyone of the whole Companions رضى الله عنهم ever asked the Holy Prophet ﷺ about any command of the *Shari'ah* why that command was issued. There are, however, occasions when they asked what

was the injunction of the *Shari'ah* about a certain problem. They never asked a question with the interrogative word "Why". Why did they not call in question an injunction of the *Shari'ah*? Did they not possess the necessary intelligence to understand the wisdom and prudence of these injunctions? No, it was not favoured with intelligence and understanding of the highest order. Why then did they not put irrelevant questions? It was the result of their high standard of intelligence and understanding power whereby they understood that they had no right to call in question the advisability, wisdom and truth of an injunction of the *Shari'ah*, when they had acknowledged Allah as their Creator and Master and Muhammad ﷺ as His Messenger.

This is a proof of deficiency in our love for Allah and in the acknowledgement of His Greatness

My respected father Hazrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi Sahib رحمة الله عليه used to say that those who entertain great doubts about the truth of the injunctions of the *Shari'ah* are persons who are deficient in the love for Allah and in belief in His greatness. A man who loves any authority and acknowledges his greatness cannot entertain any doubt about the truth of the commands issued by that authority. This is exactly what happens in the affairs of this world. If a man loves anyone and has regard for him he accepts his orders, irrespective of that he understands or does not understand the wisdom of that order. If the Creator of this entire universe and its overall Controller issues any command, His greatness and love for Him demand that His command should be accepted for obedience without trying to find out the wisdom contained in His command. Our Deen demands that we should surrender ourselves passively and without any hestiation

to the commands of Allah. The basic cause of our straying prevalent today is that we want to judge with our deficient intelligence the truth of the injunctions issued by Allah and His Messenger ﷺ and we reject that command of which we fail to understand the wisdom behind it.

The similitudes of a child and a servant

A father or a mother orders his/her innocent and ignorant child to do something. If that child challenges that order and refuses to obey it, unless he is informed of the wisdom of the order, then the child can never receive right training. Let the child alone and take the example of your own servant who is an adult and quite intelligent. If you ask him to go to the market to purchase something, he refuses to obey you unless you tell him the wisdom of purchasing that thing. such a servant deserves to be dismised at once, because it is his duty to carry out the order and not to inquire about the cause of that order. You and your servant are both human beings. When this is your attitude towards your own servant who both are almost on an equal footing in being limited in intellect and understanding, what should be your attitude towards Allah Who is the Creator and Worthy of being worshipped and Who possesses infinite wisdom and prudence? It is by no means appropriate to call in question the wisdom of All-Knowing Allah.

Summary

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has prohibited his *Ummah* from three acts :

1: To put irrelevant questions on issues which have nothing to do with our practical lives.

2: To put question on issues which have not yet

overtaken us.

3: To put questions to find out the wisdom underlying some commands issued by Allah and His Messenger ﷺ with the intention that one shall act upon the commands only when the wisdom underlying that command becomes known. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said that the past communities perished as a punishment for putting these three questions.

So, people should refrain from putting questions and that we should refrain from putting questions from which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has forbidden us.

May Almighty Allah help us all to act upon these injunctions. *Aameen*!

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد للّٰہ رب العالمین

Venue : Jame' Darul Uloom
Karachi.
Date : 1st October 1993

THE ULAMA AND MODERN PROBLEM

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه و نستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرورانفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا، من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له ونشهدان لا اله الاالله وحده لا شريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا و سندنا و نبينا و مولانا محمد اعبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه و على اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيراكثيرا

اما بعد!

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and seek His forgiveness and believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our souls and from the vices of our deeds. There is none to misguide him whom He guides and there is none to guide him whom He lets go astray. We bear witness that there is no god but Allah the One Who has

no partner. We also bear witness that our sire, and our authority and our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. May Almighty Allah have mercy on him, his household and bless and salute them all in great abundance.

My respected Ulama,

I feel highly obliged to you all for accepting very kindly my invitation and taking the trouble to undertake this long journey to participate in the study seminar. May Allah accept this effort on your part. *Aameen.*

The Need for this Study Seminar

We are opening today this Study Seminar. I want to mention briefly in this assembly why the need of such a Seminar was deemed necessary and what is its importance.

All Muslims, particularly the educated ones, are well aware that ever since the western colonial powers got ascendency over the world, they have been trying by a well-organised conspiracy to confine Deen (Faith) only to places of worship, educational institutions and private houses. Not only was the natural result of this conspiracy that the hold of Deen has become loose on the political and social levels, and has almost ended gradually. It was originally a great conspiracy hatched by the enemies of Islam under which the western concept of Deen (religion) was given prominence. The western concept of religion is that religion is a private and personal matter. A man is at liberty to follow whatever faith appeals to him or he may, if he so desires, make himself free from the bonds of any religion.

The western concept of religion maintains that religion has nothing to do with right and wrong, truth and falsehood.

Religion is a means of attaining spiritual peace for man. He is free to follow the religion best suited to his need. A man may adopt for religion idolatry and another man may choose *Tauheed* (oneness of Allah) or any other religion which best satisfies his desire for spiritual peace. Thus, religion being the personal need of a man, whatever faith he chooses is respectable and none has a right to call in question this choice. Being totally private and personal, religion has nothing to do, nor interfere, with other walks of life.

The theory of Secular Democracy

The theory, which is in today's terminology called Secularism, has taken its birth from this concept. The sum and substance of this theory consists in the belief that all social activities like economics, livelihood and politics are totally free from the bonds of religion. Using his intellect, experience and observation, man is at liberty to choose whichever mode of living best suits him. Religion should have no say in this matter. Everyone is free to follow whichever faith he likes, not because it is true but becauses it pleases him. The theory followed by the west may be summed up in these words:

"Religion has no substance in it except that it is a means of attaining peace and joy".

After the tiresome days work, if a man finds peace and joy from a monkey-show then that show is best for him. In the same way if a man finds pleasure and peace in offering *Salat* in a mosque, then this practice is appropriate for him. but each of these acts has nothing to do with real life. This theory has nothing to do whether praying in the mosuques is right or wrong. This is the concept which is presently prevailing over the entire western world. The second name of this concept is Secular

Democracy, which is nothing but Democracy bereft of all traces of religion.

The latest Theory

Now it is being claimed that every system and theory in the world has failed and now the only latest and unfailing theory is the theory of Secular Democracy. When the Soviet Union collapsed, the people in the west were puffed up with joy and a book was written and published and its copies were sold in millions. It is being introduced as the greatest publication of this age. A member of the American Foreign Ministry has compiled it as a research thesis. The book has been named: "The End of the History and the Last Man." The gist of the book is that the end of the Soviet Union marks the end of a history, and the last man who is perfect in all respects has come into existence. In other words, the theory of Secular Democracy has been proved and now no system or theory better than this will come into existence till the Day of Judgement.

What was Spread With The Canon?

When the western colonial powers got control over Islamic countries, it also spread the concept of Faithless Democracy, not peacefully, nor with the sword, but with the Cannon. These western powers accuse the Muslims that they spread Islam with the sword. In fact it is really the west itself that spreads its Democratic system by force with the sword. The late Indian poet Akbar of Allahabad has pointed out this fact in the following poetic lines:

اپنے عیبوں کی کہاں آپ کو کچھ پروا ہے
غلط الزام بھی اوروں پہ لگا رکھا ہے

یہ ہی فرماتے رہے تیغ سے پھیلا اسلام
یہ نہ ارشاد ہوا توپ سے کیا پھیلا ہے

You (O western powers!) do not look into your own short-comings and vices, instead you are putting the blame on others, you have been crying hoarse to allege that Islam was spread with the sword, but you feel shy to tell what you spread with the Cannon.

These western colonial powers first established their political supremacy with the use of force and the Cannon, then they gradually dissociated Deen from the political and social institutions with the help of an educational system which was introduced in India by Lord Macaulay, one of the Viceroys of that country. In doing this he openly declared that he wanted to instal a system of education which shall raise up a new generation which will be Indian in colour and language, but it will be purely English in thinking, temperament and mentality. We ultimately succeeded in introducing such an educational system which severed faith from politics, means of livelihood, economics and all other walks of life. Thus, he confined religion to very narrow lanes.

This Was All due Partly to the Conspiracies of the Enemies and Partly to our own Negligence

On one hand, it was the conspiracy of the enemies and on the other hand it was our own conduct and behaviour that complicate matters. We did not concentrate our attention on other branches and walks of life as we did

on worship. Islam consists of five branches:

1- Tenets and beliefs;
2- Worship and Devotion;
3- Transactions and Dealings;
4- Mu'asharat (social living); and
5- Morality and character.

It is regretable that we did not give importance to the last three branches as to the first two branches of Islam. There are two reasons for this lapse:

(1) In our own day to day living we did not pay the same attention to the reformation of our dealings, social living, morals and character, as we paid to matters concerning our beleifs and acts of worship. The natural result was that if a man missed his *Salat*, he was subjected by the society to harsh comments and condemnation, because he missed an obligatory duty imposed on him by Allah and thereby he pulled down one of the most important pillars of Islam. But the society did not condemn so harshly a man who did not distinguish between lawful and unlawful, nor does he refrain from such immoral and sinful conduct and character as have been severely forbidden in the *Shari'ah*.

(2) The second reason for the lapse on our part is that in the courses of study prescribed in our Religion Schools we did not care to give the same importance to chapters on our dealings, social living, and morality be it *Fiqh* or *Hadith* as we gave to the chapters on beliefs and worship. The entire force of research and investigation is exhausted on the Book of Hajj or at the most on the topics of marriage and divorce and nothing beyond that. There are no chapters at all in the Books about "purchases,

business and other dealings" and matters relating to these topics. Even if chapters are opened about them, they are not discussed with care and attention with which the minor and subidiary problems of worship and devotion are studied and discussed. For example the problems concerning the practice of raising the hands during *Salat* is a problem involving only the degree of appropriateness or non-appropriateness, and about three days are devoted to thrashing out this problem. Full justice is not done to sections devoted to dealings and moralities, etc.

The Effect of the System of Education on Students

The system of education followed in Religious Schools does not give much importance to the issues concerning dealings, moralities, etc. A student who graduates from these schools sees that out of ten months eight months are devoted to beliefs and worship and the remaining branches of Deen are touched off only superficially in two months. The student is, therefore, disposed to think that Deen, other than beliefs and worship, occupies only a secondary position.

This was due to another handicap. The grip of Deen (Faith) had become actually loose in the market, politics, etc. owing to the conspiracies of the enemies of Islam. As these problems concerning business, politics and other social issues had been set aside and no action was taken on them, they had acquired the position of theoretical issues to which such attention is naturally not paid as is paid to issues which are pursued in our practical life.

Apart from this handicap, the fact remains that even

in our educational programmes and syllabuses chapters relating to dealings, moralities and social living lagged far behind, so their basic principles remain unknown even to the quite knowledgeable and educated section of the society. This is our plight. As far the matters relating to Governments, they are not quite clear as to their results, whether the Government was controlled in the past by the English or thereafter by their stooges. There is hardly any difference in the thinking of each of these two forms of Governments.

The common run of the Muslims consists of the groups. One group is formed by those who succumbed to the English system of education and the conspiracies of the English who adopted their trend of thinking and severed their relations with Islam in actual practice and thus lost their contact with Islam, although their members retained their Islamic names. They rebelled against religion and regarded it only as a fraud - God forbid.

The other group consists of those common Muslims who want to stick to Islam, love Islam and they cannot even think of severing their relations with Islam. They had acquired some knowledge of Islam, but that knowledge remained confined to beliefs and formalities of worship or at the most to the rules of marriage and divorce. If the number of problems referred for solutions is collected from the *Darul-Ifta* (Institutions that issue rulings on such problems) it will be found that most problems relate to forms of worship, beliefs, marriage and divorce. Problems concerning purchase and other dealings are few and far between. Why is it so? Why do these persons not bring problems about business transactions, about other fields and their personal financial issues?

Propaganda in Favour of the Secular Systems

One of the reasons why the Muslims show indifference to all aspects of Islam other than beliefs and worship is the propaganda launched in favour of Secularism. The effect of this propaganda is that the people do not care to know if their day to day dealings are lawful or unlawful.

I take the liberty to relate to you a true event. Apparently a very pious man used to call on my respected father, Mufti Muhammad Shafi' رحمة الله عليه. He had always in his hand a Rosary to rehearse Allah's names. He often asked my father about incantations. It came to light after a very long time that his main profession was speculative trading. The speculative trading is of two kinds - (1) secret gambling and (2) open gambling. As regards his rehearsals and incantations, they were undertaken only to know thereby the successful numbers of the speculations.

This propaganda about Secularism was so effective that even those who had an idea of lawful and unlawful had no contacts with the Ulama (scholars). The gulf created by Secularism between the two classes was so wide that each group remained far separated from the other with the result that one group is not able to convey its views to the other, nor is the latter group inclined to accept the views of the former.

In our systems of education transactions and dealings have been considerably overlooked with the result that there are Ulama who are quite conversant with problems concerning *Salat*, *fasting*, marriage and divorce, but they are not so conversant with problems concerning trade and relative dealings. This is particularly true of new problems arising day to day in our lives. People are not able to explain

their problems to the Ulama quite clearly and quickly. On the other hand the Ulama also did not probe into such problems, as they did not come across them ever before. They also do not remember the juristic principles with the help of which they can find solutions to problems confronting them. As a result of this, the Ulama in general are not able to satisfy a businessman. This situation has convinced the business community that the Ulama are unable to solve their problems, and as such, it is useless to approach them for guidance. They should, therefore, solve their problems according to their convenience, benefit and interest. The natural result of all this anomaly is that our trading, means of livelihood and politics are all being practiced on the principles of Secular Democracy and Islam has been kept out of the picture.

A Wide Gulf Between the General Public and the Ulama

It is crystal clear that with regard to the problems of the common man the grip of the Ulama has become loose. The public sector is not prepared to obey the Ulama if the latter advise them to vote for the Ulama in the elections or to carry on trade in the Islamic way. This in spite of the fact that the public sector, kisses the hands of the Ulama from morning to evening, gets their new shops opened by them, invites them to perform the Nikah (marriage ceremony) of their sons and daughters and to bless them for success in their worldly enterprises. This is because the public is under the notion that these Ulama cannot provide them proper guidance in problems concerning their worldly affairs. This is a very wide gulf intervening between the public and the Ulama. The vices that have crept into the society cannot be eradicated unless this gulf

is filled. The work of filling this gulf needs to be undertaken from all sides.

It may be mentioned here that the demand to fill this gulf is emanating from many directions, even from the newly educated sections of the public. Late Maulana Ihtishamul Haq Thanawi رحمة الله عليه has very aptly defined this demand in the follwoing words:

"The demand of these newly-educated students on modern lines to fill this gulf means that the Ulama should be buried in this gulf in order to fill it".

An Ignorant Person is He Who is Not Aware of the Trends of the Times

It is incumbent on us to feel the pulse of the times in order to understand the trends of the contemporary conditions. The respected Jurists (Fuqaha) are well-versed in this field of knowledge. That is why they have said:

مَنْ لَّمْ يَعْرِفْ اَهْلَ زَمَانِهٖ فَهُوَ جَاهِلٌ

He who does not know the people of his age is illiterte and ignorant.

اِنَّ تَصْوِيْرَ الْمَسْئَلَةِ نِصْفُ الْعِلْمِ

The true picture (basic points involved) of any problem means its half solution.

Full acquaitance with the modern conditions of matters is impertive. I remember to have read in the books of Imam Sarkhasi, the "Mabsoot" that Hazrat Imam Muhammad رحمة الله عليه used to go to the traders in the market to find out how they carried on thier business. Seeing the Imam wandering in the market someone asked him what a teacher and scholar like him was doing in the market. He replied that he was going about in the market to know how the traders were carrying on thier business, so as to

be able to give correct replies to their problems.

Three Unique Peculiarities in Imam Muhammad رحمة الله عليه

Imam Sarkhasi رحمة الله عليه has mentioned one after another three unique peculiarities of Imam Muhammad رحمة الله عليه. The first one has already been mentioned above. Someone asked the Imam that, although he had compiled so many books, yet he did not compile any book on *Zuhd* زهد - asceticism or mysticism. What was the reason? The Imam replied that his book on البيوع (*Purchases)* was a book on *Zuhd*. This was the Imam's second peculiarity. Thirdly, someone told the Imam that he never saw on his face the glimpses of smile; he was always seen gloomy. The Imam replied, saying:

ما بالك فى رجل جعل الناس قنطرة يمرون عليها شيئا

What do you think about a person of whom the people have made a bridge to cross over it?

We Have Accepted the Conspiracy

Those personalities were very keen in investigating into the customs of the times, trade dealings and the like, so as to know the reality of the problems. It is very sad that we have been expelled from the market places and business houses under a conspiracy and what is sadder is that instead of frustrating this conspiracy, we have passively accepted it by confining the circle of our knowledge, thoughts and ideas which has surrounded us from all sides and we never thought of extricating ourselves from this confinement. We cannot apply the injunctions of our Deen to the branches of our various walks of lives without taking ourselves out of this maze. It is, therefore, our prime duty to acquire

first-hand knowledge of all these problems and of the injunctions of the *Shari'ah* about them, then to bring about a practical revolution in the various branches of life. We cannot succeed in bringing about a revolution, unless we fulfil these basic conditions.

The Responsibility of the Scholars in the Field of Research and Investigation

It is not an exaggeration to say that our work in the field of research and investigation is only half-way and inadequate. For example, if some authority entrusts to us the entire responsibility of the Government from the President, Prime Minister right up to the peons, on the condition to revolutionise the fate and fortune of the country, we are not in a position to fulfil this condition, not in a few days, weeks, months but not even in full one year to effect a change for the better. This is because we are not well aware of the problems involved and have done no research work on them. It is, therefore, imperative for the scholars to turn their attention to this aspect of the problem. This is their responsibility and the crying need of the time. The intention is to emphasise that they should find out, and work in the right direction in the light of the accepted juristic principles and submit the result to the people at large.

It is the responsibility of the *Faqih* (Jurist) to find out alternative avenues

It is not the responsibility of a *Faqih* (Jurist) only to declare that this is lawful and that is unlawful. It is his responsibility that when he declares some thing or act to be unlawful, he should also declare its alternative.

The story of Hazrat Yusuf عليه السلام has been related in the Holy Qur'an. The Prophet عليه السلام was asked to give the

interpretation of a dream:

إِنِّي أَرَىٰ سَبْعَ بَقَرَاتٍ سِمَانٍ يَأْكُلُهُنَّ سَبْعٌ عِجَافٌ ..... (سورة يوسف: ٤٣)

I certainly saw in a dream seven fat cows being eaten by seven lean cows.... (12:43)

Hazrat Yusuf عليه السلام gave the interpretation of this dream later on. First he عليه السلام advised the method of safety from the loss pointed out in the interpretation of the dream. So he عليه السلام said as reported in the Holy Qur'an:

قَالَ تَزْرَعُونَ سَبْعَ سِنِينَ دَأَبًا فَمَا حَصَدْتُمْ فَذَرُوهُ فِي سُنْبُلِهِ (سورة يوسف ٤٧)

You shall cultivate (land) seven years as usual, but leave in the ears what you have harvested. (12:47)

The *Faqih* (Jurist) is a Preacher also

The *Faqih* (Jursit) is charged with the additional duty of being a preacher. It is not only the dry, legal work which the *Faqih* has to do by declaring that this is lawful and that is unlawful. The *Faqih* is also responsible to point out a lawful substitute for what he declares to be unlawful.

The Objective of this meagre Attempt of Ours

It is included in the duties of a *Faqih* to point out a lawful substitute for what he declares as unlawful and forbidden. He cannot, however, discharge this duty, unless he has knowledge of contemporary problems and modern trend and dealings. I have, therefore, made a modest attempt to present to the respected Ulama the reality and the various forms and categories of modern modes of transactions and dealings and how they are being tackled. The only objective of this discussion is to popularise this trend of thinking, so that people may begin to talk about these matters and pay

attention to the consequential problems.

I have taken great pains in Embarking upon this subject

I have taken great pains in embarking this subject, because when I had entered this difficult field, the difficulties I had to have in this enterpisre were due to the fact that I encountered strange terminologies, varying styles and trends and style of speeches. If I read books on the subject I failed to grasp the points discussed in these books. Despite all these difficulties the craze that had obsessed my mind compelled me to read many books? Consulted many persons and after going throught all these ordeals for years. I was able to get a few coherent ideas and a mentel summary of the subject which is expected to prove useful to the studends.

A Fresh Example of the Importance of this Course

I am presenting to you a fresh example which will convince you of the importance, benefit and necessity of this course. Just as we have drawn up this short course in the same way we have established a centre under the title of : مركز الاقتصاد الاسلامي (The Centre of Islamic Economics) under the care of this centre we held recently a course at Masjid Baitul Mukarram (Gulshan-e-Iqbal). The intention was to furnish to the businessmen all necessary information about what is lawful and what is unlawful in business and to advise them that in tackling today's business activities, they should not transgress the limit prescribed by the *Shari'ah* and that all this should be brought to their notice. When we launched this course for the first time, the people felt doubts about its success and

thought that the businessmen remained too busy to take interest in such courses. As necessary arrangements for their lodging and boarding, a fee of Rs. 400/- (four hundred) per head had been charged for this service.

The People's Enthusiasm

We had made arrangements to accommodate in the course only one hundred men and had published no advertisements about this in the Press, yet one hundred and seven men took admission to the course by paying the prescribed fee. The enthusiasm was so intense that some of the candidates sought intercession to get admission. A few of them who had purchased tickets for leaving Pakistan for America got their seats cancelled for the sake of participating in this course.

The Sparks of *Eeman* (Faith) are Still Simmering in the Hearts of the Muslims

I have been participating in many seminars, symposiums and assemblies being held from time to time in the world. I have seen with what interest and fondness the Muslims attend these gatherings. In general, if the people's attendance is 100% in the first session it gradually decreases to 70% or even much less. As far the seminars held under my arrangement and care, I find that the people remain present on the first day from 9 a.m. in the morning till 4 p.m. in the afternoon and on the second day up to the *Maghrib Salat*, except for short break for *Salat* and meals. They listen to the lectures and addresses with rapt attention and interest. This shows that the sparks of Eeman (Faith) are still simmering in the hearts of the Muslims. Only a little boosting is needed to push them ahead. If they are given right guidance through the right

way and they feel that right guidance is available at such and such quarters they are still ready to visit these sources of guidance with due interest. How beautifully has a poet expressed this idea in one of his couplets:

میرے طائر قفس کو نہیں باغباں سے رنجش
ملے گھر میں آب و دانہ تو یہ دام تک نہ پہنچے

The bird of my self has no grudge against the garden - keeper, except that he does not feed me properly. If he fed me properly there was no need for me to be caught in the hunter's trap.

The Fear to give Explanation in the Presence of Almighty Allah

We feel afraid lest Almighty Allah should ask us to explain why we did not take care of this community which was falling into the trap of the conspirators. I, however, hope that, by the grace of Allah, that all this is due to conspiracy; it is artificial and a temporary phase and things shall soon take a trun for the better. Our fourteen centuries old history denies that the present spell of decadence is a permanent phase. During this entire period the conduct and character of the Ulama have proved a beacon of light in guiding the *Ummah* in every walk of life. May be, we shall not see this change in our lives but our later generations shall surely see the welcome change. Blessed are those souls that will sacrifice in this cause.

May Almighty Allah accept the tribute of our lives in the cause of this sacred goal.

We should take part in paving the path of Revolution

There is no doubt that a revolution is in the making and shall take place. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a *Hadith*:

مثل امتی مثل المطر لا یدری آخره خیرام اوله (ترمذی، کتاب الامثال، باب مثل امتی مثل المطر)

The example of my *Ummah* is like the rain. It is not known whether its first part is better or the later part.(*Tirmizi*)

We shall be very fortunate if we too, by the grace of Allah, contribute our mite to the blessed revolution. If we lag behind in this sacred task, Allah will entrust this responsibility to some other party. Allah does not stand in need of our help and contribution, as He has said in the Holy Qur'an:

وَاِنْ تَتَوَلَّوْا يَسْتَبْدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَ كُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَكُوْنُوْا اَمْثَالَكُمْ (محمد: ۳۸)

And if you turn away, He shall substitute in your place another people and they will not be like you (47:38)

A time is sure to come when the voices of those who taunt and raise slogans agianst the Muslims will be choked and the word Deen will, God willing, become exalted.

Knowledge of new Publications and Compilations is Inevitable

Our entire talk in this lesson will be devoted totally to juristic problems concerning transactions and dealings. We have in the Indo-Pak Sub-continent good collections of Religious Rulings فتاوی, but we do not have books on this subject. The scholars in the Arab countries have done much work in this field. Among theseArab research

scholars and writers are persons professing different trends of thoughts, viz., modernists, free-thinkers, right-thinkers and those who are adamant and unyielding in their views. I have secured and stocked in the library of the Darul-Uloom a sizeable collection of books written and compiled by these scholars, holding varying angles of vision. It is my desire that scholars should benefit by, and study these books in order to acquaint themselves with the various aspects of the issue confronting the *Ummah*.

It is the working method of the Arab scholars that they pick up a topic and compose a complete book on it. For example, they wrote a book under the title of (Al-Khiyar), meaning literally "The Choice" and incorporated therein all sorts of choices, e.g., choice of a defect, of a condition, of a slight and of specifying etc., along with discussing all problems relating to this issue. In the same way someone wrote a book on the topic of الغبن (cheating) or التامین (Insurance) and so on.

May Almighty Allah make this work a means to success for us in this world and also in the Hereafter, and accept this humble attempt of ours. *Aameen*!

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمین

Venue : Jame 'Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi.
Date : 15th November, 1991

THE PRINCIPLES OF PREACHING AND CALLING TO ISLAM

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

وَالْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنٰتُ بَعْضُهُمْ اَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ ۘ يَأْمُرُوْنَ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُقِيْمُوْنَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَيُؤْتُوْنَ الزَّكٰوةَ وَيُطِيْعُوْنَ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ ؕ اُولٰٓئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللّٰهُ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَزِيْزٌ حَكِيْمٌ (سورة التوبة ٧١)

Praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him and ask

Him for help, and we seek His forgiveness. We believe in Him and place our trust in Him. And, we seek refuge in Him from the mischief of our base self and from our evil deeds. He whom Allah guides none can mislead and he whom He leaves to stray none can guide. We bear witness that there is no god except Allah, the One who has no partner and we bear witness that sayyidina Muhammad ﷺ is His Servant and Messenger, may blessings of Allah be on him, his family and companions, and may He bestow favours and peace a complete peace.

I seek the protection of Allah from the cursed devil. In the Name of Allah, the Compassionat, the Merciful.

And the believing men and the believing women are friends of one another. They enjoin the right and forbid the wrong, and they establish the *Salah*, and pay the *Zakah*, and they obey Allah and His Messenger. Those - Allah shall have mercy upon them. Surely Allah is Mighty, Wise. (at-Tawbah. 9:71)

I believe in Allah who has spoken the turth and He is our Great Protector. And, His Messenger and noble Prophet has spoken the truth, too. And we bear witness to that, and we are thankful. Praise belongs to Allah Lord of the worlds.

Stages enjoining the Right and forbidding the Wrong

This verse of the Qur'an deals with 'enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong.' In describing the quality of His pious slaves, Allah says that they bid other

people to do is good and forbid them to do what is bad or evil. The verb in the verse امر (*amastetra*) means 'to command', 'to bid' while the noun (*ma'ruf*) means 'the right', 'piety', 'good'. The verb نهی (*nahi*) means 'to forbid' and the noun منکر (*munkar*) means 'evil'. The jurists contend that just as it is فرض (*obligatory*) on every Muslim to observe *Fast* and offer *Salat*, so also it is فرض (obligatory) to stop anyone who does something evil according to his ability telling him that what he does is sinful. Generally, people know that 'to enjoin right and forbid evil' is obligatory but they do not know when it is فرض(*obligatory*) and when it is not. The result is that many people are neglectful of this duty. Such a man sees his wife, children and friends indulge in unlawful activities but he does not feel inclined to forbid them from doing evil; he observes them defer their duties but he does not bid them to fulfil their obligations. On the other hand, there are some people who interpret this verse 'to the letter' and occupy themselves from morning to evening in baring other people from different activities. In this way, people go to the extreme in observing this verse because they have not understood it well. Therefore, let us go through the explanation of this verse.

Two approaches in Preaching and Calling Individually and Collectively

The first thing that we must know is that there are two ways in which anyone may preach and call others to Islam. (i) The individual way is to convey the message to an individual. For instance, if anyone sees another person doing an evil deed or disregarding an obligation then asking him to give up the evil or meet his obligation is the individual preaching and calling 'to Islam'.

(ii) The 'Cllective preaching and calling to Islam." This is achieved when anyone delivers a sermon to a group of people, or teaches them, or intends to visit other people and tell them about religion with no other purpose in mind. This last is also done by the members of the *Tablighi Jama'at* when they visit other people's homes and offices to convey to them religious ideas. This is 'collective propagation'. The rules for both these approaches differ as also their etiquettes.

The Collective method is also a *Fard Kifayah*

The 'collective propagation' is not an individual duty (*fard 'ayn*) but it is a *fard kifayah* (collective duty). Thus, it is not incumbent on every Muslim to go to other people and deliver a sermon, or to visit them and preach bacause this is a *fard kifayah* which means that if a few people discharge that duty the remaining are absolved of it, but, if no one does it then all the people are being sinful. Take the funeral prayer. It is not the responsibility of every individual to join it; if he does, he will be rewarded but if he does not then he will not be a sinner provided some people are offering it. If no one offers it then every Muslim there will have committed a sin. This is known as *fard kifayah* (a collective obligation). In the same manner the collective preaching and calling to Islam ' is a *fard kifayah*.

Individual Propagation is also An Individual Obligation

The 'individual preaching and calling to Islam ' is what anyone does when he sees another person do something wrong or overlooks a duty: to the best of his

ability he stops that person from doing wrong, or makes him fulfil his obligation. It is not a *fard kifayah* but it is a *fard 'ayn*. It implies that one does not leave it for other people to do it, or imagine that a preacher or a member of the *Tablighi Jama'at* will do it. It is an obligatuion on every individual Muslim that must perform and is known as *fard 'ayn*.

To Enjoin Right and Forbid Wrong Is *Fard 'Ayn*

Allah has described the pious people in many verses of the Qur'an. He says يأمرون بالمعروف وينهون عن المنكر {They bid what is right and forbid what is wrong}. Thus this behaviour is a duty on every individual. Today, we do not even know that it is an obligation. We see our children, family members, acquaintances do wrong but we do not care to warn them or feel within ourselves that we must reproach them, this is a continuous dereliction of duty, a perpetual negligence in fulfilling an obligation. Just as a Muslim is obliged to observe *Salat* five times a day, *Fast* in the month of Ramadan, pay *zakah* and perform *Hajj*, so too is his duty to enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. We must,. therefore, realise its significance before we proceed. If anyone is pious all his life, never missing a *Salat* or a *Fast* and pays *zakah* regularly and performs *Hajj* and he never commits a grave sin at any time yet he has omitted to enjoin the right and forbid the wrong and never thought of keeping other people away from doing evil then, in spite of his personal piety, he will be called to account in the Hereafter. He will have to explain what efforts he undertook to stop the evil being committed before his eyes. Therefore, it is not enough to reform oneself but it is necessary to worry about correcting other people.

When does 'Bidding the Right and forbidding the Wrong' become Obligatory?

We must remember that there are two kinds of worship: the *fard* or *wajib* (absolute obligatory or obligatory) and *Sunnah* or *Mustahab* (the practice of the Prophet ﷺ. or the desireable behaviour). The former include: regular *Salat*, *Fasting*, *Zakah*, *Hajj* and so on. The latter include: using the *Siwaak*, reciting the *Bismillah* before eating, drinking water in three sips, and so on, and include all the practices of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. As for the evil deeds, they are also of two types; the unlawful, sinful acts absolutely disallowed, and those though not unlawful yet violate the *Sunnah* are *undesireable*. If anyone omits the *fard* or *wajib*, or commits the unlawful, it is *fard ʿayn* to 'bid the right and forbid the wrong', If anyone drinks wine, or involves himself in any illicit act, or backbites, or tells lies, it is obligatory to 'forbid the wrong' and stop him doing so. If anyone omits regular *Salat*, or does not pay *zakah*, or skips *Fasting* in Ramadan then it is obligatory to ask him to do his duty.

When is it not *Fard* to Forbid the wrong

In discharging the foregoing duty, it is a condition that the perpetrator is likely to pay heed to the person who discharges his duty and there is no risk to the latter. Thus, if one is confident that the perpetrator will not pay attention but make fun of *Shariʿah* and belittle it then one is absolved of the duty to forbid him. We must remember that by insulting *Shariʿah* the person commits an act of disbelief because to belittle a command of *Shariʿah* is not only sinful but it draws the person outside the fold of Islam and makes him an unbeliever. Therefore, when there is likelihood of the doer of an evil act reacting to an advice

of a preacher and making fun of *Shariʿah* or its commands then it is no more a duty to forbid him from doing anything sinful. However, one must remove oneself from there and pray for the sinful person: "O Allah! This slave of yours is sick, do cure him of his ailment by your mercy."

Forbidding One Who Sins

Let us examine the case of a person who is deeply involved in a sinful act and derives full pleasure out of it. At that time, there is no possibility whatsoever of that person listening to advice and stopping himself from the sinful act. If anyone approaches him at that time when he is deriving peak pleasure and, without assessing the situation, commends to him the right way then that person will make fun of the command of *Shariʿah* and thus do a thing of disbelief. The responsibility of this man's conduct rests on the 'bidder of the right conduct'. We have seen, therefore, that it is dangerous and disadvantageous to forbid a sinner when he is deeply involved in the sin. The correct way is to explain to him later on what he did was not proper.

When the chances are equal

When the possibilities of the sinner paying heed and refusing to listen are equal then it is necessary to convey to him the message. The chances are that Allah will inspire him to listen to the preacher and he may thus reform. If that happens then every pious deed that he does thereafter will earn a reward for the preacher too.

When there is possibility of harm befalling the Preacher

There is also the possibility that the person who 'bids the right or forbids the wrong' might be harmed by the sinner when he is asked to desist but he many not comment on *Shari'ah*. In such cases, too, it is proper not to preach to the sinner and the 'bidding and forbidding' is not *fard*. However, it is better to forbid him from doing wrong because although the preacher may risk himself, he will, nevertheless, convey the Truth. He may endure the annoyance and do the preferable thing. We must remember the foregoing three possibilities. They are: when it is likely that advice and counsel will backfire and the person advised may speak against the commands of *Shari'ah*, the commended must not be bid and the wrong must not be forbidden but one must maintain silence. When there are equal possibilities of favourable and unfavourable response from the perpetrator of sin, it is necessary to preach him. The third possibility is that the perpetrator of sin may not deride *Shari'ah* but may harm the advisor; in this case although it is not necessary to preach to him yet it is better to endure the hardship and tell him 'to do the right and shun the wrong'. This is the gist of the courses open to the preacher which he must remember.

When advising anyone the intention must be Sincere

The person who conveys the message of *Shari'ah* must be sincere in his intention. If he imagines himself as a reformer, religious-minded and God-fearing and his subject as a sinner and misled whom he is reforming then his good words will benefit neither the person to whom they are

addressed nor their speaker. This is because a faulty intention grows in the speaker arrogance and his deed no longer gains approval in the sight of Allah Thus his deed is worthless and of no avail and his effort wasted. The listener too will not be impressed by his words. Therefore, it is imperative that the caller to good deeds must be sincere in his intention.

The Style of delivery must be proper

In the same way, when the message of *Shari'ah* is conveyed to someone the speaker must adopt a correct approach. He must speak in a polite, loving manner wishing him well so that the person who is addressed does not feel much hurt and disgraced. My respected father. Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه often quoted Allama Shabbir Ahmad Uthmani رحمة الله عليه as saying frequently, "When the Truth is spoken in a true way with a true intention it will never cause harm." So, whenever there is a conflict after someone says something True, one of the three things will be found surely: the speaker may not have spoken the truth or his intention may have been faulty or he may have hoped to disgrace his listener. Such a shortcoming would deprive the words of their power to influence. If, on the other hand, the words were true and the speaker was sincere, then the approach may have been faulty. The words may have been spoken roughly as though the addressee was being beaten with a stick. The True words are not a stick that one picks up and hits another with but it is a well-wishing affair that should be done politely. When the well-wishing factor is missing then the True word will also cause harm.

The Preacher must be Soft-Spoken

My respected father, Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi' رحمة الله عليه often remarked that when Allah directed Sayyidina Musa and Aaron (Harun) عليهما السلام to preach to Fir'aun, (Pharoah) He asked them.

فَقُوْلَا لَهٗ قَوْلًا لَّيِّنًا لَّعَلَّهٗ يَتَذَكَّرُ اَوْ يَخْشٰى (سورة طه:٤٤)

But speak to him mildly; Perchance he may take warning or fear (Allah). (20:44)

But, who was this Fir'aun? Was he not who said that he had divine powers? He said:

اَنَا رَبُّكُمُ الْـاَ عْلٰى (النازعات:٢٤)

"I am your Lord, Most high."

Thus, he was the worst of the disbelievers.

My father would say after narrating this event that there cannot be a reformer more capable than Sayyidina Musa عليه السلام in our age nor can there be anyone more misled than the Pharaoh no matter how sinful he may be. The Pharoah laid claim on divinity. In spite of that the two Prophets, Sayyidina Musa and Haarun عليهما السلام were instructed that they should speak to him politely, not in a harsh tone. This principle we have to follow upto the Day of Resurrection and we should be soft when speaking about religious matters.

The Method Of The Holy Prophet ﷺ

The Holy Prophet ﷺ was sitting in Masjid Nabvi once with the Companions رضى الله عنهم when a villager entered it. He offered his *Salat* hurriedly and then made a very suprising supplication.

اَللّٰهُمَّ ارْحَمْنِىْ وَ مُحَمَّدًا وَلَا تَرْحَمْ مَعَنَا اَحَدًا

"O Allah, have mercy on me and Muhammad ﷺ and do not show mercy to anyone else

besides us."

The Holy Prophet ﷺ heard him and said, "You have restricted the mercy of Allah very much and limited it to two people only, no more! But, the mercy of Allah is large and all-encompassing." After a while, this villager sat down in the courtyard of the mosque and passed his urine. On seeing him the Companions رضى الله عنهم hurried towards him and were on the point of scolding him and repriminding him when the Holy Prophet ﷺ said : لا تزرموه {Do not interrupt him. Leave him alone}.(*Sahih Muslim*. Book of Taharah Chapter Ghusl).

اِنَّمَا بُعِثْتُمْ مُيَسِّرِيْنَ وَلَمْ تُبْعَثُوْا مُعَسِّرِيْنَ

"You are sent as well-wisher for the people, to make things easy for them and not to create difficulties in their way."

He then asked them to throw water over it and clean the mosque. He then called the villager to him and explained to him that the mosque was the House of Allah and was not meant for what he did, so "do not do it again."

The Method of Preaching By the Prophets عليهم السلام.

If someone behaved in this way in our presence and defiled a mosque, we might perhaps teach him the lesson of his life. The Holy Prophet ﷺ., however, observed that the man was unacquainted with the etiquette of the Mosque and whatever he did, he did out of lack of knowledge. So, instead of reprimanding him, he gently explained to him what the proper way was. This was the way of teaching with all the Prophets عليهم السلام. If any one abused them they never retaliated. The Holy Qur'an has reproduced the words of the idolators, they used against Prophets عليهم السلام

اِنَّا لَنَرٰكَ فِىْ سَفَاهَةٍ وَّاِنَّا لَنَظُنُّكَ مِنَ الْكٰذِبِيْنَ (الاعراف:٦٦)

We see you in folly, and surely, we think you to be one of the liars.(al-A'raf. 7:66)

If anyone were to speak in this manner to a religious scholar today, or to a sermoniser, he would retaliate and abuse him in similar words. But, the Prophets عليهم السلام said.

يٰقَوْمِ لَيْسَ بِيْ سَفَاهَةٌ وَّلٰكِنِّيْ رَسُوْلٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ

"O my people, there is no folly in me; but I am a Messenger from the Lord of the worlds." (Al A'raf.7:67)

How gentle are the words! In another case, people said to their Messenger:

اِنَّا لَنَرٰكَ فِيْ ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِيْنٍ (الاعراف:٦٠)

Surely we see you in manifest error. (al- A'raf. 7:60)

But, their Messenger answered that he was not in error but that he was a Messenger from the Lord of the worlds. That was their manner of teaching and reforming. But, we find that our preaching does not bear fruit which is because of one of these things: We do not convey the Truth, our method is not True or our intention is not True. That is why there is so much evil around.

An Incident in the Life of Shah Isma'il رحمة الله عليه

Shah Isma'il Shaheed رحمة الله عليه is one of those eminent pious men who have proved this behaviour to be correct. He was delivering a sermon in the Jami Masjid of Delhi when one of the audience got up and asked him to answer his question. The Maulana asked him to put the question. He said, "I have heard that you are a bastard? (We seek refuge in Allah). He said it when the sermon was being delivered before a multitude and to a man who was not only a religious scholar of high calibre but also a royal prince! One like me might have turned red in anger at that very moment

and might have punished the daring interrupter. And if one like me would not do so, the supporters would surely have taught him a lesson for saying such a thing about their Shaikh. But, Maulana Shah Isma'il Shaheed رحمة الله عليه said in answer to the man, "Brother, you have a wrong information. The witnesses to the marriage of my mother are yet present in Delhi." It was thus that he answered the man and did not make an issue out of it.

How May One Create Effective Words:-

When a person speaks solely for Allah and suppresses his own desires so that his listeners too realise that he speaks for the cause of Allah and has no axe to grind for himself then what he says produces the desired result. As for Maulana Shah Isma'il Shaheed رحمة الله عليه, thousands of people repented to Allah at his hands in each of his sermons. In comparison, we may say for ourselves that we have, in the first instance, given up the task of propagation of Islam and if any of us does make an attempt his approach incites his listeners. There is, therefore, no productive result. To overcome the drawback we must remember three things and observe them. We must convey the Truth with a sound intention and when we do it we will not suffer any damage but we will derive much benefit.

Who Is Authorised To Make The 'Collective Call'

The second way to preach and call to Islam is the collective approach. In this method, the preacher gathers people and delivers a sermon or a speech, or gives them advice. This is known as collective preaching and calling to Islam.'The collective call' is not *fard a'yn*. It is *fard kifayah* and if some people undertake it, the others are absolved of

it, but everyone is not authorised to do it. The preacher must have certain qualifications and if a person is not qualified enough then he may not undertake the work. A person who is not likely to utter anything wrong during his sermon may be permitted to sermonise. This task of 'preaching and calling' is a very delicate affair. When a speaker observes a lot of people listening to him, he gets it into his head that he is a great scholar and he misleads his listeners into believing him as a great scholar. They imagine he is a very pious person. When the listeners are cheated, he himself goes alongwith and considers that he is a great man. "So many people! They all call me a scholar, a righteous and pious man. There must be something to it. They cannot be mad, all of them." This is how one may trap oneself into a trial.

Therefore, everyone must not attempt to deliver a speech or sermon. Of course, if a teacher or an elder ushers a pupil forward then he may begin under the elder's patronage and seek Allah's help who will potect him from the trial.

To Impart Lessons From The Qur'an & *Hadith*

We have commented on delivering the sermon and the speech which is comparatively easier than giving lessons in the Qur'an and *Hadith*. Now-a-days,about every other person takes it upon himself to impart lessons from the Qur'an and *Hadith*. But the truth is that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said about the Noble Qur'an.

من قال فى القران بغير علم فليتبوأ مقعده من النار

"If anyone says anything by way of interpreting the Qur'an without having the knowledge then he must know that his destination is Hell".

Another *Hadith* tells us:

من قال فى كتاب الله عزوجل برأيه فاصاب فقد اخطأ (ابوداؤد، كتاب العلم، باب الكلام فى كتاب الله بغير علم)

"If anyone gives his personal opinion in the Book of Allah, the Great, and even if his opinion is correct then, he has erred (in giving it)". (*Abu Dawood*, Book of Knowledge)

What a serious warning the Prophet ﷺ has given! In spite of that we see people learning something from the books then imagining themselves learned men and scholars. They then consider themselves capable of imparting lessons in Qur'an although this department like the lessons in *Hadith*, is one that eminent Ulama hesitate to undertake. How then may we expect an ordinary man to give the lessons and interpret the Qur'an?.

The Respected Mufti Muhammad Shafi and the Exegeses of the Qur'an

My respected father, Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه spent seventy or seventy-five years of his life in studying and teaching religion. It was in the final years of his life that he compiled the exegeses of the Noble Qur'an, the Ma'riful Qur'an. He told me often that he did not consider himself capable of undertaking this work. He said, "But, I have composed the exegeses of Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanavi into simple language." All his life, he said, "Eminent Ulama stayed away from expounding on the verses of the Qur'an."

Imam Muslim on *Hadith*

Imam Muslim رحمة الله عليه has collected a number of authentic *Ahadith* and compiled them together as *Sahih Muslim*. However, he refrained from saying even one

word in explanation of these *Ahadith*, so much so that he did not distinguish them under different chapters although others in this field have done so-Book on *Salat*, Book on Purification, and so on. He did not do it lest it go down as an explanation on the *Hadith* of the Prophet ﷺ, and he might commit a mistake and make himself answerable to Allah for that. He said simply that he had collected the *Ahadith* from which the Ulama may derive knowledge. We can see from it that it is a very delicate task but we find around us that givers of lesson abound: we hear of someone speaking on the Qur'an at some place, someone else explaining the *Ahadith* at some other place though they may lack in knowledge and may not have the required qualifications. The result is there is a plethora of confusion and mischief. Those who attend such gatherings must satisfy themselves that the person imparting lessons in Qur'an or *Hadith* is qualified and worthy of it. They must verify if he has the required knowledge because it is not fit for everyone to impart lessons in this manner. In the same way he who lacks in the required knowledge should not undertake 'collective preaching and call to Islam',. should not give sermons or deliver speeches. He should, of course, carry on with individual preaching and call.

Should One Who Does Not Practice Not Preach

It is commonly believed that anyone who does some wrong should not stop others from the same mistake.Thus, it is said if a man does not offer his *Salat* with the congregation, he should not urge others to join congregational *Salat* unless he himself observes it; this view is not correct. In fact, it is the other way round: the person who invites other people to offer congregational

Salat must also observe them regularly. It is not that one who neglects them should not invite other people! People generally quote the following verse of the Qur'an:-

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لِمَ تَقُوْلُوْنَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُوْنَ (سورہ صف:۲)

O you who believe, why do you say that what you do not? (as-Saff 61:2)

Some people take it to mean that if anyone does not do something then he must not urge others to do it.For instance, if anyone does not give charity then he must not impell other people to give charity; or, if he does not speak the truth then he cannot recommend others to speak the truth. It is wrong to interpret the verse in this manner. The correct meaning of this verse is: "if you do not possess an attribute then do not claim to have that quality in you." Thus, if a person does not offer his *Salat* with the congregation then he must not say to other people that he observes the congregational prayer; if he is not devout then he must not pretend to others that he is one; if he has not peformed *Hajj* then he must not tell others that he has performed it. "That which you do not do, why do you claim to have done?" is the meaning of the verse but not "That which you do not do, do not ask other people to do." Often, a man benefits from telling others to do good. When he tells others but does not do it himself then he feels ashamed and feels compelled to do it.

One Who Counsels Must Himself Practice What He Preaches

There is another verse of the Qur'an. Allah addresses the scholars of the Jews and tells them:

اَتَاْمُرُوْنَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ اَنْفُسَكُمْ (سورہ بقرہ:۴۴)

Do you enjoin virtue upon mankind and yet

you yourselves forget it. (al Baqarah. 2:44)

When a man recommends someone to do some good he must himself remember and behave accordingly. It is not that because he does not practice he will not preach. In other words, one should not feel hindered from advising anyone if one is not doing what he advises. Our elders have emphasised من حرم شماتة بحبيه "I have not abstained but you do abstain." Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has said "At some times I sense a drawback within myself then I speak on that very topic the next time I deliver a sermon. It is thereby that Allah reforms me of that shortcoming."

Nevertheless, there are two sides to this question. There is one man who does not practice himself but preaches to other people while there is also the man who practices himself and preaches to other people too. Of course, there is a difference in the results of their efforts. As for him who acts and then recommends, Allah blesses his effort so that what he says is digested by his listeners and they are reformed by that. As for the advice that is not preceded by action, the listeners are not very impressed by it. The tongue speaks and rebounds from the ears of his listeners and the speech is not digested by them. Therefore, it is necessary to endeavour and practice too although lack of it does not debar one from advising other people.

When The Mustahab (desirable) Is Neglected, It Is Not Wise To Reproach

We have seen that it is *fard* to preach to one who neglects the obligatory duties or commits an obvious sin and to 'bid him to the right way and fobid the wrong'. However,. there are certain things that the *Shari'ah* regards as *Mustahab* (recommended or preferrable acts)

which are not *fard* or *wajib* (obligatory). *Mustahab* deeds are those that fetch the doer rewards but do not make a person sinner if he neglects them: or, the *Mustahab* are the etiquettes of *Shari'ah* as explained by the Ulama.The correct procedure is that people should be encouraged to observe the *Mustahab* but if anyone skips observance he should not be reproached for that. We have no authority to reprimand a person who overlooks the *Mustahab* or to insist on his performance. However, a teacher, a mentor, a parent or a guardian may surely point out to his student, disciple, child or ward that he should have observed the *Mustahab* or the etiquette that he omitted previously. As for any other person, one has no right to condemn him for passing over a *mustahab* act. Some people elevate the *Mustahab* to the level of *wajib* and censure those who ignore and overlook their performance. They demand to know why the *mustahab* was ignored although Allah will not ask anyone on the Day of Resurrection why he had omitted the *Mustahab*, neither will the angels put the question. These people appropriate to themselves the authority to question other people's behaviour in this regard.

Supplication After The *Azan*

As an example we may cite the supplication that is made after the *Azan* which is *Mustahab* :

اللهم رب هذه الدعوة التامة والصلوة القائمة آت محمدا الوسيلة والفضيلة وابعثه مقاما محمودا الذى وعدته انك لا تخلف الميعاد

"O Allah, Lord of the perfect call and the salah that is to follow grant Muhammad ﷺ the means of approach to you and eminence, and elevate him to the glorious station that you

have promised him. Surely, you never fail in (your) promise."

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has prompted us to recite this supplication after every *Azan*. It is a blessed supplication. We must teach it to our children and house folk and advise them to recite it after *Azan*. We must also advise other Muslims to pray in these words. But, if anyone does not make this prayer then it is wrong on our part to raise objections or rebuke him. We may only reprimand anyone when an omission involves a *fard* duty or when there is a commission of sin.

Omission Of An Etiquette does not invite Reproach

We come across some behaviour that is not labelled as *Mustahab* in *Shari'ah*, the Qur'an or the *Hadith* yet some Ulama regard them as *Adab* (etiquette). For example, some Ulama advise us that when a man washes his hands before eating he should not clean dry them with a towel.They also tell us that we must sit down to eat before the food is laid; if it happens the other way about and the food is laid before we sit down, we have neglected the etiquette. We do not find mention of these etiquettes in the Qur'an or *Hadith* but the Ulama have told us that these are etiquettes of eating. They do not classify as *Mustahab* too. So, it is not right on our part if we object to a person who cleans his hands after washing them before he sits to eat, or if he waits for the food to be laid down and then sits down at the table spread to eat; we cannot tell such a person that he has violated the *Sunnah* or the *Shari'ah*. These things are neither *Sunnah* nor *Mustahab* and it is wrong to censure anyone who skips them. But, we find people raising objections vociferously on flimsy grounds which they should not.

Sitting Cross-legged When Eating Is Permitted

It is not disallowed to sit cross-legged while eating and no sin is attached to it. However, this posture is not as near to humbleness as the squatting posture (sitting on the hip and bending the legs backward at the knees) or sitting on the hips with one leg bent backwards and the other raised on the foot. Therefore, we must accustom ourselves to eat in one of these postures but if anyone cannot sit in this manner or feels more comfortable in the cross-legged posture then it is not a sin. It is wrongly understood by many people that the cross-legged posture is disallowed while eating; these people must realise their mistake and not reproach anyone who sits cross-legged.

It Is Correct To Eat At the Dining Table

Again, it is not disallowed to eat at the dinning table but to sit on the floor while eating is nearer *Sunnah* and fetches reward because of the imitation of *Sunnah*. Therefore, we must try, as far as possible, to eat while sitting on the floor.The more we follow the *Sunnah* the more the blessings and reward. In spite of that, it is not wrong to eat at the dining table and there is no sin in doing so; therefore, we should not rebuke those who sit at the table to eat their meals.

It Is *Sunnah* To Sit On The Floor To Eat

Tlhe Holy Prophet ﷺ sat on the floor to eat for two reasons. First, much simplicity was observed during those days and there was no concept of chairs and tables, so they sat on the floor. Secondly, there is much humility in eating on the floor and one respects the food as blessings. It is something one may experience oneself by observing his inner feelings in trying both the methods. There is a world

of difference in the two methods because eating on the floor arouses a sense of submisiveness, meekness and devotion to Allah These things are not found in eating at the dining table. Therefore, one must make it a habit to eat on the floor but if one faces a situation when table is used then there is no harm in using it and no sin either. So, it is again wrong to oppose the use of table and chairs vehemently as some people are wont to oppose and call its use unlawful for eating.

Provided The *Sunnah* Is Not Ridiculed

The foregoing reference to eating while being seated on the floor as a *Sunnah* and preferable and more rewarding is subject to *Sunnah* being respected. If there is a possibility of anyone making fun of the *Sunnah* then we must not insist on eating on the floor.

Eating On The Floor In Restaurant

My respected father narrated an incident while he was teaching us once. It was about his visit to Delhi from Deoband with some companions. At Delhi they had to eat their meal but could not find any place so they went to a restaurant. Naturally, food is served on the dining table in a restaurant and two of his companions protested that they would eat on the floor, not at the table. They decided to spread their towels on the floor and order the meal because that was the *Sunnah*. My respected father advised them not to do so but sit on the chairs and eat at the table. They wished to know why they should give up the *Sunnah* and opt to sit at the table, and why should they feel ashamed about it. My father explained to them that it was not a question of feeling ashamed or afraid. "The truth is, he said, "that when you will spread the cloth on the floor

and ask for food you will be conspicuous and other people may laugh at you and be guilty of deriding the *Sunnah*. Not only is that a sin but liable to place them into disbelief." May Allah preserve us from that!

An Event To Learn From

My respected father then recalled to them an incident. It was about a very eminent person, Sulayman A'mash. He was the teacher of Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه The Books of *Hadith* are replete with his narrations. A'mash is an Arabic word meaning 'blear-eyed'; one whose eyes are blurred and his eye-lashes drop and whose eyes dazzle because of light. Because he was bleary-eyed, he was called A'mash. He had a student who was lame. He was one of those students who kept himself close to his teacher at all times. Some students have that habit and they are constantly with their teacher. They follow him wherever he goes. This student of A'mash was one like that. Thus when Imam A'mash رحمة الله عليه went to the market, his student A'raj because of the lameness-accompanied him. The people in the market passed remarks at the twain: "Look at that! The bleary-eyed teacher (a'mash) and the lame student (A'raj)! So, Imam A'Mash instructed his student not to follow him when he went to the market-place. The student asked "Why? Why should I not accompany you?" Imam رحمة الله عليه said, "When we go to the market, the people make fun of us, calling out: the A'mash teacher with the A'raj student!" The student put in:

مَالَنَا نُوْجَرُوَيَأْثَمُوْنَ

"We are rewarded for their behaviour while they sin by calling out in that manner. So, we gain thereby and lose nothing."

Imam A'mash رحمة الله عليه explained to him.

نَسْلَم وَيَسْلَمُوْنَ خَيْرًا مِنْ اَنْ نُوْجَرَوَيَأْثَمُوْنَ

"We will be safe and they too will be secure from sinning. That is better than our getting a reward and their committing a sin. It is not obligatory that you accompany me and there is no disadvantage if you do not accompany me. Rather, there is the advantage that these people will be prevented from sinning. So, do not come with me again when I go there".

This is what we mean by understanding religion. On the face of it, the student seemed to say the right thing: If people make fun, let them do it. But if a person has his eyes on the creatures of Allah with compassion, he does not look at their mistakes very much. Rather, he works to protect them from sinning. That is why he disallowed his student from accompanying him. Whenever there is a likelihood of people making more fun, it is better to keep quiet.

A Saying of Hazrat ʿAli رضی اللہ عنہ

The following saying of Sayyidina ʿAli رضی اللہ عنہ is worth remembering:

كَلِّمُوا النَّاسَ بِمَا يَعْرِفُوْنَ اَتُحِبُّوْنَ اَنْ يُّكَذَّبَ اللّٰهُ وَرَسُوْلُـهٗ

"Speak to the people about what they know.

Would you like that they should reject Allah and His Messenger ﷺ?" That is, when you speak to them about religion, speak in a manner that does not arouse in them rebellious tendencies. For instance, we must not talk of religion at an inopportune time. lest our listeners are compelled to deny it. It is not correct to speak of religious topics at such times.

An Incident In The Life Of Maulana Ilyas رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Every Muslim knows Maulana Ilyas رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. Allah had inspired him with tremendous love for religion and its dispersion. He would not miss an opportunity to talk about religion. Wherever he went, he would give the call and invite people to work for Islam. It is related about him that someone used to visit him regularly and he came to him for many days. But, he had not grown a beard. When he had come for many days, Maulana Ilyas thought that he was well-acquainted so he said to him, "Brother, I wish that you too adopt the *Sunnah* of the beard." That man felt ashamed on hearing him say that and did not turn up the next day onwards. Maulana Ilyas رحمۃ اللہ علیہ felt very sorry for that and repented to his companions that he had made a mistake and not waited for the proper opportunity. The result of his hasty action was that the man had stopped visiting him. "If he had been coming, at least, he would have heard something about religion regularly. It would have been beneficial." Anyone else looking at it outwardly would have said that if a person does something wrong we must tell him orally because the Prophet ﷺ has said. "If you cannot prevent evil physically, at least, speak against it with your tongue." But, here the oral utterance proved disadvantageous because that man's mind was still not prepared for advice. It is wisdom that chooses the right time for an action and how it should be done. Religious work is not like throwing stones at will, neither is it a duty that one may ignore. The speaker must assess the situation and see what results he might get, and how will his efforts be received. If it is likely that the results would be adverse then it is better to defer the attempt. This deferment also comes under the inability exemption (that the Prophet ﷺ has defined).

Summary

It is not from reading books alone that one knows what to say, when to say, how to say, when to be stern and when mild. These things are learnt by keeping the company of elders. Only when a man has gone through the rough with religious mentors that he can perceive the proper method. When anyone makes a mistake, it is proper to call that to his attention but one must know when it is *fard* to do so and when not. One must know how to talk. This is the summary of the method of preaching. May Allah make us understand it and may He cause all Muslims to reform through this knowledge. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

Venue : Jame 'Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi.
Date : 30th October, 1996.

HOW MAY ONE ACHIEVE COMFORT

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد!

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم انظروا الى من هو اسفل منكم ولا تنظروا الى من هو فوقكم فهو اجدر ان لا تزدروا نعمة الله عليكم (صحيح مسلم، كتاب الزهد، باب نمبر ١)

All priase is for Allah. We praise Him, ask for His help and seek His forgiveness. And, we believe in Him and place our trust in Him. We seek refuge in Allah from the evil in our souls

and from our mischievous deeds. Whomso Allah guides, none can mislead but whomso He leaves to stray none can guide. and we bear witness that there is no one worthy of worship besides Allah, the Alone, Who has no partner. and we bear witness that our master Muhammad is His servant and Messenger, may Allah shower His blessings on him and on his family and his companions, and may He favour him and give him peace a complete peace, plenty of it.

We have from Hazrat Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ, he said that the Messenger of Allah said. "Look upon one who is below you in status and do not look upon one who is above you in status. In this way you will not look down upon the blessings of Allah that He has bestowed upon you." {*Muslim*, Kitb uz Zuhd (piety) *Hadith* #7070}

Look At Those Lower Than You In Status:.

We have read the *Hadith* narrated by Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has advised us to look at those people who are poorer than us in worldly possessions but not to look at those who are richer than us in worldly possessions. The result will be that we will not regard the blessings of Allah that He has granted us as insignificant and worthless (If we look upon the richer people, those higher than us in status, we will not value the blessings of Allah on us and we will be worried on that account.)

Avoid The Love Of The World

Through this *Hadith* the Holy Prophet ﷺ has given us a prescription for removing the love of the world from our hearts, and to achieve true comfort in this world. A man may own worldly possessions but he should not have the love of the world in his heart. It is necessary to own worldly possessions because one cannot live without them. If a man does not have food to eat, a home to live in and clothes to wear, how will he subsist? Therefore, these things are necessary. But, we must not make the pursuit of these things the aim of our life and occupy ourselves in that direction day and night. We must not grow its love in our heart. However, this condition may be achieved by contentment. When a man is content, he has the worldly possessions in his hands but he does not love them and does not hanker after them. If a man loves the world, then he occupies himself all the time in thinking of it and there are a hundred things he wants and craves for and he counts what he has and what he should have and how much he has earned and hopes to earn. This is the love of the world that makes one greedy.

How May One Obtain Contentment

There is a *Hadith Qudsi* that tells us: "If the son of Adam were given a valley of gold, he would love to have a second one; and if he were given the second one, he would love to have a third. Nothing fills the belly of Adam's son except dust."

لا يملأ جوف ابن ادم الا التراب (صحيح بخارى كتاب الرقاق باب مايتقى من فتنة العال حديث ٦٤٣٨)

When he dies and is buried in his grave only then will his belly be filled.

The extraordinary effort that he used to make in the world to amass wealth and possession will go wasted and he will depart from this world empty-handed. However, if Allah grants anyone contentment then that fills his belly; the prescription to obtain contentment is found in the *Hadith* of the Prophet that we read earlier in this essay. Those who seek success in this world and the Hereafter must use that prescription and those who do not use it will suffer discontent and worry all their life. The prescription of the Prophet ﷺ is that we must not look upon those enjoying a standard of living higher than our's for that will prompt us to crave for the things they have and create in us a sense of deprivation. We must rather look upon those who are on a level lower than we so that we will realise how much less they have and this will prompt us to be grateful to Allah for the nice things He has given us. Looking at those at a higher level will make us greedy for the things that we do not have and we will compete with them for those things and feel jealous. This will give rise to avarice and hatred. We will violate the rights of Allah and His slaves in the process. Contentment and the related gratitude to Allah is a great blessing of which many people are deprived. There is no way to obtain peace other than being contented.

Desires Of Worldly Things Are Unending

As for the world we live in, as yet no such man has lived on it who has said, "I have had all I wanted!" This is because desires are unlimited, unending. If a man gets even what Qarun (Korah) had, he will covet for more. The desires of the world are such that the end of one is linked to the begining of the other. An Arab poet Mutanbi has said very wise things. He has said a very true thing about this world:

وَمَا قَضٰى اَحَدٌ مِنْهَا لُبَانَتَهٗ

وَمَا انْتَهٰى اَرَبٌ اِلَّا اِلٰى اَرَبٖ

There hasn't been in the world yet one who has obtained all the pleasures of this world. It is with this world that as one desire is accomplished another crops up!"

The World's Affairs Are Never Fulfilled

We can see that in the story of an unemployed man who seeks an employment and gets one. Once he gets that he looks around and finds other people getting more salary so he wishes that he could earn as much as they. Then he finds some people getting more than him so he aims at that and attains that figure. It goes on in this manner all his life but he will never be peaceful. We read this story in the life of every person today.

The Affairs Of the World Are Never Over:

No one has ever completed the worldly tasks except he who has understood the reality-the Prophets علیہم السلام and their successors who saw the world for what it was worth and who toiled for its possessions only that much as was necessary. They knew that they need not set themselves to amass much wealth unless Allah bestowed on them through His favour. They always looked upon those who were lower than them, not higher in possesssions.

In Religious Affairs One Must Look At The Elevated Ones

In yet another *Hadith*, we see the saying of the Prophet ﷺ: "In the affairs of the world, look at those who are lower than you in status. Look at him who is not

blessed with a favour that you enjoy, and thank Allah for His favours on you. Do not look at those who are at a level higher than you. But, in matters pertaining to religion look at those who enjoy a higher status,.Look at him who is more involved in religious duties while you do not do that much. This will prompt you to take more religious work and create in you a zeal for deeper involvement." So, look at one who is superior to you in religious matters but at one who is inferior to you in worldly matters so that you improve your religious life and your worldly living. This is one of the wise suggestions of the Prophet ﷺ.

An Incident with Abdullah Bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه.

Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه was an eminent juirist, scholar of *Hadith* and *Sufi* of high calibre. He was a contemporary of Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه., and his student too. Before he turned to religion he was a very rich and free-thinking man. He had many properties, including gardens but he was not interested in learning or religion. He was an alcoholic much interested in singing and dancing. Among his gardens, he also had apple gardens. Once he took his friends to one such garden when the apples were ready to pick. There they had plenty of food and wine together with the fresh apples, and music. He himself was a good musician and played the musical instruments very well. They had satiated themselves with food and were deeply intoxicated, the atmosphere was pleasent, 'Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه had a guitar in his hands and he played it. Suddenly he fell asleep. When he woke up, he still had the guitar in his hands. He began to play it again but it would not work. It did not produce any sound. So, he fiddled with the threads and wires and tried again but it did

not emit any sound. He tried it a third time after some more fiddling with it. This time it did work but, instead of producing music, it reproduced the sound of the following verse of the Qur'an:-

اَلَمْ يَاْنِ لِلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اَنْ تَخْشَعَ قُلُوْبُهُمْ لِذِكْرِ اللّٰهِ وَمَا نَزَلَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ.....(الحديد: ١٦)

Has not the time yet come for those who believe, and their hearts should be humble for the remembrance of Allah and the Truth (al Hadid. 57:16)

The guitar gave out this sound. When Allah wishes to guide any of His servants then He provides such unseen means too. The moment Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه heard this voice, his heart accepted the Truth, and he answeed the words of the verse بلیٰ یارب قدان {Surely, my Lord! It has arrived!"} Then and there, he repented and gave up singing and wine, and felt an urge to seek knowledge,.He began acquiring it and became such a great scholar that he was regarded an authority on *Hadith*. He had the honour of being a student of Imam Abu Hanifa رحمة الله عليه. He is cited in *Hadith* and jurisprudence and is placed as a great Sufi.

He Attains An Eminent Position;

Yet another incident is related about him. One evening Harun asl Rashid and his wife were sitting in their palace when there was loud commotion from the outskirts of the city, its fortification. The king feared that an enemy had attacked the city and he despatched someone to investigate. The man reported back that Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه was expected to arrive that day and many people had gone to the outskirts to welcome him. When he arrived, he happened to sneeze. When he sneezed, he said

الحمد لله {Praise belongs to Allah}. Those who had assembled to welcome him said in deference to the prescribed response {May Allah have mercy on you}. The spontaneous and simultaneous response from all the people together raised a loud sound and it was "that sound that your Majesty had heard." When the wife of Harun al Rashid heard this, she said to her husband, "Harun! you think of yourself as a great king who rules over half the world! But, the truth is that royalty is the right of these people who are sovereign in reality because they rule over the hearts of men. They were not driven there by force but they assembled there from love of Abdullah bin Murarak to receive him in such large numbers." This is the position Allah had granted him after he had reformed and turned over a new leaf.

The Comfort that Abdullah Bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه Received

Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه has said that there was a time in his life when he frequently stayed with the rich people and moved about and ate and drank with them. But perhaps no one else was more sad than he was because which ever friend he visited, he found him more affluent than him. He often took pride in his animal that he rode but when he encountered a friend he realised that his own animal was inferior. It was the same with his dress. He would buy the best of the garments and wear them but always found his friends had better garments on them. He said, "Wherever I went, I found my friends had superior things than I had. Someone had a better house, someone better clothes, someone a better animal to ride.....Then, I took up the company of those people who were not very rich but were men of ordinary means. The result was that I found comfort I had lacked all along. This

was because whoever I went to, I found my condition better than his-my house, my conveyance, my clothes....I thank Allah for that, for having blessed me with better and abundant bounties." This is known as contentment. If a man is not content then he will run after worldly pleasures all his life and will never receive comfort.

Comfort Is A Blessing Of Allah

We say that because comfort is not the name of money and riches. Rather, comfort is the condition of the heart that only Allah the Exalted grants to whom He pleases. "You may build large houses, hire many servants, have at your disposal large limousines, but, with all those luxuries, when you lie down on your bed at night, sleep eludes you although the bed on which you lie is the best available, the mattress the most superior and the pillows most ideal. You keep awake all night, now turning to the right, now to the left. You have to take sleeping pills to induce sleep but the pills lose their power after some time. We see here that all the means of comfort are available but none of these-the palatial house, cars, wealth, air-condictioners-none, can help get the most wanted, yet elusive, sleep. These means are ineffective in removing restlessness. Only Allah can help remove it. On the other side there is the labourer who has neither a worthy bed to sleep on nor a proper room yet when he goes to sleep he wakes up after eight hours of sound sleep. Now, decide for yourself who is comfortable, the labourer or the rich man? Remember, only Allah grants comfort. The means to comfort cannot provide it. *Comfort* is not something that may be bought although the *means of comfort* may be bought at will.

An Eye-Opening Event

Let me narrate to you my own experience of buying an airconditioner for myself. The first step was buying it and when the huge amount was paid for it, I was told that the wiring in my house was weak and needed replacement. When that was done at some expense,the problem of voltage fluctuation was faced and a stabilizer was procured to protect the airconditioner, but that did not help and I was told that a stronger stabilizer was needed to run the air-conditioner safely. In this way, about six months were spent before the airconditioner could be commissioned. I recalled the poetry of Mutanabbi

وما انتهى ارب الا الى ارب

There is no end to a desire except that it leads to another.

I spent my money and put in personal effort but could not obtain the elusive comfort because that ease and comfort and peace is only granted by Allah. Money cannot buy it.

Let us remember that as long as man does not be content and as long as he does not be grateful to Allah for His blessing, he cannot be comfortable and peaceful no matter how much he spends for it money and effort. The only method of achieving comfort and peace is to follow the advice of Sayyidina Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ that we should look upon the one lower than us in status and not upon the one higher in status. and then be grateful to Allah.

The Adverse Effects Of Looking At the Higher Status

In following this advice, contentment is achieved. But, if we disregard it and look upon those higher than us

then we will always remain grieved and sorrowful. At some time or other that will give rise to jealousy because when a person becomes greedy for the things of this world, he feels jealous of those who have what he does not have. It is a necessary consequence of greed that the greedy person envies him who overtakes him and he feels deprived. The next growth after jealousy is hatred and hostility and enemity. We can see this today in our society. There is a mad race to overtake one another and, as a result, the participants do not even care to distinguish between the lawful and the unlawful. Once a person decides to get something then he does not care how it comes to him, he will use all means available to him to get it, fair or unfair. He will pay bribe or receive it, he will cheat, adulterate, and he will do all the unlawful things to get what he wants. This is because he is not content. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said, therefore, "Be content. Look upon him who is lower than you in status.".

How To Cure Greed & Jealousy

This thing is stated in another *Hadith* in a different set of words:

اذا نظر احدكم الى من فضل عليه فى المال والخلق فلينظر الى من هو اسفل منه ممن فضل عليه (مسلم، كتاب الزهد، باب نمبر ١)

When one of you looks at one who stands at a higher level than you in regard to wealth and physical structure he should also see one who stands at a lower level than him in regard to these things (in which he stands at a higher level as compared to him). (*Muslim*, Book of Purification).

We had been told in the *Hadith* previously that we

should not look upon one higher than us in status, meaning that we must not make up our minds and look upon him attentively. But it is obvious that man, living in this world, cannot avoid eyeing a person who enjoys a higher standard of living, a richer man, because he often lives with him and comes in contact with him in his day to day affairs. Thus, when this happens and we see anyone richer,or having a better physique, then we must atonce see or think of another person who is weaker than us in wealth and comfort and body. For example, a person may be richer than us or more beautiful or strong or healthier, and we happen to observe him then we must atonce think of another person who is poorer than us and less comfortable, less beautiful and weaker in health. This will curb the growth of greed and jealousy in us on aspiring to attain the first person's level while the second is at a lower status.

That Person Ruins Himself

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ has said in yet another *Hadith*.

تعس عبد الدينار والدرهم والقطيفة الخميصة ان اعطى رضى وان لم يعط لم يرض۔

He who is a slave of *dinar, dirham* and valuable clothes and striped sheets will be ruined. If he is given, he is pleased but if he is not given he is displeased (*Bukhari* Book 81 Chapter10 *Hadith* 6435. and *Muslim*).

While *dinar* and *dirham* are nomeclatures of coins of gold and silver, it refers to anyone who is after money, and the beautiful expensive things of the world. Such a person ruins himself. To be a slave of something is to occupy

oneself in the pursuit of that thing. Such a person is so deeply involved that he neglects the injunctions of Allah. If he is given something he will be happy but if he is not given anything he will not be happy. This behaviour is quite different from the behaviour of the man who is content and pleased with whatever Allah has given him; he thanks Allah when he gets whatever he earns from his lawful effort within the lawful limits. He does not complain on not receiving anything that any other person might own.

All these *Ahadith* call upon us to refrain from loving the material things of this world. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had made his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم understand very well that the world was meaningless and unreal and its possessions were not something that anyone should run after day and night and worry himself for that. They had learnt that they should occupy in worldly activities and pursuits only to the extent it was necessary.

Ashab us Suffah

Hazrat Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated the following *Hadith*:

لقد رأيت سبعين من اهل الصفة ما منهم رجل عليه رداء اما ازار اما كساء قد ربطوا فى اعناقهم فمنها ما يبلغ نصف الساقين ومنها ما يبلغ الكعبين فيجمعه بيده كراهية ان ترى عورته (بخارى، فضل جوع)

Indeed, I have seen seventy of the *Ahl us-Suffah* none of whom had more than a sheet of cloth to cover him, neither trousers nor a small blanket. They tied the sheet to their necks that reached half way down someone's shines, or someone's ankles so that they had to gather the sheet lest their private parts be exposed *(Bukhari)*.

Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ describes the state of the *as-habus- Suffah.* They were those companions who had relinquished all their affairs and devoted themselves to study religion for which purpose they kept close to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. They were called the *ashab us Suffah.* Those people who have had the good fortune to visit Madinah might have seen a platform in the Masjid Nabawi that is called *suffah.* These companions stayed at this *suffah* day and night. It was their school, college and university where they were taught by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. There was no syallabus for studies, no timings for the classes, no prescribed books. Whenever the Holy Prophet ﷺ arrived and spoke of something, they memorised that. They also listened carefully to what the Prophet ﷺ said in answer to any question that may have been asked by someone, and then they memorised the question and the answer. They observed the behaviour of the Prophet ﷺ and how he dealt with different people and then they remembered it. They devoted their life to this task and they were *Ashab us Suffah* or *Ahl-us-Suffah.* They were the first students in the history of Islam and *Suffah* was the first *Madarasah* in the history of Islam and it was working on a platform or a dais.

The Condition Of the *Ahl us-Suffah*

Hazrat Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ was also one of them. In this *Hadith,* he narrates the condition of these people and says, "I saw seventy of them none of whom had a proper pair of clothing to cover their body. Some of them had only one sheet of cloth that they tied to their necks and it dangled to their calves half way down their legs, or some had only a pair of trousers but nothing to cover the upper portion of their body. Those who had tied the sheet

to their necks had to hold it to prevent it from uncovering their bodies and they had to walk very carefully." This was the state in which these Companions رضی اللہ عنہم stayed close to the Prophet ﷺ to gain knowledge. If they had chosen, they could have amassed worldly possessions for they had the ability and the intellect to do that. Allah had blessed them with the tact and understanding like others but they did not incline towards that life. Whatever they received of the bare necessities of life, they showed contentment. In those days there was a pillar on the dais of the *Ahl us Suffah* and the symbol is found to this day to commemorate the original pillar. People used to place bunches of dates on the pillar from which the *ashab us Suffah* ate dates whenever they felt hunger. It was their diet.

The Extreme Hunger Of Abu Húrayrah رضی اللہ عنہ

Hazrat Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ tells of his own hunger that he used to remain in the company of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and often would fall down at the door of the Masjid Nabawi worn down from sheer hunger. People would think that he was having an epileptic fit and would pass over his neck because it was believed in those times that anyone suffering from epilepsy would recover if someone passed over his neck placing his foot there. He adds, "By Allah! Neither had I epileptic fits nor did I suffer from convulsions or unconsciousness. It was hunger, very sever, anyone that made me very weak and unable to rise.". This is how Hazrat Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ lived and went on to collect and transmit to us five thousand three hundred and sixty-four *Ahadith,* the highest number of *Ahadith* transmitted by any person.

This is how the Noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم endured

hunger, lack of proper clothing and food, yet preserved for us the religion of Islam. They have departed and we are much obliged to them for handing down to us the religion in such detail. May Allah elevate their ranks, *Aameen!*

The Method Of the Prophet's ﷺ Training

The Holy Prophet ﷺ had moulded the temperament of his companions رضی اللہ عنہم in such a way that they no longer craved for worldly possessions nor loved its life but only had the bare necessities with them. Each of them thought of obtaining the favours of Allah in the Hereafter. How did the Prophet ﷺ do it? Let us see the examples of his teachings. Hazrat Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ narrates this incident: One day, I came out of my house in the afternoon only to find Abu Bakr and Umar رضی اللہ عنہما moving about on the street. I wondered why they were there at that time so I asked them the purpose of their being there. They let me know that they were hungry and had nothing to eat at home so they were looking for work as labourers and earn something that might buy them food. After a little while, the Holy Prophet ﷺ also came out and asked them, "Why are you outside your houses?" They said:

مااخرجنا الا الجوع

O Messenger of Allah ! It is hunger that has driven us out.

The Prophet ﷺ revealed that he too was outside the house for the same reason. He then took them to the gardens of one of his Campanions but learnt that he was not there. His wife was there. She learnt that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and Abu Bakar and Umar رضی اللہ عنہما. had come to their garden and her happiness knew no bounds. She said to herself that she was the happiest woman that day. The Prophet ﷺ was their guest. She said to him, "Messenger of

Allah! Do allow me a little time that I may slaughter a goat for you." He said, "You may do that but mind that you do not slaughter one that gives milk". She said that she will slaughter a goat that does not yield milk. Thus, she slaughtered a goat and presented to her valued guests its flesh, fresh dates from the garden and cold water. The Prophet ﷺ and his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم ate the food. After they had eaten, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Allah has favoured us today with excellent food and drink under the shades of the trees. These are His blessings about which the Qur'an says :

وَلَتُسْئَلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيْمِ

That day you will be asked concerning these blessings.

Allah will say, "We had bestowed on you these favours, how did you spend them?"

You Will Be Asked Concerning The Blessings

This is how the Prophet ﷺ trained them. They were very hungry and then had something to eat. They are told not to make the food and comfort they received as an ideal but to realise that these were blessings of Allah about which they would be liable to recknoning on the Day of Resurrection, how they acquired and used it. This was the manner of thinking of all the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم.

Death Will Come Earlier

One day the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saw a man repairing his hut. He went near the man and asked him what he was doing. He said that the hut needed repairs and he was attending to it. The Prophet ﷺ did not forbid him but told him only this much مَا اَرَى الْاَمْرَ اِلَّا اَعْجَلَ مِنْ ذٰلِكَ {I do not see death except that it is earlier than that}. The moment

when man will stand before Allah is approaching so fastthat if one thought of it one would not worry about repairs to one's house. The aim in telling that is to make one realise that his house in this world is not a permanent abode but he had to travel further. The house here in this world is a stage in a man's journey and he must make only as much arrangements here as one would in a jouney.This is the method employed by the Holy Prophet ﷺ in training his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم.

Is It Difficult To Observe Religious Duties?

After reading these *Ahadith*, we sometimes begin to think that it is beyond us to observe our duties in religion. We cannot do what Abu Hurayrah , Abu Bakr and Umar or the *Ahl us Suffah* رضی اللہ عنہم did- we cannot endure hunger for days together or clothe ourselves with one sheet of cloth or not repair our house, we cannot perceive the approach of the last Day at the same time as we take up repairs to our home. Let us remember that these events are not recalled to create a feeling of despair but our aim by narrating them is to show that the Holy Prophet, Muhammad ﷺ trained his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم in such a way that they may attain the highest form of conduct and thinking. It is not that everyone can attain that level to receive salvation but ability to act and think varies from person to person and none of the Commands of Allah requires man to go beyond his ability. 'There is a saying in Urdu دیتے ہیں ظرف قدح خوار دیکھ کر that may be translated: Allah deals with every person in accordance with his ability.

Wish to be in The Times Of The Prophet ﷺ

We sometimes hope that we had lived in the times of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. We would have been with the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم. and blessed with the company of the Prophet ﷺ whom we would have seen. We would have participated in battles with him. But, this is part of Allah's plan that He did not create us in that period. Given our current ability and aptitude we might have been with Abu Jahl or Abu Lahb if we were born then. It was the spirit and ability of the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم that they extended support to the Holy Prophet ﷺ in those difficult times. However, our blessed Prophet ﷺ has shown us the path as to eveyone else-born upto the Day of Resurrection on which we must walk to the best of our ability shredding from our hearts the love of the world and greed for its possessions. We are asked to live in the world without loving it or wanting its comforts and pleasures. We must seek its comforts without greed and love in a lawful way and shun the unlawful path. It is only that much which is enough to keep aloof from the world.

Maulana Thanavi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ Was A revivalist of his times

In this era, Maulana Ashraf ali Thanavi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was a true heir of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and a revivalist of his times. He demonstrated to us in his life-time what we can do within our ability and what we can avoid. May be no one else might explain that better than him. Thus he had outlined for us a principle about how much we may involve oursleves in this world and to what extent we should obtain its possession and how we must conduct ourselves while we are alive. Actually, he had described

this principle for acquiring a building a house but we may apply it to all fields of our life.

Four Reasons For Having A House

He said that a man may acquire a house for one of the four reasons. The first is for residence purposes. It is a house where one may spend the night and protect himself from sun, rain, cold and heat. These things may be had in a hut too. It is permissible to have a house with this thing in mind. The second reason could be *comfort*. Thus he would want a house that serves the foregoing aims and also provides comfort. In a hut or a make-shift house,. a man may live one way or the other but he will not be comfortable there. Rain water might leak in or the sun might heat up the house. To avoid such discomfort, he may build a strong house and that too is permissible. There is no sin in that. The third reason is luxury-or decoration in the house. A man builds a house suitable for his living but the walls are not plastered and the house is not painted. He has the house that is comfortable but not luxurious.When anyone enters it, he does not feel happy. If he paints the house and decorates it somewhat then there is no sin. Allah has allowed him to do that too provided he does that to please himself. There is a fourth reason that prompts anyone to acquire a house and that is ostentatious display. He has a house that allows him to live comfortably and some personal happiness, but he wants to renovate it in a way that prompts other people to describe its beauty and laud his refined tastes and realise his richness. Ths is disallowed and unlawful. Any alteration or renovation that prompts other people to call him a wealthy peson and give him a status higher than themselves then that is unlawful. The gist of what we have

said is that one is permitted to build a house to live in, adopt it to provide comfort to him and decorate it to please him but it is unlawful to renovate it so that other people may praise him. Thus, anything that is acquired with an exhibitionist view is disallowed.

The Correct Meaning Of Contentment

The foregoing example and explanations should make the meaning of contentment clear. It means that a man should be pleased at whatever Allah has given him. It does not preclude him from hoping to remedy a shortcoming in his house through proper and lawful means and the repair in that case would classify under comfort. It is not greed. Also, if a man has a good house but wants to improve its looks in his own eyes by adding greenery so that it pleases him then it is not being over-zealous or greedy provided he uses lawful means to attain his goal. But although his house is good and comfortable yet he feels that other people are not impressed with it or his house is not upto the standard of other houses in his locality then it is unlawful if he renovates it. This is because he is driven by demonstrative motives to make it showy and pleasing to other people who may praise and exalt him; it is not within the defination of contentment. If anyone renovates his house through unlawful means then too it is forbidden whether he takes bribe, cheats other people or violates their rights.

Attain The Lowest Rank At Least

The examples of the behaviour of the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم show that they were people of a very high calibre. If we cannot attain their standard we must, at least, aim at the lowest rank. This is the rank that Maulana Thanavi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has described. We can attain that rank only if we are

convinced of the fleeting nature of this life and of the need to prepare ourselves for the Hereafter. Man plans for years together, although he does not know that he might depart from this world the very next day. It is just like a flash that man departs from this life. Therefore, he must refrain from scheming long-term plans but remain content with the bare necessities of life. This contentment will fetch him from Allah comfort in this world and peace in the next. The way to get that is to follow the advice of the Prophet ﷺ, "Look upon those below you and be grateful to Allah. Don't look at those higher than you in status because there is no limit to the high status."

The Case of a Jew

Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has recorded the case of a Jew who had amassed much wealth. He had stored gold and silver and appointed a guard over the stores. One day, he took his personal keys and went to the stores unknown to the guard to see whether the guard is honest or not. Without the guard knowing it, he opened the stores and examined his treasures. There, finding the door unlocked, the guard re-locked it from outside. When the Jew had finished his examination, he came to the door but found it locked from outside. He shouted from inside for someone to open it for him but his voice did not carry through. The guard never heard him and the man died inside among his gold and silver from hunger and thirst. His treasure not enough to satiate his hunger or quench his thirst, but was the cause of his terrible death. Allah has said about such people

إِنَّمَا يُرِيْدُ اللهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ بِهَا فِي الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا..... (سورة التوبه:٥٥)

Allah intends only to chastise them in the life of this world..... (at Tawbah, 9:55)

Allah punishes some of those who are worldly minded in this very world through its own means. To preserve oneself from the chastisement he must refrain from looking upon those higher than him in worldly wealth but must look upon those lower than him, and show gratitude to Allah. However, he may obtain his bare necessities keeping himself within proper limits and as a whole, he must cease to work day and night restlessly to amass the wealth and treasures of the world.

The Case Of A Trader:

Shaikh Sa'di رحمة الله عليه has narrated a story in *Gulistan*. He was on one of his travels and was spending the night at the house of a trader who did not let him sleep all night by bragging about himself and his business stories. He told him of his businesses in diffeent lands and his shops at various places and the wares he sold. He informed Shaikh Sa'di what he imported and exported. In this manner he continued to speak night long and said, "All my desires have been fulfilled and my business is prospering. I have got whatever I wanted. I have only one more desire and I intend to travel just once more. Pray for me that I am successful for after that I will be content and restrict myself all my remaining life at my shop".

Shaikh Sa'di asked him what his last desire was. He answered that he wished to carry Persian Sulphur to China where it would fetch a good price. From China he would carry chinaware to Rome from where he would take cloth to India. From there he would buy iron for Syria."I will buy glass there and sell it in Yemen. Then, I will return to Persia with Yemeni cloth.". In short, he had made a very ambitious plan of travel and trade, and asked Shaikh Sa'di to pray for him. He assured him that thereafter he would

be content and bind himself to his shop all his life. Shaikh Sa'di then said to him:

آن شیدستی که در صحرائے غور
بار سالارے بیفتاد از ستور
گفت چشم تنگ دنیا دار را
یا قناعت پر کند یا خاک گور.

He related to the trader the story of a big merchant. In a desert, the merchandise of this trader lay on the ground fallen from his camel that lay dead on a side. On the other side, the merchant lay on the earth dead. His merchandise seemed to say, "The narrow outlook of a worldly man is satisfied only through contentment or the grave! There is no third way to satisfy it." (*Gulistan Sa'di*,Story 23 P-119)

Worldly Possessions Can Turn Into Assets For The Hereafter

Shaikh Sa'di رحمة الله عليه has commented thereafter that when man is dictated by worldly desires then he does not think of anythng else. It is this love of the world that we are asked to eschew. If a person is not tied down in the love of the world and is also blessed by Allah with riches to which he is not much attached so he continues to obey Allah and spend his wealth in Allah's cause then not only does he gain Paradise through it but his wealth is also an asset for him in the Hereafter. But when his wealth stops him from his religious duties then this person is said to be in love with the world.

How May Love Of The World Be Lessened

Man must give a little time to contemplate on his negligence so that he softens his love for the world and

replaces it with love for the Hereafter. He must contemplate how day and night he is disregarding death, the time of recknoning, possibility of reward and punishment and the Hereafter. Man must take out some time to ponder and think that he has to die. What will happen then? How will he fare before Allah? The questions that will be asked and the replies that he will give. He must make it a daily practice to contemplate in this manner. Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه used to say that if anyone contemplates on this line every day then he will sense within a few weeks *Insha Allah* that his love for the world is dwindling.

He Was Given All The World

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in a *Hadith*

مَنْ اَصْبَحَ مِنْكُمْ آمِنًا فِيْ سِرْبِهٖ مُعَافًا فِيْ جَسَدِهٖ عِنْدَهٗ قُوْتُ يَوْمِهٖ فَكَاَنَّمَا خِيْزَتْ لَهُ الدُّنْيَا (ترمذی، ابو اب الزهد، باب ماجاء فی الزهاد فی الدنیا)

The one among you, who wakes up in the morning peaceful in his house, sound in his body and having food for the day, is as one who is given the world with all its possessions (Tirmizi).

(i) The person who wakes up in the morning in his house fearless with no possibility of harm from an enemy or an oppressor, (ii) who has no pain in his body but is healthy with no illness, and (iii) who has food with him for the day. The person who has these three things is one who is given the world with all its possessions. Therefore, anyone who has these things has his needs fulfilled and he must be grateful to Allah for that. He must not show ingratitude.

Be Grateful For These Blessings

This *Hadith* encourages us to do two things. The first is to make it a habit to thank Allah always, and to avoid being ungrateful. It is very wrong on our part to show ingratitude. We enjoy numerous blessings of Allah in so many different ways yet when we face anything against our temperament we forget the blessings on us and become ungrateful. We do not endure minor difficulties. This behaviour is wrong because the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that if anyone gets the three things (mentioned above) he has got everything in the world. If we do not get more than that then we must not complain and be ungrateful. The position is that these days instead of being grateful most people respond with "We carry along," or "The time passes on," when they are asked how they are. May Allah protect us and preserve us from being ungrateful. These words mean "Allah has not blessed me with any favour and I am surrounded with difficulties but I am facing this situation boldly." The true method is that if anyone asks someone how he is then he must recall the favours of Allah on him and thank Him, saying الحمدلله {Praise be to Allah} "I am thankful to Him for His blessings on me." If anyone faces a trying situation then he must pray to Allah, "O Allah! You have bestowed on me innumerable blessings and the difficulty that I am facing is also a kind of blessing. But, I am weak and cannot bear it. O Allah! Remove it through Your mercy." This is what he must say and not that he is living in difficulty.

Do Not Devise Ambitious Plans

Those of us who find it difficult to live their lives smoothly are to blame themselves because they chalk out ambitious plans for the future. They conceive for

themselves large houses, beautiful cars, a retinue of servants, a hefty bank balance and luxuries. They imagine a utopian life for themselves. Naturally, they cannot achieve the target they set for themselves and then they become ungrateful and complain.The foregoing *Hadith* tells us clearly that we are wrong to chalk out ambitious plans for ourselves because if we have the three things then we have everything. The Prophet ﷺ has said that if a man has peace in his house, a healthy body, and guarantee of the day's food for himself and his family then he has everything the world can give. If anyone tells himself that these three things by themselves are enough-then when he gets more, he will thank Allah and say "I was not entitled to that but You gave that to me through Your mercy." But, if he does not get more than those three things then he will not be ungrateful in the least, because he has made up his mind that he has had enough, and that is all he craves for. Anyway, it is our fault that we draw up extraordinary imaginative plans and then grumble in dissatisfaction when they do not materialise.

Do Not Worry Much for The Next Day.

When we hear and read the saying of the Prophet ﷺ that if we have nourishment for the day we have everything in the world, a question arises in our minds, "What of the next day? and, what after that? The truth is that this *Hadith* emphasises that we do not know whether we will see the next day and if we do, then the Master who has given us today will bless us with his benevolence always. Allah has said very explicitly:

وَمَا مِنْ دَآبَّةٍ فِى الْاَرْضِ اِلَّا عَلَى اللهِ رِزْقُهَا وَيَعْلَمُ مُسْتَقَرَّهَا وَمُسْتَوْدَعَهَا(سورۂ ھود 6)

> And there is not a creature on the earth but upon Allah rests its sustenance, and He knows its dwelling place and its repository. (11:6)

Thus, Allah has taken upon Himself the sustenance of every creature and He knows where it lives so He will cause its sustenance to be delivered to it. Therefore, we are required to work and trust in Him and He will provide us with nourishment. Let us do that and thank Allah for whatever we have with us today. Allah has promised those who thank Him that He will grant them more. لَئِن شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ {If you give thanks,certainly I will give you move} (*surah Ibrahim*, 14:7)

Peace Is Found In Contentment

This *Hadith* also teaches us that in contentment lies peace and security. Contentment is satisfaction with whatever Allah has given us after we have adopted lawful means for livelihood. We must not covet something more because there is no other way to be happy in this world. A man may amass wealth and build palatial houses but he cannot be peaceful if he is not content. If he has all the imaginable riches, he cannot buy peace but if he has the asset of contentment then he will be happy with the slightest amount of food and the fulfilment of the bare necessities will bring him peace and satisfaction. This statement will be found correct by anyone who experiments it.

How Do Rich Fare

We are accustomed to measure everything in terms of worldly standards. Thus, when a poor man looks at a rich contemporary and the way he conducts himself getting what he likes, the poor man supposes that the

richer man is very happy and very fortunate. He considers himself deprived and longs for a like richness. But, he does not know the facts. He does not know if the rich man is really peaceful and happy. There are many affluent men whom other people may take to be very happy and carefree, but, because they come to me with their problems, I know that looks are deceptive. They have their problems. Outsiders cannot realise what a terrible life they lead. Many rich men have come to me and lamented, "Perhaps, we had not received this wealth! May be, we would have been more peaceful without it."

Money cannot Buy Peace

We have seen, therefore, that peace and comfort do not necessarily go with money. These things are bestowed on us by Allah. If He wills He may grant peace and comfort to a man of meagre means while He may not let the affluent have it. Therefore, how long we shall race after the world's riches? When will we stop planning utopion schemes? The Prophet ﷺ has told us, therefore, that we must realise that the world is not a place to live for ever. If one gets the necessities of life then it is enough and if he is content with that then he will be peaceful but if he is not content then let him run after wealth and riches but he will not earn peace and security. We have the example of some multi-millionaires. They need not work for more money and if they are idle, their wealth will not exhaust all the rest of their lives yet we see that they do not call it a day but go on working for more money. They use all means, lawful and unlawful, to further their business and increase their wealth. This carries on in spite of the fact that they do not know where they will use their money.

The Costliest Place In the World Is In Los Angeles

When I had visited the United States, one of my friends took me to a Shopping area in Los Angeles and told me that it was the costliest of the shopping markets in the world. He said, "Everything here is costlier than anywhere else." When I asked him how much costlier, he gave me an example, "A pair of socks here costs two thousand dollars." (About eighty-five thousand Rupees!)." A tie is worth three thousand dollars, and a man's suit is somewhere between ten thousand to twenty thousand dollars." There were more expensive things. He showed me a shop in which there was an enclosure that a client could only enter in the company of the owner. There, the owner would advise the client which suit was most suitable for him and would charge him ten thousand dollars for his advice, the cost of the purchase being additional. Prince Charles once sought his advice and was told to see him after six months.

The Other Side Of Affluence

The truth is that man has not given up his greed for wealth, for abundance. When he amasses it, he does not know where to use it. So, various ways are invented to use the accumulated wealth. While wealth is being wasted in this manner by some people, there are other people who beg for pennies too! We had just drove down the road, not more then a mile, when we found different people begging for money at various traffic lights. One such beggar approached us as we stopped at the red light and my friend told him that he did not carry any money then but the beggar insisted that he was not asking for much, he simply wanted cents because he was very hungry. This is the

obverse side of affluency that buys a pair of socks for two thousand dollars. There should be a limit to accumulating wealth. Let a person first spend what he has with him before he thinks of earning more. Greed knows no bounds. It is known as جوع البقر (*Ju'al Baqar*) hunger of the Cow (that always munches)- hunger that never satiates, thirst that is never quenched, no matter how much one eats and drinks!

The Itching Hands

One day, one of our very rich man who is regarded among the few eminent people of our country, visited me. While we were talking about different things, I remarked that Allah had blessed him with much wealth and riches. "It is the mercy and blessing of Allah on you so that people are enviable of you. Let this wealth be an asset for you in the Hereafter by putting it to good use. Besides, now that Allah has bestowed on you with so much wealth and you have earned plenty, repent to Him and keep away from interest dealings." He listened to me and then entered on a discussion on interest dealings and wished to know how could it be unlawful. "One cannot progress in this life without interest dealings, or do any business." I tried to explain to him the facts and finally he seemed to agree. "But," he said, "I cannot stop the itch within me. It does not cease. No matter how much my business expands. The result of this urge is that my family life stands demolished and I have no peace at home nor comfort with my children. There is a bickering within the family. I have plenty of wealth but don't find comfort and peace."

Qarun, (Korah) The Richest Man

Allah has said in the Qur'an about Qarun (Korah):

وَاٰتَيْنٰهُ مِنَ الْكُنُوْزِ مَآ اِنَّ مَفَاتِحَهٗ لَتَنُوْٓاُ بِالْعُصْبَةِ اُولِى الْقُوَّةِ (سورہ القصص:۷۶)

The very keys of them would have weighed down a company of men endowed with strength (al Qasas. 28:76)

The keys alone of his treasures were so heavy that a group of people used to carry them along. It was not within the powers of any one man to carry them. When he passed by people displaying his riches to them, some of them said

يٰلَيْتَ لَنَا مِثْلَ مَآ اُوْتِىَ قَارُوْنُ اِنَّهٗ لَذُوْ حَظٍّ عَظِيْمٍ (القصص:۷۹)

Would that we had the like of what Qarun has been given. Surely he is a man of mighty good fortune.... (al Qasas 28:79)

The Qur'an has said about these people that they only looked at what was obvious of his condition from his richness. That is why they considerded him worth envying. They did not foresee the punishment that was in store for him. Thus. when they saw his fate, these very people said, "It is the mercy of Allah that He did not make us like him." This shows that there is no limit to the wealth of the world that a man may run after. So, how far he will go to fetch it? He will never be satisfied at any point except when he obeys the direction of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to observe contentment. It means to be content with whatever one gets through a reasonable effort in a lawful manner.Once a person gains contentment then he will feel peaceful and comfortable with whatever he has of worldly possessions through the mercy of Allah; this wealth is not available to Kings and Royalty, and to rich men.

An Incident In The Life Of Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه

When my respected father, Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه came to Pakistan, the Government of Pakistan had established a Board for Islamic Education attached to the Constituent Assembly. My father was also appointed as its member. This Board was one of the sections of the government. After some time the government did something wrong and my father spoke against it for which some of the government officers remarked to my respected father that he was a member of the Board and part of the Government so he should not have criticised it. My father told them that he had consented to become a Member for no other reason but for the sake of religion. As a worker in that direction, it was his duty to say what was correct whether that was in agreeement with the line of the government or not. He clarified that he was not a government servant and unlike them was not worried about losing the employment. He said, "I have my resignation letter in my pocket and my expenses do not exceed two rupees, so I am not dependent on salary and allowances like you. I can earn that much money by hard work anywhere else while you cannot because your suit alone costs two hundred rupees. So, you might fear losing your job. By the Grace of Allah, I have no such fear."

We Cannot Control Income But We May Control Our Expenses

My respected father also used to say that a man has no say over his income although he has control over his expenditure. It is easier for him to reduce his expenses, and be content. *Insha Allah* he will not be worried. A man becomes worried only when he makes out plans beforehand

calculating a high income. The trouble arises when he does not achieve that figure of income. On the other hand that man enjoys comfort and lives peacefully who reduces his expenses, has fewer needs and lives a simple life, moulding it according to his income. He is satisfied with what Allah gives him. This man is said to live a life of contentment.

We Must Make This Suplication

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ has taught us the following supplication and urged us to make it often

اَللّٰهُمَّ قَنِّعْنِیْ بِمَا رَزَقْتَنِیْ وَبَارِكْ لِیْ فِیْهِ

"O Allah! Make me content with that which you have provided me of the sustenance, and bless it for me."

This is a very suitable supplication that the Prophet ﷺ has taught us. Every word of it is meaningful and the whole of it is compact. Allah be glorified! If this supplication is granted to us, all our problems will be solved because once we are content we will also be relieved of the urge to earn more, to eat more and amass worldly possessions. This will bring us peace and comfort. The prayer also asks for 'blessings in the sustenance' which means that even a little will provide a large benefit.

Meaning Of Blessings

The words *barakah* and *mubarak* are used frequently but few people know their meaning. When someone buys a house or a car or gets married, we say to him "Allah may bless that for you." *Barakah* and *Mubarak* are a blessing meaning, "May Allah make that a means of comfort for you such that even if it may not be large it may provide you much advantage."

The Age Of Statistics

We live in a world of *statistics*. Today, everything is counted and measured. People count money. They measure their income and their salary. But, no one measures the advantages reaped by this exercise. An European Muslim has written a very good book, The *Reign Of Quantity*. It is *numbers* that rule the world.

Example of blessings & lack of it

Let us take the example of a man who has earned a hundred rupees. As he was returning home aiming to go by bus, a friend met him and offered him a lift in his car saying he was going on the same route as his house. When this man goes to buy something, he gets it at a discount. These are two examples of blessing in his income, the hundred rupees are stretched. If he had not been offered the lift (or the discount), he would have spent from his hundred rupees. We take another example of a man who earns a hundred thousand rupees. He arrives at his house, happy. But he learns that his son is unwell. The doctor asks for a number of laboratory tests that cost thousands of rupees and then advises him to hospitalise his son. Tlhis man's money is spent on medical tests, hospital and doctor's fees and medication. This means that his money lacked blessing.

Bribery & Interest Lack Blessings

It is with bribery that there is lack of blessings in that. A person who receives bribe spends it on unexpected heads, like having to bribe other people. He may be happy receiving bribe and multiplying his money but he has to spend it, sooner or later, in bribing many other people. His money will exhaust in this manner and that means lack of blessings. Blessings are bestowed by Allah and it is not in man's power to get them.

Therefore, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has urged us to make the supplication, "O Allah! Give me contentment with the sustenance that you have bestowed on me and bless it for me."

Blessings In The Salaries Of Dar-ul-Uloom

The blessings a man receives on being content are seen in the salaries of the teachers of Dar-ul-Uloom, Korangi, Karachi. The salaries of teachers and staff are meagre by all standards, any of them may be interviewed and it will be confirmed that the purchasing power of these salaries is higher than that of the fat salaries of outsiders. This is *barakah* that Allah grants. The *barakah* is the lot of those who show contentment.

The Third Portion Of The Supplication

There is a third clause too in the supplication that we are discussing:

وَاخْلُفْ عَلٰى كُلِّ غَائِبَةٍ لِيْ مِنْكَ بِخَيْرٍ

"O Allah! Those things that my heart desired to receive, but I could not get, O Allah! Grant me things better than those things that you know are better!"

Thus, this prayer has three clauses. The first time the supplicant prays to be blessed with *contentment*. The second time he prays for *blessings*. The third time he prays to be given a *better* thing (than what he is denied). There were some of the things that he longed for but did not get, he supplicates Allah for something better than that. for instance, he may have longed for a car but he could not get it. So he tells Allah, "You have not given me what I desired then surely there must be some reason behind the denial. O Allah, let me have instead something

that is better in your sight for me." What more could a man ask for once he gets all these three things-he is content with what he has, that what he has is blessed and he receives a substitute for what he has not received.

Contentment is a great asset

There is no wealth greater than contentment. Today, everyone counts money, house, possessions as wealth and assets. We must know that none of these is wealth. True wealth is contentment. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said, according to a *Hadith*:

لَيْسَ الْغِنٰى عَنْ كَثْرَةِ الْعَرَضِ وَلٰكِنَّ الْغِنٰى غِنَى النَّفْسِ (صحيح بخارى، كتاب الرقاق، باب الغنى غنى النفس)

"Richness is not abundance of property and possessions but richness is self-contentment."

(*Bukhari*, Book 81 of Ar-Riqaq (Softening of Hearts.) Chapter15 Hadith# 6446)

Thus, abundance of property and possession is not a sign of wealth and riches but self-contentment is senonymous with wealth and riches for such a man's heart is unconcerned and independent of wants. He does not extend his hand before anyone else, he does not narrate his need to anyone else and he does not attempt to gather wealth through unlawful means. He is satisfied with what he possessses and is resigned to the fact that what he has not received was not good for him; if that was good for him, he would have got it but since he has not received it, Allah knows that it was not beneficial for him.

The Contentment Of The Prophet ﷺ

An angel presents himself before the Holy Prophet ﷺ and says, "If you command the Mount Uhud, would turn into

gold and that would belong to you." The Holy Prophet ﷺ refused the offer saying, "I wish to spend my life in such a way that when I get anything to eat, I should thank Allah and when I do not get it, I may be patient. In this way, I would receive the blessings of gratefulness and I would not wish to have large wealth and possessions and I would receive the blessings of patience too. I want the wealth that would pull me towards Allah." So, he also made this supplication:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّی اَعُوْذُبِك مِنْ كُلِّ غِنًی يُطْغِيْنِیْ

"O Allah! I seek your protection from every such wealth that causes me to be rebellious."

Summary

The gist of my statement is that this *Hadith* teaches us two things. One of these is that we should thank Allah for whatever we have received, even if it is a very minor thing. We must refrain from being ungrateful. We must sit down a while and concentrate on the blessings Allah continues to shower on us. It is our existence, our life, our breathing, our eyes, ears, teeth, face, hands and feet. These are Allah's blessings and none of them can be bought if we happen to lose any. We must think of our health, house, family, peace, comfort, and such blessings and thank Allah for that. The second thing it teaches us is that we must not look at any person who has a higher worldly rank than us, but we must look at him who is lower than us in worldly matters. In affairs of religion we must look at him who enjoys a higher rank. The third lesson this *Hadith* teaches us is that we must be content with what we have. But contentment does not mean that we must not adopt reasonable means; we are not precluded from adopting reasonable means. For example, a man may do business, take up service, cultivate the land and

what he gets lawfully from these reasonable means, he must be content with it. He should not try to make up any shortfall through unlawful means. He must be contented and pray to Allah. "O Allah! Grant me contentment and bless whatever favours You have granted me.

May Allah grant me and all of you the wealth of contentment and inspire us to obey the sayings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ *Aameen.*

And our last prayer is Praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame 'Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi.
Date : 28th February, 1997.

DO NOT TROUBLE OTHER PEOPLE

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

عن ابى موسى الا شعرى رضى الله تعالى عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم المسلم من سلم المسلمون من لسانه ويده (ترمذى، كتاب الايمان، باب نمبر ١٢)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and ask Him for forgiveness. And we believe in Him. and trust in Him. We seek refuge in Allah. from the mischief of our souls

and from our evil deeds. He whom Allah guides none can mislead and whom He leaves to stray none can guide. And, we bear witness that there is no god except Allah Who is Alone and has no partner, and we bear witness that Sayyidina Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and Messenger-May Allah bless him and (likewise) his family and Companions. And may He favour him and give him peace.

We have it from Abu Musa al-Ashari رضی اللہ عنہ that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has said "A Muslim is he from whose tongue and hands other Muslims are safe." (Tirmizi, Book of Faith, Chapter 12)

He Is Not A True Muslim

This *Hadith* is transmitted by Sayyidina Abu Musa al-Ashari رضی اللہ عنہ and it implies that a Muslim is one who does not cause trouble to another Muslim by his tongue or by his hand. The *Hadith* describes a Muslim and tells us that only he is a Muslim who has these attributes. Therefore, if other people are not safe from the hand or tongue of a Muslim then truly this man is not entitled to be called a Muslim. He is like one who does not offer *Salat*. Although no jurist will decide that such a man is a non-Muslim because he neglects regular *Salat* yet he is not truly entitled to be called a Muslim because he does not observe the most significant of the duties imposed by Allah. In the same way the person whose hand and tongue cause trouble to other people is not called a disbeliever by a jurist but, in the light of this *Hadith*, he is not entitled to be called a Muslim because he does not behave like one.

What Is Social Living

There are five sections in Islam.

(i) Belief.
(ii) Worship.
(iii) Dealings or Behaviour.
(iv) Character and Manners; and
(v) Social living.

This *Hadith* is the base on which the fifth section stands. No one lives alone in this world; neither is he asked to live alone. So, he has links with someone or the other-his family, friends, neighbours, other people, where he buys or sells or he works. How, then should he conduct himself with these people. This is the principle and rule of social living and it is a significant part of religion. Unfortunately, due to our negligence and irresponsible attitude that we have cast it aside and do not even consider it as part of religion. We do not pay heed to the commands of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ in this regard.

Importance Of Social Rules

Allah has given particular importance to social rules for us. We can see it in the way the Qur'an deals with one of the principles of social living: *to seek permission before entering anybody's house*. The Arabic word for seeking permission is *Istizan* Allah has revealed two complete *rukus* (sections) in the Qur'an to describe *istizan*. We can guage the importance attached to it from the fact that the command to offer *Salat* is discussed some sixty-two times in the Qur'an but it is left to the Holy Prophet ﷺ to describe how to offer it. The Qur'an does not tell us the method of offering it. But, details of *istizan* are mentioned by the Qur'an itself and not left for the Prophet ﷺ to describe. Besides, a large portion of *surah al-Hujurat* is devoted to

social laws. Thus, on the one hand such a great importance is attached to social conduct and on the other we ignore that in our daily life and do not even know its rules.

Maulana Thanavi رحمته الله عليه Revives Rules Of Social Way Of Living

In his times, Allah has caused Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanavi رحمة الله عليه to revive those sections of religion that had been put in the background. People had forgotten that these were part of our religion. Maulana Thanavi recalled their significance and taught us their rules .It was in his *khanqah* that he gave it practical shape. It was supposed previously that a *khanqah* is a recluse: people sit in rooms and chant 'Allah' Allah' and occupy themselves in *zikr* (remembrance of Allah, devotional exercises) and worship. Maulana Thanavi did not lay as much emphasis on *zikr* and optional worship as he placed on social conduct. He educated his disciples to avoid inconveniencing other people. He used to say that when his disciples failed to observe the devotional exercises that he prescribed, he felt sorry for their dereliction but when he learnt of one of them violating social conduct or causing hardship to someone he felt hatred for that man.

First Become A Human Being.

It is known, too, that Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه frequently said, "If you wish to become a Sufi or an ascetic then you will find many other *khanqahs* for that purpose where you may go. If you wish to perfect yourself as a human being, you should come here. We mould them here. To become a Muslim, a Scholar or a Sufi is the next step and it is a higher status. You must first enter the human field, and come out of the rows of animals. You can only achieve that by learning the Islamic etiquettes of

social living and behaving according to them."

Three Types of Animals

In his *ahya ul Ulum,* Imam Ghazali رحمة الله عليه has said that Allah has created three types of animals. One of these types are beneficial to mankind and it is very rare that they harm man. Examples of this type are: cows, sheep, and so on. They are beneficial because they give milk and when they do not, they are slaughtered for their meat; that is, they give up their lives to benefit man. These animals do not harm anybody. The second type includes animals that are always harmful to man and there is no apparent benefit from them. Examples of this kind are snakes, scorpions, beasts of prey, and so on; they are all harmful animals. They bite man. The third kind of animals are those animals that neither benefit nor harm. These are found in the wild and include fox, jackal, and others. Man does not gain from them nor is harmed by them to a noticeable extent. After recalling these types of animals, Imam Ghazali رحمة الله عليه addresses man and says, "O Man! You are the Best creation and you enjoy excellence over all animals. If you do not behave as a human being but wish to live as an animal then at least initate the first kind of animal who benefits other creatures but does not harm them, like the cow and goat. But, if you wish to stoop lower then become like the third type that neither harms nor benefits. If you are not like either of these and cause harm to other people instead of benefitting them then you have grouped with the second type of snakes and scorpions, and the like."

They Are Human Beings

So we see that the question of Muslim or non-Muslim, scholar or not, ascetic or not, is not of immediate import. The first thing for a man is to behave like humans. To do that it is necessary that he tread the Islamic Social way of living. He should not be responsible for causing even the slightest of inconvenience to any one else, by his hand or tongue or through any effort whatever. Once Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه said in a spirit of humbleness, "Even I am not a perfect and complete human but-praise be to Allah - I have seen what human beings are like. So I cannot be deceived by a bull who claims to be human. So I will aim at that, *Insha Allah*, and will not be deceived into behaving like a bull".

Save Other People From Harm

As far as voluntary devotional exercises are concerned, no one will be taken to task for omiting these forms of worship but if anyone observes them, he will be rewarded for that in the Hereafter. Nevertheless, these are virtuous deeds, and one must accustom oneself to do them. On the other hand, if anyone is behind the hardship another person suffers then he has committed a grave sin and he will be taken to task for that commission. This is why *Shari'ah* tells us to abandon voluntary worship when there is a possibility of helping someone out of difficulty or saving him from that.

Importance of Congregational *Salat*

We know that men are urged strongly to offer their obligatory *Salat* with the congregation. It is so important that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "I feel like appointing someone else to lead the congregational *Salat* when the

time comes and go out myself to visit every house and see if anyone has stayed behind. Then, I should set the houses of those who remained behind a fire because they neglect their duties to Allah." This shows the importance attached to congregational *Salat*. Some of the jurist regard offering *Salat* with the congregation as *sunnah muwakkadah* but some othres give it the higher status of *wajib*. Prayer in congregational form is a perfect form while in an individual capacity is an imperfect form. We also have the example of the Holy Prophet ﷺ when he was ill before his death and could not walk with ease and had appointed Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه as Imam in his place. At such a moment too, he came to the mosque to offer the congregational prayer supported by two men. This stresses the importance of *Salat* with the congregation.

When Is One Not Allowed To Go To The Mosque?

The jurists have decided unanimously that a man who is ill and smells badly then he must not go to the Mosque. It is not merely that he is allowed to stay away from congregational prayer but he is not even allowed to join it, and if he joins it, he will be committing a sin. If he joins the congregation, he will inconvenience other people because of the bad odour. We must see that such an important thing as congregatgional *Salat* is disallowed if it becomes a cause of inconvenience to other people..

Causing Hardship To other People When Kissing The Black Stone

We all know the importance of the *Hajr Aswad* (the Black Stone, at *Ka'bah*). We are told that kissing the Black Stone is like shaking hands with Allah, and it effaces a

man's sins. The Holy Prophet ﷺ and his companions رضي الله عنهم themselves kissed the Black Stone which also highlights its importance. In spite of that we are advised that if in attempting to kiss it we might push other people and cause them difficulty then it is not proper to kiss it; rather that is sinful. *Shari'ah* is very particular that one does not cause another man even a little bit of difficulty. Such important forms of worship as congregational *Salat* and kissing the *Hajr Aswad* are abandoned only because we might not hurt anyone else; thus, the lesser forms that are voluntary should also be postponed when such a situation arises.

Reciting The Qur'an Loudly

We may cite the example of reciting the Qur'an, too. It is such a virtuous act that the reciter is rewarded tenfold on reciting each letter. In other words a person amasses rewards when he recites the Qur'an.Of all the devotional exercises, recital of the Qur'an is the most excellent. Then, an audible recital is preferred. An audible recital secures more reward than an inaudible. But, if there is a likelihood of disturbing someone's sleep because of the sound then it is not allowed to recite audibly.

How Did The Prophet ﷺ Arise For Tahajjud *Salat*

The Holy Prophet ﷺ woke up in the night for Tahjjud *Salat*. Never in his life did he miss the Tahjjud *Salat*. But, Allah and His Messenger ﷺ made it easy for us and did not say that the *Tahcjjud Salat* was obligatory for us although it was so for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He never missed it. In spite of that we are told in a *Hadith* that whenever he got up for *Tahajjud* he was very quiet and never made a noise or let the door squeak lest the sleep of any of his wives be

distrubed. The Qur'an and *Hadith* tell us that we must not cause the slightest difficulty to anyone.

Praying On the Thoroughfare

It is not proper to offer prayer at a place where people pass by. Some people do not heed this. Take for example the mosque. Although the front rows are vacant, some people pick up the very last row and offer their *Salat* there. The result is that those who have to go out of the mosque or come into it, find it difficult. Either they make a detour round such people or commit a sin by walking in front of them. To offer *Salat* in such a manner is not proper. Rather, it is a sin.

'Muslim' includes Security

The *Hadith* we are discussing may be repeated here {A Muslim is one from whose tongue and hand other Muslims are secure} المسلم من سلم المسلمون من لسانه ويده. The word *Muslim* is an Arabic word whose root is *seen lam mim* which is also the root word of the word meaning *security*. Thus implied *security* or *safety* is included in the word *Muslim*.

The meaning of as-salam 'Alaicum

When non-Muslims meet they greet each other with a *'hello'*, *'good morning'*, *'namstay'* or *'adab'*. They have different words of greetings. but, the Islamic form of greeting is {as-salam 'alykum} السلام عليكم meaning *Peace be on you*. Apart from greeting, these words offer a prayer for the safety of the person greeted whereas every other form of greeting does not include any prayer. The addressee receives no benefit thereby. But when a man greets the other with *as-salam 'alay kum Wa rahmat Allah Wa barkatuhu* he prays for three blessings as we see in the meaning of these

words: Peace be on you and the Mercy of Allah and His Favours. This is a supplication and if it receives the approval of Allah even once, the person addressed benefits for the rest of his life from the blessings. Besides, by using these words the addressee is assured of safety and security at the hands of the speaker. The former is then confident that he will not suffer hardship through the latter. A Muslim, when he greets in this way, conveys to the other that he has brought the message of peace for him and will not torment him.

The Meaning Of Security From The Tongue

The *Hadith* describes a Muslim as one from whose tongue and hand other Muslims are safe. To be safe from the tongue is to be satisfied that he will not say anything that might dishearten the other, cause him difficulty or displease him in any way. So, even when that man is to be censored such words may be used as do not cause heart-burning. For instance, he must be told in simple terms that his action was not proper or that he must re-consider his behaviour or that it was not in line with *Shari'ah*. He must not be cursed or taunted. Anything said in an indirect manner that injures is taunt and it causes a deep wound. The Arabic couplet further explains:

جَرَاحَاتُ السِّنَانِ لَهَا الْتِيَامُ
وَلَا يَلْتَامُ مَا جَرَحُ اللِّسَانُ

"The wound caused by the sword heals sooner or later but when it is caused by the tongue it leaves a lasting impression".

It is better, therefore, to tell anyone plainly that he has wronged rather than taunt him. The Qur'an says:-

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَقُوْلُوْا قَوْلًا سَدِيْدًا (سورة الاحزاب: ٧٠)

O you who believe! Fear Allah and speak words straight to the point (al-Ahzab. 33:70)

Indirect speech is neither desired nor liked. In the present times, we are used to oblique references and round about approach. The listener is hurt by that. People who speak in this manner gain the appreciation of the masses and are said to possess good sense of humour as an orator.

A Unique Incident Of Oblique Speech

Someone wrote an article in which he commented on one of the books of Maulana Mahmud ul Hasan رحمة الله عليه. while making the comments he called the Maulana an infidel or unbeliever. One of the sincere disciples of the Maulana retaliated by citing a literary persian poem which, by today's standards, was a high-ranking criticism with a taunting bent. The poem was

مرا کافر گر گفتی غمے نیست
چراغ کذب را نبود فروغے
مسلمانت بخوانم در جوابش
دروغے را جزا باشد دروغے

If you call me an infidel, it pains me not,
Because the light of falsehood never kindles.
You have called me an infidel. In answer, I call you a Muslim, Because falsehood can only be repulsed with falsehood.

This means that you have lied by calling me an infidel, so I lie by calling you a Muslim or that 'you are not a Muslim'. A poet or a literary person would applaud such a response because it is a biting literary reply. The second poet starts by calling him a Muslim but he clarifies his

statement when he says that a lie is responded with a like lie. 'You spoke a lie by calling me an infidel so I speak a lie by calling you a Muslim'. When this man presented his poem to the Maulana, he commented, "You have composed an excellent poem but you have turned the table on him and called him an unbeliever which is not our approach. We do not call anyone a disbeliever." So, he did not send the peom to the man who had criticised him.

Then, the Maulana revised that poem and made an addition, too. He wrote

مرا کافر گر گفتی غمے نیست
چراغِ کذب را نبود فروغے
مسلمانت بخوانم در جوابش
دھم شکر مجائے تلخ دوغے
اگر تو مومنی فیھا وَ اِلّا
دروغے را جزا باشد دروغے

If you have called me an infidel, it pains me not because the light of falsehood never shines. In answer, I call you a Muslim and instead of the sour dose, I feed you sugar. If you are a believer it is indeed very good. But if you aren't then the recompense of falsehood is always falsehood.

Ponder over it! That man labels him an infidel, so consigns him to Hell. But, the Maulana could not tolerate even a sentence of biting language against that man which would transgress the limits. Such unseemly language would be used here in this world. We will have to account in the Hereafter for the tongue's utterance. "Why had we used such a word for another persons? Therefore,we must exercise care and speak plainly and say exactly what we mean.

An Incident About A biting Tongue.

My respected father, Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه. used to say that some people have a biting tongue. Such people will always taunt or raise objections. Such behaviour causes heart burns. My father narrated an incident to support his point. A man visited a relative. When he went there he found the daughter-in-law of the house very angry. She was speaking rudely to her mother-in-law who was seated nearby. The man asked the elder woman what had angered her daughter-in-law. She said, "There's nothing, I spoke only two words of reproach and am being punished for that. She is running wild since then and is very angry." The man asked her what it was that she had spoken and she said, "I only said that her father was a slave and her mother was a slave. Since then she is wild with anger." Look at that! Those were only two words according to the elder woman.. But, they were such words as irritate a person. Taunting words ruin families and create hatred among family members. We must keep away from using them. We must always speak clearly and in a straightforward way.

We must think before we speak

Before we speak anything, we must ponder over the consequence and on how the other person would take it. We must also see how these very words we wish to speak to other people would be received by us if they were spoken to us. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught us the principle:

اَحِبَّ لِلنَّاسِ مَاتُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِكَ (ترمذی، کتاب الزھد، باب من اتقی المحارم فھوا عبدالناس)

"Prefer for other people what you prefer for yourself." (Tirmizi, Book of Az-zahd(piety)

The Prophet ﷺ has put an end to the setting up of two standards, one for ourselves and one for the others. If Allah grows this attitude in our hearts then we will be free of all the bickering and hatred that we see around us.

The tongue is a great Blessing.

The tongue that man has is one of the great blessings of Allah on him. We are enjoying its gratis and it works round the clock from birth to death. We can only understand its value if we imagine ourselves without it. Those who are down with paralysis and cannot speak they try their best but cannot utter a word. They wish to convey their inner feelings to their dear ones but cannot do so and it is then that they realise the value of the tongue. But, we use this blessing of Allah from morning to evening, day in and day out, like a sharp weapon without thinking for a moment what words we utter with it. This is very wong. The correct thing is to weigh out words before we speak. If we do that then instead of being a means to deliver us to Hell, the tongue will take us to Heaven and amass for us a wealth for use in the Hereafter, *Insha Allah.*

Let Us Accustom Ourselves To Think Before We Speak.

We are told in a *Hadith* that it is mainly the tongue that will be responsible for flinging its owner face down into Hell. Therefore, we must think before we speak. This does not mean that a man should wait for some time during which he thinks before saying something but when he accustoms himself to think before speaking then he will do it spontaneously. Allah then makes his tongue value its words before it utters them and it will only utter the correct words, never the wrong ones that displease Allah and hurt

other people.

Maulana Thanavi's Case

There was an attendant of Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanavi رحمة الله عليه. He was called Bhai Niaz. He was a very cossetted servant and even visitors of the Maulana loved him. He made himself felt by exercising authority on visitors to the *khanqah* always giving instructions and he was aided in this behaviour by the strict system that ruled the *khanqah.* One of his disciples complained to the Maulana about this man's behaviour and told him that he was a rude man who scolds many visitors. The Maulana did not like that so he summoned Bhai Niaz and reproached him for his rude behaviour and wished to know why he did that. In answer, Bhai Niaz said, "Maulana, fear Allah. Don't lie!". He was not addressing these words to Maulana Thanavi but he had meant to refer to those who had brought about the complaint. They should fear Allah and not lie. On hearing him, the Maulana lowered his head and went away from there saying, "*Astaghfir-Allah* (I seek Allah's forgiveness.)" Those who saw this happen were surprised that a menial could speak in this manner to the Maulana who instead of taking him to task for that went away saying *Astaghfir Allah.* Later on, the Mawalana explained that he had erred in scolding Bhai Niaz without first giving him an opportunity to explain and that is why he had said *Astaghfir Allah.* The *Shari'ah* directs us to allow the accused to defend himself. The truth is that when Allah gives someone the power to recognise truth from falsehood he takes care not to exceed the limits. May Allah give us also such an understanding! *Aameen.*

It Is Not Proper To Hurt A Non-Muslim Too

Some people suppose that this *Hadith* excludes the non-Muslims from its application because it defines a Muslim as one who does not hurt another Muslim with his tongue or hand. They contend that the *Hadith* does not disallow us to hurt a non-Muslim. They are mistaken in thinking so. Muslims are mentioned in the *Hadith* because generally they live in a Muslim surrounding and have to deal with each other, otherwise the scope of the *Hadith* extends equally to Muslims and non-Muslims.It is not allowed to cause inconvenience to a non-Muslim too in times of peace. Nevertheless, when Muslims are at war with the infidels then it is a part of the activity to hurt them in pursuance of the objective to diminish their status; but it is not allowed to hurt those unbelievers who are not engaged in war with the Muslims.

Evidence In Support Of This Statement.

We find evidence to support our contention in the case of Hazrat Musa عليه السلام who lived under the rule of the Pharoah in Egypt where everyone was a disbeliever except Hazrat Musa عليه السلام. It happend that an Isra'ili and a Qubti (copt) were engaged in quarrel. Hazrat Musa عليه السلام slapped the Qubti who died because of it. Although the man was an unbeliever, Hazrat Musa عليه السلام considered himself a sinner because he had inadvertantly brought about his death.

وَلَهُمْ عَلَيَّ ذَنْبٌ فَأَخَافُ أَنْ يَقْتُلُونِ (سورة الشعراء ١٤)

And they have a crime against me; so I fear they will slay me.(ash-Shu'ara. 26:14)

Hazrat Musa عليه السلام considered the inadvertant killing of the unbeliever to be a sin. The question arises that the man was an unbeliever and slaying the unbelievers is an act

of *Jihad*; then why did Hazrat Musa عليه السلام call it a sin and sought the forgiveness of Allah for that? The answer is that although the Qubti was a non-Muslim, in times of peace when Muslims and non-Muslims live together the rights enjoyed by Muslims and non-Muslims are similar so that just as it is wrong to hurt a Muslim so too it is wrong to hurt an unbeliever. It pertains to human rights and the first duty of a man is that he acts like a human being and thereafter he many become a Muslim and a Sufi. It is part of human behaviour that he refrains from causing inconvenience to anyone else without distinction of Muslims and non-Muslims.

To Retract On A Promise Is Like Hurting The Other Person With The Tongue.

There are certain things that are the same as hurting with the tongue but some people do not consider them in this way. An example is to go back on one's promise. If anybody assures another person that he will be with him at a certain time or do a certain task for him at the agreed time and then fails to do it then that person to whom the promise was made faces difficulty. The man who had given out the assurance commits the sin of failing to keep his promise and also the sin of causing inconvenience to the other man. This is a form of hurting someone with the tongue.

Greetings while the Qur'an is Recited.

Sometimes, we do not realise that we are hurting someone with our tongue. We suppose that we are being virtuous but actually we are being sinful because our behaviour is causing difficulty to someone else. For instance, to greet another person with *as-salamu-'alay-kum* is an excellent thing and rewarding too. But, *Shari'ah* has

seen to it that when others are liable to be inconvenienced, the greetings must not be exchanged; it has given instructions on this matter. In fact, on some occasions instead of being rewarding it is sinful to offer greetings to another person. If a man is reciting the Qur'an then he must not be saluted. The salutation will interrupt him and he will have to stop the recital and turn towards the person greeting him which is an inconvenience to him. So, the greeting causes him difficulty with the tongue. In the same way, it is not allowed to salute those already sitting in the mosque because they are remembering Allah. and are engaged in devotional exercises. They have the name of Allah on their lips and they will be disturbed if anybody salutes them.

Greetings When A Meeting Is In Progress.

The jurists opine that when someone speaks to other people who listen to him attentively then a new-comer must not salute them even if they are talking about worldly matters. Those people were attentive to the speaker and their attention would be diverted if anyone interrupts them with the salutation. The interruption would be in bad taste. Thus, we are commanded that when we go to an Assembly and the proceedings are on then we must sit down quietly without offering the *salams*. A salutation at that time will be like hurting them with the tongue. It may be guaged from this principle how very particular *Shari'ah* is in forbidding us from inconveniencing other people.

Salutations To One Who Is Eating

Although it is not disallowed to salute a person who is eating his food, it is certainly a disliked behaviour to do so if that person is likely to be inconvenienced. That person is not engaged in worship but only eating his food

so if anyone salutes him, the mountains will not fall down on him. However, there is a possibility of being disturbed and feeling bad when someone salutes at such a time. In the same way, if someone is seen to hurry along somewhere, it is not correct for us to salute him and extend the hand for a handshake. One must understand by the way he was walking he must be in a hurry. It was not a proper time to salute him and shake hands with him. He should have been allowed to go where he was going. The salutation at such times is like hurting other people.

Prolonging Conversation On The Phone.

My respected father رحمة الله عليه used to say that telephone is also an instrument through which other people may be harmed. Rather, it is a tool that may be used to create unlimited hardships to other people. Thus, if anyone rings another person and engages him in a long conversation without even considering that he might have been busy in some other task then he is causing him inconvenience. My father, Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه has commented in the Ma'ariful Qur'an that before the caller engages in a long conversation he must let the called person know his intention and ask him if he has that much time or should he call later. He, رحمة الله عليه has said that this is part of etiquettes of telephonic converstation, and he has defined the long conversation as spanning over five minutes! This is mentioned in the interpretation of *surah an-Nur* and my father was very particular in observing it.

Use of Loudspeakers

Another example of causing hardship by the tongue is the misuse of the loudspeaker in the mosque. If a few people are to be addressed within the mosque perhaps the internal

loudspeaker would suffice. But, if the external loudspeaker is also used then the entire neighbourhood is compelled to listen to the address., Some of these people may be reciting the Qur'an or occupied in other tasks or resting. Someone may be ill, they are all subjected to hardship by the tongue.

An Incident Of The Times Of Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ

In the times of Hazrat Umar Faruq Sayyidna someone used to come to the Masjid Nabavi and deliver sermons. The abode of Hazrat Aishah رضی اللہ عنہا was just next to the Masjid Nabavi. Although there were no loudspeakers in those days yet this man's voice was loud and could be heard by Hazrat Aishah رضی اللہ عنہا in her room while she was occupied in different household chores or some form of worship like the recital of the Qur'an. She sent a message to Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ that this person delivered sermons near her house in a loud voice which disturbed her. She requested that this man may be asked to deliver his sermons elsewhere or subdue his voice. Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ summoned the man and explained to him that his behaviour annoyed the Mother of the faithful, Hazrat Aishah رضی اللہ عنہا so he must discontinue his preaching there. That man obeyed and discontinued his preaching for some days. After a few days, however, he again continued his sermons. When Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ was informed of that, he summoned him again and warned him that if he did not cease he would smash his rod on him. That is, he would beat him with the rod until it broke up.

Our Behaviour Today

If we look at our behaviour today we have set aside these principles. If someone is delivering an address in the mosque, he torments the locality around him. The loudspeaker blares at full volume and nobody in the eighbourhood is allowed to sleep or rest. If anyone asks them to lower the volume, they taunt him that he is preventing religious effort although it is the speaker in the mosque and the responsible men there who violate the principles of *Shari'ah*. They are responsible for the hardship other people suffer. The truth is that it is part of the etiquette of a religious scholar ('Alim) that he keeps his voice only that high as his audience can listen to him.

ينبغي للعالم ان لايعد وصوته مجلسه

The voice of an Alim must not go beyond his listeners.

Violation of these principles amounts to causing hardship with the tongue. Allah has blessed us with this tongue that we may remember Allah with it, we may convey the truth and we may soothe the hearts of other people but not that we may hurt them.

A Woman Of Hell

A *Hadith* tells us that the Prophet ﷺ was asked about a woman who fasted during the days and kept vigil in the night but she was rude to her neighbours. The Prophet ﷺ said that the woman would go to Hell. Maulana Thanavi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ says in explanation of the *Hadith* "People must not be put to difficulty unnecessarily and this is more important than individul worship." That is, fair dealing with other people takes precedence over worship. Maulana Thanavi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ then says that the question of mutual dealings has been

shelved these days and no one even tries to explain what it means and what we are required to do in this regard.

Causing Hardship With The Hand.

The second thing that the *Hadith* under discussion calls for is to refrain from hurting anyone with the hand. Sometimes it is very obvious that we are putting someone to hardship, for example when we beat him. But sometimes we put him to hardship but our society does not think of that in those terms, although there are so many ways in which we may cause hardship to another person. By mentioning the hand, the *Hadith* includes all the deeds performed by man because he performs most of them by his hand. The Ulama include all the deeds performed by man whether he uses his hands for that or not.

To Put Something Out Of Place

We can give the example of people living together. There are many things of common use, for instance towel, utensils, soap and so on. If one member uses any of these things and then does not replace it at its proper place, the others are inconvenienced when they have to look for it here and there. The first peson is responsible for the inconvenience and it is a hardship to which the others are put which the *Hadith* forbids us to do.

A Grave Sin.

My father taught us even those things which we consider trifle. When we were young we too would commit such mistakes. We would use something and then misplace it and, not finding it at its proper place, he would have to search for it. He told us once that apart from being bad manners, it was a grave sin not to put something back at its

proper place after use. This misdeed causes inconvenience to a Muslim and it is a grave sin to do that. Before that we had not known that it was a grave sin to put anything at a wrong place. This was an example of hurting anyone with the hand.

Causing Hardship To Family and & Relatives

It must be understood that the foregoing does not presuppose that those with whom we live together are strangers alone. They could be our family members and relatives too. Generaly, we do not feel that we are causing hardship to our close relatives like wife, children, brothers and sisters; some people say that it does not matter if these relatives suffer hardship because they are relatives, after all. This is a wrong approach. It is not the fault of those people that they are our relatives that we cause them hardship. We must remember that our beloved Prophet ﷺ woke up for *Tahajjud Salat* and was very quiet in eveything that he did lest he distrurb Hazrat Aishah رضی اللہ عنہا in her sleep. So, just as we are forbidden to cause hardship to strangers so too we must not cause hardship to the folk of our homes and our relatives.

To Stay away At The Times Of Meals

For instance, it is a grave sin for a man to be away from home at the times of meal after assuring his family members that he will be there and have his meal with them so they are kept waiting and wondering where he is. It often happens that such a man does not worry about his family members or his coommitment and eats out while they wait for him. He is committing a grave sin in this manner because he hurts someone whom Allah has joined

to him in marital relations. Such a man must inform his family members if he is delayed so that they are at rest concerning him. But people do not think of it from this angle because a wife is supposed to be a subordinate and she may be put to inconvenience, although it is wrong and forbidden, and a grave sin to do so.

It Is Forbidden To Dirty The Thoroughfare

Another example of hurting someone by the hand is to throw something on a thoroughfare, a banana peel or any dirty thing. The passers-by will suffer because of that or someone may slip and fall down when he puts his foot on it. The person who is responsible for that will be answerable on the Day of Resurrection for his misdeed. Even if no passer-by is inconvenienced yet because of dirtying the thoroughfare the person throwing it will have committed a sin. We are told about the Holy Prophet ﷺ that whenever he was travelling and felt the urge to urinate, he would search for a proper place to do it in the same manner one looks out for a place to build his house. He did this to avoid dirtying a pathway and thus causing the passers-by an inconvenience. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said, "Faith has over seventy branches, the most excellent of these is to declare the *kalimah*

لا الـــه الاالله محمـــــد رســـول الله

There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.

And the humblest form is to remove offensive and injurious things from the thoroughfare." These things could be a thorn or a peel and their removal is the most minor form of faith. Thus when removal of injurious things from the road is a branch of faith the throwing of such things on

the road could be a branch of disbelief.

It Is Forbidden To Cause Mental Agony To Any one

Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has said that the *Hadith* under discussion refers to actions of the tongue and hand but it also includes any action by the tongue or hand that causes someone else a mental agony. For instance, if a man borrows money from someone and promises to return it at a certain date then he must return it by that day. If he cannot repay the sum borrowed on the promised day then he must request for more time but he must not try to fool the lender and cause him mental torture. Let not the lender keep waiting for the debtor to make an appearance so that the poor fellow cannot make a proper planning bacause he does not know when he will get back his money.

Agonising One's Servants

Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه goes so far as to say that a person must not atonce ask his servant to do more than one task in sequence. In this way, the master frees himself of remembering the tasks but shifts the responsibility of remembering them on his servant. If it is not necesary to do so then the servant must not be burdened with the responsibility to remember. He must be asked to finish a task and when he is through, he should be given the next task, and so on in this manner. The Maulana said about himself that he always followed this method. After his servant finished one task, he instructed him to do the other and then the next. The Maulana said, "I remember the duties my servant has to be instructed with and I do not shift the burden to his memory. He is thus not under a mental pressure. He knows that when he has completed one

assignment, I will instruct him with the next." The Maulana رحمة الله عليه was a far-sighted man.

Where Should One Wait for a Worshipper Engaged In *Salat*

Continuing with examples of how one does inconvenience other people, we may cite the case of a man waiting for another who is offering his *Salat*. Such a man must not sit next to the worshipper so that he senses that the man is waiting for him and his attention is diverted into hurrying through the *Salat*. The worshipper feels he must not keep the man waiting so hurries through the postures of prayer. The proper thing for the man who is waiting is to wait at some distance so that the worshipper is not disturbed and offers his *Salat* peacefully. He may meet him after he finishes his *Salat* without knowing that someone was waiting for him. The first method of sitting next to the worshipper making him realise that someone waits for him is wrong. It causes him mental agony. *Al Hamdulillah*, our elders and teachers applied themselves equally to all branches of religion. They did not take up one or two branches and exclude the rest. the Qur'an says

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا ادْخُلُوْا فِي السِّلْمِ كَآفَّةً (سورة البقرة: ٢٠٨)

O you who believe! Enter completely into Islam (al Baqarah. 2:208)

Let it not be that you, O Believers! pay attention to the branch of worship like *Salat*, *Fasting* and so on, but by-pass social conduct, fair dealing and good manners as prescribed in Islam.

Adab ul Mu 'ashirat

Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has composed a small book in Urdu by the name of *Adabul Mu 'ashirat*. It is worth reading. The Maulana رحمة الله عليه has stated in the book that he could not write down all the social etiquettes in the book but he has nevertheless collected there in as many as he could récollect. He has suggested that the reader would read the book and go on behaving as the book wants him to behave and gaining knowledge of all the social etiquettes as prescribed by Islam. Allah will open up his mind for him. Thus it is a part of social manners that a man may park his car in such a way that no one else is obstructed; it is also part of religion. We have forgotten these things today and are, therefore, sinful. At the same time we present a wrong picture of religion. Anyone looking at us would say that we are regular at *Salat* but careless in cleanliness and quick at causing hardship to other people. We must try to think what picture of Islam our behaviour presents to a non-Muslim, would he be attracted to it after observing us? Or, would he be repelled? May Allah guide us! Instead of behaving as good specimens of Muslims, and inviting other people to Islam by our conduct, we have become instrumental in turning them away from Islam. We have paid scant attention to the branch of social manners.

May Allah cause us not to be neglectful in this regard–myself and everyone else. May He inspire us to comprehend correctly and to conduct ourselves fairly on all branches of religion.*Aameen*

And our concluding prayer is: "Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds!."

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame'masjid Baitul-Mukarram,
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.

Date : 22th September, 1995

FEAR OF ALLAH FIGHTS OFF SINS IN MAN

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهٖ جَنَّتٰنِ (سورة الرحمن: ٤٦)

All praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him, beseech Him for help and seek His forgiveness. We believe in Him and trust in Him. We seek refuge in Allah from the mischief of our souls and from our evil deeds. He whom Allah guides none can mislead and

whom He leaves to stray none can guide. And, we bear witness that there is no god except Allah who is Alone and has no partner, and we bear witness that Hazrat Muhammad is His Slave and His Messenger- May Allah bless him and his family and Companions. And may He favour him and give him peace, complete peace.

I seek refuge in Allah from the cursed devil. In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

And for him who fears the standing before his Lord, there shall be two gardens. (ar-Rahman. 55:46)

Assurance Of Two Gardens

As for the person who fears to stand before his Lord, and fears that one day he will have to stand before Him and account for each of his deeds, there will be two *Jannahs* for him. *Jannah* is Paradise or Garden (of Paradise).

In explanation of this verse, the well-known successor of the Companions Hazrat Mujahid رحمة الله عليه says that the verse refers to that person who gets an evil suggestion and intends to commit a sin but at the same time he thinks of Allah and remembers that he will stand before Allah one day so he gives up the idea and abandons the sinful thought. It is for such a person that the assurance is held out for two gardens in Paradise.

It Is *Taqwa* (Fear of Allah)

He then explains it in detail. A man is all alone and nobody is there to see him so there is no apparent obstacle to prevent him from committing a sin. It is there, in the loneliness, that he feels like doing a sinful act. But he tells

himself, "although no man can know what I do but my Allah sees me. One day, I will stand before Him." He then abstains from the act. It is for this man that the two Gardens are promised, and for those like him. The behaviour of this man is called *Taqwa* (piety, righteousness, God-fearing). *Taqwa* is defined as "the awe of Allah that prompts man to abandon the most pressing demand of his base desire to sin." He thinks that although no one watches him the One Who sees all sees him too. The aim of all pious teachings and of *Shari'ah* is to grow in man the fear that he will have to stand before Allah.

The Graeatness Of Allah

Allah does not tell us in this verse that one should fear Hell, or the chastisement, or the Fire, but, He has said that he should fear the standing before his Lord.

In other words, he should recognise the greatness, the majesty of Allah and he should realise that Allah may or may not punish him against the sin. But, the real question is how would he stand before Him with the sin against his name? If anyone recognises the greatness of someone and esteems and respects him then, even if he knows that he will not punish him, he stands in awe of Him and will not do anything against his wishes lest he have to face Him after doing the wrong. This is *taqwa* when the attitude is in relation to Allah.

My Respect For My Father

Except for a couple of times, my father Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه never raised his hands over me. I remember he slapped me once or twice but I held him in such respect and awe that I would tremble when I passed near his room. Why was that? That was because of the

fear that he might come to know of my deeds that would displease him. When a man can fear another creature in this manner then it is imperative that he fears and esteems the Creator of the Universe. He must fear and ask himself how he would stand before Him with the record of deeds marking his evils and sins. The verse of the Qur'an tells us about this very thing:

وَاَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهٖ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوٰى (النازعات: ٤٠)

(But as for him who feared the standing before his Lord and restrained (his) soul from caprices.) (an-Naziat, 79: 40)

The Thing To Fear Is The Wrath of Allah

Hell and Chastisement are feared because they are signs of the punishment of Allah otherwise we should really fear and esteem the grandness and the majesty of Allah Himself. He Himself is to be feared actually.

There is an Arabic poem.

لا تسقنی ماءَ الحیاة بذِلّة

بل فاسقنی بالعزّ کأس الحنظل

The meaning is:

Do not give me to drink the water of life while you debase me, but you may give me the bitter juice of the colocynth while you honour me.

Those people who have understood the Reality of Allah crave for His pleasure and keep away from His displeasure. So, they fear Hell and chastisement because they represent His displeasure which itself is really feared.

An Incident Of Mixing Water Into Milk

It is said about Hazrat Umar Faruq رضی اللہ عنہ that as a Caliph, he made rounds of the city at night to learn about the problems of his people. He helped the poor and needy and aided the grief-sticken. If he came across anyone doing something wrong, he reformed that person. One night, he was on his usual rounds at the time of *Tahajjud*, he heard two women in a house speak to each other and he pictured that one of them was an old woman while the other was young. The former said to the latter who was her daughter, "Mix some water into the milk to increase the quantity before we sell it." The young woman said, "Mother, the Commander of Faithful, Umar Faruq, has prohibited every milk-seller from doing so. We must not do it." "The Amir ul Muminin is not here. He cannot see you. No one can see you in this hour of the night if you put some water into the milk." The young woman replied, "Mother! It may be true that the Amir ul Muminin does not watch us but what about his Lord. Is He not watching us? We must not do the wrong thing." Hazrat Umar Faruq رضی اللہ عنہ heard all they had spoken and in the morning enquired about them. Then he sent a proposal of marriage of his son for the young woman and Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ was married to her. His grandson, Umar Bin Abdul Aziz رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was born from this family and became the fifth Caliph. Returning to the story, the girl was convinced in her heart that even though the Commander of the Faithful did not see, Allah does see everything whether one was all alone and it was pitch dark or not. This behaviour is known as *Taqwa*.

A Lesson-giving Event

Once Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ was travelling soewhere and on the way he exhausted his provision but he spied sheep grazing nearby. The Arabs were known for their hospitality to travellers whom they fed goat's milk free of charge, Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ approached the shephered and told him that he was a traveller and hungry and would like him to provide him milk of one of his flock. The shephered explained that he was not the owner of the sheep but an employee of the real owner who was not there so he could not oblige. This was a proper *Shari'ah* procedure. Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ then tried him out. He said, "I will show you something profitable that will benefit both of us. You sell me one of these sheep. You can keep the price I pay and will get the sheep and also its milk. You can tell its owner that a wolf gobbled it up. He will believe you because he knows there are wolves in the jungle. "The shephered was prompt with his reply یا ھذا! فاین اللہ؟ {"O Man! Then where is Allah?} He meant to say that he could fool his employer, the owner of the sheep. But, there is the Owner of his master to cope with. "How will I fare with him?" and he added that he was not willing to be an accomplice in the deal. When he heard the answer, Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ said, "As long as people like you live on this earth, no tyrant can oppress anyone." Thus, till so far as hearts fear Allah, people think of the Hereafter and fear the standing before Allah crimes and oppressions cannot go on. This too was an example of *Taqwa.*

The Best Way To Eradicate Crime

We must realise that unless we develop this way of thinking we cannot hope to eradicate crime or fraudulent conduct. We may call the police to help us but the, most any

security and check can do for us is to work in day time and in cities only but they will be ineffective at night and in lonely remote places when only one thing can do it. It is the fear of Allah. Nothing else can eradicate crime and evil. When men do not have the fear of Allah in their hearts then their society plunges to lowest depths. We can observe that happening today. There is a police force and another one over it, and there are control centres and departments, one over the other. Laws are being enacted but nothing is happening. The law courts are functioning, the police force is active and the anti-corruption cell is at work. Much money goes into creating and maintaining these cells and forces but, on the other side, there is corruption at its peak so those who are there to stop it are corrupt themselves. How many of these checks and counter-checks will be applied? There is always a loophole in the law or a way out is always found out. So far, no one has discovered a method to stop cirme completely but awe and fear of Allah together with the Hereafter in mind is the only way to eradicate crime and oppression.

The *Taqwa* Of the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم

It was this behaviour that the Holly Prophet ﷺ had grown in his noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم. The result was that if anyone happened to commit a wrong, he would become restless and would not be peaceful until he had the prescribed *Shari'ah* punishment applied to him and until he had sought forgiveness of Allah sincerely and repented to Him. The wrong-doer would approach the Holy Prophet ﷺ and ask him to sentence him and get the mark erased from him. Therefore, only fear of Allah in the hearts, and the thought of the Hereafter and the presence before Allah can wipe out crime from the world. Every other plan will fail.

Proceedings In Our Courts

I have been associated with the courts for many years. The procedure is that cases of theft and robbery should come to us finally in appeal. But, during the first three years we did not hear any case of theft or robbery. I was suprised. I investigated the matter and learnt that during the time only three or four appeals were filed. I exclaimed that anyone who goes by these statistics will think that we live in a peaceful society full of Angels.Only three or four cases of theft and banditry were brought to the Supreme court in three years! But if the same man reads our newspapers, he will find that innumerable thefts and dacoities are committed every day. When I probed further, I learnt that all such cases are settled in the lower courts and there is no reason to take them to the higher courts.

An Eye-opening Event

After I had been in court for three years, I received a case. Someone had arrived from Kuwait and had hired a taxi from the airport to his home and he had his luggage with him. At the Bahdurabad roundabout in Karachi a police posse stopped the taxi and after learning that the passenger had arrived from Kuwait appropriated his entire luggage at gun-point. This was the first case I received for hearing in which the police that are deputed to wipe out theft and banditry themselves used the official gun to snatch the property of other people. The custodians of law and guardians of peace and security were responsible for committing crime and disturbing peace and security. The only reason for it is that the fear of Allah no more finds a place in our hearts. We have forgotten that we will have to stand before Allah. We do not remind ourselves that we

have to die and will be brought to life again. The result is that we are overtaken by murder and killing, lawlessness and restlessness.

How The Devil Works

We do not come to behave in this manner all of a sudden. Rather, we do it gradually. The devil does not prompt anyone to commit a grave sin at once. No man will do that if he prompts him to do it. For instance, the devil will not whisper to anyone straightaway that he should commit robbery because the man will not agree to do it in that way. The devil first gets him to do small things. For instance, he gets a man to ogle at women in the beginning. Gradully, the devil gets him to commit graver sins. When man becomes a habitual sinner, the devil reminds him that he did not think of Allah when he committed sins in the past. So he may commit a grave sin too again. In this manner, he gets him to do a grave sin and the man becomes a criminal.

Television Spoils Our Youth

We see young people carrying about pistol. At pistol point they loot someone, kill someone or dishonour someone. Did anyone do that before? Never! Young boys were first invited to watch the television on the pleas that it was watched the world over. They were shown films and this led to graver sin. These boys were gradually brain washed. Then they became bolder and forgot Allah and the standing before Him when they committed a sin. This led themfurther into the labyrinth of crime and sin.

Minor sins Lead To Graver sins

It is always the minor sins that lead man to the major ones. The Devil makes man commit the minor sins. When he commits them regularly, he becomes bold and then dares to commit the major ones. Our youth think that they will live forever, they will never be called upon to account for their actions and they may commit the gravest of sins because the door is open for them. There is an Arabic verse

الشر يبدأه في الاصل اصغره

Evil always commences from minor, insignificant evils.

Therefore, let not anyone do any wrong howsoever minor, thinking it to be insignificant and of no consequence. In reality, that is the devil's net in which he entangles the sinner and then gains control over him. Thereby, he removes from the sinner fear of Allah and the Hereafter. Because of that, we must shun all sin-major or minor-fearing Allah, all the time.

Is a sin minor or major?

Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has said that many people ask with much interest, "Is that sin minor or major?" They ask because if the sin is minor they may go ahead and commit it; if it is major, they will feel some fear in doing it.The respected Maulana used to say that the two things are like a spark and a live coal. Is anyone ever known to have placed a spark in a case because it was a mere spark that would not do any harm? No sane person would do it. That spark would turn into a fire inside the case and burn everything inside and then the case itself. The fire may then engulf the suroundings. It is the same thing with a sin-minor or major, it is a spark. If a man

wilfully commits a sin, it might devour all that the man had built up (of pious deeds). Therefore, let us not enquire whether a sin is major or minor. Let us see if any act is sinful or not, a deed is allowed or disallowed. Let us ask whether Allah has permitted us to do something or not. Once we know that Allah has disallowed something then we must remember also that we will have to stand before Him and account for our deeds. In this way we can be like those who are described in the verse of the Qur'an quoted above from *Surah an-Nazi'at* by remembering that Allah is there even when we are tempted and thus we may ward off the temptation.

Or, This Is What We Must Remember When Tempted

Maulana Doctor Abdul Hayy رحمة الله عليه used to say that often man does not imagine Allah when he thinks of Him as watching over him. This is because he has never seen Him and one can only picture that which he has already seen. The Maulana رحمة الله عليه suggested that when anyone is tempted to commit a sin, he must imagine that his father is watching him or that his children are present and seeing what he does, or he must think about his teacher or mentor. He may think of anyone else: his students, his friends. He may ask himself, "Would I do it if one of these is watching?

Maulana Doctor Albdul Hayy رحمة الله عليه asked "Suppose you are tempted to cast a wrong glance. At that moment just picture that your Shaikh is watching you. Or, your father; or, your children. Will you then glance in the forbidden manner? Of course not! Because if one of them catches you in the act, he will think of you as naughty. You will automatically cease to cast the wrong glance.

Thus, if you can desist from wrong-doing from fear of an ordinary creature, you should think that Allah, the Creator and Master of all, the King of Kings is watching. If you think that way everytime you are tempted then you will feel obstructed from committing sin.

Sweetness Of Sin Is Fleeting

When a man is accustomed to sin then, if he tries to, he will find it difficult to give up the habit initially. But that is the right time and he must force himself to give up the sinful habit. He should stiffle the desire to sin for the sake of Allah and once he does it for the sake of Allah, He will give him such a sweet taste of faith and belief that he will come to find sin a distasteful experience. May Allah grant all of us the sweetness that preserves us from sinful activity *Aameen.*

Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi رحمة الله عليه used to compare the enjoyment derived from sin to the persistent urge of an itchy person to scratch. He goes on scratching and derives pleasure from it. But, that pleasure is unhealthy. He will get little wounds on his skin which would pain and burn and so undo the pleasure he had derived from itching. Now, if he had refrained from scratching and told himself that it was better for him, and if he had applied an ointment instead, and taken the unpleasant medicine, then he would have saved himself from the after-effects. So, he realises that soundness of health is preferable to the enjoyment derived from itching. In the same way enjoyment derived from sin is misleading and unreal. Let us surrender it for the sake of Allah. Instead, we may choose *taqwa.* We will realise then how far Allah elevates our ranks. The base desires have been created for the sole reason that we smother them and obtain thereby the pleasure of Allah. May Allah by lHis Mercy cause us to realise the truth. *Aameen.*

Let the Youth Fear And The Aged Hope

It is a Believer's distinguishing mark that he fears Allah and at the same time places his hopes in Him. But, our elders have stated that it is better to overcome with fear of Allah in the youthful stages. This is because at that age a person is healthy, he is active in his movement and strong and he can do everything he wishes to do. He also is tempted easily and often, finds greater opportunities to sin and a greater urge too. So, it is more proper that he grows a fear of Allah at this age as it will preserve him from sinning. As for one who has attained old age, it is advisable that he hopes for the mercy of Allah in an intensified manner so that he does not despair.

Life Is Regulated By Fear

Some people argue that it is not necessary to develop the fear of Allah. They claim, "Allah is ours. Why fear Him? He is the One who creatred us and He says again and again in the Qur'an that 'He is Forgiving, Merciful.' Then why should we fear Him." If this is the way people think, how may we expect them to develop fear of Allah. It is the result of this sort of thinking that people live a carefree life, unmindful of the fear of Allah and deeply involved in sin. But,. the truth is that if there is no fear in the mind none of the tasks of this life can be accomplished, no affair can progress. If a student does not fear failure in examinations, he will not study. It is the fear that inspires to prepare and study. If an employee does not fear dismissal he will be derelict in the performance of his official duties, he would warm his chair doing nothing or look to his personal affairs. If a son does not fear his father, a subordinate does not fear his officer, people do not fear the law then there would be anarchy and lawlessness. Everyone's rights would be

violated. Today, we find ourselves in an unruly atmosphere, no one is safe, life and property are insecure and meaningless, daylight robberies are committed. Man is worthless even in comparison with small insects. This is because we do not have the fear of Allah and we do not fear the law or authority. Money can buy law so anyone who is prepared to pay is above law. The result is lawlessness.

The Freedom Movement

In the Indian sub-continent, when the British ruled over it, Muslims and Hindus collaborated to drive them out of India, and launched a joint movement holding demonstrations and public meetings and calling for strikes. Sometimes the Muslims were asked to behave as Hindus and sometimes it was difficult to distinguish a Muslim from a Hindu. For instance, during the protest demonstrations, Muslims also marked their forehead in the Hindu fashion and went to their temples and took part in their rites. Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه did not like the manner in which the Movement progressed and not only did he not take part in the movement but he also advised his acquaintances and disciples against it.

The Red Cap Fear

At one time during the movement, a delegation of its leaders visited Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه to convince him to cooperate with them. He told them plainly that he was not in agreement with the way the movement was going on when they suggested that if he joined and supported it the British would soon be driven out. He also asked them what they had achieved in the past few years during which they had held demonstrations, organised public meetings and called for strikes? One of them remarked that although

they had not gained independence they had succeeded in removing fear of the *Red Cap* from the minds of the people. The police then used to don the red cap and were known by it. "No one now fears the police. There was a time when on seeing the police the entire locality trembled with fear. This is a great success and soon we will drive the British out, too."

Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه told them that they had done a very bad thing by removing fear of the police from the minds of the people. He said, "By removing fear of the *red cap* you have given freedom to thieves and bandits. They will do the bad things without fear of the police. The least you could have done when you removed the fear of the *red cap* was to instill the fear of your *green cap* in the minds of the people. That would have been a great success. But, you have removed the fear of authoritry without replacing it with another fear with the result that society will face lawlessness and restlessness. People will be in constant danger of losing their lives, property and honour. You have not done a good thing and I do not praise you for that."

No Longer was there any Fear

These words were spoken by Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه about sixty years ago. We can see today that there is no longer fear of authority in the minds of the people and the consequences are apparent in the raging chaos and disorder our society goes through. It was seen in those times that if a murder took place in a locality, the entire country shook with the news and everyone called for an investigation into the murder. But, today, with our minds without fear, human lives are not even as worthy as mosquitoes and flies.

Instill Fear Of Allah

It is fear on which depends the conduct of the world. Without it there will be disorder, lack of peace, and terrorism. The Qur'an says frequently; adopt *taqwa,* be God-fearing, *fear Allah* - and as a consequence, refrain from disobedience. Just as the affairs of the world cannot be conducted without fear, so also religion depends on fear of Allah. If there is no fear or not much fear- then we will experience a sinful society: one which we find ourselves in today. The Qur'an tells us of Paradise, warns us of Hell and threatens us with its punishment. It describes the majesty and greatness of Allah and His powers so that Muslims think of it and ponder over it and implant in themselves the Fear of Allah.

Fearing Allah In Solitude

Fear of police, the law, the government or of imprisonment is one that bars a person from misbehaving in the presence of other people. But, when a man fears Allah then even if he is alone in the wilderness or in the dark of the night, he will not commit a sin- although there is no one else to see him. When a Believer in such circumstances keeps himself away from sin then there is nothing else apart from the fear of Allah that stops him from it.

Fear Of Allah When *Fasting*

We have the example of fear of Allah in these days too. A man may be a great sinner but if he Fasts in the month of Ramadan then inspite of a terrible thirst from severe heat and being all alone in his room he will not drink water. A person may have the water available to him while he is tempted to have a drink in private but in

today's times too we will not find a Muslim who gives in to it and secretly has a glass of water. If he drinks water no one will ever know that he has cheated but he will not drink it.

What was it that stopped him from drinking water in private and continuing to pretend that he was Fasting? It was the fear of Allah in his mind. We are accustomed to Fasting and it is the habit that instills in us fear of Allah.

Let Us Be Fearful At All Times

Shari'ah calls on us to extend the fear of Allah to every department of life just as we apply it during Fasting. Thus, if we are tempted to cast a wrong glance, fear of Allah. must prevent us from doing so. We must do the same thing when we are tempted to backbite or tell lies. When fear of Allah is imbibed in us then we will never disobey Allah and it is this behaviour that *Shari'ah* wants us to develop.

Who will get Paradise?

The Holy Qur'an says:

وَاَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهٖ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوٰى ۙ۝ فَاِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَاْوٰى (سورہ النازعات: ۴۰، ۴۱)

But as for him who feared the standing before his Lord and restrained (his) soul from caprices, surely the Garden shall be his abode.

(an Nazi'at. 79:40-41)

These are wonderful words. They are about the man who understands that he will one day stand before his Lord and asks himself how he will face Him, and his fear is so severe that he restrains himself from pursuing his base desires. Such a man will have his abode in Paradise that is prepared for such people alone.

Paradise Is Surrounded By Difficulties

A *Hadith* tells us that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

ان الجنة خفت بالمكاره

Surely, Paradise is surrounded by hardship. (*Muslim*)

That is, things that a man does not like surround Paradise–things that call for toil and hardship. He has to overcome them to attain Paradise. That is why man is asked to instill fear of Allah in such a manner that he is prevented from doing the prohibited things. When he keeps away from them then he is assured of Paradise. The awe and fear should be to such an extent that whatever a man says or does he is fearful lest he says or do anything that displeases his Master, his Creator. Nothing he does or says is against the wishes of Allah. The Companions رضی اللہ عنہم feared Allah to such a degree that they were restless until they presented themselves before the Holy Prophet ﷺ and asked him to pass a sentence over them for their wrong.

Seeking Forgiveness After Worship

As the degree of fear progresses, man does not merely fear the committing of sin but he also fears that his worship might not be upto the mark. He may not have put in enough effort in his act to bring it to the standard approved by Allah. In other words, a man does something to please Allah but fears that he may leave something out of it or perform it in a way that displeases Allah. Our righteous predecessors have advised us that man must carry on being pious and righteous but continue to fear Allah. The Qur'an has said :

تَتَجَافٰى جُنُوْبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ يَدْعُوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَّطَمَعًا.....

(السجدہ:١٦)

Their sides forsake their beds as they call on their Lord in fear and in hope (as-Sajdah, 32:16)

They get up during the night to worship Allah but are fearful all the while they pray to their Lord unsure if their effort is worth presenting before Him.

The Condition Of The Pious Men

Allah also says in the Qur'an in reference to the pious people:

كَانُوْا قَلِيْلًا مِّنَ الَّيْلِ مَا يَهْجَعُوْنَ o وَبِالْاَ سْحَارِهُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُوْنَ

(الذریت:١٧،١٨)

They used to sleep but little at night. And in the mornings they would ask for forgiveness (*az-Zariyat* 51:17-18)

The slaves of Allah sleep a. They offer the *Tahajjud Salat* and at dawn they seek the forgiveness of Allah. We are told in a *Hadith* that Hazrat Aishah رضی اللہ عنہا asked the Holy Prophet ﷺ, "Messenger of Allah, There is no time at Dawn to seek forgiveness Forgiveness is sought after committting a wrong while they pious people have worshipped Allah at night and have not committed a sin." The Prophet ﷺ said, "They seek forgiveness for a possible lapse or shortcoming in their worship. They fear they may have not put in a proper effort as was necessary." These people say:

مَا عَبَدْنَاكَ حَقَّ عِبَادَتِكَ

We have not worshipped You as is the right of Your worships.

The pious people do not fear the commission of sin alone, they also fear they might commit a mistake in their worship which would earn the displeasure of Allah.

Fear Of Allah Depends On Closeness To Him

The more a person is close to Allah and the more he has recognised Him, the more he will fear Him. The more he is away from Him, the less he will fear Allah. The latter person is like an infant. If he faces a King, a minister, even a lion, he will not fear him. But he who recognises the King fears him. The Companions رضی اللہ عنہم were the closest to Allah after the Prophets علیہم السلام and they feared Allah accordingly.

Hanzalah رضی اللہ عنہ And Fear Of Allah

Once Hazrat Hanzalah رضی اللہ عنہ went to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ trembling with fear. He said, "O Messenger of Allah, Hanzalah has become a hypocrite." The Prophet ﷺ said, "How is that Hanzalah?" Hanzalah رضی اللہ عنہ said, "O Messenger of Allah ﷺ! when I am with you and you remind us of Paradise and Hell and of the Hereafter we almost see them and become soft-hearted and wish to neglect the world. But when we go away to our homes, to our family and occupation, we no longer have those feelings and get involved in the worldly affairs. We have one feeling here but quite the contrary when we are away from you. This is a sign of the hypocrite." The Holy Prophet ﷺ said in reply, يا حنظلة! ساعة ساعة "O Hanzalah do not worry! This happens.There is a time for everything. Sometimes the heart softens much and sometimes it is not so. That is not the standard with Allah. The true standard is measured according to deeds. Let not men do anything against *Shari'ah* " *(Muslim)*

Umar رضی اللہ عنہ and Fear of Allah

Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ had heard the Prophet ﷺ say, "Umar will enter Paradise." He had also heard him say, "When I was on Mi'raj and visited Paradise, I found a splendid palace. A woman sat on one of its corners and performed ablution. I asked to whom did that palace belong? and I was told that it belonged to Umar. I wished very much to go into it because it was very beautiful but, O Umar, I remembered your modesty. You have great sense of honour. That is why I did not enter it but returned." On hearing it Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ began to weep and said, "Will I prevent you on that account?"

This was the position of Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ who had heard the Prophet ﷺ give him the glad tidings of Paradise and of a palace for him there. In spite of that he approached Hazrat Huzayfah bin Yaman رضی اللہ عنہ after the death of the Prophet ﷺ and asked him to confirm that he was not included among the hypocrites whose name the Prophet ﷺ had revealed to him. The Prophet ﷺ had in his life time revealed to Hazrat Huzayfah رضی اللہ عنہ the names of the hypocrites in Madinah. Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ knew that the Prophet ﷺ had given him the glad tidings of Paradise but he was worried lest he had done something afterwards that might have obliterated the previous standing. Thus, the more a person is near to Allah and knows Him better, the more he fears Him. We must know that unless a person fears Allah to any extent, he cannot acquire *taqwa.*

How May We Develop This Habit

We may grow fear of Allah in our hearts by setting aside sometime during the day or night to meditate. We can do it after dawn prayer or just before sleeping. We may imagine we are dying, lying on the death bed, all

relatives around. The soul departs from the body and it is being shrouded. Then the body is lowered into the grave after which the angels put their questions. We are then before Allah. Let us think along these lines. If a man thinks in this way everyday, then *Insha Allah* he will find that he is no more neglectful. We are neglectful because we do not think of death although we bury our dead relatives with our own hands. We do not think of death although we see many sudden deaths, we see people who are occupied day in and day out in amassing wealth die suddently and do not even turn back to glimpse at their wealth. In spite of seeing all this, we connect death only to the dying and the dead but never think that we would die too. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said,

اكثروا ذكر هاذم اللذات الموت

"Remember often that which will end all pleasent seeming things." (Musnad, Ahmad)

If we devote sometime every day to meditate in this manner, we will grow fear of Allah in our hearts to some extent at least.

Fate Overtakes

The Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "One of you conducts himself in a manner that qualifies him for Paradise until he is at a distance of one arm's length from achieving it when fate overtakes him and he begins to behave in a manner that leads him to Hell until he finally goes to Hell. As against this, one of you behaves in a manner that qualifies him for Hell but fate overtakes him and he begins to perform deeds that lead him to Paradise until he enters Paradise.

We Must Not Be Proud Of Our Deeds

We learn from this *Hadith* that none of us should boast that he performs certain deeds. We cannot rely on our deeds because reliance may only be placed on the final deeds of a person's life as we see in another *Hadith*:

انما العبرة بالخواتيم

"It is only the ending that is of consequence."

(Bukhari, Book 81, Ar-Riqaq Hadith: 6493)

The behaviour of a person in the last stages of his life is of consequence. That is what is seen. We must not, therefore, do things that take us towards Hell but we must do pious things and keep fearing Allah.

Inauspiciousness Of Evil Deeds

However, we must remember that no one will be compelled to perform evil deeds to despatch him to Hell. That person, in fact, does those deeds of his own accord without the least bit of compulsion. But, the inauspiciousness of the bad deeds that he does erases the reward accumulated against past good deeds. It also pulls him towards more bad deeds. Some sins are malignant so they drive the sinner deeper and deeper into sin. The result is that his past pious life is overshadowed. That is why our elders have advised us that we must not consider any sin insignificant; it could be that a minor sin might cause one to lose all his previous pious efforts. Besides, the mere commission of a sin on the presumption that it is minor makes it a major sin, and the danger is that it leads to other sinful activities and gradually the man becomes a habitual sinner.

Example Of Minor & Major Sins

Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has cited the examples of minor and major sins as a spark and a large fire. No one will enclose a spark in his suit case on the assumption that it is a harmless thing. If he does that then the spark will burn the suit case and all its contents to ashes.

Result Of Rude Behaviour With Elders

To show disrespect to righteous men, to be rude to them or to pain them often causes adverse consequences. Even if anyone has a difference of opinion with a righteous person then he must let it remain at that because if he displays rudeness to him and is disrespectful then the rude man becomes involved in sinful activity. My respected father, Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه has written a booklet, *Dars-e-Ibrat* (Urdu) in which he has described a lesson-giving incident of a very righteous man. All his life he was a very pious and righteous man and regarded an eminent Shaikh and a man devoted to Allah. Suddenly he took an about-turn and did evil deeds. So, sometimes this is the punishment against minor sins. Therefore, we must not do anything sinful under the supposition that it is minor lest it be the one committed at the end of one's life. All religious elders make it a practice to supplicate Allah that He make their end a righteous one.

Blessings Of Piety

In juxtaposition to this a man is evil, immersed in sin, suddenly he is inspired by Allah and he becomes pious. This inspiration follows a good deed. For instance, he is inspired first to do a minor good deed through whose auspiciousness Allah causes him to do more good deeds, and, as a result, the doors of Paradise are opened up for

him. This is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said:

لا يحقرن احد من المعروف شيئا

Let not anyone think little of a pious deed. (*Muslim*)

How can he know that very deed may bring about a revolution in his life and success with it? Allah may then forgive him. There are innumerable instances of righteous people who began the climb after doing a minor good deed. We must not belittle even a minor pious action. I have written a booklet in Urdu by the name *Assan Naykiyan* (Easy Good Deeds, in English) which is a collection of apparently small, and minor acts which are termed virtuous and excellent in the *Ahadith*. If a man performs them then he will add considerably to his pious deeds. Every Muslim must read that booklet and accustom himself to perform those pious deeds.

Reality Of Faith

Some people argue that since the fate of a man is already decided whether he will go to Paradise or to Hell, as pointed out in this *Hadith*, what then is the purpose of doing good deeds. We must understand that the *Hadith* does not mean to say that a man will do what is prescribed for him. On the contrary, the *Hadith* tells us that whatever he will do at his own option is recorded in fate. Fate is the *knowledge of Allah* who knows beforehand what a man will do of his own free will. That is recorded in the Preserved Tablet (*Lauh Mahfuz*). So, a man's entry into Paradise or Hell depends on his own actions, and it is not that a man will do what is predestined for him. It is actually the reverse, fate is what a man will do of his own accord. Allah has allowed man to choose and he acts according to his choice. Thus, it is wrong to sit idle

because everything is predestined. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ narrated this *Hadith*, the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم asked him:

ففیما العمل یارسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم

What is the meaning of doing anything, then, O Messenger of Allah!

They asked him what was the purpose of being good or bad when it has been decided already whether a man will go to Paradise or Hell. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said :

اعملوا فکل میسر لھا خلق لہ

Go on performing deeds. Every person will have to do what he has been created for.(Therefore, let us use our discretion and perform our deeds)

Let Us Not Be Careless

The purpose of narrating this *Hadith* is to caution man from placing reliance on his personal voluntary devotional exercises. He should not be over-confident that if he treads the path of *Shari'ah* he is sure of Paradise. On the contrary, man must not be sure till the last moment of his life. He must always worry and fear lest he suffers a change of behaviour for the worse. Maulana Rumi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has said

اندریں راہ ے تراش و ے خراش
تادم آخر دے فارغ مباش

"There are always changes on this path, Till the last moment, one cannot be carefree."

One has to keep one's eyes open lest he goes on the wrong path. Many prominent people have erred through carelessness. Therefore, we must not be neglectful till the last moment of our lives.

The Lightest Punishment Of Hell

We are told of a saying of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in a *Hadith*: The lightest punishment a man will receive on the Day of Resurrection will be that two sparks will be placed below his soles. But they will be so severe that because of them the man's brain will boil and he will suppose that he is being given the severest of punishments." Some narrations state that this punishment will be awarded to the paternal uncle of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, Abu Talib because he had been very helpful to the Holy Prophet ﷺ but did not profess faith until his last breath. Allah knows best.

Nevertheless, we may imagine the condition of one who is awarded a very severe punishment when the lightest punishment will cause the recepient's brains to boil. Let us sometimes imagine the chastisement in Hell so that we grow in ourselves fear of Allah and gain *taqwa.*

Stages In Hell

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has described the condition of different dwellers of Hell. He has said that some will have the Fire upto their ankles. We have seen in the foregoing lines what will happen to those who have the fire below their soles and can imagine what will happen to him when the fire reaches the ankles. There will be some dwellers of Hell who will have the fire upto their knees, some more will have upto their backs, others will have it upto their Collar bones joining their shoulder blades to the breast bones. These are some of the stages of the dwellers of Hell. May Allah protect us by His mercy and benevolence. *Aameen!*

The Gathering Ground

This was a short description of what would happen in Hell. Before anyone is sent to Hell, there will be a Gathering Ground on *Yaumul Hashr,* (the day of gathering). What will happen there? The Messenger of Allah ﷺ has said, "People will stand before the Lord of the worlds. They will be covered with perspiration, some down into it upto part of their ears.". This means that it will be very hot and men will perspire so much that they will drown into it upto their ears. The words of another *Hadith* are: "On the Day of Resurrection, people will perspire so much that their perspiration will go under the ground upto seventy cubics, and it will drown people (above the ground) upto their ears."

The Expanse of Hell

There is another *Hadith* narrated by Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ that they were seated in the company of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ when they heard a loud noise from something falling down. The Holy Prophet ﷺ asked his companions if they knew what that noise was and they said only Allah and His Messenger knew best. Then, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "A stone was dropped into Hell seventy years ago and, today, it has reached the bottom. This sound that you heard is from the stone touching the bottom of Hell, " Until recently men found it difficult to believe that a stone would take seventy years to travel to the bottom when it is dropped from the mouth but now science does confirm such a possibility. Thus science tells us that there are many stars that emanate light since the time they were created and although their light travels towards us it has not yet reached earth. When the creation of Allah is itself so large and spacious, then Hell too

(which is part of it) could be so large that a stone would land down seventy years after release. The aim of this *Hadith* is to impress upon us the expanse of Hell. May Allah protect all of us from Hell. *Aameen*

The gist of these *Ahadith* is that we must think of death and of Paradise and Hell. Gradually, this will grow in our hearts fear of Allah. It will then be easy to perform pious deeds and shun sin.

May Allah grow in our hearts fear of Allah and give us strength to restrain ourselve from sin. *Aameen!*

And our concluding prayer is that Praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد للہ رب العالمین

Venue : Jame'masjid Baitul-Mukarram,
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.

Date : 4th September, 1992

Keep Good Bonds With Relatives

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهد ان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده و رسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيراً كثيراً

اما بعد !

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطٰن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ان الله تعالى خلقِ الخلق حتى اذا فرغ منه قامت الرحم فقالت هذا مقام العائذبك من القطيعة قال نعم اما ترضين ان اصل من وصلك واقطع من قطعك قالت بلى قال بذلك لك۔

ثم قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم اقرؤا ان شئتم: " فَهَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِنْ

تَوَلَّيْتُمْ اَنْ تُفْسِدُوْا فِى الْاَرْضِ وَتُقَطِّعُوْا اَرْحَامَكُمْ اُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ لَعَنَهُمُ اللّٰهُ فَاَصَمَّهُمْ وَاَعْمٰى اَبْصَارَهُمْ" (مسلم، كتاب البر والصلة، باب صلة الرحم)

All praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him, beseech Him for help and seek His forgiveness. We believe in Him and place our trust in Him. We seek refuge in Allah from the mischief of our souls and from our evil deeds. He whom Allah guides, none can mislead and he whom He leaves stray none can guide. And, we bear witness that there is no god but Allah Who is Alone and has no partner, and we bear witness that Sayyidina Muhammad is His Slave and His Messenger - may Allah bless him, his family and his companions. And may He favour him and give him peace, a complete peace.

I seek refuge in Allah from the cursed devil. In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

We have it from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Allah created the creations and when He finished from that *ar-Rahm* (ties of relationship) stood up and said: (O Allah) This is the place where I seek refuge with You from the severing of relations. He said: Yes! Are you not pleased that I will keep good relationship with one who keeps you united and I will sever relationship with one who severs you. It said: Certainly! Allah Said: That is how it will be for you.

Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Recite, if you like:

فَهَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ اِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ اَنْ تُفْسِدُوْا فِى الْاَرْضِ وَتُقَطِّعُوْا اَرْحَامَكُمْ ۝ اُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ لَعَنَهُمُ اللّٰهُ فَاَصَمَّهُمْ وَاَعْمٰى اَبْصَارَهُمْ (سورة محمد: ٢٣-٢٤)

If you turn away, then is it to be expected of you anything but that you would do corruption in the land and sever your ties of kinship? Those are they whom Allah has cursed, so He has made them deaf and blinded their sights."

(Surah Muhammad 47:22-23)

Keeping Good Relations Encouraged

We have read the *Hadith* narrated by Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه. In another version, it is stated that *ties of relationship* caught hold of the throne. Anyway the question arises how did it stand up? This is something that only Allah and His Messenger ﷺ know. We cannot describe it because *ar-Rahm* or ties of relationship is not something with a body that may stand up, but sometimes Allah will grant a body in the Hereafter and the heaven to such things as do not normally have a body.

Yet Another Verse

Actually, this *Hadith* is an explanation of all those verses of the Qur'an in which Allah repeatedly enjoins that rights of relatives be fulfilled and ties be maintained with them. Thus whenever he delivered the sermon of *Nikah* (marriage), the Prophet ﷺ recited the following verse of the Qur'an:

وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ الَّذِىْ تَسَآءَلُوْنَ بِهٖ وَالْاَرْحَامَ ۚ (النساء: ١)

So fear Allah by Whom you demand (your rights) of one another, and fear (breaking) kinship of wombs. (an-Nisa : 1)

When everyone demands his rights from another person he demands them by Allah - on His Name and cautions him to fear lest he violates the rights of relatives

and face Allah's punishment in the Hereafter. The Holy Qur'an and the *Ahadith* are replete with exhortations to meet the rights of kinship.

Shari'ah Is Another Name For Granting Rights Of Other People

The truth is that *Shari'ah* is actually another name for meeting the rights of others. There are rights of Allah and rights of the slaves of Allah, and the latter differ according to different people. There are rights of parents, children, spouse, kith and kin, neighbours, companions in journey, and in this manner, *Shari'ah* is a text defining rights of people. If anyone does not give even one of these rights then his following *Shari'ah* is faulty, his religion is incomplete. If any one meets the rights of Allah but does not meet the rights of fellowmen then his religion is blemished and he is not following the religion faithfully. Among the rights, Allah has given rights to relatvies too particularly.

All Human Beings Are Relatives.

If we think of it, all children of Hazrat Adam عليه السلام are one family related to each other as the Prophet ﷺ has said. All human beings have one, common father Hazrat Adam عليه السلام. We are descended from him, all of us. Later on human beings branched off into families and tribes. They settled at different places. Relations came to be known as distant and were then considered as such although actually all mankind are relatives of one another. Some people are closed relatives and some distant, but all are tied in kinship, all are relatives.

Giving Rights Results In Peace

Some people have special rights. They are close relatives and they include brothers, sisters, uncles-paternal and maternal - spouse, father and mother. In common, parlance, they are the ones who are called relatvies. If their rights are given faithfully, life will be peaceful and secure. What we see of mutual wrangling and disputes, hatred for one another and enmity, and lawsuits, are all results of neglecting mutual rights among close relatives. If everyone gives rights of his relatives, kith and kin, there will never be any dispute never squabbles and never disagreements, and never any lawsuit. That is why Allah has commanded us to give these rights and earn a peaceful life. The *family* is the base of a society. If a family is not united and its members do not love each other and do not have proper mutual relation then the whole society suffers. Its mischief spreads in the entire society and it soils it. Then the entire nation gets the stain. To avoid this, Allah and His Messenger ﷺ have laid great emphasis on giving rights of relatives and keeping good ties with them.

Keep Good Ties For The Sake Of Allah

It is every religion and every society that calls for giving rights of relatives and maintaining good relations with them but the principle taught by the Holy Prophet ﷺ in this regard is distinct from every other teaching. If we adopt that principle we will never lag behind in giving rights of relatives and dealing well with them. The principle he taught us is that we should never aim to please our relatives whenever we deal with them nicely but we should aim at obtaining the pleasure of Allah. Our intention in metting out fair treatment to our relatives should be to obey the command of Allah and thus please Him and we must tell

ourselves that we do that for the pleasure of Allah. If we do it with the intention to please Allah, then we will not anticipate a return from the relatvie for our good behaviour with him. Our minds will be made up accordingly and if our relatives are happy because of our conduct and thank us or reciprocate then that would be a blessing for us. If they do not reciprocate and do not be grateful and do not show happiness at our conduct even then we have to continue our efforts as part of the obligation imposed on us by Allah.

We Must Not Expect Gratitude And Reciprocation

While everyone is agreed that the rights of relatives should be met, the problem arises because, once these rights are given, the giver expects a grateful gesture and a reciprocal move. The recepient is supposed to publicise the donor's conduct. But, if he does not thank or respond then the giver of rights is disappointed and feels hurt. He begins to think bad of his relative and disparages him with the result that he loses the reward he had earned. He harbours illwill for the relative and will never again show goodwill to him. When the time comes, he will hesitate to deal with him in a good manner because he does not even utter a 'thank you', to him. Not only does he cease to deal with the relative in a good way, he also surrenders whatever reward he had earned previously because the goodwill that he had shown was not for the sake of Allah but to get a 'thank you' and a return. The Holy Prophetﷺ has said, therefore, whenever we deal with other people in a good manner we should have the pleasure of Allah in mind and anticipate no return from the person to whom we are being good, nor may we expect him to show gratitude in words.

Who Is The One To Keep the bonds of Kinship Intact

There is a *Hadith* that we must remember always. The Holy Prophetﷺ has said:

لَيْسَ الْوَاصِلُ بِالْمُكَافِئِ لٰكِنَّ الْوَاصِلُ مَنْ اِذَا قُطِعَتْ رِحْمُهُ وَصَلَهَا

(بخاری، کتاب الادب، باب لیس الواصل بالمکافی)

"*Al-Wasil* - the person who keeps ties of relationship intact is not the one who reciprocates but he is the one who maintains good relations with those relatives who break bonds of kinship with him." (Bukhari Book of Adab, 78. Hadith 7991)

That person is not credited with having maintained ties of relationship who does it in a gesture of reciprocation, because the other person has maintained the ties. He reciprocates in equal measure to what his relative does in keeping alive the bonds. He says to himself, "If he keeps the ties of relationship, I will do likewise but if he severs them, I too will sever the ties." This person is not defined as one who joins ties of kinship. He will not be rewarded for joining ties of kinship. The person who really joins relationship is he who carries on his effort inspite of the fact that the other man violates the right and severs the relationship. This person ignores the other man's behaviour and keeps the ties intact for the sake of Allah and to gain his pleasure. He is the one who really joins bonds of kinship and who is entitled to reward on that account.

We Are Restricted By Custom

If we asked anyone today if our relatives have any rights, he will say promptly that they do have. But the question is how many give these rights and to what extent?

If we investigate, we will find that we are restricted by our custom and the bonds that we maintain with our relatives are limited by custom. We do not go beyond that. For instance, we take care to offer a gift on the occasion of a marraige of a relative because it is a custom although we may not be able to pay for it or not feel like giving the gift. If we do not make a present, the hosts may feel offended because they had given gifts when they had been invited. So the gift is given not because of love but to meet custom and to show off. The result is that the giver of gifts will not earn a reward but, on the contrary, is committing a sin because his intention is to show off and earn a name for himself.

It Is Unlawful To Give An Equal Return On Occasions

A custom is in vogue in our society whereby guests repay the host the gifts that they had given them when they had invited them earlier. This exchange of gifts in like value is known as *Niyotah*. People remember the gifts different people had given them in the shape of cash and know what they have to give. Some people maintain a proper record that is consulted when the occasion arises. This amount has to be paid at all cost even if he cannot afford it and has to leave his children hungry. If he does not give, he will be looked down upon by society members. The principle on which this works is the 'equal return' basis, and it is unlawful. The Qur'an has called it *Riba* and it says about it:

وَمَآ اٰتَيْتُمْ مِّنْ رِّبًا لِّيَرْبُوَا۟ فِيْٓ اَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ فَلَا يَرْبُوْا عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ ۚ وَمَآ اٰتَيْتُمْ مِّنْ زَكٰوةٍ تُرِيْدُوْنَ وَجْهَ اللّٰهِ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُضْعِفُوْنَ (سورة الروم:٣٩)

And whatever you give in usury in order that it may increase upon people's riches, it increases

not with Allah; but what you give in *zakah*, seeking Allah's Countenance (will increase), so those who (do this) shall have manifold increase

(ar-Rum. 30:39)

This refers to giving anything to other people in the form of *Niyotah* as an apparent gift (but with the intention of receiving back a like value or an increase). There will be no increase with Allah except when *zakah* is given, or *Sadaqah*, with the intention of obtaining the pleasure of Allah. In the latter cases, Allah does increase the wealth of the givers.

Why Is A Gift Given

If anyone feels that he should present a gift to one of his relative who is celebrating a happy occasion then he will earn a reward for that provided he is sincere and expects no return for it. His only motive is to fulfil the obligation of relationship and to please Allah. His gift will be bracketed with joining relationship.

How May The Intention Be Verified

How may one know whether the intention in giving the gift is to see the pleasure of Allah or to hope for a reimbursement from the recepient? It is verified very easily. If the giver of a gift looks out for a sign of gratitude from the receiver and waits for a return gesture when he invites the receiver to an occasion then these are clear signs that the gift was not given for the sake of Allah. It is also the same when the return gift is of a lesser value and, therefore, not appreciated. In these cases a gift is given, but it is wasted because the intention is blemish. On the other hand, it is a sign that the gift is given to secure the pleasure of Allah if the giver does not expect thanks from the receiver and

forgets he had given a gift; he does not expect a return for that but tells himself that he has given the gift for the sake of Allah and expects no gratitude or a return gesture. "I will not mind if he does not reciprocate," he tells himself. This gift turns out to be a blessing for both the giver and receiver.

A Gift Is Lawful And Pure

My respected father Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه used to say that the gift a Muslim gives to another willingly and with love with no ostentatious designs, is the most lawful and pure thing in the universe. This is because in what a man earns himself, he might have committed excess or erred somewhere so that the earning is not fully lawful but when a Muslim gives a gift sincerely with love and no ulterior motive, the only driving force being to please Allah then the gift is lawful without doubt. This is why my respected father valued a gift very much and Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه had set certain principles for giving gifts and he valued them. He was very particular in spending them because that was a lawful pure wealth of a Muslim given for the sake of Allah. That gift was full of blessings. In short a gift that is given for the sake of Allah is auspicious for the giver and the receiver, and that which is given with ostentatious designs is neither a blessing for the giver nor for the receiver.

A Gift That One Waits For Is Not Auspicious

The *Hadith* goes so far as to tell us that if we look forward to the visit of a certain person who will bring a gift along for us then that gift is inauspicious. But, a gift is auspicious if it is received without waiting for it or asking for it. Allah puts it into somebody's mind to give a present

and he presents the gift then it is very auspicious. In other words, the auspiciousness wanes away if one waits for the gift, personal objective being behind the wait.

The Case Of an Elder Religious Man

There was a very devoted, righteous man. He was god-fearing and deeply religious. Such men often face difficult trials. Once he encountered hunger and remained without food for several days. He was delivering a sermon to his disciples but because of severe weakness could not convey his message well. His voice was very low and weak. One of his disciples in the gathering saw the condition of his mentor and understood that the weakness was due to hunger and perhaps he had not eaten for days. He went out with the intention of bringing food for his Shaikh. He came back after a little while with food laid down in a tray and presented it to his Shaikh. The Shaikh saw the food, thought about it for a moment and said, "No. Take it away. I will not eat it." So, the disciple took it away. He was not like the disciples we come across these days who would insist that their mentor should eat. This man knew that his Shaikh was a perfect mentor whose order must be obeyed without demur. He knew that he was not being pretentious in rejecting food but that there must have been a reason behind the refusal. So, he took away the food he had brought. Then, he came back after sometime again with the food and presented it before the Shaikh saying, "Do accept it now." The religious man said, "Yes, I will eat it now."

The disciple revealed later on,"When I first brought the food and the Shaikh refused it, I understood that he refused it because when I got up from the gathering and went out, he presumed that I had related his weakness to

hunger. So, he anticipated that I would bring him food and he was waiting for that. When I did bring the food, he was in a state of anticipation and hope. He recalled the *Hadith* that if a gift is received after wait and hope it is not blessed. So he refused the food. I took away the food so that he may not wait and hope for it. When I brought it again after a while the hindrance to acceptance of the gift was removed so he accepted the gift."

If there is wait for the gift, or an ostentatious behaviour behind serving or expectation of reimbursement then the gift is without blessing.

Grow Love Through Gifts

The saying of the Holy Prophetﷺ is recalled in a *Hadith*:

تها دوا تحابوا (المؤطا فی حسن الخلق، باب ماجاء فی المهاجرة)

"Exchange gifts and grow mutual love."

(al-Muwatta - in Hasan ul-Haq. Chapter Ma ja fil Muhajirah)

Exchange of gifts grows mutual love provided the driving force is to see the pleasure of Allah, to give the rights of relatives, to improve one's lot in the Hereafter and attain success before Allah. But, we do not give gifts with this in mind. We can see what happens in marriage parties; gifts are given to follow custom. Gifts are not given to fulfil mutual obligations or to meet the rights of kith and kin. Even if some of the menfolk decide to give their relatives gifts, the women in the family stall their move saying, "What's the use in giving a gift now without an occasion. Let's wait for an occasion in their family when the gift would be given. Our burden will be removed then. "The truth, however, is that the correct time for giving a gift is when there was no occasion and the

intention was sincere there being no desire to gain fame. The motive was to please Allah and one's relative or friend. That was the correct time to make a present, a gift should be made at such times always.

Do Not Look At The Gift But At The Spirit That Prompts It

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has also taught us that we should not look at the thing that is presented but we should look at the spirit with which it is presented. If a small gift is presented with sincere love then it is much better than a large gift that is given to earn a name and to show off. The Holy Prophetﷺ has said:

لا تحقرن جارة لجارتها ولو فرسن شاة(بخاری کتاب الادب، باب لاتحقرن جارة لجارتها)

"A female neighbour must not look down upon the gift of her lady neighbour even if it were the trotters of a sheep:"(Bukhari. Book of Manners. 78. Hadith 6017)

This is because we do not have to see what is presented, we must see the sentiments that prompted the person to make the gift. If it is presented because of love, the gift must be valued. It is a blessed gift. On the other hand, a very precious gift lacks blessings if ostentatious motives are behind it. Therefore, if a slave of Allah - no matter who the person is - presents us something howsoever small we must accept it as an auspicious gift. Normally, a small gift is not prompted by an ostentatious behaviour because it is an ordinary thing and what can one show off about it. But a precious thing may be accompanied by a display. Therefore, we must value a small gift more than a large one.

An Invitation From The Earner Of Lawful Means

My respected father, Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه used to narrate an incident of a righteous man in Deoband whose occupation was mowing the grass. He earned his livelihood through selling the grass. His daily income was six paisas. He divided his income in three. He spent two paisas on himself, two paisas on charity and the remaining two he set aside for a feast to which he invited prominent scholars of the Dar ul-Uloom which he did when he had collected a few paisas. The invitees included the Shaikh ul-Hind, Maulana Mahmud ul-Hasan رحمة الله عليه, Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رحمة الله عليه, and others. These scholars would look out for the invitation for the whole month while the very rich would also invite them but they never waited for their invitation - because that man's invitation was sincere only for the sake of Allah and from lawful earnings. They found much blessings in his feast, the like of which they did not experience in any other. They found their hearts glow with light for days together after they ate his meals and felt impelled to worship and engage in devotional exercises. This shows that a small gift is more likely to be sincere than a large gift and, therefore, we must value it.

Gift Must Not Be Given To Meet Obligations Of Custom

When we give a gift we must remember that a gift is given to provide comfort and to make someone happy. The gift that is given to satisfy custom will not provide comfort or happiness to the receiver because only customary things are given at such times like sweet meat, piece of cloth, and so on. If anyone gives something else as a gift that would look out of place and people would pass adverse comments

on it, and the giver will feel ashamed. But, if anyone wishes to give a gift sincerely for the sake of Allah alone then he will search for something the receiver needs. He will give him that so that he benefits from it.

The Unique Gifts Of An Elder

There was a religious elder, Shah Abdul Aziz رحمة الله عليه. He was a well-known missionary worker and a member of the *Tabligh Jamaat* that is very active in the propagation of religion. He came frequently to my respected father رحمة الله عليه and was a good friend. When he visited my father at the Dar ul-Uloom he brought with him one or the other out-of-the-oridinary gift. These were unconventional gifts that were not normally presented on visits. Sometimes he brought a quire of paper and presented it to my father. No one gives such a gift but this man knew that my father wrote profusely and paper would be a useful gift for him. He hoped to be rewarded too through the pious writings on the paper. Sometimes he brough an ink pot. Naturally, anyone who hopes to make a display will not bring such things as gift. Only such a person who hopes to please Allah and bring comfort to the recepient will give gifts of this kind. If he had presented a box of sweetmeat, my father did not eat it and that would have gone to other people beside him.

A Gift Must Be Chosen Sensibly

In giving gifts, we have to choose sensibly. This ability is also given by Allah and sought sincerely. This does not apply to those cases where a gift is given with ostentatious designs when custom is followed and an ink pot would be a laughing stock but a box of sweatmeat would look beautiful and appropraite. Our society is

entangled in customs and ties of relationship also follow dictates of custom and habit. On the one hand exhange of gifts is a very good thing which is encouraged by the Holy Prophet ﷺ but we have made that part of customs and lost the virtuous angle that brought us Allah's reward. We have lost its blessings and happiness and made it a sinful habit. Let us realise that these things, like *niyotah,* are unlawful and sinful. Reward accrues only if a recepient reciprocates of his own accord without pressure or hint.

Do Everything For The Sake Of Allah

There are other things too besides gifts that go a long way in cementing ties of relationship with kin. We may share their grief and sorrow, help them in their time of distress, and so on. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has advised us that even while helping a relative we must do it only for the sake of Allah and not expect him to laud us or show gratitude to us or reimburse us. If we do it with such motives we will not earn happiness although we may have put in an effort.

Relatives Are Like Scorpions

In keeping with the deterioration of our society, the Arabic language has an adage- الاقارب كا العقارب (*relatives are scorpions.* The first word means 'relatives' and the second is the plural of 'scorpion'. It says that, like scorpions, relatives always sting. They are never happy. This saying gained currency after our wrong expectations did not materialise. It happens that people behave kindly with their relatives in the expectation that they would reciprocate and be grateful but that does not happen so the relatives are likened to scorpions. But, the kind treatment should be shown on the understanding that it is a command of Allah and the example of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and, whether or not a return

gesture is shown, the command of Allah will be obeyed. Whether the recepient responds or not Allah will surely respond. A person's true test is when he goes on treating his relatives well although they do not respond or give a rough treatment in return. He must go on maintaining good relations with the hope of geting a return from Allah for Whom he does the good work. We must remember that the Prophet ﷺ has said, "He is not the one to link relationship who expects a reciprocal gesture but he is one who joins broken relationships inspite of a negative response."

The Prophet's ﷺ Treatment Of His Relatives

We must look at the Prophet ﷺ, how he treated his relatives. With the exception of a few relatives, all were his staunch enemies and they did all they could to cause him hardship and trouble. These include the very close relatives, his paternal uncle and his cousin who put him to difficulty every now and then. But, the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not lag behind in giving the rights of his relatives. We see him at the conquest of Makkah when he had an opportunity to take his revenge but he forgave them all. He made it known that whoever entered the *Haram* was safe and whoever took shelter in the house of Abu Sufyan was safe, and he did not seek vengeance on anyone and he did not expect anyone to reciprocate his fair treatment of anyone. It is *Sunnah,* therefore, to respond to a relative's unfair treatment with good treatment.

Do Not Place Expectation With The Creatures

Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanav رحمة الله عليه has said something very wise from his experience. He said, "There is only one way to live in comfort in this world and that is to cease to have expectations with the creatures of Allah." We

may not expect anyone to be good to us, to help us, to remove our problems and to share our griefs. All our expectations must be placed with One Being - Allah, Full of Glory and Majesty. If we have no expectation from anyone of the creatures of Allah and if we get anything from them by way of fair treatment or help then that will give us much joy and happiness, and if they torment us or are unfair to us then we will not grieve over that. This is because we had not expected any good from them and did not rely on them so if they are bad to us we would have expected that any way and if they do good to us that would please us. If, however, we expect good treatment at their hands and they deal with us unfairly then that would grieve us much.

Man May Expect Pain & Sorrow In This World

The reality of this life is that it always places hardship and pain in a man's path. If he finds happiness and joy in his life then he must understand that it is the blessing of Allah on him. If he is grieved then he must know that it was expected and he need not feel sorry for that. If we follow this advice then we will have no cause for complaint because a man complains only when he fails to get what he expects. Let him place his expectations in Allah and hope not for anything from fellow men then, *Insha Allah,* he will live in peace and comfort.

Lives Of Men Of Allah

Our elders gave us this prescription and I have passed it on to you but nothing is achieved from merely listening to sermons or reading good advice. We must understand it well and put it into practice. We must examine ourselves again and again and ask ourselves these questions. What do we expect from others? Why do we

rely on them? Why have we not turned to Allah for these things? We must look at the *men of Allah* who are always happy. If they encounter an hardship, may be they are grieved momentarily but they do not let the grief engulf them nor are they restless because they have established a link with their Master. They never turn to fellow creatures, or expect anything from them, and they ask them not for anything. They only ask Allah for their requirement and they are always content and peaceful.

The Case Of A Righteous Man

Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has written about a righteous man whom someone asked, "How are you?" He replied, "*Al-hamdu lillah* (Praise be to Allah)." The righteous then added, "My brother, you are asking me how I am although nothing in the universe goes against my wishes. Everything in the universe happens as I like. "If everything in the universe happens as one likes then who else is happier than that person and who is more luxurious than him. The person who had put the question was taken aback and asked, "This experience was not available to the Holy Prophets ﷺ too. They could not say that everything in the universe obeyed their wishes. Rather, things happened even against their wishes. How, then, can you say everything happens according to your wishes?"

The righteous man replied that he had made his wishes subservient to the wishes of Allah. "The will of my Allah is my wish and what my Allah chooses, I choose. Nothing in this universe goes against the will of Allah and His wish 'and I have surrendered my ego so everything happens as I wish because it happens as Allah wills. Therefore, I am very happy and live in luxury."

The Peace Of The Righteous

The *men of Allah,* the righteous men live a very comfortable and peaceful life. Hazrat Sufyan Thawri رحمة الله عليه has said about it that if the kings of the world learnt about the magnitude of peace and security these people enjoyed then they would fight them with their swords to snatch the comfort from these men. The peace that they enjoy is available to them because they turn away their sights from fellow creatures and because they expect nothing from them. We too can experience that. Let us refrain from hoping for something from fellow creatures and then see the peace we derive and enjoy. These things cannot be had by merely listening to somone narrate them or by reading about them. We must live in the company of devoted men and these things will come to us gradually and our lives-in this world and the next - will change for the better.

Summary

We may summarise this discussion by emphasising that the right of our relatives must be given to them together with a fair treatment for the sake of Allah and to gain His pleasure, not in an ostentatious manner and not to comply with custom.

May Allah be merciful to us and help us understand the facts, and to behave accordingly. *Aameen*

And the conclusion of our call is that praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the Worlds.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame'Masjid Baitul-Mukarram,
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.

Date :

The Muslim Fraternity

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهد ان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد !

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطٰن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

وَافْعَلُوْا الْخَيْرَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُوْنَ (سورة الحج: ٧٧)

وعن ابن عمر رضى الله تعالى عنهما ان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال:

اَلْمُسْلِمُ اَخُوالْمُسْلِمِ لَا يَظْلِمُهُ وَ لَايُسَلِّمُهُ وَمَنْ كَانَ فِىْ حَاجَةِ اَخِيْهِ كَانَ اللهُ فِىْ حَاجَتِهِ وَمَنْ فَرَّجَ عَنْ مُسْلِمٍ كُرْبَةً فَرَّجَ اللهُ عَنْهُ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرَبِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ وَمَنْ سَتَرَ مُسْلِمًا سَتَرَهُ اللهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ (ابو داؤد، كتاب

(الادب باب المواخاة)

Praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him, beseech Him for help and we seek His forgiveness. We believe in Him and place our trust in Him. We seek refuge in Him from the mischief of our souls and from our evil deeds. He whom Allah guides none can mislead and he whom He leaves to stray none can guide. And, we bear witness that there is no god except Allah, the One, He has no partners; and we bear witness that Sayyidina Muhammad is His Slave and Messenger. May Allah bless him and his family and companions, and shower favours and peace, a complete peace.

I seek refuge in Allah from the cursed devil. In the Name of Allah the Compassionate, the Merciful. Do Good that you may prosper.(Surah al-Hajj, 22:77)

(this verse calls for prostration)

Ibn Umar رضی اللہ عنہما has said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "A Muslim is the brother of another Muslim. He does not oppress the other and does not hand him over to the enemy (so that he does not leave him in the lurch). He who sees after the needs of his brother, Allah looks after his needs and satisfies him. And he who removes a Muslim's distress or hardship. Allah will remove a distress of the several he will face on the Day of Resurrection. And he who conceals a Muslim's secret, Allah will conceal his secret on the Day of Resurrection." (Abu Dawood. Kitab ul-Adab)

Do Good To Other People

It is not enough for a Muslim that he cause no hardship to another Muslim and oppress him not and preserve him from trouble, but he must go further and help him and be of service to him. He must do what he can, within his means, to satisfy his needs. He must try to remove an anxiety a Muslim brother might be facing. This is among the duties of a Muslim. Allah has said in the verse quoted above. "Do good deeds that you may be successful." To do good encompasses a wide range of goodness, for instance, it calls upon one to do good to another person, to give him good treatment, to be compassionate to him and to fulfil his needs.

A comprehensive *Hadith*

The *Hadith* that we have read above is narrated by Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہما. It tells us that a Muslim does not oppress another and does not desert him. It tells us that as long as he is engaged in fulfilling his brother's needs, Allah will fulfil all his needs and settle his affairs. It tells us further that on the Day of Resurrection, Allah will remove one of the hardships of the man who solves a Muslim's difficulty and removes his anxiety. The *Hadith* states furthur that on the Day of Resurrection, Allah will conceal the sins of the man who conceals the faults of a Muslim in this world, for instance, he does not publicise a major defect of a Muslim that he comes to know whether that is a major sin or shortcoming.

This is a very comprehensive *Hadith* and it comprises of several sentences. Each sentence calls for our careful attention.We must not only ponder over it but also put it into practice.

Muslims Are Brothers One Of The Other

In this *Hadith*, the first sentence that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said is that a *Muslim is the brother of another Muslim.* Thus, each of them will deal with every other Muslim in the same way as he deals with his brother, even if the other Muslim is a stranger, and the two are not friends yet they are to treat each other as brothers. By speaking this one sentence, the Holy Prophet ﷺ cut at the roots of discrimination that is common in our society. There is no discrimination between residents of different nations, people of different tribes and speakers of different languages. A Muslim is the brother of another Muslim no matter what he speaks, what country he comes from,what his occupation is, to what tribe he belongs. In every condition, the two are brothers.

One Does Not Enjoy Excellence Over The Other

Allah has stated this fact in the following words in the Holy Qur'an:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اِنَّا خَلَقْنٰكُمْ مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ وَّاُنْثٰى وَجَعَلْنٰكُمْ شُعُوْبًا وَّقَبَآئِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوْا ۭ اِنَّ اَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَاللّٰهِ اَتْقٰكُمْ ۭ (سورة الحجرات:١٣)

O mankind! Surely we have created you from a male and a female, and have made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another. Surely the noblest among you in the sight of Allah is the most pious of you.

(al-Hujurat. 49:13)

This verse proclaims a manifesto for all mankind. It tells them that their line of descent originates from one man and one woman, Hazrat Adam علیہ السلام and Hazrat Hawwa علیہما السلام. They have one father, Hazrat Adam علیہ السلام, and one mother, Hazrat Hawwa علیہما السلام. They are descended from

one father and one mother so they do not enjoy preference or excellence one over the other. A question arises because of this : "When all human beings are children of one father and one mother, then, O Allah, why did you divide them into different families and tribes?" Following our question, Allah let us know why; He said: لتعارفوا (that you may know one another). If all men spoke one language, resided in one country and belonged to one family then it would have been difficult to know one from other. For example, if three men are named Abdullah then to distinguish them their origin is attached to the name, Abdullah of Karachi, of Lahore, of Peshawar. This is why Allah created different languages and different cities. There is no excellence to anyone over the other (because of that) except on the basis of *taqwa.* A man who shows more *taqwa* - that is, is more God-fearing, devout, religious - enjoys greater closeness to Allah as a noble person even if he has a lower status by worldly standards.

Difference Between Islam & Disbelief

The Prophet ﷺ showed us by example that we have to make a distinction between Islam and disbelief and prefer the first in our dealings with others. Abu Lahab was his paternal uncle and a chief of his family but had not abandoned disbelief. Therefore, his position is that the Qur'an curses him, and this a position that will carry on till the Last Day. Every Muslim who recites the Qur'an sends a curse on Abu Lahab when he reads this verse:

تَبَّتْ يَدَآ اَبِيْ لَهَبٍ وَّتَبَّ ۝ (سورة اللهب:١)

Perish the hands of Abu Lahab and perish he.

(al-Lahab, 111:1)

Also, at the Badr, the Prophet ﷺ fought his paternal

uncles, his father's elder brothers.

The abode of Bilal رضی اللہ عنہ in Jannah

On the other side, the Prophetﷺ embraced Hazrat Bilal رضی اللہ عنہ who was a black man from Ethiopia. Rather, he asks him. "O Bilal! Let me know that behaviour of yours on account of which I heard your soft footsteps ahead of me in Paradise in my dreams tonight." This question was put to the man who is black and a resident of Ethiopia whom the Arabs looked down upon. Hazrat Bilal رضی اللہ عنہ replied, "O Messenger of Allah! I do not do anything in particular except one little deed that I have observed regularly. Whenever I perform ablution during the day or night, I am sure to follow it up with voluntary *Salat* of two or four *rakaat*." (This *Salat* is known as *tahiyat ul-wadu*.) The Holy Prophet ﷺ confirmed that perhaps it was because of this that Allah granted him the high station. (Bukhari, Tahajjud)

Why Was Hazrat Bilal رضی اللہ عنہ Ahead Of The Messenger of Allah ﷺ

The question perturbs some minds: why did Hazrat Bilal رضی اللہ عنہ walk ahead of the Prophetﷺ when no one does that? The Ulama have asserted that Hazrat Bilal رضی اللہ عنہ was ahead of the Prophet ﷺ in Paradise not because of a higher station that he enjoyed over him but it was his practice in the world too to walk ahead as a sentry. He always carried a stick and walked ahead of the Holy Prophetﷺ removing stones and thorns from the way and looking out for an intruder. Because it was his habit in the world to walk ahead of the Prophet ﷺ, Allah has honoured him with that distinction in Heaven too, "You protected my friend in the world so I will keep you ahead of him in heaven too!" That is why the Holy Prophetﷺ heard his

footsteps before him in Paradise.

Islam gathers its adherents together

This distinction was achieved by him who was known as a slave, considered a lowly black and had no standing in terms of blood and family. In comparison Abu Lahab has the Qur'an curse him تبت یدا ابی لهب وتب (May the hands of Abu Lahab perish and may he perish). Hazrat Suhayb رضی اللہ عنہ of Rome arrives and earns a high station. Hazrat Salman Farsi رضی اللہ عنہ of Iran arrives and earns such a noble distinction that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said about him سلمان منا اهل البیت "Salman is one of us - the people of the house!" In this way the Prophetﷺ broke down the icons of nationality, descent, colour and language and made known, "We are those who believe in one Allah Who has created all men from one man and one woman and all mankind are borthers."

اِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ اِخْوَةٌ

When the Prophetﷺ migrated to Madinah, the tribes of Aws and Khazraj were at loggerhead with each other. A father would instruct his son to carry on his war with the enemy and seek vengeance with him. They fought a war in the Days of Ignorance by the name of *Harb Basus* that was waged for forty years. The war had its beginnings in a simple incident. Someone's chick had annoyed another person when it strayed in that man's fields. The owner of the fields killed the chick in anger. This infuriated the owner of the chick and after an exchange of hot words they came to blows after which swords were picked up and their respective tribes came to their aid. This war lasted for forty years. But, the Messenger of Allahﷺ so engrossed them in the *Kalimah*: There is no god but Allah لا اله الا الله that their

hostility for one another cooled down into friendship. It could not be guessed after that if they had ever been hostile to one another and at such a prolonged war. The Qur'an has pointed out to their cordial ties of fraternity

وَاذْكُرُوْا نِعْمَتَ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ اِذْ كُنْتُمْ اَعْدَآءً فَاَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوْبِكُمْ فَاَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهٖٓ اِخْوَانًا (سورة آل عمران: ١٠٣)

And remember Allah's blessing on you when you were enemies (of each other), and He united your hearts in love, and you became brethren by His blessing... (Al Imran, 3:103)

Let it not be that the fraternal relations are forgotten and the ways of the Days of Ignorance are reverted to.

We Have Forgotten The Principle

The first thing that the Prophet ﷺ taught us through the *Hadith* is that all Muslims are linked together in bonds of fraternity irrespective of the language they speak, the tribe to which they belong and the nation they are associated with. They must deal with one another in brotherly fashion. A Muslim must not be driven away from his brother because of difference in genealogy, nationality or language. History tells us that Muslims suffered defeat every time they thought in these terms and they forgot the principle taught to them by the Prophet ﷺ that a Muslim is the brother of the other Muslim. There has been always an instigator who pointed out differences of nationality or ethnic variations and in this way brought the two factions to fight each other. May Allah inspire us to adopt the principle taught by the Prophet ﷺ. *Aameen*! We do say and assert the words that Muslims are brothers one of the other but do we match our words with our behaviour? When the time comes our conduct is much

different from what we profess. Let all of us examine ourselves and resolve to reform our conduct so that we treat every other Muslim as our brother. May Allah be merciful to us and make us adopt this principle. *Aameen*!

A Muslim Helps Another Muslim

The *Hadith* says further ولا يسلمه "and he does not desert him." It is not merely that he does not be cruel to him but he also does not abandon him. If a Muslim is surrounded by an anxiety or a difficulty and is in need of assistance then no Muslim will leave him in the lurch. He will not tell himself that it is not his concern what the other has to cope with, and he does not separate from him saying that. This is not the trait of a Muslim. On the contrary, it is part of a Muslim's duties that when he sees another Muslim in distress or anxiety, he should do his best to help him out, to remove his anxiety without worrying about his time being spent and his tasks being delayed.

An Eye-opening Account Of Our Times

The times that we are passing through are times when human life is not valued. A human being is not respected as such. There was a time when men would rush to help a stumbling fellowman stand up and to support him until he was properly balanced on his feet. If there was an accident, people would run and come to his aid, trying to dress his worunds. But, the situation has changed in our times. Let me recall an incident that I saw with my own eyes. I saw that a man was hit by a car that raced away after the accident. The man fell down flat. After that between twenty and twenty-five cars passed, the driver of each car slowing down to satisfy his inquisitive nature, but none of those

people stopped to help him. All the cars sped away after feeding their curiosity. In spite of that, the current generation call themselves civilised and cultured. We are not speaking of Islam here, but even as human beings, the drivers should have stopped, got down and seen what was wrong. They should have helped him as much as they could. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said in the *Hadith* that is the topic of our discussion that it is not expected of a Muslim that he would abandon the other Muslim in this manner. Rather, it is the duty of a Muslim that he should try as best as he can to remove the difficulty and trouble of another Muslim when he finds him in that.

The Practice Of The Prophet ﷺ

It was the behaviour of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that whenever he learnt that someone was in need of something, he would do his best to get him that thing. If anyone was in some difficulty, he would be restless and continue to be so until he had done his utmost to help out the other man. It was only at the time of the Peace Treaty of Hudaybiah that he was hindred from helping out the Makkan Muslims who sought protection in Madinah. In compliance with the Treaty, he had to return those Muslims to the unbelievers. The Treaty was signed with the idolators of Makkah at the command of Allah. He said, "I am helpless because of the Treaty and I have to return the refugees." Apart from this incident, it never happened that the Prophet ﷺ did not help a Muslim whom he found in difficulty.

May Allah help us to conduct ourselves in the manner we have been taught in this discussion. *Aameen!*

And the conclusion of our call is that all praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame'Masjid Baitul-Mukarram,
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.

Date : 10th January 1992

Love the Creatures of Allah

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهد ان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد!

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله عنه عن النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم قال:

مَنْ نَفَّسَ عَنْ مُؤْمِنٍ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرَبِ الدُّنْيَا نَفَّسَ اللهُ عَنْهُ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرَبِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَمَنْ يَسَّرَ عَلٰى مُعْسِرٍ يَسَّرَ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ فِى الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ وَمَنْ سَتَرَ مُسْلِمًا سَتَرَهُ اللهُ فِى الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ وَاللهُ فِىْ عَوْنِ الْعَبْدِ مَا كَانَ الْعَبْدُ فِىْ عَوْنِ اَخِيْهِ وَمَنْ سَلَكَ طَرِيْقًا يَلْتَمِسُ فِيْهِ عِلْمًا سَهَّلَ اللهُ بِهٖ طَرِيْقًا اِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَمَا اجْتَمَعَ قَوْمٌ فِىْ بَيْتٍ مِنْ بُيُوْتِ اللهِ تَعَالٰى

يَتْلُوْنَ كِتَابَ اللهِ يَتَدَارَسُوْنَهُ بَيْنَهُمْ إِلَّا نَزَلَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّكِيْنَةُ وَغَشِيَتْهُمُ الرَّحْمَةُ وَحَفَّتْهُمُ الْمَلٰئِكَةُ وَذَكَرَهُمُ اللهُ فِيْمَنْ عِنْدَهُ وَمَنْ بَطَّأَبِهِ عَمَلُهُ لَمْ يُسْرِعْ بِهِ نَسَبُـهُ (صحيح مسلم، كتاب الزكر والدعاء، باب فضل الا جتماع على تلاوة القران)

Praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him, beseech him for help, and we seek His forgiveness. We believe in Him and place our trust in Him. We seek refuge in Him from the mischief of our souls and from our evil deeds. He whom Allah guides none can mislead and he whom He leaves to stray none can guide. And we bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the Alone, Who has no partner, and we bear witness that Sayyidina Muhammad is His Slave and Messenger may Allah bless him, his family and Companions, and may He bestow favours and peace, a complete peace.

Hazrat Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ has reported the Messenger of Allah ﷺ as saying: He who alleviates the suffering of a Believer out of the sufferings of the world, Allah will alleviate his suffering out of the several on the Day of Resurrection and he who makes easy the difficulties of the hard pressed, Allah will make his difficulties easy for him in this world and in the Hereafter, and he who conceals the secrets of a Muslim, Allah will conceal his secrets in the world and the Hereafter. Allah supports a slave as long as the slave supports his brothers, And he who treads the path in search of knowledge Allah makes that path easy leading to Paradise. And a group of people do not gather in a House of the Houses

of Allah reciting the Book of Allah and learning it but that there descends on them tranquility, and mercy envelopes them, and angels surround them. Allah makes a mention of them to those close to Him. As for him who is slow in doing his deeds, his lineage prevents him from that. (Muslim. Book of Zikr Hadith 6518)

What is *Jawami ul Kalim*

This *Hadith*, as we have seen, is narrated by Hazrat Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ. The *Hadith* is made up of many sentences each spoken by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Each of the expression is a complete sentence, comprehensive in meaning. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has also said, "I have been given the *Jawami ul Kalim*" اوتیت جوامع الکلم *Jawani'ul Kalim* are such expressions as are comprehensive in meaning, although a few words are spoken they give a deep wide meaning. The sentences comprise of a few words and are brief but they convey a wide, rich meaning and they call for exhaustive deeds. Sayings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ which are made of small sentences but encompass a wide meaning are called *Jawami ul Kalim* (Comprehensive Brief Sayings). So, in the *Hadith* quoted Hazrat Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ has narrated many *Jawami ul Kalim* that cover various topics.

Reward On Removing Someone's Anxiety

The first sentence is about the person who alleviates a suffering out of the several a believer faces in this world. He may do it manually or otherwise. His action is very rewarding so much that on the Day of Resurrection, Allah will alleviate one of his sufferings as reward for his deed in the world.

Excellence of Allowing Time To An Indigent

The second sentence is about the person who makes difficulties easy for the hard-pressed. His reward is that Allah will make his difficulties easy for him both in this world and in the Hereafter. Say, someone is in debt, having borrowed money to meet a need but when the promised time comes for repayment of the debt, he is unable to pay it although he wishes to repay it. Then if the lender. Allows him time until he is able to repay, although he has a right to demand repayment at the promised time. Allah will make things easy for him in this world and the Hereafter. The Qur'an has said about such men:

وَاِنْ كَانَ ذُوْعُسْرَةٍ فَنَظِرَةٌ اِلٰى مَيْسَرَةٍ ؕ (سورة البقرة: ٢٨٠)

But if the debtor is in difficulty, let there be respite till it is easy (for him). (al-Baqarah, 2:280)

It calls upon a Believer to allow the debtor time until he is able to repay the loan.

Allah Loves Mildness

Allah loves very much mild behaviour in a person. He loves very much the tender and soft treatment of his slaves by anyone. The man who has loaned any money has every right to demand back his money. He may even get him arrested for non payment. However, Islam requires of a Muslim that he should not look at money alone how much is lost and what is expected-but he should remember how much Allah loves him to be tender and mild towards one of His slaves. There is no limit to the pleasure of Allah at such times so He will recompense him on the Day of Resurrection with tenderness and mildness.

Virtue of Seeing To Another Muslim's Needs

We are told in another *Hadith* that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

مَنْ كَانَ فِيْ حَاجَةِ اَخِيْهِ كَانَ اللّٰهُ فِيْ حَاجَتِهٖ (ابو داود، كتاب الادب، باب المواخاة)

"The time a person spends in helping his brother get his needs fulfilled, Allah will go on fulfilling the helper's needs. (Abu Dawood, Book al-Adab)

Allah will get his needs fulfilled for him as long as he is occupied in helping his brother with his needs It is as though he says, "You go on helping My slave, I will continue to help you".

کار ساز ما بساز کار ما
فکر ما در کار ما آزار ما

There is one more saying of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

مَنْ فَرَّجَ عَنْ مُسْلِمٍ كُرْبَةً فَرَّجَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرَبِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ (حوالہ بالا)

"As for him who alleviates a Muslim's hardship, Allah will remove for him a hardship out of the several on the Day of Resurrection"

(Abu Dawood, Kitab ul-Adab)

Show Mercy To The Creatures

The truth is that one can do both these things helping someone with his needs and alleviating his hardship only when he loves the creatures of Allah and shows mercy to them. If anyone does that to show off and earn fame then his deed is of no value. His deeds are of value only if he treats them well because they are the servants of Allah and His creatures, and his good treatment of them will please Allah Who will grant him

reward for that. If a person hopes to love Allah, he must love His slaves too, and if he does not love them then it means that he does not love Allah. The following saying of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is reproduced in a *Hadith*

اَلرَّاحِمُوْنَ يَرْحَمُهُمُ الرَّحْمٰنُ اِرْحَمُوْا مَنْ فِىْ الْاَرْضِ يَرْحَمْكُمْ مَنْ فِى السَّمَآءِ (ابو داؤد، كتاب الادب، باب الرحمة)

"Those who are merciful have mercy shown them by the Compassionate One. If you show mercy to those who are on the earth He Who is in heaven will show mercy to you". (Abu Dawood. Kitab ul-Adab)

So, until we do not show mercy to the creatures of Allah, we will not be entitled to be called Muslims. How can we hope for the mercy of Allah if we do not show mercy to His creatures. It is a demand of faith that we love Allah's slaves and creatures.

Majnun Loves The Edifices Of Layla's City

If anyone loves someone dearly then he loves everything connected with his beloved. He, the *Majnun*, tells his beloved, the *Layla*

اَمُرُّ عَلَى الدِّيَارِ دِيَارِ لَيْلٰى
اُقَبِّلُ ذَا الْجِدَارِ وَ ذَا الْجِدَارِ

"When I pass by the houses, the city of Layla,
"I kiss this wall now, and that wall now".
Why is it so?

وَمَا حُبُّ الدِّيَارِ شَغَفْنَ قَلْبِىْ
وَلٰكِنَّ حُبُّ مَنْ سَكَنَ الدِّيَارَ

"Love of the city will not kill the fire in my heart
But, I love her who lives in the city".

When this happens that a *majnun* loves a *layla,* then what stops one who loves Allah from loving His creatures. How is it that one claims to love Allah but does not have links with His creatures, does not show mercy to them and does not love them?

Can Love For Allah Be Less Than Love For Layla

In his Mathnavi, Mawlana Rumi رحمة الله عليه says that *majnun* loved *layla* to such an extent that he even loved the dog of her city. He argued, "It is the dog of my beloved's city. I love it too." He says:

عشقِ مولیٰ کے کم از لیلیٰ بود
گوئے گشت بہر او اولیٰ بود

O, the love of the Master became lesser than the love of Layla

The earthlings are mortal and not lasting yet one does fall in love with them to such an extent that one comes to love their dog too. If that is so, then Allah is the King of kings and He is the Most Beloved of all, it is the right of His love that all His creatures be loved even the animals. This is why *Shari'ah* has given rights to animals too. It has asked us to show mercy to them and should not be cruel to them.

A Dog Is Given Water To Drink

The *Hadith* Book of *Bukhari* has recorded an incident of a prostitute who had spent all her life in sin. She came across a dog who was very thirsty and tried to quench his thirst by licking at the mud. There was a well close by. The woman took out her leather socks and drew out the water from the well and watered the dog with it. Allah liked her deed very much and forgave her for that. "You loved my

creation and showed mercy to it, then We are more entitled to show mercy to you". Therefore, we must deal mercifully with the creatures of Allah, even the animals.

Another Case Of Showing Mercy To The Creation

The respected Maulana Masih ullah Khan, my Shaikh, was blessed with a unique temperament in showing mercy to animals. Leave aside killing an animal, he never raised a hand to shoo away an animal. As a creature of Allah, it deserved that treatment and should not be mistreated. He was so particular about it that once he had a wound on his feet and flies sat on it. On the face of it, this is unhygienic and it intensifies the wound but my Shaikh did not drive away the flies. He carried on with his chores in the normal manner. Meanwhile, someone visited him and requested that he be allowed to drive away the flies from the wound. Quick was the reply, "Brother! They are doing their job. Let me do mine." The reason he did not unsettle the flies was that they were the creation of Allah, "Why should I make them uneasy by driving them away from here?" In other words, we can love Allah truly if we also love His creatures, and have mercy on them.

A Unique Case Of Compassion On A Fly

My Shaikh, Mawlana Doctor Abdul Hayy رحمة الله عليه, often related this incident. There was a great religious man an eminent scholar and a recognized authority on *Hadith* and exegesis. He spent his life in teaching and writing and had vast knowledge. When he died, someone saw him in a dream and asked him how he had fared. He said, "I am grateful to Allah for bestowing His mercy on me. But, it has been very surprising with me! I had worked much for

Islam, by the grace of Allah, had engaged myself in teaching, had delivered sermons and speeches, had penned down many looks and had diffused religious teachings with a missionary zeal. I had hoped that these things will be recalled at the time of reckoning and that Allah will reward me for these services. But, when I was brought before Allah, he said, 'I have forgiven you but do you know why?' I thought of all those things that I had done and supposed it was because of them. However, Allah said, 'No! I have forgiven you for another reason. One day you were writing down'. In those days the quill was used and it was dipped in ink before writing 'You put your pen in the ink but before you could bring it back a fly sat on it and suck the ink. You stopped yourself from bringing out the quill so that the fly, could quench its thirst. That was a sincere show of love for Me and My creature. You had no other motive. Go! In reward for that, I have forgiven you, today".

Tasawwuf Is Really Service To The Creatures

This is a very sensitive path. As long as one does not love Allah's creatures, he is not true in his claim that he loves Allah. Mawlana Rumi says about *tasawwuf*

زتسبح و سجاده و دلق نیست
طریقت بجز خدمتِ خلق نیست

"The rosary, the prayer rug and the darwesh's gown is not *Tasawwuf*, but service to His creation is!"

Allah has said, "If you really love Me then love My creatures. Serve them."

Allah Loves His Creatures

Allah loves his creation dearly. We can find that out easily. If anyone creates something by his own hands anything, even something carved out of stone-then the-creator loves what he has produced; he put in some time in fashioning it and laboured over it. It is his pride possession. In the same way, Allah created this creation and gave it life, so He loves it. We too must love His creation if we love Him.

A Unique Incident In The Life Of Hazrat Nuh (Noah) عليه السلام

When the flood came over the people of Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام and they perished because of that, Allah commanded him through a revelation that he should cast pottery utensils. So, he obeyed Allah and began to mould untensils of pottery and earthenware. He was occupied in that all the time, day or night. Many days passed in this manner, and a lot of untensils accumulated. He received a second command. "Now smash down the utensils, one by one". Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام pleaded before the Lord, "O Allah! I have taken great pains to create them. And I had done that at your command; now you command me to break them up!" Allah said, "My command now is that you break them all." So, Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام broke them up but was broken hearted that he had taken great pains to create them and was asked to undo his effort. Allah said to him, "O, Nuh, you fashioned the earthenware with your hands at My command. You became very attached to these untensils so when I commanded you to break them, it was a very difficult task for you to obey. So you wished to preserve them somehow because they were moulded by you and you loved them. But, you did not observe Me. I had created all the creation with My Hands

but on your suggestion, I destroyed all of them My creatures! You had said:

رَبِّ لَا تَذَرْ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ مِنَ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ دَيَّارًا (سورة نوح: ٢٦)

My Lord, leave not of the disbelievers any dweller on the earth. (Surah Nuh, 71:26)

You said that much and I destroyed what I had created myself."

The implication was that Hazrat Nuh عليه السلام had moulded the utensils out of the earth that he had not created. Then, he had not fashioned the utensils of his own will but was commanded by Allah to do so. In spite of that he came to love them, so did he not realize that Allah loves His creatures dearly? If that is so then he too will have to love Allah's creatures if he loves Allah.

Maulana Doctor Abdul Hayy رحمة الله عليه Used to Say

Maulana Doctor Abdul Hayy رحمة الله عليه used to relate his experience about our supplication to Allah that He cause us to love Him. He said: At such times, I feel that Allah says: "you wish to love Me but you have not seen Me so you cannot love Me directly. You cannot have with Me a relationship that one has with what one sees. Yet if you wish to have a relationship with Me then I have created My slaves on earth to stand for Me and you must love them and show mercy to them. Be tender to them. You will grow love for Me, thereby. This itself is the way to love Me."

If we imagine that we love Allah but deride His creatures as despised and lowly and if we look at them with scorn and consider them evil and inferior then this is a sign that we do not love Allah really. Our so called love for Him is unreal. This is because if anyone loves Allah, he will surely love His creation. This is why the Holy

Prophet ﷺ said, "If anyone is engaged in helping his brother get his needs, then Allah gets this man's needs fulfilled. If any person removes a Muslim brother's anxiety, Allah will remove his anxiety on the Day of Resurrection."

The Conduct Of Allah's Friends

It has been with all the *Awliya* (the friends of Allah) رحمة الله عليه that they were pained when they saw the creatures in a bad condition. When they saw these people in sin and corrupt behaviour they hated the sins because it is obligatory to hate sin. They hated their corrupt and evil deeds because it is obligatory to hate evil. But, they did not hate the sinful, evil man in their hearts and did not despise him.

An Incident With Junayd Baghdadi رحمة الله عليه

Junayd Baghdadi رحمة الله عليه was walking along the banks of the Tigris when a boat appeared in the river close to him. It carried some youngsters who looked like vagabonds. They were singing songs. In every situation when a group of young men sing and have fun, they do not fail to ridicule a religious man who happens to be there. Accordingly, these young men lived upto the reputation of naughty boys and they made fun of the respected Junayd Baghdadi رحمة الله عليه. They also passed some nasty remarks on him. There was another man with him who asked him to curse them because at the same time as committing a sin by singing and frolicking they made fun of Allah's friends. Junayd Baghdadi رحمة الله عليه immediately raised his hands in prayer, "O, Allah, you have granted happiness to these young men in this world. Make their deeds such that they get happiness in the Hereafter too." Observe! He did not despise them; they

were creatures of his Allah.

Love and Compassion Of The Prophet ﷺ For His *Ummah*

The Holy Prophet ﷺ was described as *mercy to the worlds*. When the unbelievers rained rocks on him and hit him with stones, his feet bled profusely but he kept on saying

اَللّٰهُمَّ اهْدِ قَوْمِیْ فَاِنَّهُمْ لَا یَعْلَمُوْنَ

"O Allah! Guide my people for they know not."
"They do not know me and behave in this way out of ignorance, so, O Allah guide them."

As far as the deeds of the unbelievers were concerned, he hated them much but as far as the disbelievers were concerned themselves, he did not hate them. He seemed to say, "Their person in the capacity of a human being is the creature of my Allah. And, I love the creatures of my Allah."

Do Not Hate The Sinner

We must understand that if we do not hate morally corrupt behaviour and sinful activity then that itself is a sin. We must hate sin, and we must consider it bad. But we must not despise the person who is committing the sin. We must not hate him. Rather, we must have pity on him. It is just like a patient visiting a doctor. Now, the doctor will not get angry on him for becoming ill but he will have pity on him and he will treat him with medicine. He will also pray for him, "O Allah! Cure him of the illness.." We must deal in the same way with a sinner. While we hate and despise their behaviour, we must not look down upon them. Rather, they should be loved because they are creatures of Allah and we must pray for them that Allah guide them to the right path.

A Unique Incident Of Forgiveness Gained By A Merchant

A *Hadith* tells us that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said. "A person was brought before Allah." We may explain here that everyone will be brought before Allah on the Day of Resurrection when the reckoning will take place, but there might be an example of that which is depicted beforehand. Anyway, that man was presented before Allah. The Prophet ﷺ continued, "Allah instructed the Angels to look into the Record of his deeds and see what all he had done. The Angels found out that his Record deeds was almost without any piety and virtue. He had not observed Salat, Fasting or any other worship; he had occupied himself completely in his business transactions. Allah knows already the situation and the position of all His slaves but he asks the Angels that the reality may be known to other people, so he asked the Angels again to see well if there was at all any other pious deed in his Record of deeds. The Angles looked again and confirmed that he had performed a righteous deed. Although he had not performed any particular pious deed, he had instructed his slaves through whom he exported his merchandise that if they encounter anyone in hardship they should be tolerant with him. If they had sold the ware to such a man on credit then they should not be hard on him for payment. Rather, they should forgive him if necessary. Consequently, this was his regular practice all his life. He gave respite to anyone in straitened circumstances and he did not hesitate to forgive him if there was such a situation. Allah remarked to them that he forgave His slaves too! He said that if that was so, He was more entitled to forgive him, and He commanded the Angels to pardon him and send him to Paradise." Thus, Allah loves very much that we

forgive and pardon His slaves.

Mercy Over-ruled Law

We must know that in the foregoing case mercy superseded the law. This case is not a precedent but it is an extra-ordinary case lest anyone suppose that he might neglect his duties of *Prayer*, *Fasting*, *zakah*, and not refrain from sin but go on forgiving people and hope for forgiveness on the Day of Resurrection. This is a wrong approach. In this case the mercy of Allah is dominant and His mercy is not bound by a procedure. He may forgive whom He will and show mercy to whom He will. The procedure for us to follow is that we must observe our duties, the *fard* obligations must be met and we must keep away from sin. It is wrong for anyone to neglect the *fard* and to go on sinning yet hope to attain Paradise on the basis of any one deed because that is not the law of Allah. The man who obtained forgiveness on the basis of only one deed may have been driven by deeply sincere motives which we do not know and cannot fathom but which attracted the mercy of Allah to him and got him His forgiveness. It is not a procedure for us to adopt.

A Child Abuses A King

In order to explain the likes of the foregoing case, Mawlana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has narrated an incident of child using expletives against a king. He has recalled that there was a Nizam of Hyderabad Deccan. His minister once invited him to his house. When the Nawab entered the house, a son of the minister was playing there. It was the nawab's habit to tease children and play with them and he pulled the ears of the child. The child was very brave and, besides, how do children know what a king or nawab is? He

cast a glance at the man who had pulled his ears and abused him. The minister heard his son useing the swear word on the Nawab and was terribly frightened for his son's safety. The Nawab's word was law. What will become of his son? So, to show his faithfulness to the king, the minister drew out his sword and announced that he would behead his son who had shown rudeness to the Nawab. But, the Nawab stopped him saying, "No! He is only a child. He is an intelligent child. He is self-respecting and one who will not give in if anyone pulls his ears. He can fight for himself and is confident too. Now, you will get a regular monthly scholarship for him." So, a scholarship was presented to the boy. The scholarship was called *Wazifah Dushnam* (scholarship for using expletives).

At this point, Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has said. "If you go now and abuse the Nawab in the hope that you too will get a scholarship, that would be foolish. No one would do it. This was a peculiar situation; The Nawab had been impressed by the child and it was a display of the King's generosity in that situation. It is not a general procedure that everyone who abuses the Nawab gets a scholarship. If anyone does that, he may get a severe beating and may be imprisoned or may be beheaded."

It is the same thing with the benevolence and generosity of Allah. He gives someone on one pretext and someone else on yet another pretext. He approves a behaviour in a man and another behaviour in another man. His mercy knows no limits or conditions or procedure. He has said ورحمتي وسعت كل شيء "My mercy prevails over everything" (al-A'raf 7:157). Therefore no one suffers injustice but, sometimes, a man is blessed with mercy against a deed that Allah comes to like.

Do Not Underrate Piety

We can draw one conclusion from this discussion that no piety is too little. Allah may grant approval to any virtuous act the result of which would spell out tremendous success to the doer of the act. Therefore, we must not consider any act of piety insignificant but, at the same time, it is wrong to rest on hope alone neglecting obligations of *prayer*, *zakah*, and so on. It is wrong to cite an instance of Allah forgiving anyone for anything done out of the ordinary (although he may have been a sinner all his life). We have the *Hadith* of the Prophet ﷺ "The helpless man is he who has allowed himself to follow his desires and does what he likes. He does not wait to see if what he does is lawful or forbidden, proper or wrong but relies on hope that Allah is Forgiving, Merciful who will forgive all sins. We must draw a proper conclusion from these incidents."

Forgiven For Being Mild to the Slaves Of Allah

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported in a *Hadith* to have said, "Among the peoples who have passed away before you was a man given to softness in business transactions. He was not inflexible in his dealings. It was his habit that he quoted a price to his customer and if he requested for a reduction in price, this man obliged the customer saying to himself that he would do with a smaller profit margin. He was equally mild when buying something. When the seller quoted a price, he requested him just once to make a reduction and then paid the agreed price. He never argued with the seller and never insisted to give him a concession. He was again soft in asking for his rights. For instance, if he had to receive payment against a debt, he was soft and mild and often told the debtor that if he did not have the

money then he might repay later. When this man was presented before Allah in the Hereafter, Allah said about him, 'Because he treated My slaves kindly so I too would treat him with kindness.' So, Allah forgave him." We see from this example too that Allah likes very much if anyone treats His slaves with kindness and if he gives respite to those in straitened circumstances.

The Practice Of The Holy Prophet ﷺ

It was the practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that all his life he gave more than whatever was due from him in buying and selling transactions. In those days, coins of silver and gold were in circulation and they were of various denomination. They were not counted but weighed and payments were made according to weight. According to a *Hadith*, the Holy Prophet ﷺ bought something from the market. When he paid for it in dirhams, he asked the man who was weighing the coins زِنْ وَارْجَحْ "Weigh till it tilts." In other words, "Give him some more dirham than are due on me." Yet another *Hadith* tells us خِيَارُكُمْ اَحْسَنُكُمْ قَضَاءً "The best among you are those who when they repay the rights of other people give them in a good manner," that is, they give a little more, not less. For instance, if someone has to repay a hundred rupees, he pays a hundred and ten. Further, the debtor, or giver of rights, must not bother the other person by making false promises. All these things tell us that we must be prompt at paying out debts and giving the rights of other people in a fair manner.

Instructions Of Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه

Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه is our leader in *fiqh* (jurisprudence). We follow his Rulings. He has left instructions for his students. He has written in his will,

"when you engage in a buying and selling transaction with anyone then pay him more than what is due to him. Do not pay less." This is the *sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It is with us that we have memorized a few particular practices on which we act although these things that we have narrated are also part of his *sunnah* and we must conduct ourselves according to them too. May Allah cause us to practice accordingly. *Aameen*. It is in connection with this *sunnah* that the Prophet ﷺ said:

وَمَنْ يَسَّرَ عَلٰى مُعْسِرٍ يَسَّرَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ فِى الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ

"As for one who makes things easy for the straitened, Allah will make it easy for him in the world and the Hereafter."

The removing of difficulties in the Hereafter is what matters really but we can say from experience that such man finds his anxiety removed for him in this world too.

Those Who Amass Wealth & Hoard It Are Cursed

We are told in a *Hadith* that an Angel makes the following supplication to Allah every day:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَعْطِ مُمْسِكًا تَلَفًا

"Allah! Let his wealth perish who hoards wealth, counting and recounting it. And let his wealth perish who withholds his hands from spending."

Therefore, as a result of this curse, his wealth is destroyed. It falls into the hands of thieves or bandits or there is a loss of some kind or the other. If nothing like this happens, there is a withdrawal of blessing and a fall of curse on it. His wealth may be much in count but in terms of purchasing power it would be too little. He may have a lot

of money but he may face illness of family members and consequent medical bills. He may face differences among family members so that he does not live a peaceful life.

Supplication For Those Who Spend Money

The Angel prays to Allah for one who spends money

وَاَعْطِ مُنْفِقًا خَلَفاً

" O Allah! Give him who spends something in place of it." He is the one who spends in Allah's way, gives charity, deals well with people or helps someone with his wealth. People like him get their reward in the world itself. Those people who spend in this way seem to others as growing less rich but the money they spend does not really lessen their wealth. In fact it brings to them blessings from Allah Who gives them something in its place. We have yet to see anyone become a pauper because he gives more in *sadaqah* (or charity) or treats other people kindly. It never happens in that way but Allah surely gives him a return. This is borne out by the *Hadith*: "Allah makes things easy for him in the world and in the Hereafter."

To Conceal The Secrets Of Other People

The third expression that we read in this *Hadith* is

وَمَنْ سَتَرَ مُسْلِمًا سَتَرَهُ اللهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

"He who conceals the secrets of a Muslim, Allah will conceal his secrets on the Day of Resurrection."

If anyone comes to know of a Muslim's faults, he should not go on publicising it everywhere but he should keep his secret to himself. He should conceal it and not reveal it to anyone else. This procedure is adopted when no one else is at risk of harm at his hands but when

someone is liable to come to harm then the secret must be revealed. Thus, for instance, if one comes to know of a man conspiring to kill someone, he must not conceal the secret but he should let it be known because it is not correct for him to conceal the conspiracy. If no one is likely to come to harm then not only must he conceal the other man's secret but he must also pray for him: "O Allah! Bring this man out of his sinful habit by Your mercy."

It is necessary for us that we must not look for defects in other people and if we come to know of them then we must not attempt to make them known to other people. It is a failing in us that we cannot keep quiet about the things we come to know of other people. We think that we are justified in publicising another man's faults although the truth is that it is a sin to do that.

To Ridicule Another For A Sin

The Holy Prophet ﷺ is quoted to have said in a *Hadith*

مَنْ عَيَّرَ اَخَاهُ بِذَنْبٍ قَدْ تَابَ مِنْهُ لَمْ يَمُتْ حَتّٰى يَعْمَلَهُ (ترمذی، کتاب صفة القیامة، باب نمبر ٥٤)

"If anyone reviles his brother for a sin that he has already repented then he will not die before he has committed it himself." (Tirmizi. Book Sifatul Qiyamah. Chapter # 54)

Allah does not like at all the behaviour of a man who blames anyone naughtily for a sin of which he has sought forgiveness and repented for it. Allah says, "I have concealed the fault of the man and forgiven him. I have deleted the sin from his Record of deeds, then who are you to raise an objection and to revile him for that? If you will remind him of that scornfully then I will recoil it on you and you will commit the same sin." To publish a Muslim's faults is a grave sin.

Allah has not appointed you supervisors over other people that you point out their defects, rather, you are slaves of Allah.

Think Of Yourselves

You must think of yourselves and look at your own shortcomings. When Allah helps anyone look at his own defects then he does not observe the defects of other people. Only those people see the faults of other people who do not care to see their own faults and are negligent in reforming themselves. If anyone is ill himself, he will not worry whether someone else has a cold or catarrh. So, it is a grave crime to seek faults in anyone else, spy on him and publicise it. This is what the Prophet ﷺ said in the *Hadith*. It does not behove a Muslim to do it, and he must refrain from these sins. Unless he does so, he cannot be a true Muslim.

The Excellence Of Learning Religious Knowledge and The Good Tidings

The fourth expression is:

وَمَنْ سَلَكَ طَرِيْقًا يَلْتَمِسُ فِيْهِ عِلْمًا سَهَّلَ اللهُ لَهُ بِهِ طَرِيْقًا اِلَى الْجَنَّةِ

"And he who treads the path in search of knowledge Allah makes that path easy leading to Paradise."

This sentence brings good tidings for all of us. May Allah inspire us to be worthy of that. *Aameen*. If anyone covers a distance with the aim of gaining knowledge of religion then Allah makes for him the path to Paradise easy. This distinction will be available to anyone who walks to learn even one question about religion for instance, he may go to ask for a Ruling from a Mufti.

Our Predecessors Preserved The Knowledge With Labour

We cannot match the effort put in by our predecessors to seek knowledge. We sit in comfort of our homes and read a book and then deliver a speech on it. Our predecessors went without food, they had sparse comforts and they took great pains and sacrificed much to collect and preserve the knowledge for us. If they had not worked as hard, the sayings of the Prophet ﷺ would not have been preserved for us in this manner. They have gone away after preserving for us every little behaviour of our beloved Prophet ﷺ. This will be there for everyone who comes into this world until the Day of Resurrection. They have left for us a beacon light.

A Long journey Undertaken To Learn A *Hadith*

There is a report in *Bukhari* about Hazrat Jabir رضی اللہ عنہ a very close companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He was an Ansar. One day after the death of the Prophet ﷺ he learnt about *Hadith* on the virtues of *Tahajjud Salat* that he had not heard himself but another companion had learnt it directly from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. That companion رضی اللہ عنہ was residing at Damascus in Syria, at that time. He was not satisfied that he had *Hadith* through indirect sources but wished to get it direct from that companion. He enquired and found out that the companion he liked to meet was in Damascus. He himself lived in Madinah. The distance between the two cities was about 1500 kilometers. I have travelled by that road myself and the entire path is through a desert there being no tree or water throughout. Hazrat Jabir رضی اللہ عنہ called for a camel at that very moment and rode it all the way to Damascus. He located the man he had come to meet and knocked at

the door of his house. The companion رضی اللہ عنہ opened the door and asked him why he had come. Hazrat Jabir رضی اللہ عنہ said, "I have learnt that you have heard a *Hadith* from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ directly and have come to you to hear it from you." He asked. "Have you come here from Madinah only to get the *Hadith*?." "Yes! I have come for no other purpose but that." The companion said, "I will narrate that *Hadith* to you but before that let me narrate to you another *Hadith* that I have heard from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ:

> If anyone treads a path to secure knowledge of the religion of Allah then Allah makes the path to Paradise easy for this man.

After relating to him this *Hadith*, the Companion narrated to him the *Hadith* about the *Tahajjud Salat* that Hazrat Jabir رضی اللہ عنہ came to learn. He then invited him into the house to rest awhile and have meal with him but Hazrat Jabir رضی اللہ عنہ said, "No! I will not eat because I wish to dedicate my entire journey to the *Hadith* of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and do not wish to do anything else during this hourney. I have got the *Hadith* and my purpose is served. I go back to Madinah. As-salam alaykum."

Form An Intention To Learn When You Come Here

We have seen that he undertook a long journey for the sake of *Hadith*. This is only one example that I have told you about. The lives of the Companions, their successors and the successors of the second generation-the companions and the epigones-are replete with examples of the long journeys they undertook to obtain religious knowledge and collect the *Ahadith*. The result is that we enjoy the fruit of

their efforts. These people spent their money, gave their lives and underwent hardships to preserve and disseminate the knowledge. It was through their effort and dedication that they achieved the task but if we had to do it then we would have failed miserably and knowledge would not have been preserved. It is the benevolence of Allah that He created those people in order that they might preserve religion for the generations following them. It is the grace of Allah, and His favour that the religion is safe. Books are available and teachers and students are engaged in disseminating knowledge of religious topics. All you have to do is to go to them and learn. You may ask them questions, too.

This *Hadith* gives glad tidings to those who seek religious knowledge. We too gather here to teach and learn the religion of Allah. Therefore when we leave our homes to attend such gatherings we must form an intention in our minds that we go to learn about religion. May Allah entitle us to the tidings offered by this *Hadith*.

Glad Tidings For Those Who Gather In The House Of Allah

The *Hadith* which is the centre of our discussion gives another glad tiding in the next expression. It says: "a group of people may choose one of the Houses of Allah that is, a mosque and sit there to recite the Qur'an or take lessons from it, talking about the religion of Allah. When they sit in this manner, peace descends on them from Allah and the mercy of Allah envelopes them. The Angels surround them from all sides" which means that the mercy of Allah turns on them and they are the Angels of mercy who pray for them. They seek forgiveness of Allah for them, "O Allah! These people have assembled for your

religion. O Allah! Forgive them through Your mercy. Let your mercy descend on them. Pardon them their sins and cause them to progress in religion."

Remember Allah And Allah Will Remember You

The next expression in the main *Hadith* of this discussion is

وَذَكَرَهُمُ اللّٰهُ فِيْمَنْ عِنْدَهٗ

"Allah makes a mention of them to those who are close to Him."

These people who are gathered in a House of Allah to remember Allah are remembered by Him in the presence of those who are near to Him. He says to them, "These! My slaves have given up whatever they were doing only for My sake and to remember Me, to talk about Me and to hear about My religion." He tells the Angels around Him about the assembly of His slaves. This is no ordinary thing. It is a great thing.

"My mention is better than Me because it is made in that Assembly."

Is it an ordinary thing that the Lord makes our mention? It is our duty to remember Him and He even commanded us to remember Him فَاذْكُرُوْنِيْ {So, remember Me (*al-Baqarah*, 2:152)} but immediately gave the response and reward for the remembrance اَذْكُرْكُمْ {I shall remember you, (*al-Baqarah*, 2:152)}. "You will make my mention, I shall mention you." This is being offered to us although we are not worthy of mention. It is the same for Him if he mentions us or ignores us. Nothing will add to His greatness if He mentions us and if we do not mention Him nothing will diminish from His greatness rather even if everyone in the world forsakes it, He will not lose a bit. We are like the tiniest

piece of anything. How do we favour Him if we remember Him but if He remembers us then that is a great favour.

Ubayy bin Ka'b رضی اللہ عنہ Requested To Recite The Qur'an

Hazrat Ubayy bin Ka'b رضی اللہ عنہ was a well-known Companion. Every one of the Companions was distinguished in his own way and Ubayy bin Ka'b رضی اللہ عنہ was distinguished for his excellent recital of the Qur'an. Therefore, the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to say about him اقرئهم ابی بن کعب "Ubayy bin Ka'b is the best of them in reciting the Qur'an." One day, he was among the people seated with the Holy Prophet ﷺ, when the Prophet ﷺ addressed him and said, "Allah has instructed me through Jibril (gabrial) علیہ السلام to ask you to recite the Qur'an to me." When he heard the command, Ubayy bin Ka'b رضی اللہ عنہ asked, "Did Allah take my name and instruct you to ask Ubayy bin Ka'b to do that?" The Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "Yes. He took your name when instructing me to listen to your recital." The moment he heard that, Ubayy bin Ka'b رضی اللہ عنہ could not hold himself and wept ceaselessly. Amidst sobs he said, "I am not worthy enough that Allah remembers me and call me by name."

Glad Tidings For Those Who Make Mention Of Allah

If Allah remembers anyone then that is a great blessing for the man. It is such a great blessing and favour that it surpasses all the blessings and wealth of the world. The *Hadith* refers to this great blessing when it says that when people Assemble to learn and listen to the religion of Allah then Allah refers to them in His assembly with the Angels. There is a *Hadith Qudsi* – it is a *Hadith* in

which the Prophet ﷺ quotes the words of Allah and it says that Allah has said:

مَنْ ذَكَرَنِيْ فِيْ نَفْسِهٖ ذَكَرْتُهٗ فِيْ نَفْسِيْ وَمَنْ ذَكَرَنِيْ فِيْ مَلَإٍ ذَكَرْتُهٗ فِيْ مَلَإٍ خَيْرٍ مِنْهُ

"If anyone remembers Me when he is alone, I remember him Myself. And if anyone remembers Me among others, I remember him among others more superior than them." (Bukhari and Muslim)

So, when a person remembers Allah to himself, Allah remembers Him by Himself and when a person mentions Allah to other people, Allah mentions him to the Angels who are better than those people. This remembrance of Allah is known as *zikr* and a great excellence is attached to it. This includes all people who are engaged in teaching or learning religion and assemble for that purpose. They are included, all of them, in this excellence. May Allah cause us to qualify for this distinction. *Aameen*. Those who assemble to learn religion do not do anything insignificant. It is a rewarding thing by the grace of Allah provided they are sincere and seek the religion of Allah.

High Lineage Is Not Enough For Salvation

The concluding sentence of the *Hadith* is the subject of our discussion is

مَنْ بَطَّأَ بِهٖ عَمَلُهٗ لَمْ يُسْرِعْ بِهٖ نَسَبُهٗ

"As for him who is slow in doing his deeds, his lineage prevents him from that."

This is also one of the *Jawami'ul kalim* (comprehensive brief expressions). It refers to a person who lags behind in deeds and it says that he has lagged behind because his high pedigree prevented him from

being active. His deeds are not good so he cannot go to Paradise and remains behind while other people took quick steps and reached Paradise, a poet has said:

یارانِ تیز گام نے منزل کو جالیا
ہم محوِ نالہ جرسِ کارواں رہے

Those people went ahead while he lagged behind because of his deeds. He could not reform his deeds because of his lineage.

He kept boasting about his descent and was left behind. The message is that we must not rely on our lineage for success in the Hereafter but we must give thought to correcting our behaviour. If descent was helpful then the son of Hazrat Nuh (Noah) عليه السلام would not have been sent to hell because Hazrat Nuh (Noah) عليه السلام was a glorious Messenger. He even prayed for the forgiveness of Allah for his son, but Allah said:

اِنَّهٗ عَمَلٌ غَيْرُ صَالِحٍ

"He is of unrighteous conduct." (surah Hud. 11:46)

"Therefore, your prayer for him will not meet My approval." This shows that the real thing that matters is deed, a good deed. Nevertheless, if good deeds are following up with links with a religious man, a mentor then Allah gives help. In spite of that, a man is required to make preparations himself - do righteous deeds, pay attention and be mindful. If anyone neglects these things then merely high lineage will not help. May Allah cause us to rectify our deeds. *Aameen.*

Summary

The summary of this discussion is that it is a corollary of love for Allah and a condition too that we love His creatures. It calls on us to show them mercy and compassion. Unless we do that our claim of love for Allah is without truth. May Allah grow in our hearts love for Him and for His creatures. *Aameen*

And our concluding remark is that all praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram,
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.

Date : 13th December 1996

DO NOT DISGRACE THE ULAMA

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده و رسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد!

عن عمر و بن عوف المُزَنى رضى الله تعالى عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم:

اِتـقـوا زِلةَ العـــالـمِ ولا تـقـطـعـوهُ وَانتـــظـرُوا فيئته (مسند الفردوس للديلمى جلد ١ صفحه ٩٥. كنزالعمال حديث نمبر ٢٨٦٨٢)

Praise belongs to Allah, we praise Him, beseech Him for help, and seek His forgiveness, we believe in Him and place our

trust in Him. We seek refuge in Him from the mischief of our souls and from our evil deeds. He whom Allah guides none can mislead and he whom Allah leaves to stray none can guide. And we bear witness that no one is worthy of worship besides Allah, Who is Alone and has no partner. And we testify that sayyidina Muhammad is His slave and Messenger May Allah bless him, his family and Companions, and May He bestow favours and peace, a complete peace!

It is reported by Hazrat Amr bin Awf al Muzani رضی اللہ عنہ that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Fear the fault of a religious scholar, do not sever bonds with him and wait for him to return. (Musnad al Firdaus by Daylmi VI P 95, Kanz ul'umal *Hadith* # 28682)

This *Hadith* is weak as far as the chain of transmission is concerned but it has been unanimously approved in regard to meaning. A religious scholar an 'Aalim is one whom Allah has blessed with religious knowledge including knowledge of the *Qur'an, Hadith* and *Fiqh.* If you find such a man doing something that you know surely to be a sin, and he does it constantly, then you have to do certain things. The first of the things you have to do is that you must not commit the same sin on the plea that you are imitating a Scholor. Rather, you should refrain from that sin and protect yourself from that.

Do not Follow the Ulama in Sinful Deeds

This *Hadith*, in its first message, stops those people from committing a sin who insist on doing it because they have seen a religious scholar do it. They refuse to listen to

reason and point out to the scholar who sins. The Holy Prophet ﷺ cut at the roots of the argument that a scholar is imitated ever in sinful activity. He said that a scholar should not be followed in his wrong behaviour but must be followed in the approved things he does. You must not find courage to commit a wrong on the plea that an 'Aalim is donig it. Will you follow in his footsteps if he is going on the path of Hell? Will you jump in the fire behind him? Certainly you will not conduct yourself in this manner, then why obey him in sinful activity?

The behaviour of an 'Aalim is not Necessarily Reliable

The Ulama (Plural of 'Aalim) have told us that if an 'Aalim is authentic in his field then we may rely on his *fatwa* (ruling), and what he says by the tongue, but it is not necessary that his deeds and his behaviour are reliable. If he does something wrong and you ask him if that behaviour is correct, the scholar will say that it is wrong. Therefore, you may follow the directions and instructions he gives, but not his behaviour. It is wrong to argue that you should do what authentic Ulama have been doing. This argument is tantamount to saying that if eminent people jump in the fire (by their behaviour) so you may also jump into it. Just as this statement is foolish so also the first one is wrong. That is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ said *fear the following of that fault.*

We Must Not Mistrust an 'Aalim

The seconnd thing that you have to do is not to sever relations with the religious scholar. Some people do that immediately they spy a scholar do something wrong or commit a sin. They begin to mistrust him. Some of them

defame him and extend the defamation to all religious scholars and say that the present-day Ulama are like that. This is what the Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said in the second expression of this *Hadith* 'do not sever bonds with him' even if you find a religious scholar committing a sin. The reason for that is explained in the next paragraph.

The Ulama Also Are Human Beings

An 'Aalim or a Religious Scholar is a human being, after all, like any of us. He is created just as we are and he is not an Angel. He harbours the same sentiments as we do. The same desires tempt him as we face and he too has to cope with the evil like we have to. Neither is he innocent and sinless nor is he Prophet and Messenger or an Angel. Rather, he lives in the world and faces the same things as any other man here. There is no evidence that a Religous Scholar should be innocent and sinless and one who will never sin or do wrong. If he is human then it follows that he might err and sin. Therefore, it is wrong to reject him if he is. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said "do not sever ties with him immediately but wait for him to return". He has the true knowledge and there is hope that he will come back to the correct path *Insha Allah.*

Pray For the Ulama

If you pray for him you will get a two-fold reward. You will earn a reward for making a supplication and another for wishing well for a Muslim. Your prayer could be; "O Allah! This man is responsible for diffusion of religious teachings. We learn religious matters from him but the unfortunate man is involved in sin. O Allah! Be Merciful to him and get him out of this evil habit." If your prayer is answered then you will be held responsible for

his reformation and every righteous deed that he does after that will be credited to your Record of deeds also. So, you should not publicise the man's faults and accuse him of being sinful. You will not gain anything by that.

An 'Aalim Who Lags behind in Doing Good Deeds Is Also Entitled To Respect

Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi رحمة الله عليه has said that it is the duty of a Religious scholar to be rightious . But, if an 'Aalim lacks in that field then too he is entitled to respect because of his knowledge. Allah has bestowed on him knowledge for which he enjoys a rank and that rank entitles him to rspect. It is like the respects due to parents which the Qur'an calls upon us to give them.

وَاِنْ جٰهَدٰكَ عَلٰٓى اَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِيْ مَالَيْسَ لَكَ بِهٖ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا وَصَاحِبْهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوْفًا ۖ (سورة لقمان:١٥)

But if they strive with you to make you associate with Me that whereof you have no knowledge then obey them not, yet you keep honourable company with them in this world.

(Surah Luqman. 31:15)

If the parents are unbelievers or idolators then they must not be obeyed in religion but they are entitled to fair treatment in the world. They have the honour to be someone's parents and that itself calls for their children to respect them. It is wrong for any one to insult them. Similarly, if a religious scholar does not do good deeds, one must pray for him, "O Allah! cause him to be righteous." He should not be disgraced for his lack of righteousness. Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has advised the Ulama "mere knowledge is nothing unless it is accompanied by deeds". But he also said, "when a

religious scholar comes to me, and although I am aware of his shortcomings I honour and respect him because of his religious knowledge."

Maintain Ties with the Ulama

It has become a habit with people these days to pick up fault with the Ulama and publicise it. They accuse them of wrong and say that it is common with present-day Ulama. They say, "All Ulama are like that". Those people who are irreligious are occupied in this way because until they defame the Ulama and lower them in the eyes of the common man their objective is not served and they cannot mislead the Muslims. They know that once they succeed in breaking the ties of the common man with the Ulama they can play with his sentiments and mislead him. My respected father رحمة الله عليه used to say, "when the flock is separated from the shepherd, the wolf is free to molest them and devour them." So, this is what the irreligious men do and we are not surprised at their behaviour. However, what surprises us is that the men who are religious also indulge in such behaviour. They do not hesitate to blame the Ulama although they gain nothing out of it. They do not consider that once they lower the Ulama in the sight of people, who will teach them their religious duties? The evil will then mislead them into classifying the lawful and unlawful according to their whims and they will be misled. Therefore, although the Ulama are seen to lack righteousness, they should not be insulted. We should pray for them and because they are men of knowledge they will *Insha Allah* come back to the Right Path.

Bandit Turns into Man of Allah

Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رحمة الله عليه once asked his disciples "why do you follow me? I am just like the so called mentor who was a banit actually. He had observed people throng the haunts of pirs religious mentors paying them great respect and holding them in high esteem. They carried gifts along, kissed their hands and were deeply devoted to them. He said to himself that it was a lucrative occupation and that he unnecessarily risked his life and kept awake in the night to commit robberies. There was always the possibility of being caught and imprisoned. He also had to put in extra effort."

Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رحمة الله عليه continued. The bandit decided to quit banditry and become a holy man. He thought he would have a large number of disciples who would kiss his hands and bring him gifts. So he stopped committing robberies and built himsilf a *Khanqah* (a sort of sanctuary). He took a rosary and dressed himself like a holy man wearing a long shirt and making-up in the fashion of a mentor. He began to hold sessions of remembrance of Allah (*Zikr*) and chant His praises. People saw him and were much impressed by his appearance. One by one, they began to enrol as his disciples and gradually, he had a very large following. Gifts poured in, charities were brought. His hands were kissed and some even kissed his feet. He would prescribe a different set of recitals to every disciple. Naturally the recitals do have an effect and Allah raises the reciter's ranks. Because the disciples were sincere in their recital, Allah raised their ranks very high and they were able to meditate and look into the hearts of other people.

The Supplication of the Disciples Does work

The Maulana continued his narration: one day, the disciples commented to each other that Allah had granted them a rank and they should now meditate and see how much further it is to the rank of their mentor, how much more they have to travel? They began their exercise and set about to ponder on the status of their benefactor, their Shaikh. But they could not locate him when they meditated on that question. They thought that their Shaikh had attained such a high status that they could not see him in their meditation exercises. So, they approached him and submitted to him Sir! We tried to see your station through meditation but you are so very high that we could not find you. The bandit-turned-Shaikh realised then what he really was and he revealed to his desciples the true story. Weeping. he said to them, " How can I show you what my rank is? I am a bandit! And I have taken up this profession to earn a livelihood and amass wealth. Allah has granted you high stations through your recital Which I continue to wander in the lowest of the low ranks. How then can you find me in the high ranks? I am a bandit, a robber and I do not have anything so please go away from me. Find yourself another mentor?

When they heard the facts the disciples gathered together and prayed for their shaikh "O Allah! He may be a thief or a bandit. But Allah! whatever you have granted us is because of him. O Allah! Guide him and reform him. Raise his ranks, O Allah!"

These disciples were sincere and pious men. Through the blessings of their supplication Allah forgave him and gave him, too! a high station.

The narration of Maualana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi ends here.

So whenever you hear a derogatory remark passed on a religious scholar do not publicise it. Instead, pray for him. May Allah cause us to behave accordingly *Aameen.*

And our concluding remark is: Praise be to Allah Lord of the worlds.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame'Masjid Baitul-Mukarram,
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.

Date : 11th May, 1997

Restrain Your Anger

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسنا ومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهد ان سيدنا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد !

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطٰن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله عنه قال انّ رجلا قال لرسول الله عليه وسلم اوصنى ولا تكثر على قال" لاَ تَـغْـضَـبْ "(جامع الاصول الكتاب الثالث فى الغضب والغيظ)

Praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him, ask Him for help and seek His forgiveness. And, we believe in Him and place our trust in Him. And, we seek His protection from the mischief of our base souls and from our evil deeds. He whom Allah guides nobody can mislead and he whom

He leaves to stray none can guide. And we bear witness that there is no one worthy of worship besides Allah, Who is Alone and Who has no partner, and we bear witness that Muhammad is His Slave and Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family and companions, and may He shower favours and peace a complete peace, and plenty of it.

Hazrat Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ has said that a man asked the Prophet ﷺ, "Give me some instruction but do not make it lengthy." He said, "Do not be angry." (Jami'ul-Usul, Book three-Anger)

According to Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ a man presented himself before the Holy Prophet ﷺ and asked him to give him some advice but it must be brief. So while he wants an instruction, he also places a condition that it must not be a long advice but a short one. The Holy Prophet ﷺ acceded to his request and did not show displeasure at the condition the man had placed. The exponents of *Hadith* have commented, that it is not wrong for anyone who asked the Ulama for instructions to place a condition that they should be brief and it is not contrary to etiquette. It is possible that the man might be in a hurry and if he is given a long instruction, he might be delayed and repent having asked. The Holy Prophet ﷺ gave him a very brief instruction لاتغضب "Do not be angry."

Sin is prompted by two things Anger and Lust

If we think over it there are two forces that drive man to sin. They are *anger* and *lust*. Whether a sin pertains to violation of rights of Allah or of fellow men, one of these two things prompts man to sin. Lust stands for the Arabic

word *shahwah* meaning *desires of the soul*. A man may wish to eat something, is a desire of his soul. He may wish to do something unreasonable, that is also a desire of his soul. Why does a man rob someone? He wants to collect wealth and possessions. For the same lust he ogles at women. These are things that his soul desires and makes him commit a sin. Many sins originate because of lust. Many others originate from anger. We will see as we read further that anger leads to innumerable sins. Thus, if we will obey the Prophet ﷺ when he instructs us not to be angry then we will save ourselves from fifty percent of the sins that we commit.

The first step to Self Reformation

Maulana Thanavi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has said that the message of this *Hadith "do not be angry"* is an important lesson of *Sufism,* The first step for a man who takes the path of Allah and sets to reform himself is to curb anger.

Anger is Instinctive

As it is, anger is natural to man. There is no man without the instinct of anger. Allah has placed this quality in man for some reason. If man keeps it under control then he saves himself from many difficulties but if he is bereft of the quality of anger then he will never be angry and never defend himself when attacked by an enemy or an animal. So, man is allowed to show anger to protect himself and *shari'ah* has not placed any restriction on that., This quality of anger is given to man for the very purpose of protecting himself, his possessions, his family and his relatives. These are the times when anger is permitted.

Sins that result from anger

However, if a man does not control his anger then he is liable to commit innumerable sins. It is anger that gives rise to arrogance. Again, anger grows jealousy in man. An angry man bears malice and is hostile too. There are plenty of other undesirable traits in a man who is given to anger and who does not control his anger. For example, a man who does not check his anger may hit a subordinate when he is very angry; he will cause the poor fellow much difficulty and use abusive language. These are sinful acts that he commits when he is angry. To beat someone unnecessarily is a grave sin. Similarly, it is a grave sin to abuse someone and the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said about it:

سِبَابُ الْمُسْلِمِ فُسُوْقٌ وَ قِتَالُهُ كُفْرٌ (صحیح بخاری، کتاب الادب، باب مایہی من السباب واللعن)

"Abusing a Muslim is *fusuq* (an evil act) and killing him is *kufr* (disbelief)." (Bukhari, Book of al-Abad. *Hadith* # 6044)

These things happen when a man is angry. He abuses and taunts another Muslim when he loses his temper and in this way pains him and makes him sad. This is a very sinful behaviour. Thus anger led him to commit a sin.

Anger makes one Spiteful

If the person on whom a man is angry is not his subordinate then the angry man backbites him. This happens when, for instance, a man is angry at someone who is senior to him and he cannot let him know what he has in his mind so he will speak ill of him behind his back. It is thus anger that caused him to backbite. Sometimes, no matter how much he backbites the other man, his anger does not subside and he feels like slapping the man and hurting him but he cannot do it because of the other's seniority. This

is being spiteful. This man is ever prepared to hurt the other and gets pleasure when the other is in difficulty. It is a sinful behaviour and a result of anger.

Jealousy grows from Anger

We have seen that the angry man derives pleasure from the other man's troubles but it also happens that this man sees comfort and happiness. The angry man, then, wishes for his comfort and happiness to be taken away from him. He wishes that whatever gain the other has by way of prosperous business or promotion may be lost to him. He cannot see him happy and prosperous. In other words, he is jealous of him, and we have seen that it is also a result of anger. Thus, a man commits many sins when the person he is angry at is his subordinate or junior and even when he is his superior or senior. Therefore, the sins that he commits are because he cannot control his anger; if he had a control over his anger then he would not have committed so may sins. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said for the very reason, "Do not be angry." We also find in the Qur'an, Allah describes the pious Muslims in these words:

وَالْكَاظِمِيْنَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِيْنَ عَنِ النَّاسِ (سورآل عمران: ۱۳٤)

And restrain their anger, and are forgiving towards mankind. (Al Imran, 3:134)

The pious Muslims do that because one who controls his temper preserves himself from many sins.

An angry person violates Rights of other People

We have stated earlier that two things prompt a man to sin anger and lust. Sins that are committed through lust are also grave but there is always a likelihood that Allah will

forgive the sinner if he repents to Him and seeks His forgiveness from the sins. They are erased from his Record of deeds. On the other hand, sins that are committed in anger often involve violation of rights, of fellow men. This is apparent when an angry man beats the subject of his anger, abuses him or scolds him and causes him pain and grief. In other words he usurps the other man's rights. In the same way, an angry man backbites his victim, shows spite or becomes jealous of him and thus encroaches on his rights. The sin of violation of rights of fellow men results from anger. It is so grave a sin that even if the sinner repents and reforms, his repentance will not be perfect unless he is forgiven by those people whose rights he had violated. Allah says, "When you repent. I will forgive your violation of My rights but I will not forgive your violation of the rights of My slaves unless they forgive you." This thing becomes difficult. How many people will the violator go to and ask for forgiveness and get it? This is why the Holy Prophet ﷺ gave the instruction لاتغضب "Do not be angry."

When a man contorls his anger Allah says, "My slave has restrained his rage so I too will not be angry at him."

Excellent reward on controlling Anger

The gist of the *Hadith* is that a man will be brought before Allah on the Day of Resurrection as part of reckoning. Although Allah knows everything yet He asks for some details that other people may know it too. So, He will ask the Angels to let Him know what piety is recorded in his Record of deeds. The Angels will say, "O Alalh! There are not too many righteous deeds in his Record. He was not given to voluntary effort in worship but there is one thing very prominent in his Record. Whenever anyone trespassed his rights, he was quick to forgive him and if

anyone told him that he could not repay his rights then he asked his subordinates to forgo their demand and pardon him because he did not have the means. In this manner, he gave up his rights." Allah will say, "As this man behaved in a forgiving manner with My slaves and gave up his rights too for them, today I too will deal with him in a forgiving spirit, and I forgive him." So, it is on this basis that Allah forgives the man.

The effort of the son of
Shah Abdul Quddus Gangohi رحمة الله عليه

It is with this in mind that our religious mentors prescribed restraining anger as the first exercise after repentance to anyone who approached them for guidance and reforming. They asked the seekers to go through tremendous effort to restrain anger.

Shaikh Abdul Quddus Gangohi رحمة الله عليه was a very eminent man of Allah, a *saint.* People came to him from different places of the world to seek advice and to reform themselves at his hands. But, his own son did not regard him with esteem. Father is there at home and everyone visits him to seek his blessings but the son is unconcerned. He is occupied in idle pursuit. It happens often that an elder man in the family is valued only after his death. So, when he died, his son opened his eyes and realised his mistake. He said to himself. "I lost a great opportunity while everyone else took advantage of my father's blessings. I sought nothing."

He sought out someone who visited his father regularly and reformed himself and received blessings from him more than anyone else. He hoped to earn and regain some blessings for himself from that man. He learnt that a holy man who suited these qualifications lived in Balkh

while he lived in Gangoh in the United Provinces (India). So, he decided to go there and informed the holy man that he would visit him. That man awaited the son of his Shaikh outside the city together with his retinue. He received him with a warm welcome and brought him home. He arranged exceptional meals for him and treated him very well, The guest son of his Shaikh said to him after a couple of days, "you have treated me with much love and affection and honoured me highly but truly I have come with some other purpose." He asked him to name the purpose of his visit. He said, "My respected elder, I want to receive from you some of the blessings you derived from my father because I failed to gain anything from him while he was alive." His father's disciple and his own mentor said, "O, so you have come for that purpose. Well, from now on there will be no hospitality for you. You will not be given special treatment and no choice meals will be served to you. From now on, you will stay next to the *Hammam* (bathrooms) situated near the mosque. You will have to sleep there. You will have to burn the fire and heat the water for the *Hammam* and collect the fuel for the fire-wood and garbage." It was the winter season and water had to be heated for the worshippers to perform ablution. The son was told that he had to do all that and nothing more. No recital was prescribed for him. What a fall from the honourable reception to the task appointed for him!

Remedy For Arrogance

Because he had come with a sincere intention, he followed the directions of his mentor and took up the duties at the bathrooms. For a period of time his duties included observance of the five daily *Salats* and looking after the bathrooms of the mosque. The holy man knew that such young men had in them nobility and purity of

heart but they also had a semblance of pride and conceit, a drawback that was attached to them surely, it had to be cured. So, he was given a task that would remedy the ill. After some days, the mentor decided to find out whether he still had the germs of pride in him the-image of a prince-or not. To do this he chose to use the sweepress who cleaned his house. He instructed her that she should walk close to the man appointed at the baths when she had collected the garbage and let him know if he said anything to her. She did as directed. The moment she walked close enough to him, he exploded in anger, "How dare you walk close to me! I am not at Gangoh otherwise I would have taught you a lesson." She reported the reaction to the Shaikh who concluded that his student was yet raw and still had to improve so, his duties at the bath continued further.

The Second Trial

After some more days, the sweepress was again instructed to walk close to him with the garbage in her hands, and she was told to walk very close this time. She followed the instructions and walked very close to him. The young man stared at her in anger but uttered not a word. She reported to the Shaikh what had passed. He saw that the treatment was having its effect.

The Third Trial

When some more days had gone by, the Shaikh instructed the sweepress to walk close to him once again and keep close enough for the garbage basket to touch him and for some of the garbage to drop on him. She was very close to him, dropping a little garbage on him but he did not even glance at her. She told the mentor what had transpired

and he commented that they were succeeding in the treatment.

The Fourth Trial

Once again, the Shaikh sent the sweepress to his disciple, the son of his own Shaikh. Some days had passed since he had been tried the third time. The sweepress was asked to repeat her performance with the added act that she should tumble down before him dropping the basket full of garbage on the young man. "Let me know how he reacts," the Shaikh said. The sweepress stumbled just as she was close enough to empty her basket on him. As she fell down, the young disciple did not bother about his own condition but aided her if she had hurt herself. She recalled before the Shaikh what happened and the Shaikh expressed hope of success in reforming the young man.

A Great Trial And Inward Reward

After that, another incident took place. The Shaikh was in the habit of going on hunting trips; he had hunting dogs with him. Naturally, he must have seen some wisdom in that from a religious point of view. Besides, it is permitted to hunt with the help of the hunting dogs. So, when he went on one such trip he took the young man along and appointed him to hold the chain of one of the hunting dogs. The dog was strong and fat, and this poor fellow was thin and hungry. When the dogs spied the hunt they ran but this young man could not keep pace and fell down. However, he did not let go of the chain because his master had forbidden him to release his grip on the chain. The result was that he was being pulled by the dog and he bled profusely but did not go against the command of his Shaikh. He did not release the chain.

After this incident, the Shaikh saw his own mentor, Shaikh Maulana Abdul Quddus Gangohi رحمة الله عليه in his dreams. He told him, "I had not put you to that much trouble." Only a father cares for his children! In the morning, the Shaikh summoned the young Gangohi and embraced him and he said to him, "I had received a wealth from your father and you had asked me for it. I had held it as a trust for you and have returned it to you. The way that I have followed was the only one to hand over the trust so I followed it."

Restrain Anger and overtake the Angels

We have seen that when the young man approached the Shaikh he was not asked to follow a recital pattern or pursue a set of devotional exercises but he was asked to menial work that removed pride from his mind. He was taught to deal fairly with the slaves of Allah and to restrain anger, the cause of pride. Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has said that the first lesson in *suluk* and *tasawwuf,* and the first step to *Sufism* is to check anger and to give it up. When a man has a full control over anger, Allah raises him up to such stations that even the Angels envy him. The Angels never get angry because they lack the charactereistic of anger, and they are always engaged in worship. If they do not cause anyone any difficulty it is not something worth marveling. Allah says. "I have created them with that quality. But I have put in the son of Adam the quality of anger. So, if, out of My fear and love, he restrains his anger, he progresses ahead of the Angels."

An incident in the life of
Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه

Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه is the jurist whose school of thought we follow. He is well-known and has a following all over the world. During his time there were many people jealous of him. Allah had blessed him with a high station, renown, knowledge and a large following. The result was that he also had many who were jealous of him, and because they were jealous they spoke ill of him behind his back and were rude to him also. One day while he was going home, someone walked along with him and abused him continuously. When they had walked some distance, they came to a crossing and their destinations stood on different paths. Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه stood at the corner of the street and spoke his first words to the man, "My house is situated on this street while you have to go on the other side, so I will stop here for sometime to allow you to finish what you have to say. May be you still have to hurl more abuses on me. Please do that. After you have said all you want to say, I will go to my house. along this street." This incident is recorded in relevant books.

Ablution of *Isha* was intact
Upto *Fajr* a Period of forty years

My shaikh, Maulana Masih ullah Khan رحمة الله عليه told us that Imam Abu Hanifa رحمة الله عليه used to perform ablution for his Isha *Salat* and remained in the state of ablution until he had offered the Fajr *Salat*. This has an unusual begining. He was not used to do it always. In the beginning, he would get up in the last part of the night to offer *Tahajjud* but one day, while he was walking along, an old woman remarked, "He is the one who prays the *Fajr* and *Isha* with the same ablution. On hearing this, he

felt ashamed and said to himself, "This woman holds an opinion about me that I offer the *Isha* and *Fajr Salat* with the same ablution but I do not do that. I am being praised for what I am not." He resolved that very day to qualify himself for those words the rest of his life. So, he made it a rule of his life to engage in worship after *Isha* until the *Fajr Salat* and in this way offer the two distant *Salat* with a single ablution.

This did not mean that he slept all day because he was engaged in worship all night. He had his own business to look after and he also conducted lessons on religious matters. People visited him to learn from him. He worshipped Allah all night, gave lessons on the Qur'an after *Fajr Salat* and then looked after his business. He kept himself occupied until the *Zuhr Salat* and then slept till the *Asr Salat*.

Yet Another Unique Incident In
The Life Of Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه

As was his wont, he went home one day after *Zuhr* to rest. He lived in an upper storey. He went there and lay down on his bed. Just then, someone knocked the door below. How very infuriating it is for one who has not slept in the night and has been working all day to be disturbed just as he lays himself to rest! But, the Imam got down the staircase and opened the door. He found a man standing there and asked him what he wanted. He wanted to ask a question. Now, this was not the time to ask questions. The Imam had set aside a time when men put their questions and got the reply, they solved their problems. However the Imam did not rebuke him but invited him to ask his question. He said, "What can I say? When I was coming here. I knew what I had to ask but I have forgotten it now. I

cannot remember it." Imam Abu Hanifa رحمة الله عليه said, "Well, you may ask me when you remember it." He did not tell him off, or scold him. Quietly, he returned upstairs to his quarters. He had just lied down when there was a second knock on the door. He came down again and opened the door to find the same man there. "What is it?" he asked and was told by that visitor, "I had remembered the question." "Go on, ask it." "O, I had remembered it until a short while ago but I forgot it again when you were half way down." Anyone else would have lost his temper but Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه had sacrificed personal comfort and suppressed his ego. He said to him, "When you remember it, you may ask me." He went up stairs to his bed and prepared to sleep. The knock was heard a third time and he came down again to find the same man at the door. "I have recalled the question." The Imam said, "Go on, ask it." He said, "I wish to know if the faeces of man tastes sweet or sour?" (We seek the protection of Allah. What a question to ask?)

Limits of patience

It is difficult to say if any other man would have borne patiently so long but even if he had, this question would have thrown him into a rage. The Imam, however, was very cool and gave a polite answer, "If the human excretion is fresh then there is some sweetness in it but once it has dried up, it becomes sour to the taste." That man asked, "Have you learnt this after tasting it?" Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه said, "You cannot know everything by taste alone. You can know something by intelligence and by seeing that flies infest fresh excretion. That shows that there is a difference in the two otherwise flies would sit on both."

Forbearing Man Of His Times

On hearing Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه give this answer, that man said, "Imam Abu Hanifah, I apologise to you. I have troubled you too much. You have defeated me, nevertheless." The Imam asked him how was it that he was defeated? He said, My friend and I had argued about the most clement man among the Ulama. I said that Sufyan Thauri رحمة الله عليه was the most patient of the Ulama who does not get angry at all. But my friend said that Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه was the most patient who never was angry. Then we decided upon this method to try you and to incite you. I decided to provoke you when it was time for you to rest and get you up and down a few times before putting to you a nonsensical question. If you had flown into a rage. I would have won but, as it is, I lost to my friend because I could not irritate you. You defeated me. And it is a fact that there is no one besides you as forbearing as you are and one who does not get angry at all."

This shows what the station of Imam Abu Hanifah رحمته الله عليه was. Why should the Angels not envy him? He had given up personal desires completely.

Forbearance Adorns

This is a prayer of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْنِنِیْ بِالْعِلْمِ وَزَیِّنِی بِالْحِلْمِ (کنزالعمال حدیث نمبر ۳۶۶۳)

"O Allah enrich me with knowledge and adorn me with forbearance." (Kanz ul-Ummal, *Hadith* # 3663)

It means decorate me with dignity. If a man possesses knowledge but is not forbearing or patient then in spite of knowledge he lacks polish and beauty.

The first step in walking this path and chaining one's

soul is to restrain anger. That is why the Prophet ﷺ said, "Do not be angry" لا تغضب. That in itself is the first lesson and a brief advice and also a way to save oneself from the wrath of Allah.

Ways to Control Anger

It is not that we are just told that we must not be angry. We are also shown how to do that. The Qur'an has also shown us how, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has also shown us the method. The first thing we must know is that we are not called to account for involuntary and unintentional anger when one is excited suddenly. This is because it is not within one's control but the excitement and commotion that is aroused should not be allowed to influence one's actions. For instance, there is no sin if one loses his temper on someone and feels aroused but if he scolds him or hits him or abuses him because of the anger then he will be liable to answer for that and it will be a sin.

Recite The *Ta'awuz* When Angry

So, when you face such a situation and are excited, the first thing you must do is act a on the direction that Allah has given in the Qur'an:

وَإِمَّا يَنْزَغَنَّكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ نَزْغٌ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللّٰهِ ۚ إِنَّهٗ سَمِيْعٌ عَلِيْمٌ (الاعراف: ٢٠٠)

If a provocation from Satan provokes you (O Prophet), then seek refuge in Allah.(al-A'raf 7:200)

That is, recite شيطان الرجيم (I seek refuge in Allah from the cursed devil). The devil provoked you but you sought the refuge of Allah, so Allah will preserve you from its evil consequences. Therefore, make it a habit to recite

these words whenever you are faced with such a situation. It is not difficult and only needs a little practice.

When Angry Sit Down Or Lie Down

The next thing that you must do when angry is follow the advice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It is an unusual but psychological procedure. He said, "If you feel the rage of anger in you then if you are standing, sit down. If the feeling persists in that posture then lie down." It is the peculiarity of anger that it rises to the brains and when it is at its peak a man stands up. Thus if a man is lying down and he gets angry, he will sit down, if he is sitting at that time then he will stand up. So, to subside anger, you must behave the other way about. If you are standing you must sit down and if you are sitting down then you must lie down and you take yourself to a lower position. The Holy Prophet ﷺ showed us this method because he knew that we might get into much difficulty because of anger. (Abu Dawood, Kitab ul-Adab باب مايقال عند الغضب)

When Angry Think Of The Powers Of Allah

Yet another method to fight anger is to say to oneself, "Suppose Allah were to be angry at me in the same way as I am angry at this man then what will become of me." We are told by a *Hadith* that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ once came across Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه scolding his slave. He was blaming him harshly. According to a version, the Prophet ﷺ said to him, "Remember, Allah has more power and authority over you than you have over him. You use your authority to hurt him but Allah has more authority over you." لله اقدرعليك منك عليه

Forbearance of Allah

We must look at Allah, how very clement and forbearing He is! His slaves disobey Him. They disbelieve in Him and they associate partners with Him. They go to the extent of denying His existence. In spite of that he lets them have their provision. Rather, He lets some of the disobedient slaves have abundant worldly wealth. There is no limit to His clemency. It is said, تخلقوا باخلاق الله "Grow the manners of Allah in yourself." You must think, "when Allah does not lose His temper on His slaves and not on me too, then why should I use it on my subordinates."

Hazrat Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ Scolds His Slave

Another version tells us that when the Holy Prophet ﷺ saw Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ scold his slave harshly, he told him:

لَعَّانِيْنَ وَصِدِّيْقِيْنَ كَلَّا وَرَبِّ الْكَعْبَةِ

"By the Lord of the Ka'bah, it cannot be that you curse while you are truthful, too!"

Your status is of the Siddiq. This thing does not behove a Siddiq. In this way, he forbids him to scold a slave. Thus, when you get angry on someone you must remember that the power and authority Allah has over you is much greater than the power and authority you have over your slave. "If Allah calls me to account, I will be nowhere." These are some of the ways to restrain anger that the Qur'an and the Prophet of Allah ﷺ have shown us.

Hold back Anger In The First Instance

In the beginning when man takes the first step in reforming himself, he must not see into the justification of anything whether he is justified in showing anger or not.

Sometimes, a man's behaviour calls for anger to be shown to him but a novice who is in his first steps to reformation must not differentiate between the two situations and he must repress his anger. Once he has full control over anger then he will be discreet in showing anger and will always use it at the proper time. However, as we have said, a man must not show anger at the initial stages when he learns to control it even if he knows that the situation calls for it, then he will not exceed the limits when he is angry.

Reasonable Anger

Sometimes, it is necessary to deal with a situation in anger. This is necessary when a teacher copes with his students, a father with his children, a mentor with his disciples, but the limits must not be exceeded. One must scold only as much as is necessary. If one scolds more than is needed then one's own ego plays its part and it is a sinful act besides blessings.

Varying Temperament of Holy Men

Most of the *awliya* (the friends of Allah, the saints) treat their disciples with compassion and love. They do not get angry at them. But, it is not the same with all of them. These men of Allah vary in their temperament. Some are very merciful and show mercy and compassion in reforming their disciples. Some others are quick tempered and they reform their disciples with their wrath over which they have control and of which they use proper doses for treatment of their disciples, when people refer to a holy man as awe inspiring and wrathful, it does not mean that he is always in a rage, scolding every now and then but it means that he uses his anger according to the dose required to reform his disciple. For instance, it is

known of Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanavi رحمة الله عليه that he was a temperamental man and he was a *Faruqi* that is a descendant of Hazrat Umar Faruq رضى الله عنه and, therefore, had a great sense of honour. However, he never exceeded the limits in being angry at his disciples. In normal circumstances, he was very clement and tolerant.

Do Not Scold When Angry

He used to say, "I advise other people and I also behave accordingly that I do show anger to one who is under my training but I am never angry at anyone who is not under my training. When you are angry and excited, do not scold anyone. At such times, keep quiet but when your anger has subsided, pretend to be angry and scold the delinquent. You will not then exceed the limits but you will exceed limits if you show anger when excited." He used to say, "By the grace of Allah, even when I punish someone to reform him, I remember at the time that he is at a higher level than I and more excellent. I punish him because I am duty bound to do so for Allah." He then compared it to a King's treatment of his son. It is like a king who is angry at his prince for doing something unreasonable so he asks his executioner to whip him. That man will obey the king and whip the prince but while whipping him he will be aware that his victim is a prince. So, I am the executioner and the other man is of a rank higher than I, I am helpless because of the duty imposed on me." He then continued, "Right at the time I treat my disciple I am aware that his rank is higher, but I am compelled to scold him because of the duty imposed on me by Allah."

Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه used to explain his behaviour, "On the one hand, I called for his explanation

and examined him but on the other I would pray to Allah inwardly that He may not do the same thing to me in the Hereafter. And, as I scold him here, O Allah, do not do that to me on the Day of Resurrection. Whatever I do, O Allah, I do in pursuance of Your command."

So, Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه showed anger only when training his disciples and observed the etiquettes minutely not exceeding the limits. What is commonly known among people about his wrathful nature is without foundation.

An Incident In The Life Of Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه

Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه had an old servant with him, Bhai Niaz, He lived with him in the *Khanqah* at Thana Bhaun. He was with Maulana for a long time and was thus somewhat spoiled and touchy. Someone once complained to Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه that Niaz was very short tempered and often scolded his guests. The Maulana was worried about it because this was not a correct way to behave with visitors. So, he summoned him and said to him, "Niaz! What is it that I hear! You are rude to every visitor." Suddenly, Niaz erupted, "Maulana! Don't lie, fear Allah!" What he really wished to say was that those who have complained about him should not lie but fear Allah and what he said to the Maulana was not meant to refer to him. The words, however were addressed to the Maulana, his master, and he was his servant telling him not to lie but to fear Allah on that account. By our standards that servant was liable to further censure and punishment but Maualana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه lowered his gaze and saying *astaghfirullah, astagahfirullah* went away from there. (I seek the forgiveness of Allah).

The truth was that the Maulana realised that he had only heard the complainant's version and scolded Niaz without getting his side of the story. He said, "It was my mistake. I should have found out what he had to say. Therefore, I sought the forgiveness of Allah and walked out from there." It is about this man that it is circulated that he was quick-tempered and scolded other people.

Certain Things Must Be Considered Before Telling Off Others

My respected father, Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه used to say, "We found with Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه nothing but compassion and love. When he found it necessary to reprimand someone as part of reforming him then he kept in mind certain considerations before giving him a piece of his mind. If anyone has to be scolded and he is young then he must consider some thing. For example, he must not aim to take out his steam but his aim should be to reform the other man. Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه described the method for that "Do not take any step when you are excited or in a rage. When you have cooled down, think over what you must do then pretend to be angry and give the man a scolding to the extent it is necessary, not less than that and not more. If you scold him while you are excited then you will lose control and commit excess."

The Proper Time To Show Anger

What is the proper time to show anger? The first and most correct time to show anger is when Allah is being disobeyed and sin is being committed. You must hate these things and you must show only that much anger as is necessary to eradicate the evil things. This is the first place to be angry.

Four Signs Of Perfect Faith

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ is quoted in a *Hadith*:

مَنْ اَعْطٰى لِلّٰهِ وَمَنَعَ لِلّٰهِ وَاَحَبَّ لِلّٰهِ وَ اَبْغَضَ لِلّٰهِ فَقَدِ اسْتَكْمَلَ اِيْمَانَهٗ

(ترمذی، ابواب صفة القيامة، باب نمبر ٦١)

"He who gives, gives for Allah, and he who denies, denies for Allah, and he who loves, loves for Allah, and he who hates, hates for Allah, then surely his faith is perfect." (Tirmizi, Chapter Signs of Qiyamah No. 61)

The Prophet ﷺ testified that the faith of such a man is perfect.

The First Sign

The Holy Prophet ﷺ showed us four things in this *Hadith* as signs of a perfect faith. The first sign is that when anyone gives something to someone else then whatever he gives, he gives for the sake of Allah. It means that a man always has this in mind that when he spends on a pious cause, he spends for Allah. Again, he spends for the sake of Allah when he spends on himself or his family, or in charity. He has the pleasure of Allah in mind. When he gives *sadaqah* or in charity, he should tell himself, "I give the *sadaqah* that Allah may be pleased with me and may reward me thorough His beneficence." He should never aim to make a display of his charity or to earn fame.

The Second Sign

The second sign is مَنَعَ لِلّٰهِ. "If he denies, it is for Allah. "If a man stops someone, he has the pleasure of Allah in mind. For instance, if he prevents spending money, he does so because Allah and His Messenger ﷺ have said, "Do not spend unnecessarily." So, he must tell himself that he saves

the money for the sake of Allah. This is also a sign of faith.

The Third And The Fourth Signs

The third sign is وَاَحبَّ لِلّٰہِ "He loves for the sake of Allah." Thus, if a man loves a holy man, his love is not to fetch worldly gains but to progress in faith and gain advantage in religious knowledge and practice and so to please Allah. This love is for Allah alone and is a sign of faith. In this way, he always loves for Allah Whose pleasure he seeks.

The fourth sign is وَاَبغَضَ لِلّٰہِ "if he hates or scolds anyone, he should do it for the sake of Allah." A man scolds another, or hates him, it is not against this person but it is for the wrong he does and for his behaviour that displeases Allah; in such cases, his action is for the sake of Allah, and is proper.

Do Not Hate The Person

Our religious mentors have told us something that we must remember. The hatred or the animosity that we bear must be against the disbelief but not against the unbeliever himself, against a sin but not the sinner and against immorality but not the immoral person. The subject of our anger is the immorality or the sin not the person involved in it because he is worth having mercy on, he is sick. He is ill with disbelief or with immorality. Our hatred is with the illness not the ill or sick because if we come to dislike the ill then who will treat him: this is why if he refrains from disbelief and immorality, he is entitled to be embraced because we have no quarrel with him and no argument.

The Method Of The Holy Prophet ﷺ

Let us see at the behaviour of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Hazrat Hamzah رضی اللہ عنہ was his beloved paternal uncle. He was martyred in the Battle of Uhud and his body mistreated. Wahshi killed him and Hindah had eaten the martyr's liver but when both of them embraced Islam, they became the Prophet's ﷺ brother and sister in Islam and when their names are called out Muslims say رضی اللہ عنہ or رضی اللہ عنہا (May Allah be pleased with him, or her). No malice was borne with their persons but their behaviour and their belief were detestable. When their behaviour improved and their belief was corrected there remained nothing in them to loath.

An Incident In the Life Of Khwajah Nizam ud-din Auliya رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Khwajah Nizam ud-din Auliya رحمۃ اللہ علیہ enjoys a high station among the saints. In his times, lived an eminent scholar and jurist, Maulana Hakim Ziauddin رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. The one was a well-known Sufi while the other was a well-known scholar and jurist. Khwajah Nizam ud-din Auliya رحمۃ اللہ علیہ considered *sama* to be persmissible. Many Sufis observed it. *Sama* is to recite poetry of *hamd* or *na't* (praise of Alllah or His Messenger) without the accompaniment of a musical instrument in a melodious voice or in a nice sgtraightforward prose reading while the audience listen to it religiously with love. Some Sufis allow it but most of the juirists disallow it calling it *bid'a* (an innovative practice). So, Maulana Hakim Ziauddin رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was also one of those who disallowed it and, as we have seen, it was in the times of Khwajah Nizamuddin Auliya رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. The former issued a *fatwa* (a religous legal opinion) against it while the latter listened to it.

When Maualana Hakim Ziauddin رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. was on his

death bed, Khwajah Nizamuddin Auliya رحمة الله عليه went to see him. He asked someone to inform the Maulana that he had come to see him. The Maulana sent the messenger back with instructions to stop him from coming to him, saying, "I don't wish to see a perpetrator of *bid'a.* while I am dying." Khwajah Nizamuddin Auliya رحمة الله عليه sent the message that the perpetrator of *bid'a* had come to repent from *bid'a.* Maulana Hakim Ziayuddin رحمة الله عليه immediately sent his turban with instructions that it should be laid down and Khwajah Nizamuddin Auliya رحمة الله عليه be asked to walk on it to him with his shoes on. "He should not remove his shoes". Khwaja Nizamuddin Auliya رحمة الله عليه picked up the turban and placed it on his head saying it was an honour awarded to him. He went inside with that grace, shook hands with the Maulana and sat down next to him. He turned in attention to Maulana Hakim Zia ud-ddin رحمة الله عليه who died soon after in his presence. The Khwaja commented, "Praise be to Allah! Allah has granted approval to Hakim Ziauddin رحمة الله عليه who died while progressing in ranks."

We have seen that he was not prepared to meet him but after a moment only, he sent his turban to walk on!

Anger Must Be Shown For The Sake Of Allah

Anger that is for the sake of Allah does not ever create personal enmity, hostility or mischief because the one who is shown anger or hostility knows that it is not against his person but against his behaviour. People do not mind it because they know what he says is for the sake of Allah. He is the one who qualifies for the saying:

مَنْ اَحَبَّ لِلّٰهِ وَاَبْغَضَ لِلّٰهِ

"He who loves, loves for Allah and who despises, despises for Allah."

That is the right time to show anger provided it is within limits set by *shari'ah.* May Allah bestow on us His favour whereby we love anyone for His sake and hate anyone for His sake.

Anger should be properly chained. One should be angry when it is for the cause of Allah but one should pull the chain when it is wrong to be angry.

An Incident Of Hazrat Ali رضى الله عنه

A Jew spoke derogatory words about the Holy Prophet ﷺ in the presence of Hazrat Ali رضى الله عنه who was not one to let him go unpunished for that. He got hold of him at that very instant, raised him high and dropped him to the ground and sat down on his chest. The Jew finding himself no match for Hazrat Ali رضى الله عنه spat on his face, but the latter let go of his hold on the Jew and came down from his chest. When someone asked him why he set the Jew free while he had continued to be disrespectful and should have been punished, he said, "The first time I attacked him was for the love of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ because he had been disrespectful to him. When he spat on me, I became more angry and if I had revenged myself that would not have been for the Prophet ﷺ but for my own self because he had spat on my face. If I had hit him any more that would not have been for the sake of Allah, so I allowed him to go." In fact, this was the *Hadith:*

مَنْ اَحَبَّ لِلّٰهِ وَاَبْغَضَ لِلّٰهِ

"He who loves, loves for Allah and he who hates, hates for Allah."

Put into practice. In other words, a chain is tied to anger so that one is angry only when it is allowed by *shari'ah,* otherwise the chain is held tight. One should

refrain from being angry and show that he has nothing to do with anger. It is about these very people that it has been said كَانَ وَقَّافًا عِنْدَحُدُوْدِ اللهِ "They are the ones to stop within the limits of Allah."

An Incident In the Life Of Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ

One day, as he entered the Masjid Nabavi, Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ observed a conduit on the house of the Prophet's ﷺ uncle, Hazrat Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ directed over the Masjid Nabavi. Rain water etc. dropped into the mosque from it because its direction was over the mosque. He concluded that the mosque was the House of Allah and a conduit from any private house should not fall over it. So he ordered that the conduit be removed and that was done. He had ordered the removal because he was angry that the etiquettes of the mosque were flouted. Hazrat Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ learnt that the conduit was removed so he appreached Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ to know why it was done. He told Hazrat Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ that it was removed because it brought water into the mosque that was not anyone's personal property and it was in violation of the rules of *shari'ah*. Hazrat Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ informed that it was there from the times of the Prophet ﷺ whose permission was obtained before fixing it. "You should have known that and you had no authority to remove it". Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ asked him, "Did you have the permission of the Prophet ﷺ for that?" Hazrat Albbas رضی اللہ عنہ confirmed that he had the Prophet's ﷺ permission for that. Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ said to Hazrat Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ, "Come with me for God's sake!" So, they went where the conduit was and Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ bent down in the posture of *Ruku'* and asked Hazrat Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ to stand on his back and refix the conduit. Hazrat Abbas رضی

اللہ عنہ said, "I will get someone else to fix it. "Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ said, "How can Umar dare remove the conduit allowed by Muhammad ﷺ. I have committed a great crime. The minimum punishment I should get for it is that I bend down and you stand over my back to fix the conduit." So, Hazrat Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ stood on his back and fixed the conduit back at its original place. That conduit still stands in the Masjid Nabavi, May Allah reward those people who have built the Masjid Nabavi, they have retained the conduit at its original place although it has no utility now. It only remains as a memory-refresher. It is an example of putting into practice the *Hadith* مَنْ اَحَبَّ لِلّٰهِ وَاَبْغَضَ لِلّٰهِ {He who loves, loves for Allah. and he who hates, hates for Allah}. The anger that Hazrat Umar رضی اللہ عنہ displayed the first time was for the sake of Allah. Then the love that he displayed was again for Allah. He who behaves in this manner, perfects his faith because this is a sign of a perfect faith.

Pretend To Be Angry & Scold

As we have seen, sometimes it becomes necessary to show anger for the sake of Allah. This is more true when dealing with those who are under one's care as a teacher with his students, a father with his children, a Shaikh with his disciples. However, one must not fly into a rage going beyond what is necessary to correct one's word. We have seen earlier that a man must not scold when he is excited and angry. If a teacher gets angry over his student and gets excited as a result then he must not scold the student or beat him as long as he is angry and worked up. When his anger has subsided and he has cooled down then he must create a pretended anger and scold him so that he does not go beyond the limits. 'This procedure is somewhat difficult because a man generally goes out of control when

angry. So,unless he practices this behaviour, he will not get rid of the disadvantages and evils of anger.

Consequences Of Excess On Subordinates

If one exceeds the limits in showing anger to those in one's care, like children, students and disciples, then sometimes the consequences are very detrimental. If it were an elder or equal whom one scolds and rebukes beyond limits, he would not hesitate to show his displeasure and may even seek vengeance. He may tell him that he did not approve of his behaviour. But, junior person will not say so. He will not even seek vengeance because he is not able to do that. A son will not tell his father, a student his teacher or a disciple his mentor that he had been too rude to him. The result is no one will know how much he was hurt by the excess they had committed. When it is not known, how can anyone ask to be pardoned. 'This is a very delicate matter. Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has said particularly about teachers who teach young children that their case is verty sensitive because they are minor. It is with the minors that even if they forgive, the pardon is not valid. When a minor forgives it is not authentic because he is not authorised.

Summary

The summary of what has been written so far is that we must try to suppress our anger. If we do not do that we must realise that anger is the root cause of many ills and gives rise to innumerable evils. When trying to suppress anger, we must begin by curbing the tendency whenever we feel the urge. Once we have it under control then we may use it discreetly and express anger only when it is permitted by *shari'ah* but then again within prescribed limits.

The Wrong Use Of Anger

We have seen the *Hadith* tell us بُغض فی الله "Express anger for the sake of Allah. Some people use it in a very wrong manner. Although they declare that they show anger for the sake of Allah, their anger is for their personal ends, to serve their pride or to lower the other man in the sight of people. For instance, if anyone is favoured by Allah. and he becomes religious and takes part in some religious exercises he considers every other person below him. He goes so far as to belittle his father, his mother, his brother, his sister, every member of his family. He looks down upon them and regards them as destined to Hell while he is worthy of Paradise. He takes it upon himself the responsibility of reforming the other people so he rebukes them and scolds them and refers to them in derogatory terms. He debases the other people and begins to usurp their rights. Then the devil teaches him that whatever he does is in terms of hatred *for the sake of Allah* while actually he may be doing that for his personal ends.

These people are raw on the path of Allah. The devil tempts them that they should deal with the other people in terms of the *Hadith* بغض فی الله (Hatred for Allah) and gets them to despise the other Muslims. As a consequence, they quarrel with them and never see eye to eye with one another. They get angry on flimsy grounds and they rebuke other people every now and then. The result is outright mischief

An expression of Allamah Shabbir Ahmad Usmani رحمة الله عليه

One expression of Allamah Shabbir Ahmad Usmani رحمة الله عليه is worth remembering for ever. He used to say, "If a true word is said with a sincere intention in a faithful

manner then it is never ineffectivce. It never gives rise to mischief and corruption." There are three conditions that he has stated. They are (i) the word is true, (ii) the intention is sincere and (iii) it is delivered in a faithful manner. For example, if someone does something evil then the reformer must pity him and try to advise him in a polite and mild manner so that he gives up the evil practice. This should be his intention and he must not seek personal fame and should not aim to debase the other man and his method should be faithful, that is he be soft-spoken and loving. If these three conditions are met then normally there is no mischief done. If you find that mischief has erupted after saying the true words then you must realise that one of the three conditions was not met either the words were untrue, or the intention was faulty or the method employed was incorrect.

You are Not Supervisors on Behalf of Allah

We must remember that we were not sent to the world as policemen of Allah. The work entrusted to us is only to convey to other people truth with a sincere intention in a faithful manner. We must go on doing this in a reasonable way. While we must not tire of doing it, we should not do any thing that gives rise to mischief and corruption.

May Allah have mercy on us and favour us and cause us to observe what we have read. *Aameen!*

And our concluding remark is that praise belongs to Allah Lord of the worlds.

وآخر و دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

Venue : Jame'Masjid Baitul-Mukarram,
Gulshan-e-Iqbal,
Karachi.

Date :

The Believer Is A Mirror

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهد ان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد !

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم

اَلْمُؤْمِنُ مِرْاٰةُ الْمُؤْمِنِ (ابو داؤد، كتاب الادب، باب فى النصيحة)

Praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him, ask Him for help and seek His forgiveness. And, we believe in Him and place our trust in Him. We seek His protection from the mischief of our souls and our evil deeds. He whom Allah guides, none can mislead and he whom He

leaves to stray none can guide. And we bear witness that there is none worthy of worship besides Allah, who is Alone and has no partner, and we bear witness that Sayyidina Muhammad is His Slave and Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family and companions, and may He bestow favour and peace, a complete peace and plenty of it.

Hazrat Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ has said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "The Believer is the Believer's mirror."(Abu Dawood, Kitabul-Adab)

A Believer Is A Mirror For Another Believer

The *Hadith* reproduced above is very brief and it contains only three words (in Arabic). In spite of that it contains a world of knowledge for us. The apparent meaning of this *Hadith* is that a Believer is as a mirror which reflects the image of the man facing it. The man sees his countenance in the mirror which faithfully reflects its beauty and ugliness. Without the mirror a man cannot see his drawbacks, the ugly spots on his face. The mirror tells him that he must pay attention to his countenance and it needs cleaning. In the same way, a Believer is a mirror for another Believer. He tells him if he sees any shortcoming in him he removes it and reforms himself. Once the Second Believer learns from the first of any wrong in himself he sets himself to remove that wrong and corrects himself. This is what is meant by the *Hadith*: "A Believer is the mirror of another."

One Who Points Out Wrongs Is Truly A Well-Wisher

This *Hadith* is lesson-giving to both the Believers-the one who points out a drawback and the one to whom his shortcoming is pointed out.

The man to whom his mistake is pointed out should not feel offended by the one who points it out because the Holy Prophet ﷺ has compared a Believer with a mirror-a Believer is a mirror for another. If anyone stands before a mirror and it reflects the dirty spots on his face that he should clean then that man is not offended with the mirror for pointing out his deficiencies. Rather, he is pleased that the mirror afforded him an opportunity to remove the spots. In the same way, a Believer is a mirror for another Believer and if he tells the other that he has certain defects in him-whether in his observance of *Salat* or mutual dealings-then he shoud not get angry on him. Rather, he should be pleased that he has pointed out to him the dark spots and he must assure him that he would rectify his defects as far as possible.

Why Is Objection Raised On The Ulama Who Point Out A Mistake?

People often express anger at the Ulama because "they call every other person an unbeliever or a sinner. They issue an edict that so-and-so is an unbeliever, a sinner or a *bidati* (an innovator in religious matters). They spend their lives turning other people into disbelief." Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanavi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has given a reasonable reply to these people. He has said, "The Ulama do not make other people unbelievers but say that they are practicing disbelief." If anyone does an act of disbelief then actually he is the one to perpetrate it. It is then that the Ulama point out that his

behaviour smacks of disbelief in the same way as a mirror points out the dark spots on the face. The mirror does not put the spot on the face nor stains it. The Ulama merely tell us that a behaviour borders on disbelief, sin or *bida'h* so they cannot be blamed for the behaviour of a person just as a mirror cannot be blamed for the spots or stains on a face. The Ulama do not make anyone an unbeliever or a sinner. So we must not express anger at them for our defects. On the contrary, we must be grateful to them that by telling us of the wrong they enabled us to correct ourselves.

A Doctor Diagnoses, Does Not Give The Disease

We may take the case of a man who does not know the nature of the disease he is suffering from. He goes to a doctor for a treatment but is told that he is afflicted with a serious illness. Naturally, the doctor will not be blamed for causing the illness. The illness was there already but the patient was unaware of it and the doctor cautioned him by pointing it out so that he may now begin the treatment.

An Incident Worth Learning From

My respected father Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه narrated to us an incident concerning his father's-my grandfather's-illness. He lived in Deoband. There was a Hakim (a doctor of eastern medicine) in Delhi and he was blind and a very expert Hakim. He treated my grandfather. My father said, "I travelled to Delhi to relate the symptoms to the Hakim and get his medicine for my father. I went to his clinic and told him about my father and requested for the medicine. The Hakim was blind but when he heard me, he told me that he would give the medicine for my father later but first I must treat myself. I protested that I was not ill and was healthy but he insisted that I take my

medicine. He gave it to me and prescribed the doses for different times of the day. He told me to report how I was, when I returned after a week for my father's medicine. So, I got medicine for myself and my father and when I arrived home I told my father about it and how he had given me medicine for myself too. My father advised me to follow the directives of the Hakim and to take the medicine as prescribed. When I went to the Hakim again after a week I told him that I had not been able to understand why he gave me medicine and I could not find any illness in myself. The Hakim told me that he had heard me last week and feared that my lungs were infected and I might get tuberculosis so he gave me the medicne. He told me that by the Grace of Allah I was cured of the infection." The patient does not know his illness but the Hakim or doctor diagonises it for which the patient should be thankful to him. Thus, we will not say that the doctor brought about the illness; rather, he warned the patient on time so that he may treat himself but not take out his rage on the doctor.

We Must not show Anger to the Doctor.

However, there are different ways of pointing out the shortcommings. Someone gives a timely warning in a gentle and polite manner but someone else is careless in telling us about our faults. However, even if anyone is rough in giving us the warning, we must be grateful to him for pointing out our illness. There is an Arabic poetry meaning: "My greatest well-wisher is he who presents to me a gift of my defects, who tells me about them. As for him who praises me highly, exaggerating imagined qualities, he leads me to pride and arrogance. He seems to be great but he really hurts me. As for him who points out my defects, I must thank him. "The *Hadith*, nevertheless,

teaches us that we must not be angry at anyone who points out our defects but we must take it as an opportunity to correct ourselves.

The Person who Points out Mistakes Must not Curse

The second lesson the *Hadith* teaches us is that the person who points out to the other his mistakes or defects must not curse him. Again, he is compared to the mirror. The mirror reflects an image faithfully without adding or diminishing anything and without passing any comments. It does not curse the one whose image it reflects but it merely shows what it sees including any spot or stain. In the same way, the believing man must merely point out the stains and spots in characters, the defects and the shortcomings in behaviour without passing comments adverse or favourable. He does exaggerate but is faithful in reflecting what he sees. It is not a believer's task to curse or criticise or publish anyone's faults or to debase him. He is just a mirror and must say exactly what he finds and not blame or censure.

Pity Him who Errs

When a Believer tells another of his faults, he truly has pity on him for being involved in the mistake. It is just like the pity we show when one is ill. We do not show our anger. No one will scold him for being ill but everyone will pity him and advise him to get a treatment. Similarly, if a believer commits a mistake or a sin then he is entitled to be shown pity and not anger. He must be told politely and softly with a display of love that he suffers from a defect so that he may treat himself. No one should be angry at him and no one should curse him or blame him.

Do not Degrade Anyone who Commits A Mistake

We are not aware these days of our duty to caution a believer when he does something wrong. If a Muslim offers *Salat* in a wrong manner, it is our duty to show him the correct method because that is part of *commanding the approved and forbidding the disapproved.* It is obligatory on every Muslim. Today, no one cares to correct anyone. On the contrary, if they see anyone do a wrong they say to themselves that they must let him commit the mistake. However, there are some who are prompted to point out the error but then they behave like policemen of Allah so they reprimand and ridicule the wrong doer and they debase him on the face of other people. This is not in accordance with the Prophet's ﷺ advice *"you are a mirror"* do not curse or scold or debase anyone. Tell him in such a way that he is not hurt and understands you.

A Incident in the Lives of Imam Hasan and Imam Husain رضی اللہ عنہما

It is said that once both Hazrat Hasan رضی اللہ عنہ and Hazrat Husain رضی اللہ عنہما were walking along the banks of Euphrates when they saw an old man performing ablution at the shores of the river. He was not doing it correctly. They realised that it was their duty to correct him but he was older than them. How should they tell him? They did not wish to hurt him or he might feel offended. They thought of it and together went and sat near the man. They kept talking to each other and with him. They said, "you are older than us. When we perform ablution we are always in doubt whether we observed the *Sunnah* procedure or not. Therefore, we will perform ablution before you and you tell us if we err or omit a *Sunnah*." They both performed the ablution and afterwards asked him if they had correctly performed the

ablution. The old man had realised, meanwhile, that he had committed mistakes himself in performing the ablution and that the boys were right. He said, "The truth is that I had actually performed ablution in a wrong manner and have realised my mistake by seeing you do it. *Insha Allah*, I will now perform in a correct way. This is the approach the Qur'an wants us to adopt when it says:

اُدْعُ اِلٰى سَبِيْلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ (سورة النحل ١٢٥)

(O Prophet) Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation.(An Nahl 16:125)

You are not appointed by Allah to act as strongman to force people with stern language and insulting words to correct them. You are a mirror. Just as a mirror gives only a faithful reflection and does not rebuke or scold so you too have to behave in like manner. This is a lesson we derive from the *Hadith*:

المؤمن مراة المؤمن

"The Believer is the Believer's mirror".

The Shortcoming of One Should Not Be told to Another

Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi رحمة الله عليه has commented on this *Hadith* in this manner. It is the characteristic of a mirror that it casts the reflection of the man who stands before it and the reflection goes to him alone. The mirror will not cast anyone's reflection to someone else. If he carries a stain or spot only he will see it and no one else. The mirror will not tell anyone else that such-and-such has these stains on his face. It will not publicise the defects. A believer is also a mirror. If he sees a defect in someone then he must tell him in private and quietly that he has that defect. It is not a believer's characteristic that he tells other

people of some one's defects. Such a behaviour is selfishness. If he is sincere in his intention that he reveals to a man his defects for the sake of Allah then he will not let anyone else know of it. If on the contrary, he is selfish and hopes to please himself, he will try to debase the man because of his defects. We must know that it is unlawful to insult and belittle a Muslim.

Our Ways of Life

If we look round at our society, we will find only a very few people who show goodwill in pointing out to a Muslim his shortcomings. Very few people today tell a Muslim that his behaviour is not upto the mark or against *Shari'ah*. Yet, we will find many who relate a Muslim's defects to other people with the result that they are guilty of backbiting, slander and falsehood. They also commit the sin of defaming a Muslim. The best method for such people is to tell the wrong-doer in private that he has that defect which he must correct. The *Hadith* under reference also teaches us that when we find a drawback in a Muslim we must not publicise it but tell only that man about it and none else.

Do not feel Disheartened After Pointing out A Mistake

The *Hadith* tells us that a mirror will tell the person facing it what defects it sees in him. If that man comes before it a second time, it will again tell him what is wrong with him. If he comes a third time, it will again point out to him his defects. But it will not pester him to remove his shortcomings. If that man does not remove his shortcomings, the mirror will not show displeasure or separate from him. It will not insist the man to remove his defects and it will not tell him that because he does not

correct himself it will not cast his reflection if he comes before it. Rather, the mirror will faithfully reflect his image as many times as the man appears before it. It will not cease giving the reflection and it will not express displeasure or take upon itself the role of a policeman and impose upon him its will.

The Method of the Prophets عليهم السلام

It was the approach of the Holy Prophets عليهم السلام that they never gave up and never separated from their people and never conceded defeat. Rather, whenever they got a chance they conveyed their message but never imposed themselves upon their people. The Qur'an says:

لَسْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمُصَيْطِرٍ (سورة الغاشية: ٢٢)

You are not a warder over them. (al-Ghashia 88:22)

The Qur'an says "while you will not impose your will over them you are there only to convey the message". Tell him who errs, and caution him. After that, it is his duty to reform and correct himself. If he does not reform, you may tell him again but do not lose heart and become aloof. Tell him a third time but do not give up hope. The Prophet ﷺ was very much compassionate on his people so he lost heart when the unbelievers and idolaters rejected him. The following verse of the Qur'an consoled him.

لَعَلَّكَ بَاخِعٌ نَّفْسَكَ أَلَّا يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ (الشعراء:٣)

It may be that you (O Prophet) will kill yourself with grief, because they believe not (ash-Shuara, 26:3)

It is not your duty, the Qur'an tells the Prophet ﷺ to make them believe. Your task is merely to convey the message. It is not your responsibility that they believe.

Why Did You Do That?

My respected father Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه used to say that those who are engaged in propagation of Islam and in enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong must persevere in their efforts and never give up. They must not lose heart if people do not pay heed. They should not be angry at them and give up their effort because of the failure of the people to pay heed to them. They must ask themselves for whom they do the work. Is it not to please Allah? They must resolve to do it again and again for Allah. They may hope for reward each time they try. So, their effort is not in vain even if the people do not listen to them. It is not their direct concern whether people pay heed or not. It is Allah Who guides and Who keeps away guidance from anyone.

The Best Way To Reform Society

The truth is that Allah gives guidance to the defaulter when a Believer points out to him his fault sincerely and repeatedly and at the same time makes a supplication to Allah to help him. He supplicates Allah in these words: "O Allah, my brother is involved in sin. Do guide him. Show him the right path." If we persist in doing this work then it is something whose blessings will surround the atomophere around us and reform the society. My respected father used to say that it is an automatic self-working system that if a Believer keeps correcting another Believer observing these conditions and following these etiquettes then Allah will reform the society thereby.

Summary

This is a summary of our discussion on this *Hadith* a Believer is another Believer's mirror.

It is a Believer's task to remind again and again.

He should not lose heart and concede defeat if his reminders fail to draw a response.

If a Believer is sincere and keeps drawing attention to the wrong repeatedly then some day his efforts will surely bear fruit.

A Believer must play the part of a mirror. If another Believer acts as a mirror and points out to anyone his wrongs then he must not grieve or get angry at him for pointing out his mistakes.

May Allah grant us the urge to behave accordingly. *Aameen.*

And the concluding part of our remarks is that praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Darul-Uloom
Karachi.
Date : Shawwal 1990

Two Approaches
Book of Allah - Men of Allah

الحمدللّٰه رب العلمين والصلوة والسلام على رسوله الكريم وعلى
آله اصحابه اجمعين

امابعد!

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطٰن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللّٰهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ اِذْبَعَثَ فِيْهِمْ رَسُوْلاً مِّنْ اَنْفُسِهِمْ يَتْلُوْا عَلَيْهِمْ
اٰيٰتِهٖ وَيُزَكِّيْهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ (سورة آل عمران: ١٦٤)

Praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds. And blessings and peace be on His Noble Messenger and his family and Companions, all of them.
I seek refuge in Allah from the cursed devil. In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, The Merciful.
Certainly Allah has conferred a favour on the Believers when He sent among them a Messenger

from themselves, who recites to them His revelations, and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and Wisdom... (Aal Imran, 3:164)

Two Approaches.

Allah launched a two-pronged approach for the guidance of humanity. One of them is through a sequence of His Books. The Books of Allah are His heavenly Books and include the Torah, the Zabur (Psalms), the Injeel (Bible) and, finally, the Qur'an:

وَاَنْزَلْنَـآ اِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ اِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُوْنَ (النحل: ٤٤)

And we have (now) revealed to you (O Prophet) the Admonition that you may make clear to mankind what has been revealed unto them, and that they may reflect. (an-Nahl, 16:44)

The second approach is through men of Allah. They are the Prophets عليهم السلام. These men of Allah were sent together with the Books of Allah so that they could explain the Books, give a practical training of its doctrines and expound its meaning by their sayings and behaviour.

Allah had said in the Holy Qur'an:

لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ اِذْبَعَثَ فِيْهِمْ رَسُوْلاً مِّنْ اَنْفُسِهِمْ يَتْلُوْا عَلَيْهِمْ اٰيٰتِـهٖ وَيُزَكِّيْهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ (سورة آل عمران: ١٦٤)

Men of Allah are sent that they may expound the Book, explain it and train the people. The verse of the Qur'an quoted in the begining is about this topic itself:

The basic purpose of sending a Prophet to a people is to teach the Book of Allah because they are not capable by themselves of deriving gainful knowledge from the Book without the guidance and explanation of a teacher.

A perusal by itself without a teacher is not enough. And this does not apply to the Books of Allah alone. It is

the same with every science and art taught in the world. If anyone hopes to gain profitable knowledge and excellence in any subject by simply reading and studying the books on the subject he cannot do so unless he submits himself to the guidance of a teacher. He cannot become an expert in any field unless he learns from a teacher.

Will Populate The Graveyard

There are several books available on medical science. They may be had in different languages - Urdu, Arabic, Persian, English, etc. But, if anyone hopes to study them in the comfort of his home and attain proficiency in medicine, he is wrong. Suppose he is very intelligent and capable and he has tremendous grasping power, so he sits down to study from the books. He is also able to understand what the books say. What can he do after that? Will he treat people? He will send them to the graveyard if he does so. Even if he knows what is in the books and understands what they convey, he cannot be a doctor unless he has a teacher to train him. No government, anywhere in the world, will permit him to work as a doctor because he has not pursued the method necessary to adopt a medical profession. Allah has made man in such a way that unless a teacher teaches him and trains him he will not gain mastery over any science or art.

Difference Between Man & Animal

Allah has created man and animal with different charecteristics. The animals do not need a teacher or trainer as much as a man does. The young of a fish for instance, begin to swim immediately on birth. As the eggs hatch, no one teaches the young how to swim and they do not need a teacher for that. They are created with inborn instincts that tell them how.

If a man takes the example of a fish and throws his new-born baby into the water hoping that it would swim by instinct like the young of the fish, then this man is mad. There is a vast difference between a man's child and the young of a fish. Allah has fashioned the latter in a way that it does not need a teacher while the former - the man's young - needs a tutor to teach him to swim.

Take the new-born chick, the moment it hatches out of the eggs, it nibbles at food without being taught but a human baby will not eat unless taught. It needs a teacher.

Allah has fashioned man so that he needs to be taught. He cannot do anything in the world without a teacher and so cannot learn a science or technique or craft.

Make A Cupboard From A Book

Look at a carpenter! If there is a book that instructs how to build a table or chair, it also says what tools are required. Can anyone read the book and follow its directions to carve out a cupboard? He will never do it. But, if a man does not read any book but keeps in the company of a carpenter for a few months watching him all the while how he uses his tools then he will soon build a cupboard by himself.

One Cannot Cook Food By Reading Books

There are several cook books available. They tell us how different items of food may be cooked. They tell us what ingredients to use and in what proportion. The books have everything in them. If a man who has never cooked anything sets about to cook some kind of food, he will never do it unless he is taught by an expert cook.

Man Goes By Practical Example

So, it is the nature of man that he cannot acquire knowledge merely from books unless he has a teacher and mentor to train him. He needs to live in the company of the teacher and mentor. It applies to every science, art and craft. The same pattern and procedure governs religious studies. If anyone attempts to acquire religious knowledge merely through books then he will never succeed. He needs to have a solid base in the company of a teacher and mentor and to have studied his life to be able to understand religious philosophy.

Just The Book Alone Was Not revealed

This is the secret behind a Book of Allah never being revealed without a Prophet to explain it. There are cases of Prophets عليهم السلام who had no Book revealed to them by Allah but there is not a single case of a Book of Allah descending on mankind without a Prophet carrying it. Why is it so?

This is because a Book by itself would not have been understood by man who does not possess enough capability to reform himself by that. Of course, it was not difficult for Allah to send the Book by itself. The idolators also made similar demands:

لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الْقُرْآنُ جُمْلَةً وَاحِدَةً ۚ (الفرقان: ٣٢)

Why has not the Qur'an been sent down on him all at once? (al-Furqan. 25:32)

Was it difficult for Allah to have the Book before every man when he woke up in the morning? A beautiful, well-bound Qur'an could have been placed at the head of every bed. A voice from the heavens would have decalred, "This is the Book. Obey what it says." It was not difficult for Allah to do so. But, He did not do it. He did not send a Book by itself. He sent the teacher along too, to impart

training Why was that?

Two Lights Help In Reading The Book

This is because a Book cannot be understood unless accompanied by the light of a Messenger's teachings. The Book is very eloquent and perfect but I sit in darkness, I have no light with me. Can I then benefit from it? No! Not until I have two lights. First, I have to have with me the light of the eyes and secondly, I must have the light of the sun or an artificial electric light. If even one of these lights is missing then I cannot derive benefit from the Book. There may be sunlight but my eyes may lack radiance, then how will I read the Book?

Or, if my eyes have the light but there is no outward light of the sun or the bulb, then too I will not be able to take advantage of the Book. To read the Book I must have both lights - a light within me and a light outside me. It is an inward light and an outward light. When both the lights are available only then can one benefit from the Book. Therefore, Allah let us have two opportunities-the Book of Allah and the Men of Allah.

The Slogan *The Book of Allah Suffices us*

This is where man wavers and goes into the labyrinth of error. so, a sect arose and said about itself:

حَسْبُنَا كِتَابُ اللهِ

It is a very appealing slogan: *The Book of Allah suffices us.* On the face of it this is a very good thing to say. The Book of Allah Tells Us of Everything. تِبْيَانًا لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ

But, let someone ask him who raises this slogan that if he has a book of medicine at home and the book says all one wishes to know about medicine but the light of the teacher is

not there is not then the book of no use? Then why pick up the Book of Allah and say "We are not in need of a Messenger's training?" This is nothing but blindness and decption.

So, there is a group of men who embraced the Book of Allah but kept away from the men of Allah, the Prophets علیهم السلام. They went down the labyrinth of error. Actually, if the men of Allah are overlooked, it is like overlooking the Book of Allah because the Book itself says, "Look at Our Men whom We have sent as your teachers. We have sent them as our Prophets." Now, if anyone says that he holds the Book and does not need the men then he actually casts aside the Book. The books of medicine say: "administer medicine as directed by the physician." Then, what will happen if anyone forgets this directive but takes medicine according to his own whims claiming to have knowledge of the books? He will hasten his death. Exactly the same thing is done by those who raise the slogan. حسبنا کتاب اللہ The Book of Allah sufficies us. They incite people against the men of Allah.

The Men Alone Too Are not Enough

There is another group of men who sought the men of Allah to such an extent that they neglected the Book of Allah. They say that they are satisfied with the Men of Allah alone and they do not know what the Book of Allah is. Thus, they picked up the Men who they thought were enough for their thinking and they came to adore them. They paid no heed to what the Book said but decided to go along with the Men. They are also on a wrong path.

The Middle Course

The reasonable course is to hold the Book of Allah and the Men of Allah in conjunction with each other. The

Book of Allah must be read in the light of the teachings of the Men of Allah. It is then that we will receive guidance. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said about holding both these things:

مَا اَنَا عَلَيْهِ وَاَصْحَابِىْ

"What I am on (that is the Book) and my Companions."

That is, the Book and the Men, The Book of Allah is what the Prophet ﷺ was on, and the Companions are the Men of Allah, and we are asked to hold to both of them. Anyone, who follows both these at the same time, will be on guidance. If we understand this then there will be an end to error and possibility of going astray whether technically, ideologically or practically. Many people have studied books and upgraded themselves as religious guides and leaders. They have studied books So they bracket themselves with Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه and call out:

هُمْ رِجَالٌ وَنَحْنُ رِجَالٌ

"They are Men of Allah so are we men (of Allah)." (We will do what they have done.)

They raise themselves at par with the real Men of Allah. Just as they observed *Ijtihad* to answer a problem through Qur'an and *Hadith*, these men also appropriate the authority to themselves to observe *Ijtihad.* These men are misled. It is just like a raw medical student comparing himself to a surgeon and appropriating to himself the right to operate patients, saying هم رجال They are Men so I am also a Man!" Those people who raise this slogan هم رجال (They are Men so are we) after reading books on religion without going through a teaher's eyes, are people of the third type on error.

Let us suppose a man has studied medical books and

learns from them the different medicines for different illnesses. He opens up a clinic and preseribes medicine to his patients. Let us also suppose that his initial patients recover and he becomes famous. People throng his clinic without knowing that even one patient could be administered wrong medicine and die. So, it is foolish to visit an uneducated quack just because his prescriptions seem to bring relief. There is always the possibility of someone suffering adversely.

In the same vein we often hear people say, "many people became religious after reading a certain book although they were irreligious before that. They never offered *Salat* or remembered Allah before but have come to do that after reading the book. The author is a great man. The Ulama tell us unnecessairly that we must not follow him and not read his books. But, we have met him and read his books. We have benefitted much." It is the same with this author as with the quack. If he could cure a few people it does not qualify him as a doctor. He can err any time and cause a terrible loss. In the same way this man who appropriates to himself the task of a religious teacher or mentor just by studying books should not be allowed to cheat Muslims.At any time he will present a theory that will mislead the layman.

How did the Companions رضى الله عنهم learn the Religion

Allah has said about this religion that it will go down from one to another, generation to generation. It does not progress by just reading the books with the eye. It is transferred to the student's heart from the teacher's heart. Did the Companions رضى الله عنهم read any book? Did they obtain a degree? Did they get a certificate? They did nothing of the sort but studied at *Sufah,* for instance, where they had

no syllabus and no fixed periods of classes.

What did they do at *Sufah*? They studied the behaviour of the Holy Prophetﷺ. They examined his deeds and actions, and what he said. They obtained the light of the teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The same method was adopbed by successors of the Companions and the epigones after them, and so it goes on to this day.

We read in the *Hadith* books:

قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا فُلاَنٌ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا فُلاَنٌ

He said that:

So-and-so narrated that so-and-so narrated to him....is the line of transmission of a *Hadith*, a pure chain that connects us directly to the Holy Prophetﷺ.

Grants Through A Means

There are two ways of studying a book. You read it yourself with the aid of a dictionary from which you get meanings of difficult words. Or, you read it under the eyes of a teacher. There is an ocean of a difference between the two methods. It may be that the reader understood the same thing what the teacher explained but when a teacher says something it is like a light and that light brings blessings and radiance of the knowledge from Allah. This is never received from direct reading of the book. The teacher is nothing and has no reality and it is only Allah Who grants - but, He gives through a *means* (not directly). The question arises : Can Allah not grant directly? Could He not reveal to the Prophet ﷺ without a *means?* But, He did not do it and He made Jibril (gabrial) عليه السلام the *means.* Even when He spoke to Hazrat Musa عليه السلام, He did it through the *means* of a tree, the *Tur.* What is the wisdom behind it? Only Allah knows that, but it is His practice

that He gives through a *means.* The *means* could be a living person or a lifeless thing, like the tree. He wished to display His Self then he did it via the Mount *Tur* although it has no standing otherwise. In the same way a teacher has no standing if he is not made a *means.* This is the practice of Allah. He showed us how He gives and if anyone wants to take it, he may take it in the manner He gives. If we look at a window that lets in sunlight, will we say that the window creates the light? The light comes from another source and the window is only the *means* of letting it in. In the same way, a teacher is a *means* and his person has no say in giving the light of knowledge yet he is helpful to us in conveying this light. This is why a teacher is respected and honoured. Allah has made him a *means* for us.

The gist of what has been said is that although the Book of Allah ranks first and *Hadith* follows it as second yet from the point of view ot observance the sequence is to pass forward through *Hadith* to arrive at the Book of Allah. Without *Hadith*, we canot comprehend the Book of Allah. Therefore, knowledge of *Hadith* is the root of every other Science and learning.

May Allah inspire us to learn and teach sincerely and make us observe all etiquettes in our study. *Aameen!*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame'masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal
Karachi
After 'Asr Prayers

Date : 25th August, 1995

The Four Signs of Perfect Faith

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد !

من اعطى لله ومنع لله واحب لله وابغض لله فقد اسكتمل ايمانه (ترمذى ابواب صفة القيامة، باب نمبر ٦١)

Praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him, ask Him for help and seek His forgiveness. We believe in Him and place our trust in Him. We seek refuge in Allah from the mischief of our souls and from our evil deeds. He whom Allah

guides, none can mislead; and he whom Allah leaves astray, none can guide. And we bear witness that there is no one worthy of worship except Allah, who is Alone and Who has no partner. We bear witness, too, that Sayyidina Muhammad is His slave and His Messenger, may His blessisngs be on him and on his family and companions, and may He favour him and give peace, a complete peace.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said, "If anyone gives something to someone else for the sake of Allah, forbids something to someone for Allah, loves someone for the sake of Allah and hates someone for the sake of Allah, then he will have perfected his faith." (Tirmizi, Sifat ul Qiyamah, Chapter 61)

The First Sign

The first sign of a perfect faith is that the Believer gives someone something for the sake of Allah. Thus, if he spends some money, he has the pleasure of Allah in mind. Whether he spends on himself, his family or in charity, he forms an intention at the time of spending that he wishes to please Allah. This condition is more emphatic when he gives in charity that he has the pleasure of Allah in mind and harbours no ostentatious designs but hopes for a reward from Allah alone.

Form the same intention when buying or selling

A man who spends money on any head other than charity must also form a similar intention and aim at the pleasure of Allah. For example, when he buys something and pays for it to the seller, it is, on the face of it, a mere

worldly transaction. But, when he buys it he has in mind the responsibilities placed on him by Allah towards his family members and hopes to discharge these responsibilities thereby. At the same time, he must form the intention to undertake this transaction in accordance with the lawful method prescribed by Allah and he should shun the forbidden transaction. In that case, the two intentions will make the transaction an effort to seek the pleasure of Allah although it may look like a worldly dealing.

It depends on the angle of seeing

Mawlana Doctor Abdul Hayyi رحمة الله عليه would say often that the only difference in mundane and spiritual matter is the angle of sight. What is worldly from one angle becomes religious when seen from another angle. The method to do it is to carry on whatever one does in this life but look at it from a different perspective - whether he sleeps, arises, eats or drinks. For instance, to eat is apparently a worldly matter, but he is religious if he thinks that he eats to comply with the Holy Prophet's ﷺ directive:

ان لنفسك عليك حق (صحيح بخارى جلد ١ صفه ٢٦٤، ٢٥٦)

Surely, your body has a right over you (Sahih Bukhari, Book 19, Chapter 20, *Hadith*# 1153)

Let him think that when food was presented to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, he took it as a blessing of Allah and thanked Him for that while he ate it. Now, if this man intends to follow the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in eating, the seemingly worldly exercise will become a religious effort. In this way, there is nothing of the actions of the world that cannot be seen from a religious angle. One can see whatever he does from morning till evening

from a different angle and turn it into a religious task.

Every piety is charity

People suppose generally that charity is to give money to the needy or to feed him. They suppose it not to go beyond that. However, according to the Holy Prophet ﷺ "every pious deed done with a pious intention is *sadaqah*". He went so far as to say that the morsel a man feeds his wife is also *sadaqah*. It is so because he does it to fulfil the responsibility imposed on him by Allah and hopes to earn a reward from Allah for what he gives is given for the sake of Allah.

The second sign

The second sign that tells us that a Believer has perfect faith is that he withholds or forbids for the sake of Allah. For instance, if he does not spend on something, he restrains himself for the sake of Allah because Allah and His Messenger ﷺ have forbidden us to spend unnecessarily. Or, if he does not pay anyone to spend on an unlawful cause, he meets the demand of *Shari'ah* and gains the pleasure of Allah.

Giving a gift to meet custom

Many inexplicable customs are in vogue in our society and they call upon us to present gifts on different occasions. If anyone fails to comply with the custom, he is looked down upon although there is no precedence in the behaviour of the Holy Prophet ﷺ for that and Allah has not asked us to do so. For instance, *niyota* is paid on weddings. Whether a man be able to afford it or not, he has to pay it otherwise people will look at his behaviour with contempt; he will have to borrow or earn in an unlawful way. On the other

hand, a man may be able to afford to pay for it but he withholds payment unmindful of the custom or censure simply because he wishes to please Allah then what he does is for the sake of Allah and his behaviour is a sign of perfect faith.

The third sign

The third sign that a Believer's faith is perfect is that he loves anyone for the sake of Allah. A person loves someone for no other reason but simply for the pleasure of Allah as, for instance, his attachment to a man of God. Obviously, he does not expect any worldly benefit from that man and loves him only for the sake of Allah and he hopes to progress in spiritual matters and to please Allah. This is a very blessed love and provides much benefit to the beliver who attaches himself to the pious man.

Attachment With A Pious Man To Obtain Worldly Benefits

Sometimes a man is tempted by the devil or his own base desires and seeks mundane advantages from the spiritual attachment to a pious mentor.

For instance, he hopes to raise himself in the eyes of other men by attaching himself to the pious man. He hopes to be counted as close to the love merely for Allah becomes a means of furthering his worldly gains.

Some people attach themselves to the pious man because men from different walks of life visit him and they include influential men, men of high office, and rich affluent men. They will thus gain contact with these people and be able to further their ends thereby. The love that was meant to be for the sake of Allah gave way to worldly interest. In contrast, anyone who maintains a

contact with a pious man to gain religious and spiritual advancemet is said to be doing so for the sake of Allah and his love is regarded as love for Allah for which Allah has given assurance of great reward.

Turn every love for the sake of Allah

There is a form of love in the life of every man. There is love between mother and child, father and child, and husband and wife. There is fraternal love and love between relatives. If the angle of view is aligned properly, these forms of love can be described as love for the sake of Allah. For instance, if anyone heeds the directive of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ that one should love his parents then his love for his father and mother is regarded as love for the sake of Allah. We are told that if anyone casts even a glance towards his parents with love, he is rewarded as though he has performed a *Hajj* and an Umrah (pilgrimages to Makkah). On the face of it, the man fulfils his natural tendencies in loving his parents but with proper alignment of his intention, he is credited with doing that for the sake of Allah.

Let a husband love his wife for the sake of Allah

A man's love for his wife is part of his sexual instincts. However, he can gain credit for loving her for the sake of Allah if he forms an intention of obeying Him and His Messenger ﷺ and if he tells himself that he follows the *sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ in doing so. Thus, if we have the case of a man who loves his wife because of his sexual instincts and another man who loves his wife for the sake of Allah, the two of them seem to be doing the same thing but actually, there is a wide difference in their respective behaviour. The *Ahadith* are replete with

examples of the Prophet's ﷺ show of love to his wives. He missed no opportunity to please them. People like us are sometimes surprised at some of the examples of his behaviour with his wives. For instance, we read in a *Hadith* that the Holy Prophet ﷺ narrated to Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها the story of eleven women. These women sat together and decided that each should relate her husband's behaviour to the others. "The first woman said.... Then the second said..... and the third woman said.... and the fourth related....." The man who receives revelation from Allah and who is in constant contact with Allah - this man finds time to tell his wife the story of eleven women! Another *Hadith* tells us of an occasion when the Prophet ﷺ asked Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها if she would compete with him in a running and she consented. The two ran a race on an open ground where there was nobody else and no likelihood of the veil being violated.

Our behaviour is influenced by sexual instincts

On the face of it, this behaviour seems to have nothing to do with worship and it seems to be no different from a similar behaviour of any of us with his wife. But there is much difference between our behaviour and that of our Holy Prophet ﷺ. We follow our sexual insticts in showing love to our wives while the Prophet ﷺ came down from his high station to do it because Allah has directed that a husband pleases his wife.

Who is An *'Arif*

An *'Arif* is one who recognises Allah and the *Shari'ah* as well as the path and knows them well. According to the Sufis, an *'Arif* is a collection of paradoxes. His pesonality and his deeds seem to be contradictory for he is in constant

link with Allah and remembers Him all the time, he mixes along with his family and other people talking to them and laughing with them. This is why such a man is called a "collection of paradoxes."

Difference between the beginner and the graduate

Among the Sufis, one who is in the incipient stages is known as a *Mubtadi,* a Beginner, and one who has passed through all stages is a *Muntaha*, a Graduate we may say. The former has set his foot on the road to *Tariqah*, the Sufi Path in search of inner reality of religious and spiritual life. The obvious status of both of them is similar and their behaviours look alike, while one who is between them seems different.

For example, there is a man like us who is a *Mubtadi,* a novice, just beging to tread the religious path. He does everything that is worldly. He eats, drinks, converses with other people, buys and sells, spends his time with his wife and children. At the other extreme is the Holy Prophet ﷺ who buys and sells in the market, does manual labour and spends his time with his wives but he is a *Muntaha,* in the Final stage, the Teacher. The apparent condition of the *Mubtadi* and the *Muntaha* is alike but there is much difference between the two. There is a third man who is a little ahead of the tyro, the *Mubtadi,* and in-between the two stages. His behaviour is different. He does not go to the market and does not spend his time with his family but he is ever occupied in remembering Allah and in seeking His forgiveness. He has nothing else to do from morning to evening and he is on a third and middle stage.

The example of a *Mubtadi* and a *Muntaha*

Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has explained the three categories through an example. There is a river and a man is standing at its bank while another has crossed over it and is at the other side of it while a third is crossing over it and is swimming in its midst using his hands and feet in the exercise. To one who sees them, the two men at either side of the river are alike; each is standing at the bank of the river although the one has yet to cross over the river and to endure the waves while the other has gone through the river and the tests involved in swimming before arriving at the other side. The third man is grappling with the waves and going through the tests in his attempt to arrive at the other side. To one who sees them the third person who is swiming through the river seems the bravest because he is fighting the waves but in fact, the second man who is at the other side of the river is the bravest because he has endured the test successfully. He is now on dry land and in the same state as the one who has not yet had a dip in the water. This is why the *mubtadi* and the *muntaha* seem alike but there is a wide difference between the two.

One needs to practice to achieve love for Allah

In order that a person convert his worldly loves for the sake of Allah, he must practice for sometime before he achieves that. When he approaches a religious mentor or a Sufi, that pious man will make him undergo ritual exercises that will enable him to change the angle of his existing love so that they become for the sake of Allah while the love remains as devoted as it was. Mawlana Doctor Abdul Hayyi رحمة الله عليه used to say that it took him years together to change the angle of his love and form the

intention for it to please Allah. Thus, for example, when he returned to his home and was hungry and food was brought before him, he restrained his hand a while although it would draw towards food instinctively. He first formed an intention in the light of the *sunnah* of the behaviour of the Prophet ﷺ who would express gratitude for the food and his own dependence on it before he began to eat it. In this way the Mawlana changed the angle of sight, remembering also that Allah has imposed on him a duty to his body.

Love children for Allah's sake

Likewise, when he entered his house, he saw his child playing and the sight pleased him and he felt like picking him up and kissing him. But, he stopped himself from doing so until he had formed an intention to emulate the Prophet ﷺ who showed love to children. Once, the Prophet ﷺ was delivering a sermon in the Masjid Nabawi when he saw Sayyidina Hasan or Sayyidina Husayn رضی اللہ عنہا comeing towards him; he got down from the *minbar* (pulpit) to receive him and placed him on his lap. Once, while he was offering his prayer, Sayyidah Umamah رضی اللہ عنہا, a young child then somehow climbed to his shoulders; when he was going into the *Ruku'* (bowing posture), he picked her up and placed her on the floor gently but when he was in the *sajdah* (the prostration posture), she again climbed onto his back! Anyway, to love children and to play with them is the *sunnah* (practice) of the Holy Prophet ﷺ we must contemplate ourselves observing this *sunnah* when we love our children. In the beginning it seems to be done with particular concentration but gradually one does it automatically. It comes naturally after some time so that every love becomes love for the

sake of Allah whether it is shown to a child, wife or parents.

This is a very easy method and there cannot be an easier method that allows one to do whatever he does only with a change in the angle of perspective and intention. But this can only be done after one puts in some effort for it. All it needs is practice and a time will come when every love will be for the sake of Allah.

Token of love for Allah

What will tell one that his love is really for Allah? The sign is that when the cause of Allah demands he will be prepared to give up the love without the least bit of demur and he will not feel an unbearable pressure on himself.

An incident in the life of Hazrat Thanavi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Once Mawlana Thanavi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ told his audience that he had gone through an unusual test one day. His wife had spoken to him in a harsh tone and he told her that he was not used to that adding, "If you say, I will transfer my lodgings to my *khanqah* where I will live the rest of my life because I cannot endure the tone used by you." He told his audience that he had thrown the challenge but the next moment wondered if he could do that at all. He wondered what if she asked him to go ahead with his threat? Would he spend the rest of his days in the *khanqah*, or was it just an idle burst of words? When he thought of it, he realised that he was able to carry on his threat because his love was for Allah and if he had to give up love of someone against his love of Allah then he would do it. He would not undergo an intolerable situation

because his love was for the sake of Allah. Khanqah is a recluse where disciples undergo training.

This stage can be achieved after strenuous effort which is not impossible for a person to do. The result of the effort is that Allah grants a station which is worth achieving.

The fourth Sign

The fourth sign is to hate someone or be angry at him for the sake of Allah. The hatred or anger that a person feels for another is not on his person but it is because of an evil deed he performs that earns the displeasure of Allah. Such anger and displeasure is then for the sake of Allah.

Do not show hatred to the Person

The religious elders have taught us a lesson that we must remember always. They have told us not to hate the unbeliever but to hate disbelief, not to hate the sinner but to hate the sin, not to hate the transgressor but the transgression. If anyone is involved in immorality and sin, he is not the one to be hated but it is his deed that is detested. His person is worthy having pity because the poor man is ill -- he is ridden with the illness of disbelief, vice or sin. One does not hate the sick man but he detests the illness. If we hate the sick man then who will care for him?This is why when a person gives up sin and disbelief then he is worth embracing.

The method of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in this regard

Let us look at the behaviour of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in this regard. The person that chewed the liver of his paternal uncle, Sayyidina Hamzah رضی اللہ عنہ- sayyidah

Hindah رضی اللہ عنہا- and the one who made it possible for her - Sayyidina Wahshi رضی اللہ عنہا - when they embraced Islam, they became his brother- and sister-in-faith. When their names are recalled now, the prayer رضی اللہ عنہ or رضی اللہ عنہا (may Allah be pleased with him/her) is spoken after their names. The truth was that their persons were never despised but their behaviour and their deeds were despised and their belief was hated. When they repented sincerely and gave up the evil deed and belief, there was no cause to hate them.

An incident in the life of Khwaja Nizam-ud-din Awliya رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Khwaja Nizam-ud-din Awliya رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was a great saint. In his times, there lived a great religious scholar too, Mawlana Hakim Zia-ud-din رحمۃ اللہ علیہ who was an eminent jurist too. While the former was a well-known Sufi, the latter was noted for his mark in jurisprudence and so as a Mufti (one who gives judgement in religious matters). Khwaja Nizam-ud-din Awliya رحمۃ اللہ علیہ regarded *sama* as proper as indeed, many Sufis allow it. *Sama* is the recitation of *Hamd* (praise of Allah) and *naat* (eulogy of the Prophet ﷺ) in a sweet, melodious voice without the accompaniment of musical instruments. It may be in a singing style or a simpe melodious recitation but is delivered and heard with rapt attention and religious devotion. While the Sufis generally held it as proper many jurisprudents disallowed it and termed it as a *bidah* (an innovative practice). Thus, on the one hand Hakim Zia-ud-din رحمۃ اللہ علیہ had issued a religious edict that *sama* was disallowed and improper while, on the other hand, Khwaja Nizam-ud-din رحمۃ اللہ علیہ permitted it and listened to it.

It happened that Mawlana Hakim Zia-ud-din رحمة الله عليه was taken ill and death seemed near. Khwaja Nizam-ud-din Awliya رحمة الله عليه paid him a visit to enquire after his health. When he arrived at his house, he let it be known that Nizam-ud-din Awliya had come to enquire about the health of Zia-ud-din. The latter sent the messenger back with instruction not to allow him in because he was not willing to see a *bidati* (an innovator) but Khwaja Nizam-ud-din رحمة الله عليه sent message that the innovator had come to repent on his *bidah*, on his behaviour. At that very moment Mawlana Hakim Zia-ud-din رحمة الله عليه sent his turban with instructions that it may be spread on the floor and Khwaja Nizam-ud-din Awliya رحمة الله عليه be asked to step on it with his shoes on - not bare foot - and be brought in to him. However, Khwaja NIzam-ud-din رحمة الله عليه picked up the turban and tied it on his head, saying, "It is like my graduation, an honour for me!" And he was shown in with respect! He shook hands with the Mawlana and remained attentive to him. It was in his presence that death approached Mawlana Hakim Zia-ud-din رحمة الله عليه. Khawja Nizam-ud-din Awliya رحمة الله عليه remarked that Allah had granted approval to the Mawlana whose station was elevated as he died.

Even anger must be shown for the sake of Allah

Anger that is for the sake of Allah does not grow personal hatred and enmity because the other man knows too that the first person shows anger not on him but on his behaviour and conduct. He understands that the anger is displayed for the sake of Allah. It comes under the purview of :

من احب لله وابغض لله

Love and enmity is shown for the sake of Allah

The anger must not exceed the limits set by *shari'ah*. May Allah inspire us to show love and anger to anyone only for the sake of Allah. May He give us the strength to control our anger so that we show it only where it is to be shown for the sake of Allah and we check it where it has to be restrained for His sake.

An incident in the life of Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه

A Jew spoke ill about the Holy Prophet ﷺ in the presence of Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه who seized him at the very moment and lifting him high threw him on the ground. He then placed himself on his chest. The Jew, finding himself helpless, spat on the face of Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه. When the Jew did so, Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه released him immediately and got down from his chest. People around expressed surprise that he let go of the man while he had shown greater rudeness. Sayyidina Ali رضى الله عنه said, "The first time I threw him down and intended to give him a beating was because he was rude to the Prophet ﷺ and my anger was for the sake of Allah. Then, he spat at me and it provoked me much but if I had beaten him that would have been for my own sake and not for his rudeness to the Prophet. That is why I left him alone."

This behaviour was really putting into practice the *hadith* "من احب لله وابغض لله" loves some one for the sake of Allah and hate someone for His sake." In other words, it shows that anger is held in check. It is shown only when *Shari'ah* calls for it but restrained when *Shari'ah* disallows it. These people then behave as if they had nothing to do with it. It is about these people that it is said: كان وقافا عند حدود الله "These were men who stopped within the limits set by Allah."

And incident in the life of Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ

Sayyidina Umar Faruq رضی اللہ عنہ once observed that the conduit over the house of the paternal uncle of the Prophet ﷺ, Sayyidina Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ, lay on the side of the Masjid Nabawi. It meant that the conduit would drop rain-water and other waste water within the mosque. He believed that the mosque was the House of Allah and the condnit of anyone's house should not lie over the mosque so he instructed that the conduit should be removed and that was done. He did it out of anger because the sanctity of the mosque was violated. When Sayyidina Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ learnt the removal of the conduit over his house, he complained to Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ about it and wished to know why that was done. The latter explained to the former that the conduit dropped waste-water into the Masjid Nabawi which was not a private property and such a thing was against *Shari'ah* and that he had instructed it be removed. Sayyidina Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ said to him "Do you know how this conduit came to be erected here ? It was fixed in the time of the Prophet ﷺ with his permission. Who are you to demolish it?" Sayyidina Umar Faruq رضی اللہ عنہ asked, "Had you obtained the permission of the Prophet ﷺ to fix it there?" Sayyidina Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ confirmed that he had the Prophet's ﷺ permission for that. Umar رضی اللہ عنہ requested Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ to accompany him to the site for the sake of Allah. There, he took the bowing posture (*Ruku*) and asked Sayyidina Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ to stand on his back and re-fix the conduit. Sayyidina Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ said that he would get it fixed by someone else. Sayyidina Umar Faruq رضی اللہ عنہ said, "how dare Umar break the conduit allowed by Messenger of Allah ﷺ? I have committed such a grave crime, the minimum punishment it invites that I bow down and you stand over my back to

fix the conduit." So, Sayyidina Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ stood over his back and re-fixed the conduit. That conduit graces the Masjid Nabawi to this day. May Allah reward those people who have constructed the Masjid Nabawi and have let the conduit remain at its original place although there seems no real purpose for it to be there; it is there as a reminder of the days gone by. This behaviour of Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ was in accordance with the *hadith* "من احب للہ وابغض للہ" love and hate anyone for the sake of Allah." He had expressed anger in the first instance for the sake of Allah and then he displayed love, again for Allah's sake. He who does so perfects his faith and this is a sign that the man's faith is perfected.

Pretend to be angry and scold someone

It becomes necessary sometimes to scold someone for the sake of Allah. It is more marked when dealing with those who are being trained by someone. For instance, a father has to scold his children, a Shaikh has to discipline his disciples and a teacher has to train his students. They must limit their censure to the extent it is necessary to correct their juniors and must not exceed the limits. When a man is in a rage then he must not scold anyone. Thus, if a teacher is angry over a student but has built up a temeper then he must not scold him or beat him in such a state of rage. When he has cooled down then he must pretend to be angry and scold the pupil so that he may not exceed the limit. This is a difficult proposition because a man is generally out of control when angry. Unless a man practices it, he cannot escape the ills of anger and its evils.

Result of excess on Juniors

It becomes dangerous sometimes to show excessive anger to a junior like one's child, student or disciple. If the one who is shown anger is older than one showing anger or of the same age then he will let him know of his displeasure and might seek revenge. But, a junior and younger persons will not be able to seek revenge or to express displeasure. A son will not tell his father that he is displeased with what the father says to him, a student will not tell his teacher the same thing and a disciple will also not let the mentor know about his displeasure. The result is that the senior will not know what is going on in the mind of his junior and how much he has suffered. He will not thus seek forgiveness for the excess committed or make amends. This thing is very sensitive and Mawlana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has said that the position is more marked in the case of the teacher who teaches very young children because they are minors and their forgiveness is not valid even if they forgive the teacher.

Summary

We must try to check our anger because it is the root cause of innumerable evils. It grows many latent ills. In the begining a novice must try to suppress anger completely. When he has achieved control over it then he may show anger only when it is necessary to show it and he must keep himself within limits in showing anger.

The wrong use of anger

As we have seen بغض فی الله (anger should be shown for Allah alone.) However, some people use it very wrongly and although they claim that they are angry for the sake of Allah, they express anger for personal ends and in

haughtiness. They aim to belittle their victim. For instance, if anyone becomes a little religious then he considers everyone else low and has a poor opinion about them. He includes his father, mother, brothers and sisters and all family members in a lower bracket. He consigns all of them to Hell and believes that he alone will go to Paradise and that Allah has chosen him to reform everyone else. So, he scolds them, belittles them and uses derogatory terms for them in order to reform them and he also violates their rights in the process. The devil prompts him that he is doing all that for the sake of Allah although whatever he does is to satisfy his own ego.

Those people who just begin to be religious are assured by the devil that they are showing hatred for the sake of Allah and he tempts them to ridicule and insult other Muslims. Such behaviour gives rise to quarrel and mischief. The novice shows anger to other people on slight pretext and they rebuke them every now and then. This causes unrest.

Words of Allamah Shabbir Ahmad Usmani رحمة الله عليه

We must always remember the words of Allamah Shabbir Ahmad Usmani رحمة الله عليه. He used to say that if truth is uttered with true intention in a true way then it will never be wasted and it will never cause mischief. There are three conditions, as it were. The first what we say must be ture. The second, hour intention must be genuine, true. And the third condition is that it must be said in a true way. For example, if someone is doing something evil then the reformer must have pity on him and try to make him understand gently and in soft words with compassion so that he may cease to do the evil. The intention must be true and there should be no personal ego involved in it to show

oneself as a superior man or to belittle the other. The method is true too; mild words and love prompt the advice. When the three conditions are thus met then there is no likelihood of mischief being committed. But, if it is found that unrest is created on giving the advice of reformation then one of the three conditions must be missing. It could be that the word of advice is not true, or the intention is faulty or the approach is wrong.

We are not appointed by Allah

We must remember that we are not sent into this world as policemen of Allah. Our task is only to convey to other people the Truth with a true intention in a True way. We must carry on doing that in a reasonable way and not get tired of doing it. But, we must not do anything that gives rise to mischief.

And our concluding remark is that all praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

May Allah be merciful to us and help us behave in the manner set out in the above lines. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Chamber of Trade and Industry
Karachi :
After ʿAsr Prayers

Date : 20th July, 1993

The Obligations Of A Muslim Merchant

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادىٰ له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد !

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطٰن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

وَابْتَغِ فِيْمَآ اٰتٰكَ اللّٰهُ الدَّارَ الْاٰخِرَةَ وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيْبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَاَحْسِنْ كَمَآ اَحْسَنَ اللّٰهُ اِلَيْكَ وَلَا تَبْغِ الْفَسَادَ فِى الْاَرْضِ ط (سورة القصص:٧٧)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم وصدق رسوله النبى الكريم ونحن على ذلك من الشاهدين والشاكرين والحمد لله رب العالمين

Praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him and ask Him for help and seek His forgiveness.

We believe in Him and place our trust in Him. We seek refuge in Allah from the mischief of our souls and from our evil deeds. He whom Allah guides no one can mislead and he whom Allah leaves astray no one can guide. And we testify that there is no god but Allah, the Alone, Who has no partner, and we testify that Sayyidina Muhammad is His slave and His Messenger. May Allah bless him and his family and companions and may He favour him and give him peace, a complete peace.

I seek refguge in Allah from the accursed devil. In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

"And seek the abode of the Hereafter by means of what Allah has given you, and forget not your portion of this world, and do good (to others) as Allah has done good to you, and seek not corruption in the land." (al-Qasas, 28:77)

I believe in Allah, our Great Protector Who has spoken the truth. And His noble Messenger and Prophet has spoken the truth. And we are among the witnesses over that and among the grateful, and praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

Introduction

My Respected Listeners! It is an honour and pleasure for me that I have the opportunity to speak before you on a religious topic. This august house of yours is the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and normally those who come to speak here delve on the subject of trade and commerce or politics. As for me, I have no practical connection with politics non practical ties with commerce.

I am a student of religion and whenever I get an opportunity to speak, I pickup a religious subject. Accordingly, I will submit before you today a few words on this very topic. Religion is a subject that encompasses every field and every department of life.

The Topic

The religion that Allah has blessed us with is not restricted to the mosque or any place of worship but it encompasses us in every field of our lives. So, our discussion will centre round *the duties of a Muslim merchant in today's life*. May Allah help me to say the right thing sincerely in a true way with a true intention. *Aameen.*

Religion is not restricted to the Mosque alone

The point is that we have shelved religion to a few forms of worship like people of other religions ever since the turn of tide towards social and political downfall in the Muslim life. We remember the commands of Allah and His Messenger as long as we are in the mosque or engaged in worship at our homes. However, we forget the commands of religion and its teachings the moment we take up our day-to-day activities and enter the hub of life – political or social activity or any other business.

Recital of the Qur'an

One of the very good customs prevelant among us is that at the commencement of every ceremony we listen to the recital of the Holy Qur'an. It applies to the beginning of the session of an assembly, a ceremony at the government level or commercial level. But, is it very cruel that we remember to respect the Qur'an only as long as the words are recited and just as the recital is over and our practical

life commences we do not remember the Qur'an.

The complaint of the Qur'an

An Urdu language poet who has lived in our very days has composed a poem on the complaint of the noble Qur'an. He has shown the Qur'an in his poetry as a complainant. The late Mahirul Qadri, the poet, depicts the Qur'an as saying:

طاقوں میں سجایا جاتا ہوں
خوشبو میں بسایا جاتا ہوں
جب قول و قسم لینے کیلئے
تکرار کی نوبت آتی ہے
پھر میری ضرورت پڑتی ہے
ہاتھوں میں اٹھایا جاتا ہوں

I am made to adorn the niches And to remain in fragrance. But when it's time to take an oath . To settle a score orally, It's then that I am needed .And I am raised with the hands! That is, "I am always kept in corners and insat here (niches where scent is applied and) every ceremony begins with my recital. So that blessings may accrue through me. When people quarrel then they pick me up in their hands to take oaths. This is how I am treated: although it is said that I am loved and respected yet the way they live and the laws they enact, they seem to say, O Qur'an! We do not need your guidance!" (May Allah forbid!)

Enter Islam whole-heartedly

The verses of the Qur'an recited at the commencement of to-day's gathering before my address are very apt. The recital includes the following verses:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا ادْخُلُوْا فِي السِّلْمِ كَآفَّةً ص (سورۃ البقرہ: ۲۰۸)

O you who believe! Enter completely into Islam.

(al- Baqarah, 2:208)

Let it not be that you are a Muslim only as long as you are in the mosque but when you are out of it into the market you do not behave as one. Rather, you must be a Muslim everywhere in your behaviour.

The topic of our discussion today is *The Duties Of A Muslim Merchant In Today's Life.* The verse of the Qur'an quoted by me at the beginning is relevant to our discussion and I will explain it now in a few words but before I do that let me delve somewhat on the present era. When the verse is explained in the background of the current era perhaps it will be more beneficial.

The two Ideologies

The age we live in considers means of livelihood as the basic problem before man. It is on this basis that the two ideologies of economics clashes with each other; first on the theoretical platform and then on their practical working. Capitalism is one of them and Socialism is the other. For more than the last fifty years there has been a continuous clash in the two ideologies and both had a philosophy behind them. But after seventy-four years Socialism died its death allowing every one to see the futility of its ideas. It failed as a revolutionary ideology.

Why was Socialism brought about

It is worth considering what causes called for the introduction of Socialism. Those who have studied economics know that Socialism is actually a reaction to the unjust distribution of wealth in the Capitalist economy

and the wide wall between the poor and the rich that Capitalism promotes; the reaction brought about a competitive Socialist economy. Capitalism allows an individual unlimited freedom to earn and amass wealth. No restrictions are placed on him. Free trade gives him full liberty so there is an unequal distribution of wealth and a harsh division between the rich and poor. The rights of poor are violated which gave rise to Socialism which took away the rights on the indiviual and placed everything under the control of the State.

Drawbacks in a Capitalist Economy

It is correct that Socialism failed-are the defects of Capitalism that had encouraged Socialism removed? Is the injustices found in Capitalism remedied? The answer is in the negative. The defects in Capitalism are found today as they were before.

Those who earn the most

The following news is worth regarding as an admonition. The day the *Time* magazine carried the news of the dismemberment of the Soviet Union and its own comments, it also carried in the same issue a report on the American life style. It pointed the people who earned the most in the American society against their personal effort. The report revealed that the *model girls* were top earners in American society, earning their money from modelling. It said that some of the model girls receive twenty-five million dollars against one day's modelling. No one else earned more than that. Who pays the 25 million dollars? Obviously, it will be recovered from the consumers ultimately. As pointed out in the foregoing lines, the two reports were carried in the same issue of *Time* and I drew

a lesson from reading the magazine. On the one hand, bugles were played on the dismemberment of the Soviet Union claiming credit for the demolition of Socialism but, on the other, no heed was paid to the factors responsible for the birth of Socialism. They may have split up Socialism but they had not eradicated the reasons and motivating factors that originated it. Another form of Socialism may yet come up any time. The first Socialist economy caused injuries to man and its next form may cause deeper wounds.

The main defect of Capitalism

The truth is that the defect in the Capitalist society lies not in unbridled liberty it allows to an individual to earn or in its recognition of individual ownership. The drawback lies in its failure to differentiate between the lawful and unlawful, the permitted and forbidden. Indeed, the religion that Allah has preferred through His Messenger, Sayyidina Muhammadﷺ and the conduct of economy it prescribes although they allow liberty in trade and occupation yet they in the unbridled liberty bind the individual to the command of his Creator and Master. Thus, his business and his industry, and economy are tied to the principles of what is lawful and unlawful conduct. Unless the principles of what is lawful and unlawful are observed in business and economy, man will continue to face immoderation and failure.

A meeting with an American Officer

At the time when the Federal *Shari'ah* Court had announced its decision on *interest* ,an enconomist in the American Embassy visited me to enquire the background of the ruling. The failure of Socialism had, occured just then. I

took the opportunity to ask him some questions. I said to him, "Surely, you people have achieved success in many fields and you are regarded as a super power and there is no other power besides you. However, have you realised that although Socialism has failed yet the factors that gave birth to it are there as they had been. Should you not look at those foctors? Is it not a fact that if anyone says that he has a solution to the problems of the capitalist economy and suggests the adoption of the Islamic principles, you will categorise such a man as a fundamentalist? If he asks you to consider the principles dividing the lawful and the unlawful, you will call him a fundamentalist? Such a man would be critised and it would be said about him that he does not understand the needs of time. Why are you not prepared to concede that at hird system of economics is viable?" He said to me after listening to me attentively, "The truth is that our media has presented Islamic teachings in a very garbled way and they have corrupted Islamic injunctions and teachings. I have heard these views on interest in such detail for the first time and I think it is essential to consider them carefully. Unfortunately, our media does let such proposals to be circulated. Theirs is not a correct approach."

Only the Islamic Principles are Just

If non-Muslims allude to Islamic teachings in this way, they are helpless because they are non-Muslims and do not know what Islam is. They have not studied Islam and are not interested in what Islam teaches them and they have no faith in it. But, we who call ourselves Muslims have no excuse to ignore the teachings of Islam after we confirm the *Kalimah - La ilaha il lal lahu Muhammadur Rasu lul lah* (There is no god but Allah and Muhammad ﷺ is His Messenger) and recite the Qur'an at the

commencement of every meeting. It is not proper that we refuse to learn what Islam teaches us in the field of economics. We must remember that Socialism has failed and Capitalism has its drawbacks just as they were. If any ideology presents a moderate approach for mankind it is only in the teachings of Sayyidina Muhammad, Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

If we place full faith in this statement while considering the verse that I have quoted from the Qur'an it will help us much in receivng guidance from the verse.

Qaroon (Korah) and his Wealth

The verse that I have quoted earlier in this discourse is from the surah al-Qasas. The verse is addressed to Qarun (Korah), a very rich man who lived in the times of Sayyidina Musa عليه السلام. His wealth is proverbial. He was so rich that the Quran says about his wealth.

إِنَّ مَفَاتِحَهُ لَتَنُوٓأُ بِالْعُصْبَةِ أُولِي الْقُوَّةِ ق (سورة القصص:٧٦)

the very keys of them would have weighed down a company of men endowed with strength (al-Qasas, 28:76)

The keys of those times used to be very heavy and his wealth was spread over a large area. The verse tells us of the instructions Allah gave him through Sayyidina Musa عليه السلام. Although the said verse addresses Qarun directly, its instructions are for every person whom Allah has bestowed wealth.

Four-point guidance to Qarun (korah)

To repeat the verse :

وَابْتَغِ فِيمَآ اٰتٰكَ اللّٰهُ الدَّارَ الْاٰخِرَةَ وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَاَحْسِنْ
كَمَآ اَحْسَنَ اللّٰهُ اِلَيْكَ وَلَا تَبْغِ الْفَسَادَ فِي الْاَرْضِ ط (سورة القصص:٧٧)

> And seek the abode of the Hereafter by means of what Allah has given you, and forget not your portion of this world, and do good (to others) as Allah has done good to you, and seek not corruption in the land.(al-Qasas, 28:77)

There are four clauses in this verse. The first tells him to seek success in the Hereafter through whatever Allah has granted him (wealth). The second clause says : Let it not be that you spend all your wealth aiming success in the Hereafter and leave nothing of it for use in this world. Do not forget the portion Allah has given you for this world (keep it with you and use it in the proper way). In the third clause he is advised to remember the good Allah has done to him (by giving him the wealth) and he too must do good to other people and deal with them generously. The fourth instruction is that he must not use his wealth to make mischief in the land (or try to spread mischief in the land). These are the four points of guidance this verse gives to Qarun. But, if we think over it, a complete charter is presented in these four instructions for a merchant, an industrialist and a Muslim whom Allah has granted something in this world.

The First Guiding Principle

The first guidance tells a Muslim that the difference between him and a non-Muslim lies in the latter's belief that the wealth with him is amassed through his own effort and acumen. He, therefore, assumes himself as the sole owner of his wealth and tolerates no outside interference. He supposes that just as he is at liberty to choose how he earns his wealth, he is at liberty to spend it as he wishes.

The people of Sayyidina Shuayb عليه السلام and their Capitalistic minds

The people of Sayyidina Shuayb عليه السلام had said to him :

> اَصَلٰوتُكَ تَاْمُرُكَ اَنْ نَّتْرُكَ مَا يَعْبُدُ اٰبَآؤُنَآ اَوْ اَنْ نَّفْعَلَ فِيْٓ اَمْوَالِنَا مَانَشٰٓؤُا ط (سورة هود:٨٧)
>
> Does your prayer command you that we should forsake that which our fathers have worshipped or we should not do what we will with our riches? (11:87)

That is, you forbid us to give less weight and measure, you ask to be just and fair, to be careful about the lawful and unlawful - why is it that you interfere in our economics. If you wish to offer prayers, you may do so in the privacy of your home.

Actually, this thinking is prompted by a capitalistic thinking. It prompts the possessor of wealth to claim ownership and right to spend as he wills and earn as he chooses. The people of Sayyidina Shuayb عليه السلام had the same mentality. This approach was rejected and they were told that the wealth that they possessed was not entirely their own because Allah has said :

> وَلِلّٰهِ مَافِى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِى الْاَرْضِ (سورة النساء:١٣١)
>
> And to Allah belongs whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth. (4:131)

However, Allah has given it to them and that is why He said: وابتغ فى مآلك ما اتاك الله "And seek with what Allah has given you the home of the Hereafter."

Wealth & Possessions are given by Allah

The first thing we must understand is that whatever we have- cash in hand or at the bank, industry or business is all given to us by Allah. Surely, we may have worked and endeavoured to receive that but our effort and endeavour is not the real reason why we have the wealth. There are many people who work very hard and try very much but do not gain wealth and possessions. Many have the wealth and work hard too but they do not receive extra wealth. So, the wealth is a grant from Allah and we must get it out of our minds that the wealth we have belongs to us. It belongs to Allah who has granted it to us by His favour and mercy. This is one guidance that we receive from the verse.

There are three distingishing featurs of a Muslim & a Non-Muslim

A Muslim and a non-Muslim are distinguished by three features. A Muslim realises that his wealth is a grant from Allah while a non-Muslim does not think so believing that he has gotton that through his own effort. The second difference is that a Muslim must use his wealth to gain success and reward in the next world and he must adopt such means and methods in gaining wealth and spending it that he does not displease Allah or violates any of His commands. This world becomes for him a means to religion and to success in the next world. It is this worldly life which becomes religious if a man's intention to further it is proper and he observes the commands of Allah distinguishing the lawful from the forbidden, and his life becomes a step to (success in) the Hereafter. The third difference between a Muslim and a non-Muslim is that while both of them eat and earn, the non-Muslim does not heed Allah or obey His commands.

A Muslim worships Allah and obeys Him. That is why Allah has turned the worldly living religious for us. A merchant must engage in business for two reasons. One, he must know that Allah has imposed certain duties on him - towards his own self and body, his children and his wife and he must intend to engage in business to fulfil those duties. Secondly, he must intend to be a means to provide something to society through his business and to distribute that by reasonable means. If he has these two intentions in mind when doing business and observes the lawful methods and refrains from the forbidden then his business activity becomes a form of worship for him.

Two types of Merchants

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ is quoted in a *Hadith* as saying,

التاجر الصدوق الامين مع النبيين والصديقين والشهداء (ترمذی، کتاب البیوع، باب ماجاء فی التجارة)

"The trustworthy, truthful merchant is associated with the Prophets, the upright and the martyrs (on the Day of Resurrection)."

(Tirmizi, Book of Sales, Chapter on Business Transactions)

However, if intentions in business transactions are not worthy and the lawful and forbidden are not differentiated then another *Hadith* reports a saying of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

التجار يحشرون يوم القيامة فجاراً الا من اتقى وبر وصدق

"The merchants will be raised on the Day of Resurrection as *fujjar* (that is, corrupt, transgressors, disobedient, sinful) except the merchants who fear Allah and are pious and truthful." (Tirmizi)

If he fulfils the three conditions then he will be in

the row of the Prophets, the truthful and the martyrs. Allah has granted to such a merchant to that station.

So, the first step is a proper intention and the second step is on the practical grounds to distinguish between the lawful and unlawful dealings. Let it not be that he acts as a Muslim as long as he is in the mosque but once he gets out of it he does not care whether his business transactions respect the injunctions of Allah or not. His conduct at that stage allowed no distinction between a Muslim and a non-Muslim. A non-Muslim engages in interest transactions and such a Muslim also does so. A non-Muslim gambles so does this Muslim gambles. When these things are found in a Muslim then he is included in the admonition of the second *Hadith* but when they are not found in him then he is the one described in the first *Hadith* above.

The second guiding principle

On looking at the first instruction and the guidelines to it, a man could complain that Islam had sealed his path to trade by asking him to work for the next world. He could say that it calls upon him to ignore his life in this world and his necessities here. However, the very next clause in the Qur'anic verse rejects this idea by giving the second guidance :

وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا (القصص ٧٧)

and forget not your portion of this world

We do not ask you to give up the wordly necessities but you must adopt the lawful and proper approach.

The world is not all there is to work for

The style of the Qur'an has made it clear that the earning of livelihood is not a man's basic problem. Undoubtedly, the Qur'an and the *Ahadith* recognises that earning livelihood is a task before man but it is not the basic question. This is a difference between an unbeliever and a Believer that the former regards it as his basic task all his life. Until he dies an unbeliever worries about how he will earn a livelihood and he does not think beyond that. But, the Qur'an and *Ahadith* permit a Muslim to occupy himself in that pursuit without regarding it as his basic aim. No one knows how long he will live. He may die any moment. No human being has denied that he will die one day. There are those who deny the existence of Allah but there is not anyone who rejects death. Everyone has to bid farewell to this world some time. And a Muslim believes that there is a life after death and that life is unending.

Is man a materialist Animal?

Anyone with a little sense can see the futility of labouring incessantly for the life of a few days and making it his goal. He can see that he should work and prepare for the next, everlasting life. A Muslim as a believer in the Commands of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ cannot have as his goal mere eating and drinking and making money in this life. To have that goal is to behave like an animal. Man has been described as a *materialistic animal* (*an economic animal*, in the Urdu original) but this description is faulty because that would place him in the same bracket as a cow, donkey or dog whose life is nothing beyond eating and drinking. If man is also created for that purpose then there is no difference between him

and the animals. Allah has left open door of livelihood for all animals so that they eat and drink freely. He has distinguished man from animals by blessing him with intelligence. He must use it to understand that his next life is permanent and that next life supersedes his current life and must be preferred over it.

In short, Allah tells man in the second clause that he should not forget his share in this world remembering that the true aim of life is the Hereafter. The economic activities are the stages of the journey, not the end in itself.

The third guiding principle

The third clause contains this instruction :

وَاَحْسِنْ كَمَآ اَحْسَنَ اللّٰهُ اِلَيْكَ (القصص ۷۷)

And do good (to others) as Allah has done good to you

This verse thus tells us that we must distinguish between lawful and unlawful dealings and not earn livelihood through unlawful means. It then tells us that whatever we have earned lawfully we must not consider ourselves as outright, sole owners of it but we must use it to do good to other people. Good may be done to others through *zakah* and voluntary charity. (*Zakah* is a fixed proportion of wealth at 2.5% obligatory on the wealthy to be paid to the needy Muslims.)

The fourth guiding principle

The guidance in the fourth clause is :

وَلَا تَبْغِ الْفَسَادَ فِى الْاَرْضِ ط (القصص ۷۷)

And seek not evil in the land.

Do not spread evil or corruption in the land. Do not

violate the rights of other people on the strength of your wealth and do not appropriate to yourself the due of other people.

If one accepts these four guiding principles, his wealth and his economic activities become auspicious for him. He will be bracketed with the Prophets, the upright and the martyrs. But, if he rejects these instructions then his efforts in the economic field are of no benenfit to him and he will face punishment in the next world.

Present an example before the world

It is a foremost responsibility of the Muslim merchants to bear in mind the guidance provided by the Holy Qur'an in the four clauses and let the world have an example in their conduct. Both Capitalism and Socialism have caused injury to the people, and the Muslim merchants must provide such an example that other people are attracted. Those who do it will fulfil the greatest need of the hour.

Can one man bring about a change in Society

Certain people put forward the excuse that one man by himself cannot bring about a change unless the system is altered and everyone else obliges. They aslo say that a man by himself cannot act on the four-point guidance. We must remember that the system and society is a collection of individuals. If every individual says that he will not change himself until society reforms then there never will be a change in society. Change is brought about only after an individual steps forward and his example is emulated by others, and so on. When individuals reform, society reforms itself. It is the individual who builds nations. Therefore, the excuse that a man by himself cannot do

anything is not a valid excuse.

How did the Prophet ﷺ bring about a change

When Prophet Muhammad ﷺ arrived, evil and vice had reached their peak in society. The Prophet ﷺ did not tell himself, "How can I correct such a big society that goes the wrong way?" He was not over-awed and did not lose heart. If he had given up, we would not have been Muslims. He went against the current of the world and presented a fresh approach, a new path. And, he walked on that road. It is correct that he had to make sacrifices on that path and he faced difficulties too; but, he endured them. The result is that one-third of the world's population today is following the path of Muhammad ﷺ. They are his slaves. But, if he had given up on the excuse that he could do nothing unless society changed itself then we would not have witnessed this situation.

Let every individual bring about a change in himself

Allah has placed responsibility one every man. So, it is his duty to reform his action without waiting for anyone else to do the same. The least that each of us must do is to seek out the injunctions ordained by Allah and His Messenger ﷺ in the fields of economics, trade and industry. We must see how we can follow those injunctions. If we become aware of those injunctions and feel an urge and resolve to act on them then this discourse will have been auspicious and beneficial. If not then there are many gatherings where people sit, talk and depart.

May Allah grow in us through His mercy the urge and the resolve to know and follow the injunctions in this regard. It is the gravest need of the hour. May He reform

us in this world and improve our chances in the Hereafter and may He prompt us to act goodly.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame 'Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal
Karachi
Date : 25th October, 1996
Time : After 'Asr Prayers

Let Your Dealings Be Fair

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَاْكُلُوْٓا اَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ اِلَّآ اَنْ تَكُوْنَ تِجَارَةً عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِّنْكُمْ (النساء:٢٩)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم وصدق رسوله النبى الكريم ونحن على ذلك من الشاهدين والشاكرين والحمد لله رب العالمين

Praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him and beseech Him for help and seek His forgiveness. We believe in Him and place our trust in Him. We seek refuge in Allah from the

mischief of our souls and from our evil deeds. He whom Allah guides, none can mislead and he whom Allah leaves astray, there is no one to guide him. And we bear witness that there is no god except Allah, the Alone, who has no partner, and we bear witness that Sayyidina Muhammad ﷺ is His slave and Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family and companions, and may He favour him and give peace, complete and abundant.

And I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed devil. In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

I have believed in Allah, and Allah, our Great Protector, has spoken the truth, and His Messenger, the noble Prophet has spoken the truth, and we are over that grateful witness. Praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

"O You who believe! Devour not your possessions among yourselves by false means, but let there be trading between you, by mutual agreement." (an-Nisa, 4:29)

Fair dealings - An important Religious duty

The verse that has been quoted above concerns an important religious obligation, *to be fair in one's dealings with other people.* A man must be good to others when dealing with them and give them courteous treatment. It is very important part of religion. However, it is sad that we have totally neglected it in our lives. We have limited religion to a few forms of worship, for example Prayer, Fasting, *Hajj, Zakah*, Umrah and rituals. But, we consider monetary dealings as not a part of religion as if these are

not part of our religious obligations. However, if we examine the injunctions of Islamic *Shari'ah* then we will find that one-fourth of them pertain to worship and three-fourth concern dealings and way of living.

Three-fourth of religion concerns dealings with others

There is a very famous book on *Fiaq* (Islamic law). It is taught in all our *madrasahs* (religious schools) before our students can become *Ulama* (religious scholars). The book is called *hadayah.* It contains every law of *Shari'ah* from purification to inheretance. This book is divided into four volumes and the first volume deals with worship and contains injunctions on Purification., Prayer, *zakah, F*asting and *Hajj.* The remaining three volumes concern laws on mutual dealings and social living. We can see from it that the one-fourth of the religious laws pertain to worship and three-fourth to mutual dealings.

Unfair dealings influence Worship

Allah has given such importance to mutual dealings that if anyone does not distinguish between the lawful and unlawful, and the proper and improper monetary transactions then his worship is affected. He may have fulfilled his obligations in worship but the reward thereagainst and their approval become uncertain. His supplications are not answered. A *Hadith* quotes the Holy Prophet ﷺ as saying, "There are many people who demonstrate much humility before Allah. Their hair is dishevelled and untidy. They implore and cry much while calling out Allah : *O Allah! Let me have that, and that!* They beseech Him in their supplications very deeply but the food they eat is unlawfully acquired, their drink is

likewise unlawful, their clothes are unlawful and their body is fed with unlawful income. فانى يستجاب له الدعاء *Then how can the supplications of such a man be granted?* Supplications of such men are not granted.

It is difficult to rectify wrong dealings

As far as different forms of worship are concerned, when anyone defaults on them it is easy for him to make amends. If prayer is neglected, for instance, he can redeem in his lifetime The number of prayers he has missed and if he cannot do so, he may leave instructions in his will to pay *fidya* against the omitted prayers from his legacy and he may make a repentance. Allah will accept the redemption, if He wills. But, if he has appropriated to himself someone's wealth then it is only possible to make amends if the owner forgives him, otherwise he may repent thousands of times and offer optional prayers innumerable times amends will not be made. Therefore, the department of dealings is very important.

Mawlana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه on this subject

It is thus that Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanavi رحمة الله عليه laid most emphasis on this subject when teaching *tasawwuf* (Mystic path containing knowledge leading to purification of the human soul) and *tariqat* (path in search of inner reality of religious and spiritual life). He used to say, "If ever I learnt of a disciple that he lagged behind in offering optional prayers or observing the rituals, I was sad on that account and I asked him to observe that. But if I learnt of a disciple who defaulted in a monetary dealing then I felt hatred for him."

An exemplary incident

Mawlana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه had a disciple whom he had bestowed his *khilafah* so he was authorised to take pledge from a fresh disciple and to exhort him on the Path. Once he travelled by train from his native place to visit the Mawlana and he brought his young son with him. He greeted the Mawlana on arrival and presented himself before him, saying, "This is my son. Please pray for him." Mawlana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه blessed the child and asked him how old he was. He said that he was thirteen years old. The Mawlana asked him whether he had paid half fare or full fare for the child when he travelled by train; he said that he had paid half fare. The Mawlana said to him, "Why did you pay for half the fare for the child when the fare for a child over twelve years is to be paid in full?" He said, "That is the law alright but my son looks a twelve-years old so I paid half fare." The Mawlana said, "We belong to Allah and we are to return to Him. It seems that you have no inkling of *tasawwuf* and *tariqat.* You have not yet realised that the journey on which you took your son has been unlawfully accomplished. Anyone over twelve years old has to pay a full fare by train and you paid half the fare for your child so you deprived the Railways of half the fare and that is theft. Anyone who commits theft knows nothing of *tasawwuf* and *tariqat.* So, as from today, I withdraw my permission to you to act as my *Khalifah* (deputy) and to obtain pledge from anyone." So, he withdrew the *Khilafah* from him although the man was perfect in observance of rituals, routine exercises and voluntary prayer including *tahajjud* and *ishraq.* He made the mistake of paying only half the fare and that cost him his *Khilafah.*

An incident with Mawlana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه

Mawlana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه had instructed his disciples and admirers to be sure to pay for excess baggage when they travel by train. They were instructed to get their luggage weighed and pay for what was in excess of the allowed limit. It is known of himself that once he arrived at a Railway Station with intent to travel. The time of departure was drawing near. He took his luggage to the relevant office and stood in the queue. Incidentally, the guard of the same train recognised the Mawlana while he was standing in the queue and asked him why he was standing there. The Mawlana told him that he was there to get his luggage weighed.The guard told him that he need not undergo the exercise because he was in the same train as the Mawlana and he need not worry about excess weight and payment against that. The Mawlana asked him, "How far you will travel with me?" The guard said that he would go up to a certain station. The Mawlana said, "What will happen after that?" The guard said, "Another guard will take over from there and I will tell him about it." "How far will that guard travel?" The guard replied, "He will go beyond your destination." The Mawlana said, "But, I will go much further (meaning beyond this world) and I will go in my grave. Which guard will accompany me there? When I will be questioned in the Hereafter that I had travelled in the State Railways without paying for the luggage and I committed theft, which of the guard will help me there?"

Unlawful living because of unfair dealings

So, it was understood that if anyone had his luggage weighed in the office of Railways, he was travelling to Thana Bhon. He must be an admirer of Mawlana Thanavi.

Many of the teachings of the Mawlana are well known among people but it is forgotten that he taught also that we should not acquire even the least amount of money in contravention of the *Shari'ah* prescription. Many people are involved today in such dealings but they do not even realise that they violate the *Shari'ah* and behave in an improper manner. If anyone saves some money by doing somthing wrong, that money is unlawful which makes the rest of his money evil too. The food that he buys with that money is unlawful and, in the same way, the clothes that he buys are unlawful and his whole living is like that. But, he realises it not and does not see the evil effects of the unlawful money he has on his life. His life is corrupted badly and he is unaware. But, those people whom Allah has given the ability to realise understand what an unlawful thing it is.

Mawlana Muhammed Yaqub رحمة الله عليه on eating a few doubtful morsels

Mawlana Muhammad Yaqub Nanotvi رحمة الله عليه was the renowned teacher of Mawlana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه and the President of Darul-uloom, Deoband. He said that he had accepted an invitation from a man once and had food there but he later learnt that the man's income was from doubtful sources. He said, "I felt the repercussions of the few morsels for months together and felt the urge to sin. I was tempted frequently to commit one or the other sin." Unlawful wealth causes such evil repercussions.

Two types of unlawful wealth

The mingling of the unlawful in our wealth is the main reason why we do not despise sin any longer and do not consider sin as a sin. There is the unlawful that is apparent and everyone knows it as such, like bribery,

interest, gambling, cheating , theft, etc. There is another kind of the unlawful that we do not realise as unlawful. This unlawful mixes with our assets and this second type we will discuss here.

Ownership must be defined

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught us that dealings must be very clear and transparent even if they are between brothers, father and son, or husband and wife. Ownerships should be defined. A father's things must be known from his son's, a husband's from his wife's and a brother's from his brother. These things must be known clearly. There is a *Hadith*:

تعا شروا كا لا خوان تعا ملوا كالا جانب

"Live like brothers but deal with each other like strangers."

For instance, if a debt is taken the transaction must be reduced to writing specifying the time after which it would be returned.

Combined business among father and sons

It is very common among us today that nothing is clearly defined. If father and sons do business together, it is done without proper defination. It is not defined whether the sons are partners in business with their father, his empyees or just helping him without remuneration. They keep expanding their business and adding factories or shops one after the other but their respective offices and positions are not defined. The share of each is not known. When they are advised to define their shares and make dealings clear among themselves, they say that would be shameful and there was no need to do that among family members. The

result is that when they are married and beget childern, they begin to complain against each other's behaviour because someone spends more on marriage, or builds a house for himself while the other has no house of his own. Then they begin to quarrel. If their father dies, then the quarrel knows no end and there seems to be no solution to that.

Inheritance must be distributed immediately on a father's death

When the father dies *Shari'ah* calls upon us to distribute the inheritance without delay. It is forbidden to delay distribution of inheritance. However, what happens is that intheritance is not distributed promptly. The eldest son takes over father's business and the daughters keep mum.They do not know what their rights are. This situation goes on for tens of years when someone else dies or one of the brothers adds his capital to the business. Years later when their children grow up they quarrel with each other and there is utter confusion. They then turn to a Mufti (jurist on religious matter) who cannot do anything because it is difficult to find out how the sons had joined their father and in what capacity they were working with him.

Share of Co-owners in Construction of Joint Home

It also happens that a joint home is constructed and during the construction different family members put in various sums of money at different times. The proportion according to which they put in the money is never specified. It is also not known whether each contributor puts in the money towords his share or gives a loan or just helps out. Finally, the house is built and they begin to stay in that. When the father dies or different other problems crop up they approach the Mufti for a solution. But, they cannot

answer him when he asks them on what basis they had contributed money during construction. They want a solution, anyhow. The Mufti naturally cannot solve the problem confused as it is. These things happen because the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ are not heeded. People observe voluntary forms of worship- at *tahajjud* and *ishraq*- but they ignore proper dealings among themselves. They know nothing about this subject. This behaviour is unlawful. If they do not know their shares then whatever they consume cannot be said to be lawful with any degree of certainty.

Mawlana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه and defining ownership

My respected father, Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه (may Allah elevate his rank)had a separate room for him self. He had a bed there on which he rested and did his writing. His visitors also came to that room to meet him. I had observed that when anything was brought into that room from outside he sent it back immediately. For instance, if he asked for water, he wanted the glass to be taken back immediately after he had drunk the water. Or, if any other utensil was taken into the room he would ask that it be taken back to its original place. If there was delay in complying with his command, he would become angry. One day I asked him to forgive me if there was delay in complying with his command. He said, "You do not understand what I say. The point is that I have observed in my will that whatever is found in this room is my property. Whatever is in other rooms and the house belongs to your mother. So, I fear that if anything from other rooms remains in my room and I die then you will think that it belongs to me while it is not mine. That is why I do not let anything remain in my room when it does not belong to me."

The caution exercised by Mawlana Doctor Abdul Hayyi رحمة الله عليه

When my respected father died, my Shaikh, Mawlana Doctor Abdul Hayyi رحمة الله عليه visited us to condole his death. He had a great attachment to my respected father such as we cannot imagine. Because he was old, weakness had overtaken him and I observed that he was very weak and sad. So, I brought my father's medicine from the house and offered a spoonful to him. On seeing it he asked me how I had brought it because it was then part of the inheritance and legacy and it was not proper that I pick it up and offer it to anyone just like that. I submitted to him, "Respected Mawlana! All the heirs are major and present here and they are all agreed that you take the medicine." He then took the medicine.

Make the settlement the same day

In this way Mawlana Doctor Abdul Hayyi رحمة الله عليه taught us that it was not something that could be delayed. Suppose, even one of the heirs was a minor or was not present and his permission had not been obtained then even one tablespoon of the medicine was unlawful. Therefore, it is a command of *Shari'ah* that when anyone dies, his legacy must be distributed immediately or, at least, a settlement must be made of the shares of the different heirs. Sometimes the distribution takes time, some of the things need to be valued and some have to be sold. But, the settlement should be made on the same day. One of the basic reasons for the disputes in our society today is that we are not upto-date in accounts and mutual dealings.

Imam Muhammad and the book on Tasawwuf

Imam Muhammad رحمة الله عليه was a student of Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه. He is our benefactor who wrote down the juristic rulings of Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه for us in his various books. He has thus been very kind to us and we cannot repay his goodness in our lifetime. His writings were equal to many camel loads. Someone asked him why he had not written on *tasawwuf* and *Zuhd* (mysicism, asceticism) and he answered, "How is it that you say so. The book *Kitab ul-buyu* that I have written is a book on *tasawwuf*." He meant to say that the laws of buying and selling and mutual dealings are really laws of *tasawwuf* because *zuhd* and *tasawwuf* really mean a correct observance of *Shari'ah* and obedience of laws of buying and selling and mutual dealings implies a correct observance of *Shari'ah*.

Using something belonging to another person

In the same way it is unlawful to use something belonging to another person without his permission. However, it is proper to use it if one is confident that he will be happy if his thing is used and will give the permission happily. However, where one has the least bit of doubt about the permission forthcoming it is not proper to use his thing, even if it belongs to a real brother or to a son. The *Hadith* of the Prophet ﷺ tells us :

لا يحل مال امرئ مسلم الا بطيبِ نفس منه (كنز العمال، حديث: ٣٩٧)

"The property of a Muslim is not lawful for you unless he gives it to you willingly."(Kanz ul-Ummat, *Hadith* 397)

This *Hadith* does not use the word 'permission' but uses the word 'happily' or 'willingly'. It means that a mere

permission is not enough but the permission must be given happily; then that thing is lawful. If anyone is using something that belongs to another person but he does not know if the owner is happy over it then it is not proper for him to use it.

The subscription is not lawful

Mawlana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه used to say that it was not lawful to invite and receive subscription from anyone for *madarasahs* or *anjumans* (welfare associations) in such a way that he feels compelled to donate. For instance, if donations are collected in a gathering and someone feels that he should give something because everyone else was giving something otherwise he will be ridiculed then it is not lawful for the receiver because he did not give it willingly. A complete booklet has been written by Mawlana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه on this subject and all rulings are found in it specifying under what conditions donations are properly received.

Property of everyone must be clearly defined

We must bear it in mind that it is not lawful to use anything belonging to someone else unless he permits that happily even if it is a son, father, brother or sister, wife or husband. If we forget this principle, we mix the unlawful in our wealth. If anyone believes that his wealth is lawfully acquired because he has not done anything wrong- no bribe or interest, not committing theft or robbery- then he must know that unless he goes by this principle he cannot claim to have lawfully acquired wealth. And if anything is received unlawfully it renders the rest of the wealth unlawful too, its blessings are wiped out. The reverse happens and that man is tempted towards

sin because of the unlawful thing he collects, and he suffers a spiritual downgrade. Therefore, we must keep our dealings honest and clear without any complications. Everything must be clearly explained and it ownership must be well-defined. However, keeping ownership well-defined, people must live together in fraternal ties. If anyone needs something from us, we may give it to him but ownership must be clearly defined.

Land was not accepted for Masjid Nabavi

When the Holy Prophet ﷺ arrived at Madinah from Makkah following what is known as Hijrah (the migration), the first thing before him was the building of a mosque, the Masjid Nabavi where the reward of one prayer is equal to that of fifty thousand prayers. He selected an open plot of land for that. He enquired into the ownership of the land and learnt that it belonged to the Banu Najjar who, when they learnt about the Prophet's intention, came to him and said, "Messenger of Allah! It is our good fortune that our land has been selected for the Masjid. We give it to you as donation that the Masjid be constructed on it." The Prophet ﷺ said, "No! I will not take it free of cost. Let me know the price of the land and I will buy it." Although it looked that they considered it their good fortune that the Masjid was being constructed on their land but the Prophet ﷺ did not agree to get the land free of cost.

Pressurising for Mosque - Building

The Ulama have explained this *Hadith* in these words. While it was proper to receive the piece of land free from the Banu Najjar who had offerred it willingly, the Prophet ﷺ did not accept their offer because this was

the first mosque in Madinah - although one was already built at Quba - and it was destined to enjoy the second place after the Haram at Makkah. It would have been a precedent for people later on to receive a free piece of land for building a mosque instead of buying it. The Prophet ﷺ did not accept a free land that in future people might not pressurise others for donation of land for building a mosque, or that they may keep an eye on the property of other people. That is why the Prophet ﷺ paid the price of the land before building the Masjid so that there should be no complication and the dealing should be fair and clear.

Paying personal expenses for the year

The wives of the Prophet ﷺ were truly his life partners. Allah had caused them to give up love for this world and put in their hearts love for the next world. But, it was the habit of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that he paid them at the beginning of the year money for a full year's expenses and he told them that was against their yearly expenses and they were at liberty to spend as they chose. They too were not ordinary women but they were wives of the Prophet ﷺ. They were used to giving charity so they kept with themselves only that much as covered their necessities and spent the rest in charity. The Prophet ﷺ set the example that he gave them a year's allowance in one go.

Treatment of wives at Par

Allah had not placed a condition on the Prophet ﷺ that he should treat his wives equally. Allah had given him authority to pay more to whichever of his wives he chose and less to whichever he wished. Allah had assured him that He would not question him about that. Thus, it was not obligatory on the Prophet ﷺ to treat his wives equally. But,

it is obligatory on his *ummah* to treat their wives equally without distinction. However, the Holy Prophet ﷺ did never take advantage of the waiver all his life. Rather, he treated them at par in all matters and defined their properties clearly and he respected their rights faithfully all his life.

Summary

In short, the basic principle shown in these *Ahadith* and verses of the Qur'an is 'fair dealing' which we continue to neglect. We are asked to have our mutual dealings clear and explicit without confusion and complications or doubts. This is equally essential for man and woman. If that is not done, income and expenditure cannot remain within the limits of *Shari'ah.*

May Allah cause us to understand this command and to behave accordingly. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue	:	Jame 'Masjid Baitul Mukarram Gulshan-e-Iqbal Karachi
Time	:	After 'Asr Prayers
Date	:	22th November, 1991

The Meaning Of Islam

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد !

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

يٰٓاَيُّهَاالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا ادْخُلُوْا فِى السِّلْمِ كَآفَّةً ۖ وَّلَا تَتَّبِعُوْا خُطُوٰتِ الشَّيْطٰنِ ۭ اِنَّهٗ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِيْنٌ (سورة البقرة: ٢٠٨)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم وصدق رسوله النبى الكريم و نحن على ذلك من الشاهدين

Praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him and we seek His help and forgiveness, and we believe in Him and put our trust in Him. We seek refuge in Allah from the mischief of our

souls and from our evil deeds. He whom Allah guides, there is none to mislead and he whom He leaves astray, there is none to guide. And we bear witness that there is no god but Allah, Who is Alone and has no partner, and we bear witness that Sayyidina Muhammad is His slave and Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family and companions, and may He give him peace, complete and abundant peace.

I seek the protection of Allah from the accursed devil. In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

"O you who believe! Enter completely into Islam, and follow not the footsteps of Satan. Surely he is an open enemy to you." (al-Baqarah. 2:208)

I have believed in Allah. Allah, our Great Protector has spoken the Truth, and His Messenger, the noble Prophet, has spoken the Truth and we are witnesses over that.

Introduction

My respected listeners, I wish to congratulate you, first of all, for your interest that has prompted you to find time to listen to a religious sermon and for which you have assembled here. You will listen to the Commands and teachings of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ. May Allah accept your attendance and may He prompt the speaker and listeners to act on what is said. *Aameen*! I have recited a verse of the Qur'an before you and I hope to present a brief explanation of the verse. Allah addresses the Believers saying, "O you who believe, enter completely into Islam, and follow not the footsteps of Satan....."

Are belief and Islam two separate things

The first thing that we must observe is that Allah addresses in these words in the verse : "O you who believe!" The address, therefore, is to those who have believed, who have expressed their belief through recital of the *kalimah tayyibah* and the *kalimah shahadah* (I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah). It is they who are told, "O you who believe! enter into Islam." It is worth pondering over that these people have believed already. What then is implied by asking them to enter into Islam? It is supposed generally that if anyone has believed then he has joined the folds of Islam; belief and Islam are regarded as the same thing. But, Allah says, "O you who believe! Enter into Islam" which means that belief and Islam are different things, and it is necessary to enter into Islam after believing.

Meaning of entering Islam

The first thing we have to understand is to know what Islam is. What is the meaning of asking the Believers to enter Islam and what is Islam? Islam is an Arabic word. It means to *submit oneself before someone*. That is, *to bow oneself completely before some great Power* and to surrender oneself to His obedience so that he does exactly as He commands. This is what Islam calls upon its adherents. The meaning is that to enter into Islam, it is not enough to profess the *kalimah* by the tongue, and unity of Allah, the messengership of the Prophet ﷺ and the Last Day. To enter into Islam it is necessary for one to submit and surrender oneself completely before the Commands of Allah and the teachings of His Messenger ﷺ. Unless he does so, he has not entered into Islam in the true sense of the word.

The Command to sacrifice his son was not consonant with sense

Allah has used this very word, Islam, in the case of Sayyidina Ibrahim عليه السلام in surah *as-saffat*. Allah had commanded Sayyidina Ibrahim عليه السلام to sacrifice his son, Sayyidina Ismail عليه السلام, which incident we remember every year on the Eid ul-Adha. He was the son for whom he had waited a long and prayed much, "O Allah! Grant me a son." When he grew up and was able to go here and there and help out his father a little, he was commanded to use the knife on his throat and finish him. If we were to find a sensible reason for this command and a wisdom behind that we will not see any logic, sensible reason or wisdom behind this command asking a father to rub the knife on his son's throat. No father can do it and no one can say that such a thing is sensible or just.

Even the son was put to test

However, when he received the Command of Allah, Sayyidina Ibrahim عليه السلام said to his son, Sayyidina Ismail عليه السلام

إِنِّيٓ أَرَىٰ فِي ٱلْمَنَامِ أَنِّيٓ أَذْبَحُكَ فَٱنظُرْ مَاذَا تَرَىٰ ۚ (الصافات:١٠٢)

I have seen in a dream that I shall sacrifice you, so consider what you think. (as-Saffat, 37:102)

What shall I do? The question was put not because he was wavering himself, but because his son too should be put to test; and it may be seen what he said. That son was no other than the son of *Khalil ullah* (the friend of Allah) and one from whose loins the noble Prophet ﷺ was to be born. The son also did not ask why he was being punished or what crime he had committed or why he was being killed. But he gave a firm reply

يَٰٓأَبَتِ ٱفْعَلْ مَا تُؤْمَرُ ۖ سَتَجِدُنِيٓ إِن شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰبِرِينَ (الصافات ١٠٢)

O my father, do as you are commanded; if Allah will, you shall find me one of the persevering (as-Saffat, 37:102)

Sayyidina Ibrahim عليه السلام also did not ask Allah to let him know the wisdom behind the command to sacrifice his son. Both of them saw the command as from their Creator and Master and forthwith submitted wholeheartedly before it.

Lest the moving knife stop

The Qur'an has described this incident in a very beautiful way. These are the words it uses to tell us how father and son proceeded to comply with the command, the father had the knife in his hand and the son was lying down and the knife was about to be moved on the throat terminating the life of the son.

فَلَمَّآ أَسْلَمَا وَتَلَّهُۥ لِلْجَبِينِ (الصافات:١٠٣)

Then, when they had both submitted and he had flung him on his brow. (as-Saffat, 37:103)

He made him lie down on his brow not straight on his back so that he might not observe his son's face and the signs of pain on it and thus slow down the knife and fail to comply the Command of Allah. He made him lie on his back. The word used by Allah is *aslama* meaning *both of them submitted to the Command of Allah.*

Submit yourselves to the Command of Allah

This shows that in the terminology of the Qur'an, Islam means that one should submit himself and his whole being to the Command of Allah and when he receives a Command of Allah, he should not ask to be informed of

the wisdom and reasoning behind command. Rather, he must set himslef to fulfil the command as he receives it. This is Islam and it is this Islam that we are commanded to enter in the verse of the Qur'an:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا ادْخُلُوْا فِي السِّلْمِ كَآفَّةً ص

"O you who believe! Enter completely into Islam."

You may have recited the *kalimah tayyibah* and the *kalimah shahadah* but it is now necessary to enter into Islam and this is done by submitting your whole being to the Command of Allah and by accepting every Command you receive from Him, bowing down before it and acting on it.

If not, you will become slaves of your Intelligence

Why should one submit to the Command of Allah without the least bit of demur? The answer to the question is that if anyone does not accept the Command of Allah without demur and uses his intelligence to argue that the Command is senseless, unmeanful and unjust, then he will become a slave of his mind giving up the slavery and worship of Allah.

Means of receiving Knowledge

Allah has blessed man with some means of acquiring knowledge. He learns through these means. The first of these means is the 'eye'. He sees things through the eye and learns about them. The second means is the 'tongue'. He tastes many things by it and gets knowledge about them . The third means are his 'ears' through which he hears and gains knowledge thereby. His 'hands' are also a means through which he touches many things and

obtains knowledge about them. For instance, I see the microphone before me with my eyes and observe that it is an instrument and it is round shaped and I learn that it is solid by touching it with my hand and my ears tell me that it relays my voice to a distance. So, knowledge is gained through the eyes, the ears and the hands.

The working of these means is limited

Allah has limited the spheres of working of these means. They work within these spheres. If anyone tries to use these means outside those spheres, they will not work. For instance, an eye will provide knowledge through sight but it will not teach through listening because it cannot hear and that the ear does. The ear can hear but not see and the tongue can taste but is unable to hear or see. If anyone closes his eyes and tries to see what is ahead through his ears then he is foolish because the ear cannot show anything and he is trying to use it beyond its sphere of activity. The ears are not placed to see. If anyone shuts his ears and tries to listen with his eyes then he too is foolish because an eye cannot listen. But, this does not mean that the eye is unnecessary. It is very useful only as long as it is used within its range to see but it will not work if it is employed to hear.

Another means of acquiring knowledge — the "Intelligence"

There is a stage beyond which these five senses cease to function—the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue and the hand cease to provide knowledge beyond a point. At that point, Allah has blessed man with another source of knowledge —his intelligence. It provides man with knowledge that the eye cannot provide. For instance, one

sees with his eyes and feels with his hands that before him is a solid microphone made of steel but he cannot know through his eyes, ears and tongue who made it and how it came into existence (by seeing it, hearing it or tasting it). Allah has blessed man with his intelligence to find that out. His intelligence tells him that the beautiful tool that is very useful in relaying his voice to a distance did not come up by itself. Someone made it and he must have been an expert technician who knew his art. So, where the five senses fail to work, Allah has blessed man with intelligence to obtain knowledge.

The limits of Intelligence

Just as the eye, ear and tongue and the other senses are limited in their scope of activity and they cannot do anything beyond that so too intelligence is not unlimited in its scope of activity. Its shpere is also limited. It cannot help man beyond its limits. There is a limit where the mind stops helping man and does not guide him beyond that.

***Wahi* "Revelation from Allah"**
is another means of acquiring knowledge

When intelligence stops helping man at its limits, Allah has granted him yet another means of Knowledge called "Revelation from Allah". It is the Revelation that Allah bestows on His Prophets عليهم السلام. It guides man exactly where his intelligence alone is not enough for him. So, those things that could not be fathomed with the mind were revealed by Allah through Revelation on the Prophets عليهم السلام and it told man how things were.

Revelation compared to intelligence

We may see this example. The knowledge that the world will end and man will die and these things will be followed by another life could not be conceived by the mind alone. It is through the Revelation of Allah which sent to the Prophets عليهم السلام that we know about life after death when man will be brought before Allah and he will have to account for his deeds and we know too about Paradise and Hell. We could not have conceived these things only by our intelligence and could never have known about life after death, the reckoning before Allah and the situation at that time. It is only through the third means of knowledge granted to us by Allah that we know these things—the Revelation.

Revelation cannot be evaluated by intelligence

Revelation is received when intelligence gives up and cannot guide man. Revelation takes over at that point and guides man. So, if anyone says that he will not believe in Revelation until he understands it then he is being as foolish as the man who will accept a fact only when he sees it by his ear.The latter is foolish because intelligence cannot understand what Revelation reveals to us. Revelation is received only when intelligence stops being helpful. This can be seen from the example of Paradise and Hell. People say that they cannot understand Panadise and Hell, although these things cannot be understood because they are outside the sphere of intelligence. That is why Allah sent revelation to the Prophets عليهم السلام to reveal these things.

Revelation decides what is good and bad

It is Revelation that decides what is good or bad, what is lawful or forbidden, what is proper or improper and what pleases Allah or displeases Him. It is not for man to decide through his intelligence. Man's intelligence cannot decide by itself what is good and what is bad and what is lawful and what is unlawful.

Man's intelligence misguides him

All the grave evils and the worng ideologies that are found in this world are the products of the mind. For instance, as Muslims we believe that pork is forbidden but if ignore the teaching of Revelation and rely solely on intelligence then we will get a wrong guidance. It will tell us that there is nothing wrong in eating pork just as non-Muslims eat it because it tastes good to them. The same argument is presented in favour of wine by those who do not believe in Revelation while as Muslims we regard it as evil and forbidden. They argue that they find no evil in it and millions of people drink it without any serious harm. Their intelligence tells them of no wrong in it. Some people have gone so far as to say that there is no harm in illicit relations between an unmarried man and women if they are both willing to enjoy that relationship. They say that they find no intelligent reason against that and if the two have sex willingly why should a third person object to it?

It is on the strength of intelligence that the worse of evils is considered proper. This is because if intelligence is used beyond its scope then it will return wrong answers. So, if man uses his intelligence at the point where Revelation has taken over then he will get wrong answers from it. He will then go on the wrong path

Socialism was Intellgence

For seventy four years Socialism and Communism were synonymous with Russia. The slogan of equality and sympathy with the poor was raised very prominently and it was claimed that Socialism will spread all over the world. If anyone had said then that this ideology was based on intelligence alone and was wrong then he would have been called a Capitalist, a Feudalist or a Conservative. But, the truth stands revealed today after seventy four years when the idolizers of Lenin themselves topple his ideology. This is the consequence of an ideology that is based only on intelligence in utter disregard of Revelation from Allah.

Submit to what Revelation says

Allah has said that man must submit himself to the Command of Allah and of His Messenger ﷺ and follow the Revelation in order that he may live peacefully and on the correct path. He must bow down before it and not use his intelligence against it even if it seems to him to be against common sense, his desires or reasoning. The only thing open to him is to bow down in submission when he receives the Command of Allah. This is what is meant by entering Islam which is found in the first clause of the verse recited by me : "O you who believe! Enter into Islam", that is, submit yourself wholeheartedly before the Command of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ.

Enter completely

The second clause says "enter completely." It says, in other words that it should not be that a man enters into Islam only as far as belief, faith and worship is concerned. He recites the *kalimah,* observes Prayer and Fasting, pays

zakah and performs Hajj, but no more. It should not be that when he enters the mosque, he is a Muslim but when he is in the business arena, his office, or at home, he does not behave as a Muslim. This, in spite of the fact that Allah has said that Islam does not encompass mere worship and a man may not suppose that he is absolved of responsibility as a Muslim if he has performed whorship. Rather, Islam is to mould one's whole life according to the dictates of Allah. So, a Muslim is one who behaves as one in the practical field of everyday business at his office and at his home with his wife and children and with his companions and friends.

The five sections of Islam

Allah has divided the religion of Islam into five parts. The religion is based on these five parts :

1.Belief: Belief must be along proper lines
2.Worship: Prayer, fasting, pilgrimage and *zakah* must be observed diligently.
3.Dealings: Buying and selling transactions must respect the Commands of Allah Improper and unlawful means must be shunned.
4.Mutual Living: One must observe the Commands of Allah in day to day living and mutual, social affairs.
5.Character: One's personal character and morals, feelings and thinking must be correct.

Today, we are Muslims in our behaviour only as long as we are in the mosque but when we step into the practical field, we hasten to cheat other people, we betray trusts and cause inconvenience to other people and hurt them. This is not entering into Islam because while

one-fourth of it is made up of worship, as much as three-fourth of Islam concerns rights of other people, the creatures of Allah. So, if anyone does not respect their rights, he has not entered into Islam completely.

An Eye-opening Event

Once while Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ was travelling, he exhausted his provision but he spied sheep grazing in the wilderness. It was the custom with the Arabs that they received travellers with hospitality and presented to them milk. So, he approached the shepherd and informed him that he was a traveller whose provision was exhausted and requested him to let him have milk to drink. The shepherd, however, excused himself saying, "I would have presented milk to you surely but the problem is that I am not the owner of these sheep and the owner is someone else. He pays me to graze the sheep which are a trust with me and their milk is also a trust. So, I am not permitted by *Shari'ah* to give their milk to anyone."

Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ put the man to a test. He said to him, "Listen to something of benefit to you. It will benefit both of us. Sell one of these sheep to me and you will get the money for it and I will get the sheep. I will milk it whenever I feel hungry on the journey and you may keep the money. As for the owner, tell him that a wolf devoured one of the sheep. He will believe you becuase that does happen in the wilderness. In this manner, both of us will be satisfied. On hearing this, the shepherd was prompt to reply, یا ھذا فاین اللہ؟ "O man! Where then is Allah?" He meant to say that if he would do it, he might convince the owner but there is a Master of the owner too, what reply would he give Him when he is brought before Him? "I am not prepared to do it." Obviously, Sayyidina Umar

رضی اللہ عنہ had put him to test. So, when he heard him, he said; "As long as people like you are found in the world, no tyrant can oppress another person. So as long as there is fear of Allah in the hearts of men, and they have in their minds the Hereafter and the standing before Allah, crime and oppression cannot take place."

This is an example of entering into Islam completely. Even in solitude, he remembered that he must not do anything that displeases Allah.

This is an essential part of religion. If a man does not observe it, he is not a Muslim in the true sense of the word. A *Hadith* quotes the Messenger of Allah ﷺ as saying, لا ایمان لمن لا امانة له "He who betrays trusts, does not believe."

A surprising incident with a Shepherd

A shepherd presented himself before the Holy Prophet ﷺ during the Battle of Khyber. He used to graze the sheep of the Jews. He had seen that the Muslims had encamped outside Khyber and he said to himself that he should go and learn what the Muslims said and how they behaved. So, he led his sheep towards the Muslim camps and sought their leader. He was told where their chief Sayyidina Muhammad ﷺ could be found. But, he could not believe that a chief would occupy an ordinary tent built of date leaves. He imagined that a king would live in pomp and extravagance. However, he went into the tent and met the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He asked him what Message he had brought for mankind and to what path he invited them. The Prophet ﷺ placed before him the message of Islam and he asked what will become of him if he embraced Islam and what position he would enjoy in life. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said to him:

"You will be our brother when you join Islam and we will embrace you."

The shepherd said, "You are joking with me. I am not your equal. I am an ordinary shepherd, a black man, my body stinks - how can you embrace me in that condition? The Prophet ﷺ said to him :

"We will embrace you surely. Allah will turn your blackness into brilliance and the stench into fragrance."

On hearing this, he joined Islam and became a Muslim. He recited the *Kalimah shahadah* :

اشهد ان لا اله الا الله واشهدان محمدا عبده ورسوله

"I testify that there is no god but Allah and I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah."

He then asked the Prophet ﷺ "O Messenger of Allah! What may I do now?" The Prophet ﷺ said,

"You have embraced Islam and the time of prayer has not yet come that I may ask you to offer prayers. It is not the month of Fasting that I may ask you to Fast and you are not liable to pay *zakah*. At this time only one form of worship is being performed and it is under the protection of the sword - *jihad* in the cause of Allah!"

The shepherd said, "Messenger of Allah! I do join the *jihad*. One of the two things may happen to the participant of *jihad* - he may become a *Ghazi* (an heroic warrior) or a *shahid* (a martyr). Then, if I become a martyr in this *jihad*, do offer me a guarantee."

The Prophet ﷺ said to him, "I assure you that if you become a *shahid* in this *jihad*, Allah will send you to Paradise and change the bad smell of your body into a fragrance and the blackness of your face into whiteness."

Go, return the sheep

The shepherd had walked over to the Prophet's ﷺ camps while he was grazing the sheep of the Jews, so the Prophet ﷺ asked him to return the sheep to them because they were a trust with him.

This is indeed a lesson for all of us. A battle was being fought with those people and they had been surrounded by the Muslims. Enemy porperty is war booty but here the property - the sheep - were an agreement. Therefore, the Prophet ﷺ ordered him to go and return the property and then come back and join the *jihad*. The shepherd did as he was told and participated in the *jihad* on his return. He attained the *shahid* (martyrdom) in that battle. This is what is called Islam.

Sayyidina Huzayfah bin Yaman رضی اللہ عنہ

Sayyidina Huzayfah bin Yaman رضی اللہ عنہ is a well-known Companion of the Prophet ﷺ, and an intimate one. When he and his father became Muslims, they travelled towards Madinah to meet the Holy Prophet ﷺ. On the way they met Abu Jahl and his army who were on their way to fight the Prophet ﷺ. Abu Jahl caught hold of him and asked him where he was going. He told him that he was going to meet the Holy Prophet ﷺ at Madinah. Abu Jahl said, "Then I will not spare you because when you go there you will join the forces against us." He said, "Our purpose is only to meet the Prophet ﷺ and to see him. We will not take part in the battle." Abu Jahl said, "Alright then promise me that you will have only a meeting with the Prophet and will not take part in the battle." He made the promise so Abu Jahl let him go. When he reached Madinah, the Prophet ﷺ had already left it with his companions to fight the Battle of Badr. So, they

met the Prophet ﷺ on the way.

The first clash between Truth and Falsehood, The Battle of Badr

The Battle of Badr was Islam's first combat between Truth and falsehood. It is the combat which the Qur'an has called the يوم الفرقان (*yaum ul-furqan*) the combat to decide between Truth and falsehood. It was the combat the participant of which was called a *Badri*. Among the Companions, those who are *Badri* are regarded very highly. The *asma Badriyin* (names of the *Badris*) are recited as a routine practice in the hope that Allah grants supplications if they are read. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had given the tidings that all those who took part in the Battle of Badr have been forgiven by Allah and rewarded by Him. It was this combat of which Sayyidina Huzayfah رضی اللہ عنہ had promised Abu Jahl that he would not participate in it.

A promise that is extracted after placing a sword on the throat

When they met the Holy Prophet ﷺ, Sayyidina Huzayfah bin Yaman رضی اللہ عنہ related to him what had transpired when they had encountered Abu Jahl and now he had made them promise not to take part in the the Battle of Badr. He then requested the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to allow them to participate in the Battle that was indeed a memorable one in which the Prophet ﷺ himself took part. He said further "As for the promise, it was extracted by force placing the sword on our throat. If we had not promised as we did then he would not have let us come to you. So, do permit us to join you and thus gain honour and excellence." (al-Asabah, Vol: 1 P 316)

You have given your word

However, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "No! You have made a promise and he has released you on the condition that you will see me but not join me in the Battle. So, I do not permit you to participate in the Battle."

This was one of those times when a man is put to test and it is seen how he keeps his word. One like us would have put forward many excuses. He might have said that he had not given the assurance with a sincere heart, he had been compelled to make the promise. He might have put forward the excuse that he had to join the Prophet ﷺ in the Battle against the unbelievers and so he was permitted to break his promise. Further, each man was very important to the Prophet ﷺ at that time becuase the Muslim army had only 313 unarmed men. They had only seventy camels, two horses and eight swords. The others had a baton, a stick or a stone. They were pitted against one thousand well-armed men. Therefore, each man was important to them. But, Sayyidina Muhammad ﷺ said, "What has been held out in assurance and a promise given will not be violated."

That is called Islam.

Jihad is fought to uphold the Truth

The *Jihad* was being waged not to acquire territory or to gain control over leadership but it was waged to uphold Truth and yet engage in *Jihad?* How may one commit sin and work for the religion of Allah at the same time? It can not be done. We are being unsuccessful today because we seek to propagate Islam while we sin at the same time and to enforce Islam while we continue to sin. We have thousands of pretexts in our minds all the time. We say very easily, "Expediency demands of us to do this

ot that so let us overlook the demand of *Shari'ah* this time,"or "Expediency calls on us to do it, so let us do it."

Faithfulness

But, there was only one thing before the eyes: Gain the pleasure of Allah. There was no other aim-not to gain property, win the Battle no to be called brave. The only aim was to please Allah. It is Allah's wish that one must be faithful to one's promise. Thus, both Sayyidina Huzayfah and Sayyidina Yaman رضی اللہ عنہ were deprived of the honour of participation in the Badr Battle. They had given their word that they would not take part in Jihad. That is the Islam which we are asked to enter completely.

Sayyidina Mu'awiyyah رضی اللہ عنہ

Sayyidina Mu'awiyyah رضی اللہ عنہ is one of those companions about whom wrong reports are in circulation among the people and they speak ill of him. Let us see an incident about him.

War tactics to gain victory

Sayyidina Mu'awiyyah رضی اللہ عنہ was the Governor of Syria. There were constant skirmishes between the syrian and Roman forces. Rome was a Super Power of those days and was a very strong nation. However, Sayyidina Mu'awiyyah رضی اللہ عنہ once drew a ceasefire agreement with them. The two agreed not to fight one another for a specified period. Before the period was over, Sayyidina Mu'awiyyah رضی اللہ عنہ said to himself that the period was yet not over and some time was left before it ended. He thought he could alert his forces through positioning them on the borders to launch an attack immediately after the period ended hopes to gain much success because the

Romans would not expect him to be in a state of preparedness before the ceasefire ended.

That is a violation of the Agreement

So, Sayyidina Muawiyyah رضی اللہ عنہ put forces on the borders and even let some of them position themselves into the borders of enemy territory. He was ready to attack. Just as the sun set on the last day of the agreement he ordered his army to advance. This move proved very successful because the enemy had not anticipated the attack. The army of Sayyidina Muawiyyah رضی اللہ عنہ moved ahead rapidly overcoming city after city and settlement after settlement and in their intoxication of victory the whole army moved ahead into enemy territory. Suddenly they observed a horseman approaching them from the rear and Sayyidina Mu'awiyyah رضی اللہ عنہ paused for him when he saw him coming towards him. Perhaps he had a message from the *Amir ul-Mumineen* (the Commander of the Faithful). As he neared them, the horse-rider called out,

اللہ اکبر اللہ اکبر قفوا عباد اللہ قفوا عباد اللہ

"Allah is Great! Allah is Great! Stop, O slaves of Allah! Stop, O slaves of Allah!"

When he was near enough, Sayyidina Muawiyyah رضی اللہ عنہ recognised him as Sayyidina Amr bin Abasa رضی اللہ عنہ - and he asked him what message he carried. He said,

وفاء لا غدر وفاء لا غدر

"Faithfulness, not treachery. Faithfulness, not treachery."

Sayyidina Muawiyyah رضی اللہ عنہ said that he had not deceived anybody and that he had attacked after the period of ceasefire was over. Sayyidina Amr bin Abasa رضی اللہ عنہ said, "Although the agreement to ceasefire had now

expired yet you had lined-up your forces on the borders before the expiry of the agreement and some of them had encroached across the border. That was against the covenant and I have heard with my own ears the Prophet ﷺ say,

من كان بينه وبين قوم عهد فلا يحلنه ولا يشدنه الى ان يمضى اجل له اوينبذ اليهم على سواء (ترمذی، ابواب السیر، باب فی الغدر، حدیث نمبر ۱۵۸۰)

"When anyone has a covenant with a people then he must not loosen or strengthen it till its term comes, or he lets them know (first) that he ends it".(Tirmizi, abwab us-Sayr, Bab fi Gadar *Hadith* # 1580)

Therefore, it was not proper to ready the army at the borders before the expiry of the agreement of ceasefire or before announcing termination in the light of the Prophet's ﷺ saying.

Returned the captured territories

Imagine an army that has made in-roads and occupied a large piece of enemy territory and continues to gain further unchecked, fully intoxicated with victory. Now, the words of the Holy Prophet ﷺ are brought to their notice that Muslims must be faithful to their covenant and at that very time Sayyidina Mu'awiyyah رضی اللہ عنہ gives the order that they must hand over the occupied territory to the vanquished and retreat. The territories were returned and they all retreated to their own land. We do not find a similar example in the history of the world that a people returned the won-over lands merely to honur their covenant. In this instance, the advance was not prompted by a lust for territory or leadership but by a desire to please Allah. Thus, when they learnt of the Command of Allah that they should be loyal to

their covenant and they had possibly been wrong, they returned to their own lands.

This is the Islam which we are commanded to enter completely.

Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ and the Covenant

When Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ conquered *Bayt ul maqdas* (Jerusalem) he made an agreement with the Christians and Jews that the Muslims will protect them and their properties in return for the *Jizyah* received from them. *Jizyah* is a tax that is received from non-Muslims. Thus, in terms of the agreement they paid the *Jizyah* annually. It transpired later that Muslims faced confrontation with an enemy so that the army stationed at the *Bayt ul Maqdas* was required at the battlefield. There was a suggestion that this unit of the army may be called upon to reinforce the main body. Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ agreed with the idea but he also ordered that the Jews and Christians must be told that the army had to be called at the warfront so they could not offer them protection. The *Jizyah* that they had paid that year would be refunded to them and after that the army would be withdrawn and they may arrange their own security measures.

This is Islam. It is not merely an observance of prayer and Fasting that qualifies one as a Muslim. A man becomes a perfect Muslim only when he resigns wholly to the will of Allah - submitting his tongue, his eyes, his ears and his living to the pleasure of Allah.

It is unIslamic to hurt anyone

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said about a Muslim that he is one from whose hand and tongue other Muslims are safe and it is a grave sin to hurt other Muslims and it is

forbidden. It is as grave a sin as consuming wine, being immodest or eating pork. Every kind of hurting another or causing him inconvenience is a grave sin. It is the duty of a Muslim that he should not hurt anyone. For instance, if anyone parks his car in a way that blocks people's passage and he thinks of it as no more than a traffic offence then he is really offending religion and committing a sin. It is not merely bad manners but also a grave sin similar to drinking wine because the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said that a Muslim is one from whose hand and tongue other Muslims are safe, that is they are safe from him in all ways. By parking his car at a wrong place, he has been a nuisance to other people. Our position today is that we have restricted religion to worship, like prayer and Fasting, and to the mosque and the daily routine of glorifying Allah and praising Him. We pay scant respect to rights of fellow-men that Allah has placed on us.

Who is the real Indigent

A *Hadith* tells us that the Prophet ﷺ once asked his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم "Who is an indigent?" They said, "Messenger of Allah, we consider that person an indigent who has no money with him." The Prophet ﷺ said, "An indigent in the true sence of the word is not one who has no money on him but he is one who is brought before Allah on the Day of Resurrection while he has plenty of pious deeds to his credit in the Record of Deeds like Fasting, prayers, chants of *zikr* and supplications. But, he would have devoured somebody's property, cheated someone, caused heartache to another and hurt someone else. He would have in his Record of Deeds violations of the rights of other people. Those people will complain to Allah about this man that he had wronged them and that

Allah should get him to make amends. Currency as we know it in this world will not be valid there are he might have paid it in compensation. The legal tender there would be pious deeds. So, those people will be credited with this man's pious deeds - his prayers and his Fasts and so on. Each of them will thus be compensated and satisfied. This will go on until all his pious deeds are exhausted. This man will become empty-handed. The piles of his piety, whether prayers or Fasts, will have been given away. But, the claimants would not all have been compensated. Allah will order then that the sins of the remaining claimants must be transferred to this man's Record of Deeds. As a consequence the man may have brought piles of piety but, having exhausted them, will carry away piles of sins. This is the real indigent."

We are not fully entered into Islam

This is enough to tell us how grave the matter of rights of fellow-men are. But, we do not even consider it to be part of religion. The noble Qur'an calls upon the Believers to enter into Islam completely - with all of our existence, our living, our worship, our dealings, our social Life our manners, every part of us must enter into Islam. . Only then will we be true Muslims and it was only this thing that spread Islam. Islam did not spread by propagation but through the example and character of men. Whereever they went, Muslims were distinguished by their example and character and this attracted men to Islam. However, today other people observe our living and character and are repulsed from Islam.

Let us resolve to enter into Islam Completely

Let us derive some benefit from the foregoing discussion and resolve that we shall let Islam enter our lives- into every department of it whether worship, mutual dealings, social life or manners. Our every action should be in terms of Islam. Let us try to do it.

We must obtain knowledge of Religion

Finally, I request that all of us must spare some time out of the twenty-four hours to obtain some knowledge of religion. Reliable religious books are available. We must have them with us and make it a habit to read them in our homes so that we will benefit by religious teachings. Our problem today is that we do not know about religion. This discussion will be deemed to have borne fruit if we are able to benefit and observe and follow the religious teachings in our lives. If not, there are many occasions when something is said and heard (but not heeded).

May Allah be merciful to us and cause us to behave on these teachings. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Alamgir Masjid
Bahadurabad,
Karachi
Time : After 'Zuhr Prayers
Date : 28th December, 1997

How You May Pay *Zakah*

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد!

فا عوذ بالله من الشيطن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

وَالَّذِيْنَ يَكْنِزُوْنَ الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلاَ يُنْفِقُوْنَهَا فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللهِ فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ اَلِيْمٍ ۝ يَّوْمَ يُحْمٰى عَلَيْهَا فِيْ نَارِجَهَنَّمَ فَتُكْوٰى بِهَا جِبَاهُهُمْ وَجُنُوْبُهُمْ وَظُهُوْرُهُمْ ط هٰذَامَاكَنَزْتُمْ لِاَنْفُسِكُمْ فَذُوْقُوْا مَاكُنْتُمْ تَكْنِزُوْنَ

(التوبة: ٣٤.٣٥)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم وصدق رسوله النبى الكريم ونحن

على ذلك من الشاهدين والشاكرين والحمدلله رب العالمين

Praise be to Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and ask Him for His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah from the evil of our souls and from our sinful deeds. He whom Allah guides, no one can mislead and He whom He leaves astray none can guide. And we bear witness that there is no god except Allah who is alone and who has no partner and we bear witness that Sayyidina Muhammad is His servant and Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family and companions and may He favour him and give him peace a complete peace abundantly.

I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Satan. In the Name of Allah the Compassionate, the Merciful.

"And those who hoard up gold and silver and expend it not in the way of Allah,so give them the glad tidings of a painful chastisement,on the day when it shall (all) be heated in the Fire of Hell, and there with their foreheads and their sides and their backs shall be branded, (saying), This is what you hoarded up for yourselves, so taste you now what you used to hoard up." (at-Tawbah, 9: 34-35)

I have believed in Allah. Allah, our Great Protector, has spoken the Truth and His Messenger, the noble Prophet, has spoken the Truth and we are witnesses over that and grateful. Praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

Introduction

The gathering today has before it the subject of *Zakah*. There are a few days to the month of Ramadan and Muslims generally pay *Zakah* in this holy month. So, the time is opportune to discuss the importance of *Zakah,* its virtues and the necessary procedure and rules. This will enable us to pay *Zakah* properly.

Admonition for not paying *Zakah*

It is for this reason that I have quoted two verses of the Holy Qur'an. These verses speak of the serious warning that Allah has given to those people who do not pay *Zakah* on their assets as prescribed. Very strong words are used to warn them of the punishment. So, the Qur'an says, "Those who hoard up gold and silver and expend not in the way of Allah so (O Prophet ﷺ) give them tidings, of a severe punishment." These are the people who continue to hoard their wealth, gold and silver and do not spend in the cause of Allah and do not fulfil the duties imposed on them by Allah so let them have the glad tidings of a painful punishment. Then, the next verse describes the kind of the painful punishment. This punishment will be awarded on the day when the gold and silver will be heated in the fir of Hell and with it the man's forehead, and his sides and back will be branded. And it will be said to him:

هٰذَا مَا كَنَزْتُمْ لِاَنْفُسِكُمْ فَذُوْقُوْا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْنِزُوْنَ (التوبة: ٣٤-٣٥)

This is what you hoarded up for yourself so taste now what you used to hoard up.

May Allah preserve all Muslims from this punishment. *Aameen*!

The fate of the people is described who store up

wealth but fail to discharge their duties correctly. The warning is given not merely in these verses but it is given in other verses of the Qur'an too. For instance, we are told tn surah al Humazah.

وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍ O الَّذِيْ جَمَعَ مَالاً وَّعَدَّدَهُ O يَحْسَبُ اَنَّ مَالَهُ اَخْلَدَهُ O كَلاَّ لَيُنْبَذَنَّ فِي الْحُطَمَةِ O وَمَآ اَدْرٰكَ مَا الْحُطَمَةُ O نَارُ اللهِ الْمُوْقَدَةُ O الَّتِيْ تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى الْاَفْئِدَةِ O (سورة الهمزة: ١ تا ٧)

Wo to every slanderer, defamer, who amasses wealth and counts it. He thinks that his wealth will make him live forever! Certainly not!He shall be thrown into the *Hutamah.* And what the *Hutamah* is? It is the fire kindled by Allah, which roars over the hearts. (al Humazah, 104:1-7)

He will be punished because of his wealth against which he did not pay the dues. The *Hutamah* is a fire kindled by Allah not by any man whose kindled fire can be extinguished by water or sand. The fire kindled by Allah will burn man's heart and liver (that is it will reach upto his heart and liver). This is a very grave warning. May Allah protect every Muslim from it. *Aameen!*

From where is the wealth coming

Why is such a strong warning given for not paying *zakah* ? It is to be considered first where one gets one's wealth from? Whether he is engaged in business, employment, agriculture or in other occupation, does he think that he amassed the wealth by his own effort? In fact, it is a system drawn up by Allah through which He provides livelihood to different people.

Who sends the customers

A shopkeeper supposes that he has opened his shop and sells his merchandise and so earns wealth but he does not consider who sends customers to his shop. Suppose if no customer had visited him, would he have earned money? It is Allah who sends his customers and who has formed a system whereby each fulfils the need of the other. He prompts one to set up a shop and another to visit his shop.

An eye-opening event

I had an elder brother, Muhammad Zaki Kayfi رحمة الله عليه, may Allah elevate his rank. He had a bookshop in Lahore, *Idara Islamiyat.* That shop is still in business. He told me once that very unique acts of Allah are witnessed in business. He cited an example of a morning when he woke up to see it rain heavily. Water had flooded the streets. He thought that it was better to stay home rather than open the shop because no one would buy a book especially a religious book. People generally put a religious book last on their list till everything else is bought and there is a spare money. This is because books do not satiate the hungry nor do they quench the thirst. When one's needs are fulfilled and he has some money on hand he will prefer to buy a fiction or a novel.

However, my borther had lived with the religious-minded and had been with Mawlana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه so he said to himself, "It is okay if no customer visits my shop but Allah made it a source of my livelihood so it is my duty to open it and wait. To get a customer to visit my shop is not my task; it is on someone else to send him to me. I must not lag behind in my duty whether it rains or there is flood." So, he took his umbrella and waded

through water to his shop. He opened it and waited for his customers. Not expecting one, he opened the Qur'an and began reciting it. Hardly had he begun the recital when he saw some men in raincoats and holding umbrellas enter his shop to buy books and he wondered what had made them brave in the rain and floods to visit a bookshop. This happened all day and his sale that day was the same as his sale on a normal day. He then realised that the customers did not come on their own but were sent by someone because He has appointed his livelihood through his shop.

Distribution of labour is by Allah

It is a system organised by Allah that He sends customers to different people. No one else has distributed different tasks and business to different people. It is Allah who has put in the hearts of men that they should do different tasks and take up different occupations and businesses. Someone sells cloth, someone shoes, someone rice, someone utensils and so on. In this way everyone sees to the needs of the other. There has never been an intentional worldwide distribution of labour whereby everyone was asked to do something or the other. It has been an automatic, unplanned distribution of tasks. The result is that everything that is necessary is available in the market and there is a buyer for everything sold. In other words, a means of livelihood is available to different people. This system is orginised by Allah and it provides livelihood to different people.

Who grows food from the land

Whether one is engaged in a business, in farming or in an employment, He is Allah who really provides sustenance. Let us take agriculture for example. The

farmer tends to the land and sows the seeds. He then irrigates the land but He is Allah alone who causes the seed to sprout. A seed which really is lifeless and weightless but it pierces the tough earth to make itself known. Its roots are very delicate, so much that even a child may undo them with his fingers but they are strong enough to tolerate the severity of the varying seasons and the winds. Passing different stages, the seed finally grows the fruit that is consumed by the people the world over. Allah alone brings these things to happen.

Man is not capable of producing anything

Therefore, whatever the means of income, man is on the earth to do a limited task and he does that but he is not able to cause anything to grow. He is Allah alone who produces what is necessary and grants it to mankind whatever man has is a blessing from Allah

لِلّٰهِ مَافِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَافِي الْاَرْضِ (البقرہ:۲۸٤)

To Allah belongs whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth. (Al-Baqarah, 2:284)

The real master is Allah

After giving things to man, Allah also said to him, "You are the owner." Thus, He has said in *Surah Yasin.*

اَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا اَنَّا خَلَقْنَا لَهُمْ مِّمَّاعَمِلَتْ اَيْدِيْنَآ اَنْعَامًا فَهُمْ لَهَا مٰلِكُوْنَ

(یٰسین:۷۱)

"Have they not seen that we have created for them - among the things which our hands have fashioned-cattle that they own." (Surah Yasin, 36:71)

"I was the Real Owner but I made you the owners. So in the things that have come to your possession true right belongs to Me. Then spend in the way, I have commanded

you." If a man spends in accordance with the commands of Allah then the rest of his possessions are lawful for him and blessings of Allah are on those possessions. If he does not give from his wealth what Allah has asked him to give then all of it is fire for him and he will experience the fire on the Day of Resurrection when he will be branded with it and told, "This is the wealth that you had amassed."

Only 2 1/2% is to be paid

If Allah had said, "Keep to yourself the 2 1/2% and spend in His way the rest 97 1/2% then that would have been just because all really belongs to Him and is granted by Him. But He is Merciful to His slaves and asked them to retain the bulk share of 97 1/2% and spend in His way only 2 1/2% because man is in clind towards possession. The 97 1/2% will then become lawful and pure; it may be spent on his lawful personal needs.

Emphasis on *Zakah*

The 2 1/2% is *zakah.* The Qur'an has said about it.

وَاَقِيْمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتُوا الزَّكٰوةَ

And establish the Salah, and pay the *Zakah*

(al-Baqarah, 2:43)

At the same time as prayer is mentioned, *Zakah* is also mentioned. This is the importance attached to *Zakah.*If that is the case and the wealth also is a grant from Allah then a Muslim must, at least, make the 2 1/ 2% payment in accordance with the Command of Allah. He will not suffer anything if he pays this small amount.

***Zakah* must be calculated and paid**

Many people just neglect payment of *Zakah.* They simply do not pay it.There are some others who pay *Zakah* but do not bother to calculate the correct procedure is to assess the wealth and possessions and pay the 2 1/ 2% on it. They shy away from counting their stocks and possessions and estimate the *Zakah* payable on that. This could lead to an error and a lesser amount could have been estimated and even if an insignificant amount as low as one rupee is underpaid then it is enough to ruin the rest of the wealth. If an over payment is made then, *Insha Allah,* there will be no questioning on that.

When Property causes Ruin

We are told in a *Hadith* that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "When *zakah* becomes part of a wealth - that is, when full *zakah* is not paid but something of it remains unpaid - then that wealth becomes a means of ruin for the owner." Therefore, we must be careful in evaluating our wealth and pay the full *zakah* due on it otherwise the obligation remains unobserved. By the Grace of Allah, a majorty of Muslims pay *zakah* but they are not careful in making a proper calculation before paying it with the result that something of *zakah* remains included in their wealth. That becomes a cause of destruction and ruin.

Benefits of *Zakah* in this life

Zakah must be paid with the intention that the command of Allah is being observed, it is the demand of His pleasure and a form of worship is being fulfilled. Whether benefit from that payment or not, our aim should be to obtain the pleasure of Allah. This is the true aim of *zakah.* It is the mercy of Allah on us that when anyone

pays *zakah,* Allah lets him have its benefits too. His possessions and wealth are blessed as we are told in the Qur'ani

يَمْحَقُ اللّٰهُ الرِّبٰوا وَيُرْبِى الصَّدَقٰت

Allah blots out usury and augments charity

(al-Baqarah, 2:276)

A Haidth quotes the Holy Prophet ﷺ as saying, "When a slave of Allah pays *zakah,* the Angels of Allah pray for him in these words :

اللهم اعط منفقا خلفا واعط ممسكا تلفا (بخارى كتاب الزكاة بابك قول الله تعالى: فاما من اعطى واتقى)

"O Allah! Grant abundance to him who spends (in Your cause) and destroy him who does not spend and restricts to himself his wealth."

(Bukhari Book of *Zakah*)

That is why, he said :

مانقصت صدقة من مال

Charity does not diminish wealth

So, it happens sometimes that as a Muslim pays *Zakah,* Allah opens for him fresh avenue of income so that he receives more than he has paid in *zakah.* It happens sometimes that although payment of *zakah* seems to reduce wealth to the extent of payment, Allah blesses the remaining wealth so it provides more benefit than expected from it.

Consequences of lack of blessings in wealth

Today, everyone believes in numbers. No one understands what one means by *blessings.* It is the name given to benefit beyond expectation from something. For example, someone earns a lot of money someday and takes his earnings home only to find a child ill and only one visit to a doctor costs him all his day's earnings. This

means that there was lack of blessings in his earnings. Or, he encounters bandits on the way who disown him of his earnings. This is also an example of lack of blessings in his wealth. Or, the man buys food from his earnings and eats it only to get an indigestion. This again is an example of lack of blessings in his earnings. On the other hand, blessings in a man's earnings allow him to reap more benefit from his little earnings than he had expected. Allah showers blessings on him who does what Allah has commanded him to do. Therefore, we must pay *zakah* on our wealth in the manner Allah and His Messenger ﷺ have instructed us to pay and make a correct calculation, not a mere conjecture.

The *Nisab* of *Zakah*

Allah has prescribed a *Nisab* (standard) for *Zakah. Nisab* is the minimum amount of property liable to payment of *zakah.* If anyone owns property less than the *Nisab* then he is not liable to pay *zakah* but when he possess the *nisab* he becomes liable to pay *zakah* on it. The *nisab* is : fifty two and a half tolas of silver or its value in cash or jewellery or commercial merchandise. The person who has this much wealth is known as *Sahib Nisab* (owner of the property liable to *zakah*).

It is not necessary that each rupee should have been owned for a year

Zakah is payable by the *Sahib Nisab* when he has the *nisab* in his hands for a year. *Zakah* is then *wajib* on him. There is a misconception generally that a man should have every part of his money or wealth for a year to be called a *Sahib Nisab* and only then will *zakah* be *wajib* on him. It is not so. Rather, if a man becomes a *Sahib Nisab* at one time

say the 1st of Ramadan and then again on the next 1st Ramadan he is a *Sahib Nisab*. He is liable to pay *zakah* even if during the year he did not constantly have that much wealth. On the 1st Ramadan when the first year is over and the next begins he will pay *zakah* on what he owns even if he may have had some of the wealth only for a day.

Zakah is payable on the wealth one owns on the date of *Zakah*

For example, a man had a hundred thousand rupees on the 1st of Ramadan. Next year two days before this date he received another fifty thousand rupees so on the 1st Ramadan he had a hundred and fifty thousand rupees. It is now *fard* (absolute obligation) to pay *zakah* on this amount of a hundred and fifty thousand rupees. He cannot argue that he has had fifty thousand rupees for only two days so he will not pay *zakah* on that amount because that money has not been with him for a year. Rather, he will consider the date of payment of *zakah*, the date when he became a *Sahib Nisab*, and value his assets and pay *zakah* on these assets. The value may be more than the last year's value or it may have become less. For example, he had a hundred thousand rupees last year and he may have a hundred and fifty thousand in the current year so he will pay *zakah* on the current value of a hundred and fifty thousand rupees. Or, he may have only fifty thousand rupees this year then he will pay *zakah* on the amount of fifty thousand rupees only. The amount of money spent during the year is not calculated and no *zakah* is paid on the money so spent. Allah has spared man from the intricacies of accounting and has prescribed an easy method so that he has not to worry about the money that he has spent and used up. In the same way, whatever

money is received during the year has not to be recorded separately. It is so simple that whatever money and assets a man has on the date of *zakah,* he will pay *zakah* on that amount. This is the meaning of the words 'passing of a year.'

On what heads is *Zakah* payable

It is one of the several favours of Allah on us that He has not made it *fard* (obligatory) on us to pay *zakah* on every item we possess, for there are different heads of assets a man may own. The items on which *zakah* is *fard* are:

(1) Cash in any form like currency notes or coins.

(2) Gold and Silver whether jewellery or coins. Some people suppose that jewellery used by women is not liable to *zakah* which is a wrong notion. The truth is that *zakah* is payable on the jewellery that is worn or used and made of gold or silver; however, *zakah* is not applied on jewellery made of any other metal such as platinum. Similarly, *zakah* is not paid on pearl or jewel as long as they are in personal use and not for business purposes.

We must not apply reasoning in these matters

We must remember that *zakah* is a form of worship and a duty imposed on us by Allah. Some people try to reason out the wisdom behind different rulings and ask why *zakah* is applied on some things and not on others. To pay *zakah* is to perform a worship whether we understand the reason behind it or not. Thus, we cannot ask why *zakah* is payable on gold and silver and not on pearls, jewels, and platinum. It is like asking why the *Maghrib* prayer is not reduced during a journey while the *Zuhr*, *Asr* and *Isha* prayers are reduced to the *Qasr*. *Qasr*

for these three prayers two is *rakaat* each instead of four while one is travelling. Or, it is like asking why a passenger who travels luxuriously by first class in an airline is allowed to offer *Qasr* prayers while another travelling with great difficulty in a local bus within his city not allowed to offer *Qasr* prayers. The answer to all such questions is the same that these are rules of worship prescribed by Allah and these rules must be respected otherwise the worship will be meaningless.

To offer worhsip is to obey the Command of Allah

It is also like asking why Hajj is observed on 9th Zul Hajjah and not on just any day convenient to a pilgrim, and why stay just one day at 'Arafah and not three days. Obviously, if anyone stays at 'Arafah for three days instead of one day his Hajj will not be valid because he does not follow the method prescribed by Allah. Again, a man cannot say that he will perform the *Rami* of the *Jamarat* all together on the fourth day instead of the three days of Hajj. *Rami* is the casting of pebbles on the *Jamarat*, the pillars marking places where Satan tried to tempt Sayyidina Ismail عليه السلام. This also is a form of worship and a worship should be performed in its prescribed manner otherwise it is invalid and meaningless. Thus they raise an objection on the levy of *zakah* on gold and silver and not on pearl is to question the philosophy of worship. Nevertheless, Allah has prescribed *zakah* on gold and silver whether in use or not, and on cash money.

Method of valuing merchandise of trade

Zakah is also paid on merchandise of trade. For instance, if someone has stock-in-trade at his shop then he will have to pay *zakah* on all his stock. However, at the time of valuation the shop-keeper is at liberty to value his stock at the price his good would fetch if sold in bulk. There is a retail price, a wholesale price and a price that would apply to the entire stock sold together. So, there is a scope to price the stock at such a price and then pay *zakah* at 2 1/2%; however, it is safer to use the wholesale price.

What is stock-in-trade

Everything that a man buys with intent to re-sell is stock-in-trade. Thus, if anyone buys a piece of land to re-sell at a higher price, or a house or car, then these things are his trading merchandise. *Zakah* is *wajib* (obligatory) on all these things because he had acquired them with intent to sell. Many people buy a piece of land as an investment intending to sell it later at a higher price and making a profit in the process. *Zakah* is payable on the value of this land. However, if anyone buys a piece of land with the hope that if he has an opportunity he will construct a house thereon for his personal use, or give it on rent or alternatively, sell it off so having no definite intentions; he has not made a choice of the three options then *zakah* is not payable on that piece of land. *Zakah* is only *wajib* when the intention at the time of buying was clearly to re-sell. Even if anyone buys a piece of land with intent to construct a house for himself but later on he changes his mind and decides to sell it, a mere change of intention does not involve any liability on him to pay *zakah*; only after he actually sells the land and receives the sale proceeds will he have to pay *zakah* on that.

So, everything that is bought with intent to re-sell is stock-in-trade and attracts *zakah* at two-and-a-half percent.

The date of valuation

It must be remembered too that the date of valuation is the date of calculation of *zakah.* If a piece of land was purchased for a hundred thousand rupees and values a million rupees on that date then will *zakah* be paid, on the latter value and not on one hundred thousand rupees.

***Zakah* on share certificates**

Share Certificates are also stock-in-trade. There are two possibilities : a man may buy shares to receive annual profit from the company and another may buy them to sell them at a higher price.

In the second case where a man buys shares with intent to do business and sell them at a higher price then *zakah* is *wajib* on the full market value of the shares. For instance, if the purchase price was Rs.50 and the current market value is Rs.60 on the day of calculating *zakah* then the shares will be valued at Rs.60 and *zakah* is to be paid at 2 1/2%.

However, in the first case where the man did not intend to re-sell his shares at the time of purchase but hoped to receive annual profit on them he is allowed to find out the fixed assets of the company and its liquid assets and he may pay *zakah* on the proportion of liquid assets in his shares. The fixed assets include building, machinery, cars, etc. while the liquid assets comprise of cash, stock-in-trade, raw material and finished goods. Suppose, the fixed assets form forty percent of its overall assets and the liquid assets form sixty percent, the share-holder will value his share holdings at the market

value and pay *zakah* on sixty percent of that value. Thus, if the market value of each share is Rs.60 and the assets on which *zakah* is payable comprise 60% of the assets while the remaining do not attract *zakah* then the value of each share liable to *zakah* is Rs.36. If this data cannot be found out from any company then *zakah* will be paid on the full market value.

Every other financial instrument apart from shares will be categorised with cash whether they are bonds or certificates. *Zakah* will be paid on their face value.

Factory Assets that attract *Zakah*

The finished product in a factory is liable to be valued for *zakah.* In the same way, *zakah* is payable on the merchandise at different stages of production and on raw materials. However, *zakah* is not payable on factory machinery, building, cars etc.

In the same way, if anyone is a partner in a business then he will be liable to pay *Zakah* on the market value of his share in business.

In short, *zakah* is payable on cash which includes cash at bank and financial instruments, on stock-in-trade that includes finished products, raw material and merchandise under different stages of production, on share certificates which are also included in stock-in-trade, and on everthing else that is classified as stock-in-trade which anyone has bought with intent to re-sell.

At the time of paying *zakah* the gross value of all these things must be found out and *zakah* paid on that value.

Zakah on Loans Receivable

Apart from these, certain sums of money are receivable from other people. Either loans are given to them or sales are made to them on credit. So, when one calculates the gross value on which he has to pay *Zakah*, he must include sums receivable from all such sundry debtors. Although *Shari'ah* tells us that until sums receivable are not actually received *Zakah* is not payable on them yet when they are received *Zakah* is paid for every past year it was payable on them but not paid. For example, if anyone had loaned another person a sum of a hundred thousand rupees and he receives it back after five years then although it was not *Wajib* for him to pay *Zakah* on this sum of money for the five years yet once he had received it back then he will have to pay *Zakah* for each of those five years. Now, since it becomes very difficult sometimes to pay previous dues of *Zakah* all together so it is better to pay it each year regularly on the loan receivable.So, when a man calculates the *Zakah* payable to him, he may include sums receivable in the gross value.

Debts be deducted

The debts payable must be added up and their total deducted from the gross value of possessions on which *Zakah* is payable. On the net value, *Zakah* is paid at 2 1/ 2%. It is better to keep apart the *Zakah* payable and disburse it among those entitled to receive it from time to time.

Loans are of two kinds

We must understand that loans are of two kinds. The first kind is that loan which one ordinarily borrows for personal meeds or to meet contingencies. The second type of loans are those which the capitalists take to finance

their commercial projects for expansion. For instance, they borrow to set up a factory, buy machinery, import trading merchandise or to set up additional factories, etc. Now, if this second kind of borrowing is deducted from the gross value of possessions to arrive at the net wealth that attracts *zakah,* then not only will these capitalists find themselves not liable to pay *zakah* but also in fact, some of them might find that they are entitled to receive *zakah.* This is because they borrow from the financial institutions more than what they possess of *zakah* leviable wealth. They are poor people from this point of view. Therefore, *Shari'ah* has distinguished the different borrwoings when the question of duduction arises.

When are commercial borrowings duducted

The first kind of loans will be deducted from the gross value and *zakah* will be paid on the nett value. As for the second kind of borrowings, if anyone borrows money for commercial purpose to finance anything on which *zakah* is levied (for instance, raw material) then the borrowings will be deducted from the gross value. But, if the borrowings are to finance such things as do not attract *zakah* then the loans will not be deducted from the gross value.

Examples of brrowings

Suppose someone borrows from a bank ten million rupees to buy machinery. Since *zakah* is not levied on plant and machinery, the loan will not be deducted from the gross value of his assets on which *zakah* is payable. But, if he purchased raw material from the borrowed money then the value of borrowings will be deducted from the gross *zakah* leviable value because the raw material itself attracts *zakah,* and is already included in the gross value.

In short, normal borrowings are deducted from the gross value but commercial borrowings are not deducted if used to finance something on which *Zakah* is not paid, but deducted if used to finance anything on which *Zakah* is paid. These were rules concerning payment of *Zakah*.

Zakah is paid to the entitled

Let us now see the rules concerning disbursement of *zakah*. My respected father, Mawlana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه used to say that Allah has not asked us to just give out *zakah* but He has commanded us to pay it carefully واتوالزكوة and distribute it to the proper entitled people, not give it out injudiciously. The directions of *Shari'ah* should be heeded while distributing *zakah*. Some people pay *zakah* but do not care to distribute it to the right people and do not care if it is put to proper use. They hand over the *zakah* money to someone without ensuring that he uses it for proper causes. There are many institutions that collect *zakah* and there may be many among them who do not make sure that money under this head is put to proper use. Therefore, *zakah* must not just be handed over but must be paid out with care.

Who is entitled

Shari'ah has prescribed the principle that *zakah* must be paid to only those who are not themselves *Sahib Nisab*. Even those people, who have in their possession anything more than their needs and which is worth as much as the value of fifty two and half tolas of silver, are not entitled to receive *zakah*. Such people are entitled to it who do not have anything equal to the value of fifty two and a half tola of silver after meeting their needs, whether cash or anything of that value.

The entitled must be handed over ownership

The *Shari'ah* commands us that the person entitled to *zakah* must be made owner of it when the amount is paid over to him. This means that he should have a free say in his property. This is why *zakah* cannot be used to construct a building and cannot be paid as salary of the employees of an institution. If it was allowed to use *zakah* to build and establish institutions then it would have been misused, the buildings require much money and the institutions pay heavy salaries. Therefore, one who is not a *Sahib Nisab* must be paid *zakah* and transferred ownership over it. *Zakah* must be paid to only such people and only then is *zakah* validly paid.

The relatives who may be paid *Zakah*

The duty to pay *zakah* encourages the Muslim to spend the money under this head in a proper cause. He looks out for the right people and makes out a list of those entitled to receive it. He then disburses the amount to these people and it is one of his responsibilities to do so. One must pay *zakah* to those who are entitled and who live in his neighbourhood, who are his acquaintances, relatives and friends. The most excellent act in the payment of *zakah* is to pay it to those of one's relatives who are entitled and this secures him a dual reward - against payment of *Zakah* and against strengthening ties of relationship. *Zakah* may be paid to every relative who is entitled to it except two the relationship of father and son so neither father nor son can pay it to the other, and the marital relationship so the spouses cannot pay of *zakah* to one another. All other relationship do not bar payment of *zakah*, for example, one can pay it to a brother and a sister, an uncle or an aunt whether paternal or maternal, the only condition is that they

should be entitled to it.

The command to pay *Zakah* to a widow and to orphans

Some people suppose that a widow must be paid *zakah* preferably but the condition stands here too that she must be one who is entitled to it and not a *Sahib Nisab*. If she is thus entitled then it is excellent to pay *zakah* to her. But, if she is a widow but not entitled then being a widow does not qualify her to receive *zakah*. In the same way, it is excellent to pay *zakah* to an orphan provided he is entitled to it but if he is not entitled being a *Sahib Nisab* then it does not qualify him to receive the *zakah*, although he is an orphan. These rules must be borne in mind while paying *zakah* to anyone.

Deduction of *Zakah* from Bank Accounts

For some time now, *zakah* is collected by the government and the financial institutions do it for the government as also some companies who deduct *zakah* and pay it to the government. This calls for some comments.

As far as banks and financial institutions are concerned, *zakah* of a person stands paid when deducted by them and he is not required to pay that again. However, he may form an intention on the 1st of Ramadan as a precautionary measure that he is paying the *zakah* so that his duty in this regard is discharged and he may not pay it again. Some people are in doubt that before the full year passed on their entire wealth, *zakah* is being deducted on all of it. I have stated earlier in this discourse that it is not necessary that a full year should pass on every part of the wealth. If anyone is a *Sahib Nisab* then even the wealth he

gets a day before the year ends will be added to the gross value and the *zakah* deducted on it is correctly charged because *zakah* is *wajib* on that wealth.

Deduction of loan from the Bank Balance

However, someone may have all his wealth in cash in a bank account and not have anything else with himself. Then, he may also be a debtor and have to pay to other people, the bank will deduct *zakah* on the due date and he will not be able to deduct the "payables" from his gross wealth. There is one solution for that. He may withdraw the money from his account or transfer it to a current account before *zakah* is deducted because *zakah* is not deducted from a current account. Let me mention here in passing that everyone must maintain a current account and not a savings account becuase interest is paid on the savings accounts and that is unlawful. When he withdraws his money from the savings account, or transfers it, he will be able to take into account the "Payables" while calculating *zakah.* Alternatively, he may write to the Bank that he is not a *Sahib Nisab* and not liable to pay *zakah.* According to law, the Bank will not deduct *zakah* from his account when he writes to them in this way.

Deduction of *Zakah* on Shares by the Company

There is also the question of shares. When the company pays the annual dividend, it also deducts *zakah* but it calculates *zakah* on its face value while it should have been on the market value. So, while the *zakah* has been duly paid to the extent of the face value, the shareholder must calculate the difference between the market value and face value on the basis of the

explanation under the head *"Zakah On Share Certificates"*. For instance, the face value of a share is fifty rupees on which the company deducts *zakah* but the market value is sixty rupees, so the share-holder must pay *zakah* on ten rupees by himslef. This applies to share certificates and N.I.T. Units. Thus, whenever *zakah* has been deducted on face value, the difference between the market value and face value must be calculated and *zakah* paid thereon.

The date of *Zakah*

Shari'ah has not fixed a date for calculating *zakah* nor any period or date for its payment. In fact, every person may have his own date. In the eyes of *Shari'ah* the true date begins when anyone becomes a *Sahib Nisab.* If anyone becomes a *Sahib Nisab* on the 1st Muhurrum then his date for *zakah* is that date and in future, he will calculate his *zakah* on the 1st of Muhurrum. But, often people do not remember when they became *Sahib Nisab* so they may fix any date when it is easy for them to calculate their liability. They may follow that date every year in future and it is good to pay a little more as a precautionary measure.

Can one fix a date in Ramadan

Normally, people pay *zakah* in the month of Ramadan because a *Hadith* tells us that observance of a *fard* (absolute obligation) in Ramadan entitles to a reward equal to seventy times. Thus payment of *zakah* will also fetch them a reward seventy times the normal reward. This is a correct thinking and commendable too but if anyone remembers his date when he became a *Sahib Nisab* then it is wrong for him to seek a date in Ramadan. He must

calculate his *zakah* on the date he remembers; however, if he pays the calculated *zakah* in small amounts then he may pay the remaining in the month of Ramadan. If he does not remember his date then there is an excuse for him to fix a date in Ramadan. But he must pay a little more so that he may make up for any shortage because of difference in date.

Then He may go by that date every year and calculate his wealth accordingly. He may add up his wealth on that date, cash, gold holdings, shares, stock-in-trade, etc. and get their values on that date. He may not then change the date again.

This was a little comment on *zakah.* May Allah cause us to observe the commands that call on us to pay *zakah. Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame 'Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal
Karachi

Date :

Time : After 'Asr Prayers

Do Thoughts Disturb You

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد !

Praise belongs to Allah,we praise Him and seek His help and ask Him for His forgiveness. We believe in Him and place our trust in Him. We seek refuge in Allah from the mischief of our souls and from our evil deeds. He whom Allah guides there is none to mislead him and he whom He leaves astray there is none to guide him.We bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the One, Who has no partner and we bear witness that

Sayyidina Muhammad is His Slave and Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family and his companions and may He favour him and give him peace, a complete peace,plentifully.

Evil thoughts, sign of faith

According to Sayyidina Abdullah Bin Masud رضی اللہ عنہ the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was asked about evil promptings that incite one to disbelief and polytheism and wickedness and sin. He said in answer to the question.

ذاك محض الايمان

"They are signs of faith.".

That is, one should not be worried on their account or feel sad and deterred because they are signs of faith.

A Companion رضی اللہ عنہ asked the Prophet ﷺ. "Messenger of Allah! Sometimes I get such thoughts that rather than get them on my lips, I may better be reduced to charcoal." He meant to say that to speak of these thoughts was worse than burning in fire. In answer to that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "These are truly signs of fatih."

Satan robs faith

Haji Imdadullah Muhajir Makki رحمۃ اللہ علیہ explained this by saying that evil promptings came from the devil because he alone puts them into the hearts of men. He is the thief who steals faith. A thief and a robber will strike only where there is wealth, but where there is none they will not even look. Thus, the fact that the devil whispers in anyone's heart and enters it shows that there is wealth of faith in that heart. If there was not that wealth in the heart, the robber would not have entered it. So, he should

not worry because of whispers. The fact that one prefers to burn himself than revealing the promptings shows that he has faith in his heart. If there was no faith in the heart, he would not have said that. Therefore,the Holy Prophet ﷺ said,."It is a perfect sign of faith."

One is not answerable for his evil thoughts

A *Hadith* quotes the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying :

الحمد لله الذى رد كيد الشيطان الى الوسوسة

Praise belongs to Allah who has restricted the devil's designs to no more than evil promptings." He did not let it go further. It is the favour of Allah that He did not allow the devil's designs to influence them more than that.

Another *Hadith* quotes the Holy Prophet ﷺ

ان الله تجاوز عن امتى ماوسوست به صدورها

"Allah forgives my people the evil thoughts that arise in their hearts." He will not hold them responsible for that. However, they will be questioned if they act upon them.

Thoughts about belief

Evil promptings are of two types.One of them concerns belief. The devil grows evil thoughts in a man's heart about the Being of Allah or about the Hereafter whether it is a reality or not. About such thoughts the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that as long as you keep your belief correct then no matter how evil the thoughts you receive there will not be questioning on that, *Insha Allah,* and neither will he who experiences these thoughts become an unbeliever because of that. Some people who get such

thoughts suppose themselves to have become like the devil or an unbeliever. They must remember that nothing happens by getting these thoughts as long as they are believers in their hearts, through their tongues and by their deeds.

Sinful thoughts

The other type of thoughts call man to commit sin and be immoral. He feels like doing something sinful or is inclined towards a sin. Allah has said about them that if anyone merely gets such thoughts then he will not be questioned about them as long as he does not act on them. Once a person does what his thoughts prompts him to do then he becomes liable to be questioned about his behaviour. Thus, a person becomes answerable for his actions once he puts his thoughts into shape. When anyone receives an evil thought he must immediately seek refuge in Allah , "O Allah ! I experience the evil thought and I seek Your protection. Protect me from this sin." In this way the evil promptings will be checked.

Turn to Allah when you receive anm evil prompting

The noble Qur'an relates the event of Sayyidina Yusuf عليه السلام. He was put to a trial and he too received an evil prompting because , after all, he too was human he made this supplication to Allah:

وَإِلَّا تَصْرِفْ عَنِّي كَيْدَهُنَّ أَصْبُ إِلَيْهِنَّ وَأَكُنْ مِّنَ الْجٰهِلِيْنَ

"And if you turn not away their guile from me then I shall incline towards them, and become one of the ignorant." (Surah Yusuf, 12:33)

So,whenever one receives evil thoughts, he must immediately turn to Allah and seek His protection. "O

Allah, protect me from this sin by Your mercy." And, he must redouble his resolve not to commit the sin. Then, the promptings will not harm him in the least.

Thoughts that distrub during Prayer

A third type of prompting is tolerated because it does not incline one towards sin. However, it does preclude one from concentrating on the worship one is engaged in. For instance, the moment a man forms an intention to offfer his prayers he begins to experience a wide range of wanderings from thoughts of food and drinks and the family to one's occupation etc. By themselves, these thoughts may not be sinful but they stop one from having his heart in prayer and from being humble and attentive. As they are involuntary thoughts not brought about intentionally one will not be answerable for them and will be forgiven. However, one must not purposefully bring such thoughts to oneself while one is engaged in prayer or set one's attention to them. A person who begins his prayer must keep his mind to it. When he recites , he must be attentive to his recital and if inspite of his efforts his mind keeps wandering then, *Insha Allah*, he will not be called upon to explain his behaviour but, as he recalls himself, he must return his attention to his prayer and his recital therein. If he persists in his efforts then his wanderings will come down and Allah will bless him with humility and humbleness.

Do not disesteem Prayers

Many people underestimate their prayer because of the wide range of thoughts they get while praying by saying, "Our prayer is nothing but an exercise." They must not underrate prayers in this way. It is the favour of Allah that He has inspired us to offer prayers and we must be

grateful to Him for that. They must not let their stray thoughts cause them to belittle their prayers whose regular observance is indeed a blessing of Allah. *Insha Allah*, they will not be asked to explain their thoughts but they must not intentionally let their minds to think in this manner.

An incident in the life of Imam Ghazali رحمة الله عليه

Imam Ghazali رحمة الله عليه was an eminent scholar and Sufi and Allah had raised him to a very high station. He had a brother who had a purely Sufi bent of mind. Whenever Imam Gazali رحمة الله عليه led prayers this brother of his did not follow him in prayers. Someone complained to their mother of his conduct. She summoned him and asked him why he did not offer prayers behind his brother. He answered, "Where does his prayer stand? How can I offer my prayer behind him? When he leads the prayers, his mind and heart are occupied in questions of menstruation and lochia so his prayer is dirty and I will not pray behind him." That woman was none other than the mother of Imam Gazali رحمة الله عليه. She retorted, "While your brother solves juristic questions when engaged in prayers and it is permitted to think of them, you are occupied in finding his faults and examining the correctness of his prayer. These things are surely unlawful and forbidden in prayer. So, tell me who is better, he or you." The mother of Imam Ghazali رحمة الله عليه also made it clear that it is not sinful to think of juristic questions in prayer. So, if anyone intentionally brings to his mind thoughts that are part of worship and obedience then he is not acting contrary to the demand of prayer on one's humility.

Command to think over Qur'anic verses

We are required to ponder over the verses of the Qur'an when we recite.Thus, if anyone obeys this command and thinks over what is recited from the Qur'an when he prays then he is allowed to do so and it is a part of worship. He can intentionally think of anything when he prays that is part of obedience to a command and a form of worship. He should not think of worldly matters when he is offering prayers, but if these thoughts come to his mind on their own then it does not deter from his humility in prayer in the least. Of course, once he realises that he is wavering in his thoughts then he must check himself and return his concentration to prayers because he is not allowed to carry on with those thoughts when he is conscious of them.

The Prostration is for Allah Alone

Someone visited Mawlana Doctor Abdul Hayi رحمة الله عليه and complained, "Mawlana, I am very worried because my prayers are of no use. When I prostrate I get very dirty sensual thoughts. My prostration is not sincere and I am worried that my prayers are not correct. I do not know how I may rescue myself from this." The Mawlana asked him what he thought of his prostration and he answered that it was very dirty and impure. The Mawlana said, "One must not offer an impure and dirty prostration before Allah. So, you offfer that prostration to me because Allah is pure and only a pure prostration must be offered to Him. Let the dirty prostration be offered before me, I am impure myself." That man said "May Allah forgive me! How can I prostrate before you? The man asked "The Mawlana said, "That's enough. It tells us that one can only prostrate before Allah. The forehead cannot bow down before anybody no matter how dirty thoughts one while prostrating. The forehead will

only bow down before Allah. So, your prostration is for Allah and if the thoughts are involuntary they will not harm you in the least. Allah will surely forgive you and overlook them.

There is wisdom in promptings and thoughts

If ordinary people like us do not experience such thoughts in prayer and go through prayer with great humility and we do not think of anyone else but Allah then we will swell with pride and egoism. We will then think of ourselves as great men. Someone has said. صل الحائك ركعتين والنظر الوحى "A weaver once prayed two rakaah and then waited after the prayer for *Wahi* (revelation from Allah.)" Maybe one of us would also lay claims to prophethood or the promised Mahdi if our prayers were undisturbed and sincere. Allah bestows the high station only to the deserving. There is wisdom in the thoughts that disturb one engaged in prayers.

Reward on pious and evil intention

In brief, the *Hadith* gives us the tidings that Allah will not hold anyone responsible for the thoughts he gets involuntarily. His mercy is very unique. As far as sins are concerned, His principle is that a person will not be taken to task for it if he gets the thought, shows a little interest and seems to form something like an intention but stops at that and does not make a firm resolve to commit it. In fact, if he gets the thought again and again and he goes on rejecting the idea and refuses to commit the sin then he will get a reward for not committing the sin. Then, as far as piety is concerned, the principle of Allah is that if anyone gets the thought and forms an intention to do it but does not make a firm resolve to do it actually then too he will earn a reward

from Allah. For instance, if anyone intends to give something in charity if he gets some wealth then he will be rewarded for that intention. Again, if anyone hopes to participate in Jihad if the opportunity arises and to gain *Shahadah* (martyrdom) through it then, according to a *Hadith,* Allah will grant him the rank of a *Shahid* (martyr)

من سئل الشهادة بصدق قلبه كتب من الشهداء وان مات على فراشه

"If anyone seeks martyrdom with a sincere heart, The will be classified among the martyrs even though he may die on his bed".

Anyway, the procedure for a pious intention is that even before a firm resolve is made Allah will grant the reward, and for a sinful intention no punishment is awarded as long as a firm resolve is not made.

The most apt example of thoughts

A man must keep himself from making a firm resolve to commit a sin but he must not worry about the evil thoughts that he receives and must carry on with his duties. He must not stop fulfilling his obligations. A very apt example of this is given to us. It is like an ordinary man receiving an invitation from a King or President of a State. He will hurry along to the palace. On the way, he comes across different people, someone tries to hold his hand, and some tries to get a few words with him and so they all irritate him. Will this man stop and mix up with those people or carry on with his mission? If he obliges, those people then he will never make it to the palace but if he thinks of them as foolish people and resolves to earn the honour of a meeting with the king then he will pay no attention to those people.

It is sinful to bring the thoughts intentionally

Someone wrote a letter to Mawlana Thanvi رحمة الله عليه that he got different thoughts in his mind when he stood in prayer. He was worried about the validity of his prayer. The Mawlana wrote back to him that it is"not sinful if thoughts come by themselves but it is sinful if thoughts are invited."

The Remedy

The remedy of the thoughts and promptings lies in ignoring them and not paying attention to them. If this advice is followed then gradually the thoughts and promptings will disappear. One must carry on with one's duties and when he stands in prayer he must keep his mind on that. Mawlana Thanvi رحمة الله عليه has said in one of his sermons that the real thing desired of a man is prayer. Thus, if a worshipper gets involuntary thoughts then he must not belittle prayer for that reason. Often worshippers complain that they do not derive pleasure from prayer although they observe them or that they used to derive pleasure earlier but do not get it any more. They must know that prayer is not made obligatory that the worshipper may derive pleasure but it is a form of worship and devotion to Allah. If a worshipper derives pleasure while praying then it is a blessing from Allah but if he does not get it then this thing does not render prayer defective in any way. If a man pays due attention to the various postures of prayer and fulfils all the conditions and etiquettes of prayer and observes the *sunnah* method in offering prayer then even if he does not derive pleasure for the rest of his life, it does not matter because he will suffer nothing. He has to offer prayer whether he derives pleasure from it or not.

Prayers must be offered even if the worshipper is distracted

In fact, if one offers prayer although he does not derive pleasure from it and feels a burden over him, then he will fetch a higher reward for his effort. He could not coax his heart to it and his base self would have him avoid it but he forced himself into praying in order to worship Allah and obey Him. So, he will get a greater reward. Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رحمة الله عليه used to say. As for the man who offers prayers all his life although he never derives pleasure from it, I congratulate him for two things. First, that he gets a greater reward for observing prayer in spite of the fact that he gets no pleasure from it and second, that if he had derived pleasure it may have been presumed that he offered prayer for the sake of pleasure but, in the absence of that, it is clear that his prayers are for the sake of Allah alone. He will get additional reward for that." Therefore, one must not worry himself that he gets no pleasure from prayer.

Man is responsible for deeds

Some people write that there was a time when they experienced a unique conditions when they prayed and. They remained unaware of their surroundings when they were in their prayer but they did not get the same experience any more. They were worried lest the devil had gained the better of them. Let them realise that these experiences are beyond the powers of man. He may or may not derive pleasure and this is not within his powers to derive pleasure and man is not responsible for that. He is responsible only for his deeds. What concerns him is whether he performs his deeds or not and whether he follows the *sunnah* of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in

their performance or not. If his deeds are according to *sunnah* then it does not matter whether he experiences a condition or not, he is, nevertheless, absolved of his responsibility. His deeds receive approval. The underlying point is that receipt of approval does not depend on what conditions the worshipper experiences, nor does salvation depends on it. The only thing is that if Allah inspires him to perform his deeds then he must be thankful to Him for that.

Experiencing a condition is neither the aim nor within one's powers

Those people who perform pilgrimage generally experience different conditions. It is well known that when one sees the *Bayt Allah* {the K'abah the, House of Allah} for the first time, he gets a weeping condition over him, or he begin to laugh or he experiences some other condition. The same thing happens at the *Multazim*. These experiences are involuntary and cannot be brought about intentionally. If anyone experiences them, it is the blessings of Allah on him but if he does not experience them, he need not worry. Some people worry too much if they do not experience an unusual condition and blame it on themselves. They must know that Allah will not reject them simply because they did not get an unusual experience that was not within their powers. The only condition is that their deeds must be performed correctly and in accordance with *sunnah* of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. In which case, their efforts will gain approval irrespective of whether they get the weeping or any unusual condition or not.

Deeds must be according to *Sunnah*

Mawlana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has explained it very well. The dependance is not on a condition or state but on the deed. If the deed is according to *sunnah*, then *Insha Allah*, the worshipper will attain his station.

بر صراطِ مستقیم اے دل کے گمراہ نیست

If your step is on the Right Path, then, O heart!
you are not misled.

This is so even if the worshipper gets different thoughts or promptings, whether he experiences conditions or not ,whether he derives pleasure or not.

The prayer of a Retired Officer

My Shaikh, Mawlana Doctor Abdul Hayyi رحمة الله عليه may Allah elevate his ranks, gave us one day the example of two different prayers. He said, "There is a man who has retired from active life but he is well-off and in no need to earn a living. He has no worry concerning livelihood. He spends his time freely at home. When he hears the *azan* (call to prayer), he goes to the mosque, performs the ablution very correctly and takes his time over it, offers two raka'at *tahiyat ul Masjid* (the prayer offered voluntarily on entering the mosque) and the *sunnah* prayer and then waits patiently for the congregation, occupying himself in *zikr* or recital of Qur'an. Then he offers the prayer with the congregation and is very careful to every detail and shows great humility. After that he offers the remaining *sunnah* and then makes a long supplication very humbly. Then, he goes home and waits for the next prayer and its *azan*."

The prayer of a hawker

Mawlana Doctor Abdul Hayyi رحمة الله عليه then continued with the narrative. "There is another man, a hawker with a family to look after. He works hard for a livelihood. He has innumerable other responsibilities over him. He moves his merchandise on his cart, calling out loudly praise of his wares. People stand around his cart examining his wares. Just then the *azan* is called out. He tries to hurry the people around him but by the time he finishes with them, it is time for the congregational prayer. Hurriedly, he pushes his cart to a corner, covers it with a cloth and rushes to the mosque. There, he performs ablution quickly and joins the congregation. All the while, his mind is with the customers waiting for him. In spite of that, he stands before Allah and offers the congregational prayer. Then he prays the *sunnah* and brings out the cart." This was the second example.

Which of the two prayers is more devoted

The Mawlana then asked, "Tell me, which of the two prayers is more devoted?" On the face of it the prayer of the first man seems to be more punctilious. Not only did he do all that with great humility and pay attention to little details, but he also observes the various optional and recommended things, like *Tahiyatul Masjid*, and elaborate supplications and so on. But, in the sight of Allah the prayer of the hawker is more spiritual although he is neither attentive nor mentally present in his prayers. The reason for this is that the first man has no responsibilities on him and he has plenty of time available so he derives pleasure from prayers. On the other hand, the second man has a lot of responsibilities on his shoulders and his cart is literally the source of his and his family's livelihood yet when it is time for prayer he leaves it aside to respond to his duty of Allah

and join the congregational prayer. His deed requires more effort and is more approved and so more rewarding. Although he do not derive pleasure from his prayer, and experiences no exceptional condition like the other man, yet that does not mean that Allah will reduce his reward.

Do not lose heart

Today people generally worry about involuntary matters. Soon they become disenchanted and then give up the deed on the prompting of the devil. The devil tells them that if their effort is not acceptable why must they bother,why must they not give up. Therefore, we must not worrry about involuntary affairs. As for prayers, we must offer them in the manner the Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught us and we must try to concentrate in prayers. We must also realise that it makes no difference if we experience something unique or not, if we find pleasure in prayers or not because the prayer gains acceptance with Allah.

We must be happy on receiving the whispers

As we have seen, this *Hadith* recalls the saying of the Prophet ﷺ that receiving whispers are signs of faith and Allah has not listed the receiving of faith as sinful. Mawlana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has explained this *Hadith*. He has said that according to the two *Ahadith* the involuntary affairs of anyone will not be questioned and, in fact, he should be pleased on receiving evil whispers. If one gets the promptings but he does not act on them then he should feel happy because that is a sign of faith. An unbeliever does not receive these promptings only a man with faith gets them. So one who gets them must feel happy. The Mawlana went on into say, "The only deliverance from them is not to heed them except being pleased on receiving them." A religious

man has said, "Satan does not tolerate the happiness of a Believer. When he sees him happy on receiving the promptings, he ceases to prompt him anymore."

Definition of promptings

However,we must remember that a prompting or a whisper is what comes to one's mind by itself. But, to bring it to oneself intentionally to think of a sin or to intend to do it is not the same thing; rather, it is a behaviour and excess of it is sinful. So, one must not picture or contemplate a whisper intentionally and must not heed what comes unintentionally.

Another way to protect oneself from promptings

Another way to deliver oneself from the intentional promptings is to busy oneself in some task when one gets them. One cannot get them away by simply desiring them to go away, so one must take up something to occupy oneself in, and the supplication recommended by the Holy Prophet ﷺ for removing them must be made often. May Allah accept that supplication on behalf of all of us *Aameen.*

اللهم اجعل وساوس قلبی خشیتك وذكرك واجعل همتی وهوای فیما تحب وترضٰی

"O Allah ! Make Your fear and remembrance the obsession of my mind and divert my will and courage to the performance of deeds that please you."

The Prophet ﷺ taught us such supplications as are comprehensive and beyond our imagination. It is disposition of man that his mind is always occupied and never without

thoughts. His hands may be doing something but his mind is thinking of something else and he continuously receives diverse thoughts. So, we must pray to Allah that the idle thoughts that we receive may be replaced by His remembrance and fear. "Whatever we think must be about You or fear of Yourself. We may remember You and of the moment when we shall stand before You, of the blessings of Paradise and torment of Hell. We may remember the commands of your religion. O Aallh ! Divert my thoughts to such things as please you, and my desires to that which pleases you." This is the supplication the Holy Prophet ﷺ taught us. May Allah accept it in our favour. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame 'Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal
Karachi
Time : After 'Asr Prayers
Date : 6th May, 1994

The Damage That The Sins Cause

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهدان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

عن ابى عباس رضى الله تعالى عنهما انه قال له رجل :

"رجل قليل العمل قليل الذنوب اعجب اليك او رجل كثير العمل كثير الذنوب قال لا اعدل بالسلامة " (كتاب الزهد ابن مبارك، باب ماجاء فى تخويف عواقب الذنوب)

Praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him and ask Him for help and seek His forgiveness. We

believe in Him and place our trust in Him. We seek refuge in Allah from the mischief of our souls and from the evil of our deeds. He whom Allah guides, there is no one to mislead and he whom He leaves astray, there is no one to guide. And we bear witness that there is no one worthy of worship except Allah, the Alone, Who has no partner and we bear witness that Sayyidina Muhammad is His Slave and His Messenger. May Allah bless him and his family and companions, and may He favour him and give him peace, a complete peace, plenty of it.

It is reported by Sayyidina Ibn Abbas رضی اللہ عنہما that a man asked him : There is a man whose deeds are few but his sins are few too. Would you prefer him or another man whose deeds are plenty but his sins are plentiful too. He answered : "I do not equate anything with safety from sins". (Kitab uz Zahd, Ibn Mubarak)

Sayyidina Abdullah Ibn Abbas رضی اللہ عنہما

He was the paternal cousin of the Prophet ﷺ. Sayyidina Abbas رضی اللہ عنہ was the uncle of the Prophet ﷺ and the father of Sayyidina Abdullah رضی اللہ عنہما who was very young during the times of the Prophet ﷺ. He was about ten years old at the time of the Prophet's ﷺ death. But Allah had blessed him with abundant knowledge which was the answer to a prayer of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in his favour.

اَللّٰهُمَّ عَلِّمْهُ الْكِتَابَ وَفَقِّهْهُ فِي الدِّيْنِ

" O Allah! Grant him knowledge of the Qur'an and understanding of religion. "

Although he was about ten years old when the Prophet ﷺ died, he had preserved in his memory the words and behaviour of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the events of his life. Besides, after the death of the Prophet ﷺ he met the eniment Companious رضی اللہ عنہم of the Prophet ﷺ he met his eminent companions and learnt from them the sayings and the *Ahadith* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He would undertake tiresome journeys and face much ordeal to meet the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم. He gained knowledge from them and earned a high station in the knowledge and exegesis so that he is known as the Imam of the exegetists. His word is the most reliable in the commentary of the Qur'an. The *Hadith* that has been quoted in the beginning is reported by him.

Which man is preferred

So, someone asked Sayyidina Abdullah bin Abbas رضی اللہ عنہما to tell him which of the two men is better? There is one who performs few deeds of a voluntary nature keeping himself to the obligatory duties (*fard* and *wajib*) but the sins against his name are also few. There is a second man who has many optional deeds to his credit but, at the same time, many sins too against his name. Sayyidina Abdullah Ibn Abbas رضی اللہ عنہما said that he did not value anything as much as preserving oneself from sin. If a man protects himself from sin then it is such a great blessing and favour on him that no deed is equal to that, and if he keeps himself away from sin then voluntary worship is nothing compared to it.

The real thing is to abstain from sin

This *Hadith* tells us that although the voluntary acts of worship are very excellent exercises but a worshipper must not rely on them to such an extent that he does not

keep away from sinful deeds. If he does, then he is under an illusion. The real thing is abstain from sin and, if after he keeps himself away from sin he does not perform a reasonable amount of voluntary worhsip then he does not suffer or lose anything. *Insha Allah*, he will achieve salvation. If, On the contrary, helperforms many voluntary forms of worship but also commits many sins then there is no guarantee he will come out safe and achieve salvation because what he does is very risky.

We must concentrate on giving up the sins

It has become a custom in our society that if anyone turns to religion somewhat he thinks that he must take up certain optional practices like *Zikr*, regular recital of some supplications, or routine devotional exercises like *wazifah*, etc. These are a few apparent routine practices in which he occupies himself. But he does not look at the innumerable sins committed in his daily life and at the many things that displease Allah. There are many religious-minded people who pay careful attention to their worship, prayers and optional exercises but do not turn to the sins committed in their homes. They do not worry about correcting the situation there. They do not distinguish between the lawful and unlawful in the market when they go there. When they converse with somebody they do not refrain from backbiting and they do not care to remove the unlawful things from their homes. Films and television are watched in theare homes and songs are played but they do not worry about that. All they do is repeat the *wazifah* that they are taught although the other sinful things are destructive to them so they should worry about them.

An excellent example of voluntary worship and sins

We may explain this by example. Suppose that voluntary worships - be they prayer, recital of the Qur'an or glorifying Allah - are like a tonic that provide strength. And suppose that sins are like poison. If anyone takes the tonic in large measure but also consumes the poison then while the tonic will be ineffective the poison will do the damage and the man will be destroyed. Then, there is the example of another man who does not use any tonic but eats simple food refraining from harmful diet that might play with his health. This man will keep healthy although he does not take a tonic. The first man who takes a tonic but does not avoid harmful diet will necessarily keep unwell and sickly. It is the same thing with optional worhsip and sins. So, we should strive to do away with sin in our daily life and unless we do that we will not benefit from optional worship.

The first task for those who aim at reformation.

It is a procedure now-a-days with religious mentors that when anyone visits them to seek their help in reforming themselves, they prescribe a series of recitals and rosaries to be observed at fixed times daily. However, it was the practice of Mawlana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه that when anyone came to him to get himself reformed, he never prescribed an assignment of a set of recitals but he required him to shun sin. The first task was perfection of repentance. The disciple should seek the forgiveness of Allah, "O Allah, forgive my past sins and I resolve not to sin in future." He must then do his best to keep away from sin of every kind and not just a few known sins because

every sin is abhorrent. Allah has said in the Qur'an :

وَذَرُوْا ظَاهِرَ الْاِثْمِ وَبَاطِنَهٗ

And forsake the open sin, and the secret there of (al-Anam, 6:120)

and again, in the same verse :

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَكْسِبُوْنَ الْاِثْمَ سَيُجْزَوْنَ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَقْتَرِفُوْنَ (سورة الانعام: ١٢٠)

Surely those who earn sin shall be recompensed for what they used to do. (al-Anam, 6:120)

Forsake every sin

Therefore, there is not any sin that may be taken lightly whether it is an open sin or a secret commission. One must not think it enough to give up some grave sins and care not for the minor ones. Thus it is not enough to give up some of the sins but continue to backbite and slander, to hurt someone or to behave arrogantly. Everything must be given up which Allah and His Messenger ﷺ have described as sinful.

Protect the family from sin

There is one more thing to think of. A man cannot hope to give up sins unless he corrects his surroundings. If anyone hopes to reform himself but does not pay heed to his family who are on the wrong path, he can never give up sins. If his family members are on the wrong path then no matter how much he tries to set himself on the right path; without worrying about them, one day or the other they will lead him astray. Therefore, it is as much important to get one's family members on the right path as it is to correct oneself. One must always be cautious about one's wife and children that they do not fall off the right path.

Women's behaviour is significant

In this regard, women play a significant role. If they decide to mold their lives according to the Commands of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ then the atomosphere in the house becomes very ideal because a woman is the main character in a house. If she is obedient to Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, the entire household stands reformed, but if she pays no attention to it and does not observe the veil, keeps her hair uncovered and leads a sinful life then the atmosphere in the house becomes very bad. Therefore, women must keep themselves away from sin.

Disobedience and sin

What is sin? And, what are the consequences and repercussions of sin? We must understand these things first. Sin is a disobedience. Suppose, an elder tells someone to do something but he refuses to do it, or if he forbids him to do something but he insists on doing it then he is being disobedient to the elder. If anyone is disobedient to Allah and His Messenger ﷺ then he is committing a sin. The results of being disobedient to Allah are grave to an unimaginable extent.

Damages of sin - first, selfishness

The first damage caused by sin is that the sinner is selfish, ungrateful and usurper of the rights of his Benefactor. His Benefactor who has created man who is always drowned in His blessings. Allah's favours cover him from head to foot. Each organ of a man's body is valuable and significant but becuase he enjoys them gratis, man does not appreciate them. It is only when anyone loses one of these organs, or has a defective one, that he realises the significance and the loss. Look at the eye or

the ear or the tongue. Look at sound health or the sustenance one gets morning and evening - how great a blessing each one of these are! The Great Benefactor who has covered us with so many blessings asks us to desist from only certain things. But, we cannot obey Him even in the little He asks us and are thus involved in the first defect of sin, selfishness, ungratefulness and usurption of the rights of our Benefactor.

Second damage, rusting of the hearts

The second damage caused by sin is described by the Prophet ﷺ in a *Hadith*. He said, "If a man commits sin for the first time a dark spot shows itself on his heart. What this spot is, Allah alone knows! When that man sins again, a second spot appears on his heart and if he sins the third time, a third spot comes up on his heart. However, if he repents, meanwhile, then the spots are effaced but if he does not express repentance and persists in sins then the spots keep multiplying and cover up his heart as marks of rust and his heart becomes corroded. When a man's heart is corroded, it no longer can listen to the Truth and it becomes inattentive and indifferent so that it will not recognise sin and he does not sense the repurcussious of sin. It is as though he is bereft of intelligence.

Difference in a believer's and a transgressor's idea of sin

Sayyidina Abdullah bin Mas'ud رضی اللہ عنہ reports a *Hadith* which describes a Believer who has never sinned as one who sees it as a mountain overhead about to crush him while a transgressing sinner holds sin very lightly like a fly that he drives away which means that he does not feel sorry after committing sin. A Believer, on the other hand,

who fears it as he fears a mountain overhead,if he happens to conunit a sin,indulges himself in sorrow and remorse.

A Belivers condition on missing a pious opportunity

Commission of a sin apart, a Believer becomes sad on missing an opportunity to do a pious deed. He becomes very upset and regrets the lost opportunity. Mawlana Rumi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has said about it:

بر دلِ سالک ہزاراں غم بود
گر ز باغِ دلِ خلالے کم بود

"A mystic behaves as though he has lost too much when he misses an opportunity to do a little good." When these are his feelings on missing an opportunity to do good how would he feel if he commits a sin. May Allah protect us from the condition that sins cause spots on our hearts and we begin to consider them insignificant. So, this is one of the damages that sins cause. They make the sinner become inattentive and in different to sins and his heart becomes covered with a veil, as it were.

Third damage, darkness

The point is that we have become accustomed to the environment of sin so we do not notice the darkness and abhorrence. There is somuch darkness from sin and excessive abhorrence to it that a man blessed by Allah with perfect faith cannot tolerate it. Mawlana Muhammad Y'aqub Nanotawi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ once ate a morsel of food from unlawful income which upset him for two months and he was tempted to commit one or the other sin. He ate the morsel when he was invited to a meal by someone and learnt after eating it that the man's income was unlawfully acquired.

Example of being accustomed to sin

We do not become upset of the darkness and do not feel abhorrence for it because we have become accustomed to sin. Our behaviour may be compared to a bad-smelling house offensive to the mind. If any outsider enters it, he will find it difficult to stay even a while in the house, but anyone already staying in it will not sense the difference because he is accustome to the smell. He will not understand why anyone should rebuke him for staying in the offensive atmosphere. The other man whom Allah has protected from the bad-smelling house and kept in a fragrant atmosphere will be repulsed from a distance when he gets the bad smell. In the same way, Believers whose hearts are devoted to Allah and are clean like a shining mirror are replused from the darkness and abhorrence of sin. This then is the third defect of sin; darkness and abhornce.

Fourth damage is to intelligence

The fourth damage from persistent sin is that the sinner suffers loss of intelligence. His intelligence quotient drops and his thinking and comprehending powers toe an evil path. He regards good as evil and vice versa. He will not receive sound advice even if given politely. He is the one of whom Allah has said: "He whom Allah leaves astray cannot find guidance."Allah does not let anyone go astray unless he insists on sinning and disobedience so that he cannot understand Truth.

Sin caused the devil to suffer intellectually

The example of Satan is before us. He is the fountain head of sin and its originator because he was the first one to commit a sin. Not only did he sin himself but

he tempted the eminent Messenger Sayyidina Adam عليه السلام to sin. The consequences were that his mind became weak. When Allah asked him to prostrate before Sayyidina Adam عليه السلام he did not obey the Command but presented excuses. He said that he was created out of fire but (sayyidna) Adam(عليه السلام) out of dust. On the face of it, his reasoning appeared sound because fire is superior to dust. He could not see that the Creator who created fire also created dust and if He Commands fire to bow down before dust then no superiority rests with fire and dust is not then inferior. He could not understand that and was thus exiled from the Heaven, accursed a nd dis-honoured. The opportunity to repent is always present not only for mankind but also for the devil. If he had used his senses correctly he could have said to Allah, "I have erred. Forgive me. I will do what You say." But, he is not prepared to say that, even today.

A lesson-giving incident with the Devil

I have heard a story from my Shaikh. Although it seems to be an Israili fabrication, it does give a lesson. It runs: when Sayyidina Musa عليه السلام was going to the Mount Tur to receive the honour of a conversation with Allah, the devil met him on the way. The devil said to Sayyidina Musa عليه السلام, " You will have a conversation with Allah, do a little thing for me." "What is it?" Sayyidina Musa عليه السلام asked. "I have been rejected and accursed and there is no way I can be forgiven. Do recommend me to Allah, perhaps I may receive deliverance. " Sayyiddina Musa عليه السلام agreed to speak for him and when he arrived at the Mount Tur, he did have a conversation with Allah but he forgot to convey the message of Satan. As he was returning, Allah Himself reminded him if he had brought a message from anyone. He said, "O yes! I

did forget. I met Iblis on the way and he seemed very worried and requested to be shown a way to salvation. O Allah! You are Most Merciful. You forgive everyone. He repents so do forgive him. "Allah asked him, "When did I say that the door through repentance is shut? I am willing to forgive. Let him know that his repentance will be granted. He had disobeyed me when I had asked him to prostrate before Adam and even now it is very easy. He may go to his grave and prostrate himself there. I will forgive him. "Sayyidina Musa عليه السلام said, "This is a very easy thing." So, he returned with the message and met the devil again and he asked what had become of his petition. "Your case is very easy. You had made a mistake when you did not prostrate yourself before Sayyidina Adam عليه السلام but Allah has said that He will forgive you if you go and prostrate yourself before the grave of Adam عليه السلام." In reply the devil said, "How astonishing! I did not bow myself before a living creature, how do you expect me to prostrate before a dead man? How may I bow before his grave? I cannot do it." His reply was prompted by his lower intelligence.

It is sin that lowers the sinner's intelligence so that he cannot see the right thing.

One cannot ask to be told of the Wisdom behind everything

There are certain sins that the Qur'an and *Hadith* have clearly defined as unlawful. Those people who commit these sins present their reasoning and arguments when they are reminded that the sins are unlawful. They ask why these sins are declared unlawful and they enumerate the benefits of the sinful act. These people must realise that they are not masters but slaves of their Creator and they must place themselves in the place of

their servants who cannot ask them why they give a command and what is the wisdom behind it. Just as a servant must do what he is told to do whether he fathoms the wisdom behind the command or not, so too must Allah's creatures do what they are told whether they know why or not.

We are creatures not servants

A servant whom we employ is only our servant and not a slave, and we have not created him so he is not our creature. Yet, we will not allow him to ask us for the reasons behind our orders to him. But, we are creatures of Allah Who has created us yet we seek to know the wisdom behind His Commands. Our behaviour is as foolish as that of our servant who might ask us the same question, rather our behaviour is more foolish - because our servant is a human being like us and his intelligence is at par with ours but our intelligence cannot grasp the wisdom of Allah in giving a Command. The reason we ask that question is that our intelligence has grown low from committing excessive sins.

The eye-opening account of Mahmud and Ayyaz

My Shaikh Mawlana Doctor Abdul Hayyi رحمة الله عليه, had narrated an event that shows a lesson. He said that the famous conqueror and King, Mahmud Ghaznavi, had a very favourite slave, Ayyaz, whom he loved much. Since Ayyaz was the King's favourite slave, other people observed that he was given preferance over eminent men and it was correct that Mahmud Ghaznavi did not heed the advice of his ministers and governors as much as he did the advice of Ayyaz.

Mahmud Ghaznavi decided to demonstrate to his governors and ministers why he gave Ayyaz a preferential treatment. Once the King received an expensive diamond as a gift. It was a beautiful piece of jewel. At that time the King's court had assembled and everyone saw the expensive, valuable diamond. They all praised it, too. The King called the Prime Minister to him and asked him about the diamond and the Prime Minister sang its praises and said that it was a unique piece, unmatched anywhere in the world. The King then asked him to hurl the diamond on the ground and break it into pieces! The Prime Minister was taken aback at the order and he pleaded with his King to rescind his decision and retain the diamond, putting forward a number excuses..... The King asked him to take his seat, and gave the same command to another of his Ministers who too made similar excuses and then the King asked every other Minister to do it but all of them excused themselves from executing the King's command to break the diamond.

A diamond may break but not a command

Finally, Mahmud Ghaznavi called Ayyaz and asked him to do what he had asked his Ministers to do, namely, smash the diamond! Ayyaz picked up the piece and hurled it on the ground and it broke down into fragments, small pieces. When the King saw that the diamond was broken, he scolded Ayyaz for having broken the diamond. "Did you not see the great Ministers before you, very intelligent people, how they dared not break the diamond when I asked them to do it. Are all of them insane? You did not hesitate to break it, why?" Ayyaz appologised for his action first, "Your Majesty! I have made a mistake." The King asked him, "Why did you break it?" Ayyaz submitted

to him, "I said to myself that after all it was a diamond and no matter how valuable, if it breaks it is not a great loss and not very bad but your command should not be broken. Your command is more valuable than the diamond so I thought it would be worse if the diamond was preferred over your command. That is why I broke the diamond."

Slave of the Command

Mahmud Ghaznavi then told the Ministers and dignitaries that the difference between them and Ayyaz lay in the fact that while they sought wisdom behind a command, Ayyaz was 'slave of the command' and did what he was told to do.

What is the reality of the Command of Mahmud Ghaznavi? His intelligence was limited as was his Ministers and Ayyaz's intelligence. It behoves the Creator who created everything. No matter what breaks-a diamond, a heart, the sentiments of someone-His Command should not be disobeyed. It is foolish to try to find wisdom in the Commands of Allah; anyone who is senseless does it and his condition results from sinning. The more a man sins the more insensible he becomes. Thus we see that sins lower the sinner's intelligence.

Enlightenment follows giving up of sins

Let anyone repent before Allah for some time at least and give up sins for a few days. Blessings will flow his way from Allah and he will receive Light. He will begin to understand what he never understood before. The Qur'an says:

إِنْ تَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ فُرْقَانًا (سورة الانفال:٢٩)

If you fear Allah, He will give you a criterion

(to judge between right and wrong). (Al-anfal, 8:29)

If one fears Allah, he will keep himself away from the unlawful, disobedience and sins. Allah will give him the ability to judge between right and wrong. Today, we do not distinguish between right and wrong because we have stained our intelligence after persistent sinning.

Fifth damage, it stops raining

The punishment to the sinner will be awarded to him in the Hereafter truly but the inauspiciousness of sin is apparent on him in this world too, and he suffers a fifth damage. A Hadih tells us that when Muslims deny *zakah*, Allah stops rainfall over them.

Sixth damage, Illnesses

The sixth damage is seen when men involve themselves in immorality, vulgarity and lewdness. Allah afflicts them with illnesses which were unknown to their forefathers. We have the example of Aids which is threatening everyone in the world. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had said fourteen hundred years ago that such illnesses will afflict men. Every sin has a peculiarity and Allah reveals that to us in this very world and the punishment against the sin comes to be awarded.

Seventh damage, Killing

A *Hadith* tells us that towards the final times a period will come when يكثر الهرج "Killings will be rampant." Man will be killed and neither he nor his heirs will find out why he was killed or who killed him. Also لايدرى القاتل لم قتل وه المقتول فيم قتل "The murderer will not know why he kills and the murdered will not know why he was killed." If we look at this *Hadith* in relation to what is happening today, no one

knows why a murder is committed. In the earlier days, when a murder was committed, it was soon found out why it was committed; either there was an enmity or some other reason. Today, the reason is not known and the murderer is not traced out. It looks as though the Holy Prophet ﷺ had seen fourteen hundred years ago the situation as it exists today and reported it to us. This is happening because of our deeds and our sins. Excess of sining has brought about this situation.

The only solution to killings

Everyone tries to find out a remedy to the killings. Someone suggests a political solution and others want different people to talk together and compromise. We do not accept that the real cause for the unrest is commission of too many sins. If a people are given to sinning, Allah inflicts on them punishment in this manner. So, we must pay attention to it. May Allah grant us perfect intelligence to give up sins. Let us first repent before Allah for our sins and seek His protection from the consequences of the sins. "O Allah! remove the punishment from us!"

We must worry about sins more than about *Wazifah*

While it is excellent to involve oneself in optional worship, it is better than that to refrain from sinning. I receive many telephone calls every day, especially from women, and the callers ask me to recommend to them a supplication for their peculiar predicament. Some of them suppose that there should be a different supplication for their problem or a different *wazifah* (a set of repetitious religious exercises). Let them know that the supplications and *wazifahs* are excellent where they are concerned but

what is more important is to avoid and shun all sins. We must shun sins ourselves and get our family members to shun sins too. Unless we do this, we will not reap the benefits of the repetitious exercises. They can only be helpful if we are prepared to shun sins. Once we make the effort then the supplications and *wazifahs* give strength in our hearts to fight temptation. But, if we do not care to give up sin then it does not matter if we offer voluntary worship and recite *wazifah*, we will not benefit from them.

Review sins

In short, we must work to save ourselves from sin. We must review our daily life and make a list of the sins that we commited. We must investigate in what ways we have displeased Allah. Then, we must see which of the sins we can give up immediately, and we must stop doing those. As for the sins that we can give up after some changes in our life, we must begin to work in that direction. Also, we must repent from our sins and seek the forgiveness of Allah and we must turn to Allah. May Allah give us the strength to keep away from sins. *Aameen!*

How to get ahead of one who offers *Tahajjud* Prayers

Sayyidah Ayshah رضی اللہ عنہا has reported a *Hadith*, "If anyone desires to overcome a devoted worshipper who offers *tahajjud* then he must protect himself from sin." Thus, we read from great religious men that they kept vigil in the night worshipping Allah, offered voluntary prayer in large numbers and recited the Qur'an profusely. If we wish to overtake them in piety then we must give up the sinful life completely. This will secure us salvation just as those religious men obtained salvation for

themsleves because they too kept away from sins. The only difference will be that their ranks would be higher than ours. If anyone of them was involved in sin then we will overtake him because of our abstinence from sin.

Example of a Believer and his Faith

Sayyidina Abu Said Khudri رضی اللہ عنہ has reported the Holy Prophet ﷺ as saying, "The example of a Believer and his faith is seen in the example of a horse tetherred to a peg. The horse can move around but not beyond a limit. The tether does not allow him beyond that. The horse moves around within the limit and then comes back to the corner where it is tied up. Thus the tether serves two purposes - it does not allow the horse to go beyond a certain limit and it serves as its refuge too when the horse comes to the corner and sits down."

After citing this example, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "A Believer's tether in his faith. It restricts him within a certain limit and if he tries to exceed it, the tether of faith will pull him back. After moving about, the Believer will return to rest at the corner." It means that a Believer has such a strong faith and belief that it does not allow him to sin. If he lapses into sin by mistake sometimes, he returns to his tether, the faith. The Holy Prophet ﷺ gave a very beautiful example. May Allah help us to strengthen our tethers.

Recording sins is delayed

A *Hadith* teaches us that there are two angels with every man. One of them records his pious works and the other his evil deeds. My Shaikh, Mawlana Masihullah Khan, told me that the angel who records good deeds has the instructions to record them that very instant he performs

the good deeds. The other angel who is in-charge of recording evil deeds has the instructions to consult the first angel before recording the man's evil deed. The first angel tells him not to record and allow him time to repent and seek forgiveness. If he sins again and does not repent from his first sin, the second angel asks the first one again, "Shall I record it?" "No. Not yet." If the man sins a third time, he asks again whether he should record it. He answers, "Yes. Write it down." The sin is recorded in the man's Deed of Records. Allah has shown leniency to His creatures by recording piety on the very instant but recording of evil is held in abeyance, perchance the sinner might repent.

Repent at the very instant a sin is committed

Our religious elders have advised us to repent and seek forgiveness the moment we happen to commit a sin so that the sin is not recorded in our Record of Deeds. They have also advised that we should repent and seek forgiveness immediately on the very place the sin is committed so that on the Day of Resurrection when that piece of land testifies to our sin, it also bears witness to our repentance.

"This man had committed a sin when he stood over me and then repented over it while he still stood over me." This is in conformity with the saying of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that faith is the tether of a Believer, when he moves about, he returns back to the peg to which he is tied.

Keeping away from sin

We must first of all endeavour and resolve to shun sin. Without an endeavour and a resolve we cannot keep away from sin. If inspite of our endeavour and resolve we happen to commit a sin by mistake, then we

must immediately repent over it and seek forgiveness for that. We must turn to Allah. If we do that, we should hope to be forgiven by Him. But, the greatest tragedy is that instead of repenting and seeking forgiveness and thinking about it, we strive to justify our behaviour.

May Allah save us from the burden of sins. *Aameen*!

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame 'Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal
Karachi
Time : After 'Asr Prayers
Date : 8th November, 1991

Forbid The Disreputable.....Otherwise!

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد!

عن ابى سعيد الخدرى رضى الله عنه قال:

سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول من راى منكم منكرا فليغيره بيده فان لم يستطع فبلسانه فان لم يستطع فبقلبه وذلك اضعف الايمان (صحيح مسلم كتاب الايمان باب بيان كون النهى عن المنكر من الايمان)

Praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him, and ask Him for His help and seek His forgiveness. We believe in Him. We seek refuge in Allah from the mischief of our souls and from our evil

deeds. He whom Allah guides,none can mislead and he whom He leaves astray, none can guide. We bear witness that there is no god but Allah, Who is Alone and has no partner, and we bear witness that Sayyidna Muhammad ﷺ is His Slave and Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family and Companions رضی اللہ عنہم , and may He favour him and give him peace, a complete peace.

Sayyidina Abu Sa'id al Khudri رضی اللہ عنہ has said: I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say, "If anyone amongst you sees something disreputable, he should correct it with his hand; but if he is not able to do it then he should do it with his tongue; if he cannot do it (with it) then he should (abhor it) in his heart. And this is the least form of faith." (Sahih Muslim, Book of Faith Chapter XX Hadith#79)

Three steps to forbidding the Disreputable

In this *Hadith*, the Holy Prophet ﷺ is quoted as saying that if anyone of you sees something wrong being done, he must not only stop it with his hand but also correct or modify it. If he does not have the strength to stop it and correct it, he must prevent it with his tongue and ask the perpetrator to modify it. "Brother! What you are doing is not right. Instead of that do it this way.....". This is the second stage. If he cannot even use his tongue then the least he should do is think it wrong and correct it in his mind. About this third stage the Ptrophet ﷺ said that it is the weakest sign of faith.

Four ways to prevent loss

Allah has shown us in Surah al-Asr, a general rule to prevent loss:

وَالْعَصْرِ ○ اِنَّ الْاِنْسَانَ لَفِیْ خُسْرٍ ○ اِلَّا الَّذِیْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ○

By the time, surely man is in loss, except those who believe and do righteous deeds, and exhort one another to Truth, and exhort one another to perseverance. (al-Asar. 103:1-3)

The four ways shown in these verses are to believe, to be righteous, to exhort one another to Truth and to exhort one another to perserverance. 'Truth' implies meeting obligations (the *fard*) and 'perseverance' means to keep away from sin. Thus, Allah has not said that belief and doing righteous deeds are enough to protect oneself from loss but He has said that it is also necessary to exhort one another to Truth and Perseverance.

A righteous man overturned

The Holy Prophet ﷺ narrated the case of a people who were involved in sin, disobedience and disreputable behaviour. Allah, therefore, Commanded His angels to upturn their settlements so that the top went down and the bottom came up. Sayyidina Jibril علیہ السلام asked whether anyone was to be spared because he knew of a righteious man in that settlement who was never known to have disobeyed and had devoted himself to worship all his life, never having sinned. Allah said to him that the whole settlement was to be destroyed including that man who was pious as far as his own life was concerned but he never frowned on seeing sins being committed and never considererd it evil. There never was a change on his face

and he never took any steps to stop sins from being committed.

Even the sinless will suffer punishment

It is towards this thing that Allah refers in another verse:

وَاتَّقُوْا فِتْنَةً لَّا تُصِيْبَنَّ الَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْا مِنْكُمْ خَآصَّةً (۸:۲۵ سورۃ الانفال)

> And fear the trial which shall not afflict in particular the evildoers alone among you (al - Anfal, 8:25)

That is, it will afflict the sinless too because, though they may be without sin to the eye, they took no steps to resist evil. They did not even speak against it. So, they too will be punished. In short, one of our significant duties is to command the reputable, the righteous behaviour and to forbid wrong or the disreputable behaviour. But, today we turn our eyes away from this duty. We see wrong being done and we do save ourselves from that but do not advise other people or try to save them from evil.

The first stage in resisting evil

We have seen in the very first *Hadith* quoted in this discourse that the Prophet ﷺ described three stages of resisting evil. The first of these is to stop it by the hand. If anyone had the strength to stop it by his hand and he does not do so then he too commits a sin. For instance, if the head of a family who has authority over it should stop his family members, his dependants, from doing a wrong if he sees them perpetrating it; if he knows that he will be obeyed and there will be no uprising because of his action. It is *fard* (an absolute obligation) on him to do so in such circumstances by his hand and authority. It is wrong of

him not to resist evil merely not to displease someone or break someone's heart. In relation to a Command of Allah, breaking someone's heart is not a thing to worry about.

An incident with poet Fayzi

In the times of king Akbar, there was a poet with a pen-name, Fayzi. Once he was having his beard shaved by a barber. A righteous man passed by and said to him

آغا ریش مے تراشی ؟

"Agha! Are you having your beard shaved?"

Fayzi was not only a poet but he also had claims to religious learning and was regarded as a scholar. It was he who had written a commentary on the Qur'an without any dotted letter (like ب ث ض..... etc.). So, the righteous man meant to tell him, "You are a scholar and know that beard is the *sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ yet you have it shaved? Fayzi retorted, "Sure, I am having the beard shaved but not breaking anyone's heart." In other words Fayzi taunted him that he was only committing a sin, while the pious man had broken his heart. The elderly man replied,

ولے دلِ رسول اللہ مے خراشی

> "Right, (you are not breaking anyone else's heart) but you are breaking the heart of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ".

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ has disallowed us to do something and he was doing it in spite of that.

Do not care if a heart breaks

People do say that we must not pain anyone or cause heart burning. It is true but if we do something politely without degrading someone yet he takes it to heart then let

him take it to heart because the injunctions of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ are more important. Of course, the reformer must not adopt a style that breaks other's heart or is insulting to him or degrades him. Rather, he must advise the other man politely when he is alone and if in spite of that he takes it to heart, let him do that.

Those who neglect the *Fard*

Thus if a head of family, who has authority over it and who is obeyed, sees a family member doing a wrong or committing a sin but he does not stop him and correct him, then he is committing a sin. It is a *fard* (his duty) to correct the wrong-doer by his hand. In the same way if a teacher does not stop his pupil from wrong-doing, a Shaikh does not stop his disciple or an officer does not forbid his subordinate -although each of them has authority over his junior - then they are guilty of neglecting a *fard* and are thus sinning.

If there is fear of mischief then resist with the tongue

However, sometimes there is fear of mischief being created when anyone is stopped or that person might become rebellious. He might then commit a graver sin. In such a case, the reformer may not use his hand but may resist with the tongue. Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has said that when the *Hadith* says, "if he is not able to do so by the hand then he should do it with the tongue," it includes this situation where rebellion or mischief is possible. For example, vulgar pictures are hung outside cinema halls. Now, if anyone has the ability and takes along a few men who all of them bring down the vulgar picture then as a result a mischief will be created and all

those who pulled down the picture will find themselves in hot waters. So, their physical ability does not come under the purview of strength and ability that the *Hadith* calls on and they are advised to resist only by the tongue.

Head of family must stop these things

The basic reason for the wrong that is rampant in our society today is that the heads of our families join their family members in doing wrong instead of resisting the sins and correcting them. This can be seen also in the marriage functions. Innumerable wrongs are committed in these functions, and these range from the minor wrongs to the very grave evils. It is now becoming very common to hold these functions without separate arrangements for men and women; there is now a combined gathering in these functions. This is happening because the head of a family does nor object to the evil and he neither stops it with his hand nor with his tongue and in fact, he participates without demur. The excuses such heads of families present for their own participation is that they cannot help it and they have to join because it was a family affair. Rather, it ought to have been the other way and the views of the head of family should have been respected and he should have refused to attend unless separate arrangements were made for men and women. If the family members insist on their stand then they should not object to his absence from the function. If the heads of families will not adopt this attitude then, on the Day of Ressurrection, they will be called to account for their behaviour. They could stop the evil by hand by refusing to attend themselves.

A marriage function or dance party

Today, we are surrendering ourselves before evil at every step. Most of these evils were unknown in the past but gradually, one evil after another came to be adopted so that there is a plethora of evils in our marriage functions. Not one family member ever resisted an evil, thus allowing more to be taken up. The mixed gatherings have led to young boys and girls dancing together. The head of the family has surrendered on this issue too and willingly sees his daughters and daughters-in-law dance. He willingly participates. Surely! How long will this go on? Unless a few people who matter refuses to participate in these functions these things will not stop. They must say, "If these things continue, we will not attend." They will have to give them up or they shall cease to have relations with these people.

We do find that some people refuse to attend marriage functions because of an insult they had suffered in the past or an improper treatement metted out to them. They will compromise only when amends are made and they attend the ceremony only after, apologies, are offered for past misdeeds. This could serve as a precedent and on the basis of this approach some important people must adopt a similar attitude that they would attend only when the evil practices are abolished.

Consequences could be dangerous

However, sometimes a situation is very delicate and instead of reforming things a stern attitude brings about unforseen reactions. Therefore, one has to be very careful in adopting an attitude. A proper time must be chosen and the circumstances must be considered before taking a stand. There are no hard and fast rules to tell us when this

should be done or not. But as far as mixed gatherings of men and women are concerned a strict decision should be taken against it. If we do not stop it now, it might be too late and the consequences of our indifference could be dangerous. There is still time. We must have pity on ourselves. We must remember the questioning we will go through in our graves and we should realise that we will have to face Allah. Let us reconsider our attitude and give up the indifference. May Allah guide us to act correctly *Aameen* !

The second stage in resisting evil

The second stage taught to us in the *Hadith* under discussion is to use the tongue if we cannot use the hand. To use the tongue implies to speak to the evil-doer compasionately and tell him politely, "Brother, what you are doing is not correct. Please do not do that." When using the tongue, the principle should be remembered that speaking the Truth is not the same thing as throwing a stone. Neither is inviting other people to Truth or missionary work like hurling stones. These duties are done with goodwill, love and compassion. Allah has instructed us clearly:.

ادْعُ إِلَىٰ سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ (سورة النحل: ١٢٥)

(O Prophet) Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation.... (an-Nahl.16:125)

Sayyidina Musa عليه السلام advised to speak gently

My respected father, Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه used to remind us that when Allah asked Sayyidina Musa عليه السلام to go to the Pharaoh, He cautioned him and Sayyidina Harun عليه السلام to speak gently to him.

قُوْلًا لَهٗ قَوْلًا لَيِّنًا (سورہ طٰہٰ:٤٤)

Yet speak to him a gentle word....(Ta Ha. 20:44).

It must be noted that Allah advised them in this manner concerning *Fir'awn* (the Pharaoh) of whom He knew that the unfortunate man will never believe but remain adamant in his disbelief. My father used to say, "You are not a reformer higher than Sayyidina Musa عليه السلام and your subjects cannot be more misled than Fir'awn. So, when He asked Sayyidina Musa عليه السلام to speak softly to Fir'awn the Command applies to you more strongly. Let not your tongue move like a sword when you resist evil."

Manners of resisting by the tongue

In fact, there are certain manners of resisting wrong by the tongue. The reformer must not tell the wrong-doer of his wrong in the presence of other people, he must not insult or belittle him and must not use a style that disheartens him. Rather, The must speak to him when they are alone and must show love and compassion when correcting him. Some people put forward the excuse that gentle words have no effect on the wrong-doers. These people must know that if they do not pay heed to their advice then the reformers are not supervisors. Allah has not placed upon them the duty to compell others by their tongue to reform. The only duty they have is to be true in intention and use a true method to tell the Truth. Thus, the intention must be to reform. When someone is ill, the doctor will not scold him for being ill. He will treat him kindly and have pity on him. In the same way, the wrong-doer is actually ill and entitled to be shown pity. Therefore, The must not be scolded but advised with love and compassion.

The case of a young man

A young man presented himself before the Holy Prophet ﷺ and requested to be allowed to commit adultery because he could not check himself. Observe it, the young man seeks the permission of the Prophet ﷺ for such an act as is forbidden by every religion. If anyone asks a Shaikh or mentor for such permission, the religious man will run wild with anger. But may we be ransomed to him–the Prophet ﷺ did not display the least bit of anger. He knew that the man was sick and his condition is pitiable. So, he called the young man to him and placed his hand on his shoulder and said, "You have put a question to me. May I also ask you a question? " The young man said, "O Messenger of Allah! What is your question?" He said, "Tell me, will you agree to some other man wishing to do the same thing with your sister?" He said, "No! Messenger of Allah" Then the Prophet ﷺ asked "With your daughter? Or, your mother?" Certainly not, I will not like that." "Then, the woman with whom you will do it is also someone's sister, someone's daughter or someone's mother. And, how will those people agree for this thing to be done to their sister, daughter or mother?" The young man then said, "O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, I have now understood you. I will not do it again and I begin to detest this thing from now." This is how the Prophet ﷺ corrected the young man.

The case of a villager

A villager entered the Masjid Nabawi and hurriedly offered two raka'at prayer and then made the following supplication

اَللّٰهُمَّ ارْحَمْنِیْ وَمُحَمَّدًا وَلَا تَرْحَمْ مَعَنَا اَحَدًا

O Allah! Have mercy on me and on Muhammad ﷺ and do not have mercy on anyone else besides us.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ heard his supplication and told him that he had restricted Allah's great mercy. After a little while this man urinated in the courtyard of the Masjid Nabawi. When the Companions رضی الله عنهم saw him in the act they rushed towards him to stop him and they began to reprimand him but the Prophet ﷺ prevented them from that. He said "Do not stop him from urinating. Let him finish it." After he had finished, the Prophet ﷺ asked the Companions رضی الله عنهم to wash the place and purify it. He then called the man and explained to him that the mosque was a house of Allah that must be kept clean and pure. He was kind and loving to him. But, if anyone were to behave in this way before us, we would teach him the lesson of his life. The Prophet ﷺ did not even scold him.

Our method of inviting to Religion

In this *Hadith*, the Prophet ﷺ showed us the manners of propagation of religion and teachings. Today, we are not interested really in propagating religion but if anyone of us is moved in that direction he becomes a menace for the rest of the people. If he sees anyone committing some mistake in the mosque, he will fly into a rage over the poor fellow. This is not the *sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. There is a way for everything to be said and done. We must understand that the other man is also a slave of Allah and is somehow involved in the mistake; he needs to be told what is right that he may correct himself. The reformer must not be driven by the urge to publicise his knowledge or superiority because that mars the results of missionary effort.

Only the message be conveyed

A doubt arises in certain minds that if people are stopped with soft words they will not listen and stop. The answer to this is that it is not our responsibility to make them listen. The Qur'an tells us of a people who were disobedient to a great extent and there was no hope of their reforming. Allah's punishment was about to descend on them but some pious people talked to them mildly before the punishment overtook them. They were admonishing them gently when one of those people said:

لِمَ تَعِظُوْنَ قَوْماً ِ اللهُ مُهْلِكُهُمْ (سورة الاعراف: ١٦٤)

"Why do you admonish a people whom Allah is about to destroy...."(al- A'raf. 7:164)"

"What hope is there that they would reform?." But, these people gave a wonderful reply مَعْذِرَةً اِلٰى رَبِّكُمْ."To be able to offer an excuse to your Lord (that we did our duty)...."(al A'raf.7:164) "We know that they are a stubborn people who will not listen but we instruct them, advise them, that we may be able to say to Allah when He would call us to account for our behaviour that we did try to advise them when they committed the sin before us and we were not one of them." Thus, anyone engaged in preaching must keep this answer in mind while he preaches; whether other people then pay heed or not, he stands absolved of his responsibility. Sayyidina Nuh عليه السلام preached for nine hundred and fifty years during which time only nineteen people became Muslims. He will not now be taken to task because he was not responsible to convert all of them to Islam. Therefore, we must also say the Truth with a True intention in a True way with soft sentiments and goodwill. *Insha Allah,* we will be absolved our of responsibility. Besides, if one persists in this mission with these principles then Allah causes his

efforts to bear fruit.

The third stage in resisting evil

The *Hadith* under discussion tells us that the third stage in resisting evil also the last is to think of it as evil. This is arrived at after one does not have the strength to stop evil by his hand or by his tongue. The question does arise that the second stage is to resist by the tongue and if one does not have the strength to use it only then the third stage arrives but there is always the strength to use the tongue, then how can one say he does not have the strength? The meaning is that there may be fear that by resisting with the tongue the consequences may be serious and mischief may be created. In such cases, it is better to keep quiet. For instance, if there is a possibility that someone is violating a *sunnah* may make fun of it if he is admonished then it is better not to tell him anything because until then he was violating the *sunnah* but after being admonished he makes fun of it so he may enter into disbelief. It is then better to think it bad in the heart.

How is evil corrected with the heart

If the *Hadith* is translated literally it will run, "if a man has not the strength to correct an evil with his tongue then he must change (correct) it with his heart." It is not said merely that "he consider it bad in his heart, he is asked to change it with his heart. How can that be done? The Ulama have explained that if anyone could not use his hand and his tongue to modify a wrong because he did not have the strength to do it then he should feel so much hatred and uneasiness for it in his heart that his feelings should be apparent on his expression and he should knit his brows. He should look out for an opportunity to use

his hand and his tongue to correct the evil. If a man gets it in his heart that something is wrong then he is occupied in finding ways to correct it with his hand and tongue. Thus, if such a man's children are spoil and he tries to correct them with his hand by beating them and using force but it has no effect on them and he also gets no results by trying to hammer sense into them by his tongue then this man is constantly occupied in thinking of ways to correct them and he loses sleep and is very uneasy on that account.This uneasiness and restlessness finally shows him how and when to get one's message across and there shall come the day when his efforts bear fruit.

Must grow uneasiness within ourselves

We see around us many disreputable things happening, many evils and sins being committed. Suppose we do not have the strength to change them with our hands or with our tongues so we are left with the third choice. Then let every one of us grow into himself an uneasiness concerning what is happening around us and worrry about how to correct the atmosphere. This uneasiness and restlessness should grow to such an extent that it is comparable to stomachache that causes one to be uneasy as long as the pain lasts. Ultimately, these evils and sins will end and a way will be found out to do that.

The uneasiness felt by The Prophet ﷺ

The Prophet ﷺ had found himself in a society where sin, associating with God, disbelief, idolatry, open rebellion with God and disobedience were common and everyday affairs. No soul was ready to listen to him. It was then that he was commanded that he must reform the people. For three years after he was made Prophet ﷺ, he was not

allowed to preach and invite other people to the Religion. During these three years he watched the evil going on in society and secluded himself in the cave Hira beseaching Allah all the while. He felt much uneasy and restless watching the evil around him and thinking how it could be remedied. Finally, his uneasiness found for him a solution and, after that, he was allowed to preach and invite other people to the Religion and he was able to bring about a revolution through his call. The Qur'an describes his restlessness.

لَعَلَّكَ بَاخِعٌ نَّفْسَكَ اَنْ لَّا يَكُوْنُوْا مُؤْمِنِيْنَ (سورة الشعراء:٣)

It may be that you(O Prophet) will kill yourself with grief, because they believe not. (Ash-Shu'ara. 26:4)

Allah encourages the Prophet ﷺ and tells him: ان عليك الا البلاغ "Surely you are responsible for nothing but the (delivery of the) message." (Ash-Shu'ara. 42:48)

"You should not worry yourself too much or place a burden over yourself!" Yet he was so worried that he would wish to rescue everyone he met from Hell and to convey the message of religion to him.

We have given up arms

Today, however, we lack the zeal and spirit. We do not consider evil to be as such. If any of us do not do a wrong ourselves, we consider ourselves safe fromit. We use the excuse of old age *or* that we are ashamed to change our life-stlye at such an add age. Like wise, we do not regard the wrongs of our children to be evil, otherwise we would be worried and restless about it. We let our childern live as they do and argue that we have spent our lives as we chose too. There fore, they should do the same. This is why we do not

stop them from doing wrong. nor do we feel uneasy and restless on their behaviour.

How may words have the desired result

If anyone feels worried on account of society then Allah makes his words effective. Mawlana Nanotawi رحمة الله عليه used to say, "That person is entitled to preach and invite who has the desire to do that work in a manner one desires to accomplish something very necessary and basic. For instance, if someone is hungry he will be restless until he gets something to eat and unless the same spirit moves the missionary he is not entitled to preach and call." Shah Isma'il Shahid رحمة الله عليه was an example. He had such a spirit of missionary zeal that in each of his sermons hundreds of men repented from sin at his hands because he spoke from the core of his heart and his words pierced the hearts of his listeners.

An incident in the life of Shah Isma 'il Shahid رحمة الله عليه

Once he delivered a sermon at the Jami Masjid, Delhi and spoke for about two hours. After having delivered the sermon, he was descending the steps of the mosque when someone came running to the mosque and asked Shah Isma'il رحمة الله عليه him if the sermon of Shah Isma'il was over. He answered, "Yes, brother it is over". He remarked, " I am very sorry. I have come from very far to listen to him." "From where have you come?" He gave the name of his village in reply and said, "I had come to listen to him. How sad that my effort is useless and his sermon is over." The Mawlana said, "Don't you worry. I am Isma'il myself. Come sit here." He made him sit there on the steps and said that he himself had delivered the sermon and would repeat it for

him. He repeated every word of the sermon for him there on the steps. Someone then remarked to him, "Mawlana, you were wonderful. You repeated the sermon for the sake of just one man." He said, "I had delivered the first sermon also for just One and I did it the second time for just One. The gathering has no reality. I had spoken for Allah the first time and I did again for Him alone." This was the spirit that Allah had created in his heart. May Allah show mercy to us and create a portion of this spirit,motivation and restlessness in our hearts so that on seeing the disrepute we would be moved to end the disreputable in some way.

We must remember that when we grow this behaviour and become uneasy and restless for this cause we will reform our household at least. If we cannot reform our family then it means that the uneasiness and restlessness is lacking and we are merely wasting time.

Summary

In short, individual preaching is *fard'ayn* (absolute direct obligation) on every person. If he sees a wrong being done, he must endeavour to stop it. He must try to stop it with his hand, first. If that is not possible then he must try to stop it with his tongue. If that too is not possible, then he must know in his heart that thing is evil. May Allah inspire us to obey these instructions. *Aameen!*.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame 'Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal
Karachi
Time : After 'Asr Prayers
Date : 17th November, 1995

Scenes of Paradise

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد !

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

وَتِلْكَ الْجَنَّةُ الَّتِىْ اُوْرِثْتُمُوْهَا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ o لَكُمْ فِيْهَا فَاكِهَةٌ كَثِيْرَةٌ مِّنْهَا تَاْكُلُوْنَ (الزخرف : ٧٢:٧٣)

آمنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم وصدق رسوله النبى الكريم ونحن على ذلك من الشاهدين والشاكرين والحمدلله رب العلمين

Praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and ask Him for forgiveness. We believe in Him and place our trust in Him. We seek refuge in Him from the mischief of our

souls and from our evil deeds. He whom Allah guides, no one is there to mislead; and he whom He leaves astray, no one is there to guide. And we bear witness that there is no god but Allah, who is Alone and has no partner and we bear witness that Sayyidina Muhammad is His Slave and His Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family and Companions and may He favour him and give him peace, a complete peace and in abundance.

I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed devil. In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

And this is the Garden, you have been made to inherit because of what you used to do. For you therein is abundant fruit, whereof you may eat (Az-Zukhruf, 43:72-73).

I believe in Allah, our Great Protector who has spoken the Truth and His Messenger, the noble Prophet ﷺ has also spoken the Truth. We are grateful witnesses over that. Praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

How to find out the conditions in The Hereafter

Man has no way to know the conditions after death. No science or technique can tell him of that life. He who goes to that world from here knows what happens there but then we lose touch with that man.

The case of a Saint.

My father, Mawlana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه, often related the story of a saint whose disciples complained to him that whoever dies in this world does not turn back or inform the living where he reached, what happened with him and what he saw. "Do reveal to us some knack whereby we may have the answers to these questions." The saint said, "Alright, when I die leave a paper and pen with me in the grave. If I have an opportunity, I will write to you." His disciples were satisfied that they could hope for a report.

When the saint died, the instructions in his will were obeyed and a paper and pen were placed besides his body in his grave. He had also written down in his will that the paper be collected the next day from his grave; they would find his message thereon. The disciples visited the grave the next day and sure enough they found a paper placed over the grave. They were happy that they had received what they had long desired, the news of the next world. But when they picked up the paper, they found this message on it:

"The conditions here are worth seeing but not worth revealing."

Allah knows best whether this case is true or false. It is within the powers of Allah to do this thing so it could be true. But, it may also be a lie and a fabricated story. Yet, it is a fact that the situation there is not one to reveal but one to observe. That is why Allah has kept it a secret and not let anyone know about it. There is no way for anyone to know about that world beyond what Allah has revealed in the Qur'an and the Prophet ﷺ in the *Ahadith*. We will narrate here from the Qur'an and the *Ahadith* the conditions of the next world.

The lowest ranking dweller of Paradise

It is reported by Sayyidina al Mughira bin Shu'bah رضی اللہ عنہ that Sayyidina Musa علیہ السلام asked Allah, "Lord! Who among the people of Paradise will have the lowest rank and which of the dwellers of Paradise will be the humblest?" Allah said, "All the dwellers of Paradise will have entered it and all the dwellers of Hell will have gone into it. One man will have missed entry into Paradise and would be sitting in its surrounding. I will ask him to name four of the Kings of whom he had heard on earth and as many of their dominions as he could remember. He would name the four Kings one by one pointing out that he had a great dominion and enjoyed many blessings, and he would add that he had wished for a similar empire for himself. I will then ask him to recount the blessings that those Kings enjoyed and the luxury they lived in and to name which of those blessings he would like to have. So, that man will enumerate the favours and luxuries enjoyed by those Kings and will wish that he had the same.

I will then ask him if he would be happy if he received those very favours and luxuries that he had named as being enjoyed by the four Kings. He will exclaim 'O Allah! What blessing can exceed, that! I will surely be happy'. I will let him know that I grant him whatever dominions and the favours and luxuries the Kings had ten times over." Allah then said to Sayyidina Musa علیہ السلام "That man will be the lowest ranking man in Paradise and he will have the Paradise of the lowest order. "Sayyidina Musa علیہ السلام then said, "O Allah! If this is the lowest ranking man then what will be the position of the men who are Your chosen ones who will be granted the superior-most ranks? Allah said to him, "O Musa! As for My chosen slaves, I have fashioned their belongings with My hands and preserved them in,

treasures duly sealed.

ما لم ترعين ولم يسمع اذن ولم يخطر على قلب احد من الخلق

No eye has seen as yet no ear has heard of it as yet and no heart has imagined it as yet.

The Paradise of yet another Low-Ranking Inhabitant

In another *Hadith*, the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself said about a man who will be the last to enter Paradise. He will be the one who will be sent to Hell first to atone for the bad deeds he had committed on earth because even a Believer will first receive punishment in Hell for his evil deeds. So, that man will burn in Hell and he will pray to Allah, "O Allah! The heat and fire of Hell have burnt me down. Show me Your mercy and get me out of Hell for a little while and place me on the top at the edge that I may have a short respite from burning."

Allah will say to him, "If I get you there then you will ask to be taken a little further." He will promise that if he was placed on the top he will not ask to be moved further. Allah will say to him, "Well, I grant you your wish" and he will be taken out of Hell and placed at the top. After a while when he will have revived somewhat, he will say again, "O Allah ! You did get me out of Hell but even here I can sense the heat of Hell. Do place me a little further for a while."

Allah will remind him that he had promised a short while ago that he would not ask to be moved ahead and that he was breaking his promise. He will say, "Move me a little ahead, O Allah! I will not then ask for anything." So Allah will have him placed a little ahead. From that place, he will be able to observe Paradise. After a little while, he will say, "O Allah! You did get me out of Hell

and I can now see Paradise. Do grant me Your permission that I may see a little of Paradise. Let me go to its gate and see what Paradise is like." Allah will remind him that he was again being false to his promise and he will say, "O Allah! When you have been kind to me in allowing me to be here, do let me have a glimpse of Paradise." Allah will say to him, "If I let you have a glimpse of Paradise, you will ask to be allowed inside for a while." He will say, "No, O Allah! Just let me have a glimpse of Paradise. I will not want anything after that".

So Allah will let him have a glimpse of Paradise but on spying it, he will say to Allah, "O Allah! You are the Most Merciful of those who show mercy! You have brought me to the gate of Paradise so now let me in by Your Grace and Favour." Allah will remind him, "I had told you already that you will not be sinere to your promise. Come now, while I have brought you upto here by My mercy so I will now let you enter it. I will grant you so much area in Paradise as is equal to the earth." He will exclaim, "You are the Most Merciful of all mercifuls but are you laughing at me? How am I entitled to that big on area of Paradise?" Allah will assure him that he was not being laughed at and that he was really getting that big area in Paradise.

Hadith of Continuous Biddahak (بالفحک)

It is reported in the *Hadith* that the Prophet ﷺ laughed as he narrated this *Hadith*. The Companions رضی اللہ عنہم who heard this *Hadith* also laughed when they narrated it to their students. Those students also laughed as they narrated it before their students. So everyone who had narrated this *Hadith* from the Prophet ﷺ down to this day has laughed while narrating it and those who listen to it also laugh. That is why this *Hadith* is known as *Hadith*

Musalsal Biddahak (*Hadith* of continued laughing).

Paradise equal to the Planet Earth:

That was the story of the man who will be the last to enter Paradise. We may imagine what those enjoying ranks higher than him will get when this man, the last entrant into Paradise, gets a portion of it that is equal to the earth. The truth is that we are on earth and have no idea of what that world will be like and so cannot imagine the expanse of that world. Therefore, we are surprised that a man could get anything equal to the area of the earth and what he would do with it. We get these doubts because we have no inkling of the next world.

Example of the next World

Our example in relation to the next world is like a child in its mother's womb. The child has no idea of the outside world so it cannot guess its size and it does not suppose there is anything beyond its mother's womb. When it is born, however, it learns that its mother's womb was nothing compared to the world. May Allah show us the next world with His pleasure. We will then know what it is and how spacious it is. We will know that it is created for the Believers.

Paradise is for the Believers

Mawlana Doctor Abdul Hayyi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ used to say, "*Al-Hamud lillah,* Paradise is prepared for the Believers. It is readied for those who have believed. If you believe in Allah then be sure that it is created for you. Of course, you will have to do something to get to it and to overcome the obstacles on its path. If you do that then, *Insha Allah*, Paradise is yours and is readied for you. May Allah be

merciful and kind to us and grant everyone of us Paradise. *Aameen.*

The thought of the Hereafter in the mind of Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہم

Sa'id Bin Musayyib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was an esteemed Taba'i (epigone) and a high-ranking Wali (friend of Allah). He was a pupil of Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہم. He recalls that once on a Friday he went with his teacher, Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہم, to a market because the latter had to buy somethings. When they had bought what they wanted and were returning from the market, Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ said to him, "I pray that Allah bring the two of us together in a market of Paradise."observe the greatness of the Companionos رضی اللہ عنہم that they refer to the Hereafter on the smallest pretext and refresh their minds with its thought so that they do not get involved in the business of this world and forget the next. He was occupied in a worldly task in the market buying something but made the supplication in the presence of his student.

Markets in Paradise

Sayyidina Sa'id bin Musayyib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ said that he asked Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ whether there will be market places in Paradise because he had heard that everything will be available in Paradise free of charge while in markets, things were bought and sold. Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ confirmed that there would be markets in Paradise. He said that he had heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say, "A market will be opened for the inhabitants of Paradise every Friday." The prophet ﷺ then gave the details and said, when the inhabitants of Paradise enter Paradise and arrive at their respective

places they will live happily and luxuriously. They will enjoy so many blessings that they will not think of going any where else from their station. Suddenly, they will hear a call, 'All dwellers of Paradise are invited to emerge from their respective places towards the market. So they will move towards it. They will find a market with such unique merchandise that they had never seen before. Shops will be adorned with these wares but there will be no buying and selling. It will announced that whatever ware a dweller of Paradise desired, he may pick it up and take it away. The inhabitants of Paradise will go through the market from one end to the other and look at the display, each unique, and if anyone wished for anything, he would pick up that thing and carry it along.

The court of Allah in Paradise

When the shopping will be over, an announcement will be made, all the people will assemble in the court of Allah. It will be announced, 'It is the day that was a Friday when you lived on earth and you people used to get out of your homes to offer the Friday Prayer at one place together. So, instead of the Friday assembly, you are granted this assembly in Paradise. The court of Allah is assembled and you are invited there. "So, all the dwellers of Paradise will assemble there. A chair will be laid for everyone over there. Some will have a chair of pearls. Some a chair of gold, some a chair jewels, and some a chair of silver. The chairs will be according to their ranks in Paradise; the more high a person's rank, the more splendid his chair. They will be made to sit on these chairs. Each one of them will regard his chair so excellent that he will not crave for another's chair because the concept of grief and longing will be unknown to them in

Paradise. They will not long for the better. For the humblest of the dwellers of Paradise there will be mounds of musk and camphor around the chairs and they will sit on these mounds. When all of them will be seated, the Divine Court will commence its proceedings. Sayyidina Jibril عليه السلام (who will blow the trumpet on the Day of Resurrection) will be asked by Allah to sing His praises and he will do it in such a melodious voice that the melody and music of all the world will be nothing in comparison.

It will rain musk and saffron

After the hymn, clouds will cover up the sky and it will seem as though it is about to rain. All of the inhabtants of Paradise will look towards the clouds when they will be sprinkled with musk and saffron from the clouds spreading fragrance in the assembly. No one will have had smelled such a fragrance before nor imagined it.

Then a wind will blow at the Command of Allah and everyone will feel fresh and active so that in doing so, he will get more beautiful. His countenance and his head will be much more beautiful than before. Everyone will then be given the drinks of Paradise. These drinks will be such as cannot be compared to any drink of this world.

The greatest blessing of Paradise - The Vision of Allah

Then Allah will ask: "O dwellers of Paradise! Tell me have you received all that I had promised to give you if you believed and did good deeds on earth. Or is anything unreceived as yet?" They will say with one voice, 'What greater blessing may we wish for after all that you have given us. You have fulfilled all Your promises. We have

received the reward against our deeds. We have received all the favours and we cannot think of any other favour besides and we have all the luxuries we could wish for. What other blessing could there be?" But, the Ulama will be helpful to the people here again. The people will ask the Ulama to advise them if any blessing could yet be had and they will let them know that they yet have to receive a favour and they must ask Allah for His Vision. So, all the dwellers of Paradise will say to Allah with one voice. "O Allah! We yet have to receive a great blessing. We yet have to see you." Allah will tell them that they indeed had to receive that favour, and they will then see Him. Allah will let every inhabitant of Paradise see Him and all of them will realise that every benefit that they had before that was insignificant compared to the Vision of Allah. There could not be a greater favour. After that the proceedings will come to an end and everyone will return to his respective place.

Increase in beauty

When the inhabitants of Paradise return to their dwellings, their wives and *Houris* will exlaim, "What is it that has happened today that you have come back with more excellent beauty than you had when you had gone." They will say in reply, "We find you more beautiful than you were when we left you." The Prophet ﷺ has said that both of them will increase in beauty because of the pleasant wind that Allah will blow.

In short, this was a brief account of the assembly on Friday and the Vision of Allah in Paradise. Allah will grant this to His slaves through His mercy. May Allah grant it to all of us. *Aameen.*

The blessings of Paradise cannot be imagined

The truth, however, is that one cannot describe or draw a pen picture of the conditions in Paradise in a correct manner. A *Hadith* Qudsi reproduces the words of Allah:

اعددت لعبادى الصالحين مالا عين رات ولا اذن سمعت ولا خطر على قلب بشر

I have prepared for My upright slaves what eye has not seen and ear not heard, nor has it occurred to the human heart. (Bukhari and Muslim)

The Ulma tell us that although the names of the blessings of Paradise will be similar to those in this world yet they will be different and beyond our imagination and perception. We will come across the same fruit, like pomegranate, dates etc. but we do not know what pomegranate or dates they will be.

We are also told that there will be neighbourhoods in Paradise. Sitting here in this world, we have an idea of the neighbourhoods as we know them but we cannot say what they are in Paradise. In the same way, we are told that there will be rivers of wine, milk and honey and we do not think much of that because we imagine them as we know them in this world but we cannot really perceive them as they are in Paradise.

Fear and grief will be unknown in Paradise

The greatest of the bounties of Paradise that we cannot even hope for on earth and no man can imagine a life without these things is that there will be no fear and no grief. There will not be any grief over the past nor fear for the future. This is a bounty that can never be received on earth. Allah has made the world such that no happiness can be perfect and no luxury complete and unimpaired.

There is sorrow with happiness and difficulty with every luxury. For example, when one eats food there is always the possibility of indigestion from over-eating, or over indulging in a pleasant drink may have its repurcussions. There is always fear that one may face a difficulty, a sorrow or pain. But Allah has kept Paradise free from grief, pain and apprehension. There will be no regrets in Paradise that a desire remained unfulfilled because every desire will be achieved there.

A glimpse of those blessings

We know from a *Hadith* that every desire of the people of Paradise will be accomplished. For instance, if anyone there wishes for a juice, he will not have to work for that or prepare it but he will have the juice before him the moment he wishes. Allah has let us see glimpses of some of the blessings of Paradise right here in this world. When the bounties of Paradise were described in earlier days, it was not very easy to picture them. People thought of them as imaginary and found it difficult to believe in them. Today Allah has let us have a glimpse of that. Man with his limited intelligence and experience has done something which a hundred years ago was unimaginable. If anyone was told of that then, he would have thought the informer was mad. As little as twenty years ago no one would have believed that a letter could be transmitted to a distant land in a minute because even by an aeroplane a letter could not be delivered from Pakistan to the U.S. in less than twenty hours. Allah let us realise this through the telex and fax. When man with his limited capacity can achieve this, then Allah with His perfect power and complete mercy can surely let man have such means whereby he can get what he wishes for at the very moment

he thinks of it.

Paradise is for the God-fearing

The point is that man only believes when he has the facts before him. But the Holy Prophets عليهم السلام were blessed with the knowledge which no one in the world had and they have conveyed to us definite information about the bounties of Paradise and told us that there cannot be more definite news than that. Therefore, their reports are all true. Paradise is a reality and its blessings are real. Allah has said about them:

وَسَارِعُوْٓا اِلٰى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمٰوٰتُ وَالْاَرْضُ اُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِيْنَ (سورة ال عمران: ۱۳۳)

And vie with one another, hastening to attain forgiveness from your Lord, and to the Garden whose breadth is as the heavens and the earth, prepared for the God-fearing.(Al Imran, 3:133)

The God-fearing are the rightenous, who fear Allah and obey Him.

Paradise is encompassed by forms of hardship

However, the Paradise which is great and whose bounties are great is a place about which the Prophet ﷺ has said:

ان الجنة حفت بالمكاره

"Surely, Paradise is surrounded by disliked things".

That is, Allah has encompassed Paradise by such things which seem to be unpleasant to man and he dislikes them. For example, a glorious palace is surrounded by a fence of thorns; to enter it one has to go over the fence and unless one does so the luxuries of the palace cannot be

enjoyed. Thus, Allah has surrounded Paradise with a fence made up of various duties and obligations (called *fard* and *wajib*) which a man finds burdensome. For instance, he has to give up his work to go to the mosque to offer prayers, or there are many things he would like to do but they are forbidden and sinful. He has to keep his gaze lowered and not to look at stranger women, not watch film, and so on. These things are difficult for him to keep away from. He wishes to do certain things but he is disallowed from doing them. This is the thorny fence around Paradise. To backbite is also disallowed and so a fence again. To gain access to Paradise one must get over the fence otherwise it is impossible to get there. This is the way with Allah.

Hell is surrounded by desires

The same *Hadith* has this first clause :

حجبت النار بالشهوات

Allah has placed a fence of base desires around Hell. Beautiful things and attractive, tempting desires surround Hell. A man is tempted to go towards these things. But, it has Fire inside.

The thorny fence becomes rosy

As we have seen, Allah has placed a thorny fence around Paradise but Allah has made it such that if anyone braves it with determination then it turns into flowers. As long as one sees the fence from a distance it seems to be thorny and it will seem so as long as one thinks of them as such-and it will appear difficult to get over. However, once anyone shows determination in crossing over the fence, and going over to the other side where the garden

is, then Allah turns the thorns into flowers for him.

The sacrifice offered by a Companion

A Companion was participating in Jihad and he found that the enemy had attacked the Muslim force with full strength and there seemed to be no way of safety from them. Suddenly these words came on his tongue:

غدا نلقى الاحبة محمدا و صحبه

"The time has come for us to meet our dear ones, Muhammad ﷺ and his Companions" (In the Hereafter). At a time when they were surrounded by fire and blood, death was all around and it was not easy to give up one's life, this Companion was happy to give up his life in the fight. We are told in a *Hadith* that when a warrior in the cause of Allah attains *Shahadah* (martyrdom), he does not undergo the travails of death not even to the extent of the feeling an ant-bite. It was actually the thorny fence surrounding Paradise which he had to go over and when he was determined to return his life to Allah, Allah turned it into flowers.

جان دی دی ہوئی اسی کی تھی

حق تو یہ ہے کہ حق ادا نہ ہوا

The life that you gave was given by Him.

The truth is that you have not given His right to Him.

If anyone dies on one's bed, may be he had to go through severe pangs of death but Allah has made the death from killing as simple as the bite of an ant.

Tolerate the taunts

So, the thorns look like that from afar but if anyone makes up his mind and goes forward with determination, Allah turns the thorns into flowers. But, the trouble is that

we fear we will have to undergo much stress and listen to people call us orthodox and ridicule us. But, these are the thorns, and the fence that delays us from approaching Paradise is made up of such obstacles too. If we tell these people only once that although we may be orthodox and backward yet we are those who look towards the *sunnah* of Sayyidina Muhammad ﷺ then the thorns will become flowers for us.

It is the Religious-minded who are really respected

It is with Allah that in this very life, He causes those who criticise to cease criticising and He causes them to respect those who obey Allah and the Prophet Muahmmad ﷺ. Even in the times of the Holy Prophet ﷺ the hypocrites claimed to be honourable and called the Muslims debased and they asserted that when they go to Madinah they would drive out the Muslims from there. Thus, they ridiculed the Mulims as debased. Allah said about them :

وَلِلّٰهِ الْعِزَّةُ وَلِرَسُوْلِهٖ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَلٰكِنَّ الْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ

And might belongs to Allah, and to His Messenger and the Believers, but the hypocrites know not. (Al-Munafiqun, 63:8)

Worship will bring pleasure

It is true that there are thorns around Paradise but they are really trials. When one approaches them, Allah turns them into flowers. These very obligations which one finds difficult to meet become then a source of happiness and one is drawn towards worship instinctively. Thus, we have the saying of the Prophet ﷺ قرة عينى فى الصلوة "I find the

coolness of my eyes in prayer." In other words, "though prayer is a form of worship, Allah has given me pleasure in it which overshadows every worldly pleasure."

The difficulty faced in fighting sin

In the same way, one certainly finds it difficult to forgo sin. It requires great determination. In spite of that if anyone convinces himself that he is giving up sin for the sake of Allah and that he forgoes his desires for the pleasure of Allah though he might undergo untold self-control, yet he will find pleasure in the end in overcoming his desires. He gets pleasure in fighting sin if he does it for the sake of Allah.

Why does a mother face suffering for her child

Imagine it is a cold, wintery night. A mother is cuddled with her child in a warm blanket when it urinates. She does not mind the weather but casts the blanket aside and changes the clothes of her child, washes the bed covers in cold water and gets the child to sleep again. In fact she gets pleasure in doing these things for her child although these things are not easy to do otherwise. If anyone were to suggest to the woman that if she gave away her child she would save herself the trouble, she would certainly say that she was ready to suffer much more trouble for the sake of her child but she was not prepared to give it away. Why should she say so? It is because she loves her child and she can go through graver hardship for her love, and she would draw pleasure from it. In the same way, if a person loves Allah, he is prepared to give up his desires and he gets more pleasure through giving up his desires than he would have had in getting them.

Think of paradise and the Hereafter

The holy Prophet ﷺ has enumerated the blessings and bounties available in Paradise and the Qur'an has described them throughout its passages. They have been enumerated and described that man may try to get them and that he may overcome the thorny fence surrounding it. Therefore, our religious mentors have prescribed a method to achieve them by imagining the blessings and thinking about them. Mawlana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has said, "Every Muslim must sit down every day for a while and think about the Hereafter and let his imagination picture life particularly in Paradise. He must imagine, death and burial in the grave: "People have buried me and return to their homes. I am in the *Barzakh* (the life in the grave before the Hereafter), then it is the Hereafter, the reckoning takes place, the *sirat* is being crossed over, Paradise on one side and Hell on the other." He must then think of the bounties in Paradise, the punishment in Hell. Let him do it a little while every day." This is necessary because we are occupied in our worldly pursuits and neglect the thought of the next life. It is our belief that we have to die one day and there is a next life. It is not enough to believe, but we have to keep ourselves aware of that and prepare ourselves for that. It is the awareness and preparedness that prompts man to obedience and to shun sin. So, we must devote some time everyday to contemplate and picture ourselves in the next world.

If we think of the Hereafter occupied as we are in worldly pursuits, and ready ourselves for that life, we will be inclined to be obedient and to avoid sin. This was the

purpose of recounting the blessings of Paradise whose bounties are found mention in the Qur'an and *Hadith*. May Allah cause us to prepare ourselves for the next life. *Aameen!*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Introduction

On 14th March 1988, Mawlana Mufti Muhammad Taqi Uthmani مدظلهم spoke at the Jami' Masjid Haqqaniyah, Sahiwal, Sargodha after the 'Isha prayer. The occasion was the second great assembly of the *siyanatul Muslimeen*. The Mawlana is the teacher of *Hadith* at, and vice President of, Dar ul-Uloom, Karachi and Justice of the *Shari'ah* bench of the Supreme court of Pakistan.

He spoke on the subject of the "Thought of The Hereafter" and Hafiz Abdul Ghafur Tirmizi and Hafiz Ghulam Rasul, honorary workers of the Majlis were instrumental in getting the Mawlana's address printed (in Urdu).

Thought Of The Hereafter

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد !

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطٰن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

بَلْ تُؤْثِرُوْنَ الْحَيٰوةَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَّاَبْقٰى (سورة الاعلى: ١٧٠)

امنت بالله صدق الله مولانا العظيم وصدق رسوله النبى الكريم ونحن على ذلك من الشاهدين والشكرين والحمد لله رب العلمين

Praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and ask for His forgiveness. We believe in Him and place our trust in Him. And, we seek refuge in Allah from the evil of

our souls and mischievous deeds. He whom Allah guides there is no one to mislead him and He whom he leaves astray there is no one who can guide. And, we bear witness that there is no one worthy of worship except Allah, the One by Himself and the One who has no partner, and we bear witness that Sayyidina Muhammad is His slave and His Messenger. May Allah bless him and his family and companions and may He favour him and give him peace, a complete peace in abundance.

I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed devil. In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

"Nay, but you (O mankind) prefer the life of this world, while the Hereafter is better and more enduring." (Al-A'la 87:16-17)

I have believed in Allah, our Great Protector who has spoken the Truth and so has His Messenger, the noble Prophet, spoken the Truth, and we are over that grateful witness. All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

Our weakness

The verse that I have quoted is from *surah Al-A'la*. It is the distinction of the Qur'an that the smallest of its verses though few in words is deep in meaning. The smallest of its verse is enough to guide man all his life. and this is a small verse in which Allah tells man that although he prefers the life of this world, the Hereafter is better and more enduring.

In this verse Allah points out to the basic weakness of mankind.

It is a weakness that may cause destruction in every field of man's life. Allah named the weakness and its remedy too. He did all that in two small sentences. He showed the defect in man and He also showed how it is repaired. The first clause is:

بَلْ تُؤْثِرُوْنَ الْحَيٰوةَ الدُّنْيَا ۝ وَالْاٰخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَّاَبْقٰى (سورة الاعلى ۱۷۰)

"Nay, but you (O mankind) prefer the life of this world."

The basic weakness in man is that he gives preference to the life of this world in every field and in every affair. He thinks in the limited sphere of this life and he is always concerned with betterment, success and happiness in this life. Over what does he prefer this worldly life? It is over the life of the Hereafter after his death. This is his weakness and what is the cure?

Cure of the weakness

He must ponder over it a while. His thinking is restricted to the life of this world. He wishes to have a beautiful home, a lot of wealth, prestige, name and fame and high office. He does not distinguish between the lawful and the forbidden for the sake of these things and he also quarrels, fights and kills his fellow man to acquire these things. But, he does not consider how long this life will last. He does not realise how good the next life could be-better than this life and lasting.

No happiness is perfect

Man must know that no happiness of this life can be perfect. There is always sadness with happiness, or worry with grief is attached to happiness. A man may have delicious food before him and he may be hungry too but he has a worry on his mind so he loses his appetite. Similarly, there is no happiness in the world that can be perfect.

Man supposes that if he amasses large wealth, he will live peacefully and be content. Let him look around. Let him peep into the lives of millionaires. They may have prosperous businesses, large factories, a fleet of cars, palatial houses, a retinue of servants, in short, every means of comfort. But, sleep alludes them and they use sleeping pills to get a night's sleep.

They may lie on comfortable beds in luxurious, air-conditioned rooms but they cannot get sleep. In comparison a labourer or a farmer who lacks these luxuries lies down on his cot using his hands instead of a pillow and gets sleep at the very moment he lies down and wakes up after eight hours. Let man compare which of the two spends a better night, the millionaire or the labourer? Thus, it is the work of Allah that no pleasure in this world is perfect, no luxury unimpaired. Every happiness has with it a sorrow and every grief has with it a pleasure.

Three worlds

Allah has created three different worlds. In one of these, there is pure happiness, nothing but luxury, and taste of sadness is unknown there, sorrow is not found. That place is Paradise. It lacks grief and sorrow and has no room for worry and anxiety.

Another of the worlds created by Allah is the place

of sadness. It has nothing but sorrow and pain. There is worry all round and grief everywhere. Happiness is unknown there as is comfort lacking. It is Hell. May Allah be merciful to us and preserve us from it. *Aameen.*

The third of these three worlds is the earth. Here sorrow and happiness are mingled. We can find here sorrow as well as happiness. There is luxury here, comfort in abundance but also pain and difficulty. This world has both the things. Anyone who hopes to be safe here from grief and sorrow and for nothing to go against his wishes lives in a fool's paradise.

He cannot get these things in this life. Ordinary people aside, The noble Prophets عليهم السلام had to endure difficulties, pain and grief, and these people were the nearest to Allah!

If anyone were to receive only comfort and happiness in this world, then it would surely have been the most beloved of Allah, the Prophets عليهم السلام. But, they too had grief and they too faced difficulties. Rather, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

اشدالناس بلاء الانبياء ثم الامثل فالا مثل

"Of men, the severest of trials fall on the Prophets. Then on those who toe their line and then on those who are like them."

Thus, no happiness in this life is perfect and no pleasure either. Whatever happiness befalls one it is not enduring. No one knows if his happiness will last until the next moment. He could be without it after an hour, a day, a month, or a year. Neither happiness nor grief is prefect.

Happiness in the Hereafter will be Perfect

Allah has said that the life of the Hereafter is better which means it is perfect. Therefore, its luxuries are also perfect and its blessings are also perfect and the happiness there also perfect and enduring. It will never end. The bounties once received will be at the receiver's disposal for ever.

It is the synopsis of a *Hadith* that if anyone gets something to eat here in this life and he likes the food, he will eat it until he is satiated. After that, he will not be able to eat it even if he is induced to eat or is offered a prize if he does eat. He will dislike the food then. This is because he has reached the limits of his stomach and there is no possibility he can put in more. But there will be no such thing in the Hereafter. The taste for food will be lasting and perfect while the life of this world is not only worse it is also fleeting. In spite of that, man prefers this life and occupies himself day and night in its affairs neglecting the Hereafter.

If we ponder over this verse, we will see that Allah has shown us the cause of our weaknesses and the cure for that. What is the cause?

Death is certain

Nothing in this life is as certain and as agreed upon as the certainty of death and the consensus on it. There is nothing else more certain. It is such a thing that not only a Muslim but even an unbeliever agrees upon that some day he will die. No one has proposed so far that man will not die. There are men who deny the existence of God and there are those who do not believe in Him but there has not been anyone so far who denied that death is certain. The greatest of athiests, the staunchest of deniers of Allah

have not dared say that death is not certain. There is a difference of opinion in every other belief or idea but this is something on which all are agreed. Everyone subscribes to the fact that death is certain, that he will die. Everyone is also agreed that the time of death is unknown. There has been progress in scientific knowledge, man has travelled in space and been to the moon, he has invented the computer, built the robot but no scientist can say when a man will die.

Science and all knowledge have ceded on the question of the time of death. But, it is very surprising that in spite of the certainty of death and the ignorance of the time of death, man continues to ignore and neglect death. Let us all examine ourselves. Is it not that day in and day out each of us is occupied from the time we awaken to the time we go to sleep, we are in various worldly pursuits: business, employment, labour farming, and a variety of thoughts all about worldly pursuits. Does one ever concentrate on being buried and what will happen thereafter?

The case of the Saint Bahlul

There has passed a saint by the name of Bahlul. He was called *Bahlul Majzub*. He was a *majzub* (deranged in a benign way, presumably from an overpowering perception of Divine Reality; mad in some way but possesses an aura of sanctity-the Concise Encyclopaedia of Islam). His words were full of wisdom and that is why people called him Bahlul (the wise).

He lived in the times of Harun al Rashid. Sometimes. Harun al-Rashid laughed at him, and he had given standing instructions that whenever Bahtul Majzub wished to see him he should be allowed to walk in and not

be stopped. One day, he did come in directly to Harun al-Rashid as was his wont and the latter pulled his leg as was his habit. He had a staff in his hand which he gave to Bahlul saying, "I give it to you as a trust and ask you to pass it on to anyone you meet in this world who is a greater fool than you telling him that it is a gift from me." He meant to tell him that there was no one in the world more foolish than him (Bahlul). Bahlul kept the staff with him. Much time passed away, months and years went by. Harun al-Rashid fell ill and was bed ridden. His doctors disallowed him to get up from his bed.

Bahlul went to see him. He asked "Commanders of the Faithful, how are you?" He said, "Bahlul, what shall I say? I forsee a lengthy journey ahead." "Journey to what place O Commander of the Faithful?" "To the Hereafter." Bahlul asked, "So, how many of the forces have you sent there before hand, and what equipment?" Harun al-Rashid said, "Bahlul, what kind of words you utter? That is a journey where you do not send an equipment ahead nor any soldier or guard." He asked "Then tell me when will you come back?" "Again you talk nonsense. That is the journey to Hereafter. No one returns from there."

Bahlul then said, "O! It is a long journey from which no one returns and no force is sent ahead!" "Yes, Bahlul! That is such a journey." "Commander of the Faithful! I have got a trust placed by you with me for a long time. You had asked me to give it to anyone more foolish than myself and today I do not find one more entitled to the staff than you. I had observed that even when you undertook a small journey you sent an advance party to prepare the road ahead and set up stations for you, but now you will set foot on a long journey for which you have made no preparation although you will not return from there! So, I find only you more

foolish than I am. This staff is for you alone."

Harun al-Rashid wept on listening to this and said, "Bahlul I used to think of you as mad. But, I find none wiser than you."

Remember Death

It is a fact that we make huge preparations for an ordinary journey and talk a lot about that. However, as for the final journey of which we know beforehand and which we will undertake all of a sudden, we make no preplanning. We may wonder how things will progress without us-what will become of our families and our business? Yet we are not willing to think of that and make preparations beforehand. We shoulder so many funerals, lower our dear ones into the graves and throw dust on them but we suppose that we are not concerned with what has happened to them.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said,

"Frequently remember that which eliminates pleasures."

We must examine ourselves how much time we spend out of the twenty four hours in remembering death.

In short, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has told us in this *Hadith* that our fundamental weakness is that we neglect the Hereafter in our minds but have it before our eyes. We worry about this life all the time till all the difficulties of our lives will vanish. It is because our minds revolve round this life alone that every crime is committed, there is restlessness and corruption all over. Our minds do not look at the Hereafter. We play foul only that our lives may improve but we do not worry about what will happen after we die.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ led us to this thought and the examples of peace and contentment during his lifetime

were the result of this thinking. Everyone had the thought of Paradise in his mind and the standing before Allah. With such reflections whatever man does are pleasing to Allah and he does not waver.

An incident with Sayyidina Umar Faruq رضی اللہ عنہ

Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ was the second righteous Caliph and he ruled over half the world. The Greak Emperors like Chosroes stood in awe of him. He was once travelling somewhere and was dressed in ordinary clothes and no one could recognize him. As he travelled, he felt hungry and there were no restaurants or inns in transit in those days. However, he saw a shepherd tending sheep so he asked him for some milk to satisfy his hunger and charge him for it if he liked.

The shepherd said, "I would have fed you milk surely but the sheep do not belong to me. These are a trust with me and as long as I do not have the owner's permission I cannot give you the milk.

Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ was not only a Ruler but also a teacher and guardian. He looked after his people and examined them too. So, he put the shephered to test and suggested to him to sell him one of the sheep so that he may drink its milk and slaughter it if necessary while the shepherd may keep the agreed price. "When the owner asks, you may tell him that a wolf devoured it and he will believe you. This way you will stand to benefit and I will get the milk to drink and the sheep also."

As Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ finished speaking, the shepherd exclaimed loudly, "O man! Where then is Allah?" 'Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ said, "As long as people like you are found in this Ummah, it will continue to

prosper."

It is the thought of the Hereafter that persuaded the shepherd in the loneliness where he grazed sheep to remember that he will have to face Allah. If he had done wrong and agreed to sell the sheep then he might have earned some money but he would have had to answer for that in the Hereafter.

Another incident with Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ

It was the practice of Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ that he made rounds of the city at night. Once, on one of his rounds he stopped near a house where he overheard a mother and daughter speaking to one another. The mother said, "It is time to milk the cow but since it gives less milk these days you must add water to it." The daughter said, "Mother, I will not do that because the Commander of the Faithful has prohibited one from doing that."

The mother said, "He may have passed the order but he is not here at the moment. He must be sleeping now. He will never know if you added water to milk."

"Yes mother, he may not know. Yet the Amir of the Amir ul Mu'mineen does see us. If He does see us then how may I do what you say?

Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ heard this conversation. In the morning he enquired about the girl. He then called her and married her to his son. It is from this couple that later a Commander of the Faithful, Umar bin Abdul Aziz رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was born.

Thought of the Hereafter

This is the mind that knows that والاخرۃ خیر وابقی "the Hereafter is better and more enduring." When this thing is well grasped then the hand will not stretch to commit a

wrong. Everyone will do such things as lead to Paradise and shun those things that displease Allah.

This is the purpose of the verse. It wants us to know that our efforts are directed towards the furtherance of this world and it wants us to observe how many people die and are buried in their graves. One day, it is going to be our turn. What will happen inside the grave has been described by the Holy Prophet ﷺ and he has told us also what will happen after that. The Qur'an frequently tells us about the Hereafter and the *Ahadith* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ explain in detail what will happen in the Hereafter. This has been done so that we may prevail over the thought of the Hereafter, yet we do not set aside any time to ponder over it.

How may we develop this thought?

How is that we may suppress the desire for this life? How may we develop thought for the next life? How may we think on the same lines as the shepherd? How may we see as the young girl saw?

There is only one way for that. It is to join the company of one who has the Hereafter in mind and who fears the standing before Allah. We must adopt his company, keep ourselves with him, sit with him and listen to him. He will instill in us the reflection of the Hereafter.

It was this very companionship that changed the lives of the noble Companions رضی اللہ عنہم. They were the very ones who fought each other on flimsy worldly matters. They were those who fought a war for forty years over the young of a chicken. They had fought for the sake of wells, land, sheep and animals. They slit each other's throats for these petty things and they chased each other for these things. But, once they gained the company of the Holy Prophet ﷺ they gave up the worldly life to the extent

that they left their belongings in Makkah and migrated to Madinah bare handed.

The condition of the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم

The Ansar (Helpers) of Madinah offered half of their properties to the Muhajireen (migrators) from Makkah telling them that they were their brothers. But, the Muhajireen said that they would not take that. They said that they would work on their lands and were willing to accept a share in the produce. Where had their craving for the world gone?

Picture this scene. It is a battlefield. *Jihad* is in progress. Death is being witnessed. Someone recalls a *Hadith* that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said, "If anyone is martyred in the cause of Allah then he will grant him high ranks of Paradise." Someone asked, "Did the Messenger of Allah really say so?" The narrator confirms that indeed he had heard this with his own ears the Prophet ﷺ had said that and that he had remembered it, the enquiring Companion says, "Well, now it is forbidden for me to live without *Jihad*." He dashes among the enemies, sword in hand. An arrow pierces his chest and he sees blood spring out of it and exclaims فزت ورب الکعبہ "By the Lord of the Ka'bah, I am victorious, today!" (I have attained the goal!).

These were the people who had craved for the world and loved it but the company of the Holy Prophet ﷺ put the desire for the Hereafter in their hearts and minds.

The firm Faith of the Magicians

The Qur'an tells us about Sayyidina Musa علیہ السلام. When he invited Fir'awn (the Pharaoh) to believe, he showed him a sign by throwing his staff on the ground and it turned into a serpent. The Pharaoh ordered that his

magicians must be summoned to counter the miracle. Magicians were called from all over the country and told that they would compete with a great magician and they must defeat him by displaying their craft. The chosen magicians came and although they were among the closest to Fir'awn yet the terms were agreed upon

قَالُوْا لِفِرْعَوْنَ اَئِنَّ لَنَا لَاَجْرًا اِنْ كُنَّا نَحْنُ الْغٰلِبِيْنَ (الشعراء: ٤١)

They said to Fir'awn, "Will there be a reward for us if we should be the victors?" (Ash-Shu'ara, 26:41)

The time of the competition drew near. The magicians stood before Sayyidina Musa عليه السلام and threw down their ropes which turned into serpents moving about. Allah inspired Sayyidina Musa عليه السلام to throw down his staff and as he did it, it swallowed up all the serpents. The magicians knew their magic and they understood that what they had seen was not magic. They knew that he was a Messenger of Allah. As they believed in him and saw him, they benefited from the company of the Prophet. They said all in one voice:

قَالُوْٓا اٰمَنَّا بِرَبِّ هٰرُوْنَ وَمُوْسٰى (طه: ٧٠)

"We believe in the Lord of Musa and Harun." (Ta Ha, 20:70)

Fir'awn, who observed all this, said:

اٰمَنْتُمْ لَهٗ قَبْلَ اَنْ اٰذَنَ لَكُمْ

"Have you believed in him before I gave you leave." (Ta Ha, 20:71)

He then threatened them with dire punishment

لَاُقَطِّعَنَّ اَيْدِيَكُمْ وَاَرْجُلَكُمْ مِنْ خِلَافٍ وَّلَاُصَلِّبَنَّكُمْ فِيْ جُذُوْعِ النَّخْلِ وَلَتَعْلَمُنَّ اَيُّنَآ اَشَدُّ عَذَابًا وَّاَبْقٰى (طه: ٧١)

"So I will certainly cut off your hands and your

feet on opposite sides, and I will certainly crucify you upon the trunks of the palm-trees, and you will certainly know which of us is severer in chastisement and more abiding." (Ta Ha, 20:71)

These were the same magicians who had demanded and settled terms with Fir'awn before the competition and who had stood up against Sayyidina Musa عليه السلام, who no longer demanded their wages but were now faced with the hangman's noose. Fir'awn threatened to cut off their hands and feet. In spite of that they said:

قَالُوْا لَنْ نُّؤْثِرَكَ عَلٰى مَا جَآءَنَا مِنَ الْبَيِّنٰتِ وَالَّذِيْ فَطَرَنَا فَاقْضِ مَآ اَنْتَ قَاضٍ (سورة طه: ٧٢)

"We shall not prefer you over what has reached us of the clear proofs, nor over Him who has created us. So decree what you will (like to) decree." (Ta ha, 20:72)

"We cannot prefer you or your wealth and kingdom over the miracles we have seen and you can only decree concerning the life of this world." You may cut off our hands or feet, or you may send us to gallows-your decision will be limited to the life of this world but what we have seen concerns the Hereafter, the everlasting life.

This was the behaviour of a people who were overtaken by change in a moment-a little while ago they demanded wages but soon thereafter they were ready to go to the gallows. How was the change brought about? It was faith coupled with faithful company.

Advantages of good company

Therefore, when believing persons get the right company, it brings about a revolution in the hearts. It eliminates craving for the world and replaces it with the thought of the Hereafter. As this happens, the qualities of man are brought out and highlighted until then he is not a man but an animal. His only aim, until then, is to amass worldly favours even at the cost of human lives. There is no other way to derive human qualities except by thinking of the Hereafter and this is achieved only by keeping the company of those who reflect on the next life. The only way to be religious and to fill our lives with religion is to remain in the company of men devoted to Allah, who meditate on the Hereafter. Their company will inspire us to reflect on the next life. May Allah, through His mercy, grow this conduct in us and solve all our difficulties. *Aameen.*

The situation today

Today, we are faced with difficulties all round. There are the police, the courts and other forces to solve our difficulties, but these government offices do not move without being bribed. To fight that an anticorruption force is established. The result is that the rate of bribe is doubled because a new partner joins the bribe receivers. Does this mean that a force upon force, a check upon check, a supervisor over a supervisor should be established? Instead of bribery being eliminated, it would be increased. The reason is that those who are appointed to overlook have before them–like those whom they are to watch–the life of this world. All of them hope to better their lives–each wishes to have a better house, a better car, better clothes, and so on. I can assure you that without the fear of Allah

and without the fear of the day of reckoning, no amount of police force, anticorruption forces, law-enforcement men and courts can solve our problems. The U.S. is said to be the most civilized country, most educated, wealthiest, most advanced in science and technology, a centre of learning, their police is always alert and cannot be bribed, their police arrives within three minutes of being called–yet when I visited there I was advised not to wear my watch or keep much money with me. There is always a risk of someone snatching a watch or robbing you! To do that he may even kill his victim. The alert police is helpless! The courts and other government agencies are mere witnesses. On the one hand, they raise the American flag on the moon but their President admits that the biggest problem before them is to fight crime. Iqbal has said:

ڈھونڈنے والا ستاروں کی گزر گاہوں کا
اپنے افکار کی دنیا میں سفر کر نہ سکا

جس نے سورج کی شعاعوں کو گرفتار کیا
زندگی کی شب تاریک سحر کر نہ سکا

(The one who discovers the path of the stars, cannot Journey through his own thoughts. He who subdues the rays of the sun, cannot light the darkness of the night of his life.)

We observe this picture and will go on observing it. We will continue to observe it as long as we do not place our brow on the feet of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, as long as we do not follow his guidance and let the thought of the Hereafter overshadow our minds.

Our problems will never be solved no matter how many laws we enact or how many departments we set up to enforce the laws. The only solution is to sit with the men of

Allah, to listen to them and learn about the Hereafter from them.

May Allah cause us to realise the truth, to meditate on the Hereafter and to give up the race for the things of this world.

May Allah let us enjoy the company of pious, religious men, *Aameen!*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal
Karachi
Date : 30th March, 1997
Time : After 'Asr Prayers

Make other People Happy

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد !

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

عن عبدالله بن عمر رضى الله عنهما قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم احب الاعمال الى الله سرور يدخله على مسلم (المعجم الكبير، حديث نمبر: ١٣٦٤٦)

Praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him and ask Him for help. We seek forgiveness from Him and we believe in Him and place our trust

in Him. We seek His protection from the mischief of our souls and from our evil deeds. He whom Allah guides, no one can mislead and he whom He leaves astray, none can guide. We bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the one who has no partner and we bear witness that Sayyidina Muhammad is His Slave and Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family and his companions and may He favour him and give him peace, a complete peace in plenty.

Sayyidina Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has said: "The best of the deeds in the sight of Allah is to please the heart of a Muslim." (Al-Mu'ajjim al Kabir, Hadith # 13646)

Although the line of transmission of this hadith is weak, its text is supported by other Ahadith. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has emphasized in many of his Ahadith, sayings and deeds that it is very dear to Allah to make a believer happy.

Keep My Slaves happy

Maulana Doctor Abdul hayyi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ used to say that when a worshipper turns to Allah and expresses his love for Him then he seems to hear Allah tell him, "I am not going to meet you in this world but if you love me then you must love My slaves." Those who love Allah must love His creatures and the demand of that love is to make them happy and keep them happy.

To please anyone is like performing The Hajj Akbar

Our society goes to the extremes as far as this behaviour is concerned. We do not exercise moderation. On the one hand, there are some people who attach no importance to making another Muslim happy, nor do they know that it is a from of worship. If anyone pleases another Muslim, or any other person, Allah awards a very great reward for that but we do not realise it. Our elders have said:

دل بدست آور کہ حج اکبر است

"To take the heart of a Muslim in one's hand (that is, to please him) is like performing the great pilgrimage (Hajj Akbar)." It is not without reason that our elders have compared it to Hajj Akbar but it is because to please the heart of a Muslim is a deed liked by Allah.

The result of pleasing other people

If all of us were to obey the teachings of this hadith and each one of us were to make someone else happy then this world will be an example of Paradise. There will be no quarrel, no jealousy and no one will be hurt by another person. Therefore, we must make it a point to make someone else happy even if we have to undergo a little trouble. We must let him be comfortable and happy. The consequence of the little trouble we take will be a large reward in the Hereafter and it will be much pleasing to us then.

It is Sadaqah to meet someone happily

According to a hadith, the Prophet ﷺ has enumerated the different kinds of *sadaqah*. He has said of somethings that they were *sadaqah* (charity). To call

something *sadaqah*, is to say that the reward against that deed is equal to the reward against *sadaqah*. The final words of the Prophet ﷺ in the same Hadith are:

وان تلقى اخاك بوجه طلق

And if you meet your brother with a smiling face (that is *sadaqah*).

When we meet someone we must feel that he is happy on meeting us. The meeting must cool his heart and this is counted as *sadaqah*.

Therefore, those people who keep themselves aloof when they meet others are the ones who neglect the *Sunnah*. Those who are reserved do not observe the *Sunnah*. The *Sunnah* method is to meet a Muslim brother with happiness and to make him happy too.

Do not make anyone happy by Sinning

We saw people at one extreme who attach no significance to making anyone happy but there are some others at the other extreme who concede that it is a form of worship to please another Muslim and they do it even if they have to commit a sin for that. They will please him and go to the extent of doing something improper. They claim to observe the worship by pleasing someone else in this manner. This is to follow a wrong path because we must please other people in an approved and proper manner. If anyone pleases someone else in an unapproved and improper way then he is displeasing Allah by committing the sin in order to please that person; this is not a form of worship. If out of regard for him, someone sins to please him then he is not following religion and is not observing worship.

The case of the Poet Fayzi

Fayzi was a great poet and writer in the times of the Emperor Akbar. Once he was having his beard shaved at a barber's. Someone passed by and saw Fayzi having a shave, so he said to him:

آغا ریش ے تراشی

"Agha! Are you having your beard shaved?"

Fayzi replied:

بلے! ریش ے تراشم ولے دِلے کسے را نے خراشم

"Sure! I am having my beard shaved but I am not hurting anyone's heart."

He meant to say that he was concerned with what he did and he did not cause ill feelings to anyone else. However. By rebuking him that man had caused him ill feelings. That man said:

دلے کسے نمی خراشی ...ولے دلے رسول ﷺ ے خراشی

"Right, you are not hurting anyone else but you are hurting the heart of the Messenger ﷺ."

Men of Allah keep other people happy

So, it is with some people that they say, "We are making others happy and if we have to commit a sin we will not hesitate." How can they hope to make anyone happy by causing anger to Allah, by disobeying Him and by disregarding His command. It is not a worship that causes Allah to be displeased. The Hadith means to say that we must try to please a Muslim through lawful means. Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه explained this Hadith in these words:

"This is a practice like the natural habit of Sufis. "

The Sufis are regarded as friends of Allah. They

always think of pleasing every Muslim and this comes naturally to them. Anyone who visits them returns happy, never depressed. This is because they are inspired by Allah to observe the *Sunnah* to please the creatures of Allah.

Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه says further:

Do not involve in sin

"There is a condition attached to it. That is: *to give pleasure do not do evil yourself."*

It means that a man is engaged in giving pleasure to other's and making them happy but because of this he is engaged in evil, disobedience and sin; he must not do this.

The Maulana goes on to say:

"as is the way with those who say that their path is *sulah kul* (everything is right)."

Some people say they believe that 'everything is right' and they will never stop anyone who errs, will not call an evil 'evil' and will not condemn a wrong. This is not correct.

The Maulana says further:

Do not cease to command the approved

"Some people cease to command the approved and forbid the disreputable for this reason."

They fear that if they ask someone to offer prayers, he might be hurt or if they forbid someone else from doing wrong, he may not like it. And they say, "we should not cause ill feelings to anyone."

Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه says further:

"Have they not read the command in the Holy Qur'an:

وَلَاتَأْخُذْكُمْ بِهِمَا رَأْفَةٌ فِي دِيْنِ اللهِ

And let not tenderness for the twain seize you

in regard to the law of Allah" (An-Nur. 24:2)

If someone is disobeying the law of the religion and commits a sin then let not compassion for him stop you from censuring him.

Forbid the disreputable gently

However, we must use such an approach to forbid a wrong that causes the wrong doer a minimum of heart burning. We must not use a method that breaks his heart. Instead we must adopt a mild approach. We must be tender, loving, compassionate, well wishing and sincere. It must not be our aim to be spiteful. However, it is not correct to cease forbidding him for fear that he might feel hurt no matter how mild an approach because it is our first duty to please Allah even if it displeases the entire creation.

Therefore, both the extremes are wrong–to neglect altogether and to indulge even if one has to sin.

We must try to please a Muslim. Where the limits of Allah are concerned, and the forbidden and improper are touched, we must prefer to obey the commands of Allah whether the other person feels hurt or is happy. We must obey only Allah and His Messenger ﷺ and not care for anyone else. Nevertheless, we must do our best to adopt a mild and gentle approach.

May Allah cause us to do good. *Aameen!*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Jame' Masjid Baitul Mukarram
Gulshan-e-Iqbal
Karachi
Date : 30th March, 1997
Time : After 'Asr Prayers

Dispositions Differ allow For Varying Natures

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيأت اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد !

عن ابى ذرالغفارى رضى الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم خالقوا الناس باخلاقهم اوكما قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم (اتحاف السادة المتقين، ٦: ٣٥٤)

Praise belongs to Allah. We praise Him, seek His help and ask Him for forgiveness. We believe in Him and trust in Him. We seek the

protection of Allah from the mischief of our souls and from our evil deeds. He whom Allah guides, no one can mislead and he whom He leaves astray no one can guide. And, we bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the One, who has no partner and we bear witness that Sayyidina Muhammad is His Slave and Messenger. May Allah bless him and his family and his companions and may He favour him and give him peace, a complete and abundant peace.

It is reported by Abu Zarr al-Ghifari رضی اللہ عنہ that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Deal with people according to their disposition."

It is also part of religion that a man allows for the temperament of those people whom he come across. He must not do anything that offends them even if what he wishes to do is proper and not forbidden. He must refrain from doing this because it is against the temperament of the other person who might feel uneasy otherwise.

According to social manners as taught by religion *allowances for the temperament of people* is an important chapter. May Allah elevate the rank of Maulana Thanavi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ who explained and highlighted this chapter as a *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Allowance for the temperament of Sayyidina Uthman رضی اللہ عنہ

Thus, we learn from a *Hadith* that once the Holy Prophet ﷺ was sitting in his home. He had a *tahband* (a sheet of cloth) on his waist down and it was raised rather high upto his knees, according to a version. Perhaps, this may have happened before the knee was included in the

prescribed *satr* (The portion that must be covered before other people). Some versions tell us that the knees were covered.

Someone knocked at the door. It was Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ and the Prophet ﷺ gave his permission to him to enter the house. He came in and sat down with the Prophet ﷺ who did not alter his posture but remained seated as he had been, his legs were uncovered. After a while there was another knock and it was Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ. He too was asked to enter and he sat down with the Prophet ﷺ who continued to sit as he had been making no changes in his position. There was a third knock after some time. "Who is it"? It was Sayyidina Uthman رضی اللہ عنہ. The Prophet ﷺ immediately covered his legs lowering the *tahband* over them and then said that he may be allowed in. So, he too came in and sat down.

Even the Angels are modest

Someone had observed all this and he asked' "Messenger of Allah, when Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ came in you did not lower your *tahband* but remained seated as you were. You did the same thing when Umar رضی اللہ عنہ came in but when Uthman رضی اللہ عنہ came in, you changed your posture. Why is that?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "Why should I not be modest before a man, before whom the angels also show modesty?"

Perfect in modesty and Faith

The peculiar characteristic of Sayyidina Uthman رضی اللہ عنہ was modesty. Allah had granted him a very high station in this characteristic. He was known as *Kamil ul-Haya wal-Eiman* (Perfect in modesty and faith). The Prophet ﷺ was aware of the temperament of all his

Companions and he knew that Sayyidina Uthman رضی اللہ عنہ was extremely modest. It was not improper to have the legs uncovered upto the knees and that is why he did not cover his legs when Sayyidina Abu bakr رضی اللہ عنہ came and later when Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ came, but when Sayyidina Uthman رضی اللہ عنہ came he covered up his legs as he knew that he would feel uneasy because he was very modest. The Prophet ﷺ covered his legs before Sayyidina Uthman رضی اللہ عنہ was asked to enter.

The Prophet ﷺ allowed for the temperament of his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم who were ever prepared to lay down their lives on a mere hint from him. Suppose the Prophet ﷺ had not stirred when Sayyidina Uthman رضی اللہ عنہ had come and remained in the same condition as he was, he would not have raised an objection but the Prophet ﷺ meant to teach us that we must accommodate those with whom we are acquainted. We must make allowance for their temperament. How careful was the Prophet ﷺ in this regard!

Care for the temperament of Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ

Once Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ presented himself before the Holy Prophet ﷺ and he said to him, "Umar, I have seen a surprising dream tonight. I saw Paradise and a very splendid Palace therein. I asked to whom the Palace belonged and was told that it belonged to you. It appealed to me so much that I wished to enter it and see what the Palace of Umar was like but then, O Umar, I remembered your sense of honour. Allah has granted you with a great sense of honour. I felt that it was not in keeping with Umar's sense of honour to enter it and see it before he does it himself. So, I did not enter it." As Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ heard it, he began to weep and said:

اوعليك يا رسول الله اغار

"O Messenger of Allah! Will I do that for you? Will I not like that you enter the Palace before me?"

Consideration for every Companion

This shows that the Holy Prophet ﷺ cared for the temperament of his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم in a very particular manner. He never felt that he was their leader and they his followers, their mentor and they his disciples, their teacher and they his pupils so he could overlook on this point. Rather, he was considerate for the temperament of each of his Companions.

Consideration for the temperament of the Mothers of the Faithful Including Sayyidah Ayshah رضی اللہ عنہا

Once the Prophet ﷺ intended to seclude himself in I'tikaf (observed in the last ten days of Ramadan when one devotes oneself to meditation and worship in seclusion).

Sayyidah Ayshah رضی اللہ عنہا also said that she would like to observe *I'tikaf* with him. While it is not proper for women to observe it in a mosque, they must observe this in their homes, it was different with her because the door of her house opened into the mosque. She hoped to seclude herself next to the door and if the Holy Prophet ﷺ performed his *I'tikaf* next to the door within the mosque, she would not violate the veil. She could always enter her house when it became necessary and return to her place after attending to her needs without marring the sanctity of the *I'tikaf*. So, she sought the Prophet's ﷺ permission and got it.

However, on the 20th Ramadan the Prophet ﷺ had gone out somewhere and when he returned he found some tents raised in the Masjid Nabavi. He asked the people what they were for and was told that the Mothers of the Faithful had erected them. When they learnt that Sayyidah Ayshah رضی اللہ عنہا was observing the *I'tikaf*, the other wives of the Prophet ﷺ decided that they should also seize the opportunity to perform the auspicious worship. So, they got the tents erected for themselves to observe *I'tikaf* in those tents. The Holy Prophet ﷺ felt that the case of Sayyidah Ayshah رضی اللہ عنہا was different from the others because her house was attached to the Masjid Nabawi while the houses of his other wives were at some distance from the Masjid. If they also observed *I'tikaf* then they would have to travel to their homes and back, again and again and that might violate the veil. It was not thus proper for woman to observe the *I'tikaf* within the mosque. So, he said on seeing the tents,

البر یردن ؟

"Do these women hope to do some pious work?"

He meant to say that it was not piety that women seclude themselves in *I'tikaf* in a mosque.

I too will not observe *I'tikaf* this year

However, he had already given permission to Sayyidah Ayshah رضی اللہ عنہا to observe *I'tikaf*. The reason for giving the permission was very obvious. The same did not apply to his other wives. If he now allowed her to go ahead with the *I'tikaf* and disallowed his other wives, they would feel hurt that he had let her complete the *I'tikaf*. So, he asked Sayyidah Ayshah رضی اللہ عنہا to forgo the idea of

observing *I'tikaf*. Later, however, he felt that since he had permitted her earlier to observe *I'tikaf* next to the mosque, she would feel bad if the permission was withdrawn. Under the circumstances, he made it known that he would not himself observe *I'tikaf* that year.

Redemption of the *I'tikaf*

We have seen, therefore, that to give consideration to the temperament of the other Mothers of the Faithful, the Prophet ﷺ stopped Sayyidah Ayshah رضی اللہ عنہا from observing the *I'tikaf*. Then to allow for her temperament, he revoked his own decision to perform the *I'tikaf* himself although he had been doing it all his life during the month of Ramadan.

He gave up his regular practice merely to give regard to the temperament of Sayyidah Ayshah رضی اللہ عنہا. This was the first time in all his life that he did so and he redeemed it the following year by observing *I'tikaf* for twenty days instead of the usual ten.

This too is *Sunnah*

This behaviour of the Prophet ﷺ tells us how many concessions he offered to his juniors. Even in explaining a rule of *Shari'ah* he adopted a method that did not offend anyone. He explained the rule, behaved in accordance with its dictates and made sure that no one felt hurt. At the same time, he made it very clear that if a deed is not *fard* or *wajib* (degrees of obligatory duties) but merely *mustahab* (recommended) then one may postpone or forgo observance if it is likely to hurt someone. This behaviour is according to the *sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ.

The routine of Maulana Doctor Abdul Hayyi رحمة الله عليه

It was the practice of Maulana Doctor Abdul Hayyi رحمة الله عليه that every year throughout the month of Ramadan he observed *I'tikaf* between the 'Asr and Maghrib prayers. He spent the time reciting the Qur'an, remembering Allah through *Zikr*, glorification and supplications. If he had any time after that, he made a long supplication to Allah that ended with the time of *Iftar* (breaking of Fast) at Maghrib. He always advised those under his influence to do the same. In this way, a man could spend his time in the mosque, gain the excellence of *I'tikaf* and continue to observe his routine too. Finally, he could make a long supplication to Allah. This supplication is the essence of Ramadan because the day ends at that time and the moment of breaking Fast draws near when the worshipper seems to have lost strength. In such a situation, prayers are granted as they are made. The Maulana frequently asked those under his influence to follow this practice and many of them continue to observe it to this day.

Spend the time at home instead of at the mosque

Once, one of his disciples said to the Maulana, "Maulana! I followed your directions and spent my time between 'Asr and *Maghrib* at the mosque reciting the Qur'an, occupied in *Zikr* and glorifying Allah. One day my wife complained to me that while I was away from home all the day except this period between 'Asr and Maghrib, I had come to spend this time too away from home. She said that it was during this period that we could talk and have *Iftar* together which she missed ever since I had taken up the new practice. Maulana, now I am confused what I should do:

continue with what you have suggested or please my wife." Barely had he finished speaking when the Maulana said, "Do as your wife says. Spend the time at home. Recite as much of the Qur'an as you can and go through some of the routine, speak to your wife and have *Iftar* with her."

You will get a full reward for that

Then, the Maulana added, "The practice that I have suggested is at best a recommended procedure that is called *mustahab*. But, what your wife has said is included in her rights over you (her husband). You must keeping your self within limits, let her have enjoyment and contentment of heart. Sometimes, it is *wajib* on you (the hasband) to do so. Thus, if you omit the practice I have suggested in order to give your wife her rights, *Insha Allah*, you will not be deprived of the blessings of that practice too. This is because you have given up the practice to allow for her temperament and please her. *Insha Allah*, you will get the same reward that you would have received if you had continued with the practice.

Visiting the sick instead of observing *Zikr*

Mawlana Doctor Abdul Hayyi رحمة الله عليه spoke about a man who was given to observe routine practice of *Zikr* at a particular time when he sat alone by himself and indulged in the thinking of Allah. Once, someone in his family–his father, mother, wife, or a child suddenly fell ill. He could not then devote his time to his routine and had to look after the patient. As a result, he felt very bad about it because all his time was spent with the sick.

The Maulana said, "He must not feel bad about it because to look after the sick is also a form of worship."

Heed the demand of the moment

He goes on to say that religion is really the name for behaving in accordance with the demand of the time. "You must see what you are expected to do. At that time when there was illness in the family it was expected of you that you give up your devotional exercises and nurse the sick. Likewise, while looking after the sick, do not feel deprived of the *Zikr* and remembrance that you were used to do because Allah does not deprive anyone and you have suspended that exercise for a valid reason."

Will not be deprived of blessings of Ramadan

In the same way, Maulana Doctor Abdul Hayyi رحمة الله عليه spoke about a person who becomes ill during the month of Ramadan or goes on a journey. He cannot Fast because of that reason so he is required to redeem the Fasts he missed after Ramadan when he recovers from his illness or returns from his journey. When he redeems the Fasts, the day he keeps the Fast will be as though it is Ramadan for him. He will get the same blessings that are associated with Ramadan. Allah had allowed him to postpone Fasting because he had a valid reason and it does not go with the mercy of Allah to deprive him of the blessings of Ramadan.

Therefore, if anyone suspends his regular devotional exercises for a valid reason then, *Insha Allah*, he will continue to receive its blessings and favours. So, to behave according to the needs of the moment is to observe religion. Let it not be that he says that he set aside a particular time to recite the Qur'an or to observe any other form of worship and so will not attend to the dying or the sick. Such behaviour is contrary to religion. Religious conduct is to behave according to the dictates of time and to attend to one's duties.

Do not compell anyone unnecessarily

Therefore, we must allow for variations in temperament and when dealing with anyone we must see that our conduct does not hurt him. This conduct is an important part of social education although it is not heeded now-a-days. For instance, if someone is not prepared to do something and we compell him to do it and he agrees to it under compulsion then the poor fellow undergoes much inconvenience because of our insistence. It is possible, we may have sinned in this manner.

How to recommend

Recommendation is very common these days. If we have some relations with anyone then we take it for granted that he will recommend us to someone while this verse of the Qur'an is very clear on that:

مَنْ يَّشْفَعْ شَفَعَةً حَسَنَةً يَكُنْ لَّهٗ نَصِيْبٌ مِّنْهَا

Whosoever intercedes with good intercession,
his shall be a share of it. (An-Nisa 4:85)

There is great virtue in making a good recommendation, in interceding for a good cause. However, people do forget that a recommendation is virtuous when it is not a burden on the one to whom it is made. If anyone makes a recommendation for a person, he allows for the disposition of this person and pleases him. But, he does not allow for the temperament of the man to whom he recommends. That man will be in a dilemma, not knowing whether to accede to the recommendation coming from an important person or observing his own principles in this regard; if he does not accept the recommendation he fears he might hurt the person who brought him. So, this is not recommendation; it is a pressure. We must keep in mind the

disposition of the other person before making a recommendation.

Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه had a way to make recommendations. He would add to his recommending words, "If this thing is not against your principles and procedure, then you may oblige this man." Sometimes, he also added these words, "If it is against your procedure and you do not do it then I will not mind it in the least." He wrote these words that the person to whom the recommendation was sent need not feel compelled.

Someone visited me and on the basis of our ties he told me that he wanted me to do something, I asked him what it was? He said, "First you must promise that you will do it for me." I told him that I can only promise after I know what I have to do. But he insisted that I must assure him that I will do what he wants before knowing what it is. I asked him, "Suppose that task is beyond me, what shall I do then?" He said, "The task is within your ability." I again asked him to let me know what the task was, but he harped on the same string that I must first promise him that I will do what he wants me to do before knowing it.

I tried to explain to him that a promise can only be made after knowing the nature of the task and not before that. He said, "If you refuse to do as I say then it is against our mutual relationship."

Is that the correct approach? It is the same as applying pressure on someone and insisting that unless he promises to oblige he will not be told what he has to do. Thus, it has become part of our relationships that we intercede for them although it is contrary to the Islamic social etiquettes. It places someone under mental agony and to do that is sinful.

Ties have become customary

In the present times, ties have become mere custom. If one meets the custom then he is said to be upholding demands of relationship. If he does not follow custom then he is guilty of not maintaining the ties. For instance, if anyone invites another man then the invitee must accept the invitation and oblige the inviter even if he has to go a long way and face great difficulty. His circumstances and engagements may not allow him but he is expected to accept the invitation.

The invitation of Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه

Maulana Idris Kandhalwi رحمة الله عليه was an esteemed religious leader. He was one of the close childhood friends of my father, Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه. Once when he came to Karachi from Lahore, he visited the Dar-ul-Uloom to meet my father. The time when he had come was not anywhere near lunch time. My respected father was much pleased with his arrival and he received him very warm heartedly. As the time of his departure drew near, my respected father said "Brother, Maulana Idris! I wish very much that we have lunch together but you stay very far and you have very little time with you. You are going away tomorrow. Now, if I insist that you have lunch with me then that will not be an invitation but an ordeal for you. You do not have enough time and it would cost you at least four to five hours to come all the way here from your lodgings. This will be very troublesome to you. So, I do not invite you although I long to invite you, since I cannot let you go without inviting you, hence I wish to make a small gift to you. The money that I would have spent on inviting you, I present to you as a gift." Maulana Idris رحمة الله عليه took

the gift and placed it on his head saying, "This is a great blessing for me. Honestly, I too wished to have a meal with you and come here for that but I do not have enough time on hand. You have helped me find a way out!"

Ponder over it. If my father had invited him to lunch or dinner, he would have presented an excuse. Then, if my father had insisted that he should come to him, he would have had to spend about five hours for that, and as a result, he would have been unable to attend to the work he had come from Lahore to accomplish. This would not have been an invitation, but an ordeal.

'Love' is to provide comfort to the 'Beloved'

These customs have not only ruined our society today but they have also distanced us from the fine points of religion. Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه has said something very opt and proper. If we get it into our hearts, Allah will cause all our difficulties to be solved. He said, "*Love* is the name of providing relief to the *beloved.* " One does see that he whom one loves gets all the comforts. It is not love to impose oneself over the beloved and satisfy one's own wishes. If the lover is senseless and foolish then his love will cause hardship to his beloved. However, the respected Maulana رحمة الله عليه proposes that it is senseless to suppose that love can cause hardship and "if you love someone then do not make things difficult for your beloved but make them easy and give relief. You will have to forgo your desires and you must give relief."

Whatever is being said is an explanation of the saying of the Holy Prophet ﷺ:

خالقوا الناس باخلاقهم

"Deal with people according to their

disposition."

When we go to deal with someone, we must first examine what his temperament is. We must weigh whether he will be burdened with what we have to do with him. Will he be put to inconvenience? We cannot get these things into ourselves unless we let ourselves have the company of pious men, of religious mentors and eminent elders. This is my personal experience. Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه trained his disciples in his *Khanqah* (recluse) how they may allow for variations in temperament of different people. He kept an eye on every action of his disciples and he taught them how they should conduct themselves on different occasions and in different situations.

This *Hadith* was the last of the *Ahadith* on social etiquettes and it tells of the basic points of all rules and all etiquettes. It calls on us to ensure that we do not cause inconvenience through our conduct to anyone. We must be careful about that and pay heed to this behaviour. Before we do anything, we must ensure that our performance does not cause hardship to anyone. We must make allowances for the temperament of other people.

Jigar Muradabadi was a noted poet. He too had the honour to be in the company of Maulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه. He has said something very useful and if we adopt that poem as our guiding principle then it is a summary of the entire social etiquettes of Islam. He has said:

اس نفع و ضرر کی دنیا میں یہ ہم نے لیا ہے درس جنوں
اپنا تو زیاں منظور سہی اوروں کا زیاں منظور نہیں

In this life of gain and loss, we have learnt this lesson. We may endure pain and inconvenience to ourselves, but we cannot

tolerate harm or inconvenience to others.

He means to say that we cannot hope for everything to go as we choose in this world. We must be prepared to make a sacrifice with ourselves and endure if things take a turn against our interests and we must endure difficulties. But, we should not be the cause of financial, physical, mental or psychological loss to anyone.

This is what religion teaches. This is the essence of social manners. May Allah help me and all of you to behave accordingly. *Aameen!*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين

Venue : Sermon delivered at Jami' Masjid
Bait Ul Mukarram
Date: After 'Asr Prayers

CURE FOR WORRIES

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا

اما بعد !

عن عبد اللهبن ابى اَوفىٰ رضى اللهعنه قال قال رسول اللهﷺ :

من كانت له الى الله حاجة او الى احد من بنى آدم فليتوضأ وليحسن الوضوء ثم ليصل ركعتين ثم ليثن على الله تبارك وتعالىٰ وليصل على النبى ﷺ ثم ليقل " لا الٰه الا الله الحكيم الكريم سبحان الله رب العرش العظيم الحمد لله رب العلمين اسألك موجبات رحمتك وعزائم مغفرتك والغنيمة من كل بر والسَّلامة من كل اثم لا تدع لنا ذنباً الا غفرته ولا هما الا فرجته ولا حاجة هى لك رضى الا قضيتها يا ارحم الرحمين "

(ترمذى ، كتاب الصلوٰة ، باب ما جاء فى صلوٰة الحاجة)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in

Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is no one to misguide whom Allah guides and there is no one to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah Alone. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our authority, our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah have mercy on him, his household and on his Companions and bless them and send peace on them in great abundance.

INTRODUCTORY WORDS

This Hadith is narrated by Abdullah bin Abu Aufa رضى الله عنه who was a jurist companion of the Prophetﷺ. He quotes the Messenger of Allah ﷺ as saying. "If anyone needs something from Allah, or from a fellow man then he must first perform ablution punctiliously and offer two rakat prayer[1]. Then he should praise and glorify Allah and invocate blessings on the Prophet ﷺ[2]. Then he must make a supplication in these words:

" لا اله الا الله الحكيم الكريم سبحان الله رب العرش العظيم الحمد لله رب العلمين اسألك موجبات رحمتك وعزائم مغفرتك والغنيمة من كل بر والسلامة من كل اثم لا تدع لنا ذنباً الا غفرته ولا هما الا فرجته ولا حاجة هى لك رضى الا قضيتها يا ارحم الرحمين "

There is no one worthy of worship except Allah, the element, the Bountiful. Glory be to Allah,

1. Rakat is plural of rakat, a unit of prayer. Prayer is used for *salah*, (Namaz in Urdu).
2 Known as *durood* in urdu but *salah* on the Prophetﷺ, in Arabic.

Lord of the Magnificent. Throne! I do seek all causes of the (grant of) Your mercy, and the purposes of (securing) Your forgiveness, a full share of all virtuous deeds, a safety from every sin. Leave none of our sins unforgiven, no anxiety unrelieved and no need, wherewith you are pleased, unfulfilled. O you, the Most merciful of those who show mercy!"

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has described the method of a prayer which in common parlance is called *Salah Al Hajah* or 'prayer for fulfilment of a need' whenever a Muslim has a need or faces an anxiety or desires something which seems difficult to achieve then he must follow the advice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and offer the *salah Al Hajah,* and make the supplication of his Hajah, then he may present his need or desire before Allah in his own words. If there is good for him in that, the merciful Allah will surely fulfil his Hajah, or need. Thus, it is the *sunnah,* (practice) of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to offer the *Salah Al-Hajah,* at the time of need.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A MUSLIM AND A DISBELIEVER

When a man needs something. He employs the worldly means available to him and there is no bar in *Shariah* to use such means. However, a Muslim and a disbeliever differ in their faith, for an unbeliever relies wholly on the means he employs to achieve his end.

SEEKING A JOB

Let us take the example of a man who is unemployed and tries to get himself an employment. He would look out for job opportunities and submit his

applications there and he would request someone to recommend him. These are the apparent means that he uses to achieve his objective. An unbeliever places all his reliance on these means and sees to it that his application is well written and the recommendation worthy.

On the other hand, a muslim also sends in an application and gets someone to recommend him in a proper way but he does not rely entirely on these means. He knows that his application and the recommendation are meaningless unless Allah makes them effective. He uses the means available and then begs of Allah and says to Him, "O Allah! It is your command, so I have adopted the means but only you can make them effective. I ask you alone to fulfil my desire."

THE CONTRIVANCE OF THE SICK

Let us take another example. A person gets sick. The apparent means that he will adopt are to get the advice of a doctor and follow his prescription. Again, a disbeliever who does not believe in Allah will place reliance on the doctor and the medicine he has suggested. However, the advice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to a believer is that although he may adopt all the means available to him yet he must not depend on them to cure him. He must place his faith in Allah who is the one to cure. If he will not make the medicine and other means effective then these will not cure him. We know that a medicine cures a sick person but the same medicine is detrimental to another patient who suffers the same sickness as the first. This is because only Allah makes the medicine effective. If he wills, he may put cure in a pinch of dust, and if he wills he may render the most costly medicine inefficacious.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught us, as we have seen, that while we may employ the means, we must not count on them to help us out but we must have full faith in Allah. We must pray to Him:

> "O Allah! I have done the best I could by contriving as I could. O Allah! Only You can give efficay to my efforts. Only You can make me successful. O Allah! Make them efficacious and make me successful."

EFFORT COMBINED WITH SUPPLICATION

A very appropriate and brief phrase of supplication is known from the Holy Prophet ﷺ which he made after employing available means or even if those means were in the form or even if those means were in the form of supplications.

اَللّٰهم هـذا الـجـهد و عـلـيـك التُّـكلان (ترمذی ابواب الدعوات باب نمبر ۳۰)

> "O Allah! This is the effort but reliance is placed in You alone"

VIEW POINT MUST BE CORRECTED

Mawlana Doctor Abdul Hayy رحمة الله عليه used to say that religion is actually to correct one's angle of observation. Change the angle a little bit and that is religion, otherwise it is materialism. For instance, every religion requires a patient; to get treatment; even Islam tells us that if we are ill, we must get a doctor to treat us. However, it depends on how we observe it. While we must treat ourselves when we are unwell, we must not put faith on the treatment but we must trust in Allah to cure us.

HE IS THE CURER

This is what had prompted earlier Muslim physicians to write هوالشافی [1] on the prescriptions they wrote down. It is a practice of the Muslim. In those times, they were very careful to observe minutest details of Islamic belief and teachings in all their actions and in what they said. A physician when he begins to write down his prescription with هوالشافی, actually confides that the treatment he prescribes would not give the results unless the one who cures gives the cure. The believing doctor thus confesses his inability on the very first step. Besides, by writing هوالشافی he is also credited with an act of worship of Allah.

THE CURES OF WESTERN CULTURE

However, ever since we have imposed on ourselves the standards of western culture, we have forgotten our Islamic identity. The physician, today, does not trouble himself to write the words بسم الله (In the Name of Allah) before writing down the prescription, neither does he need to write هوالشافی. He examines his patient and prescribes the medicine. The reasons for this attitude is that our knowledge of science is taught to us by the unbelievers who have no concept of Allah as the one who cures. They rely on the medical means and their theories, and they only employ their ideas.

PROTECTING ISLAMIC VALUES

Allah has not disallowed us to acquire knowledge of science. Knowledge is not the property of any people or religion. Muslims too must learn science, but they must

1. Huwa Ash shafi, He is the one to cure.

preserve the Islamic values and symbols. They must prote protect their faith and creed and reflect Islamic belief in their lives. A man who qualifies as a physician is not forbidden to begin writing the prescription with هوالشافی and it is not improper for him to concede that Allah is the only one who cures. He should also not fear being classed as a backward person if he writes هوالشافی on the prescription, neither is it against medical ethics to do so. Rather, he must realise that he is a Muslim doctor who believes in Allah, so he must make it known beforehand that whatever he does is not helpful if Allah does not make it efficacious.

ANYTHING AGAINST A PLAN IS COINCEDENCE!

Almost every day recognised physicians come across cases which go against their expectations. They concede that the treatment that they were giving to their patients brought results quite contrary to what they had expected. Their plans go haywire but they term what happens in this way as a 'coincidence.'

NOTHING IS EVER COINCIDENTAL

My respected father, Mawalana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه used to say, "It is wrong to say - as people often exclaim - that it was a coincidence because nothing in this world was a coincidence." Everything happens, as Allah desires it to happen. It is our habit to describe anything that we do not expect as a coincidence. The fact is that He who is the Master and the Creator of this universe maintains and sustains it and every thing happens as He wishes. Nothing can happen against His wish. So, the truth is that the medicine has no curing power by

itself. Only when Allah gives it that power does it provide relief but when He does not give it the curing ability. It is not advantageous. What then is the meaning of "coincidence?"

REMEMBER THE PREPARER OF MEANS

We must not , therefore, count on our strategy or the means available to us but we must put faith in *Musabbib al Asbab*[1]. Not only has He allowed us to plan and employ means but He has actually ordered us to use them. He is the one Who has created them for us. He examines us and sees whether we depend on our plans and the means available to us. Or we depend on their Creator, too. The Prophet ﷺ had trained the companions رضی الله عنهم in such a way that they always counted on the *Musabbib Al-Asbab*. They used the means only because Allah had commanded them to do so and when anyone evinces perfect faith in Him and unflinching reliance. He displays unique miracles to them.

KHALID BIN WALID TAKES POISON

Sayyidina Khalid bin Walid رضی الله عنه had once laid siege to a strong fort in Syria. When the people inside the fort had grown exhausted of the siege, they sent their chief to Khalid bin Walid رضی الله عنه to negotiate peace. He carried a small phial in his hands which Khalid bin Walid رضی الله عنه observed and asked him about its contents. He said that there was a very strong poison inside the phial and he would consume it and commit suicide if the talks failed for he could not return to his people with the bad news.

1. *Musabbib Al-asbab* is an epithet of Allah which means Appointer or Preparer of Means or causes, or causer of causes. (Lane's Dictionary)

The foremost aim of all the Companions رضی الله عنهم was to preach Islam and Khalid bin Walid found an ideal opportunity to further the objective. He asked the chief of the enemy, "Are you confident that you will die immediately you swallow the poison?" He replied, "I am sure of that. This poison is so strong that no one has so far described its taste because the moment anyone sips it, he dies. He does not live long enough after that to say how it tastes. So, I am very sure that I will die immediately after I put it on my tongue".

Khalid bin Walid رضی الله عنه requested him to let him have the vial. Taking it into his hands he remarked, "Nothing in this world is efficacious unless Allah provides it with efficacy" He took the name of Allah and made this supplication:

بِسْمِ اللهِ الَّذِیْ لاَ یَضُرُّ مَعْ اِسْمِهٖ شَیْئٌ فِی الْاَرْضِ وَلَا فِی السَّمَآءِ وَهُوَ السَّمِیْعُ الْعَلِیْمُ

"In the name of Allah with which nothing on earth or in the heaven can harm. And he is All hearing, All-knowing".

And he said, "I swallow this poison and you observe whether I die or not. "The chieftain exclaimed, "You are tormenting yourself. The poison is so strong and rapid that if a little of it is placed on the tongue. The man will perish, while you intend to swallow all lof it. "Sayyidina Khalid bin Walid said, "*Insha Allah*[1], nothing will happen to me. "So saying he washed down his throat the contents of the vial and Allah revealed His Power. The chieftain observed the miracle of Allah's Power and submitted himself before Allah, that is, he embraced Islam.

1. *Insha Allah*: if Allah wills.

EVERYTHING DEPENDS ON THE WILL OF ALLAH

The companions رضی اللہ عنہم had a firm belief that whatever happened in this world happened because Allah willed it to happen. Nothing happens without His will. They had grown such a strong faith that the means and strategies were meaningless in their eyes. When any one shows this degree of faith then Allah lets him observe. His marvelous Power. It is the way of Allah: "the more you depend on the means and agencies, the more He will leave you tied to them, and the more you rely on Him the more He will relieve you of those things and show you the marvels of His Power". "The lives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his companions رضی اللہ عنہم were a practical demonstration of this fact.

AN INCIDENT IN THE LIFE OF THE PROPHET ﷺ

Once the Prophet ﷺ had returned from a battle and had broken journey in transit. There, he rested himself in the shade of a tree and no one was with him. An unbeliever happened to find him alone and with his sword drawn he stood over the Prophet ﷺ head, he said, "O Muhammad who will save you from me today? " He had imagined that the Prophet ﷺ would be alarmed on seeing him with the sword and finding no one around. But, there was no sign of alarm on the Prophet's countenance and he replied calmly. "Allah! He will save me". The unbeliever was taken aback and Allah caused him to be overwhelmed by the Prophet's composure. His hands shook and the sword fell down from his hand. The Prophet ﷺ picked it up and asked him, "Tell me now, who will protect you?"

In this way, the Prophet ﷺ let him realise that

while he relied on his sword, the Prophet relied on the Maker of the sword who provides it with its potency. It was this way of life that the Prophet ﷺ presented before his companions رضی اللہ عنہم. The result was that every companion although he employed the means available to him yet relied on Allah.

MEANS BEFORE RELIANCE

One of the companions asked the Prophet ﷺ, Messenger of Allah! I go to the forest on my camel. When the time of prayer approaches, should I tether the animal or leave it to itself, placing trust in Allah? The Prophet ﷺ said:

اِعْقِلْ سَاقَهَا وَتَوَكَّلْ

"Tie its legs with a rope and trust in Allah."

Once, the animal is tied, rely on Allah and not on the rope which might snap. Mawlana Roomi has expressed this idea in his poetry.

با توکل پایۂ اُشتر ببند

That is bind the legs of the camle on *tawakkal*[1] A believing man, therefore, adopts available means as well as placing reliance on Allah. He uses the means and says to Allah:

اللهم هذا الجهد وعليك التكلان

"O Allah! I have adopted the means and put in the efforts as far as I could but beyond that I trust in You."

1. *Tawakkal* is reliance (on Allah)

RELY EVEN WHEN THE MEANS ARE AVAILABLE

Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanavi رحمة الله عليه used to say, "People suppose that one relies on Allah only when the chances of his wish being fulfilled through apparent means are equal either way - he might or might not get what he wants. In that case, he may adopt the means and pray to Allah. But, they imagine that when anyone is confident of getting what he wants then he need not pray to Allah for his wishes or rely on Him. For instance, when food is laid before anyone, he is sure that he would eat that and so he does not pray to Allah to feed him and he does not rely on Him."

THAT IS THE REAL TIME TO RELY ON ALLAH

However, Mawlana Thanvi رحمة الله عليه has said that was the real time to place reliance on Allah and the true opportunity to pray to Him. Such an attitude will confirm that he does not rely on apparent means that are within his grasp. He would seem to be saying, "I have faith in You as a Sustainer and Nourisher, as a Creator and in Your Power and Mercy. "When food is before anyone, he should make this supplication, "O Allah! Feed me and give me health through it". For, although it seems possible to consume food easily yet it will be possible to eat it only if Allah so wills. There have been innumerable instances of men who were about to partake of food before them but failed to do so because of one or other obstacle or accident. So, even when food is ready one must pray to Allah to feed him.

In short one must always pray to Allah to help him out even if it seemed obvious what he would get what he wants.

ASK ALLAH TO FAVOUR IN EITHER CASE

We have read the words of the Prophet ﷺ in the every first *hadith* "If you need something from Allah or from a fellow man". There are times when there is no intermediary and we get something from Allah directly, children, for instance. Be that as it may, whether we require something from Allah or from a fellow man, we must ask Allah for it, in either case.

PERFORM ABLUITION PUNCTILIOUSLY

If we have enough time with us and that task we desire is not very urgent then we must offer *Salah Al Hajah,* for that. The Prophet ﷺ has instructed us to perform ablution, and perform it very carefully paying attention to every detail. We must not perform ablution merely to discharge an obligation but we must realize that it is the first step to an important form of worship. The Prophet ﷺ has recommended certain etiquette's and *sunnah*, procedures in ablution which we must take care of. Often, we perform ablution in a hurry and although the obligation is discharged, we miss the blessings that accrue from a carefully performed ablution.

SINS ARE OBLITERATED THROUGH ABLUTION

We learn from a *Hadith* that the Prophet ﷺ said, "When a servant of Allah performs ablution and washes his face, the sins committed by him through the face are washed away. When he washes his right hand, the sins committed by him with his right hand are washed away and when he washes the left hand his sins with the left hand are washed

away. Similarly on washing the other limbs, his minor sins perpetrated by that limb are washed away".

My mentor, Mawlana Doctor Abdul Hayy رحمة الله عليه used to say, "When you perform ablution, imagine to yourself: I am washing my face and the sins attached to it are washed away according to the glad tidings of the Prophetﷺ. I wash my hands now and their sins are obliterated. Imagine in the same manner when you wipe your head and then wash the feet. There is a gulf of a difference between an oblution performed in this manner and one which is performed without such imagination. You will sense the blessings of the former kind."

SUPPLICATIONS DURING ABLUTION

Anyway, we must perform ablution very carefully and observe its *sunnah* and etiquettes. For instance, we must sit facing the *Qiblah,* wash each limb three times carefully, and make the recommended supplications during ablution.

اللّٰهم اغفرلی ذنبی ووسع لی فی داری وبارك لی فی ما رزقتنی (ترمذی، کتاب الدعوات، باب دعاء یقال فی اللیل)

"O Allah, forgive me my sins and make my home spacious for me and bless what you provide me of sustenance.

اشهد ان لا اله الا الله واشهد ان محمدا عبده ورسوله

I bear witness that there is no God but Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad ﷺ is the warshipper and His Messanger.

اللهم اجعلنی من التوابین واجعلنی من المتطهرین (ترمذی، کتاب الطهارة، باب فیما یقال بعد الوضوء)

"O Allah, cause me to be among those who

repent and cause one to be among those who purify themselves."

NO SET PATTERN FOR *SALAH AL-HAJAH*

The Prophetﷺis then quoted in the *hadith* as advising us to offer two *rak at* prayer called *Salah Al-Hajah*, which is no different than any other prayer in observation. Some people have suggested methods of observing it and prescribed *surah*, that should be recited in different *rakaat*, but this is no more than their own innovation. The Prophet ﷺ has not prescribed any distinct method of its observation or any *surah,* to be recited.

Nevertheless, some of our righteous elders have suggested from their experience that certain chapters *(surah)* of the Quran produce extra blessings. But, we must not consider that as *sunnah,* and follow it because if we adopt it as *sunnah*, then we will be guilty of innovating a practice. Thus although Mawlana Doctor Abdul Hayy suggested *surah Al-Inshirah*, for the first *rak`at* and *Az`Zilzal* for the second yet he made it clear that it was not *sunnah*, to do so it was only the experience of elders that they are more beneficial. If anyone recites these chapters without believing that to be *sunnah,* or he recites any other chapter then he is not violating the *sunnah.*

In short, there is no special procedure to offer the *Salah Al Hajah*, and one may begin it by forming an intention.

THE INTENTION

It is common notion these days that the intention differs from prayer to prayer and unless particular words are repeated the prayer is not valid. This is why they ask

often how they may form an intention for each prayer. They regard the intention as part of the prayer. It must be understood that intention is not repetition of a set of words, but it is the resolve in the heart to offer prayers. When anyone goes out of his home to offer the *Zuhr*, (afternoon) prayers, for instance. Then that is his intention, and when he prepares to offer the *Salah Al Hajah,* then that is his intention. To repeat the words by the tongue is neither *Wajib*, (obligatory) nor *sunnah,* or *mustahabb*, at the most one can say is that it is allowed to do so. Thus, not only is there any particular procedure to offer the *Salah Al Hajah*, there is also no prescribed intention to be repeated.

PRAISE AND GLORIFICATION

After the two rak`at are offered, we must make a supplication. The Prophetﷺ, has taught us the etiquettes of making a supplication. It is not that the supplication is made straightway after completing the prayers. We must first recount the praises of Allah and glorify Him,"O Allah! All praise belongs to You. Thanks are due to You and we are indebted to You for Your favours."

WHY PRAISE & GLORIFY HIM?

The question arises, why must we praise and glorify Allah? The scholars point out to us that when anyone presents, a petition to an authority in the world. he begins by lauding him in the hope that he would be pleased and approve his petition. Thus, when this is done for a mortal, it must also be done for the most just of the judges. "O Allah! Praise belongs to You. I am grateful to You for your favours. Grant me my wish!".

Another reason for praising Allah is that man is

selfish and a slave to his own desires. What he needs is all he thinks of and he asks Allah for that. There is the risk that he might become ungrateful and show that in his supplication. At that time, therefore, he must remember the blessings of Allah which have submerged him deeply.

Anyway, we have the advice of the Prophetﷺ that we must ask Allah to give us what we need. But before we ask Him, we must look about and see how many of His bounties He has showered upon us which we cannot count. We must acknowledge them before we present our supplication, "O Allah! I am grateful for Your bounties and favours, which you have bestowed on one through Your mercy. I praise You for that. I have one more need, one more desire! O Allah! Be bountiful to me and grant me my desire". This will offset possibility of our being ungrateful.

GRIEF AND DIFFICULTY IS ALSO A BLESSING

Haji Imdadullah Muhajir Makki رحمة الله عليه said to a gathering of his disciples that the sorrow, grief and hardships which a man encounters are - if he thinks about that - actually blessings of Allah. Sickness is a blessing from Allah and so is poverty and need. If man observes with an examining eye, he will realize that these things are blessings of Allah.

We are told in a *hadith* that when, on the day of judgement, Allah will reward without limit and without reckoning those people who were patient in the face of affliction then those who had not suffered much difficulty and hardship in the world would wish that their skins were peeled off with scissors in the world and they had endured that patiently. They would then have received the reward

which the patient would get on that day. So, the hardships are a blessing in disguise which our weak sights do not distinguish.

A STRANGE SUPPLICATION OF HAJI IMDADULLAH

When he was delivering this sermon, a handicapped man arrived in the assembly. The unfortunate man was afflicted with a number of maladies. He appealed to the honourable Mawlana to pray to Allah to relieve him of his affliction. Mawlana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه who was one of those who were listening to the sermon said that they were all surprised that while Haji Imdadullah رحمة الله عليه had spoken about the blessings of affliction this man asked him for his affliction to be removed. "If the mentor prays for the removal of his hardship, it would be tantamount to be asking for removal of blessings." But, the mentor raised his hands in prayer and made this supplication,"O Allah! These hardships and afflictions are truly blessings, but, O Allah, we are weak, look at our weakness and change this blessing of hardship into a blessing of health!"

RECALL BLESSINGS WHEN IN DIFFICULTY

It is the nature of man that when he is in difficulty, he forgets the bounties he enjoys. For instance, if he has a stomach-ache, he will complain loudly about it but will not be grateful for the blessings he enjoys for he has no difficulty with his eyes, his ears, his tongue, his teeth - nay, the entire body. He has only a stomach ache. He will surely pray for the pain to be removed but he should remember to praise and thank Allah before making the supplication, "O Allah! You have granted me

innumerable blessings. I am thankful to You for that. And, O Allah, there is this pain now. I beg of You to remove it."

GRATITUDE FOR FAVOURS

My respected father, Mawlana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه had a teacher, Mian Asghar Husayn رحمة الله عليه. He was a born *wali* (friend of Allah, a man of Allah). He was a very marvelous religious man. My respected father recalled an incident about him. "He was taken ill once, and had a fever. I paid him a sick-visit and found him burning with high temperature. He was restless because of the high fever. I greeted him and asked how he was. He replied, 'Praise be to Allah! My eyes are sound, my ears can hear well, my tongue is faultless. "And he recounted all things that were sound in him. He said that he only had fever and asked me to pray that Allah cure him of fever."" This is how a grateful slave of Allah remembers His favours even in difficulty and because of this attitude the pain mitigates.

THANKFULNESS FORBLESSINGS RECEIVED

Hence, the Prophet's ﷺ advice that we must praise and glorify Allah before we make our supplication means that we must recall His blessings on us that we continue to enjoy and we must thank Him for those.

INVOKING BLESSINGS ON THE PROPHET ﷺ

After we have offered praise to Allah, we must invocate blessings on His Messenger ﷺ. The wisdom in invocating the blessings is that the Prophet ﷺ is very compassionate and kind to his *Ummah* and he wishes that

the supplication of anyone of his people is not rejected. Of all the supplications, it is only the invoking of blessings on the Prophet ﷺ that is assured approval at all times. What do the words of invocation mean when we say:

اللهم صل على محمد و على ال محمد النبى الامى

They mean:

"O Allah, shower blessings on Muhammad and on the family of Muhammad, the unlettered Prophet."

There is no possibility of this prayer being rejected. Allah has given assurance of approving it. Mercy is already being showered on the Holy Prophet ﷺ and they continue to be showered so he is in no need of our efforts in this regard.

SUPPLICATION ACCEPTED WITH INVOCATION OF BLESSINGS

The Prophet ﷺ wishes that his people invocke blessings on him before they make their supplication. When the invocation of blessings will gain approval, the supplication of the person will also be approved. It is not expected of Allah that He grant a part of anyone's supplication and reject another. Hence, the supplication that is made after the invocation of blessings stands more chance of approval.

RECIPROCATE A GIFT

Mawlana Doctor Abdul Hayy رحمة الله عليه used to say that it was the life long practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that he reciprocated a gift in some way. Then, the invocation of blessings on him is also a gift. A *hadith* tells us that the Prophet ﷺ said:

"If anyone invokes blessings on me from a far off place, that blessing is brought to me. If anyone comes to my grave and offers one salutation and invokes blessings on me then I hear him.

The invocation is a gift of the person that the Prophet ﷺ receives. So, when it had always been the practice of the Prophet ﷺ to reciprocate a gift, it is hoped that when he receives the gift in the *Barzakh*[1] he will reciprocate as was his habit. It will be in the form of a supplication for the person concerned. He will pray to Allah to grant the person his desire. So, we must praise Allah and invoke blessings on His Prophet ﷺ before making our supplication.

WORDS OF THE SUPPLICATION

Then, the substance of the supplication begins with:

لا اله الا الله الحكيم الكريم

The names of Allah have within them tremendous glow and mysteries. Only Allah and His messenger know about them and we cannot fathom their secrets which Allah has concealed in them. Therefore, the Prophet ﷺ has not asked us to recite them without purpose, and we must repeat only those words to get what we want. They mean: "There is no one worthy of worship besides Allah, the Clement, the Bountiful. "The attributes of Allah - clemency and benevolence - are recounted as a confession from the supplicant that he is not worthy of getting his supplication approved by Allah because of the number of his sins and lapses but Allah Himself is Clement. He overlooks the sins when He judges and it is expected of

1. *Barzakh* : the intervening period between death and resurrection.

Him that he will forgive. Allah is also bountiful and benevolent. Not only will he forgive but He will also grant (blessing and favours). The supplicant, therefore, beseeches Allah on the basis of these two attributes.

He then says:

سبحن الله رب العرش العظيم

"Allah is without blemish, the Lord of the Great Throne."

والحمدلله رب العلمين

"And all praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds".

These were words of praise. He then makes the supplication:

اللهم اسئلك موجبات رحمتك

"I do seek all causes of the (grant of) Your mercy,

وعزائم مغفرتك

"and the purposes of (securing) Your forgiveness:

والغنيمة من كل بر

"a full share of all virtuous deeds:

والسلامة من كل اثم

"a safety from every sin"

لا تدع لنا ذنبا الا غفرته

"Leave none of our sins unforgiven,"

ولا هما الا فرجته

"No anxiety unrelieved"

ولا حاجة هى لك رضا الا قضيتها يا ارحم الرحمين

"and no need, wherewith You are pleased, unfulfilled. O You the Most Merciful of all"

This supplication can be found in books of supplications. Every Muslim must memorise it. After

making this supplication, the supplicant must present his petition in his own words. We hope Allah will grant him his request.

OFFER *SALAH AL-HAJAH*, FOR ALL NEEDS

A *Hadith*, tells us:

كان النبى اذا حزبه امر صلى (ابو داؤد، كتاب الصلوٰة باب وقت قيام النبى ﷺ من الليل)

The Prophet ﷺ, when he faced a worrying situation, would hurry, first of all, towards prayer. He offered the *Salah Al Hajah*, and made the supplication. "O Allah! There is this problem. Do remove it." Thus a Muslim must offer this prayer often.

IF THE TIME IS SHORT

The foregoing procedure is recommended when a person has enough time on hand to offer prayers and decide but if he is pressed for time and cannot offer the two rak`at, then he must only make the supplication and ask of Allah. Nevertheless, he must present all his needs before Allah, minor or major. The Prophet ﷺ has said, "Ask Allah for all your needs even for the thong of your sandal when it is cut." Thus, we must ask Allah for our major needs often. The fact is that something is minor or major in our perspective, the thong of the shoe is minor, Kingdom is major. But, in the sight of Allah, there is no difference and everything is minor. Our most major demand is small in His eyes ان الله على كل شيئ قدير (surely, Allah is Able to do all things). His ability, His power is uniform and nothing is difficult for Him.

OUR WORRIES AND OUR REACTION

Our city (Karachi) is going through difficult times these days. Every one is worried and restless. Almost every house faces a problem either directly or indirectly. In spite of that our position is that we only discuss the situation and comment on it. But, are there any among us who are really concerned and who turn to Allah and pray to Him to correct the situation? "O Allah! We are faced with difficulty. The consequences of our sins have overwhelmed us. O Allah! Be merciful to us and remove the worrying condition from us".

NO POINT IN COMMENTING

In 1971, East Pakistan was lost and Pakistani Muslims suffered an unparalleled disgrace. Ninety thousand of their army were taken captive. They surrendered arms before the Hindus. All Muslims were sad because of that. At that time, I had the honour to visit Mawlana Doctor Abdul Hayy رحمة الله عليه with my elder brother Mawlana Muffti Muhammad Rafi Usmani مدظله العالی. We found there that people who were present discussed the situation and passed comment blaming someone or other. When they had discussed the situation for some time. Mawlana Doctor Abdul Hayy رحمة الله عليه asked them if they had arrived at a decision. Did the discussion provide them any advantage in this world or the next?

INSTEAD, MAKE A SUPPLICATION

He said to them, "You could have spent the time making a supplication to Allah - O Allah! We face a difficulty because of our misdeeds. O Allah! Foregive us! Remove this difficulty from us! Remove the consequences of our misdeeds from us! Convert the ignominy into an

honourable situation - If you had made the supplication, it is not unexpected of Allah that He would have approved your petition. Even otherwise, you would have earned reward for making the supplication, and a blessing for the Hereafter. You only wasted your time."

It was then that we realised that we are involved in this wasteful behaviour every day. We only discuss and comment. We have forgotten to pray to Allah for our needs. How many of us can we count who turned to Allah and implored Him to remedy the situation, how many offered the *Salah Al Hajah,* the prayer for fulfilment of need, and petitioned Him:

"O Allah! I offer my prayers. Let your Mercy remove the punishment from us."

Perhaps, someone may have done that. Most of us are involved in commenting and in backbiting and slander. As a result, we are being more sinful.

TURN TO ALLAH

In such circumstances, we must all turn to Allah and make our supplications. If anyone has any means in his power and authority then he must employ that. If he does not have authority over the means then let him pray to Allah. That is within the ability of all of us. We are forgetting to turn to Allah. We must recall that when Pakistan was being created, there was much turmoil and mischief in the land. At that time, in every house in Deoband and other cities people recited the verses of the Quran *(the āyate Karimah)*[1] without any one having appealed to them to do so. Every Muslim did it on his own finding it necessary to do that. Women recited the

1. Noble verse: Lāilāha illā anta subhānaka inni kuntu min Az Zālimeen.

verses and made supplications within their homes, "O Allah! Let the Muslims come out of this difficulty!"

The result was that Allah rescued the Muslims from their predicament.

WE DO NOT OPEN OUR EYES

We see today turmoil in our city. Dead bodies lie before our eyes. But, we are unmoved. We do not turn to Allah. We do not know of people reciting the verses of the Quran within their homes or making supplications to Allah. On the contrary, dead bodies are every where, death is before us, but our Muslims are in their homes, ties down before their television sets.

Under the circumstances, are we not inviting punishment from Allah? We are unwilling to stop sinning, and reluctant to give up disobedient behaviour.

BE MERCIFUL TO YOURSELVES AND DO IT

For the sake of Allah, have mercy on yourselves. Turn to allah, every Muslim can do it. Let each of them offer two rak`at, prayer for the fulfilment of needs'. It will not take much time, say two minutes. Then, it will take another three minutes to make the supplication. Let us give these five minutes for our people, our nation and stand before Allah. If we cannot do that, why do we say that we are saddened by the situation?

Let us resolve to continue praying two raka`at *Salah Al Hajah,* and making supplication to Allah as long as this situation lasts. Further, let us be merciful to ourselves and remove the instruments of disobedience from our homes and save ourselves from sin. Let us stop disobedience and sin, and pray to Allah humbly weeping. Let us recite the noble verse of the Quran:

لا اله انت سبحنك انى كنت من الظلمين

O Allah, there is no god but You. You are without blemish. I have been of the wrong doers.

Let us, repeat again and again,

"O Peace" "يـا سـلام"

Instead of wasting our time on discussing the situation and commenting on it, let us turn to Allah.

May He grant us that ability! *Aameen*!

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

Venue : Sermon delivered at Jami' Masjid Bait ul Mukarram

Date: After 'Asr Prayers

HOW TO BEHAVE IN RAMADAN

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا

اما بعد !

فاعوذ با لله من الشيطن الرجيم ـ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِیْٓ اُنْزِلَ فِیْهِ الْقُرْاٰنُ هُدًی لِّلنَّاسِ وَ بَیِّنٰتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدٰی وَالْفُرْقَانِ ۚ فَمَنْ شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْیَصُمْهُ ؕ (سورة البقرة:۱۸۵)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is no one to

misguide whom Allah guides and there is no one to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah Alone. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our authority, our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah have mercy on him, his household and on his Companions and bless them and send peace on them in great abundance.

RAMADAN — A MONTH OF BLESSING

The month of Ramadan is a great blessing from Allah, the Exalted. We cannot realise the gravity of its blessings because we are occupied in worldly affairs all the time. We are engrossed in materalism day in and day out so we cannot comprehend the significance of the month. But, those whom Allah has blessed with His favours recognise the blessings and glow which Allah showers during the month and they truly value the month. When the Prophet ﷺ sighted the moon heralding Rajab, he would say:

اَللّٰهُمَّ بَارِكْ لَنَا فِيْ رَجَبَ وَ شَعْبَانَ وَ بَلِّغْنَا رَمَضَانَ

"O Allah bless us during Rajab and Sha'ban and cause us to see Rama'zan "

He meant to say ,"Prolong our lives that we may live through Ramazan" We must observe two months before the month of Ramazan, he began his watch for it, and showed eageraess who recognises the value of the month will make this supplication and wait for it.

SUPPLITCATION FOR LONGEVITY

This *Hadith* confirms that a man may pray to Allah to give him a long life if his intention is to spend it in a way that pleases Allah, so he may accumulate pious deeds for the next world .He may pray, "O Allah! Increase my life that I may live to seek Your pleasure and come to You as one entitled to receive Your pleasure ". However, some people pray to Allah to take them away from this world. The Prophet ﷺ has forbidden us to make such a supplication and he has said that we must not yearn to death. Some people pray for death hoping that they would be relieved from the problems the face in this world but, do they examine themselves and see what they have amassed for the next world? Have they ensured that they would find peace there? Rather, we must pray for security and for ability to spend the rest of or lives in a way that pleases Allah . *Aameen*

THE PROPHET'S SUPPLICATION FOR LIFE

The prophet ﷺ used to make this supplication:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَحْيِنِيْ مَا كَانَتِ الْحَيَاةُ خَيْرًا لِيْ وَتَوَفَّنِيْ اِذَا كَانَتِ الْوَفَاةُ خَيْرًا لِيْ (مسند احمد جلد ٣ صفحه ١٠٤)

"O Allah! Let me live as long as life is a blessing for me and cause me to die when death is good for me".

The fore - going prayer of the Prophet ﷺ automatically asks that we may live until Ramazan.

WHY WAIT FOR RAMAZAN?

The question arises why was the Prophet ﷺ anxious to live till Ramazan ? The answer is that Allah has said

about this month that Ramazan is His month. We are however, short - sighted and we only see the superficial that we will fast and offer *taraweeh* prayers during this month. The fact is whether we fast or offer *taraweeh*, or worship Allah in any other way, Allah has called it His month . He allows opportunity to those who have been slack in religion for eleven months of the year to gain nearness to Him in this month. It is as if He tells them ," you have strayed far away from Me . You were immeresed in worldly pursuits and were lost in negligence, We give you this one month. Come to Us . Spend it in the right way and you will receive nearness to Us "

WHY WAS MAN CREATED

Allah has created mankind that they should worship Him . He has said in the Qura'n.:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوْنِ ٥ (الذّٰريٰت، ٥٦:)

And I have not created the Jin and Mankind but to worship Me. (*Az-zariyat* 51:56)

That is they are cerated for only one purpose to worship Allah and that is why mankind was sent to earth.

ARE NOT ANGELS ENOUGH?

Some minds might wonder why should another species be be created to worship Allah when the angels were there already, the truth is that the angles are created solely for that purpose and they have no choice but to worship Allah. Their nature is moulded in that manner and they have no inclination to sin or disobey. Man is created with to sin and disobedience , and he is commanded to worship Allah. It is easy for the angels to worship Allah but man is commanded to save himself from disobedience

and sin, and control himself, and worship Allah.

TWO KINDS OF WORSHIP

We must stop here and understand two things because failure to comprehend them leads many to the wrong path. We are told that whatever a believer does is worship if his intention is sincere and he lives according to *sunnah*. In that case, every act of his is worship including eating and drinking, meeting others engaging in business and living with wife and children. Then, when he offers prayer that also is worship. Then, how to distinguish between two forms of worship. It is imperative that we understand the difference else we may stay on the wrong path.

FIRST TYPE, DIRECT WORSHIP

The difference lies in the fact that the worship of one kind is a direct worship whose objective is nothing more than obeying Allah . Examples are , *prayer, Fasting, zakah* remembrance of Allah *(zikr),* recital of Quran, charity, Hajj and Umrah. All these things are done exclusively for Allah and they are direct forms of worship.

THE SECOND TYPE, INDIRECT

In contrast, there are some deeds which are personal or worldly needs but Allah has assured the believer that if he does them sincerely with an honest intentin observing the limits of Allah and the *sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ then Allah will reward the believer in like manner to the first kind . This kind of worship is not a direct kind but an indirect worship.

TO MAKE A LAWFUL LIVING IS INDIRECT

If anyone earns livelihood to meet the rights of his wife and children and observes the limits of *shariah* with the intention of making a lawful living then Allah regards the effort as a worship. In its essence the effort is not worship; hence, this worship is of the second kind, an indirect worship.

DIRECT WORSHIP IS SUPERIOR

Obviously, direct worship is superior to indirect worship, thus when Allah has said that he created the jin and men to worship Him, He refers to the first kind of worship the direct one. He does not mean to include the second kind.

THE CASE OF A DOCTOR

A lady once told him about her hsusband who is a physician. She said," My husband runs a climic where he attends to the patiants . But he does not offer prayers at their proper time when he is in the clinic. When he returns home at night, he offer the missed prayers of three times all together. I advise him to offer them at their proper times when he is the clinic but he argues that there he attends to his patients and that is serivce to humanity while the prayers are his indindual concern; so he prefers the former over the latter." The womam asked me how she may convince him to offer prayers at the right time.

ONE IS NOT EXCUSED PRAYERS UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES

The fact is that her husband did not distinguish between the two kinds of worship. Prayer is a direct form

of worship. Allah has said that the warriors in a battle are not exempt from observing prayer even if the enemy is before them. It is another thing that the procedure is some what easier, but the obligation is not set aside.

Allah has said:

إِنَّ الصَّلٰوةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ كِتٰبًا مَّوْقُوْتًا۝

Surely the salah is prescribed for the believers at appointed times.(*an-Nisa*,4.103)

We know that there is no deed superior to *jihad* but the command is to observe prayer even during *Jihad.*

SERVICE TO HUMANITY IS THE SECOND TYPE

A patient who is unable to do anything is also not excused from offering prayer. He is commanded to pray even though he is allowed to sit down if he cannot stand or lie down if he cannot sit or simply pray through gestures. If he cannot perform ablution, he may preform *tayammum* (dry ablution.) Prayer is not forgiven, anyway, because it is a direct form of worship. The treatment that the said doctor metes out to his patients is , of course, service to humanity and a great kind of worship but it is of the second type and not direct worship. Hence, if anyone faces a choice between the two kinds, he must prefer the direct kind. The physician had not recognised the difference so he had misunderstood his option.

PRAYER IS MORE IMPORTANT

The physician must realise that if he has to, he leaves his patients for some time, like when he has to go to the toilet, or when he has to eat, so, he can also get up for prayers and it will not harm the patients much, for

prayer is more important than those other tasks. Of course, everything a believer does is worship if he has a pious intention but it is of the second type and second level . The first ranking worship includes prayer, fasting , Hajj, *zakah* remembrance of Allah and so on. These are the direct kind Man has been created for this kind of worship.

MAN IS PUT TO TRIAL

Allah has created man for worship and he examines him by giving him emotions of desires, potential of doing right and worng and an inclination to sin. He is examined to see whether he shuns those tendencies and turns to Allah or follows them to distract him.

THE COMMAND WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN CRUEL

Once we know that man was created to worship, we must realise that Allah could have commanded us to worship him all day and do nothing else. He may have allowed us a short interval to attend to urgent needs food in the afternoon and at nightfall. If that was the command, it would not have been cruel on us, because we are created for that purpose.

WE ARE MERCHANDISE DISPOSED OF

He has created us to worship him and he has also said:

إِنَّ اللّٰهَ اشْتَرٰى مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ اَنْفُسَهُمْ وَاَمْوَالَهُمْ بِاَنَّ لَهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ ع (التوبه: ١١١)

Surely Allah has bought from the believers their lives and riches for theirs shall be the garden (in return)*(At-Tawbah9:111)*

Thus our lives and possessions have been bought and the buyer has quoted a high price for them, Paradise. The width of that place is equal to the heaven and earth. Now, the buyer has a right to restrict us to worship alone allow us only a limited time to eat and drink enough to keep us alive. However this buyer has bought us and paid a high price yet returned our lives to us . He has allowed us to reap advantage from our lives as long as we live, we may eat, do business, work and attend to our needs and desires. The only demand is that we present ourselves before him five time a day, and there is a small other demand there are certain do's and dont's .

MAN HAS FORGOTTEN THE PURPOSE OF HIS CREATION

Allah, on his part, has allowed man to engage in business, labour, cultivation and so on . But, man, in his turn, lost himself in these pursuits to such an extent that he frogot why he was created. What was the purpose behind his crection?

Who has bought him? He is so engrossed in these occupations that he makes a lot of money and is occupied day and night in these things . Suppose if anyone does think of offering prayers, he goes to the mosque but his mind is elsewhere and hurries through the exercise. He hastens back to his occupation. Some times, he does not even go to the mosque, but offers his prayers at home. At other times, he misses the prayers altogather. The pursuits of the world overwhelm him.

PECULITARITIES OF WORSHIP

The peculiarity of worship is that it joins man with Allah in a relationship. It grows a link between them so

that man may draw near to Allah.

PECULIARITIES OF WORLDLY AFFAIRS

The peculiarity of worldly affairs is that even if one stays within proper limits he gradually becomes disobedient and move away from spiritualism.

When man is busy with worldly tasks for eleven months he is so conditoned with materialism, that the relationship that should have been established with Allah remains weak. He cannot attain the nearness.

THE MONTH OF MERCY

Allah , of course, knew that man will forget Him once he occupies himself in the affairs of the world . He will not pay as mcuh attention to worship as he will be immersed in his worldly pursuits. So, he said to man, "We will give you one more opportunity. Every year you will get one month . You will spend eleven months running after the material things and We will give you one month of mercy. If you come us in this one month, you will regain the lost spiritual blessings and you will again come near Us. We guide you in this months that the rust that has come over your heart you may remove and may you come out of negligence. You may take up Our remembrance." To obtain these things fasting is very important. The other forms of worship prescribed in this month are also helpful in achieving nearness to Allah. The aim of Allah is that those who have gone far away may regain nearness to Him.

REGAIN NEARNESS

Allah has said,

يٰـاَيُّهَاالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُوْنَ ٥ (سورة البقرة:١٨٣)

"O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as was prescribed for those before you that you may be God fearing. (al-baqarah.2..183)

It is as though Allah says: The eleven months that you have been spending away from Us have weakened your *taqwa* (fear of Alalh) You can regain that by fasting this months." So, it is not enough that we fast and offer *taraweeh* prayers but we must regain what we have lost in that past eleven months. We can do that by keeping ourselves attached to worship as much as possible right from the first day of Ramazan because we can do other things in the remaining eleven months. In the month of Ramazan, we must bring down the other tasks as much as we can. Let us keep this month aside for worship.

WELCOMING RAMADAN

My respected father Mawlana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه used to say that the way to welcome Ramadan is to review beforehond what work, or part of it , may be held in that task and devote oneself to worship in the time available.

WHY ANNUAL VACATIONS IN RAMADAN

The annual vactions in our religious institutions, known as Madrasah (p1. Madaris), commence from 15 th shaban and continue upto 15th shawwal when the new academic year begins. This has been the practice since a very long time and our elders have begun it. Some people

object to this and say that our ulama teach students to remain idle in the month of Ramadan while the companions رضی الله عنهم took part in *Jihad* and other work during Ramadan. They must know that if the need arises they may participate in *jihad* during Ramadan . In fact, the battle of badr was faught in Ramadan and Makkah was taken over in Ramadan. But when there is to be a time for vacation then why not in Ramadan so that more time may be devoted to worship.

Nevertheless, whatever is done in these Madaris all over the year is also religious, the Quran and *Hadith* are taught. *Fiqh* or Juristic science is taught. But that is all indirect worship and Allah wishes that in Ramadan, Muslims engage in direct worship. That is why our elders had set aside Ramadan for direct worship. Instead of summer vacations they set aside the month of Ramadan for vacations.

So, Those who can take vacations in Ramadan may seize the opportunity but if they cannot then they may devote as much time as they can to worship. That is the aim of Ramdan .

THE PROPHIT ﷺ ASKED TO WORSHIP

My respected father, Mulana Mufti Mahammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه once pointed out to the following verses of the Quran.

فَإِذَا فَرَغْتَ فَانْصَبْ ۝ وَإِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَارْغَبْ ۝ (سورہ الم نشرح)

So when you are free (from your public duties) exert in worship, and let toward your Lord be your entire quest. (al - inshirah,94.7,8)

What worship? Offering prayers , standing before Allah prostrating before him . My respected father used to

ask us to consider who was addressed in these words. The Holy Prophet ﷺ He was asked to exert himself after he was free! Was he busy in the affairs of the world? No! Rather, whatever he did was worship , He was engaged in teaching, preaching, training or purifying his people, or Jihad against the enemy. He had no other work but serving the religion of Allah. In spite of that, he is told that when he finishes with them, he must stand before Allah and exert himself. So, in obedience to this command, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to stand all night in prayer and his feet would swell because of that. This shows that the tasks in which he was busy were indirect and he was called upon by these verses to engage himself in direct worship.

THE DEVIL OF THE SCHOLAR IS A SCHOLAR

My respected father used to tell us that the devil misguided the ulama in a scholarly way. He tells them that it is the common man who is reminded that they are engaged in worldly pursuits for eleven months of the year (and they may devote themselves to Allah for the month of Ramadan). The devil continues telling the religious scholars, "but you are occupied those eleven month in religious duty. You teach, preach religion and deliver sermons. You write and issue verdicts. These are religious duties." In truth ,this is a temptation of the deceiving devil because the eleven months the scholars are occupied in indirect worship while Ramadan is the month of direct worship. May Allah inspire us to occupy ourselves in the month of Ramdan in worship of the direct kind.

FORTY OPPURTUNITIES

Let us now chalk out a programme or a time table for this month. Let us see what work we can postpone. We have to fast and offer the *taraweeh* prayers. Mawlana doctor Abdul Hayy رحمة الله عليه used to say a very interesting thing about *taraweeh.* He would day, "It is a marvellous thing. Through it, Allah allows man to attain nearness to Him through forty more opportunities. There are tweney raka'at in taraweeh comprising of forty prostrations each of which is an opportunity of the best kind to gain nearness to Allah the forehead rests on the floor and the tongue repeats, سبحان ربی الاعلیٰ (Glory be to my Lord, the High.)

THE MI'RAJ OF THE BELIEVER

This opportunity was brought to us by the Prophetﷺ from the *Mi'raj*. When he was given the high honour, he wondered what gift he should give to his people and Allah said to him that he should present them the prostration, each of which will be a believer's *mi'raj.* The Prophet said:

الصلوٰة معراج المؤمنين

Prayer is the ascension of the believer.

He will attain nearness to Allah when he rests his forechead on the earth .

NEARNESS IN PROSTRATION

The *surah al- Iqra* tells us how beautifully Allah has described it:

وَاسْجُدْ وَاقْتَرِبْ ۩

Prostrate yourself and draw nigh(to Allah)
(al alaq 96..19)[1]

It means that every prostration draws us near to Allah and we have forty More) opportunities in Ramadan, every

1: This verse calls for prostration so we must prostrate ourselves on reading it.

one of us has that, every day! It was given because we were involved in worldly pursuits for eleven months which kept us away from Allah and these forty opportunities are available to us in Ramadan, to regain the lost time and draw near to Allah. So, we must not take the *taraweeh* lightly. Some people offer only eight raka'at *taraweeh,* not twenty, which means that though Allah offers them forty opportunities they consider sexteen as enough for them . They have not understood the singnificance of these opportunities and have thus lost them.

EXCESSIVE RECITAL OF QURAN

As we have said, we have to observe fasting and offer *taraweeh* in the month of Ramadan and whatever time we have, we must spend in worship of Allah, for instance, we must pay particular attention to reciting the Quran because the month has a special relationship with the Quran . Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله عليه used to recite the whole Quran during the day time in Ramdan and again once in the night, and yet again in the *taraweeh* prayers over the month which means that he recited the Quran from cover to cover sixty one times in Ramadan. Allamah Shami رحمة الله عليه recited the Quran in its entirety once every day and night .Recital of Quran is part of the ron time of our religious elders. So, we must also increase the recital of the Quran in Ramadan compared to our normal recital during other days.

EXCESS OF OPTIONAL WORSHIP

We must try to offer those supererogatory prayers which we do not observe in other days. For instance, the *tahajjud.* We may also offer the *ishraq ,chast* and *awwabeen*[1].

1: Respectivley, post sunrise optional prayer, midmorning optional prayer, and post Maghrib optional prayer.

EXCESSIVE CHARITY

A part from *Zakah*, we must give voluntary charity as much as we can in the month of Ramadan. A *Hadith* tells us that the Prophet ﷺ was known to give away charity very generously at all times but in Ramadan he was extra-ordinarily generous. He gave to whoever came to him.

INCREASE *ZIKR*

Apart from that, we must mention Allah all the time, whether we are sitting, or walking about . our hands may be busy but our tongue must be occupied in remembering Allah:

سبحان الله والحمد لله ولا اله الا الله و الله اكبر

سبحان الله وبحمده سبحان الله العظيم

لا حول ولا قوة الا بالله العلى العظيم

We may also invoke blessings on the Messenger of Allah ﷺ frequently and seek forgiveness of Allah often.

KEEP AWAY FROM SIN

In the month of Ramadan, we must pay particular attention to keep away from sin. Let us resolve to keep our eyes in check in the Holy month so that they do not rest on wrong places. We must control our tongue and not speak anything wrong, neither tell a lie nor backbite anyone. We must not hunt anyone with our behaviour that while we refrain in the Holy month from the permitted eatables but do not stop eating carrion because the quran has said that to backbite anyone is to eat a dead brother's flesh. We must avoid falsehood and keep away from unnecessary talk, unnecessary gatheerings and any unnecessary work .

INTENSIFY SUPPLICATIONS

In addition to that, we must make supplications to Allah frequently. The doors of merey are wide open. Mercy is being showered in plenty. Allah is looking for excuses to forgive. A crier cries out, " is there any supplicant that I may grant him," we must beg, beseech and implore in the morning evening or night at all times. Allah says, " you ask Me at the time of iftar, I will give you ask at night, I will grant ,ask while you are fasting, I will bestow, ask in the last part of night and I will give." Allah has let us know that the doors are open , so ask at all times! Maulana Doctor Abdul Hayy رحمة الله عليه used to say that Ramadan is the month to ask. He used to restrict himself in the mosque between Asr and Maqhrib prayers during Ramadan. During this time, he recited from the Quran, recanted *tasbeeh* (rosary), supplicated from the Munajat *maqbool* and them presented his petition, his supplication to Allah upto the time of *iftar* (breaking of fast). We must also make plenty of supplications, for ourselves, our country and people, all the muslims . Allah will surely opprove that.

May Allah cause us to follow what we have read and respect the month of Ramadan and spend its hours correctly. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

Venue : Sermon delivered at Jami` Masjid Bait ul Mukarram

Date: : After 'Asr Prayers

EXERCISE MODERATION WITH FRIENDS & FOES

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له و نشهد ان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيراً كثيراً۔

اما بعد

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم احبب حبيبك هونا ما عسىٰ ان يكون بغيضك يوماما وابغض بغيضك هوناما عسىٰ ان يكون حبيبك يوماما (ترمذى شريف، كتاب البر والصلة ، باب ماجاء فى الاقتصاد فى الحب والبغض، حديث : ١٩٩٨)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is no one to misguide whom Allah guides and there is no one to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear

witness that there is no god but Allah Alone. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our authority, our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah have mercy on him, his household and on his Companions and bless them and send peace on them in great abundance.

PRINCIPLE OF ESTABLISHING FRIENDSHIP

The *Hadith* quoted above is narrated by sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ and is a sound transmission. it is a marvellous *Hadith* and it teaches us a splendid lesson and it contains excellent principles on which we may live.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضی اللہ عنہ quotes the Messenger of Allah ﷺ as saying "Make friends after deliberation, that is, exercise restraint, because your friend might become your foe tomorrow. And, if you bear enmity with anyone, be cautious in showing your displeasure, because your enemy might turn into your friend tomorrow."

A very interesting lesson is taught in this *Hadith:* be moderate in displaying friendship and love to your friends, and in displaying enmity to your enemies. We must remember that friendships in this world are not lasting and the enmities and hatred are not lasting. Friends may turn into foes anytime, and foes may become enemies any moment so we must exercise restraint.

THE CASE OF OUR FRIENDSHIP

The *Hadith* imparts a golden principle for those people who go head over heels in making friends with those whom they encounter and establish some sort of a

relation, or they express a mad love for them. they know no limits after that, and they find no defects in their friends and they spend all their time with them. They are all praise for the new found friends. Suddenly, the ties are snapped, they cannot bear to see each other or hear about them. This is going to extremes. the *shari'ah* does not permit us to exceed limits of moderation and the Holy Prophet ﷺ has disallowed such behaviour. He has advised us to show moderation in our dealings with others.

ONE BEING WORTHY OF FRIENDSHIP

We must remember that there is really no such thing as friendship and love in this world. True friendship and love is reserved for only one Being and that is Allah. He is the one whose love must make home in our hearts. It is for that reason that Allah has placed a heart in man's body. It is the receptable of His glow and it does not behove a believer to allow anyone else a place in his heart for it is reserved only for Allah.

ABU BAKR رضی اللہ عنہ A TRUE FRIEND

If there could be a true friend in this world, who else could be a true friend for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ besides Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ ? We cannot find an example of the friendship evinced by Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ for the Prophet ﷺ . He came out with flying colours at every time of trial. There was not a slight wavering from the very first day when he expressed his belief آمَنَّا وَصَدَّقْنَا (we believe and we confirm), all his life.

IN THE CAVE THAUR

He was with the Prophet ﷺ in the cave Thaur and the Quran has recalled that incident in these words:

.....اِذْهُمَا فِی الْغَارِ اِذْ یَقُوْلُ لِصَاحِبِہٖ لَا تَحْزَنْ اِنَّ اللّٰہَ مَعَنَا

.....When they were both in the cave (of Thaur for three nights), when he said to his companion, "grieve not surely Allah is with us"

(at -tawbah 9..40)

He entered the cave before the Holy Prophet ﷺ to clean it and to plug the passages within the cave leading to the hideouts of the snakes, He shut them with pieces of cloth and when he had no more he shut one remaining hole with his heel.

AN INCIDENT DURING HIJRAH

We learn from a *Hadith* that when the Prophet ﷺ was migrating to Madinah, Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ observed signs of hunger on his face. He got a bowl of milk from somewhere and presented it to him although he himself was hungry Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ reported later on that when the Prophet ﷺ drank the milk, he was the one who was also satiated. Although the Prophet ﷺ drank it, he drank it in such a way that Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ also had a fill! Thus, he set an example of friendship and sacrifice which no one else can present.

FRIENDSHIP WITH ALLAH ALONE

In spite of that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said:

لو کنت متخذا خلیلا لاتحذت ابابکر خلیلا (بخاری شریف، کتاب الفضائل، باب قول النبی ﷺ "لو کنت متخذا خلیلا")

" If I were to take a friend, I would take Abu bakr for a friend."

It means that he had not made friends with him because there is no one in this world to make friends with. Friendship is reserved only for Allah. A friendship that rules the heart and dictates it with its commands does not behove anyone except Allah.

FRIENDSHIP WITH ANYONE MUST BE SUBSERVIENT TO ALLAH'S FRIENDSHIP

Friendship among human beings would be subservient to the friendship with Allah and love for Him. They would not sin and disobey under the cover of friendship. So, the first lesson is that all friendships in this life will be next to the love and friendship for Allah

SINCERE FRIENDS ARE MISSING

The second lesson is that we do not find such a friend in this world whose friendship follows the friendship of Allah. We cannot find anyone whom we can call a true friend whose friendship is subservient to Allah's and who proves true in trying times. It is difficult to find such a one. When my elder brothers spoke about their friends in the presence of our respected father, he would remark that they had made many friends in life while he, at the age of sixty, could not make any friends. All his life, he had only a friend and a half. One could not find anyone easily who would measure correctly to the standards of friendship.

Nevertheless , even if we make friends on terms of subserviency to Allah, we must make sure that our friendship does not exceed limits. We must not spend all our time with him or let him know all our secrets. If the friendship ends, he may reveal your secrets. So, let the friendship prosper with in moderate limits.

MODERATION IN ENMITY

In the same way, if we bear a grudge against anyone, we must not let it exceed the limits and try to find fault in every thing he does. If Allah has placed faults in anyone, he has also given him certain good qualities. We must not overlook his good side. The Qura'n tells us :

وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ عَلٰٓى اَنْ لَّا تَعْدِلُوْا ۚ (المائدہ:۸)

Let not hatred of a people incite you not to deal justly (al- Maidah 5.8)

We may be on antagonistic terms with people but that should not cause us to confirm their commendable qualities, But generally, we do not remember the Prophet's ﷺ saying in this regard so we surpass the limits in love and in hatred.

BACKBITING HAJJAJ BIN YUSUF

We all know this man, Hajjaj bin Yusuf. He unleashed cruelty, killing many ulama, innumerable *hafiz*[1] of the Quran and he even attacked the Ka'bah. Muslims feel repelled when they hear of his misdeeds. However, once someone recounted his tyrannous acts before Sayyidina Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ and even backbited him, Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ stopped him, saying:

"Do not suppose that if he was curel, it is lawful to backbite him or slander him. Remember that when Allah will take an account of his cruelty from him on the day of Resurrection, he will ask you to account for the backbiting or slander against hajjaj bin Yusuf ". We are not allowed to accuse anyone who has earned a bad name for himself, or backbite him, but we must exercise moderation in such cases too.

1. Those who have memorised .

POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE OF PAKISTAN

The political conduct in our country is such that when a politician is in favour, he is praised to dizzy heights, and is presented as if he is free from blemish. Anyone who criticizes him is not tolerated. But , when he falls in the bad books of the people then he seems bereft of all good qualities. In either case, limits are exceeded, The Prophet ﷺ has disallowed us to behave in this way. Religion is not only prayer and fasting, but it also calls upon us to show moderate conduct in friendship and in dislike. Men of God understand this thing. We must keep at a safe distance from those in authority, the politicians and leaders. We should let our connections become very intimate with them.

A LESSON- GIVING CASE OF QADI BAKKAR BIN QUTAYBAH رحمۃ اللہ علیہ

Qadi Bakkar bin Qutybah رحمۃ اللہ علیہ was a well-known Qadi (a gudge) and a scholar of *Hadith* . He was the student of the author of *Tahawi* which is a course book in religious institutions. The king of his times was much impressed by him and not only consulted him in all affairs but summoned him often and invited him to all official functions. He even appointed him Qadi and he decided all cases of the state. It soon transpired that he was seen with the king at all times of the day. He became the king's favourite.

However, he was a scholar and a Qadi , not the king's servant. Once, the king did something wrong and he decided against the king and said that the king had violated *shari'ah* . This displeased the king who complained that he had pampered him all the time and granted his recommendations, Yet he issued an edict against him.

The king not only displaced him from the post of Qadi but also sent a messenger asking him to return all the gifts he had given him in the past. These gifts were presented to him over a number of years and were of an assorted nature, yet when the king's messenger arrived he took him to a room and opened a cupboard which told the man that whatever the king had been giving him was found in the cupboard and they were intact, the bags bore their original seals and were unopened. "Take away all these bags. The day I had met the king, I had recalled the saying of the Prophet ﷺ:

احبب حبيبك هونا ما عسىٰ ان يكون بغيضك يوما ما

Make friends after proper deliberation for your friend might become your foe tomorrow.

Be caution in showing displeasure to anyone for your enemy night become your friend tomorrow. I had thought I might have to return these gifts. By the grace of Allah, I have not used even a bit from the king's gifts.

This was a practical demonstration of the Prophet's ﷺ advice. He did not take advantage of the king's friendship so he did not have to worry when their relations strained.

MAKE THIS SUPPLICATION

We must, first of all, love Allah alone, and make the supplication taught to us by the Prophet ﷺ for this purpose.

اللهم اجعل حبك احب الاشياء إلَيَّ

O Allah! Let my love for You be greater than love for all else.

Man is weak and is bound to human tendencies. He will love his wife and children, parents and friends and relatives. He cannot get over these relationship. But, he must go on praying to Allah to make his love for all of

them subservient to love for Him.

IF LOVE EXCEEDS THE LIMITS THEN MAKE THIS SUPPLICATION

If we find that our love for someone exceeds the limits then we must make this supplication:

O Allah! You put that love in my heart, but O lord I have exceeded the limits in showing this love. O Allah! put me not in a trial, preserve me from that.

Besides, we must also conduct ourselves carefully. A friend today can be an enemy tomorrow,. You must assure from your side that you will not turn the tables.

That is the Prophet's ﷺ advice and if we follow all his advice we will be led aright in all our affairs.

FRIENDSHIP LEADS TO SIN

Often we fall into sin because of our friendships. We do not like to displease our friend and we do not displease our friend and we do not mind committing a sin for his sake and violating *shari'ah*. Actually, it should have been otherwise – *shari'ah* should not have been violated even if the friend is displeased. However, if there is a laxity in the commands of shari'ah we may please our friend for we are advised not to hurt a Muslim.

AVOID EXAGGERATION

Mawlana Ashraf Ali thanavi رحمة الله عليه has said that this *Hadith* forbids one to exaggerate one's connactions with other people. We should not exaggerate any affair, whether it is a relationship or a dealing with someone. The meaning is that we should not exceed the limits and we should remain in a reasonable limit.

My Allah cause us to behave according to this *Hadith. Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

Venue : Sermon delivered at Jami` Masjid Bait ul Mukarram

Date: : After 'Asr Prayers

BE FAITHFUL TO RELATIONSHIPS

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهد ان سيد نا و سندنا ومولانا محمد ا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيراً كثيراً۔

اما بعد

اعوذ بالله من الشيطن الرجيم ۔ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

عن عائشة رضى الله عنها قالت جآءَ ت عجوز الى النبى ﷺ فقال كيف انتم ، كيف حالكم، كيف كنتم بعدنا؟ قالت بخير بِاَبِى انت واُمّى يارسول الله ﷺ فلما خَرجَتْ قلتُ يا رسولَ الله ﷺ تقبل هذه العجوز هذا لْاِقبال ؟ فقال:

" يا عائشة.. انها كانت تأتينا زمان خديجة (رضى الله عنها) وان حسن العهد من الايمان" (بيهقى فى شعب الايمان)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek

refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is no one to misguide whom Allah guides and there is no one to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah Alone. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our authority, our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah have mercy on him, his household and on his Companions and bless them and send peace on them in great abundance.

SUMMARY OF *HADITH* :

Sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها has said that once an old woman visited the Holy Prophetﷺ. He received her with great respect and gave her honour and served her well. When she had gone, sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ:"who was this woman whom you received so honourably? " He said:

انها كانت تأتينا زمان خديجة

" She had visited us when khadijah was alive, she had relations with khadijah she was her friend and that is why I honoured her."
Then, he added:

ان حسن العهد من الايمان

To treat anyone well is also part of faith

TRY TO BE CONSTANT IN RELATIONSHIPS

It is a believers sign that he does not break ties of relationship as far as possible. He works to constantly

maintain them even if that taxes him mentally. He does sever the tiess on an unpleasant note. However, if things become very unharmonious, the most he does is cuts down on meeting the other person but he does not stop speaking with him or sever relations altogether.

MAINTAIN RELATIONSHIPS OF DEAD RELATIVES

This *Hadith* gives two lesson. The first is that we must maintain our relationship and those of our dead relatives . For instance, the ties of our dead parents must be kept alive. Some one came to the Holy Prophet ﷺ and said to Him," Messenger of Allah, my father has died and I feel a sense of remorse, for, I have not been able to give him his rights as was his due. (Those who are derelict in their ties of parents feel remorse after they die and this man had the same feeling)

What shall I do, now?"

The Prophetﷺadvised him to maintain good relationship with the friends and companions of his father. In that way, his father's soul would be pleased, and Allah would compensate him in some way for his omission of duty. We should not behave in such a way that with the death of a person we close. Thus, it is part of faith to keep alive ties of our dead relatives.We should not behave in such a way that with the death of a person. We close the chapter on his friends and companions, but we should carry on ties with them. We have seen that sayyidah Khadijah رضى الله عنها had died quite some time earlier but the Prophet ﷺ was constant in maintaining her ties, we also find in the *ahadith* that the Prophetﷺ used to send gifts to the friends of Sayyidah Khadijah رضى الله عنها .

IT IS SUNNAH TO CARRY ON TIES

The second lesson in the *Hadith* is in the words:

ان حسن العهد

to maintain them well. When ties have been established then we must keep them alive and, as far as possible, sever them not from our side. For instance, if the other person is being rude, we must endure his attitude and be constant in the ties telling ourselves that it was the *sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. We may regard that as *sunnah* and an act of worship.

MY OWN CASE

My respected father Mawlana Mufti muhammad Shahfi رحمة الله عليه had a companion. He was very pious but he had the habit, as some people have, of raising objections. He was sure to criticise or taunt whoever he met or complain. Naturally, other people were very uneasy before him. Once, he behaved in the same way with me and it was too much for me to endure but I did not react spantaneously. I realised then that he regarded other people with disdain because he had authority and riches. Perhaps that was the reason that he behaved with me in that manner. When I came home, I wrote down a strong letter to him and wrote that he had that temperament which people dislike, and I reminded him that he had done the same thing to me. Hence, I did not wish to keep alive the ties with him.

DO NOT BE THE ONE TO SEVER TIES

However, I am thankful to Allah that I always discussed important matters with my father, so. I showed

him the letter and told him what had happened. My father realized that I was upset at that time so he kept the letter with him and said, to me that he would speak later. After one day had passed, he called me and said," I have read your letter, What do you wish to gain by that ?" I said that with that letter I hoped to sever ties with that person. My respected father spoke to me words of advice, "Listen, to sever ties with anyone is not difficult, you may do it anytime. You need not wait for it. But to preserve ties and to join them cannot be done always. So, what is the hurry wait for a few days. But, if you do not wish to meet him, do not go to him, writing this letter means that you are severing ties from your side,"

EASY TO SEVER, DIFFICULT TO JOIN TIES

Then he said to me, "Once you have established bonds of friendship with anyone, you must retain them as far as possible. It is easier to snap them but difficult to cement them. If you cannot reconcile yourself with him then it is not necessary that you meet him everyday but he showed me another letter that he had written and asked me to compare the two. His letter also complained against that man's attitude and conveyed to him my displeasure but it did not speak of ties being snapped, his letter was written in the light of the *sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ. It conveyed the essence of the matter but did not call for severing bonds of friendship.

He then said to me:

"listen these are old connections. His father and mine were friends and we cannot just snap old relations in a moment".

IT IS EASY TO DEMOLISH A BUILDING

The words of my respected father that it was easy to sever ties of relationship but difficult to join them is now etched on my heart, A building that stands before us may be razed down in two days but it takes very long to raise it. Therefore, we must give plenty of thought before taking shch a drastic step of severing ties. The Prophet ﷺ has advised us to retain them very well.

IF RELATIONSHIP HURTS

Let us suppose that we are put to difficulty because of the bonds of friendship, then we must assure ourselves that our ranks are being raised. We will earn reward for that. The Prophet ﷺ has said that if a thorn pricks a believer then it increases his reward and his rank. If we bear hardship patiently, we will gain reward against patience. Further, if we do that with the intention of obeying the words of the Prophet ﷺ then we will get the added reward for following the *sunnah.*

REWARD AGATNST PATIENCE

The hardships that we face in this life are ephemeral. We will leave them here when we die but the reward that we will carry with us in the grave and in the hereafter will more than to offset the difficulties we face here. The Prophet ﷺ has quoted in a *Hadith:*

> "when Allah will bestow his mercy on the patient His mercy in and persevering on the day of Resurrection, and He will reward them, those people who had led a life of comfort and ease in the world would wish that their skins were peeled off with scissors instead of comfort,

> has they enddured that with patience." Thus we must bear the little difficulties we encounter.

WHAT IS IT TO BE CONSTANT

We must, however, understand what it means to keep alive the bonds of connection. It means that we must go on giving the rights of the other person., and not snap the ties with him. However, it does not imply that the heart should be reconciled to it to accept him and that we cannot feel uneasy about it. We are also not required to move about with him. These things are not necessary to maintain ties of friendship. It is enough to give his rights as nominated by *Shari'ah.* We are not compelled to keep anyone's company if our heart does not harmonise with him, nor are we required to meet him. We must, however, go on giving him his rights, and we must not sever ties with him.

THE RESULT OF IGNORING THE SUNNAH

We often see that our mutual relationships are marked with disagreements and disputes. This is really because we have given up the *sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ and ignore his teachings and guidance. If we stick to the *Hadith* we had learnt in the previous chapter and the *Hadith* which we have learnt in this chapter and we understand and lead our lives according to both of them most of our misunderstandings and disputes will be removed.

The teachings are repeated here. If we love anyone, we must exercise monderation, and if we dislike anyone, we must again exercise moderation. The teachings of *Shariah* revolve round moderation and refraining from surpassing the limits. Next, once bonds of companionship or friendship

are established, we must be faithful to them as fajr as possible,

May Allah, through His mercy and benevolence, cause all of us the readers and my self to act in accordance with these teachings. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

Venue : Sermon delivered at Jami` Masjid Bait ul Mukarram

Date: After 'Asr Prayers

DO NOT SPEAK ILL OF THE DEAD

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهد ان سيد نا و سندنا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليماً كثيراً كثيراً

اما بعد

اعوذ بالله من الشيطن الرجيم۔ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

عن مغيرة بن شعبة رضى الله عنه قال قال رسول ﷺ لا تسبوا الاموات فتوذوا الاحياء (ترمذى، كتاب البر، باب ماجاء فى الشتم)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is no one to misguide whom Allah guides and there is no one to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah Alone.

He has no partner. I also bear witness that our authority, our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah have mercy on him, his household and on his Companions and bless them and send peace on them in great abundance.

DO NOT CALL THE DEAD "BAD PEOPLE"

Sayyidina Mughira bin Shabiah رضی الله عنه has quoted the Messenger of Allah ﷺ as saying:

"Do not call those who have died as bad people because to speak ill of the dead will hurt the living".

Also, Sayyidina Abdullah bin Umar رضی الله عنه has said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

اُذكروا مَحاسنَ مَوتٰكُمْ وَكفُّوا عن مساويهِمْ - (ابوداؤد، كتاب الادب، باب فی النهی عن سبّ الموتی)

"Speak of the good things of those of you who have died and refrain from speaking ill of them".

Both the foregoing *ahadith* have a similar subject-matter. We must mention the good things but not mention the bad things of anyone who has died, even if the dead man was evil.

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO GET A DEAD MAN'S FORGIVENESS

It is wrong, anyway, to seapk ill of the living persons and to backbite them. Rather, we must speak well of the living too. For, backbiting is forbidden. Then, why do these *ahadith* specify the dead alone? The answer is that backbiting the lliving is forbidden but to backbite the

dead is forbidden twice over. There are many reasons for that when anyone backbites the living, he stands the chance of apologising for his wrong behaviour and he may be forgiven. In this way, his sin will be erased. Backbiting is a violation of the rights of fellowmen, and if the victim forgives, the sin stands removed. But, one cannot seek forgiveness of the dead, So, that sin cannot be erased and is, therefore, dual.

OBJECTIONS RAISED AGAINST ALLAH

The second reason why a dead man must not be criticised is that he has gone to Allah. It is possible that Allah may have forgiven him. So, if we recall his bad nature then it means that we object to Allah's decision. It is as though we tell Allah, "You may have forgiven him but I will not pardon him." It is very sinful.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE LIVING AND THE DEAD

The third reason is that under certain circumstances it is allowed to backbite the living. For instance, there is possibility of other people falling victim to an evil man; in such cases, it is allowed to caution them that this man is likely to cheat because of his nature. The purpose of this backbiting is to save other people from loss. On the other hand, a dead man cannot harm anyone, or cheat them. So it is not permitted to backbite him under any circumstances. This is why the dead man is specified in these *ahadith* which prohibit us to speak bad about them, or backbite them.

IT WILL HURT THE LIVING

The Fourth reason is mentioned by the Prophet himself ﷺ. When we backbite a dead man, we suppose

that we cannot hurt him by our speech because he is not alive, and he will not know. But, we overlook the possibility that there may be alive those who love him and they would feel offended by the criticism. If we had backbited one who is alive, we could have approached him and sought forgiveness but by backbiting a dead man we will have offended all his relatives and friends and fans. It would not be easy for us to locate each of them and ask to be forgiven. This is more difficult than seeking pardon of one who is alive. That is why, the Prophetﷺ has disallowed us to remember the bad things of the dead man, but speak only of his good nature.

BACKBITING THE DEAD IS PROPER IF ----

Only under one condition is it allowed to backbite the dead. That situation is when anyone has written down misleading ideas in books before he died. The books are well circulated and have a wide readership. Therefore, it is proper to inform the public that this man had misleading beliefs, which he has publicized so that they may not be miscarried by them. We are allowed to mention only this much of his evil nature. We are liable to respect the limits and not speak ill of him more than necessary. We are not allowed to decide or curse him. We do not know that, though he had written misleading things, he may have been inspired by Allah to repent before he died, and Allah may have forgiven him. We cannot decide on his fate or call him as one consigned to Hell. Only Allah decides whether anyone will be sent to Hell or Paradise. We can only tell the people that his views expounded in books are irreligious and misleading and they be wary of that.

THE DEAD BENEFITS IF WE SPEAK GOOD OF HIM

We must remember the advice of the Prophetﷺ that the dead man should be remembered with his good qualities, not bad. The *Hadith* does not merely ask us to refrain from recalling his bad nature but also asks us to mention his good things. I have learnt from my elders that the wisdom behind it is that when a Muslim speaks well, or recalls a good characteristic of a dead man then it is a testimony in favour of the dead man. Sometimes, it is on the basis of such a testimony that Allah bestows on the dead man His favour saying: "My pious slaves speak well of you, so I forgive you!"

To speak well of him is better for him and, on the basis of that, it is not unexpected of Allah that He might forgive you too, saying:

> You caused my slave to benefit, so I will benefit you! And I forgive you too!"

Hence, we must refrain from speaking ill of the dead, but we must remember him with good words.

PRAY FOR THE DEAD

There is yet another *Hadith* of the same import but its words are different:

"لا تذكروا هلكاكم الا بخير"

(سنن النسائی، کتاب الجنائز، باب النهی عن ذکر الهلکی الابخیر)

> "Do not remember your dead except with good words".

To speak of anyone with good words also calls upon us to pray for him:

> O Allah! Forgive him. Be kind to him. O Allah! Save him from Your punishment.

This way we will gain a double reward. First, to make

a supplication which is a form of worship and rewarding, no matter why it was made. Secondly, to cause another Muslim to benefit brings us reward for ourselves too.

Therefore, if we pray for him, not only he stands to gain but we will also be benefitted.

May Allah grant us the ability to act on whatever we have read and thus show us His favour and benevolence. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

Venue : Sermon delivered at Jami` Masjid Bait ul Mukarram

Date: After 'Asr Prayers

GIVE UP ARGUMENT AND FALSEHOOD

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهد ان سيد نا و سندنا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليماً كثيراً كثيراً ـ

اما بعد!

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله تعالىٰ عنه قال قال رسول الله ﷺ لا يؤمن العبد الايمان كله حتى يترك الكذب فى المزاحة و يترك المراء وان كان صادقاً (مسند احمد ، جلد ٢ صفحه: ٣٥٢)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is no one to misguide whom Allah guides and there is no one to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah Alone. He has no partner. I also bear

witness that our authority, our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah have mercy on him, his household and on his Companions and bless them and send peace on them in great abundance.

TWO SIGNS OF PERFECT FAITH

Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضی الله عنه has said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

"No one can be a perfect believer unless he gives up falsehood even when joking, and unless he shuns argument even though he may be on the right."

This *Hadith* tells that two things distinguish a true believer who gives them up he does not lie even as a joke and he does not argue even if he is right.

FALSEHOOD AS A JOKE

The *Hadith* tells us, first, that we must not lie, not even when we joke. Many people believe that falsehood is unlawful when spoken seriously but not when said as a joke. Thus, when we remind anyone that he had lied when he said a certain thing, he retorts that he had only joked with us. As if to say, that is it not wrong to lie when joking. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that a believer is one whose tongue does not utter what is not true, not even in a light-hearted speech. He is allowed to joke and speak in a light-hearted vein if he respects the limits. *Shariah* has not only allowed that but also recommended it a little. It is not correct that a man may always be serious and never smile. The Prophet ﷺ himself is known to have spoken in a light vein and with a pleasant nature.

AN EXAMPLE OF THE PROPHET'S LIGHT HEARTEDNESS

Someone asked the Prophet ﷺ for a camel which was regarded then as a very valuable possession. The Prophet ﷺ said to him I will give you the child of a she-camel".That man said, "what will I do with the child of a she camel? I want a camel to ride on." The Prophet ﷺ remarked:

"Every camel is a child of a she-camel!".

The Prophet made a joke and showed a good nature but he did not lie.

ANOTHER EXAMPLE

A woman requested the Prophet ﷺ to pray to Allah that He admit her into Paradise. He said, "No old woman will enter Paradise." When he saw that she was disturbed, he said, "I mean that no woman will enter Paradise as an old woman but all of them will enter as young women."

He did not say anything false but only amused other people. To joke in this manner is the Prophet's *sunnah,* if anyone jokes in this way to follow his practice then he will earn a reward for that.

HAFIZ ZAMIN'S LIGHT HEARTEDNESS

He was one of the three well well-known *Qutubs*[1] of Thana Bhawan. *Hafiz* Zamin *Shaheed* was a great saint. Some religious elders disclosed that the *jihad,* against the British in 1857 was decreed by Allah to receive his sacrifice. However, if anyone, visited him, he would always find him in a light-hearted mood among his people. To every new visitor, he would say. "If you have

1. A rank in Sufi religious order.

come to receive a religious opinion, you may see Mawlana Shaykh Muhammad Thanavi, sitting opposite us. If you wish to learn about *Zikr,* or become a disciple then you may see Haji Imdad Ullah Muhajir Dehlavi, who is also here. If you wish to smoke the huqqah then join us. Behind this harmless talk he had hidden his high station.

MUHAMMAD BIN SEEREEN رحمة الله عليه AND LAUGHTER

Muhammab bin Seereen رحمة الله عليه was a *tabaéen*[1] of high order. It is said of him:

كُنَّا نَسْمَعُ ضَحْكَهُ فِي النَّهَارِ وَبُكَاءَهُ بِاللَّيْلِ

"We used to hear laughter from his quarters during the day but sobbing during the night."

When he prostrated himself before Allah, he sobbed much.

GOOD NATURE EXHORTED

Anyway, it is not wrong to joke if we stay within limits. We should not make it a habit to joke all the time. We must display a moderate light heartedness sometimes. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said:

رُوحُوا الْقُلُوبَ سَاعَةً فَسَاعَةً

Let your hearts rest after every little while.

When we are occupied in serious work, we must take time out for a little amusement because that is also necessary. It is the *sunnah,* of the Prophet ﷺ. However, we must not speak anything wrong.

If it is wrong to lie when joking then it should be wrong to a greater degree to lie when serious. One of the basic signs of a Believer is that he does not utter anything

1. An epigone, successor of the companions رضوان الله عليهم اجمعين.

false. Even when he is faced with difficulty he does not lie although *Shariah* has permitted us to lie if it is necessary to save a life. The pious slaves of Allah do not lie at such times too.

SAYYIDINA ABU BAKR رضى الله عنه KEEPS AWAY FROM LIE

He was travelling with the Prophet ﷺ during the *hijrah.* The infidels of Makkah had sent men to trace them out. They had offered a hundred camels to anyone who brought the Prophet ﷺ to them. That was a highly great reward. Everyone in Makkah was eager to trace him out. In this race, one of them managed to track down the Prophet ﷺ. He knew Abu Bakr Siddiq رضى الله عنه but he did not know who the Prophet ﷺ was. He asked, "Who is this with you?" If he told him the truth, there was a risk to life, otherwise he would be lying. Those people who are particular in speaking the truth find that Allah helps them out, and he was siddiq. He said in reply to that man's question:

هَادٍ يَهْدِينِي إِلَى السَّبِيلِ

He is the guide, directs me on the path.

He spoke words that contained no lie at all. The Prophet ﷺ was truly a guide who showed the path to religion. In this way, the life of the Prophet ﷺ was saved. He did not utter falsehood although we are permitted to speak a lie to save a life.

MAWLANA MUHAMMAD BIN QASIM رحمة الله عليه NANOTWI ABSTAINS FROM LYING

He was the founder of Dar ul Uloom, Deoband. In 1857 when *jihad,* was waged, the Britishers issued a warrant of arrest against him. The situation was that at every

crossing scaffolds were erected to hang those who did not support the government. Everyone, who was known to participate in *jihad,* was hunted down and hanged. Mawlana Muhammad bin Qasim Nanotwi رحمة الله عليه was sitting in the mosque and he was clad in a very simple dress. A stanger could not recognise him as a great scholar. The police came to arrest him and entered the mosque but could not find anyone. They had imagined that he would have a turban on his head and a heavy cloak on his body, and he would be sitting in a majestic fashion. They found this man dressed in very ordinary garments and took him to be a helper or servant of the mosque. They asked him. "Where is Mawlana Qasim Nanotwi?" If he disclosed himself they would arrest him and if he said anything else that would be false. So he moved a little to the side and said. "He was here a while ago." That was a very difficult time, if they took him away they would have sent him to the gallows, but he did not lie even then. It was for that reason that Allah saved him and the policemen went away. A believer does not tell a lie even when death smiles on his face.

THE RAMPANT LIE

Therefore, we should not tell lies. *Shariah* has emphasised that we speak the truth and not lie, not even as a joke or in war. Today all of us lie and this includes educated, religious scholars and those who keep company of the sanitly persons. Among them are those who submit false medical certificates, facititious statements and documents or give false testimonies. The situation has come to such a pass that people have given up hope and they say. "We cannot live in this world if we speak the truth." May Allah protect us! However, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has said:

الصدق ينجي والكذب يهلك

Truth salvages while falsehood destroys.

One may gain temporarily by telling lies but there is no success in the end. There is success in truth and in obeying Allah. We know of many things that are clear lies and there are many varieties of it. The flase certificates and statements are the worst kinds of lies. Educated people are involved in it. May Allah enable us to keep away from it. *Aameen,* and may we realise that the Prophet ﷺ has said that a perfect believer does not tell llies even when he jokes and amuses.

REFRAIN FROM ARGUMENTS

The next thing that we are told is that although we may be on the right, we should not argue or dispute. Of the mischiefs of the tongue is argument and dispute. It is a great occupation of our people. When a few sit together, they begin to argue and debate on an issue. But, they gain nothing in this world or the next. It destroyes man's unseen nature. Imam Malik رحمة الله عليه has said:

المراء يذهب بنور العلم

"Arguments and debates destory the light in men."

The scholars are more prone to this habit, because each of them regards himself as more knowledgeable. They spend hours together in argument which may be oral or written down.

ONLY GIVE YOUR OPINION

The simple thing to do is that if we have a different opinion we must just give it and hear what others say. If we are convinced then we must agree otherwise we must say that we do not understand what they say and we must make

it clear to them that they may do what they believe while we would do what we believe. There is no point in arguing, for everyone would try to over rule the other. The result is that there is no distinction between truth and falsehood. The *Hadith* cites the Prophet ﷺ as saying, "Even if you are right and the other is wrong, do not dispute." Merely give your opinion and let the other know that they may follow it if they agree otherwise it was their outlook.

SURAH "AL KAFIROON"

The *Surah Al Kafiroon* was revealed to state this very idea. The Prophet ﷺ gave his message of unity of Allah to the idolators of Makkah and he explained it. However, when they began to argue and dispute, these verses were revealed.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ط

قُلْ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الْكٰفِرُوْنَ ۝ لَآ اَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُوْنَ ۝ وَلَآ اَنْتُمْ عٰبِدُوْنَ مَآ اَعْبُدُ ۝ وَلَآ اَنَا عَابِدٌ مَّا عَبَدْتُّمْ ۝ وَلَآ اَنْتُمْ عٰبِدُوْنَ مَآ اَعْبُدُ ۝ لَكُمْ دِيْنُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِيْنِ ۝ (سورۃ الکافرون)

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

Say, "O disbelievers! I shall not worship those whom you worship, nor are you the worshippers of Him whom I worship; and I have not been a worshipper of those whom you worshipped, nor are you the worshippers of Him whom I worship. To you your religion and to me my religion." (al Kafiroon, 109-1-6)

He made it very clear that he did not wish to argue and debate. He explained the salient features of religion and if they had agreed that would have been for their own

benefit. Unnecessary debate was not good for any one.

TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT

We must see that even in the question of disbelief and Islam., Allah made it clear that there should be no disputing. Therefore, it is more essential that we keep away from debate and dispute in other matters. In contrast, our malady is that we are continually involved in argument and dispute. This habit is disadvantageous to our inner self. If we have to discuss an issue with anybody then we must state our point sincerely to convey the truth and then we must listen to their point of view. If that is sound, we must concede to their view otherwise we may leave it but not argue after that.

AN UNENDING ISSUE

Many people write to me, saying that they had a disagreement with someone on some issue and certain arguments were presented by both sides. They ask me for advice on how they may give more arguments. Now, if I were to suggest an argument and they were to present another, the issue would never end. The simple answer is that we should not indulge in argument. The only way out is to declare our idea and if the other person agrees, well and good otherwise we should leave him to his ideas. We may make it clear that we will pursue the course we are on. There is no point for further argument. The Prophet ﷺ taught us exactly this thing, "If you are on the right then, too, do not dispute."

DEBATE IS NOT ADVANTAGEOUS

Therea is a tendency these days to enter into a debate and dialogue, and defeat the other side. When Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanavi رحمة الله عليه had qualified from Dar ul Uloom, Deoband, he was much interested in entering into a dialogue with the polythiestic groups. For sometime, he engaged himself in these debates and he always had an upper hand. Allah had blessed him with an excellent art of speech and delivery. However, he himself said, after some days, that he was no more inclined to argue in this manner. He said that whenever he debated with anyone, he sensed a darkness in his heart. So, he never again participated in such a dialogue all his life. He disallowed other people too from debating an issue with anyone because there was no advantage in that. If there is really a need for it to further the Truth then it is a different question. But, it is not correct to make it a regular affair. Since it is not proper for the ulama, then it should also not be proper for the ordinary person to argue on religious question.

ONLY THOSE WITH EXECESSIVE INTELLIGENCE ARGUE

Akbar Allahbadi, the great Urdu poet, had composed an excellent couplet on the question of arguments and debates.

مذہبی بحث میں نے کی ہی نہیں
فالتو عقل مجھ میں تھی ہی نہیں

I never argued on religion,
I never had excessive intelligence.

Every person should pay heed to this advice. However, if anyone does not know something, he may ask

a knowledgeable person about it. If he cannot understand something let him ask, but let no one argue.

ARGUMENT GROWS DARKNESS

Mawlana Thanavi has explained this *Hadith* thus:

> "It shows that argument and debate grow darkness (in the heart), because an imperfect faith is (a sign of) darkness. That is why you will find that the mystics greatly detest debates and arguments".

This means that men of Allah, who tread the path of *Tasawwuf*[1] and *Sulook*[2] detest intensely argument and debate.

A DEBATE WITH MAUDUDI

Baba Najm Ahsan رحمة الله عليه was one of our religious elders who had been blessed with the company of Mawlana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه . He was a marvellous man of religion. One day, he said to me:

> "Maududi has cast aspersion on some of the companions in his book, *Khilafat wa Mulookiyat*, you must write on the subject".

Hence, I wrote an essay on it and I got a letter from the respected Maududi in answer. So, I wrote another piece as a rejoinder. In this way, I wrote an answer twice. When Bab Najm Ahsan رحمة الله عليه read my second answer, he wrote to me a letter which I have with me todate. He wrote:

> I read your essay and was much pleased. May Allah accept it.

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1. *Tasawwuf*, is the mystic path leading to purification of soul.
2. *Sulook*, conduct, it is a sufi path.

He then added:

Now, bury the debating.

He meant to say, further arguments must now cease. The truth has been declared. Do not respond if you get any argument from the other side, otherwise the process will go on.

Anyway, the men of Allah do not like to involve themselves in such arguments. They detest it because there is no advantage in it. We do not know of anyone accepting the Truth after being convinced through a debate. It is only a waste of time.

The men of Allah despise debates and arguments and disputes because the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has said:

"It is a sign of the believer that he shuns debate and argument".

May Allah enable us to keep away from argument, debate and disputes and from speaking lies and falsehood. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

Venue : Sermon delivered at Jami` Masjid Bait ul Mukarram

Date: After 'Asr Prayers

HOW TO LEARN AND TEACH RELIGION

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهد ان سيد نا و سندنا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليماً كثيراً كثيراً

اما بعد !

عَنْ اَبِیْ قِلَابَةَ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا مَالِكٌ (رَضِیَ اللهُ تَعَالیٰ عَنْهُ) اَتَیْنَا اِلَی النَّبِیِّ ﷺ وَ نَحْنُ شَبَبَةٌ مُتَقَارِبُوْنَ فَاَقَمْنَا عِنْدَهٗ عِشْرِیْنَ یَوْمًا وَ لَیْلَةً وَكَانَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ ﷺرَحِیْمًا رَفِیْقًا فَلَمَّا ظَنَّ اَنَّا قَدِاشْتَهَیْنَا اَهْلَنَا اَوْ قَدِ اشْتَقْنَا سَاَلَنَا عَمَّنْ تَرَكْنَا بَعْدَنَا فَاَخْبَرْنَاهُ قَالَ ارْجِعُوْا اِلٰی اَهْلِیْكُمْ فَاَقِیْمُوْا فِیْهِمْ وَ عَلِّمُوْهُمْ وَ مُرُوْهُمْ وَذَكَرَ اَشْیَاءَ اَحْفَظُهَا اَوْ لَا اَحْفَظُهَا وَ صَلُّوْا كَمَا رَاَیْتُمُوْنِیْ اُصَلِّیْ فَاِذَا حَضَرَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَلْیُؤَذِّنْ لَكُمْ اَحَدُكُمْ وَلْیَؤُمَّكُمْ اَكْبَرُكُمْ (صحیح بخاری، کتاب الاذان ، باب الآذان للمسافر اذا کانوا جماعة...)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we

believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is no one to misguide whom Allah guides and there is no one to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah Alone. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our authority, our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah have mercy on him, his household and on his Companions and bless them and send peace on them in great abundance.

THE *HADITH*

Sayyidina Malik bin Huwayrith رضی الله عنه was a Companion of the Prophet ﷺ. He was from the tribe, Banu layth who lived in a settlement far from Madinah. These people were blessed with the faith of Islam, and they had travelled to Madinah as Muslims to meet the Prophet ﷺ. Sayyidina Malik narrates the story of their meeting with the Prophet ﷺ. "We presented ourselves before the Holy Prophet ﷺ. We were all young men of about the same age and we stayed with him for twenty days. At the end of that period, the Holy Prophet ﷺ presumed that we were desirous of returning to our people. So he asked us about the people we had left behind in our homes, and we informed him of our relatives who were at home. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was very kind and considerate with every man, so he said, Now you go to your families and teach them religion and command them to pursue it. And offer prayers as you have seen me pray. When it is time for prayers, one of you should call the azan, and the oldest of you should act as

Imam. After giving us this advice, he bade us farewell."

LEARN RELIGION THROUGH COMPANY

The lengthy Hadith has many lessons for us. The first thing that Malik bin Huwayrith رضی الله عنه said was, "We presented ourselves before the Prophet ﷺ. We were young people and stayed with him for about twenty days." This was the method of learning religion and there were no organised religious institutions, colleges or universities in those days, and there were no books, either.

The only method of learning religion was that those who intended to learn stayed in the company of the Prophet ﷺ and observed how he spent his life and what he did from morning to evening. They studied how he dealt with other people and how he lived at home. They learnt of these things and observed them and thus knew the *Seerah,* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. In this way they learnt religion.

WHAT IS COMPANY

The original method of learning religion is to stay in company of the teacher. That is because only the literate can learn at the *madrasah* and from books. Besides, one cannot learn from books alone. Allah has created man in such a way that he cannot acquire knowledge and arts only through books. No science can be learnt merely from books. We have to stay in someone's company for that. It is to stay with one we know for some days and observe his behaviour. This is how one acquires knowledge. A novice doctor or engineer even a cook, will have to stay for some days with a doctor, engineer or cook to study these sciences and acquire professional knowledge in the respective fields. The same procedure applies to religion.

HOW DID THE COMPANIONS ACQUIRE KNOWLEDGE?

This is why Allah always sent a Messenger with a celestial book. He did not send a book alone. The Messenger or Prophet gave practical knowledge and demonstration of the teachings of the book. The noble Companions رضی الله عنه did not go to any University or *Madrasah* and did not read any book. They were not prescribed a syllabus of studies yet each of them is worth a thousand religious institutions and a thousand books because they stayed in the company of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and closely studied every detail of his life. Then, they tried to emulate the example. This is how they became a companion.

KEEP GOOD COMPANY

Company is what forms man. Our elders have said that to learn religion we must keep the company of religious men. Their company will grow in us the significance and love of religion gradually. If we are in bad company then its influences will be apparent on us. This is how the religion has come down to us from the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The Companions رضی الله عنهم were trained through the company of the Prophet ﷺ, and their company prepared the *tabaéen*-their successors. The *taba ta baéen*, or the generation following them, were trained in the company of the *tabaéen*. The entire religion has come down to us in this manner.

TWO SOURCES

My respected father, Mawlana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه, has stated in the Ma`riful Quran that Allah has guided man through two sources, His book and his men. He has created such men who give practical shape to His Book. Thus if anyone relies on both these sources

then he understands the realities of religion. If he relies only on one of these sources the book or the men, and ignores the other then he may be misled. Therefore, it is necessary to follow both of them.

Our religious elders have advised us that the easiest way to practically observe religious duties is to acquire the company of the men of Allah who understand Allah's religion and act on it. The more we keep their company, the more we will progress in religion.

Returning to the *Hadith*, these people were living at a distant place, so they stayed with the Prophet ﷺ for twenty days. During this period, they acquired the basic knowledge of religion from the Prophet ﷺ, learnt religion and benefitted from the noble company.

CARE FOR THE YOUNG

The Prophet ﷺ himself realised that the young people might be homesick. So, he asked them about the relatives they might have left behind and he found out that some of those young men were newly married. He advised them, therefore, that they should return to their homes.

STAYING AWAY FROM HOME

In explanation of this *Hadith*, the Ulama have given their ruling that a married man must not stay away from home for a long period. There is safety in it for him and his family. The religion of Allah considers all aspects of life and there is moderation in its demands. That is why it is called اُمَّةً وَّسَطًا (Justly balanced community). The balance is visible in this direction - seek good company to acquire religious knowledge but, at the same time, be careful of giving the rights of other people. Strike a balance between the two. Hence, the Prophet ﷺ said to his visitors

after twenty days. "You have learnt the essentials of religion. Now, you have the rights of your family over you and your own rights, so go home to your families."

RIGHTS OF OTHERS

We must pause and think here that obviously they could not have learnt everything about religion in twenty days and the Prophet ﷺ could have asked them to stay with him longer. But, he knew that they had learnt what was necessary to know so he sent them away that they might give the other people their rights.

IT IS AN ABSOLUTE OBLIGATION TO LEARN THAT MUCH

We must know that knowledge of religion is divided into two kinds. The first comprises the knowledge that a man needs to fulfil his obligations - the *fard* and the wajib. These include knowledge about *Prayer, Fasting, Zakah, Hajj,* and what things are lawful and what are unlawful. For instance, it is forbidden to tell lies, to backbite anyone, to take wine, to eat pork, and so on. It is called *fard ayn*[1] And is in absolute obligation for all Muslims, men and women, to know his duties and the things he must avoid. The following Hadith speaks of this knowledge when it says:

طلب العلم فريضة على كل مسلم و مسلمة

It is obligatory for every Muslim man and Muslim woman to acquire knowledge.

Every muslim must set aside all other things and give his time and effort to gain this much knowledge. If he has to go away from his parents, wife and children, brothers and sisters to learn this much, he must not

1. *Fard Ayn* is an individual duty on every muslim

hesitate but he must leave them. If they stop him from going then he must not obey them.

THE *FARD KIFAYAH*[1]

The second kind of knowledge is to acquire full knowledge of religion and become a scholar. It is not a duty on every Muslim but it is a *fard kifaya*. If some people become religious scholars all the others are absolved of the obligation. For instance, if there is a scholar in a small township and he is enough to look after the religious needs of all the people there then the other people's obligation in this regard is removed from them. Similary, in a large city, its inhabitants are absolved of their obligation to become religious scholars once there are enough of them to oversee their religious duties.

IMPART RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE TO HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

At the end of the twenty days, when the Prophet ﷺ sent them home to look after the rights of their families, he cautioned them against being careless at home. He commanded them to teach their family members whatever they had learnt with him. We learn from this command that it is an obligation for everyone who learns something of religion to teach it to the members of his family. They must be told enough to be able to live as true Muslim. It is *fard`ayn* (An absolute individual obligation) for every Muslim to impart this much education to his family. The obligation is just like the duty to offer prayers, to fast in Ramadan, to pay zakah, or to perform *Hajj*. It is as essential to teach household folk as it is to observe these duties.

1. *Fard Ki fayah*, is a collective duty.

NEGLECTING CHILDREN

There is much carelessness in our society in regard to upbringing of our children. Educated intelligent and religious-minded people also are derelict in imparting religious knowledge to their children. They do not teach their children to recite the Quran correctly or to offer prayers in the right way and they do not even give them the basic instructions in Islam. These children grow up well educated in worldly sciences but they are unaware of the difference between fard and *sunnah*. We must be as dutiful in imparting basic religious knowledge to our children as we are in observing prayers ourselves.

The Prophetﷺ said thereafter, "Go home and command the folk of your household". That is, command them to observe religious duties.

HOW MAY WE PRAY

He then said:

صَلُّوْا كَمَا رَأَيْتُمُوْنِى أُصَلِّى

Offer prayer.

When they reach their homes they must pray as they had seen him pray. It is worth considering that the Prophetﷺdid not merely ask them to offer prayers but he asked them to pray as he prayed. Prayer is a pillar of religion so we must be particular in observing it in the manner known from the Prophetﷺ. It is very imperative that our people pay attention to it. Although many people offer prayers, yet most of us merely discharge their duties without caring to observe the correct procedure. We hurry through the prayers merely to get it off our heads and we do not pay attention to the Prophet's command that we pray as he did pray.

OBSERVE THE *SUNNAH*, WHEN PRAYING

If we pray in the way the Prophet ﷺ prayed, neither do we have to give more time to it nor does it call for extra effort. In the same time and with the same effort as we are used to in our inadequate prayers, we will offer our prayers according to *sunnah*; only a little attention is necessary. However, if we persist in offering prayers as we do now, we may be discharging our obligation and keeping away from the sin of omitting prayers, but we miss the inner light associated with prayers according to *sunnah*. We miss the blessings and other advantages. I had once spoken on the subject and a booklet has been published with the title perform *salah* correctly. In this booklet, readers are cautioned against the mistakes that are made generally. This booklet must be read and prayers must be offered in the correct method it outlines. We will find out that it does not take much time to observe prayers in the method outlined in this booklet.

THE ATTENTION PAID BY MUFTI A`ZAM

My respected father, Mawlana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه lived for eighty three years. He received religious education at a very early age in his life, and all his life he imparted religious education and issued *fatawa* (rulings) on religious questions. He was appointed *Mufti Azam* (The chief jurist) at Dar-ul-uloom, Deoband. In Pakistan, too, he was known by that name. He answered queries and issued hundreds of thousands of *fatawa*, Once he said, "I have spent my life learning and teaching but it happens even now when I offer prayers that I feel unsure of what I should do. So, after I have offered the prayer, I

look up in the books whether I was correct or had committed an error." But, I see that people do not even care if they have observed the etiquette's of prayer or not, whether they have observed prayer correctly or not. It is enough for them that they have gone through the formality of prayer.

PRAYER BECOMES INVALID

We often see worshippers showing unconcern in prayer and they scratch their heads or stroke their faces with both hands. They must know that if they activate their hands and they are engaged in that for so long as it takes to recite سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْأَعْلَى three times then their prayer becomes void. The obligation is not discharged, but they are unconcerned about that. Sometimes, they use both their hands to set their clothes right or wipe sweat but if they spend a little more time doing that, their prayer is invalid. Also, if we adopt a posture during prayers, which makes an onlooker wonder whether we are engaged in prayers or not, then our prayers are not valid. If anyone uses one hand to do something three times, in a single posture and an onlooker think that he is not engaged in prayers then the prayer is invalid. Similarly, some people do not rest their toes on the floor when they prostrate. If their feet do not touch the ground even for a little while during a prostration and remain air-borne then that prostration is not performed, and if a prostration is not valid, the whole prayer becomes invalid.

CORRECT INTENTION ALONE IS NOT ENOUGH

These are a few examples. We do not pay attention to them and do not care to rectify the shortcomings. We

spend our time to offer the prayers but we do not pray in the correct manner with the result that the effort bears no fruit. To cap it all, there is a tendency these days that when the shortcoming is pointed out to anyone, he retorts promptly:

انما الاعمال بالنيات

Deeds depend on the intention behind them.

This answer is on our lips to offset our shortcomings and silence our critics. Indeed, Allah looks at the intentions behind efforts but if that was enough then why should we be required to undergo the exercise. We could have done everything in the comfort of our homes by merely forming intentions. The fact is that our deeds should also conform with our intentions. Suppose, anyone intends to go to Lahore but he boards a train that is bound for Quetta, will his intention take him to Lahore? In the same way, mere intention will not correct anyone's prayer. We have to offer prayer in the correct manner shown to us by our beloved Prophetﷺ. This is why the Prophet ﷺ said when he bid farewell to the young men, "Offer prayers as you have seen me pray." May Allah make us observe the niceties of prayer. *Aameen*!

SIGNIFICANCE OF *AZAN*

The Prophetﷺalso advised those young men:

فاذا حضرت الصلوٰة فليؤذن لكم احدكم

When it is time for prayers, one of you should call the *azan.*

The *azan*, is *masnoon*. If anyone is not offering prayers in the mosque but offers them in the wilderness of the desert then, too, it is *sunnah* to call the azan. Even if one offers prayers all alone then he must call the azan.

before he offers prayers. This is because it is a sign and symbol of the religion of Allah. Some ulama, were asked what was the point in calling the azan, in the wilderness or desert when there is no likelihood of any man hearing it or coming to prayer in response? Or, what is the point in calling it in the land of the infidels where no one is expected to join the congregation? The ulama, have suggested that the creatures of Allah are many and innumerable. It is possible that men may not hear the azan, and respond but there are the jinn, or the angels who might join the worshipper who calls out the azan, in his prayers. Anyway, we are commanded to call the azan, before establishing prayers.

LET THE ELDEST LEAD PRAYERS

The Prophet ﷺ then said to them that:

ولیؤمکم اکبرکم

The oldest among them must lead the prayers (in congregation).

The original command is that when a number of people are gathered for the congregational prayers then the most knowledgeable among them is to act as an *Imam* and lead prayers. However, in this particular case all the young men were equally knowledgeable in religious affairs and all of them had come to the Prophet ﷺ together and received like teaching. When such is the case then the oldest among them serves as the *Imam*. Allah has honoured the old in this way. It is incumbent upon the young to respect the oldest among them and request him to lead them.

TO EXALT THE ELDER IS PART OF ISLAMIC ETIQUETTE

It is related in a *Hadith* that in the times of the Prophet ﷺ a Muslim was killed by the Jews in Khyber which was a Jewish locality. The dead man had a brother who inherited him. He came to the Prophet ﷺ with his paternal uncle to find out how he might avenge his brother. The brother was naturally closer to the dead man while the other was his uncle. The former began to present his petition while the uncle kept quiet. The Prophet ﷺ remarked to the young man كَبِّرِ الْكُبْرَ "Elevate the old!" He meant to tell him that when the older man is present with him then he should not take precedence in speaking, but he should ask his uncle to take precedence. He may put in his word later on, if necessary.

This is part of Islamic etiquettes to exalt the aged even if he has no other distinction. Age itself is sufficient distinction.

Hence, the Prophet ﷺ had instructed the young men to let the oldest among them lead the prayers. The functions of the *Imam* are exercised by the most learned or, at least, by the oldest.

May Allah give us the strength to behave according to what we have read. *Aameen.*

و آخر دعوانا ان الحمد للہ رب العلمین

Venue : Sermon delivered at Jami` Masjid Bait ul Mukarr am

Date: After 'Asr Prayers

SEEKING DIVINE GUIDANCE

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيراً كثيراً

اما بعد

عن مكحول الازدى رحمه الله عليه قال سمعت ابن عمر رضى الله عنه يقول ان الرجل يستخيرالله تبارك و تعالىٰ فيختارله فيسخط على ربه عزوجل فلايلبث ان ينظر فى العاقبة فاذا هو خير له (كتاب الزهد لابن مبارك، زيادات الزهد لنعيم بن حماد، باب فى الرضا بالقضاء صفحه ٣٢)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is no one to misguide whom Allah guides and there is no one to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear

witness that there is no god but Allah Alone. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our authority, our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah have mercy on him, his household and on his Companions and bless them and send peace on them in great abundance.

MEANING

Sayyidina Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ has said, "Sometimes man seeks from Allah guidance wishing for that thing to happen which holds goodness for him. But, Allah lets that happen for this man which is better for him and since he cannot recognize it, he becomes displeased with Allah saying to himself that he had asked for something while Allah had given him another thing. He does not see it better for him at that moment but at a later moment he will realise that it was in his own interest and Allah had given him the right thing. Sometimes, this realisation of the correctness of Allah's decision dawns upon man in this world and sometimes in the next world".

We must understand a few things in the foregoing narration. Firstly, whenever a slave of Allah seeks the guidance of Allah, He selects the best thing for him. What is *Istikhara*, (seeking Divine guidance)? There are many wrong notions about it in the minds of people. Normally, they believe that it involves a complex action culminating in a dream in which the guidance is received. Nothing of the sort is taught to us by the Prophet ﷺ.

THE METHOD AND THE SUPPLICATION

The *Masnoon* method of *Istikharah* is to offer two rakaat prayer. An intention is formed:

I have two choices, O Allah! Select the one that is better for me.

Then, he must offer two rakaat optional prayers and make the supplication which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has recommended. This is a very interesting and marvelous supplication, which only a messenger can teach his people and it is beyond our abilities to compose such a supplication no matter how much we may try:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّیْ اَسْتَخِیْرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ وَاَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ وَاَسْئَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ الْعَظِیْمِ، فَاِنَّكَ تَقْدِرُ وَلَا اَقْدِرُ، وَتَعْلَمُ وَلَا اَعْلَمُ ، وَاَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُیُوْبِ، اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ اَنَّ هٰذَا الْاَمْرَ خَیْرٌ لِّیْ فِیْ دِیْنِیْ وَ مَعِیْشَتِیْ وَ عَاقِبَةِ اَمْرِیْ اَوْ قَالَ فِیْ عَاجِلِ اَمْرِیْ وَ آجِلِهٖ فَیَسِّرْهُ لِیْ ثُمَّ بَارِكْ لِیْ فِیْهِ، وَاِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ اَنَّ هٰذَا الْاَمْرَ شَرٌّ لِّیْ فِیْ دِیْنِیْ وَمَعِیْشَتِیْ وَعَاقِبَةِ اَمْرِیْ اَوْقَالَ فِیْ عَاجِلِ اَمْرِیْ وَ آجِلِهٖ فَاصْرِفْهُ عَنِّیْ وَاصْرِفْنِیْ عَنْهُ وَاقْدُرْ لِیَ الْخَیْرَ حَیْثُ كَانَ ثُمَّ اَرْضِنِیْ بِهٖ ۔ (ترمذی، کتاب الصلوٰۃ، باب ما جاء فی صلوٰۃ الاستخارۃ)

O Allah! I seek from You the good through Your knowledge, and I seek from You the ability through Your power. And I ask of You (favours) out of Your unlimited favours. For, surely, You have power and I have none and You have knowledge and I have none, and You are the best known of the hidden and unknown. O Allah! If, in Your knowledge, this matter be good for my faith, my livelihood and the consequences of my affairs - in this world and the next - then ordain it for me and make

it easy for me and bless me therein. But, if, in Your knowledge, this matter be bad for my faith, my livelihood and the consequences of my affairs then remove it away from me and remove me from it, and ordain for me the good wherever it be and cause me to be pleased with it.

"It means that "if the matter is not good for me then leave it aside and instead decree for me whatever is better for me, making me pleased with it and satisfied".

If this supplication is made after offering two rakaat, prayer then the *istikharah* is over.

NO TIME IS FIXED

Some people imagine that this procedure is followed always before sleeping at night, or after *isha* prayers. This belief is without foundation. In fact, *istikharah* may be made at any time suitable - at night, during the day, before sleeping or while fully awake.

RESPONSE NOT NECESSARILY SEEN IN DREAM

People also imagine wrongly that they would get the reply in a dream. That does not necessarily happen. Sometimes the guidance is forthcoming in a dream but sometimes one does not get it in a dream.

THE RESULTANT GUIDANCE

Some people contend that after making *istikharah,* they generally feel inclined to one action. So, they must follow that inclination. However, sometimes the confusion persists and a man cannot decide on a course of action. He should not worry in such cases, because the purpose of

istikharah, is served, and Allah alone does what is good for the petitioner so the situation takes such a turn that thereafter only what is good for him happens but he does not realize it. It is possible that a man may imagine a course of action to be suitable for him but suddenly he encounters hindrances and he turns away from that. In short, Allah creates certain means, after *istikharah,* whereby the man gets what is good for him. It is not necessary that he will recognise the action in which good lies for him.

IN THAT REALLY LIES GOOD

It sometimes happens that man is not happy with the results, and he complains to Allah, "O Allah! I had sought your guidance through *istikharah,* but the results are not what I had hoped for and I do not think they are ideal".

Sayyidina Abdullah bin Umar رضی اللہ عنہ comments on this reaction of man in these words, "O foolish one! Your limited intelligence fools you into imagining that the result is not ideal for you but He Whose knowledge encompasses everything, knows what is good for you and what is harmful. Only that what He has done is good for you. You might realise at some stage in this life that it was good for you, or you might never learn that all your life. Only in the Hereafter will you know the truth!

YOU ARE LIKE A CHILD

We may compare the supplicant to a child who demands vociferously to be given something that is harmful to him. When he sees that his parents do not let him have it, he supposes that they are cruel to him. However, when he grows old and Allah grants him intelligence and the power to recognize good from bad,

he will realise that he was seeking poison while his parents were trying to give him health. In comparison, Allah is more merciful and compassionate to His slaves than parents are to their children and He guides His slaves to the right path that is beneficial to them. It is another thing that they do not always recognize it in this life.

THE CASE OF SAYYIDINA MUSA عليه السلام

My mentor, Mawlana Doctor Abdul Hayy رحمة الله عليه, related an incident which I have not read in any book although some of the books may definitely contain it. He related that sayyidina Musa عليه السلام was going towards the mount Tur to receive the honour of a conversation with Allah. He met a man on the way who said to him. "Musa! You are going to have a conversation with Allah. You will not find a better opportunity to present your petition - full of your wishes and desires - before him. Hence, when you go there make a supplication for me too, because I am facing many problems and a mountain of difficulties. I am deep in poverty and worries. Pray for me that Allah may grant me comfort and safety. "Musa عليه السلام assured him that he would present his supplication before Allah.

GO WE HAVE GRANTED HIM PLENTY

At the Mount Tur, Sayyidina Musa عليه السلام talked with Allah and after the talk was over he remembered the man. He presented that man`s supplication before Allah and made a strong recommendation for him adding, "He is also one of Your slaves. Give him comfort through Your mercy and remove his difficulties. "Allah asked him whether he should grant him small favours or large bounties. Musa عليه السلام thought that if anyone asks of Allah, he should ask for plenty so he said to Allah, "O Allah! Since You are favouring, bestow an

him plenty. "Allah said, "Go! I have given him plentiful! Musa عليه السلام was satisfied and stayed at Mount Tur as long as he had to Stay.

ALL THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH

When he came down from the Mount Tur, Musa عليه السلام went to the house of that man and knocked at the door. However, someone else opened the door and when Musa عليه السلام asked him about the man, he informed him that he had died on such and such day. Now, Musa عليه السلام made a mental calculation and found that he had died shortly after his supplication to Allah. So, he protested to Allah that he could not understand why he had caused him to die after having assured him that he would give him plentiful. Allah reminded Musa عليه السلام that, he had asked him to bestow much on the man and if he had given him all the world then that would not have been enough. "I have now bestowed on him bounties of the Hereafter and Paradise which, indeed, reflect correctly on My promise. He now has plentiful which he never could have received on earth.

Man cannot understand the decision of Allah with his limited intelligence. Only He knows what is better for His slaves. Man looks at the visible and pours out his complaints and he regards the decisions of Allah as against his interests but he should realise that no one can see better than Allah what is good for His servants.

BE COMPOSED AFTER MAKING *ISTIKHARA*

This is why Abdullah bin Umar رضى الله عنه has advised, "When you have sought Divine guidance, be confident that Allah will only decide what is good for you. It may not seem good to you on the face of it but as far as the

consequences are concerned it will be to your advantage. It may reveal its good to you in this life, or else it surely will become apparent to you in the next life that Allah has given you what was really good for you."

A SEEKER OF GUIDANCE NEVER FAILS

Another *Hadith* quotes the Prophetﷺ as saying:

ماخاب من استخار ولا ندم من استشار (مجمع الزوائد، جلد ۸ صفحہ ۹۶)

One who seeks Divine guidance never fails and one who seeks advice never repents.

He will never reproach himself for taking any course of action or doing anything because he had followed counsel. The Hadith assures us that one who makes istikharah, never fails because the final result is always favourable to him even if he does not see that immediately. As for him who has taken counsel, he will never repent because even if things go against him he will have the consolation of having taken advice. He had not followed his own whims.

A BRIEF SUPPLICATION FOR *ISTIKHARAH*

The mathod of *istikharah*-seeking Divine guidance-described above is applicable when the seeker has ample opportunity available to him before he presents his petition. He will offer two rakaat prayers and make the supplication. However, often man has to make a spontaneous decision so he does not have enough time with him in which he may offer two rakaat prayers and make the recommended supplication. The Holy Prophetﷺ has exhorted us to make the following supplication at such time:

اَللّٰهُمَّ خِرْ لِیْ وَاخْتَرْلِیْ (کنز العمال، جلد ۷، حدیث نمبر ۱۸۰۵۳)

O Allah! Select for me what I should do.

There is also this supplication:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اهْدِنِیْ وَسَدِّدْنِیْ (صحیح مسلم، ابواب الذکر والدعاء، باب التعوذ من شر ما عمل)

O Allah! Guide me and set me on the right path.

Again one more supplication:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَلْهِمْنِیْ رُشْدِیْ (ترمذی، کتاب الدعوات، باب نمبر ۷۰)

O Allah! Put in my heart what is right.

The supplicant must make any one of these supplications. If he cannot remember these supplications in Arabic, he may make them in his own language. He may even simply reflect on these supplications in his mind, "O Allah! I am facing this diffuculty. Do put in my heart the right path which is pleasing to you and which is good for me."

THE PRACTICE OF THE MUFTI AZAM

I have observed my dear father, Mufti Azam of Pakistan, Mawlana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. Whenever he had to make an urgent decision and select one of several options, he would shut his eyes for a while and turn to Allah for guidance. To a stranger it would not be apparent why he shut the eyes. When he shut the eyes, he would make a mental supplication to Allah, "O Allah! I cannot decide which course to adopt in this complex situation. Do guide me to what is right in Your eyes. "This is a brief *istikharah* in the heart.

TURN TO ALLAH BEFORE DOING ANYTHING

My mentor, Mawlana Doctor Abdul Hayy رحمة الله عليه used to say, "If anyone turns to allay before doing anything then Allah surely helps him because he does not realize what he has achieved in the moment he turned to Allah. He has linked himself to Allah in that moment and has asked for goodness from Him and the right path. This means that he gets the straight path and the reward for establishing a link with Allah and yet another reward for making a supplication to Him. Allah loves the slave who turns to Him at such times and He rewards him generously for that. Therefore, man should make it a habit to turn to Allah for there are innumerable times every day when he has to make a decision. If he turns to Allah every now and then and asks for guidance from Him then He will surely help.

MADE A SUPPLICATION BEFORE HE REPLIED TO ANYONE

Mawalana Ashraf Ali Thanavi رحمة الله عليه used to say that he never stayed behind in turning to Allah when anyone visited him and wished to ask a question. He turned to Allah not knowing what sort of a question the visitor would ask. "O Allah! Let me give this man the correct answer to his question." He never failed to turn to Allah. This is what it is to have a relationship with Allah. We must also make the same habit.

Mawlana Doctor Abdul Hayy رحمة الله عليه used to say, "Talk to Allah, seek his help in every matter. Ask Him to guide you. Make it a habit and soon your relationship with Him will be strengthened. Then, you will always have Him in mind. "He used to say that we will not do what the sufis used to do in times passed but if you act on my advice then

you will establish a relationship with Allah.

May Allah help us to act on whatever we have read. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

Venue : Sermon delivered at Jami` Masjid Bait ul Mukarram

Date: After 'Asr Prayers

GOODNESS IS RECIPROCATED BY GOODNESS

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليماً كثيراً كثيراً

اما بعد

عن جابرعبدالله رضى الله تعالىٰ عنه قال قال النبى ﷺ من اعطى عطاء فوجد فليجزبه ومن لم يجد فليثن فان من اثنى فقد شكر ومن كتم فقد كفر ومن تحلى بما لم يعطه كان كلابس ثوبى زور۔

(ترمذى ، كتاب البر والصلة، باب ماجاء فى المتشبع بما لم يعطه)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is no one to misguide whom Allah guides and there is no

one to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah Alone. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our authority, our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah have mercy on him, his household and on his Companions and bless them and send peace on them in great abundance.

TRANSLATION

Sayyidina Jabir bin Abdullah رضی اللہ عنہ has said that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

If goodness is shown to someone and he has the means to reciprocate then he must reciprocate. But if he does not have the means to return the favour then he must at least make mention of the favour shown to him and praise the benefactor. He who praises in this manner, in fact, shows gratitude, but if he conceals the favour then he shows ingratitude. As for him who appropriates what was not given to him is like one who dons two gaments of falsehood.

REWARDING GOODNESS

The Prophet ﷺ has taught us in this *Hadith* that if any one shows another person a favour or does some good with him, then the recepient must reciprocate in some way to the benefactor. The reciprocation is referred to in another *Hadith* by the word *mukafat*[1]. The Prophet ﷺ reference to reciprocation means that the beneficiary returns the goodness with the thought that the benefactor has been

1. Requital

good to him. It is the *sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that he always rewarded one who presented him a gift or did a favour with goodness. Therefore reciprocation entitles one to reward from Allah.

NIYOTA IS DISALLOWED

There is a form of reciprocation in our society which is imposed on a person against his will. He fears that if he does not reciprocate, other people will look down upon him. Or, a person gives a gift on the assumption that he will get a return for it. This form of give-and-take is called *niyota*. A list is made out of the persons who give gifts so when those people in the list have an occasion they will receive a like gift. In fact, if the return gift is lesser than what was given, there is a hard-feeling and bitterness. The sort of a return is disallowed. The Quran has compared it to interest:

وَمَا اٰتَيْتُمْ مِنْ رِّبًا لِّيَرْبُوَا فِيْٓ اَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ فَلَا يَرْبُوْا عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ وَمَآ اٰتَيْتُمْ مِّنْ زَكٰوةٍ تُرِيْدُوْنَ وَجْهَ اللّٰهِ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُضْعِفُوْنَ ۝ (سورۂ روم:۳۹)

And whatever you give in usu ry in order that it may increase upon people's riches it increase s not with Allah, but what you give in zakat. Seeking Allah's countenance, (will increase), so those who (do this) shall have manifold increase.(Ar-Rum, 30:39)

This verse defines *niyota* as interest. If anyone gives somethings to someone because he had given him on an occasion then it is sinful to give with that intention. We must never give-and-take in this manner. There is no gain in this world or the next to those who indulge in this practice of gift-against-gift or favour against favour.

LET LOVE BE THE CRITERION OF GIVE AND TAKE

There is one reciprocation which has been recommended to us by the Prophetﷺ. The giver may not expect a return but he gives only out of love and affection to seek the pleasure of Allah. The Prophetﷺhas said about it:

تَهَادَوْا فَتَحَابُّوْا

Exchange gifts and grow mutual love.

Therefore, if anyone gives with this saying of the Prophetﷺin mind and he has not even a distant expectation of receiving return then his giving is a source of blessing. The receipient also holds no such idea (like *niyota*) and feels not compelled to show a return gesture but wishes to be able to reciprocate brotherly feelings. Such a reciprocation is *Mukafat* which is applauded and recommended by the Prophet ﷺ.

DO NOT TRY TO EQUAL RETURN GIFT

The *mukafat* implies that no attempt is made to equal the return gift in terms of value. The one who reciprocates will believe that the gift was given to him according to the means of the giver and he would return the gesture according to his own means. Thus, if some one gives us a precious gift, it is not necessary for us to return a gift equally precious but we may give a gift which we can afford that person will not mind because he had given the gift to please us, and our intention in reciprocating is also to please him. We must stay within our means and not borrow money for that or resort to unfair means like bribery, etc.

TO PRAISE IS ALSO A FORM OF RECIPROCATION

In fact, the *Hadith* tells us that if anyone cannot give a return gift then it is open to him to praise the benefactor and reveal his favour to other people. He may speak highly of that man and thus please him.

THE WAY OF DOCTOR ABDUL HAYY (رحمة الله عليه)

My mentor, Doctor Abdul Hayy رحمة الله عليه used to say that if any one brought a gift in expression of his love then the recepient must, at least, display pleasure so that he is convinced of approval. It was the habit of my mentor that he accepted a gift with deep pleasure and used to say. "Brother" this is what I like and what I needed!" or , "I like it very much. In fact, I was thinking of byuing it." The giver naturally felt elated at his gift being accepted, and at the same time it also showed his observance of the directions of the *Hadith*. To conceal the gift or not appreciate is to be ungrateful.

TO PRESENT A GIFT IN SECRET

Once someone brought gift for Mawlana Doctor Abdul Hayy رحمة الله عليه, but gave it to him quietly while shaking his hands, because this is one way to present something. The Mawlana asked him what it was and he said that it was a gift he liked to give him. The Mawlana remarked then why give it stealthily for neither you nor I have stolen it but you are following a saying of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Why then conceal it? There is no harm in giving it in the presence of other people. For it is an expression of love. Anyway, a gift is an expression of love whether it is small or large and when anyone gives you anything you must reciprocate, or at least shower praise on the giver.

WHY INVOKE BLESSINGs ON THE PROPHET FREQUENTLY IN TIMES OF DISTRESS?

Once Mawalana Doctor Abdul Hayy رحمة الله عليه advised us that if anyone is in some difficulty then he must frequently invoke blessings on the Prophet ﷺ. He then told us why this should be done. He said, we find in a *Hadith*, that when anyone invokes blessings on the Prophet, the angels convey them to him and submit to him the name of the man of his *Ummah* who had invoked the blessing. Now we know that it was the practice of the Prophet ﷺ in his life time that if anyone gave him a gift, he was sure to receiprocate. If we take these things into account, we can conclude that it is not possible that he will receive the gift of the blessing but not give a return gift. He will give a gift surely. He will reciprocate by making a supplication for this man. "O Allah! This man of my *Ummah* who is invoking blessings on me is in difficulty and distress. O Allah! Remove his problem from him."

Then, by granting this supplication, Allah will relieve him of his difficulty. Therefore, whenever anyone is trapped in anxiety or hardship, he must invoke blessings on the Prophet ﷺ frequently.

SUMMARY

The gist of our discussion is that the Prophet ﷺ has given us instructions in this *Hadith* that if any one favours us then we must try to reciprocate with the intention of observing the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ who definitely made a return gift or favour. But, we must not return it as though we are returning a debt or we are following the custom *niyota*. Our reciprocal gesture must be to please Allah and observe the *sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

May Allah give us strength and ability to put these

lessons into practice. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

Venue : Sermon delivered at Jami` Masjid Bait Ul Mukarr am

Date: : After 'Asr Prayers

MERIT OF BUILDING A MOSQUE

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

اِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ مَسٰجِدَ اللّٰهِ مَنْ اٰمَنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ (التوبه ۱۸)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is no one to misguide whom Allah guides and there is no one to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah Alone.

He has no partner. I also bear witness that our authority, our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah have mercy on him, his household and on his Companions and bless them and send peace on them in great abundance.
He only shall inhabit the places of Allah, worship who believes in Allah and the last day. (At-Tawba, 9:18)

FIRST WORDS

Honourable President, Respected Guestes. As-Salam alaykum wa rahmatAllahi wa baraktuh!.

It is a very auspicious moment for us that we are about to take part in the foundation of a mosque. It is very fortunate for a Muslim to be able to build a mosque or to take part in its construction. The verse of the Quran recited before you tells us that only those people inhabit mosques who believe in Allah and the last day. Thus, the building of mosques is the sign of a person's faith as also. The first demand on his faith.

THE PLACE OF THE MOSQUE

Every Muslim is aware of the position of a mosque in Islamic Society. The Holy Prophet ﷺ has termed as Salah (regular prayer) as a pillar of religion and he said "One who established prayer, in fact, establishes religion. And one who abandons prayers, breaks the founding pillar of religion.

The prayer that is truly approved in the sight of Allah is the one offered with the congregation in the mosque. As for the prayer that is offered at home, the jurist call it an incomplete offering, meaning that it is

imperfect. The perfect offering of the prayer is to offer it with the congregation in the mosque.

MUSLIMS & THE MOSQUE

Mosque has been a distinguishing mark of the Muslims for, to whichever region they have gone, the first thing they did was build the house of Allah whether they had their own home or not. It is known of them that they discharged this obligation in very serious and dangerous conditions too when their lives were at stake, when they did not have enough wealth and faced extreme poverty.

AN EXAMPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA

It was about seven years ago that I visited South Africa. I went to Cape Twon and found that many malaysians lived there. Of the total number of Muslims there, Malaysians formed an eighty percent majority. I was anxious to know how they reached South Africa and was told of an interesting historical fact which, indeed, is worth learning from.

THE MALAYSIANS REACH CAPE TOWN

These people were of the stock of those Malaysians who had fought the British Colonisers unsuccessfully and had failed to drive them out of their country because of inadequate weapons of war. The Britishers took them as captives and put them in fetters and brought them to Cape Town as slaves. These white people talk of democracy to day but they had subjugated innumerable people and chained them at their feet. They disallowed them to offer prayers in accordance with their religion not even in their homes. They whipped anyone found offering prayers.

PRAYERS IN THE DARK OF THE NIGHT

These people were made to labour hard and oppressed cruely. When their masters prepared to sleep in the night, they unchained thes

e Malaysians so that they could go to their barracks and sleep. But they would sneak out one by one to the nearby mountains and offer they day's prayers all together in congregational form.

LET US OFFER PRAYERS

Allah decreed that the Dutch attacked Cape Town to seize it. The Britishers had known that the Malaysians were very good fighters and worriors. They were very brave. So, they asked them to drive away the Dutch but the Malaysians said that it made them no difference whether the Britishers had authority of the Dutch, for they were slaves any way. However, they were willing to fight the Dutch on condition that they be permitted to offer prayers in Cape Town and allowed to build a mosque.

ONLY THE DEMAND TO BUILD A MOSQUE

We must heed this fact- these people did not demand monetary remuneration. They did not ask to be set free, and they did not put forth any material condition. Their only demand was that they be allowed to build a mosque. Accordingly, they fought the Dutch very bravely and compelled them to retreat. The Malaysians then reminded the Britishers of their demand and were allowed to build a mosque. These poor people built the first mosque in Cape Town in very trying conditions. They lacked proper tools and material and money. They even

could not determine the *qiblah*[1] with the result that it is off the mark by 20 degree or 25 degree. Today, the prayer mats are spread at the proper angle which leaves disalligned with the walls.

These brave people did not ask for a house to live in and they did not demand money. They did not seize the opportunity to demand proper food and drink. Their demand was that they should be allowed to construct a mosque. This is the history of the Muslim people. They preferred a mosque over everything else and did not omit the duty of building it in their pitiable condition, too.

THE SAVOUR OF FAITH

In fact, it is such people who receive the savour of faith. We are the ones who have received the religion without effort. We are born to Muslim parents and had to make no sacrifice for Islam. We have spend no money and put in no effort. The result is that we do not realise the worth of Islam. Only those who have worked for it, made sacrifices and undergone trials, know the real worth of it.

WE MUST BE THANKFUL

I have narrated this event so that we may be thankful to Allah that we face no restriction on building mosques. We are able to build a mosque whenever and wherever we like. Hence, it is our great fortune that we build this mosque and everyone who takes part in it, in whatever way, is indeed worth congratulating.

1. The direction in which Muslims pray, facing the ka'bah at Makkah.

MOSQUE IS INHABITED BY THE WORSHIPPERS WHO PRAY

I must state here that a mosque is built not with its walls, the bricks and building material. The first mosque which the Prophetﷺbuilt in Islam at Madinah- the Masjid Nabawi- did not even have a solid roof or firm walls but it walls were made of leaves of date palm. In spite of that there is no mosque more meritorious than it besides the Masjid Al-Haram at Makkah. A mosque is not the area within the walls with towering minaret and the riche. Rather, it is the name of those who prostrate[1]

We may build a very large mosque, beautiful in all respects and its walls well adorned, but it is bereft of worshippers. That mosque is deserted. A mosque is inhabited with the worshippers who offer prayers.

MOSQUES WHEN THE HOUR WILL APPROACH

The Holy Prophetﷺdescribed the Last Day and the Day of Resurrection and he said a time will come:

مَسَاجِدُهُمْ عَامِرَةٌ وَهِيَ خَرَابٌ

It would look that the Mosques are occupied and they will be well built, very beautiful to look at, but deserted within.

There will be very few worshippers inside. Very few people will use them for the purpose for which they are built. Iqbal has said about it that mosques are built overnight by the believers but their hearts are sinful and they could not become worshippers in ages.

1. A mosque is a *masjid*, and prostration is *sajdah* both words are derived from the same root

مسجد تو بنادی شب بھر میں ایماں کی حرارت والوں نے
من اپنا پرانا پاپی ہے برسوں میں نمازی بن نہ سکا

CONCLUSION

Anyway, all those who are participating in building this mosque are very fortunate. May Allah make their task easy. *Aameen.*

We must remember, however, that our task does not end with the erection of the mosque. In fact, our duty begins after putting the edifice up. We have to inhabit it with worshippers who offer prayers, who recite the Qur'an in its. Precincts and remember Allah often.

The Mosque occupies a central position in Islamic society. It is here that life is fashioned, character built and manners shapped. Mosques are built for these purposes. It is, then, occupied in the literal sense and the figurative sense.

May Allah make this mosque a source of goodness and blessing for the people of the neighbourhood. May He cause these people to fulfil their obligations and may they inhabit this mosque and keep it occupied. *Aameen.*

و آخر دعوانا ان الحمد للہ رب العلمین

Venue : Sermon delivered at Jami` Masjid Bait ul Mukarram

Date: After 'Asr Prayers

SEEK LAWFUL LIVELIHOOD! A RELIGIOUS OBLIGATION

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيراً كثيراً

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

عن عبدالله بن مسعود رضى الله عنه ان رسول الله ﷺ قال:

" طَلَبُ كسب الحَلالِ فريضةٌ بعد الفريضةِ "

(كنزالعمال جلد ٤، حديث نمبر ٩٦٣١)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is no one to misguide whom Allah guides and there is no

one to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah Alone. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our authority, our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah have mercy on him, his household and on his Companions and bless them and send peace on them in great abundance.

TO SEEK LAWFUL LIVELIHOOD IS THE NEXT IMPRORTANT OBLIGATION

Sayyidina Abdullah bin Mas'ud رضی اللہ عنہ has said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "to seek lawful livelihood is next to the first rank obligations of religion."

The scholars of *Hadith* have termed this *Hadith* as weak in its line of transmission but the ulama have accepted it because of its implication, and they unanimously regard it as sound on that basis.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that to work and toil and earn lawful livelihood is second only to the basic obligations, the pillars of Islam-*Prayer* ,*Zakah*, *Fasting* and *Hajj*, etc Trying to earn a lawful livelihood is and obligatory duty next to the basic obligations. This is a brief saying and a brief teaching but it is very comprehensive in meaning.

SEEKING LAWFUL LIVELIHOOD PART OF RELIGION

The first thing this *Hadith* teaches us is to seek a lawful livelihood is not alien to religion. We may try to earn a livelihood through business, agriculture, employment or labour. It is a part of religion and not merely commendable but also an obligatory duty second only to the basic

obligations. Thus, if anyone avoids this duty and remains idle, not trying to earn a livelihood then he commits a sin because he neglects an obligation. *Shari'ah* calls upon us not to remain idle and lazy or depend on others for our livelihood. Man is asked not to beg from anyone besides Allah. The Prophet ﷺ has shown us a way to save ourselves from that by endeavouring, according to our capacities, to earn a lawful livelihood. Allah has not only placed on us certain duties concerning Himself and religion but he has also placed on us rights of our bodies and souls and of our families. These rights cannot be given to them without trying to gain a lawful livelihood.

ISLAM DISDAINS MONKERY

This *Hadith* cuts at the roots of a monastic way of life. The Christians claim that one must forsake worldly pursuits to gain nearness to Allah, not only pursuit of lawful livelihood but also natural inclinations. Christianity advocates seclusion in the wilderness to remember Allah. However, Allah tells us that he has created mankind and put in him human desires. He feels hungry and thirsty and needs garments to cover his body and a house to live in. Then, man is called upon to satisfy these needs and, at the same time, meet the rights of Allah. When he strikes a proper blance only then will he be a perfect human being. But, if he sits idle then, no matter how highly he is engrossed in remembering Allah, he can never attain nearness to him.

THE PROPHET'S ﷺ WAYS TO LAWFUL LIVELIHOOD

Allah required all the Prophets علیہم السلام to earn a lawful livelihood. Everyone of them worked to end. There were among them labourers, carpenters, and shepherds. The Holy

Prophetﷺ also tended sheep against remuneration worked as a labourer and engaged in business. He travelled to Syria twice in connection with business on behalf of sayyidah khadijah رضی الله عنها. He cultivated land at gurf a place at a short distance from Madinah. We find him occupied in every way of earning a lawful livelihood, so that they are all *sunnah*. Thus, if in pursuing them we form an intention of following the *sunnah* then our endeavour will become part of religion whether it is labour, business or farming.

A BELIEVER'S WORLD IS ALSO RELIGION

This *Hadith* has removed a misconception that religion and worldly life are two different things. But the fact is that a believer's world is also his religion like earning a livelihood, is part of his religion, provided he acts correctly in conformity with the teachings of the Prophetﷺ. If we understand it correctly then we can keep ourselves away from being misguided in many ways.

SOME SUFIS LEAVE EVERYTHING TO GOD

It is reported about some of the sufis that they did not adopt means of livelihood and did not work for a living. They spent a life of *tawakkal*[1].

They thanked Allah for whatever he sent them and showed contentment on what they received. If he did not send them anything, they patiently persevered.

This depended on one of two situations. They could not have been in the world of normal senses but may have been in the world of the lost. When that is the case, the injunctions of *shari'ah* do not apply on such people. If the sufis were so lost then it was their individual condition

1. Reliance on Allah.

and their way of life not apply on all the *Ummah*.

The second possibility is that their *tawakkal* was of very high degree and the were resigned to living without food for months on end. They never extended their hands before anyone else, and they nevere complained to anyone. These sufis were very strong people and had attained a very high station in life. They had thought it enough for them to spend their lives in *zikr* (Remembernece of Allah) and did not mind if they faced hunger for long periods of time. They had no obligations concerning rights of other people, for they had no wives or children. Hence, this attitude to life was peculiar to them and weak people like us should not imitate them. We must follow only what the Prophet ﷺ has prescribed for us . To seek livelihood is an obligation second to the basic duties of a Muslim.

WE MUST SEEK THE LAWFUL

To seek livelihood is an obligation if it is the lawful that we seek. It is not merely food, clothing and money that we should seek in any way whatever proper or improper through lawful means or unlawful means. If we do not pay attention to this condition then our effort loses its merit and does not form part of religion. There is then no difference in the effort for livelihood by a Muslim and a disbeliever. A believer examines every part of his earnings and ensures that he receives according to the pleasure of Allah. Anything against that, he leaves away.

ALL LABOUR IS NOT LAWFUL

Some people have adopted means of earning which are not lawful. *Shariah* disallows such efforts. For instance, some people live on interest earnings. If they are reminded of the evil, they are quick to indicate that they labour over it and invest their monies for that, and put time into it.

They must know that only that earning is lawful and that labour or effort is proper which are sanctioned by Allah. If man puts in strenuous efforts and labour in ways not shown by the Prophet ﷺ then his earnings are unlawful. Even a Call girl can say that she works hard but her earnings are clearly unlawful.

IS THE OCCUPATION LAWFUL?

Hence, when we have a means of earning before us, we must first examine whether it is lawful or unlawful. If *shari'ah* does not allow it then we must forsake it no matter how much wealth we see in it. We must take up only that occupation which has the approval of Allah no matter how little it holds for us.

WHAT SHOULD A BANK EMPLOYEE DO?

Many people are employed in banks whose business rests on interest. In other words, the employees of a bank abet in the crime of interest dealings. Their employment is illegal and unlawful. The ulama have ruled that if any of the bank employees are guided by Allah and they come to realize that they are pursuing an unlawful course then they must begin their search for a lawful means of employment. They must look out for that with such a strong effort and zeal as they would if they had been unemployed. When they find out a lawful occupation they must immediately quit the bank employment even if they will get a smaller income at the other place.

BLESSINGS OF LAWFUL EARNINGS

Allah has blessed lawful livelihood but not the unlawful, a little of the lawful provides more benefit than much of the unlawful. The Prophet ﷺ made this

supplication after performing ablution:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْلِیْ ذَنْبِیْ وَ وَسِّعْ لِیْ فِیْ دَارِیْ وَبَارِكْ لِیْ فِیْ رِزْقِیْ (ترمذی، کتاب الدعوات، باب دعاء یقال فی اللیل، حدیث نمبر ۳۴۹۶)

"O Allah! Forgive me my sins, and make my house spacious for me and bless me in my livelihood."

These day's people do not appreciate the worth of blessings. They merely count money and think in monetary terms. They do not evaluate the normal returns of their wealth in terms of comfort and peace. Blessings cannot be bought and many rich people lack that but it is only they on whom Allah farows it who enjoy it. Blessings are found in lawful livelihood not in the unlawful. Therefore, we must pay attention to our earnings and ensure that we feed our family members only the lawful, *shari'ah* sanctioned.

PART OF THE SALARY THAT IS UNLAWFUL

There are some sources of income which we all know are unlawful, like interest, bribery, etc. But some other source we do not know as unlawful. For instance, hours of work are fixed and the employment is also proper and lawful. But the employees are slack in observance of these hours of work. The salary for the number of hours they absent themselves on purpose is their unlawful earning; similarly the hours they waste at work are also unlawful. But, most of us do not realise that.

VOLUNTARY PAY CUT OF TEACHERS OF MADRASAH

At the *Madrasa* at Thana Bhawan attached to the *khanqah*[1] of Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanavi, every teacher and employee had a register with him. The procedure is explained here. The teacher for instance, had to teach six hours a day. If during this time they received a guest, they wrote down in the register the time when he departed. They, maintained the register in this manner. At the end of the month, they informed the accountant the ember of hours during which they had entertained their guests. They voluntarily asked him to deduct the salary for those hours from their total salary of the month. Further, they did not merely calculate the hours spent with the guests, they also took into account the time they used to attend to their personal affairs.

Their thinking was that they had sold those hours to the institution and the salary against the hours not delivered become unlawful for them. Today, we do not think in these terms and we only consider interest and bribery as unlawful. Our minds do not see that our earnings are unlawful in various respects.

CHEATING THE TRAIN

We are also used to cheating the railways. We purchase the ticket for a lower class but travel in a higher class and save the difference in fare. The saving is unlawful and mingles with our lawful wealth.

EXCESS BAGGAGE

Those who were associated with Mawlana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه were known to get their luggage weighed before

1. Retreat, recluse.

they travelled by train. They duly paid the fare against excess baggage if that was more than the allowed weight.

MAWLANA THANAVI'S JOURNEY

Once the Mawlana was about to travel by train. He went straight to the counter where luggage was weighed. The guard was there by a coincidence and he knew the Mawlana. He said to the mawlana:

"Why do you trouble yourself to get the luggage weighed?. Board the train straightaway for I am the guard on the train and no one will ask you during the journey, or demand penalty for concealing excess baggage."

Mawlana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه asked him:

How far he would accompany him and he named the place. " what, after that?"

He said:

"I will instruct the next guard to let you travel with the excess baggage,"

The Mawlana asked:

"How far will that guard see me through?"

"He will accompany you to the end of the journey."

But, Mawlana Thanavi said to him:

"I have to go further down."

He asked the Mawlana:

"How far?"

"I have to go beyond that to Allah, the High, which guard will accompany me there and help me get through the reckoning ?"

After that the Mawlana advised the guard that the train was not his property and that he had no authority to allow anyone carry extra baggage without paying the fare, "I may get through the authorities in this world because of your

abatement but the little unlawful money I save thereby will become part of my wealth. I will be questioned by Allah about the unlawful savings and I do not know of any guard who will save me there."

The guard realised his mistake and the Mawlana paid for the excess baggage and boarded the train.

THE UNLAWFUL MINGLES WITH THE LAWFUL

Therefore, if anyone who travels by any means and does not pay against the excess baggage he carries then his savings thereby are not lawful. It becomes part of the lawful livelihood he had earned and corrupts it.

LACK OF BLESSINGS

Everyone of us is in anxiety today. The rich and the super-rich all are uncomfortable and worried. Their expenses are mounting high and their problems are multiplying. The reason is that we do not distinguish between lawful and unlawful. We only know of a few prominent things as unlawful and do try to keep ourselves away from them, but we pay no attention to the various ways in which we earn unlawful money.

CHEATING ON TELEPHONE AND ELECTRICITY

Some of us combine with the realted people in the telephone department and misuse our telephone to make unpaid calls, local or overseas. This is a way to deprive the department of its due and our savings in this manner are unlawful.

Similarly, the electric meter is tampered with and savings are made on electric consumption. Here again the

unlawful adulterates our lawful earnings, and we have shut our eyes to that.

There are many other such ways in which we cheat. The result is that we have deprived ourselves of blessings.

WE MUST THINK ABOUT IT

It view of this situation, it is imperative upon us that before doing anything we must ask ourselves if what we hope to do is correct or not. If anyone spends his life in this manner, sifting the wrong from the right and refraining from earning the unlawful then must rest assured that though he may lag behind in supererogatory worship and remembrance of Allah yet he will go straight to Paradise, if Allah wills that. On the contrary, if he does not refrain from the unlawful and fails to distinguish between the lawful and the unlawful then though he may get up in the middle of the night to pray and offer all kinds of optional prayers yet these exercises will not protect him from chastisement against unlawful earnings. May Allah guide all Muslims. *Aameen.*

MEN ARE MOULDED HERE

Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanavi رحمة الله عليه used to say that people visit the recluse (*Khanqah*) to practice *zikr* (Rembrance of Allah). If that is in their minds, there are many such *khanqah* around for them to go. But, at my place, we mould man, we teach him to act according to *shariah.* Thus, if any bearded man stood at the ticket counter to buy a railway ticket, the ticket seller would know him and ask him if he wanted a ticket of Thana Bhawan.

Mawlana Thanvi رحمة الله عليه was known to say that it did not upset him very much if anyone associated with

him missed the rota of worship but he abhorred one who did not separate the unlawful from the lawful and cared not in his dealings to distinguish between the two.

A LESSON- GIVING CASE OF ONE OF HIS DEPUTIES

Mulana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه had appointed someone as his *khalifah* to look after his affairs with the disciples. Once, he journeyed upto the Mawlana and had his child with him. During the converstation the mawlana asked him if he had come to him by train and he confirmed that. The Mawlana asked him:

> If he had paid the full fare for the child or half?.
> He did not ask him if he was regular in performing the rota of worship but he asked him about the child's fare.
> He said:
> What he had paid half fare for the child."How old is he?"
> "Mawlana! He is truly thirteen years old but looks like a twelve year child. So, I paid a half fare."

This response pained the Mawlana very much and he removed him as his *khalifah,* saying:

> "I had made a mistake. You are not worthy of that responsibility.You do not know the difference between the lawful and the unlawful. If the child was over twelve years even by a day, you should have paid full fare."

If anyone came to him and said that he had lagged behind in observing the routine schedule of woroship the Mawlana would advise him to seek forgiveness of Alalh and recommence the exercise and resolve not to be lax ever again. He never relieved anyone as *khalifah* for lagging behind in the schedule of worship. But, he relieved that man

from the responsibilities of *khalifah* because he could not distinguish between the lawful and the unlawful and thus was not moulded into a man. This is in line with the Prophet's ﷺ saying that seeking lawful livelihood is an obligation second only to the basic obligations .

THE UNLAWFUL DEVOURS THE LAWFUL

Each one of us must take an account of his earnings and the work he does. He must make sure that there are no gaps through which he gets unlawful earnings. I have presented some examples of unlawful incone but there are many ways in which one receives unlawful money, knowingly or unknowingly. Our elders have told us that when the unlawful becomes part of the lawful then it destroys it. The blessings are lost and the man, whose wealth it is, loses peace and comfort thus, it becomes necessary that we examine our deeds and incomes, and preserve ourselves from unlawful earnings.

AIM OF LIFE IS NOT TO SEEK LIVELIHOOD

This *Hadith* also tells us that while it is not irreligious to seek lawful livelihood, it is not a top priority to seek lawful livelihood. It has become the objective of everyone, today, to strive after social well-being and uplift. All of us have one thing on mind: how to multiply our wealth? We aim to achieve progress monetarily, the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said to us that to seek lawful livelihood is an obligation, no doubt, but it is next to the other obligations. It is not the main purpose of human life but it is a necessity. It is because of the necessity that man is not only allowed to search for a livelihood but also

encouraged to do nevertheless, the purpose of life is something else. It is to establish a relationship with Allah and to worship him .

OBLLIGATIONS MUST NOT BE OVERLOOKED

Hence, when one is faced with a choice between livelihood and obligations to Allah, he must prefer the obligations imposed on him by Allah. Some people go to the extremes. They have learnt that it is an obligation to seek a livelihood so they go to extremes in showing it as an obligation and overlook prayers, fasting, etc. if they are reminded of their duty, they argue that what they were engaged in a religious duty and their religion has allowed them to do that.

A DOCTOR'S ARGUMENT

A lady once told me that her husband was a doctor who did not offer prayers at their proper times when he was in his clinic. He redeemed the three times prayers when he returned home at night. The lady said that she did advise him to offer the prayers at the right time but he pleads that Islam has taught us to serve humanity and he was engaged in that. He argued that there was nothing wrong in giving up prayer to serve humanity.

This man abandoned the first rank obligation to pursue a secondary obligation, seeking a livelihood. If there has to be a selection between the two then the first religious obligation must be perferred.

THE CASE OF A BLACKSMITH

My respected father Mawlana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه related about Sayyidina Abdullah bin Mubarak that he was a high ranking man of Allah, a great

scholar of *Hadith* and a *sufi*. When he died, someone saw him in a dream and asked him how he fared with Allah. He said that he was rewarded very well but he found that a blacksmith who lived in a house opposite his own had overtaken him in the honour and favour he received.

When this man awoke, he traced the house of the blacksmith who had also died, and he asked his wife about him. She could only say that he was engaged in his trade all day. However, this man told her about the dream and asked her to tell him what deed of his could have brought him that honour which shadowed a man like Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه.

REGRET AT NOT BEING ABLE TO OFFER THE TAHAJJUD

The wife of the blacksmith told the man that her husband used to see Abdullah bin Mubarak رحمة الله عليه offer the *tahajjud* prayers long in the night on the roof of his house and regret that he did not have as much free time with him to offer the late night optional prayers. He repented that after his day-long work he got tired and felt sleepy so could not offer the *tahajjud* prayers.

STOPED WORK AT PRAYER-TIME

Another peculiarity with him was that whenever, during his work, he heard the *azan*, he ceased work. If the hammer was raised aloft and the first words of *azan* sounded, he did not bring it down to strike the iron but cast it aside, he said that it was not proper to keep working when the calll for prayer was heard. He turned towards the Mosque at that. The man who had seen the dream remarked, " No wonedr Abdullah bin Mubarak envies him."

IF ONE OF THE TWO IS TO BE SELECTED, GIVE UP THE SEARCH

The blacksmith was engaged in search of a lawful livelihood but when he heard the *Azan*, he stopped his effort and preferred the first ranking obligation. As a result, Allah elevated him to a lofty rank. We must follow suit and in every case of deciding on one of the two, we must prefer the basic obligation and forsake the secondary one of seeking lawful livelihood.

A COMPREHENSIVE SUPPLICATION

The Prophet ﷺ has taught us a supplication for such situations:

اللهم لا تجعل الدنيا اكبر همنا ولا مبلغ علمنا ولا غاية رغبتنا (ترمذی، كتاب الدعوات، حديث نمبر ٣٥٦٩)

"O Allah let not the world be the greatest of our sorrows- lest we keep worrying about receiving its riches and splendours, and, let it not be the zenith of our knowledge lest our knowledge be limited about it. And, let not the extremes of our desires be about it lest we cherish only its things and crave not the Hereafter."

We must, therefore, remember that to seek lawful livelihood is a secondary obligation, but not the purpose of our lives.

SUMMARY

This *Hadith* teaches us three lessons:

1: To seek the lawful is also a part of religion.

This hadit teaches us three lessons.

2: Man must seek the lawful and take care to avoid the unlawful.

3: He must not make it the objective of his life .

May Allah through his Mercy and favour help us to understand this fact. And, may He cause us to live accordingly. *Aameen*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

Venue : Sermon delivered at Jami` Masjid Bait ul Mukarram

Date: After 'Asr Prayers

SAVE YOURSELF FROM BEING ACCUSED OF SIN

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليمًا كثيراً كثيراً

اما بعد

عن على بن حسين رضى اللّٰه عنهما ان صفيةَ زوج النبى ﷺ اخبرته انَّها جاء ت الى رسول اللّٰه ﷺ تزوره فى اعتكافه فى المسجد فى العشر الاَوَاخِرمن رمضان .....الخ

(صحيح بخارى، كتاب الاعتكاف، باب " هل يخرج المعتكف لحوائجه الى باب المسجد")

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is no one to misguide whom Allah guides and there is no one to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear

witness that there is no god but Allah Alone. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our authority, our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah have mercy on him, his household and on his Companions and bless them and send peace on them in great abundance.

LIST OF *HADITH*

This is a lengthy *hadith* in which the Prophet ﷺ has narrated an incident. The Prophet ﷺ used to observe I'tikaf every Ramadan. Once when he was observing I'tikaf, the mother of the believers, Sayyidah Safiyah رضی الله عنها, came to meet him in the Mosque. Because, he could not leave the mosque, she came to visit him and stayed with him for some time. When she was going. The Prophet ﷺ walked with her upto the door of the Mosque to see her off.

A WIFE VISITING HER HUSBAND IN THE MOSQUE

Let us observe the *sunnah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The first thing we know from his life is that it is proper for a wife to visit her husband in the Mosque while she is duly covered.

THE WIFE MUST BE RESPECTED

The second thing we learn is that the Prophet ﷺ did not see her off at the place he was confined in *I'tik`af*[1]. He came up to the door of the Mosque, and he gave her due honour. In this way, he taught us to behave with the wife on equal terms. It is her right that we show her honour;

1. Seclusion or confinement in the Mosque as a devotional exercise.

and to see her off is also to give her that right.

DOUBTS OF OTHER PEOPLE MUST BE REMOVED

While he was going to see her off, he noticed that two of his companions were coming towards him. In order that his wife may not be seen without a veil, he requested the companions to wait a while for her to go away. Thus, sayyidah Safiyah رضی الله عنها went away to her home. Then, he invited the two men to come to him and he revealed to them that she was his wife, Sayyidah Safiyah رضی الله عنها.

According to another version, the Prophet ﷺ also said to them, "I have identified her to you lest the devil make mischief and put a wrong idea in your hearts. The companions had seen the Prophet ﷺ with a woman in the Masjid Nabavi and they could have had a wrong idea of the identity of the woman and the reason for her visiting him. That is why he made it clear to them that she was his wife, Safiyah. This incident is reported in *Bukhari* and *Muslim* and other books of *hadith*

PROTECT YOURSELF FOR BEING SLANDERED

The *Ulama*, in explaining this *hadith* tell us that no companion could ever imagine a wrong idea about the Prophet ﷺ. They could never have thought ill of him that he would stay alone with a stranger woman specially in the month of Ramadan, its last ten days in the Masjid Nabavi and, further, while he was observing the *I'tikaf*. it is difficult to imagine such an evil thought about an ordinary Muslim, let alone the messenger of Allah ﷺ

However, the Holy Prophet ﷺ used this incident to teach his Ummah that they should protect themselves fro

being slandered. They must not let anyone entertain a wrong idea about themselves. The *hadith* ascribes one phrase to the Prophet ﷺ.

اِتَّقُوْا مَوَاضِعَ التُّهَمِ

"Keep away from the possibility of being slandered."

Although, the attribution of this phrase to the Prophet ﷺ is not supported by a true line of transmission, it refers to the incident narrated above. Hence, just as a person is expected to protect himself from sin and proper behaviour, so also he is required to Prophet himself from being accused of sin or improper behaviour. He should not do anything which might prompt other people into supposing that he is committing a sin.

TWO ADVANTAGES OF THIS BEHAVIOUR

There are two advantages of saving oneself from being slandered.

The first is one may not unnecessarily subject oneself to being accused. Just as other people have a right over us, our own selves too have a right. Our own right is that we must not unnecessarily let other people imagine wrong things about us.

The second advantage is the onlooker. If anyone entertains a wrong idea about some one without ascertaining it then he will be guilty of sin. The clarification saves him from that.

PRESERVE YOUSELF FROM OPPORTUNITIES OF SIN

It is wrong to allow ourselves opportunities of sin even if we do not commit it because an onlooker might get

a wrong impression. For instance, we must not use the passage of a cinema hall as a short cut; we may not have seen the posters hung there but other people might doubt the purpose of our going there. This thing could have been avoided and possibility of doubt averted. If such a thing happens, we must immediately make a clarification just as the Holy Prophet ﷺ had done.

THE *SUNNAH* OF THE PROPHET ﷺ

It is a very delicate question. On the one hand, it is not advisable that we show ourselves as pious and God-fearing. On the other, it is also not advisable to let any one think of us as sinners. However, it is a *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ that we save ourselves from being slandered.

THE STYLE OF THE BLAMEWORTHY

There has been a sect that called itself 'blame worthy' and came to be known as *Malamati firqah* (blameworthy sect'). Members presented themselves to other people as sinners, transgressors and immoral, for instance, they never attended mosques to offer prayers and never worshipped in the presence of other people or engaged in devotional exercises. They kept themselves in the garb of immoral people. Their contention was that they shunned ostentatious behaviour in this manner. If they grew beard or went to the mosque for prayers the people would think of them as very religious and they would honour and respect them. In that way they feared that they would become arrogant. Their behaviour and attitude was not in accordance with *sunnah.*

COMMITING A SIN TO AVOID ONE

It is possible that someone may have originally behaved in this manner. Obviously, he may have been excused by Allah but his behaviour ought not to have been imitated because it is not correct in the eyes of shari'ah. Can anyone commit a sin to preserve himself from the sin of arrogance and and ostentation. Arrogance and ostentative behaviour are sinful and to avoid this he commits the sin of not going to the mosque. If Allah has declared anything unlawful then it is unlawful. Besides, the plea that if anyone goes to the mosque to offer prayers many people will consider his behaviour a showing off is untenable.

PRAYER MUST BE OFFERED IN THE MOSQUE

It is the devil who misguides men. It is the Command of Allah that prayers must be offered in the mosque, so we must go there. It cannot be ostentatious to do that. It is only the devil who prompts such thoughts in our minds. If we get any idea of boasting then we must seek the forgiveness of Allah:

اَسْتَغْفِرُ اللّٰهَ رَبِّیْ مِنْ کُلِّ ذَنْبٍ وَاَتُوْبُ اِلَیْهِ

It is the command of *shariah* that the *fard* (absolute obligations) must be performed publicly but we are allowed to offer voluntary prayers at home. But, men must offer their prayers in the mosque. The behaviour of the blameworthy sect' is against the Quran and *sunnah*. The correct method is the one shown by the Prophet ﷺ *preserve yourselves from being scandalized.*

PRESENT YOUR EXCUSE

Suppose someone cannot join the congregational prayers because of a valid *shariah* approved exemption. And a visitor to his house sees him at home. Now, it is no sin on him if he lets the visitor know why he did not go to the mosque for otherwise the visitor might suppose that he never goes to the mosque. Actually, this is an example of protecting oneself from slander for the visitor might accuse him of willfully not joining the congregation. By presenting the excuse, he made it clear to the guest why he did not join the congregation. This explanation is not a show of ostentation.

MAWLANA THANAVI'S EXPLANATION OF THE *HADITH*

He explains that the *hadith* guides us to keep away from such doubtful things as might create an impression of some disagreeable things. Say, it might appear that someone has committed a sin like remaining with a stranger woman while he was with his own wife. At such times he must exercise cautoin and adopt a defensive attitude. As for those things that are not doubtful, we should not worry about being blamed and this attitude is praised.

One must clear himself of the doubtful which appear to others as sinful but one should keep himself aloof when those things are correct by themselves, it is not proper that he delay them for fear of being censured.

IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO EXPLAIN A PIOUS DEED

Suppose, some one does something that is *sunnah* but, at the same time disliked by people, like growing a

beard. Now, it is not necessary for him to reason out his behaviour to forestall being censured. If he has grown the beard to please Allah and follow a *sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ then he should not fear the attitude of people. Even if anyone criticises or blames him who follows a *sunnah* then he should feel blessed. This is what the Prophets عليهم السلام faced and endured. So he should not worry about it.

SUMMARY

In short, it is not only allowed but is also appreciated if any one indicates himself of an accusation of doubt that he has sinned. Besides, it is also a duty of Muslim to save another from bearing doubt and suspicion.

May Allah help us to act on the sayings of the Prophet ﷺ.

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

Venue : Sermon delivered at Jami Masjid Bait ul Mukarram

Date: After 'Asr Prayers

SHOW HONOUR TO YOUR ELDERS

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليمًا كثيراً كثيراً

اما بعد

عن ابن عمر رضى الله عنه قال قال رسول الله ﷺ :

"اذا اتاكم كريم قوم فاكرموه"

(ابن ماجه، كتاب الادب، باب اذا اتاكم كريم فاكرموه، حديث نمبر ٣٧١٢)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is no one to misguide whom Allah guides and there is no one to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah Alone.

He has no partner. I also bear witness that our authority, our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah have mercy on him, his household and on his Companions and bless them and send peace on them in great abundance.

"When a respectable man of a people comes to you, you should honour him". That is, if the chief of a people or one well placed with them, comes to you, you must respect him.

ONE WAY TO SHOW RESPECT

Of course, *shari'ah* has asked us honour every Muslim. When a Muslim brother comes to you, you must honour and respect him. A *hadith* tells us that if we are sitting somewhere and a Muslim comes to meet us, the least we should do is move a little bit for him. We must not sit motionless like a statue, for that is not a way to honour him. The visitor must feel that he is respected and honoured.

TO STAND UP

One method of showing honour to someone is to stand up for him. The instructions of *shari'ah* in this regard are that if the visitor expects other people to stand up for him then we must not stand up because his desire indicates that he is arrogant and thinks that he is arrogant and thinks little of other people. However, if the visitor does not expect anyone to stand up for him then there is no harm to stand up to honour such a man for his knowledge, piety or the high office he holds. It is neither a sin to stand up nor necessary to do so.

HADITH CONFIRMS THE STANDING UP

The Prophet ﷺ instructed his companions رضی الله عنهم on some occasions that they should stand up. Accordingly, when sa'd bin Muaz رضی الله عنه arrrived to judge the case of the Banu Qurayzah, the Prophet ﷺ commanded them:

قوموا لسيدكم

"stand up for your chief."

Thus, it is proper to stand up on such occasions, but if anyone does not stand up then there is no harm. Nevertheless, we are definitely urged in a *hadith* that we should at least move at our places and not remain rooted like a statue when someone comes to us, and we must display pleasure on his coming so that he may feel that he is honoured.

TO HONOUR A MUSLIM IS TO HONOUR HIS FAITH

In fact, the honour and respect given to a Muslim is directed to the faith he holds in his heart. It is the demand and right of the *Kalimah tayyibah*[1]:

لَا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللّٰهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ

He believes, that we honour him. It may be that the man appears weak in faith and his deeds and appearance may not conform fully to religion, but we do not know the status of the faith Allah has placed in his heart, or how far he has received Allah's approval. Hence, we must honour the visiting Muslim.

1. There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is His Messanger.

A LESSON-BEARING CASE OF A YOUNG MAN

A young man came to me once in my office. He had no sign of Islamic spirit on him. From head to foot he had a western appearance and his dress was western too. One could not say on looking at him that he had religious feelings within him. He said to me that he had come to ask a question. This young man was an Actuary- one who calculates risks involved and premium chargeable. In those days there was no opportunity in Pakistan to study in this field. He had qualified in England and when he returned there were only two or three people in Pakistan who were qualified as Actuaries. Naturally, they were in great demand by the Insurance companies who paid them handsome salaries and offered them lucrative benefits and facilities , further, such a person cannot be accomodated at any other place.

However, after he was qualified and had received an employment, someone told him that the insurance business was unlawful. He said," I have come to you to confirm if it really is unlawful,"

WHAT SHOULD AN EMPLOYEE DO?

I told him that all forms of insurance available then in pakistan were unlawful. They were based on interest or gambling. Therefore, it is not allowed to be employed in an insurance company, however, our elders have suggested that an employee of a bank or an insurance company should look out for another employment and he must seek it with all earnest as if he was unemployed. As soon as he gets the other employment, he must give up the service in a bank or an insurance company. The reason they do not ask to quit the job forthwith is that living

conditions of a person may not warrant cessation of income , and if anyone becomes unemployed then the devil may prompt him against religion and suggest to him that his problems were caused by it.

I HAVE NOT COME TO SEEK ADVICE

The young man told me firmly that he had not come to seek advice on whether he should give up his employment or not but he had come only to ask whether it was lawful or unlawful to work there. I reminded him that I had explained to him the question of its legality in Islam and I had also told him what our elders suggested on the subject of employment. The young man said to me, "do not give me an advice on whether I should keep my job or not but let me know in clear terms if the employment is lawful or not." I said to him, "It is unlawful." He asked," tell me whether Allah has decreed it unlawful or is it you who declares so? "I confirmed to him that Allah had disallowed it . he said, " Allah who has declared it *haram* (unlawful) will not leave me without livelihood. Hence, I will not return to that office anymore. Allah will not close the doors of livelihood on me. I give up the employment now!"

DO NOT GO BY APPEARANCES

It is very clear from this that we must not go by appearances. It did not look by see-ing him that this young man had a very strong faith concealed in his heart. He had great faith in Allah and Allah did bestow on him avenues of lawful livelihood. He is living in the United States these days. His words are engraved on my heart till now!

Hence, we must not let appearances deceive us. We cannot say what light of faith Allah may have kindled in his heart and what kind of trust he may have placed in him

for him. Therefore, we must not condemn anyone. One who is a believing man blessed with the wealth of the *kalimah shahad`ah* :[1]

اشهد ان لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله

is worth respect. Every believer must be honoured. Shaykh sa`di رحمة الله عليه had sad :

هر بیشه گماں مبر که خالی است
شاید که پلنگ خفته باشد

Do not suppose that every forest will be empty who knows how many lions and tigers may be sleeping in it. Our duty is to honour one who is blessed by Allah with faith.

HONOURING A RESPECTABLE DISBELIEVER

We are, of course, commanded to honour all Muslims. But, the above *hadith* asks us to honour even a disbelieving chief of his people. Islamic manners demand of us that we honour him. His disbelief is what we hate but because his people hold him in esteem we must also show courtesy. We must not treat him roughly lest he despise us and our religion.

BEHAVIOUR WITH THE DISBELIFVERS

The Prophet ﷺ has shown us how we may behave with the disbelievers. Many chieftains of the infidels visited him but they never got the impression that they were maltreated. Rather, the Prophet ﷺ received them well and was polite and courteous with them, and this is his *sunnah.*

1. I bear witness that there is no God but Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is His Messanger.

THE CASE OF ADISBELIEVER

Once, the Prophet ﷺ was seated in his house and sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها was with him. He observed a man comming towards him and he said to the mother of the faithful that the man was am evil person of his tribe. When he came, the Prophet ﷺ got up and received him and conversed with him courteously. When he departed, sayyidah ayshah رضى الله عنها said," Messenger of Allah, why is it that you gave this man great honour and talked to him very mildly." The Prophet ﷺ said that the man was every evil and he was honoured to keep safe from his mischief.

BACKBITING IS ALLOWED

This *hadith* gives rise to two questions. Before that man could come, the Prophet ﷺ criticised him before sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها saying that he was an evil man. On the face of it, looks like backiting. But, really it is not so, for, one can reveal a man's evil nature so that others may be cautious of him it is allowed to let a man know that he must beware of someone's mischief lest he harms him. Warning anyone in this way is not backbiting. Rather, in some cases it is obligatory to inform the victim who is being cheated and may suffer bodily harm or monetary loss at the hands of the evildoer.

Hence, the Prophet ﷺ warned sayyidah Ayshah رضى الله عنها that she may be careful and other Muslims may also be cautious.

WHY HONOUR THE EVIL MAN

The next question that arises is why, after describing him evil, did he honour him? Why did he show him courtesy? It shows that that the Prophet ﷺ behaved with him in one manner in his presence but spoke of him when he was not there in a different way. The truth is that the

Prophetﷺ set the limit of everything so, he did reveal that the man was evil in order to caution others but when he came as a guest he gave him the rights of guest. This explains his behaviour.

THAT MAN IS VERY EVIL

The *hadith* also explains the wisdom behind the Prophet's ﷺ behaviour that the evil man could cause hardship if he was ill treated. So, there is no harm in honouring an evil man if we happen to meet him. It is a man's duty to protect himself and his property and honour from him. He is not honoured because he is honourable but because he could cause trouble or harm. However, honour must be shown to him within certain limits being careful not to perpetrate a sin.

There is a lesson for us to derive from every act of the life of the Prophet ﷺ. He defined backbiting and he told us that there is no harm in showing honour to anyone. Rather, we are commanded to honour our guest no matter how evil, immoral or disbelieving he be. This is not hypocrisy.

AN INCIDENT WITH SIR SYED

I have heard this story of Sir Syed from my father. He is now dead and his case rests with Allah. The truth, however, is that he corrupted the Islamic beliefs to a dangerous extent. However, he had initially enjoyed the company of the elders and he was also a proper scholar so his manners were good. He was once sitting with his intimate friends in his house when he saw a man coming towards him from a distance. That man was attired in regular Indiam dress. When he came closer, he stood by a pond and he carried a basket in his hand. He took out an

Arab gown from the bag and he also took out the ring that the Arabs wear on the head. He wore both the things and approached them. Sir syed, meanwhile, was watching his movements. He told one of his friends that the man who was coming was a fraud, because until then he had the Indian dress on, but as he neared he put on the Arab gown.

"He will come here and pretend to be an Arab
and beg for money".

Shortly, he knocked at the door and Sir Syed invited him inside politely. He asked him from where had he come. He said," I am a disciple of Shah Ghulam Ali رحمة الله عليه." He was a great *Sufi*. Then, he requested Sir Syed to help him in his needs. Accordingly, Sir Syed gave him a good reception and gave him more money than he needed.

WHY DID HE DO IT?

When he had departed, the friends of Sir Syed said to him, "you are a funny man. You knew that this man was a fraud but you gave him a good reception and helped him monetarily. Why?"

Sir Syed said, "I was cordial to him because he came as a guest. As for monetary help, I did not give it to him because he was a cheat but because he took the name of a very great saint and I could not dare refuse help after that. Shah Ghulam Ali رحمة الله عليه was one of those high ranking men of Allah that anyone having a distant connection and link with him is also worthy of honour. Perhaps Allah will forgive me because of my honouring his connection, that is what made me give him money!"

HONOURING RELIGIOUS LINKS

I had heard this story from my father who had heard it from his Shaykh, Mawlana Ashraf Ali thanavi رحمة الله عليه.

Mawlana Thanavi remarked, "Sir Syed honoured his guest and he also honoured the relationship in religion. For ,we cannot doubt that Allah would bestow plentifully on him who honours anyone who claims even the slightest link with a man of Allah a *Wali*. May Allah grow in us such habit. *Aameen*. This was in explanation of the Prophet's ﷺ words that we must honour a leading man of people when he comes.

HONOURING THE GREAT IN A COMMON GATHERING

It is a procedure in public gatherings or mosques that when a person sits down anywhere he is more entitled to that place and no one can ask him to give up that place. For instance, if a person sits in the frist row of mosque, he cannot be made to surrender his place to anyone else. However, if a respectable person of those people comes to that place then it is permited to offer him the front place in the light of this *hadith*. This has been the practice of our elders that when all people are seated in their places and a respectable guest arrives, he is made to sit next to them even if it means that someone has to be moved aside. There is no harm in that.

THE *HADITH* IS FOLLOWED

Some people seem to suppose that our elders act contrary to the procedure that every person sits where there is a space to sit. The first comer should sit in the front rows and the late comers in the last rows." Then why do the elders violate the rights of other people and invite the late-comers to the frist row?" the fact is that these elders follow the *hadith*:

اذا اتاكم كريم قوم فاكرموه

"when a noble man of a people comes to you, honour him".

In fact, Mawlana Masihullah Khan رحمة الله عليه (may Allah exalt his ranks, *Aameen*) paid great attention to this etiquette. He went so far as to encourage the occupants of the first rows to provide space to a respectable man when they did not give him space voluntarily. He would say, "brothers, what is this behaviour? you must give up your place to a respectable man when he comes and you must not think of that as unjust. Rather, it is in accordance with the *hadith*.

THERE IS REWARD IN HONOURING OTHER PEOPLE

The comments of Mawlana Thanavi رحمة الله عليه on this *hadith* are worth remembering. He said, "Whether a disbeliever or an immoral person visits you, and you honour him keeping this *hadith* in mind then, *Insha Allah*, that will fetch you reward and blessings, because, that is the command of the Prophet ﷺ However, if you honour him that he might help you later that is you hope to get a worldly objective served through him then it is not proper to honour him.

. Therefore, our intentions must be genuine when showing respect to anyone. Our intention must be to obey the command of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

May Allah through His mercy cause us to act on these instructions. *Aameen*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

Venue : Sermon delivered at Jami` Masjid Bait ul Mukarram

Date: After 'Asr Prayers

THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING THE QUR'AN

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهدان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليمًا كثيراً كثيراً

اما بعد

فاعوذ بالله من الشيطن الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

اَلَّذِيْنَ اٰتَيْنٰهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ يَتْلُوْنَهٗ حَقَّ تِلَاوَتِهٖ اُولٰٓئِكَ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِهٖ ؕ (البقرہ: ۱۲۱)

و قال رسول الله ﷺ:

خَيْرُكُمْ مَنْ تَعَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ وَ عَلَّمَهٗ

(بخاری، فضائل القرآن، باب خیرکم من تعلم القرآن وعلمه)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is no one to misguide whom Allah guides and there is no

one to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah Alone. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our authority, our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah have mercy on him, his household and on his Companions and bless them and send peace on them in great abundance.

INTRODUCTORY WORDS:

Respected elders! We are honoured today to be here on the founding of a *madrasah*. Qur'an will be taught here, and we are present here on the laying of its first brick. *Insha Allah*, it will prove to be a source of reward for all of us here, may Allah shower on us its lights and blessings, *Aameen.*

EXPLANATION OF THE VERSE

In keeping with the opportunity, I have recited a relevant verse of the Quran and a *hadith*. I will present a brief explanation in the limited time with us. The Qur'an has said:

اَلَّذِيْنَ اٰتَيْنٰهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ يَتْلُوْنَهٗ حَقَّ تِلَاوَتِهٖ اُولٰٓئِكَ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِهٖ

Those to whom we have given the book (and who) recite it as it should be recited, those believe therein (*al baqarah* ..2..12)

It is not enough to merely speak out that we believe in the book but we must give its right due by reciting it. Allah tells us that anyone may say with his tongue that he believes in his book but he is not true in saying that unless he recites it.

THREE RIGHTS OF THE QUR'AN

There are certains rights of the Qur'an on us, and they are three in number.

(i) To recite it correctly in the manner it was revealed and as the Prophet ﷺ recited it.

(ii) To try to understand it and to comprehend its truths and knowledge.

(iii) To act on its teachings and guidance.

If anyone gives it the three rights then he will be said to have given it all its rights. However, if he fails to give any one of these rights then he will not have given the rights of recital of the Quran.

RECITAL ITSELF IS THE OBJECTIVE

The first right is to recite it in a correct manner. Certain people suggest these days that there is no point in reciting the Quran like parrots. They say that we must understand its meaning otherwise there is no use in reciting it. (may Allah protect us from such ideas) This is a deception of the devil which is being introduced among the muslims. The Prophet ﷺ was sent for different purposes and the Quran mentions it frequently but two things it mentions distinctly:

يَتْلُوْا عَلَيْهِمْ اٰيَاتِهٖ

shall recite to them his verses

وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ

And shall teach them the book and the wisdom.

Thus, to recite the Qur'an is a distinct purpose, a pious deed and reward receiving. It is the same thing weather we understand what we recite or do not understood. It is one of the purposes of the Prophet's ﷺ mission.

TAJWEED, THE SCIENCE OF RECITAL

The recital of the Quran is not something to be taken lightly that one may read it as one likes. Rather the Prophet ﷺ had taught his companions the science of recital. Each letter is pronounced in a particular way and articulated in a prescribed manner. To teach it of tajweed and the science of recital, the former teaches us how each letter is pronounced and what care is to be taken. It is based on the Prophet's ﷺ method. Many books are written on this subject. We cannot find an example like it with any other people. This science is intact today and the Quran is recited exactly as the Prophet ﷺ used to recite. There has been no change whatever.

THE SCIENCE OF RECITAL

The science of recital includes different methods of recital which Allah revealed at the same time as revealing the Quran . Certain words may be recited in different ways. This knowledge also is preserved as it was from the beginning.

THE FIRST STEP

Anyway, recital in itself is a goal. It is the devil deceiving us if we say "what may be gained by reciting without understanding? To recite without understanding is the first step. Only after climbing it can we go to the next step.

TEN VIRTUES PER LETTER

The Prophet ﷺ has said," when anyone recites the Quran, he gets ten virtues written down for him against each letter ." He then explained that الم was not one letter but *alif* was a letter, *lam* was a second letter and *Meem* a third letter. One who recites الم gets thirty pieties credited

to him in his record of deeds. Some ulama have suggested that he gets ninety pieties credited because each of these letters is not one but three letters. That adds up to nine and ten pieties are credited against each.

VIRTUES ARE CURRENCY OF THE HEREAFTER

We do not value the virtues ecorded in the Record of Deeds but if we are told that we would get ninety rupees for a piece of work, we will understand it. However, the truth is that it is these pieties that are the currency of the Hereafter. As long as we are alive, we cannot understand the worth of piety and virtue. After death in the *Barzakh*, and the Hereafter, we will realise that money is worthless. The only question that will be asked will be can cerning our virtues and piety. Then shall we know the worth of our pious deeds.

WE HAVE FORSAKEN RECITAL

Nevertheless, the Quran is, by itself, a means of reward and excellence. This is why Muslims have continued all along from the beginning of Islam to recite something of the Quran early worning before doing any thing else. In the early morning, we could hear the sound of recital from every muslim house, it was the sign of a Muslim neighborhood . it is very sad that though we have received freedom from disbelief and polytheism, we have also freed ourselves from the Commands of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ and the teachings of Islam. We celebrate the independence day but with our political independence we have become independent of religion too. The result is that neither our lives are safe nor our wealth. Our honour is at stake and we are amidst corruption, mischief and

immodesty. The entire nation is paying for it.

PROTECTION FROM THE CURSE OF THE QURAN

We do not find people who recite the Qur'an. If anyone does recite it then he does not follow the correct method. The Prophet ﷺ is quoted in a *hadith* as saying that sometimes a man recites the Quran but its letters curse him because he spoils them and recites wrongly. A person who has embraced Islam recently and he recites worngly then he is excused by Allah but one who is a Muslim by birth yet cannot even recite *surah al fatihah* correctly after all those years then what excuse will he present before Allah. Therefore, it is the responsibility of every muslim that he should recite the Quran as taught to us by the Prophet ﷺ otherwise he is not giving the Quran even its first right what to speak of the second and third.

THE CASE OF A COMPANION

There was a time when the Muslims made great sacrifices and underwent much trouble and difficulty to learn to the words of the Qur'an. It is transmitted by Bukhari that Amr bin Salmah رضی اللہ عنہ said that when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ migrated to Madinah he was a young child and his village was very far from Madinah. He said," some people of my tribe had become Muslims and I too had embraced Islam. The biggest assest after belief is the Quran. I wished to learn the words of the Quran and its science but there was no one able to recite the Quran in the entire village,. So, I used to haunt the caravan route outside the village and wait for the caravans from Madinah. When I met a caravan from Madinah, I asked them to teach me from the Quran if anyone of them

knew it. In this way, I learnt something of the Quran from them. This had become a daily practice with me. In a few months, I came to know more of the Quran than anyone else in our village, and I had memorised more chapters than anyone had. Thus, when a mosque was built in the village and an Imam was to be selected, the people put me forward because I knew more of the Quran than other people in the village"

THE QURAN IS THUS PRESERVED

The Muslims learnt and memorised the Quran in this way. It is the result of their efforts that the Quran is preserved to this day. It is not merely the words but also by the meaning that is preserved. By the grace of Allah, the entire exegesis of the Quran is intact today as it was explained to the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم by the Prophet ﷺ and to their successors by the change in it. Allah has not only assured us that He will preserve the Quran but He has also assured us that He will preserve its meaning.

A WAY TO PRESERVE ARABIC LANGUAGE

Here is an example of how its meaning is preserved. Allamah Hamavi رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has written the *Muajjim Al buldan* describing the conditions of all well- known cities until his time, and their history. He has mentioned that there were two tribes in the Arabian peninsula the *Akkad and Daraib*. It was known about them that they did not allow a stranger from another city or tribe to stay more than three days with them, although the Arabs are known for their hospitality. When they were asked to explain this behaviour, they said that if an outsider stayed with them more than three days then he would corrupt their language, and he would

influence delivery and pronunciation of words. They said, "our language is the language of the Qur'an. We have to preserve it," in this way, Allah preserved the words and meanings of the Quran.

'DONATE' STUDENTS

Today, we have received the Quran and its sciences in a ready, prepared state, it is upto us now that we learn the Quran and its sciences and mould our lives according to that. There are many *madrasah* in our city to impart the knowledge, and this madrasah is an addition to those numbers. Naturally, the question of donation arises, and I remember the words of my respected father Mawlana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله عليه in this regard. "People make generous donations to *madrasah* but that is not very important, because it is my experience that if it is started sincerely then Alalh sends His help from unknown sources and it is run smoothly. We can verify this by looking at the running of the different religious institutions. They make no appeal for donations but they manage to progress. If there is sincerity, Allah helps us. However, the real donation is the to donate the children. If the building is erected, teachers are appointed and other formalities are observed but students do not come forward then what can be done. Muslims are unwilling to send their children where they earn piety and virtue but they send them where they hope to amass wealth.

MADRASAH IS NOT AN EDIFICE

Nevertheless, this *madrasah* is being established, but it is not just the building we need. It is not the piece of land or the institution. In fact, it is the teachers and students who make up a *madrash.* We have all heard of

the Darul-uloom at deoband. It is a very large religious institution, but when it was established, it had no building to house the classes, no place of its own, and no rooms. Rather, it had its beginning under a pomegranate tree where a teacher and one student began their first lesson. It soon became Darul-Uloom, Deoband. This itself is the *sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ. He began the first Madrasah on a raised level of ground, and his companions رضی الله عنهم collected together on a *Suffah* (a platform). That was the most excellent *Madrasah* of the world.

On the other hand if we have the building and other things for *Madrasah* but the people of the neighbourhood ignore it and neither do they come to learn nor do they send their children to it then we cannot derive benefit from it.

Therefore I request you people that you should not only get donations for the *Madrasah* but you should also exhort people to learn the Quran and recite it and send their children to this institution. Older people who do not know well how to recite the Quran, may take an interest in learning correct recital. *Insha Allah*, this *Madrasah* will then be successful.

May Allah grant the *Madrasah* His approval and may He accept the efforts of those people who have taken part and interest in establishing it. May He cause this *Madrasah* to progress and may He cause the Muslim to take full advantage from it. *Aameen.*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

Venue : Sermon delivered at Jami Masjid
Bait ul Mukarram
Date: After 'Asr Prayers

REFRAIN FORM ATTRIBUTING WRONG RELATIONSHIP

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهد ان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليمًا كثيرًا كثيرًا

اما بعد

عن جابر بن عبد الله رضى الله عنه قال قال رسول الله ﷺ من تحلى بما لم يعط كان كلابس ثوبى زور- (ترمذى، كتاب البر والصلة، باب ما جاء فى المتشبع بما لم يعطه)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is no one to misguide whom Allah guides and there is no one to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear

witness that there is no god but Allah Alone. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our authority, our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah have mercy on him, his household and on his Companions and bless them and send peace on them in great abundance.

WORD OF THE *HADITH*

Sayyidina Jabir رضی الله عنه has said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

"He who bedecks himslef with what he is not given is as though he wears a pair of garments of lies."

That is, if anyone describes himself with qualities which are not found in him then he has wrapped round his body falsehood.

IT IS FALSE & CHEATING

If a person cheats others by claiming for himself qualities which he does not have then he has dressed himself in lies. Thus, he may claim to be a scholar while he really is not, or he may say he holds a particular office although he does not, or he relates himself to a high lineage but that is not true. A person may declare himself to be wealthy man but he is poor. These are the ways in which one may fool other people. The *Hadith* calls such men as liars.

TO CLAIM TO BE FAROOQI OR SIDDIQI

We find many people in our society who relate themselves to such lines and families with which they are

not really connected. Some people who do not deserve it yet call themselves, 'Siddiqi' or 'Farooqi'. Or 'Ansari'. This practice is very sinful. The *Hadith* describes people who indulge in that as liars.

WHY COMPARE TO GARMENTS

There is a sin which someone commits and it is over after sometime, but if anyone relates himself wrongly or describes himself in qualities he does not possess then he is involved in a perpetual sin. It is thus like a garment which lies on his body.

WEAVERS DESCRIBE THEMSELVES AS ANSARI AND BUTCHERS AS QURAYSHI.

My respected father, Mawlana Mufti Muhammad Shafi, رحمة الله عليه has written a booklet on this subject, entitled *Ghayat An-Nasab* because some people attach relationships to their names quite wrongly. It was very common in India that weavers called themselves Ansari, and butchers attached the word Qurayshi to their names. My respected fatehr explained in the boolket that it is a grave sin to relate oneself wrongly. There are many *Ahadith* that forbid us to claim false relationship. When my respected father wrote that booklet, these people raised a strong protest against my father but the truth is what the Prophet ﷺ has said.

LINEAGE & FAMILY ARE NOT MERITORIOUS

The truth is that a person's line of descent or his family give him no excellence from the religious point of view. No matter to what family a person belongs he is better than any of the relationships only if Allah has

granted him *taqua*, a high degree of God-fearing attitude. The Quran says:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اِنَّا خَلَقْنٰكُمْ مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ وَّاُنْثٰى وَجَعَلْنٰكُمْ شُعُوْبًا وَّقَبَآئِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوْٓا اِنَّ اَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ اَتْقٰكُمْ ۔ (الحجرات:۱۳)

O mankind! Surely we have created you from a male and a female, and have made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another. Surely the noblest among you in the sight of Allah is the most pious of you.(Al-Hujurat, 49 : 13)

All men and women are born from one father and mother, Sayyidina Aadam عليه السلام and Sayyidah Hawwa عليها السلام. The different nations and tribes are only to distinguish one from another but they have no excellence over one another. Thus if anyone belongs to a family whom people do not regard as worthy, he should not mind that for if he perfects his behaviour, deeds and manners then he will excell the best known family. Thus why should anyone wrongly claim relationship with a family and perpetrate a sin? Let everyone describe himself with the lineage he belongs to though that too is not necessary. He may not mention it at all. If he must make mention of it then it is not correct for him to claim a wrong lineage and confuse other people.

RELATE THE ADOPTED SON TO HIS REAL FATHER

The Quran has devoted half a *ruku'* (section) to this subject. Sometimes, people adopt children. Someone may not have a child so he adopts another person's child. *Shari'ah* has allowed us to adopt another person's child and to nurture and raise him as our own, but under no

circumstances, will he be regarded as the child of his adopting parents, in the eyes of *Shari'ah*. So the child must be properly described by his real father. All directives and injunctions concerning relationship shall apply to him with his real family. Thus, the woman who has adopted him as a son will have to observe veil before him if she is not a *mahram*.

THE CASE OF ZAYD BIN HARITHA رضى الله عنه

The Prophet ﷺ has adopted Sayyidina Zayd bin Harithah رضى الله عنه as his son. He was the slave of a man in the days of Ignorance. Allah caused him to go to Makkah where he became a Muslim at the hands of the Prophet ﷺ. His parents and relatives had been searching him for years until someone told them that he had become a Muslim and lived with the Prophet ﷺ at Makkah. His father and uncle came to Makkah and met the Prophet ﷺ and introduced themselves. They narrated their tale saying that they had searched Zayd for long and now that they had found him, they wished to take him with them. The Prophet ﷺ told them that they could take him away if he wished to accompany them. They were happy that they got the permission to take him along very easily. They found Zayd in the Haram and while he was happy to see them. He did not consent to go with them. He said, "Father, I will not go with you because I am a Muslim and you are not. Besides, I enjoy the company of the Prophet ﷺ and I cannot give up this company. " His father tried to convince him but to no avail. He refused to go with them and to forsake the company of the Prophet ﷺ.

When the Prophet ﷺ learnt that, he told Sayyidina Zayd bin Haritha that he adopted him as his son from that day. The Prophet ﷺ treated him like a son and people

began calling him Zayd bin Muhammad ﷺ. At that. Allah revealed a verse:

اُدْعُوهُمْ لِاٰبَآئِهِمْ هُوَ اَقْسَطُ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ (سورة الاحزاب:٥)

Call them by (the names of) their fathers, that is more equitable in the sight of Allah. (Al.Ahzab 33:4)

And again:

مَّا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ اَبَآ اَحَدٍ مِّنْ رِّجَالِكُمْ وَلٰكِنْ رَّسُوْلَ اللّٰهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيّٖنَ (سورة الاحزاب:٤٠)

Muhammad is not the father of anyone of your men but he is the Messenger of Allah and the last of the Prophet. (Al-Ahzab, 33:40)

Hence, people were asked not to call anyone as his son. This became a directive for the future, too. No adopted son will be called the son of his adopted parents.

Besides Sayyidina Zayd bin Haritha رضی الله عنه there was another companion, Sayyidina Salim رضی الله عنه the freed slave of Sayyidina Huzayfah رضی الله عنه. He too was adopted. The Prophet ﷺ had said about him too that he would not be related to the father who has adopted him and when he entered the house of his adopted parents, the women would observe veil before him.

These instructions of *Shari'ah* ensure purity of the line of descent so that there may not be a confusion and wrong attribution. Those who describe themselves with wrong connections attract the warning of this *Hadith* on themselves.

TO CALL ONESELF *MAWLANA*

In the same way, if a person is not learned in the religious sciences then he should not present himself as a scholar. People use the word Mawalana with their names

although the words *Mawlana* and *Allamah* are used for those people who have acquired a proper knowledge of religion. Thus, if anyone who is not a religious scholar calls himself by these epithets then he calls upon himself the warning of this *Hadith.*

TO CALL ONESELF PROFESSOR

It is the same with the world Professor. This word denotes a particular significance and one who qualifies for that may use this word before his name. But, today, everyone who is a teacher calls himself a Professor. In this way, he claims to possess a distinction which he really does not have, and so he lies and confues other people. He too attracts the warning of the *Hadith* on himself.

THE WORD DOCTOR.

Again, a man who is not a qualified physician cannot call himself a doctor. Some people work with a physician or medical practitioner in junior capacities but soon appropriate the title doctor for themselves. They then dispense medicine and treat patient. They also come under the purview of this *Hadith.*

Whoever presents himself in a way and in a capacity that he is not then he is one of those of whom the *Hadith* tells us that he wears two garments of lies.

STAY JUST AS ALLAH HAS MADE YOU

These are not those sins which are related to the number of times they are committed but they are recurring sins. He commits them all the time as long as he lives. That is why they are compared to garments.

What does one get by describing oneself by any

epithet. We must live in the exact way as Allah has created us. We must describe ourselves only with the quality. He has bestowed on us. He gives a quality because he sees wisdom in that. He has a purpose behind this life and he does not like that we disturb the system.

PRETENDING TO BE RICH

It is the same thing with people who pretend to own more wealth and riches than they actually do. They live an ostentatious living that people may be deceived into calling them wealthy, and respect them. This is a sin of the same kind of which the *Hadith* warns us.

DISPLAY BLESSINGS OF ALLAH

The Prophet ﷺ has taught us every little thing and has been very comprehensive. He has instructed us two different things.

(i) Do not describe yourself with a quality that you do not possess so that other people are not cheated.

(ii) But, he had also said:

إن الله يُحِبُّ ان يَرى اَثَر نعمته على عبده (ترمذی، ابواب الادب،باب ما جاء "ان الله يحب ان يرى")

"Allah loves to see the effects of His blessings on a slave."

For instance, He has bestowed riches on someone. Now, it is the demand of Allah's blessings that this man lives and maintains himself in such a way that Allah's blessings are apparent. He must wear clean garments and live in a clean home. If he lives shabily and miserly in spite of his wealth then he is showing ingratitude to Allah. The effect of Allah's blessing must be seen on us and in

our living. We must live as we really are, not showing off and not miserely.

A SCHOLAR MUST DISPLAY HIS KNOWLEDGE

It is no different with knowledge. If Allah has bestowed knowledge on anyone then it is not humbleness on his part to sit in a corner and conceal Allah's blessings. It is wrong to do so fearing that people might think of him as a scholar. In fact, he must use that knowledge to benefit other people.

Allah does not bestow knowledge on anyone that he may sit arrogantly in a corner, or that he may impress other people, but He wants the scholar to benefit other people.

Therefore, we must strike a proper balance in our affairs. These thing are part of religion.

May Allah cause us to act on these teachings

Aameen

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

Venue : Sermon delivered at Jami` Masjid
Bait ul Mukarram

Date: After 'Asr Prayers

SIGNS OF POOR GOVERNANCE

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادى له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهد ان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

حدثنا سعيد بن سمعان قال سمعت ابا هريرة رضى الله عنه يتعوذ من امارة الصبيان والسفهاء فقال سعيد بن سمعان:

فاخبرنى ابن حسنة الجهنى انه قال لابى هريرة ما آية ذلك؟ قال ان يقطع الارحام ويطاع المغوى ويعصى المرشد۔ (ادب المفرد باب، قاطع رحم کی سزا)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is no one to misguide whom Allah guides and there is no

one to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah Alone. He has no partner. I also bear witness that our authority, our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah have mercy on him, his household and on his Companions and bless them and send peace on them in great abundance.

TO SEEK REFUGE FROM BAD TIMES

Saeed bin Sam'an رضی الله عنه was a *taba'een* (successor of Companions). He said that he heard Sayyidina. Abu Hurayrah رضی الله عنه seek protection from the governance of children and stupid people.

This is an indication that the times would be very bad when young and inexperienced and foolish people will become chiefs and rulers. This is why he sought refuge. "O Allah! Save me from such times and let not the times come when I have to face such rulers.".

THREE SIGNS OF BAD TIMES

Sa'ad bin Sama'an رضی الله عنه said that when Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضی الله عنه sought refuge in that manner, he was asked, " what are the signs of those bad times?" People wished to know how they would recognise the era of foolish rulers.

Sayyidina Abu Hurayra رضی الله عنه said about the signs.

ان تقطع الارحام و یطاع المغوی ویعصی المرشد

"There are three signs of this period:
The first is that people will violate the rights of relatives and sever ties of relationship.

The second sign is that they would obey those who mislead.
The third sign is that those who guide and lead will be disobeyed.

When these three signs are found at anytimes. It will mean that the foolish and stupid and young people run the government."

A SIGN OF THE QIYAMAH

The portents of the Hour that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has revealed include the following

ان تَرَى الْحُفَاةَ الْعراةَ الْعَالَةَ رِعَاءَ الشاء يَتَطَاوَلُوْنَ فِي الْبُنْيَانِ

"One of the signs of final hour is that bare-footed, naked people, who are dependant on others and who tend sheep, will boast and he vie one another for lofty buildings."

These people do not have a favourable past and their habits and moral character is not noble. They are ordinary people with a poor training and they lack religious knowledge. These people will become rulers over men and they will boast of lofty castles.

LIKE DEEDS LIKE RULERS

We learn from this saying of Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضی الله عنه that we must seek refuge in Allah from governors of the kind who are incapable of governing the affairs of the nation. However, if such incompetent men become rulers over a people - as we find over us these days- then, according to a saying of the Prophet ﷺ, it is the consequence of their own deeds. The words of the Prophet ﷺ:

كَمَا تَكُونُونَ يُؤَمَّرُ عَلَيْكُم

"As you are, so shall rulers be imposed over you."

Another version is:

انما اعمالكم عُمّالكم

"Your deeds will mould your rulers."

Deeds appear as rulers. If their deeds are good then Allah causes good men to rule over them but if their deeds are bad then evil men rule over them. The Prophet ﷺ has narrated this fact in many *ahadith.*

WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

The Prophet ﷺ has also said in a *hadith* that when evil men become rulers over a people they should not curse them and criticise them. Rather, they should turn to Allah. "O Allah! These evil men rule us because of our evil deeds. O Allah! Be merciful to us and forgive us our misdeeds and reform us. Appoint pious and righteous people over us."

This is the method shown to us by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Hence, we will gain nothing by condemning our rulers. Instead we must turn to Allah.

OUR APPROACH

Let us review our approach to the situation. From morning to evening, day in and day out, we are given to speak ill of our rulers and we curse them. But do we ever really turn to Allah sincerely? Do we confess our misdeeds and do we seek His forgiveness? Do we pray to Him to give us pious rulers? We offer prayers five times a day and make our supplications to Him in the end but do we also petition Him to forgive us and replace our rulers with pious people? If we do not make this supplication then it

means that we do not pursue the method shown to us by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. We must seek refuge in Allah and at the same time reform ourselves.

TURN TO ALLAH

The Prophet ﷺ is quoted in a *hadith* as saying. "Allah the kings and all the rulers have their hearts in the Hand of Allah. If we please Allah and turn to Him then He will turn the hearts of these rulers and grow goodness in them. But if they are not destined to be good then Allah will replace them with others."

Hence, instead of cursing them we must turn to Allah and please Him. There are few of Allah's slaves who really feel grieved at the situation and who make supplications to Allah imploringly. If we commence to act on these lines then Allah will surely have mercy on us and reform our condition.

THE FIRST TWO SIGNS OF A BAD GOVERNMENT

One of the signs of the era of bad government is that people will sever bonds of kinship. The second sign is that those who mislead will be obeyed. The more a man is on the wrong path, the greater following he has. We can witness this fact today. The masses pursue those politicians who mislead them and have no knowledge of religion but who make tall promises to them. When anyone is blinded to truth, he takes rank of wrong - doers as his leaders and he does not verify whether their deeds and character match the Qur'an and *Sunnah.* May Allah guide us. *Aameen.*

THE PALACE OF THE AGA KHAN

In one of visits to Switzerland, one of my hosts pointed out to me on the way a palace saying that it belonged to the Aga Khan, what a palace! It seemed like a Paradise on earth. In these countries, people generally have small houses but, in comparison, this palace was spread over about three kilometers. It had gardens, castles, ponds and an army of servants. It is well known that these people do not look down upon immodesty and luxurious living and they are used to bouts of wine drinking.

A QUESTION TO THE AGA KHAN'S FOLLOWERS

Suddenly, it dawned upon me that his followers see with their own eyes that their leaders live a life of luxury and perpetrate what even an ordinarily educated Muslim knows to be unlawful yet they continue to believe in them. One of my hosts confided to me that he had said the same thing to one of the Aga Khan's disciples and asked him how he could continue to consider him his Imam after knowing of these things about him.

THE DISCIPLE'S REPLY

His reply was, "our leader has generously offered a great sacrifice for his true worth was Paradise but he agreed to have these palaces in this life." He continued. "He has forsaken those bounties for our sake, to guide and lead us. Actually, the favours of this life are nothing in his eyes, and he is entitled to larger bounties."

It is, this attitude to which the *hadith* points out:

ان يطاع المغوى

"Those who mislead. Will be obeyed."

A man sees with his eyes the luxurious living style of the other yet, says, "He is my leader, my mentor!"

THOSE WHO MISLEAD ARE OBEYED

In the same way ignorant mentors rule the roost. These people live in a very sinful manner and consume opium. A very luxurious style is apparent and they do not mind to commit the worst of sins but their followers shut their eyes to these realities. Their mentor is the representative of Allah to them on the land. The *hadith* tells us that such people are the ones who mislead, but the masses pursue them. The truth is that these people master some form of jugglery or by sleight of hand deceive their disciples. Someone's heart stirs, another sees a strange dream, yet another is consigned to the *ka'bah*. Once they are deceived, people obey all their commands even if that means disobeying *shari'ah*.

THE THIRD SIGN OF BAD GOVERNMENT

The third sign is that people will not be prepared to visit a pious man of Allah who would sincerely wish to reform them. Naturally his pres cription would entail a Certian amount of effort on their part. They would have to observe a strict rota of worship including prayers, fasting and so on and they would have to abstain from sin and disapproved behaviour. This is the gist of what Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه had said, "Those who mislead will have a large following and those who lead will be disobeyed."

If the reformer stops them from doing the unlawful, they would demand from him the wisdom behind the prohibition. They cast aspersion on the reformers saying, "

The ulama have made religion difficult to follow." These are the trials we face in this era.

HOW TO PRESERVE ONESELF FROM TRIAL

The way to save ourselves from being misled is to examine the mentor we visit. We must see whether he follows the *sunnah* but we must not be impressed by the jugglery he performs because that has nothing in common with religion.

WHAT A SHAYKH SAYS

I happened to read a pamphlet of a mentor. I said, " He is not worthy of the rank of Shaykh , who cannot have his disciples offer prayers in the Masjid Al-Haram while they are there."

This is the standard set by the mentor, will anyone ask him if this standard is set by the Qur'an or *hadith*?

THE METHOD OF THE PROPHET ﷺ

In fact, when the Prophet ﷺ migrated to Madinah, he often remembered the Bayt Allah (House of Allah) and longed to be there. Sayyidina Bilal رضى الله عنه who had high temperature wept bitterly on remembering Makkah and Masjid Al-Haram. He made this supplication, "O Allah, when will I see the mountains of Makkah again."

In spite of that never did the Prophet ﷺ said to him. " I will cause you to offer prayer in the Masjid Al Haram."

Today, the people only look at the apparent and when they see some such thing in anyone, they go mad on him. But, they do not see whether he is pious, devoted and God-fearing. What these so-called mentors display does not even require them to be Muslims, anyone may do that with a little practice. But, our masses take these things to be religious.

THE CORRECT ONE OF THE SEVENTY-TWO SECTS.

The Prophet ﷺ has set a standard for us. He said. "My Ummah will be divided into more than seventy sects. They will invite them to different ways and will claim different things to be true. These sects will lead them to Hell, to destruction. Only one will lead them to salvation - it is the path that I follow and on which my companions tread. Hold fast to it."

SUMMARY

Before we choose a leader we must ask ourselves how religious the man is. Does he follow the Qur'an and the sunnah? If he comes upto that mark, we must surely follow him. But, if he falls short of it then he is not worth emulating, and we must stay away from him even if he shows sleight of hand.

May Allah guide us on the Right Path. May He keep us away from the wrong path. *Aameen*

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين

Venue : Sermon delivered at Jami` Masjid
Bait ul Mukarram

Date: After 'Asr Prayers

THE EXCELLENCE OF UNSELFISH BEHAVIOUR

الحمد لله نحمده و نستعينه ونستغفره و نؤمن به و نتوكل عليه ونعوذ بالله من شرور انفسناومن سيات اعمالنا من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلله فلا هادي له و نشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لاشريك له ونشهد ان سيد نا و سندنا و نبينا ومولانا محمدا عبده ورسوله صلى الله تعالىٰ عليه وعلىٰ اله واصحابه وبارك وسلم تسليما كثيرا كثيرا

اما بعد

عن انس رضى الله عنه ان المهاجرين قالوا يا رسول الله ﷺ ذهبت الانصار بالاجر كله قال لا ما دعوتم الله واثنيتم عليهم۔

(ابو داؤد، كتاب الادب، باب فى شكر المعروف، صفحه ٣٠٦)

All praise is for Allah. We praise Him and seek His help and His forgiveness and we believe in Him and rely on Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of our selves and the vices of our deeds. There is no one to misguide whom Allah guides and there is no one to guide whom Allah lets go astray. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah Alone.

He has no partner. I also bear witness that our authority, our Prophet and our Master, Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger. May Allah have mercy on him, his household and on his Companions and bless them and send peace on them in great abundance.

THE ANSWER GOT ALL THE REWARD

Sayyidina Anas رضی اللہ عنہ has said that when the Muhajirs emigrated to Madinah from Makkah, they said to the Prophet ﷺ, "O Messangr of Allah ﷺ! It seems that the Ansar of Madinah have earned all the reward leaving nothing for us". The Prophet ﷺ answered " No! As long as you pray for them and thank them, you will not be deprived of reward".

They faced the great problem of accommodating the emigrants of Makkah when they came to Madinah. A multitude of people had come from Makkah to Madinah which was the small settlement at that time. They needed homes to live in, employment to earn livelihood, and they required food supplies. They had come empty handed to Madinah leaving all their belongings in Makkah where they had property and wealth.

SELFLESSNESS OF ANSAR:

Allah had grown in the Ansar a high degree of selflessness, the example of which we cannot find in pages of history. They offered all the wealth they had to the Muhajirs. They made the offer and showed the generosity on their own. The Prophet ﷺ had not given them such a command. They opened the doors of their homes to the Muhajirs, and assured them of food and drink. Seeing their sentiments, the Prophet ﷺ established

a fraternal relationship between them, known as *Muwakhāt* whereby each Muhajir had an Ansar brother with whom they stayed and ate and drank. In fact, some Ansar went to extent of offering one of their wives - if they had two - to their Muhajir brother by divorcing her so that he could marry her. However such a thing did not happen though offers of the kind were made.

AGRICULTURE

The Ansar Companions said to the Prophet ﷺ " O Messenger of Allah! The Muhajir Companions who stay with us keep worrying that they do not have a regular source of livelihood. So, we have agreed to hand over them half of our Properties keeping half to ourselves. The Prophet ﷺ sought the advice of Muhajir companions but they were unwilling to accept the offer.

Accordingly, the Prophet ﷺ decided that the Muhajir should work on the lands of Ansar and then the two of them should divide the produce between them.

THE SPIRIT OF THE COMPANIONS

We cannot find a comparison of the spirit of selflessness shown by the companions, both the Ansar and Muhajirs. The Ansar did all they could and Muhajirs felt deprived of the reward and they even expressed their sense of loss to the Prophet ﷺ.

YOU TOO CAN GET THE REWARD

The Prophet ﷺ assured them:

"Do not think in that way. You too may get such reward. As long as you pray for them and thank them, you will not be deprived of like reward".

THIS LIFE IS FLEETING

These people were not moved by rivalry to create opposing associations for the protection of their rights, the Muhajir of theirs and the Ansar of theirs. But, it was the other way about. Each of them was moved by desire to do good to the other. It was because they were concerned with the Hereafter and knew that this life was ephemeral and would pass away somehow. What is important was to worry about the next life, how would they fare after death? That was why every one of them unselfishly looked at interest of their brother.

IF HEREAFTER IS BEFORE US

If the Hereafter is not before the man then he does not fear Allah and does not think of having to stand before Him .He only thinks of this life .He competes with his fellow-men to amass worldly possession and always worries that the other person will collect more than him, and he worries that he should overtake him.

If the Hereafter is before him then man fears his fate and worries over what will happen to him. He knows that real comfort and happiness lies not in wealth and possession but in peace and contentment. He will know that he has ample stock of good deeds. True happiness lies in seeing a smile on a brother's face and in removing his discomfort. When a man moves with these sentiments then he treats other people generously without a selfish attitude.

PEACE LIES IN SELFLESSNESS

Islam does not teach us to merely give the rights of other people but it also requires us to display genuine altruism. We must be willing to offer a little sacrifice. If we sacrifice something for our Muslim, brother Allah will

give us peace, security and comfort. Material possession and richness are meaningless before those blessings of Allah. We have become hard-hearted and have no usage to offer a sacrifice for the other man so we cannot imagine the value of selflessness.

THE CASE OF AN ANSAR

Allah has landed the selfless attitude of the Ansar when he says in the Quran:

وَيُؤْثِرُوْنَ عَلٰٓى اَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ ۚ (الحشر:٩)

(.....preferring them above themselves even though poverty was their lot...) (*Al - Hashr*:59:9) .

This story is well known. A guest of the Prophetﷺ come to an Ansar companion who did not have enough for both of them. Only one could eat with the guest he would feel bad about it so he switched off the lamp. He hoped that the guest would not know that he did not eat really but only pretended to eat. The foregoing verse of the Quran was revealed in this connection and it stressed that these people preferred others even in state of personal poverty and need.

Let us develop this attitude and see what we gain of comfort and peace. We will find that it cannot be had with any amount of world's wealth. This is why the Prophetﷺ established a fraternal link between his Ansar and Muhajir companions. May Allah grow in us altruistic attitude. *Aameen*!

THE SUPERIOR DEED:

The next *hadith* is transmitted by Sayyidina Abu zarr Ghaffariرضی اللہ عنہ. He said "Once someone asked the Prophetﷺ "which of the deeds is the best in the sight of

Allah."

He said:

"Faith in Allah and Jihad in the cause of Allah."

Then someone asked:

اى الرقاب افضل؟

"which slave is best to set free?"

People had slaves during that period and the Prophet ﷺ encouraged them to set them free. He said that it was better to set free the slave who was more precious and more capable .

Someone asked him again. "Messenger of Allah Suppose I cannot do either of these then what shall I do? The Prophet ﷺthen said to him. "The best way for you to earn reward is that you help one whose state of affairs is in a bad shape."

HELP OTHER PEOPLE

The Prophetﷺadvised his questioner that he could help one who was in difficulty or anxiety or who was in a bad shape, or do something for a tactless person. The Prophet ﷺ used the word 'tactless' meaning one who does not know any one. Or is handicapped. "There is for you in that a great reward from Allah." The Prophet ﷺ thus said that the reward for helping anyone was equal to the reward of participation in *jihad.*

IF YOU CANNOT HELP

We must note that the companion asked the Prophet ﷺ what he should do if he could not help a helpless person what an encouraging advice the Prophet ﷺ gave him that he must not despair of the mercy of Allah. He showed every one a way out. He gave them an alternative-

if they could not do one thing, they may do another, and so on.

PROTECT PEOPLE FROM YOUR MISCHIEF

Nevertheless, the Prophet ﷺ advised him that it he could not help others because of his own weakness then he should:

تَدَعُ النَّاسَ مِنَ الشَّرِ

"Protect other people from your mischief."

His advice was that he should ensure that he does not cause hardship to other people. In a way it will mean he is good to himself because he is protecting himself from cmmitting a sin which he would have committed if he had harmed other people.

WHO IS A MUSLIM?

The fact is that Islamic social teachings require us not to cause hardship to others. The Prophet ﷺ said in very clear terms.

اَلْمُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلِمَ الْمُسْلِمُوْنَ مِنْ لِسَانِهٖ وَ يَدِهٖ

"A Muslim is one from whose tongue and hands other Muslims are safe"

He does not cause difficulty to any one with his tongue or hands. Only he who has these things engrained in his heart can understand and act on this advice.

DO NOT BURDEN OTHER PEOPLE.

My respected father, Mawlana Muft Muhammad Safi رحمة الله عليه used to refer to this couplet in urdu frequently.

تمام عمر اسی احتیاط میں گزری
آشیاں کسی شاخ پہ بار نہ ہو

Let not others face difficulty by any one your actions or words. Mawlana Thanwi رحمة الله عليه was a great teacher and it would not be an exaggeration if I say that the gist of most of his teachings was that we should not be the cause of hardship or inconvenience to other people. It is not only that he advised us not to beat other people but he emphasised that we must ensure that we do not inconveience them with our tongue or deed.

MUFTI A'ZAM

I have narrated to you earlier the last wishes of my respected father, Mawlana Muft Muhammad Shati رحمة الله عليه. He had suffered heart trouble before Ramadan and the month of Ramdan began in this manner. Often if seemed that the attack he suffered would cause his death. In this way, the month of Ramdan passed away. He said, "Every Muslim cherishes that he die in the month of Ramdan because the doors of Hell are closed in the month of Ramadan. I also wished that my death take place in this month. I often wished for death in Ramadan but could not bring myself to make this supplication. The reason was that if I died in the month of Ramadan, the people who attended me would face great difficulty in looking after my last rites and burying me while they would by fasting. They would be grieved and face much difficulty in a fasting condition. Therefore, I could not bring myself to make that supplication." Then he read this cou plet

تمام عمر اسی احتیاط میں گزری
آشیاں کسی شاخ پہ بار نہ ہو

Shaykh (Mufti) Taqi Usmani (HA)

Friday talk on 21st of May 2010 at Baitul-Mukarram Masjid (Karachi, Pakistan)

Commentary of Surah Al-Humaza (The Traducer: Chapter 104)/Part II:

Disclaimer: Shaykh (HA) goes through a whole range of emotions during this talk and it will be difficult to convey his true feelings during the translation. All those who are familiar with Urdu are requested to listen to the original talk, here:
http://www.archive.org/download/BoycottFacebook/BoycottFacebook.mp3

وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍ (١) ٱلَّذِى جَمَعَ مَالاً وَعَدَّدَهُ ۥ (٢) يَحْسَبُ أَنَّ مَالَهُ ۥٓ أَخْلَدَهُ
(٣) كَلَّا ۖ لَيُنۢبَذَنَّ فِى ٱلْحُطَمَةِ (٤) وَمَآ أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا ٱلْحُطَمَةُ (٥) نَارُ ٱللَّهِ ٱلْمُوقَدَةُ (٦)
(٩) إِلَّتِى تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى ٱلْأَفْـِٔدَةِ (٧) إِنَّهَا عَلَيْهِم مُّؤْصَدَةٌ (٨) فِى عَمَدٍ مُّمَدَّدَةٍ

This is Surah Al-Humaza , which I recited in front of you and the details of its commentary were started last Friday. For refreshing our memories let me present the translation of the Surah once more, and it is:

[104:1] Woe to every backbiter, derider

Humaza here refers to the person who is accustomed to backbiting meaning that he describes the bad qualities of people behind their back, describes their faults behind their backs for the sake of self enjoyment and to become a star in gatherings, considers himself superior (due to pride).

And Lumaza here refers to the person who derides, mocks and jeers others to their face; one is to inform someone of their shortcoming so that they may rectify and correct themselves and this is being benevolent and sympathetic towards someone but to deride and mock someone (to their face) and to hurt their feelings is a major sin and Lumaza is such a person.

So Allah (SWT) is saying that indeed there is destruction to everyone who is a backbiter and the one who is derider (to their face).

[104:2] who accumulates wealth and counts it.

[104:3] He thinks that his wealth has made him eternal.

This man thinks that his wealth will deliver him from death and he will become immortal on account of his wealth.

[104:4] Never! He will certainly be thrown into the Crushing Fire.

Allah (SWT) proclaims that man is in sheer deception. The person who is a backbiter and the one who is derider (to their face) and the one who continues to hoard wealth disregarding the responsibilities placed upon him due to his wealth, such a person will definitely and surely be placed into the fire which will smash his bones!

It will smash and destroy the bones!

[104:5] And what may let you know what the Crushing Fire is?

Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) is being addressed here, "What do you know about this fire which will smash and destroy the bones?"

[104:6] It is Allah's kindled fire

[104:7] that will peep into the hearts.

[104:8] It will be closed on them,

[104:9] in outstretched columns.

This is the translation of this Surah and as I explained last week that this Surah was revealed when during the Makkan period of Dawah the opposition to Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) reached a stage where people crossed all bounds of decency and they use to backbite Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) and also deride and mock him to his face.

Wal 'Iyadhu Billah!
What was their mocking and derision to the face of Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam)? They had derogatory nicknames for Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam)!
Wal 'Iyadhu Billah!
The name of Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) was Muhammad meaning the one who is praised, and it was given to him by his Parents. A person who is praised by everyone. In fact this name was assigned to him by Allah (SWT).
This is such a name which contains the praise (of his stature) within it.
The disbelievers of Makkah in their spite, enmity, jealousy and hatred used to say Mudammam which means the exact opposite of Muhammad meaning derogatory rather than praiseworthy.
The disbelievers of Makkah held the upper hand while those who believed in Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) were few in number so the disbelievers used to associate Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) with the word Mudammam in their gatherings.
Wal 'Iyadhu Billah!
And they used to curse Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam)! Once Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) explained to his companions as to how he has been protected by Allah (SWT) from their curses for they used to pronounce curses upon Mudammam while he was Muhammad and that he has not been give the name Mudammam!
In short they (the disbelievers) had tried to pursue all means of mocking Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) and this method was one of them i.e. backbiting (behind his back) and mocking to his face. Therefore, this Surah was revealed. And this methodology has continued to this day.
Such despicable, pathetic, low-life individuals existed during the lifetime of Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) who when couldn't refute prophethood through rational and logical arguments and how could they when the honesty and trustworthiness of Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) was well established beyond doubt and it could not be refuted and indeed they had no way to refute it. Moreover the message of Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) was of Tawheed and he (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) challenged the idol worshippers to prove the divinity of their idols which they had created from their own hands, how can they worship something and consider it divine which they had created them from their own hands? So not only they couldn't refute the personality Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) they had no answer to the fact that they were worshipping idols which they had created from their own hands. They had instigated false Aqaid (beliefs) in idols and assigned them specific duties i.e. that such and such idol provided them sustenance and such and such idol provided them with benefit etc, so they had gathered together all of these false notions while Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) questioned their set of Aqaid (beliefs) and asked for an explanation as to how can an idol be responsible for providing sustenance when they had created it (from their own hands) and placed it for worship.
How can this idol provide them with sustenance?
How can this idol provide them with progeny?
The one who created the Heavens and the Earth and raised the clouds He (SWT) is Al-Khaliq and He (SWT) alone is worthy of worship.
They had no answer for this.
They had no refutation for the evidence provided by Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam). And when a stubborn fool cannot refute an argument then he resorts to ad hominem attacks, resorts to bad language and cursing, resorts to mockery and derision.
And that's what the disbelievers of Makkah resorted to i.e. ad hominem attacks. When Allah (SWT) gave Islam the upper hand in the lifetime of Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) and afterwards then the people who were subjugated to Islam (by argument and by force) then they also resorted to such lowly and despicable tactics i.e. ad hominem attacks behind the backs and sometimes in front.

In our times, the flag bearers of culture and decency, those who blow the trumpets of their superior culture and traditions, and those who proudly proclaim that they are the guardians of human rights there is no difference (not even an iota) between them and the despicable, pathetic, low-life disbelievers of Makkah. They have no evidence today (against Islam), they have been defeated in argument for the truthfulness of Islam is being accepted worldwide so they have no choice but to issue profanities regarding the personality of Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) and their attempts are nothing but trying to spit at the beautiful full moon.
They have adopted this tactic, today!
Their tactic is evidence of this lowness, their defeat and their subjugation. Since they have nothing to present in terms of a good argument, they resort to these despicable and pathetic tactics e.g. sometimes they blaspheme Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) and something they try to produce caricatures of Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) and now they have on a worldwide scale given invitation to all enemies of Islam to create caricatures of Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam). All of this is evidence and manifestation of their defeat in the field of arguments.
The one, who can soundly and squarely refute, doesn't use ad hominem attacks.
The one, who can soundly and squarely refute, doesn't resort to mocking and derision.
He speaks with sound argument and presents his case in a logical manner.
But the one who can't, resorts to lowly despicable tactics of blasphemy and creating caricatures.
This is an admission from them that they have no refutation of the evidence of Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) and they have no choice but to try to satisfy their rage with lowly despicable tactics.
On one hand it is a tactic to try to satisfy their rage and on the other hand it is a challenge to the honour and dignity of the Muslims.
Those who proclaim faith in Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam)!
Those who proclaim love for Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam)!
Let's see what they do in response to these lowly despicable tactics. It is a challenge.
And I believe that the Muslim Ummah should accept the challenge with full dignity and honour of their Eemaan (faith).
Let the Muslim Ummah display that it is ready to sacrifice even its life upon the honour and dignity of Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam).

حدثنا محمد بن المثنى وابن بشار قالا حدثنا محمد بن جعفر حدثنا شعبة قال سمعت قتادة يحدث عن أنس بن مالك قال

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لا يؤمن أحدكم حتى أكون أحب إليه من ولده ووالده والناس أجمعين

It is reported on the authority of Anas Ibn Malik (RA) that the Messenger of Allah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) said, "None of you is a believer till I am dearer to him than his child, his father and the whole of mankind." [Muslim]
Umar (RA), said to the Prophet (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam), "You are more beloved to me than everything except myself." Messenger of Allah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) placed his hand on the chest of Umar (RA) and said, "You will not have complete faith till I am dearer to you than your own self."
When the answer was given and the hand was placed upon the chest of Umar (RA) immediately a change occurred within Umar (RA) and he said, ""However, now, by Allah, you are dearer to me than my own self."
The Sahaba (companions) proved their love and devotion to Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) in a manner which is unsurpassed and cannot be matched by any other nation or group. No one can give such examples of love and devotion to their leader, to their chief or to

even to their prophet.
Sayyidina Abu Mahzura (RA) is a companion upon whose head the Prophet (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) placed his blessed hand. He did not cut the hair from the area which had touched the blessed hands of Prophet (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) for those were the hair which were touched by Prophet (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) and he refused to part with them.
My brothers, today you have been confronted with a small challenge.
You celebrate Al-Mawlid in the month of Rabiul-Awwal.
You proclaim the love for (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam).
Your challenge is to see your response towards those are extending their hands upon the honour of Prophet (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam).
Would you continue to have friendly relations with them?
Would you continue to provide financial benefits to them?
Today, I have been informed that Facebook which has instigated this filthy competition has been banned (in Pakistan). At least we praise Allah (SWT) that they have a little bit of conscious but I don't know how long this blockage will last?
But for anyone who has any love for Prophet (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) even after Facebook has been unbanned then his dignity should not permit him to use this filthy site. The filthy site which has blasphemed Prophet (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam).
I don't know but I have been informed that young boys and girls have been befriending each other through this site and the moral teachings of religion are being stampeded and trampled upon. So this site should be blocked and banned!
But if you were to leave (FaceBook) then do so now due to the Love and Honour of Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam). Know that these people are worshippers of money, their survival is in wealth, look at what the Qur'aan has said about their accumulation of wealth:
[104:1] Woe to every backbiter, derider
[104:2] who accumulates wealth and counts it.
[104:3] He thinks that his wealth has made him eternal.
So they are the same, their god is money! And when they experience a loss in their wealth then their minds comprehend the reality.
I have been informed that for every visitor FaceBook earns $2.50. Brothers! Would you reward the filthy site which is guilty of blasphemy with $2.50 with each of your visit? Would you benefit them?
There are more than a billion Muslims on the globe and if they make a determined effort to boycott such sites then within a few days they will learn their lesson. They will see the results of committing blasphemy to the personage of Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam).
Know that Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) is no need of our praise and our eulogy. Allah (SWT) has clearly stated in the Qur'aan:

وَرَفَعْنَا لَكَ ذِكْرَك

[94:4] and We raised high for you your name.
The name of Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) has been raised to an extent that not a moment goes by without someone raising the proclamation somewhere on the globe:

. . . اَشْهَدُ اَنَّ مُحَمَّد . . .

I testify that Muhammed (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam)...
Not a moment goes by in 24 hours, every moment, every second someone proclaims and testifies to the Prophethood of Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam). And the proclamation is done openly and candidly. Their blasphemy amounts to nothing when creations in the universe testify to the Prophethood of Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) and sings his praises.

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ وَمَلَٰٓئِكَتَهُۥ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى ٱلنَّبِيِّ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ صَلُّواْ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُواْ

تَسْلِيمًا

[33:56] Surely, Allah and His angels send blessings to the Prophet. O you who believe, do pray Allah to bless him, and send your Salam (prayer for his being in peace) to him in abundance.
Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) is in no need of mine or your praise.
Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) is no need of mine or your eulogy.
Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) is no need of any praise from these despicable, pathetic, low-life individuals.
Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) is above and beyond any need for our praise. He (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) was declared Muhammad (the praiseworthy) from his birth.
His (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) praise is on Earth.
His (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) praise is in the heavens.
His (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) praise is in the creation.
He (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam) is in no need of our praises but it is an honour for a believer to take steps in protecting the honour, dignity and stature of Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam), steps which will harm these decayed individuals.
At least they should be made to feel it in their pockets. They should be shown that Muslims havn't lost their dignity and self-respect.
I would particularly like to appeal to my young ones about this "Internet phenomenon" which has caught them and sweeping them along and it has become their favourite past time. Can you not make a small sacrifice? Can you not abandon one of your pursuits for protecting the honour of Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam)?
Nobody is asking for your life! Nobody is asking for your wealth! You are being asked to sacrifice a favourite of yours for the sake of honour and dignity of Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam).
And if you can do so then at least your name will be written amongst those who love Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam).
At least you will be say on the day of judgement that you at least boycotted those who blasphemed Rasul-ullah (Sallaho Alaihe Wassallam).
If such a tactic is started then you will see the results of it, Insha'Allah and may Allah (SWT) give us the ability of it (Ameen).
So brothers, Allah (SWT) has announced destruction for such people in Surah Al-Humaza. They may be happy that their plans have come to fruition but their end result is:
[104:4] Never! He will certainly be thrown into the Crushing Fire.
[104:5] And what may let you know what the Crushing Fire is?
[104:6] It is Allah's kindled fire
[104:7] that will peep into the hearts.
[104:8] It will be closed on them,
[104:9] in outstretched columns.
This not my proclamation. It is a pronouncement from Allah (SWT). Those wretched ones who have planned for this will face repercussions. They can announce their success in this world but in the hereafter thy will face severe repercussions and it will happen!
But we also have responsibility in this world and may Allah (SWT) give us the ability to fulfil our responsibilities in this world (Ameen).

thanks to:
http://central-mosque.com/index.php/society/facebook-a-insulting-caricatures-of-rasul-ullah-sallaho-alaihe-wassallam.html

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CAUSES OF DISUNITY AND THE REMEDY-I[1]

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ نَحْمَدُهٗ وَنَسْتَعِيْنُهٗ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهٗ وَنُؤْمِنُ بِهٖ وَنَتَوَكَّلُ عَلَيْهِ وَنَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنْ شُرُوْرِ اَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ اَعْمَالِنَا مَنْ يَّهْدِهِ اللّٰهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهٗ وَمَنْ يُّضْلِلْهُ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهٗ وَاَشْهَدُ اَنْ لَّا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهٗ لَا شَرِيْكَ لَهٗ وَاَشْهَدُ اَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا وَنَبِيَّنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهٗ وَرَسُوْلُهٗ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالٰى عَلَيْهِ وَعَلٰى اٰلِهٖ وَاَصْحَابِهٖ وَبَارَكَ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيْمًا كَثِيْرًا اَمَّا بَعْدُ!

اَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ الرَّجِيْمِ O

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ O

عن أبي الدرداء رضي الله تعالىٰ عنه عن النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم قال ألا أخبركم بافضل من درجة الصيام و الصلوة و الصدقة قالوا بلى قال اصلاح ذات البين و فساد ذات البين هي الحالقة۔

(ابو داود كتاب الادب، باب ما في اصلاح ذات البين)

Wiseman of the ummah

The above Hadith is reported by Sayyidina Abu a d-Darda رضي الله عنه. He was a high ranking Companion and *Wali* (friend) of Allah. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had described him as حكيم هذه الامة (the wise man of this *Ummah*). Allah had granted him wisdom.

Question creates interest

He reported that once the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked his *sahabah* رضي الله عنهم, "Shall I not disclose to you something that is

[1] Venue: Jami' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi.

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more excellent in degree than *salah*, fasting and *sadaqah*?" This was the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم style of speech. Whenever he had to bring out the importance of something, he put a question to the Companions رضى الله عنهم. This created in them an interest and the information or disclosure had an effect on them. But, without an urge to know, the best of disclosures and teachings are fruitless. So, the interest or craving is very significant.

Create an interest in religion

This is why our religious elders have prescribed that success lies in a craving for religion and practice on it. Once that interest is created, Allah bestows blessings and that is His way of doing things. Mawlana Rumi describes it thus:

آب کم جو تشنگی آور بدست تا بجوشد آب از بالا و پست

Do not search for water much, create a great thirst. When that is created, it is Allah's practice that He bestows water and it springs from everywhere. The craving is very significant. May Allah grow it in us, *Ameen!*

The urge makes you restless

Once the interest is created, it does not let man rest. He is restless till he gets what he wants. When a man is hungry-that is, he craves for food - he is restless till he gets something to eat. When he is thirsty he craves for water and will not cease to be restless till he has water.

May Allah grow in us a craving for religion. Once we have that, it will keep us restless till we get religion and we will crave for more (knowledge and practice).

Religious urge in sahabah

It was with each one of the *Sahabah* that they were worried how they would fare after death. They would be presented before Allah and there is Hell or Paradise. What is the destination? The result was that in every little thing they did from morning till evening, they wondered if it was according to Allah's pleasure or not. They worried lest their mistake sent them to Hell.

Hanzalah's رضى الله عنه thought of hereafter

Sayyidina Hanzalah رضى الله عنه went to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and submitted, "O Messenger of Allah! "يا رسول الله نافق حنظلة" Hanzalah has become a hypocrite." He said that about himself. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him how was that and he said, "When I am with you, I think of the Hereafter and seem to see paradise and Hell before my eyes. I feel tender and mild at heart and an inclined to obey Allah. But when I am away with my family, this condition is not found in me. I have become a hypocrite because when I am away from you, I am in a state different from the one when I am here."

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم comforted him, saying, "Hanzalah, these are different moments. Man is overpowered by sentiments of a differing nature. So, do not worry. Rather, keep doing what Allah has asked you to do. Insha Allah, you will succeed." The thought that one has become a hypocrite is really the craving for the Hereafter that has made one restless.

Umar's رضى الله عنه thought of the future.

Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه was a great *sahabi*. He was the second Khalifah (caliph) of whom the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "If there were a prophet after me, he would be Umar." He also said about him," The devil does not go by the path, Umar walks on. The devil takes a different path." And he also told Sayyidina Umar رضى الله عنه that he had seen his palace in paradise. In spite of these things about him, his anxiety was so intense that he adjured Sayyidina Huzayfah رضى الله عنه to say on oath whether his name was on the list of hypocrites, which the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had mentioned to Huzayfah رضى الله عنه.

Help follows the urge

When a man shows a deep interest then Allah who is Merciful bestows. Mawlana Rumi رحمة الله has said:

آب کم جو تشنگی آور بدست تا بجوشد آب از بالا و پست

Do not look for water much but first create the thirst in you.

We must always be eager and restless to have the correct knowledge. Once that craving is created, Allah grants it through His Mercy and Benevolence. It is His *Sunnah* that till today. He has never let down a true seeker who has a sincere

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desire in his heart.

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم first created an interest in his Companions رضى الله عنهم and he did that by asking them a question, "Shall I not disclose to you something that is more excellent in degree than *salah*, fasting and *sadaqah*?" They became interested.

Salah takes one nearer to Allah

The *Sahabah* رضى الله عنهم said, "O Messenger of Allah! Certainly! Do tell us." They were always eager to know how they could gain nearness to Allah and earn His pleasure. They had already heard of the virtues of fasting, *salah* and *sadaqah*. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had told them that *salah* is a pillar of religion.He also told them that Allah says, "A slave gains nearness to Me through the supererogatory. The more optional *salah* he offers, the closer he gets to Me till I become his eyes with which he sees, his ears with which he hears and his hands with which he holds." In short, by observing plenty of optional *salah*, he gets so near to Allah that from head to toe he is an example of Allah's pleasure. The Companions رضى الله عنهم had heard of this merit of *salah*, so they wondered what could be more excellent than *salah*?

Merit of fasting

They had also heard about the reward for fasting which Allah had said that while it was ten times for a kind of worship and so-many times for another kind, but:

الصوم لي وأنا أجزى به

"Fasting is for Me and I will reward it." (Nasai,Kitab us,Si'am)

In other words, He will give the reward for fasting, which is uncountable, unmeasurable and unweighable by us. "Fasting is for Me, so I will reward according to My Greatness and Glory." The Companions رضى الله عنهم were aware of the merits of fasting, so they wondered what could be more meritorious.

Merit of sadaqah

They had also heard the merits of *Sadaqah* that the reward for giving charity for Allah's sake is seven hundred times. Besides, the measure is not what we know of but it is the one

used in paradise. What could that be?

Most excellent deed is to reconcile warring groups

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had offered to disclose to them something more excellent than *salah*, fasting and *Sadaqah* whose excellences they had known. So, an interest was aroused in their hearts and they submitted, "O Messenger of Allah! Do tell us what it is that we may pursue it and Allah may grant us more reward than we get from these forms of worship." He said, "It is "صلاح ذات البين" (to put things right between two Muslims who are at loggerheads with one another." They may have quarreled, disputed or not be on speaking terms with one another. We may bring them together, make them friends.

This deed is more excellent than *salah*, fasting and *sadaqah*. This is how the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم taught his *Sahabah*.

Reconciling people is more excellent than optional salah and fasting

The *salah* and fasting mentioned in this Hadith are the supererogatory deeds, the optional worship. A man may engage in optional *salah* all night, observe optional fasting during the day and give away much of his wealth in charity. These things are very meritorious and rewardable but, if two Muslims are indifferent to one another and stranged because of that then you will get more reward for putting things right between them. You will give a little time and reunite them, bringing them harmony, but we will reward more than you can get by night long worship and day-long fasting and abundant charity.

What a great thing the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم disclosed to them!

Disharmony shaves off

After emphasizing that to establish mutual love and harmony among Muslims is more excellent than optional worship the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said in the next sentence,

"وفساد ذات البين هى الحالقة"

"But spoiling them, in-fighting and mutual hatred are the 'shavers'."

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This is explained in another Hadith, "I do not say that they shave off the hair, but mutual fighting shaves off your religion." When there is disharmony and hatred among people then they commit many sins like back biting, scandalising, hurting and accusing each other.

Evil influence

The mutual wrangling and quarrels have an evil influence on the people who become alienated from religion. They lose light of religion and a darkness penetrates their hearts. This is why the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم emphasized very often that disharmony and discord must be avoided.

He missed the congregation to arrange a patch up

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم led the congregational *salah* in the Masjid Nabawi and obviously, as long as he was alive no one else led the *salah* in this mosque. In all his life, he could not come to this mosque at the time of *salah* just once and Abdur Rahman Ibn Awf رضى الله عنه led the congregation. The reason why he did not come was that he learnt of a dispute between two groups of a Muslim tribe. So, he went to put things right between them. He was delayed there and, in his absence, Sayyidina Abdur Rahman Ibn Awf رضى الله عنه led the congregational *salah*.

This was the only time in his life that though he was healthy he would not reach the Masjid Nabwi. The Qur'an and Ahadith instruct us that we must not tolerate fighting between Muslims. We must do our best to bring them to a compromise because disputes and in-fighting are what shave off (religion).

Assurance for a house in center of paradise

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said

أنا زعيم بسط الجنة لمن ترك المراء وهو محِقّ

I give an assurance of a house in the center of paradise to one who in spite of being rightful ceases to dispute.

He could have claimed his right legally or in some other way but he surrenders it so that the dispute should end. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم assures such a man that he would get him a house in the center of paradise. This is a great thing, indeed!

No other deed gets this assurance

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has not taken this responsibility for any other deed. In this way, he has taught us to refrain from disputes and to live as Allah's slaves and brothers of each other. We must remove every such thing that might lead to disputes and quarrels because Allah has placed a light in unity, fraternity and love. This light brightens a man's life in this world and the next. If, on the other hand there is mutual quarreling and mischief then darkness pervades this life and the next and it spells unhappiness.

Murderer and murdered in hell

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also said:

اذا التقى المسلمان بسيفيهما فالقاتل والمقتول كلهما فى النار

If two Muslims confront one another with their swords then the murderer and the murdered both will go to Hell.

Someone asked him. "O Messenger of Allah, the murderer will go to Hell because he killed a Muslim unrightfully but why will the murdered go to Hell?" He said:

على قتل

Indeed, he also intended to kill his opponent.

He too had raised a sword. If he had aimed correct, he might have killed the other. By a coincidence, the other overtook him. So, both will go to Hell. Therefore, he said that Muslims must not quarrel.

Obey the ruler even a black slave

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Even if a black slave becomes your ruler then do not raise your sword at him, unless he perpetrates disbelief." If you raise your sword against him then some people will take your side and some his. As a result Muslims will be divided into two groups and hatred will grow between them. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has not tolerated differences and disorder among Muslims at any cost. He has said:

كونوا عباد الله إخوانًا

O slaves of Allah, become brothers, one of the other.

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A miserable life

At the mention of worship, our mind turns to *salah*, fasting, *sadaqah*, *zikr*, recital of Qur'an, and these things, indeed are excellent forms of worship. However, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that to reconcile Muslims is more excellent than these forms. But, today, our society has gone very far away from this instruction of the beloved Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Envy, disputes, quarreling, discord-these things are found at every step in our society. Life has become miserable. We have ignored the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم warning that these things shave off religion. They have shaved off our religion so that we do not perceive their ugliness and evil.

Doing what promotes disputes

If anyone does not offer *salah*, drinks wine or commits a sin then our society classifies him as evil. But if he does something that sets people against each other then no one regards him as a criminal and evil, as the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that he is. No one thinks about eliminating mutual discord and quarrels. Indeed, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has taught us a great thing by saying that setting things right between Muslims is more excellent than *salah*, fasting and *sadaqah*.

He is not a liar

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

ليس الكذاب الذى ينمى خيرًا

If anyone says something that is not a fact in order to create love in the heart of a Muslim for another and to remove hatred then he is not counted among those who lies. Suppose someone learns of a quarrel between two Muslims who hate one another and he wishes to grow love between them, so he goes to each and says that the other speaks highly of him and prays for him. Though he did not hear him take his name and make a supplication yet, he knows that the man surely makes supplication to Allah thus:

ربنا اتنا فى الدنيا حَسَنَةً و فى الأخرة حسنةً وقنا عذاب النار

Our Lord give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter and save us from the punishment of the fire.

The word "us" includes all Muslims!

Supplication for all Muslims

Similar, he knows that the man recites the prayer *at-tahiyaat* in *salah* and comes to the words:

"السلام علينا و على عباد الله الصالحين"

Peace be on us and on Allah's righteous slaves.

These words include prayer for security of all Muslims Again, he concludes his *salah* with the words:

"السلام عليكم و رحمة الله"

Peace be on (all of) you and the mercy of Allah.

The jurists say that it includes all Muslims the angels and jinns to his right and to his left.

Hence, he is not wrong if he tells the other man that he prays for him, for, in these prayers all Muslims are included. In this way the two men will strike a compromise, and come close to one another.

In fact, some jurists have said in explaining this Hadith that if one has to tell a clear lie to get two Muslims together then he may tell the lie. Nevertheless, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that discord between two Muslims is so bad that if one has to speak something not a fact to get them united then it is allowed to him.

If we try to get two disunited people together then that is a great thing and highly rewarding. It is more rewarding than offering optional *salah* all night, fasting every day of one's life and giving away all wealth in *sadaqah*.

Some people are the very converse. They cannot see two people united. They instigate each of them till enmity and hatred grow in their hearts. There is no sin greater than that.

Successor of Iblis (satan)

Iblis, the devil, has an army of smaller devils. They are spread all over the world their task is to lead people on the wrong path. According to a Hadith, Iblis sometimes sets up his assembly on the ocean. He calls for a report from other devils One of them reports that he induced a worshipper not to offer *salah*. Iblis commends him. Another reports that he prevented a worshipper from fasting and Iblis applauds him. A third

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reports that he tempted a person to not give *sadaqah*. Which he was about to give. He also is applauded. Another reports that he created dissension between a husband and his wife so that they hate one another. Iblis stands up from his throne and embraces this devil and says, "you are my real successor. You did the right thing just as I wished to do."

Grower of hatred is a greater criminal

The most serious attack of the devil and his most successful play is to sow seeds of dissension. Hence, in the light of this Hadith, those people perpetrate a very dangerous crime who grow hatred between two friends or between loving couples. If anyone prevents a worshipper from offering *salah* or from fasting then he also plays the part of the devil but to grow dissension is so bad that Iblis is very pleased with it. Hence, we must concentrate on keeping away from it.

How to avoid discord

The question arises, how may we keep away from quarrel and discord? How may we grow love? How may we remove dissension?

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has instructed the Ummah with a deep insight. Each of these instructions is helpful in growing mutual love and eliminating quarrel. However, before we mention them, we must point out that there is a basic condition which we must keep in mind.

The condition

The entire procedure is based on a basic condition for removing dissension and growing love and unity. Only when the condition is fulfilled will we attain our goal. Everyone proclaims loudly that Muslims must unite and bickering must end. In fact, even those who sow seeds of dissension shout hoarse that we must unite! But unity evades us. Why? A saintly man has a proposal. He has diagnosed the illness and proposed a cure. It is only the men of Allah who succeed in diagnosing the illness because Allah puts only in the hearts of His pious slaves what the nature of the illness is and what is its cure.

Haji Imdadullah رحمة الله

The great Shaykh, Haji Imdadullah رحمة الله Muhajir Makki, is the Shaykh of our Shaykh's Shaykh. He is not a graduate of a Madrasah, not a qualified aalim. He only studied the initial books. But, if Allah opens the doors of *ma'arifah* (divine awareness) on anyone then great scholars submit to him. Great scholars like Mawlana Muhammad Qasim Nanotwi رحمة الله and Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi رحمة الله also presented themselves before him to gain training and to improve manners.

Two conditions-humbleness and sacrifice

He untied the knot-why is unity not established though everyone tries to get people united and agreeable? The wise answer that he gave is such that if we sincerely go by it then all our altercations will vanish. He said, "The basic path to unity and harmony is to grow two things in oneself. If we do that then unity will be established. If even one of them is lacking then unity will never be achieved. The two things are: humility and selflessness."

Humility or humbleness is to regard oneself as nothing. (Say to yourself:) "I am Allah's slave and because I am a slave I am bound to observe His commands. By myself, I have no merit and have no right. Hence, if anyone violates my rights then he does no wrong, for, I deserve that."

Arrogance obstructs

The respected Haji Imadadullah رحمة الله said that unity is not established because every man is arrogant at heart. He thinks that he is great, and he has many rights. He then blames others for violating his rights and not giving him respect Arrogance breeds discord.

When one is arrogant, he regards himself as great and owner of many rights. He expects other people to respect him but when they do not treat him with respect, he has complaints about them and the knot is tied. He begins to hate and things worsen. They quarrel. So, arrogance is the root cause.

Prescription for comfort

Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanawi رحمة الله gave a prescription

for a life comfort and peace. He said, "If you follow the prescription then you will not have complaint against anyone, Insha Allah". It is that you conceive to yourself that the world is a very bad place and its main purpose is to hurt. Hence, if a human being or animal hurts you then it is exactly in accordance with the nature on which the world is created. But ,if you find someone favourable to you then you must feel surprised and you should thank Allah for that.

Have no expectations

Hence, do not have good expectations from anyone in this world, a friend, a relative, etc. Do not entertain any kind of expectation from anyone that he would help you, give you something and so on. If you will have no expectation from anyone and yet you are benefitted by him then it will please you much. Thank Allah for that. Say, "O Allah you put it into his heart and he was kind to me. Indeed, You are Benevolent."

No complaints against enemies

If you have no expectations and anyone hurts you then you will have no complaints. It is just like when an enemy hurts us, we do not complain. We are not grieved. We only have a complaint when someone we had relied on hurts us. This is why Mawlana Thanawi رحمه الله said, "Have no expectations from any creature."

Place hopes in only one being

We must have expectation from only One Being. Ask only Him. Place hopes in Him alone. Cut off hopes from all the others. Expect from Allah the Majestic, the Gracious alone. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to make this supplication:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اجْعَلْ فِيْ قَلْبِيْ رَجَاءَ كَ، وَاقْطَعْ رَجَائِيْ عَنْ مَنْ سِوَاكَ

O Allah! Place in my heart hope in you. And, remove my hopes from everyone besides you.

First base of unity-humility

A man who is humble will not think that he has a right over other people. He will think of himself as Allah's slave who has no standing and who will be happy with howsoever Allah treats him. He will have no expectation from others and therefore, no complaints. When there are no complaints, there

will be no disputes. Thus, humility or humbleness is the first pillar of unity and harmony.

The second base-selflessness

The second pillar of unity and harmony is selflessness. It is an attitude of self-sacrifice with Allah's creatures. He should be prepared to sacrifice his comfort to let his Muslim brother live in comfort. He would bear hardship but protect his Muslim brother from hardship. He would be willing to suffer loss but would try to benefit his Muslim brother. We must grow this spirit of self-sacrifice in us.

اس نفع و ضرر کی دنیا میں — یہ ہم نے لیا ہے درسِ جنوں

اپنا تو زیاں تسلیم مگر — اوروں کا زیاں منظور نہیں

We should agree to suffer loss but not let others suffer it.

This is the lesson the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم gave us.

Sahabah's self-sacrifice

The Qur'an described sacrifice of the Ansar Companions رضى الله عنهم

يُؤْثِرُوْنَ عَلٰٓى اَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ

Preferring them above themselves even though poverty was their lot. (al-Hashr, 59:9)

Some travellers came to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once. They were hard-pressed. At such times, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم would tell his Companions رضى الله عنهم that some poverty-stricken guests had come. Those who could might serve the guests with meals.

Example of a sahabi

When he heard the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم a sahabi took one of the guests to his house. His wife confided to him that they did not have enough food for three of them. Either they would eat or their guest, but not all of them. So, he suggested to his wife that she should place the food before the guest and blow out the lantern. She obeyed the instructions and the *Sahabi* sat down with his guest but though he moved his hand from the platter to his mouth, he did not eat anything. The guest was

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under the impression that he ate with him. Thus, the couple and their children slept hungry having fed the guest. Allah was pleased with them and revealed a verse about them:

يُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ

Preferring them above themselves even though poverty was their lot. (Al-Hashar, 59:9)

They preferred to go hungry but made sure that their guest was comfortable. This was their sacrifice.

Meaning of self-sacrifice

Accordingly, self-sacrifice is to endure some hardship but let a fellow Muslim be pleased at heart. He whom Allah grants this characteristic is really granted such a savor of faith that every other pleasure of the world is nothing before it. When a man endures hardship so that his Muslim brother might have a smile on his face then that is more pleasing to him than every other pleasure in the world. No one can say how long he would live. People die suddenly. So, why not practice self-sacrifice. Once that is done, Allah blesses people with love in their hearts for each other and He bestows His favours on those who practice self-sacrifice.

How a person was forgiven

We learn from a Hadith that a man from an earlier Ummah died and was brought before Allah. His Record of Deeds did not show any worthwhile worship. Allah asked the angel responsible over the Record of Deeds whether he had any pious deed in his record. The angel said, "He has no piety worth mention except that when he bought something he did not haggle with the seller. When the seller quoted a price, he asked for a discount and paid the discounted price."

سهلًا اذا باع، سهلًا اذا اشترى

Similarly, he was mild when he sold his merchandise. He never argued that his price was not negotiable, but reduced it for a poor buyer. Also, when he saw that his debtor was hard-pressed, he wrote-off the debt. Allah said, "If he forgave My slaves their debts then I am more liable to forgive him. So, I forgive him."

Thus, the grounds on which he was forgiven was his self-sacrifice.

Eliminate selfishness

Any way, we saw that Haji Imdadullah رحمة الله prescribed that we should rid ourselves of arrogance and develop an attitude of self-sacrifice. In this way, we will be free from discord. As for selfishness, it is the opposite of self-sacrifice. A man who is selfish is ever engrossed in his own little world always contemplating how to amass his ambitions.

The opposite of 'humbleness' is 'arrogance'. If a man gives up arrogance and selfishness and adopts humbleness and self-sacrifice then unity and love will be established, Insha Allah. So, let everyone resolve to do it. This is the deed that Haji Imdadullah رحمة الله prescribed.

One standard

The other thing that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said in the Hadith is really the base of all good manners. If we develop it then all bickerings will end. That other thing is:

أحب لاخيك ما تحب لنفسك

واكره لاخيك ماتكره لنفسك

Love for your brother what you love for yourself and detest for your brother that which you detest for yourself.

Therefore, whenever we deal with anyone, we must place ourselves in his place and think how we would react if we were treated as we treat him. What would we like? Then, we must opt to deal with him in the light of our conclusion and do for him what we would have him do to ourselves. This is the best standard to deal with others.

Remove double standards

It is a malady with us that we have set up two standards,one for us and another for others. We do not like the same thing for other people as we like for ourselves.

However, if all of us abide by the instruction of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and choose for our brother what we choose for ourselves then there would be no discord because everyone

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will abstain from doing what hurts other people.

We conclude by repeating that these are some principles for promoting unity and harmony among ourselves. May Allah through His benevolence enable us to understand these things and to conduct ourselves accordingly. *Aameen.*

وَاٰخِرُ دَعْوَانَا اَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ

And our last call be, praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds.



CAUSES OF DISUNITY AND THE REMEDY-II[6]

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ نَحْمَدُهٗ وَنَسْتَعِيْنُهٗ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهٗ وَنُؤْمِنُ بِهٖ وَنَتَوَكَّلُ عَلَيْهِ وَنَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنْ شُرُوْرِ اَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ اَعْمَالِنَا۔ مَنْ يَّهْدِهِ اللّٰهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهٗ وَمَنْ يُّضْلِلْهُ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهٗ وَاَشْهَدُ اَنْ لَّا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهٗ لَا شَرِيْكَ لَهٗ وَاَشْهَدُ اَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا وَنَبِيَّنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهٗ وَرَسُوْلُهٗ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالٰى عَلَيْهِ وَعَلٰى اٰلِهٖ وَاَصْحَابِهٖ وَبَارَكَ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيْمًا كَثِيْرًا۔ اَمَّا بَعْدُ!

اَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ الرَّجِيْمِ O

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ O

عن ابی عمر رضی اللّٰہ تعالٰی عنه عن النبی صلی اللّٰہ علیه و سلم قال المسلم اذا کان یخالط الناس و یصبر علی أذاهم خیر من المسلم الذی لا یخالط الناس ولا یصبر علی أذاهم۔ (ترمذی، صفة القیامة، باب، نمبر ۵۵، حدیث نمبر ۲۵۰۷)

In part I, we have read the sayings of the Prophet صلی اللّٰہ علیه وسلم concerning remedies for disunity among Muslims. This is another Hadith of the Prophet صلی اللّٰہ علیه وسلم.

Sayyidina Ibn Umar رضی اللّٰہ عنه reported that the Prophet صلی اللّٰہ علیه وسلم said:

There is a Muslim who keeps away from other people, stay in a mosque or a Madrassah or a place of worship so that he may not have to deal with them. There is another Muslim who

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6 Venue: Jami' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi.

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has not chosen solitude but mixes freely with the people. He meets them, has a relationship and friendship with them. He deals with them. As a result he faces hardship at their hands but he endures them patiently. This other Muslim who mixes with people and shows patience on their excesses is many times better than the Muslim who keeps away from other people so that he is not called upon to show patience on hardship. (Tirmidhi, 55:2507)

No monasticism in Islam

As we know, Islam does not advocate monasticism as Christianity does. The Christians believe that nearness to God can only be achieved when man gives up all his worldly engagements and takes up a monastic life. But, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم taught us that we must keep constant contact with people and bear with patience the hardships they cause.

Hardship from staying together

Ponder over this interesting teaching. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has mentioned the two things together: keeping company of people and enduring their excesses. This shows that the two things are complementary and corollary to one another. When you meet people, you will also face hardship, even when they are your close relatives or friends. Why is that?

Allah's perfect power seen in man's face

The answer lies in the creation of man. From the creation of Sayyidina Aadam عليه السلام till today, Allah has created billions upon billions of people and the creation will continue till the Last Day. He has given a face to every man which is no bigger than a span and has eyes, nose, mouth, teeth, ears, cheeks and chin but no two faces are alike in all respects. Every face is different from the other. The difference is seen not only among those who are already created but will persist also among those who will be created. It is not that one of the future creation will have the features of one created in the past. The features enable the looker to distinguish one man from the other.

Nature demonstrated in colour

Further, it is a demonstration of Allah's power that mankind is divided into different races. In each race there is a

common factor and a distinguishing factor. The former makes the race distinct from other races while the later distinguishes every member of that race from the other. Indeed, man cannot comprehend Allah's power.

Fingerprints

The fingerprints of no two men are the same. They are, therefore, used for identification and a thumb impression is like the signature of a man. The lines on it differ from person to person. A cursory look will not detect difference on thumbs of two men but this is a universally accepted fact that there is a wide difference in every two thumb impressions.

What experts can do

Experts on thumb impression assure us that from an enlarged thumb impression they can describe its owner from head to toe. The lines disclose to them all his features even his eyes, his teeth, etc.

Allah can recreate lines on the thumb

My father رحمه الله told us that there is a verse in *surah al-Qiyamah* in which Allah says about the disbelivers:

اَيَحْسَبُ الْاِنْسَانُ اَلَّنْ نَّجْمَعَ عِظَامَهٗ ○ بَلٰى قٰدِرِيْنَ عَلٰٓى اَنْ نُّسَوِّيَ بَنَانَهٗ ○ (سورة القيامة: آيت ٣-٤)

Does man think that we shall not gather his bones? Yea, we are Able to restore his very fingertips. (al-Qiyamah, 75:3-4)

The disbelievers used to ask, "After we die and rot and turn into dust, then how will we be resurrected? Who will do it?"

In the above verse, Allah tells them that He will restore them to life. No one else can.

Embraces Islam on this verse

Allah could have said that He was Able to restore the face, hands or feet, but He mentioned the fingertips particularly.

My father رحمه الله disclosed to us that a scientist became a Muslim on reading this verse. He said, "No body but the creator could have said this thing." Only He who has created every limb of man can say that.

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Allah's perfect ability

As we said, no two people are alike. If any two look alike then that is surprising but not if they are unalike. Truly, it would not have been surprising if all men were alike and we should be surprised at their being different. It is Allah's perfect Ability that is reflected in dissimilarity of every person though the races are identified and man is discerned from a woman.

Temperaments differ

Just as faces of every two men differ, their temperaments also differ. Their tastes differ as also their likes and dislikes.

Hence, if two men are together, it can never be that they will not cause inconvenience to one another or one will not hurt the other. They may hurt one another physically, spiritually, psychologically. They are likely to do something that hurts the other.

Sahabah's رضی اللہ عنہم temperaments differed

The Companions رضی اللہ عنہم are the most excellent creatures in this universe after the Prophets علیہم السلام. Next to the noble Prophets علیہم السلام, there is no one more God-fearing, pious, righteous, self sacrificing than them and there will not be any. In spite of that, they were temperamentally unalike each other.

Disagreement between the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم and His wives رضی اللہ عنہن

No wife on earth can match the Mothers of the Faithful in their care for their husband. The Mothers of the Faithful were very caring for their husband. However, they too encountered situations not in consonance with their temperament. Sometimes, the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم faced such moments with them and found that very trying. For instance, once he was so hurt that he swore that he would not go to them for a month.

Sayyidah Ayshah's رضی اللہ عنہا displeasure

Sometimes, it was his holy wives who were hurt on his account. Once the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said to Sayyidah Ayshah رضی اللہ عنہا "O Ayshah! I am able to tell when you are pleased and when displeased." She asked, "How is that?" He said, "When you are pleased with me, you take your oath و رب محمد 'By the Lord of Muhammad, but when you are displeased with me, you say و رب ابراهیم 'By the Lord of Ibrahim." She submitted.

لا اهجر الا اسمك یا رسول اللہ

"O Messenger of Allah, at such times, I do not leave but your name, for, your love continues to remain in my heart."

Ponder over it! Who can be more compassionate and kind than the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم particularly with Sayyidah Ayshah رضی اللہ عنہا. His love for her is not unknown to everyone. In spite of that, she had occasion to complain against him. He was not unaware of her displeasure when that occured.

Displeasure as husband and wife

Let no one say that because to hurt the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم is an act of disbelief, therefore Sayyidah Ayshah رضی اللہ عنہا committed a grave mistake. The truth is that Allah has divided life into different levels and the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم felt hurt by her in his capacity as a husband. Just as a wife takes pride on her husband, so too a husband takes pride on his wife, in certain situations, they do feel displeased with one another. This does not relate to his capacity as Prophet.

Variation in temperament of Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ and Umar رضی اللہ عنہ

So, as we have seen, temperament differences did mark the lives of the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم and his wives as, indeed, it did the lives of the two shaykhs, Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ and Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ. These two men are the most excellent on earth after the Prophets علیہ السلام. As for their relationship with the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم the Companions رضی اللہ عنہم said that the names of these two men were always taken together. "We would say:

Abu Bakr and Umar came,	جاء ابوبکرؓ و عمرؓ
Abu Bakr and Umar went,	ذهب ابوبکرؓ و عمرؓ
Abu Bakr and Umar came out.	خرج ابوبکرؓ و عمرؓ

They were like one life, two hearts. Whenever the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم wished to get advice, he would summon both of

them. No one ever imagined of them as being separated.

Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ showed great respect to Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ. Once he said to Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ, "Take away all the worship in my life and every deed, but give me the one night you spent with the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم in the cave Thawr." They were so very close to one another, yet their temperaments were different so that sometimes it surfaced.

An example of disagreement between them

It is stated in a Hadith that they were conversing one day. Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ said something which displeased Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ. He walked away and Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ followed him, trying to pacify him and strike a compromise with him. Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ entered his house and shut the door behind him. When Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ realized that he was very angry, he went to the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم who read the story on his face or was informed of it through *wahy* (revelation). Thus, when he was yet approaching the Prophet's صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم assembly, the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم told his *Sahabah* sitting there. "your friend has had a quarrel with someone today." He came and sat down in the assembly.

On the other side, Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ went into his house after shutting the door but when he was alone and sat down, he felt ashamed and repented for having been angry and having shut the door on his friend's face. He came out looking for Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ till he too came to the Prophet's صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم assembly and found him there. Here, he declared that he was ashamed and felt sorry. He said, "O Messenger of Allah, I have committed a mistake." Sayyidina Abu Bakr رضی اللہ عنہ interrupted, "O Messenger of Allah, I have been wrong more than he was. Please do forgive him, for, I am the one who is wrong."The Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم turned to Sayyidina Umar رضی اللہ عنہ and the other Companions رضی اللہ عنہم and spoke some very precious words. He said, "will you or will you not leave my companion for me? When I had said:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اِنِّىْ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ اِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيْعًا

O mankind! Surely I am the Messenger of Allah to you all,

(Al Araf 7:158)

All of you said كَذِبْتَ (you lie) but he was the only one who said "صدقت" (you speak the truth).

In short, these great men were mentioned together in the Prophets's assembly. Their natures were different and such incidents did occur in their lives.

Differences in temperament is natural

It is clear from this account that there are no two people who have identical temperament. No one will be exactly as the other expects him to be. Even a son cannot be expected to be exactly as his father likes to be. If a husband expects his wife to turn out exactly as he wishes then that cannot happen, neither can a husband turn out to be exactly as his wife expects him to be.

Unless you are patient, you will fight

Clearly, if you live with other people you will face hardship. It is natural that if you live among people you will face difficulty and you cannot separate these things. You will have to endure that patiently otherwise there will be fighting, quarreling, mischief and disorder. These things are shavers of religion.

We must realize beforehand that in every kind of relationship there will be such moments. The relationship could be between friends or spouses but one will face hardship at the hands of the other. We will have to exercise patience and not turn the experience into a permanent means of hatred. There might be a short displeasure but it should not be turned into an everlasting disunity.

How to avoid hardship

If we must expect hardship from other people, how should we reconcile ourselves to it? How may we keep away from it? And how may we develop mutual love? The Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم, who has not left behind anything unanswered, prescribed a remedy for these situations. He spoke about relations between spouses because this is the relationship most likely to see clash of temperament. The more people are close to one another, the greater the possibility of unpleasantness. The nearness enjoyed by the spouses is not known in any other relationship. Since a person is more liable to face hardship in

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this bond than in any other, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم prescribed a remedy for that. He said:

لا يفرك مؤمن مؤمنة ان سخط منها خلقًا رضى منها اخر۔

(صحیح مسلم، کتاب الرضاع، باب الوصیة بالنساء)

Let no believing man bear malice to a believing woman-meaning, no husband must detest his wife continuously-because, if he does not like any thing in her then surely there is something in her that he likes. (This Hadith is found in *Saheeh Muslim, kitab ar-Ridaa,* chapter *al-wasiyah bin nisa.)*

When a wife does something with which the husband is displeased, He must not let his displeasure take firm root in him and criticise her for several faults. Rather, he must look at her good points too. If he does that, his anger will subside.

Look only at the good thing

No one in the world is black from head to toe, or white from head to toe. No one is good in every way and no one bad or evil in all ways. If a man is wicked, he has some goodness in him, surely. There is some wickedness at least in a man who is good. So the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Look at the good qualities of your wife. As a result she will look good to you in spite of something that you do not like." You will then become patient.

An interesting case

Some one complained to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about his wife. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم cured this man of his complaining nature when he suggested to him that if she was as bad as he said then he should divorce her. The man was taken aback at that for he could not part with her, so he said to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم that he could not live without her. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then advised him to keep her and overlook her faults and try to correct her shortcomings.

What does she do for you

Why did the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم advised the man straightaway that he should divorce her? The reason is that this man had in his mind only the faults of his wife and he had come to believe that she was very bad. He did not at all look at

her good points. So the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him to take the last step. On hearing that, he realized that she helped him in many ways by performing several household chores and she was very beneficial to him. If he were to divorce her then he would be the loser and would find it difficult to carry on. So, he appealed to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "I cannot live without her!" So," said the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, "keep her!"

If you look at the evil

It is a fact that if one looks at another's evil and begins to think of him as evil then he cannot see his good qualities. Hence, think of that which is good in him. You will begin to like him and feel safe. You will realize that though things do occur against your temperament yet you learn to tolerate them.

You might be wrong

It is not necessary always that the other person whom you think is on the wrong side is really wrong. You could be on the wrong side. Either one could be wrong.

One person may like some food which the other does not relish. When that is served and the two are at the meal, one will praise it while the other will find it difficult to swallow. So, none of them is wrong. Their temperaments differ and both are right.

Both are right

Therefore, when two people differ on something that is lawful, we cannot say that one of them is wrong. Every two people, including husband and wife, differ on something or the other. The difference is more marked in the two sexes because man and woman are created on different nature and psychology. Each of them thinks according to the nature on which they are created. That is why the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Do not look at her shortcomings only. Look also at her good qualities."

You might break her

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has compared women to a rib. He said:

المرأة كالضلع، ان اقمتها كسرتها، و ان استمتعت بها، استمتعت

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بها و فيها عوج - (بخاری کتاب النکاح، باب المداراة مع النساء)

A woman is like a rib. If you try to straighten her, you will break her. But, if you leave her at her condition then though she looks crooked to you yet you can benefit from her.
(Bukhari, Kitab an Nikah, Madarat Ma'nisa)

Her beauty lies in her crookedness

Some men allege that by calling her crooked, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has blamed her and they use that saying to condemn her. When they quarrel with their wives, they threaten her "O crooked rib, I will straighten you." However, these people forget that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has described the rib as crooked. If a rib is not crooked but straight then that will not be a rib. Its beauty and soundness lies in its crookedness. If it is straight then the rib is unhealthy.

Crookedness is in the viewer

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has explained through this saying that to be crooked or to be straight is an external characteristic. It depends how you see it, for, from one angle, it would seem to be straight, but, from another it looks crooked. If we look at a street from the window of a mosque across it then the street seems to be crooked and winding, but if we stand on the street itself and look at it then it is straight while the mosque will seem to be diagonal. In fact, both the street and the mosque are straight. The same thing can be crooked from one point of view but straight from the other.

Woman's crookedness is natural

The Message is simple; because your nature is different from the woman, she is crooked in your eyes. The fact however is that the crookedness is part of her nature in the same way as a rib is crooked. If a rib is straight then that is defective and surgeons would try to mend it to its original crooked structure. Thus, this Hadith does not describe a woman's fault but emphasizes that from your point of view she is not straight and you should not try to straighten her. If you try then it would be like trying to straighten a rib which would then break. If you let it be as it is, it will be to your advantage.

An old woman and an eagle

In an Arabic beginner's text book, *Mufeed ut-Taalibeen* there is a story of a king's eagle that flew to an old woman's house. She tamed it but observed that its beak and claws were crooked. She felt pity for it and wondered that the poor thing was finding it difficult to eat and to walk. She decided to set things right, and armed with a pair of scissors, she operated upon the eagle's beak and claws. The bird was naturally injured and bled profusely. It became handicapped and could no more walk.

This is an example of misplaced love - a love without intelligent thinking. She did not realize that those things which she called crooked were part of the eagle's nature, its built.

Will never see peace

We see throughout this writing that when two people are together, differences in temperament will surely come to the surface. Each will be troubled by the other. There are two ways out for them. One is to quarrel and become disunited which will take away their peace of mind forever.

Show patience

The second way out is to realize that there is bound to be some hardship in every relationship because of variation in temperament of every two people. They should show patience. Life is fleeting and one day, they will face death. It is natural to feel angry when one's companion hurts one, but patience has to be exercised.

What will you gain

A man must think what he would gain if he displays his anger and teaches the other man a lesson of his life. He would not gain anything but there would be enmity all round. It would be very difficult to check it later on: rather, it would spread and intensify. Also, he would become answerable on the Day of Resurrection and face punishment. That punishment would be more terrible than the hardship he faces in the world. Hence, he must show patience and leave the matter to Allah's hands.

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Reward for patience

If he shows patience, Allah has promised him a reward.

إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُم بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ O (سورة الزمر، آيت ١٠)

Truly the persevering will be paid their reward in full without reckoning. (az-zumar, 39:10)

The reward is unlimited. Our numbers are limited but Allah has not mentioned a number. He said that patience is rewarded beyond limit.

If someone strikes you with a blow and you also give him a blow then you were right to do that, but what did you gain? If you show patience and do not avenge yourself then you have Allah's promise that He will reward you without reckoning. So, you must swallow your anger at the thought of the reward that awaits you.

What do you gain by retaliating

If someone else causes you hardship then *Shari'ah* has allowed you to prevent him doing that as far as it is possible for you to prevent him. But, you are wasting your time in this way. Suppose some person tells you that a certain man backbited you then you will waste your time in confirming his statement and asking other people although if he had not told you then you would never have known and it would never have made a difference to you. Even after you have obtained your information, what do you gain? But, if you had left it to Allah then what other people say about you does not change you in any away.

خلقے پس او دیوانہ و دیوانہ بکارے

If all creatures call me evil, let them do it. My case rests with Allah.

This entitles you to unlimited reward.

Equal retaliation

However, if you insist on avenging your self then how will you ensure that you do not commit excess in seizing revenge. You must cause him equal hardship, not more than what he has caused you; you should not exceed even the least bit otherwise you will be answerable in the Hereafter. Though a

man has a right to avenge himself, using this right is very risky. If, on the other hand, you forgive then you are worthy of unlimited reward. Allah has said:

وَلَئِن صَبَرْتُمْ لَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لِّلصَّابِرِينَ O (سورة النحل، آيت ١٢٦)

But if you endure patiently, that is certainly better for the persevering. (An-Nahl, 16:126)

Summary

If a man intermingle with other people, he will find it taxing, difficult and troublesome. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has prescribed patience to tackle this situation. Pay heed! If everyone follows this prescription then there no more would be discord in the world. Mischief would be eliminated.

May Allah enable me and all of us to observe this prescription *Aameen!*

وَآخِرُ دَعْوَانَا أَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

And our last call be, praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds.



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CAUSES OF DISUNITY AND THE REMEDY -III[1]

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ نَحْمَدُهٗ وَنَسْتَعِيْنُهٗ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهٗ وَنُؤْمِنُ بِهٖ وَنَتَوَكَّلُ عَلَيْهِ وَنَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنْ شُرُوْرِ اَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ اَعْمَالِنَا مَنْ يَّهْدِهِ اللّٰهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهٗ وَمَنْ يُّضْلِلْهُ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهٗ وَاَشْهَدُ اَنْ لَّا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهٗ لَا شَرِيْكَ لَهٗ وَاَشْهَدُ اَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا وَنَبِيَّنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهٗ وَرَسُوْلُهٗ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالٰى عَلَيْهِ وَعَلٰى اٰلِهٖ وَاَصْحَابِهٖ وَبَارَكَ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيْمًا كَثِيْرًا اَمَّا بَعْدُ!

اَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ الرَّجِيْمِ O

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ O

عن أبي موسى رضي الله تعالى عنه عن النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم قال ما أحد اصبر على اذًى سمعه من الله يدعون له الولد ثم يعافيهم و يرزقهم

(بخاری، کتاب التوحید، باب قول اللّٰہ تعالیٰ: ان اللّٰہ ھو الرزّاق ذو القوۃ المتین)

Enduring patiently hardship

We have read in the previous part that disunity, severe disagreement and mutual hatred are a very serious malady afflicting Muslim society. The Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم has offered many instructions to the Muslims to protect themselves from this malady and to create mutual love and fraternity among them. One of his instructions is recorded in the previous part. He said that if anyone moves about with other people and exhibits perseverance on the hardship that he faces then he is much better than one who mixes not with people and so has no

[1] Venue: Jami' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi.

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opportunity to exercise patience on hardship that would otherwise have come upon him from people.

This shows that the main reason for mutual discord and disharmony is lack of patience. When people live together, they are bound to face some difficulty from each other's actions. They must endure that with patience.

The most patient being

In order to lay emphasis on this instruction, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم have said in the above Hadith which is reported by Sayyidina Abu Musa al Ash'ari رضى الله عنه: The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "None is more patient than Allah against the annoyance of the people who say that He has a son." The Christians and the Jews who ascribe Eesa عليه السلام and Uzayr عليه السلام as His sons, the polytheists who call the angels as His daughters, and so on. They also worship stones, idols, animals etc. He created mankind and informed the angels that He was placing man on earth as His vicegerent. The same man then ascribes partners to Allah.

Allah's perseverance

Allah knows about this, yet He has given security to mankind. He provides them sustenance. If we look around, there are majority of the disbelievers and polytheists in this world as there always has been. In fact, the Qur'an says:

وَإِنْ تُطِعْ أَكْثَرَ مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يُضِلُّوكَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ (الانعام:١١٦)

And if you obey most of those on earth they would lead you astray from Allah's way. (Al-An'am, 6:116)

Most of mankind are involved in disbelief, polytheism and immodesty.

Consequences of submitting to democracy

Everyone calls out for democracy and submission to majority opinion. If we accept that then disbelief is correct but Islam is wrong. May Allah forgive us! Not only are there more disbelievers and polytheists in this world but also of those who are called Muslims and who believe in Allah's unity and the Messengership of Sayyidina Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and the Hereafter--, there are very few who adhere strictly to *Shari'ah* while those who mindlessly walk the path of sin and indecency

form a majority.

Kindness to disbelievers

People commit disbelief, polytheism, sin and indecency on earth but inspite of that, Allah who sees all this, provides and sustains them, gives them security and showers His favours on them. This reflects His Clemency and perseverence. Who is there who endures annoyance more than Allah does? Shaykh Sa'di رحمة الله has said:

بر خوان یغما چه دشمن چه دوست

"The dining mat that Allah has spread in the world for sustenance is available equally to friend and foe, everyone."

He feeds the friend as well as His foe. In fact, He sometimes gives a greater share to the enemy. The disbelievers and the polytheists have more wealth while Muslims sometimes suffer hunger and poverty. Though He hears them, Allah is kind to them and gives them security and provision.

Grow in yourself Allah's character

Observe Allah's Clemency and conduct yourself on this saying of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم:

تخلّقوا بأخلاق الله

Conduct yourself with Allah's manners.

You will not get all of them but you should try to get them. When you see that Allah patiently endures the annoying behaviour of the wicked, you - O servants of Allah-you, too should endure patiently the difficulties and trouble placed upon you by other people.

Do not take revenge

Someone may say that Allah does give His foes respite in this world and gives them provision and security and allows them to progress but He will nevertheless punish them in the Hereafter. Then, you too must do likewise and endure patiently if anyone troubles you. Leave the matter for Allah. He will do justice in the Hereafter. If you retaliate in this world then that is not as effective as the one Allah will seek in the Hereafter.

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Better to forgive

It is better for you, in any case, that you forgive him who commits excess against you. For, if you forgive then Allah will suffice you and He will fulfil your needs. He will remove every hardship that you face. Hence, the slaves of Allah always forgive. We have heard from our elders about Miyanji Noor Muhammad رحمة الله the Shaykh of Haji Imdadullah رحمة الله and of our grand father. It was his habit that whenever anyone caused him trouble, he would say, "O Allah, I have forgiven him. "Even if a thief took away his property, he would say," O Allah, I make what he has taken away from me lawful to him.. What shall I do by taking revenge from him or calling for punishment on him." He was ever occupied in *Zikr* (remembrance of Allah). When he went to buy something, he carried a pouch full of money which he handed over to the seller and asked him to take away his due from it. He never counted the money, for, he spent the time it would take him to count in making *Zikr*.

An incident in the life of Miyanji Noor Muhammad رحمة الله

Once, he passed through the market, his pouch was in his hand, when a robber came to know that he had the pouch in his hand. He came behind him stealthily and snatched the pouch from his hand, at the same time, making good his escape. Miyanji رحمة الله did not even turn to look who was that. He walked towards his home engaged, as ever, in *zikr* and he also prayed in his heart,

> "O Allah, I have forgiven the robber and made over to him a gift of what he has taken away."

The robber, on his part, got entangled in a difficulty. He could not find the way to his home. He took street after street but always came back to the same point. He spent exasperating hours in this way and, finally exhausted, he sat down. He thought to himself that this was a wonder of Miyanji رحمة الله and Allah has closed every path on him. He thought, "I should go to Miyanji رحمة الله return the money to him and request him to pray to Allah that he may show me the path to my house and release me from the torment." He went there and knocked at the door. Miyanji رحمة الله asked him who he was and he

disclosed his identity, saying "I had snatched your money. For God's sake take it back. I made a mistake." Miyanji said, "I have made this money lawful for you and gifted to you. It is no longer mine. I cannot take it back." The robber pleaded "For God's sake take it back!"

The two were arguing over it. The robber requesting him to take back the money and Miyanji asserting that it was his (the robber's).

Miyanji رحمة الله asked him finally why he wanted to return the money. He said, "I want to go home but cannot fmd the path. I have strayed through these streets for hours." Miyanji said, "Well I will pray that you find your way." So, he prayed and the robber returned to his home.

Do not bear malice for anyone

These men of Allah never bear malice for anyone, even those who hurt them. Their heart is like a mirror that has no stain of hatred, malice, or enmity.

Let Allah take account

They forgave for Allah's sake whoever annoyed them. If they had to seek revenge, they left that to Allah. If they were to take revenge themselves then that would lead to disputes and quarrels, for they might have taken more revenge then they should have. If they overstep then they would have to suffer in the next world. So, it is best to leave things to Allah.

Everyone must fulfill his duties

Nevertheless, we must know that Allah and His messenger always call us towards our duties-what we have to do, how it is to be done. Thus, one who is harassed is instructed to show patience and to forgive; do not seek revenge, do not hate, do not antagonise and do not turn the annoyance into disunity and rebellion.

At the same time, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has addressed the harassers too, lest they do not imagine that it was not wrong to harass.

Do not annoy anyone

In fact, Allah has said to such people who annoy others that He will not forgive them till the person annoyed pardons

them. So refrain from annoying anyone. Do not do anything that hurts other people.

The chief justice offered two hundred raka'at every day

Imam Abu Yusuf رحمة الله was a student of Imam Abu Hanifah and a great jurist. While he is well-known as a jurist, he is not as known as a *waliullah* (friend of Allah). However, it is recorded in his account that when he was the Chief Justice, in spite of his heavy engagements, he offered two hundred *raka'at* optional *salah* every day. When he was on his death bed, signs of worry and anxiety were detected on his face. He was asked what caused him worry. He said, "The time is near when I will be before Allah. I will have to answer to Him for my deeds. What will I say? I know that I have made *istighfaar* and repented to Him and I am hopeful that He will forgive me."

An injustice I committed

"However, I remember an incident for which I am much anxious. When I was the Judge, a case came to me involving a Muslim and a non-Muslim. I had made the Muslim sit on a respectable place and the non-Muslim on a lesser seat, but *Shari'ah* requires us to make both parties sit in equal position. It is unjust to differentiate in their seating. Although, I did decide according to the truth yet I did not observe the command of *Shari'ah* in arranging their seating. I am anxious how I will explain this if called upon to explain. This is what is not forgiven by repentance till the owner of the right forgives."

The real Muslim

Shari'ah has allowed rights not only to Muslims but also to nonMuslims. It has given rights to animals also. We are told in Ahadith of many people being punished for cruelty to animals.

We are told and warned not to cause anyone even the least of annoyance. For instance, a Hadith tells us:

المسلم من سلم المسلمون من لسانه و يده

(بخاری، کتاب الایمان، باب المسلم من سلم المسلمون من لسانه)

A Muslim is one from whose tongue and hands other Muslims are safe. (Bukhari, Kitab al-Eman)

To hurt anyone is a very dangerous thing, for, there is no way it can be forgiven unless the owner of the right himself forgives.

On the one hand, every human being is cautioned no to hurt or cause inconvenience to anyone. And, on the other, they are told to endure every annoyance with patience and to forgive the wrong-doer. They are instructed not to hate or bear animosity to any one. They should not let it turn into discord.

These are the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم teachings.

Prophet's method of training

We learn from Ahadith that when the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم liberated Makkah with ten thousand *Sahabah*, his *Sahabah* included both the Ansar and the Muhajir. Then they conquered Hunayn. In this journey the Muslims got a large quantity of spoils of war, much of that in the form of cattle. In those times wealth generally consisted of cattle and the more livestock one had the more wealthy he was considered.

Spoils to new Muslims

When the spoils were to be distributed, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم sensed that those who were new Muslims and those who had not yet become Muslims but were inclined to it could be turned into staunch Muslims if they were shown kind treatment. After that they would not conspire against the Muslim. So, he distributed all the spoils among those people.

Hypocrites incite others

One of the hypocrites incited an Ansar *sahabi* telling him, "See, how you people are treated. You have come from Madinah and support the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in *jihad* but the spoils are given to those who have just embraced Islam, the very people you were fighting against." The experienced among the Ansar did not pay heed to the provocative suggestion knowing the insignificance of wealth and property.

However, the younger Ansar *Sahabah* رضى الله عنهم did take him seriously and wondered why they got no share.

The Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم wise speech

When He صلى الله عليه وسلم learnt of this, he asked all the Ansar

Companions رضی اللہ عنہم to assemble at a place. He addressed them and said:

"O assembly of Ansar! Allah granted you the wealth of faith. He honoured you as hosts of His Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم I have distributed the spoils of war to the people who live here so that they may become firm of faith. How many times has it been that he whom I give no share is more honourable and dearer than he to whom I give a share of the spoils. I have heard of doubts being expressed by some people."

He then said:

"O Ansar! Are you not happy that when these people return to their homes, they have with them cows, oxen and goats while you go home and you have Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, with you! Tell me who is more excellent of the two?"

Those who heard him were convinced at heart. The Ansar *Sahabah* said,

"O Messenger of Allah, there is nothing more honourable to us than this. It was some of our youth who had spoken in that way but our elders did not even think of that. Whatever you decide that is the truth."

The nearest to the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم

When this thing was settled, the Ansar *Sahabah* رضی اللہ عنہم were told by the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم, "Listen, O Ansar, you are the closest of men to me." And he also said:

لَوْ سَلَكَ النَّاسُ وَادِيًا لَسَلَكْتُ شِعْبَ الْأَنْصَارِ

"If people take one road and the Ansar another, I will take the path of the Ansar."

The ansar were advised to be patient

The Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said to them, further:

"O Ansar! So far you have not been treated unfairly and I will continue to love you as always, Insha Allah. But, let me tell you that after me, you will find that other people are given preference over you - the rulers who will come will not treat you as well as they treat the Muhajir and others.

O Ansar! I instruct you that if that happens

فَاصْبِرُوْا حَتّٰى تَلْقَوْنِيْ عَلَى الْحَوْضِ

Show patience till you meet me at the Pond.

Thus, he forewarned them of the injustice that would be perpetrated on them. He advised them to be patient when that happens.

They abided by the instruction

The Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم did not advise them to form a society for the protection of their rights and to fight for that. Rather, he asked them to show patience till they meet him at the pond *al-kawthar*.

Hence, the Ansar abided by the advise so well that we do not find a single example m history of their rebellion. There were disagreements among the *Sahabah* resulting in the Battles of *Jamal* and *Safeen*, but the Ansar never raised their voice.

Heed the rights of the ansar

While he advised the Ansar in this manner, the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم also gave certain instructions to all his Companions رضی اللہ عنہم when he was ill before death and could not go to the *Masjid Nabawi*. One of these instructions was, "The Ansar *Sahabah* have supported me and have been firm believers. So, be mindful of their rights. Let them not feel mistreated."

Everyone must discharge his duty

The gist of this teaching is that everyone must see what his duties are. What is demanded of him in this regard? Does he fulfil his responsibilities and the demands on him or not? If everyone is careful to fulfil his duties and to do what Allah demands of him then everyone will get his rights.

Everyone demands his rights

However, today, we are going in reverse direction. People are taught to stand up and demand their rights. The result is that no one is mindful of his duties and of the demands on him. He does not know what rights others have over him. The labourer wants his rights as does the employer, but neither of them is ready to discharge his duty. The labourer is quick to quote the Hadith that a labourer must be paid his wages before his perspiration dries up but he does not mind if he did not do

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enough of his task to make him perspire. He does not care if he has done the task for which he claims his wages.

Let everyone examine himself

So, let everyone examine himself. He should see if he discharges his duty correctly.

If a man serves in an office, he is worried about a raise in salary, a higher grade and elevation in seniority. It does not concern him; however, if he discharges his responsibilities or not.

The result is that everyone's rights are violated and no one gets what is due to him. This is why the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم remimded everyone of his duties and instructed him to observe them. This is the only way in which our society can be steered towards reform.

Summary

To summarise, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is quoted in this Hadith to have said that no one is more compassionate and patient than Allah. He watches the people who disobey and who disbelieve and associate partners with Him. Inspite of that, He is patient and continues to let them have security and sustenance.

So, develop this manner of Allah and try to conduct yourself accordingly.

May Allah cause us to abide by what we have read. *Aameen!*

وَاٰخِرُ دَعْوَانَا اَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ

And our last call be, praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

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CAUSES OF DISUNITY AND THE REMEDY-IV[1]

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ نَحْمَدُهٗ وَنَسْتَعِيْنُهٗ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهٗ وَنُؤْمِنُ بِهٖ وَنَتَوَكَّلُ عَلَيْهِ وَنَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنْ شُرُوْرِ اَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ اَعْمَالِنَا ـ مَنْ يَّهْدِهِ اللّٰهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهٗ وَمَنْ يُّضْلِلْهُ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهٗ وَاَشْهَدُ اَنْ لَّا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهٗ لَا شَرِيْكَ لَهٗ وَاَشْهَدُ اَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا وَنَبِيَّنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهٗ وَرَسُوْلُهٗ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالٰى عَلَيْهِ وَعَلٰى اٰلِهٖ وَاَصْحَابِهٖ وَبَارَكَ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيْمًا كَثِيْرًا اَمَّـــــابعد!

اَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ الرَّجِيْمِ O

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ O

Another cause

Of the causes of disharmony among our peoples is disregard for yet another command of *Shari'ah*. It is:

"تعاشروا كالاخوان ـ تعاملوا كالاجانب"

Live as brothers of each other (and treat each other like brothers with love), but when you transact with each other do it as between strangers (let your dealings be transparent and explicit leaving no doubt whatever).

This is a great teaching of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Property should be well-defined

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that every thing of the Muslims should be clear and well explained. Properties should be well-defined and everyone's ownership must be made

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[1] Venue: Jami' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi.

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known. Today, we come across a growing number of disputes in our society because this command of *Shari'ah* is disregarded.

Partnership of father and son

For instance, a man may be engaged in business. When his sons grow old, they join him but it is not clearly defined whether he has taken them as partners in his business or they just help him out, or they are employed by him and their salaries are agreed upon. If nothing is decided then everything is in the dark. Each of them draws money as and when they need it. This goes on for years together. All the man's sons did not join business at one time and all do not do one kind of work.

Not only this they keep no account, they also do not make it clear who the proprietor is, and what their shares are. Neither is salary of each of them determined. If anyone suggests to them that they should keep an account, they declare that no such thing is necessary between family members. This is an expression of love on one side.

Disputes arise

However, when some more years pass in this way, the sons are married and have children or the father dies, the brothers quarrel. The love among them vanishes. They accuse each other. The mutual quarrels are unending and things become very complicated, the brothers stop speaking to each other and are prepared to die or kill. Finally, they come to a *mufti* for advice and a solution. But, what can he do?

Keep transparency

The disputes arose because a command of *Shari'ah* was disregarded. It calls for a clearly defined dealings whether between father and son between brothers or between the spouses. Everyone's property and share must be defined clearly. The life that we spend with out keeping an account is a life of sin, for, no one knows about that which he withdraws whether it is his own or someone else's.

Disburse the legacy immediately

The *Shari'ah* has commanded us that when someone dies we must distribute the inheritance to his heirs without delay.

Everyone must be given the share *Shari'ah* has apportioned for him. When my father رحمہ اللہ died, Doctor Abdul Hayyi رحمہ اللہ visited us to offer condolence while the funeral was still there awaiting burial. The honourable doctor was unwell and very weak which condition was accentuated by the grief of my respected father's death. We had my father's medicine from a Hakim with us and we offered it to him, saying, "Do take a little. You will gain some strength."

He said, "It is no more proper for me to eat it because it is now the property of the heirs. Only if all of them consent will it be proper for me to eat it." We told him that all the heirs were adult, who were there at that moment and gave their consent. So, he took some of it.

Anyway, Allah has said that after someone's death, his inheritance must be distributed immediately among his heirs so that no dispute may arise later on.

Consequence of delay

However, we have become so ignorant that if anyone dies in our society and the heirs are advised to distribute the shares, they exclaim, "What a prepostrous suggestion. He has been just buried and you want us to share his wealth!" They regard that as a worldly affair and put it in abeyance. On the one side, they display a pious disgust for the hurry, but, on the other, they use the legacy together till they sit down many months later to distribute their shares and quarrel over it. Those who had shown disgust are prepared to shed blood, and they accuse each other of having consumed more of the dead man's wealth.

Ownership in household articles

Shari'ah has given this command so that ownership is determined. In our society, husband and wife simply do not know who owns what, and to which of the two does the jewellery belong. They do not know whether the house is the husband's or the wife's. The result is that later on there are disputes.

Caution of my father

When my respected father رحمہ اللہ was ill and on his death bed and restricted to his room, there was a cot in the room on which he did all his work. I had my small room next to my

father's. When his food was brought to him in a tray, he would say immediately after eating his meal, "Take the utensils back quickly". If he needed a book from the Madrasah, he returned it immediately after he had read it. "Do not keep it here," he would say. If we ever were late in returning the utensils or the book, he would express displeasure. "why are you slow. Go return it forthwith."

We wondered how it could make a difference if we were late in returning the things by a few minutes. The answer was known on the day he addressed us, saying, "I have written down in my will that only that which is in my room belongs to me. Every thing in the house, I have given over ownership there of to my wife. Now, if there is anything in this room at the time of my death that does not belong to me, you will suppose that it is mine and place it with my legacy. Hence, I do not like that anything not belonging to me should remain here for long. Everything that comes from outside should be sent back at the quickest."

He was so mindful of defining every property that his things were known from those of his wife and children. There was, therefore, no dispute at all.

Even between brothers

When we give this advice to our acquaintances, they remark that this should be between strangers. But, in a few years these very people who had claimed intimacy, take up weapons against each other. Thus, one of the causes of disputes is failure to keep ownerships of every individual well marked.

Construction of house and proper accounts

Suppose a house is being built in which father and his sons have invested money. They may have borrowed some money. In this way, the house is built. However, it is not determined a forehand whether the sons have loaned the money to their father or have merely helped him. Or, is it that they put in their share of ownership as co-partners in the house.

When one of them dies, disputes arise on the ownership of the house. They claim their share in ownership of the house and the land on which it is built. They approach a mufti to decide for them but sometimes, there is some injustice in his decision because of unknown facts.

We must know that if a son works with his father in his business and his position as a partner or an employee is not specified then, according to *Shari'ah*, he may work all his life with his father, he will be understood to have helped his father merely for the sake of Allah. He will have no share what so ever in the business. Hence, it is wise to make a clarification beforehand.

How to gift a house

Shari'ah has also shown us how we may correctly make a distribution. It is not enough to say, "I have transferred my house to my wife's name," having registered it with the Registrar in her name. According to *Shari'ah*, no house is transferred to anyone simply by having it registered in his name till he is not handed over real possession and told, "I have given this house to your ownership. You are its owner." If this is not done, the ownership does not change.

Solution to problem lies in adherence to shari'ah

People do not know about these issues with a result that there is confusion and disputes arise. They go to courts with cases against each other. If people conduct themselves on *Shari'ah* in a proper way then more than fifty percent of the cases in the courts would be with drawn.

We have spoken of these disputes and quarrels which are between people who are well-meaning and have no evil intention. They do not whish to misappropriate anyone's property. They have come to this pass only because of their ignorance.

However, those people who are evil and have evil intentions who wish to appropriate other people's wealth unjustly, they are unconcerned with regulations of right and wrong.

Summary

This is a great mischief besetting our society. We must understand it well and explain it to all our acquaintances, relatives and friends.

Put things right once. Then deal with eachother with love. Everything must be clear and well-defined. Leave nothing

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doubtful and unsaid.

May Allah cause us to conduct ourselves on these guidelines.

Ameen.

وَاٰخِرُ دَعْوَانَا اَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ

And our last call be, praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

❁❁❁

CAUSES OF DISUNITY AND THE REMEDY-V[1]

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ نَحْمَدُهٗ وَنَسْتَعِيْنُهٗ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهٗ وَنُؤْمِنُ بِهٖ وَنَتَوَكَّلُ عَلَيْهِ وَنَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنْ شُرُوْرِ اَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ اَعْمَالِنَا مَنْ يَّهْدِهِ اللّٰهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهٗ وَمَنْ يُّضْلِلْهُ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهٗ وَاَشْهَدُ اَنْ لَّا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهٗ لَا شَرِيْكَ لَهٗ وَاَشْهَدُ اَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا وَنَبِيَّنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهٗ وَرَسُوْلُهٗ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالٰى عَلَيْهِ وَعَلٰى اٰلِهٖ وَاَصْحَابِهٖ وَبَارَكَ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيْمًا كَثِيْرًا اَمَّا بَعْدُ!

اَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ الرَّجِيْمِ O

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ O

Another of the causes is found in the above Hadith of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Another cause of disunity

It is reported by Sayyidina Abdullah Ibn Abbas رضى الله عنه that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

لا تمارِ اخاكَ و لا تمازحه و لا تعده موعدًا فتخلفه (ترمذي، كتاب البر والصلة، باب ما جاء في المراء)

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has given three commands in this Hadith.

1: Do not quarrel with your brother.

2: Do not make an unreasonable jest with him.

3: Do not make a promise to him which you cannot fulfil.

[1] Venue: Jami' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi.

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Do not quarrel

This is the first command "لا تمار اخاك" the Arabic key word in this command is "لا تمار" do not quarrel. It is from "مـــراءٌ" the verbal noun. It is a word with a wide meaning: to dispute, debate, argue, physical fight, oral exchange of hot words.

Thus physical fighting, oral pouring down on someone and disputing are what hinder mutual harmony, unity and love among the Muslims. So, we must try our best to avoid these things.

Go to court when necessary

Sometimes a man finds it necessary to approach the court to redress his grievance. His rights have been violated and if he does not go to court, he would not be able to live peacefully. If it comes to extremes, then he may approach the courts as a last resort but otherwise he should try his best to refrain from disputes.

Do not debate

This guidance is particularly for those who pick faults in others and reject everything they say or do. It is part of their nature to debate with other people over an insignificant thing. We have become used to engage in unnecessary debate which has nothing to do with religion and is of no worldly worth. We will not be asked about it in the grave nor in the place of gathering in the next world. These unnecessary debates lead to disputes which divide us into sects and cause us to hate each other.

Disputes remove light of knowledge

Imam Maalik رحمة الله said:

المِـــــراء يذهب بنـــــور العلـــــم .

The disputes, debates wipe off the light of knowledge.

A person who engages in these things loses the light of knowledge. If you know the truth, convey it with a true method and true intention to the other person. If he accepts it that is good other wise leave it at that. You are not sent as a supervisor over him to compel him to accept your words. Explain the Truth gently but beyond that you are not

responsible. You will not be asked to explain if people do not subscribe to what you say.

Your responsibility is to convey

In fact Allah has said:

مَا عَلَى الرَّسُوْلِ اِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ (سورة المائدة، آیت ۹۹)

The duty of the Messenger is only to convey (the message). (al-Ma'idah, 5: 99)

It is not for the Prophets صلى الله عليه وسلم to compel. Then why should you insist. Discuss matter to an extent but when you see that it is turning into a debate and your listener is unwilling to accept the truth then you should stop.

Do not complain

Some people are much inclined to complain to other people about their behaviour. They dig out past conduct and complain, "You did this. You said that," etc. Adding to that, they bracket their complaints with love, saying, "Only friends complain" (or something to the effect). They may be true in that but there is a limit to the complaints, it is understandable if they complain on something significant but to complain at every step is to transgress. For instance they grumble, "You did not invite me at your function," etc. Now, the man is with in his rights given to him by *Shari'ah* and he may, or may not, invite someone. No one has a right to complain for that. This thing leads to a counter-complain and a long debate and instead of love, enmity grows in the hearts.

Find an excuse for him

I can say from experience that this leads to serious disputes and disruption in a harmonious life of families. What you should do is forgive and forget. Put the matter in Allah's hand.

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has often encouraged us to forgive others. If you forgive then you will not lose anything. Close your eyes to the affair and suggest to yourself an excuse for the other man's conduct.

Mufti Aziz ur-Rahman's رحمة الله example

Mufti Aziz ur-Rahman رحمة الله was the teacher of my respected father. He was the Grand Mufti at Darul-Uloom,

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Deoband. His rulings have been published in Urdu in ten volumes as *Fatawa* Darul-Uloom Deoband, an ocean of knowledge. He was a great man who never refuted anyone on his face, "You are wrong," but, if anyone said a wrong thing, he would say. "O! You mean to say...." And he put in the correct words there. In that way, the other man was told of the right thing, politely.

Let your heart be clean

So, you too find an explanation for the mistake of someone you know. Perhaps he was forced by circumstances, etc. and let your heart be clean for him. If you must complain then do it in mild words, "I did not like what you had said." If he gives an explanation, accept that. But do not insist on your complaint. This is why the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

"لا تماري أخاك"

Do not dispute with your brother.

This is a few day's life

How long does one live? A few days. No one knows how long he would live. Besides, the complaints are normally for worldly matters - petty things! All things pertaining to the world - its wealth, property, position, honour, reputation, etc. - are meaningless. All these things will be taken away from us. So, instead of this, let us worry about the Hereafter which is an everlasting life. How will we fare there? What answer will we give to Allah? The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has said:

اعمل لدنياك بقدر بقائك فيها و اعمل لآخرتك بقدر بقائك فيها

Work for this world enough for your survival here;
Work for the Hereafter according to Your life there.

All the things of this world are passing. We have them with us today, but will not have them tomorrow.

What one was and what he is

People who were powerful, who had authority and who were feared, rot in jails today! They had a list of titles and honourable prefixes to their names, but today they are accused with a list of crimes.

So, on what do you pride yourself and dispute with others,

what honour, what wealth?

Allah may take away from you all these things suddenly, any moment. So, do not quarrel, do not dispute on petty matters. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has said:

لا تمار اخاك

Do not quarrel with your brother.

The jest that is allowed

The second command of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in this Hadith is:

لا تمازحه

Do not make a joke with your Muslim brother.

The Hadith speaks of the jest that might be unpalatable to the other.

There is no harm if the jest is light-hearted and well received by the listener provided it is within the limits of *Shari'ah*. In fact, if the jest is true and is made with the intention of pleasing the listeners then it will also fetch a reward for the one who makes it.

It is not allowed to ridicule anyone

It is proper to make a jest and humour someone but it is not allowed to ridicule anyone or make or play a joke on anyone. The later is unpleasant and hurts the listener. It is unlawful and disallowed. Some people take fun in ridiculing others or calling them names and tease them to make them angry. This is the jest that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has disallowed. We must keep within limits and not go so far that the listener feels disgusted and hurt. You may enjoy at his cost in this world but the punishment for it, in the Hereafter, will be very severe because you have hurt a Muslim which is a grave sin. (May Allah protect us!)

Man's honour is greater than BaytAllah

زاد الله شرفا و تعظيما

There is a Hadith in Ibn Majah. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was performing the *tawaf* of *BaytAllah*. He addressed the House of Allah while circumambulating it:

O BaytAllah! How great are you! How great is your esteem

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that Allah has declared you as His House on this earth! How great is your sanctity! But, O BaytAllah! There is something more sacred than you. It is a Muslim's life, his property and his honour.

If there is a hard-hearted person who pulls down the *BaytAllah* then everyone will call him evil and say that he has desecrated the House of Allah. But, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has said that if anyone attacks a Muslim's life, property and honour, or hurts his heart then he has committed a sin more grave than demolishing *BaytAllah*. We take it lightly and do not hesitate to make fun of other people whereby they are hurt while we enjoy that. What are we doing? We are pulling down the *BaytAllah* and causing it disrespect. It is unlawful to make fun of anybody.

It grows hatred

Such a joke is one of those things that grow hatred in the heart. It gives rise to enmity and ill-will. If another person sees that you make fun of him and insult him then do you expect him to respect and love you. Rather, he will detest you and that would lead to quarrel and dispute. However, if friends and relatives humour each other in a way that no one feels hurt and they do not tell lies then *Shari'ah* allows such jesting. *Shari'ah* does not forbid a jest of this kind.

Make good your promise

The third command in the Hadith is:

و لا تعده موعدًا فتخلفه

Do not make a promise that you will break.

Fulfil your promise. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has described breaking a promise as a sign of hypocrisy. He said:

ثلاث من كن فيه فهو منافق اذا حدث كذب و اذا وعد اخلف و اذا أوتمن خان (نسائي، كتاب الايمان، باب علامة المنافق)

Three signs of a hypocrite

When three things are found in a man, he is a hypocrite: when he speaks he lies, when he makes a promise he breaks it, and when he is trusted with something he betrays the trust.

Whoever has these three things is a hypocrite without

doubt. Thus to break a promise is a sign of hypocrisy. Hence, if you are not sure that you will be able to keep your promise then do not make one. If you do make a promise then, unless there is a serious obstruction, fulfil it.

Fulfil promise made to children

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم went so far as to emphasize that a promise made to children must also be made good. One of his *Sahabah* رضى الله عنهم called a child to him and said, "Come, I will give you something." The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him, "Do you really intend to give him something, or are you just playing with him?" He said, "O Messenger of Allah, I have dates and I intend to give him that." The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "If you had made a promise to him without intending to give him something then you would have committed a sin for breaking a promise." Also, in this way, a child is taught that a promise may be broken without compunction. You then give him a bad training. So, do not break your promise made to children.

Sometimes, a man who breaks a promise knows that he should not break it. But, some other times, people do not even bother that they break promises.

To break principles and rules is to break promises

For example, rules and procedure govern every organisation. Thus, those who are employed there implicitly promise to abide by those rules and procedures.

Or, students who are admitted to the Darul-Uloom are required to give an undertaking in writing that they would do certain things and abstain from certain other things. If a written undertaking is not asked from a student even then it is implicit in the admission granted to him.

Thus, if anyone violates the rules and procedures of the organisation or of Darul-Uloom then he breaks his promise. He does something that is disallowed and commits a sin.

Laws that do not violate shari'ah must be followed

In the same way, when a man takes up residence in a country and adopts its nationality then he really promises to abide by its laws till those laws do not compel him to act against *Shari'ah*. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has said about a law

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that clashes with *Shari'ah*:

لا طاعة لمخلوق فى معصية الخالق

The creatures are not followed in disobedience to the Creator.

You must not obey a king, a President, Prime Minister or a (man-made) law if they ask you to do that which *Shari'ah* forbids you to do.

Disobedience to laws is like breaking a promise

Hence, if you are not compelled to commit a sin and laws are framed on what is permissible in *Shari'ah* then every citizen Muslim or non-Muslim has pledged to the government that he would abide by the laws. If anyone disobeys the laws without a valid reason then he is like one who breaks a promise.

Traffic rules

Shari'ah calls upon us to obey the Traffic Rules too. This is because we have pledged to obey the laws of the land. If you disregard the Traffic lights, for instance, then you break your promise and are committing a sin. It is the same thing whether you live in a Muslim country or a non-Muslim country.

Receiving unemployment benefit

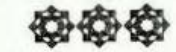
In Britain, an unemployment benefit is given to the unemployed. The government gives them an allowance till they get a proper employment. This is a commendable practice. However, some of our brothers who have gone there have made it their profession to secure the allowance. They take jobs on the quiet in the right but also draw the unemployment benefit. Even those who are religious-minded commit this fraud. First this conduct is unlawful, for, they show themselves as unemployed though they are employed. Secondly, it is a violation of government laws which they have undertaken to observe when they enterred the country. Some people argue that it is proper to take away the wealth of non-Muslim countries in any way they can. No! When they entered that country, they undertook to obey its laws. Hence, it is not proper to disobey its laws. Just as you are not allowed to break a promise made to Muslims, so too you are not allowed to break a promise made to non-Muslims. The money so acquired is unlawful.

Conclusion

May Allah help us to abide by these commands of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. *Aameen.*

وَاٰخِرُ دَعْوَانَا اَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ

And our last call be, praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds.



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CAUSES OF DISUNITY AND THE REMEDY-VI[1]

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

اَلْحَمْدُللّٰهِ نَحْمَدُهٗ وَنَسْتَعِيْنُهٗ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهٗ وَنُؤْمِنُ بِهٖ وَنَتَوَكَّلُ عَلَيْهِ وَنَعُوْذُبِاللّٰهِ مِنْ شُرُوْرِ اَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ اَعْمَالِنَا۔ مَنْ يَّهْدِهِ اللّٰهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهٗ وَمَنْ يُّضْلِلْهُ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهٗ وَاَشْهَدُ اَنْ لَّا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهٗ لَا شَرِيْكَ لَهٗ وَاَشْهَدُ اَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا وَنَبِيَّنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهٗ وَرَسُوْلُهٗ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالٰى عَلَيْهِ وَعَلٰى اٰلِهٖ وَاَصْحَابِهٖ وَبَارَكَ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيْمًا كَثِيْرًا۔ اَمَّا بَعْدُ!

اَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ الرَّجِيْمِ O

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ O

We have seen the many causes of disputes and disharmony among families, clans and people and the remedies prescribed by the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. In the above Hadith, he has pointed out to yet another cause.

A serious betrayal

Sayyidina Sufyan ibn Aseed Hadrami رضى الله عنه reported that he heard the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم say:

كَبُرَتْ خِيَانَةً اَنْ تُحَدِّثَ اَخَاكَ حَدِيْثًا هُوَ لَكَ بِهٖ مُصَدِّقٌ وَّ اَنْتَ لَهٗ بِهٖ كَاذِبٌ (ابو داود، كتاب الادب، باب فى المعاريض)

It is a great betrayal that you tell your brother something that he believes to be a truth from you while you are lying to him.

This is something that causes hearts to split and grows

[1] Venue: Jami' Masjid Baitul-Mukarram, Gulshane-Iqbal, Karachi.

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animosity. To tell a lie is always a major sin, but here the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم refers to a lie where the addressee believes the speaker to be true. He trusts him. The liar betrays the trust. So, apart from earning the sin of a lie, he also earns the sin of betrayal.

He holds the trust

The person who turns to the other takes him to be trustworthy and true. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also said:

المستشار مؤتمن

The one who is consulted is holder of a trust.

It is as though he who consults places a trust with him. He trusts him to give a correct advice. But, this man tells him a lie and gave him a wrong advice so, he has also committed the sin of betrayal.

False medical certificate

The medical certificates that are issued in our country today, all attract the warning in this Hadith. If a man is ill and needs a medical certificate to get leave from his superiors in the office where he works then the doctor who issues the certificate holds a trust because the office where it will be presented trusts him. They will believe what the doctor says and trust that if their employee was not ill, the doctor would not have issued a certificate.

If the doctor gives a false certificate whether against bribe or friendship then he not only tells a lie but also betrays those who trust him. As for the man who induces the doctor to issue a false certificate, he perpetrates a number of sins. He tells a lie, compels the doctor to speak a lie, gives a bribe if he gets the certificate against cash and he takes leave by lying. His leave is unlawful and the salary for this period is unlawful. The food that he consumes with the salary is unlawful. All these sins are committed on issuing a false medical certificate.

Our society is involved in these sins. Even well-educated, religious-minded people stoop so low as to collect a false medical certificate when they need it and feel no compunction about it. They put this wrong as not part of religion.

Confirming a madrasah

Many people come to me with a request to confirm that their madrasah exists and imparts proper education and puts donations to proper use.

Such a confirmation is like a testimony. In other words, the donor relies on the confirmation. So, the person issuing the confirmation must first satisfy himself that the madrasah deserves to receive the donation. If someone comes to me and I issue the confirmation without verifying the facts then I am telling a lie to the donors who trust me, because though I have not seen the madrasah and how it works yet I confirm its existence and working. I am also guilty then of the worst of betrayal. So, those people who come to me for a confirmation express surprise when I regret my inability to oblige them. They forget that they actually ask for a testimony about which the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has said, "It is the worst form of betrayal that people trust you to be true but you speak a lie."

False character certificate

Often character certificates are issued and the person who signs it affirms that he knows the certified man for a certain number of years though he may be knowing him for just a couple of days. He also affirms that the man has good character, etc. He imagines that he is doing a good deed for the man but he does not know that he will be answerable on the Day of Resurrection for lying in the certificate. He is involved in the worst kind of betrayal and tells lies to those who trust him

Certificate is worthless

A plethora of certificates are being issued with the result that they have become worthless. People know that they are a pack of lies. We do not pay proper respect to the sayings of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and have restricted religion to *salah*, fasting, etc. but we do not pay attention to how we deal with other people.

Cause of dissension

This wrong is also one of the causes of disunity among us. If you trust someone then you expect him to speak the truth, but he lies. The result is that you are disillusioned and begin to

dislike him.

Thus lying is one of the great causes of disunity. We must stop telling lies to remove disunity among us. While every lie is disallowed, the lie to one who trusts you is a very dangerous kind of lie.

How to atone

If we begin today to act on the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم sayings and remove the causes of disunity then InshaAllah our future life will improve. The question arises how do we atone for past mistakes like backbiting and reviling others, etc. we have come in contact with so many people in the past whom we have hurt in one way or the other but we have no more any contact with them and there is no way to seek their forgiveness. We must contemplate how we clear our past wrongs.

The Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم *seeking forgiveness*

The beloved Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has not left anything untaught to us. He has shown us a solution to every problem. If anyone wishes to correct his past mistakes and atone for the violation of rights of fellow men then the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has taught us how we can do it and he showed it by a practical example. He stood up in the *Masjid Nabawi* and said to the *Sahabah* there:

> "If I have caused hardship to anyone or committed excess against him then today I present myself before him. If he chooses to retaliate against my excess then I submit my self that he may seek revenge. If he seeks compensation then I will give that. If he is willing to forgive then I request him to forgive me."

The Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم *high station*

He was the Prophet who said that and about whom the Qur'an says:

لِيَغْفِرَ لَكَ اللّٰهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِكَ وَ مَا تَاَخَّرَ (سورۃ فتح، آیت ۲)

That Allah may forgive you of your fault that which is past and that which is to come....(al-Fath, 48:2)

فَلَا وَ رَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ حَتّٰى يُحَكِّمُوْكَ فِيْمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا

يَجِدُوْا فِيْٓ اَنْفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَ يُسَلِّمُوْا تَسْلِيْمًا ○

(سورۃ النساء، آیت ٦٥)

But no, by your Lord! They will not believe until they make you the judge of what is in dispute between them, then fmd no vexation in their hearts over what you decide, and submit with full submission. (an-Nisa, 4:65)

The Qur'an says about him that he cannot hurt others, yet he stood up in the *Masjid Nabawi* and sought forgiveness for himself from his Companions رضى الله عنهم.

One companion sought compensation

When he said that, one *Sahabi* got up and submitted, "O Messenger of Allah! I want to get even with you!" He asked, "For what?" He submitted, "Once you had hit me on my back. I want you to make amends for that." He said, "I do not remember that, but you may avenge yourself if you remember that." So, he came behind the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and said, "O Messenger of Allah, when you had struck me, I had no clothes on my back. It was bare." The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم removed his cloak from his back. The seal of Prophethood was visible. The man came forward and kissed it and submitted, "O Messenger of Allah! I had used the excuse to kiss the seal of Prophethood."

Anyway, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had offered himself that anyone might seek amends for a wrong he might have committed.

Seek forgiveness from everyone

In this way the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم taught us to apologise to everyone for past mistakes, to offer ourselves to others to get even with us. We must tell them that if they forgive, we would be obliged.

Mawlana Thanawi رحمة الله *sought pardon*

The Mawlana Thanawi رحمة الله wrote an article for that and sent it to all his acquaintances. He entitled the article (العذر والنذر) (*al-Uzar wan Nuzar*). He wrote, "Because I have contact with many people it is possible I may have hurt someone. I offer myself to anyone who might wish to get even with me. If I

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have not paid money where due, do remind me of that and I will repay it. If I have caused physical hurt to someone, I submit myself to him that he may avenge himself. Or, I ask to be forgiven." He also wrote down this Hadith:

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said,

"If a Muslim asks another Muslim sincerely to forgive him then it is the duty of the other to forgive him. if he does not forgive him then he should not expect Allah to forgive him in the Hereafter."

As far as cash is concerned, the owner of the right can demand a reimbursement in cash. However, other kinds of violations like backbiting, hurting anyone, etc. should be forgiven if the wrong-doer seeks forgiveness.

Mufti Muhammad Shafi's رحمة الله example

My respected father, Mawlana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله had a heart attack three years before his death. He called me to the hospital and instructed me to write down an article for him on the pattern of Mawlana Thanawi's رحمة الله *(al - Uzar wan Nuzar)* and to entitle it *(kutch Talafi Mafaat)*. The first word *kutch* (some) indicating that he was not necessarily seeking forgiveness for all his past conduct, but was seeking some atonement. It was written and published and was sent to all his acquaintances so that they might forgive him.

Pardon us

Our elders have taught us an apt sentence which they say on parting, "Brother forgive us what we have said or heard."

This is a very proper sentence though many people say it without seriousness. It means, "We are separating now. We do not know if we would meet again or not. So if I have said or heard anything about you, or hurt you in any way, I seek forgiveness for that now."

We must speak this sentence when going on a journey. If he says, "I have forgiven you" then, Insha Allah, you are forgiven.

Forgiveness from those who are not traced

There are many people we cannot trace. We may have met them casually and do not even know their names or where they live. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم taught us a very easy way

to ask forgiveness of such people.

Make this supplication

He made this supplication for such people.

اَيُّمَا مُؤْمِنٍ اَوْ مُؤْمِنَةٍ اٰذَيْتُهٗ اَوْ شَتَمْتُهٗ اَوْ جَلَدْتُهٗ اَوْ لَعَنْتُهٗ فَاجْعَلْهَا لَهٗ صَلٰوةً وَ زَكٰوةً وَقُرْبَةً تُقَرِّبُهٗ بِهَا اِلَيْكَ

(O Allah) if I have ever tortured or reproached believing man or a believing woman or had him whipped or cursed him then turn each of those things a source of grace and purification to him and grant him nearness to You.

Our elders have said that we must make this supplication for those people whom we cannot reach. If the harm that we have caused them turns into mercy for them then they will by themselves forgive us; Insha Allah. We must also convey reward to them (against pious deeds).

Consigning reward to the living

We can also consign reward to the living. We may do that through worship like reciting the Qur'an, etc. we may have hurt them at some time, so we can atone for that by consigning reward. Insha Allah our mistake will be forgiven.

A general supplication

There is also a general supplication:

"O Allah, do shower Your Mercy on everyone I may have hurt or whose right I may have violated. O Allah, shower Your mercy on him and turn my deed as a means of mercy for him. Cause him to be pleased with me. Cause him to forgive me and forget my mistakes."

A wrong thought

Mawlana Thanawi رحمة الله said about the Hadith with the supplication that people should not imagine from this Hadith that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has cursed those who have committed many sins. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has also said:

لَعَنَ اللّٰهُ الرَّاشِيَ وَالْمُرْتَشِيَ

Allah has cursed him who takes bribe and who gives bribe.

These people should not imagine that the Prophet صلى الله عليه

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وسلم has cursed them because he him self has made another supplication:

"O Allah those whom I have cursed, turn the curse into a prayer for them."

In the beginning of the Hadith with the supplication, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had said:

إنما أنا بشر أغضب كما يغضب البشر.

O Allah, I am human and get angry as any human being can. So, if through this anger I have caused trouble to anyone or cursed him or reproached him then turn all that into a prayer for him.

So the Hadith mentions the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم curse in anger which is a human trait. It may be turned into a prayer. If the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has cursed anyone for a sin or because *Shari'ah* calls for it then that Hadith of supplication does not cover it.

Summary

Thus, if you have violated anyone's rights and you cannot atone for that then make a supplication for them. It is not difficult to do that.

Only sit down and say to Allah, "O Allah, I do not know how many I have hurt and violated their rights. O Allah, let my wrongs turns into prayers for them and means of mercy. O Allah, clear their hearts of anger for me and cause them to forgive me."

These two things are known from the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم; *Sunnah* and the practice of our elders. May Allah cause us to do both these things! *Aameen.*

وَآخِرُ دَعْوَانَا أَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ

And our last call be, praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

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IMPORTANCE OF THE SALAH AND THE CORRECT WAY TO OFFER IT[1]

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ نَحْمَدُهٗ وَنَسْتَعِيْنُهٗ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهٗ وَنُؤْمِنُ بِهٖ وَنَتَوَكَّلُ عَلَيْهِ وَنَعُوْذُبِاللّٰهِ مِنْ شُرُوْرِ اَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّاٰتِ اَعْمَالِنَا مَنْ يَّهْدِهِ اللّٰهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهٗ وَ مَنْ يُّضْلِلْهُ فَلَا هَادِىَ لَهٗ وَ نَشْهَدُ اَنْ لَّآاِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهٗ لَاشَرِيْكَ لَهٗ وَ اَشْهَدُ اَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا وَ نَبِيَّنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهٗ وَ رَسُوْلُهٗ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالٰى عَلَيْهِ وَ عَلٰى اٰلِهٖ وَ اَصْحَابِهٖ وَ بَارَكَ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيْمًا كَثِيْرًا۔ اَمَّا بَعْدُ–

فَاَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ الرَّجِيْمِ○

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ○

قَدْ اَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ ○ الَّذِيْنَ هُمْ فِىْ صَلَاتِهِمْ خٰشِعُوْنَ ○ وَالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُوْنَ○ وَالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ لِلزَّكٰوةِ فٰعِلُوْنَ○ (سورة المومنون: ١ تا ٤)

اٰمَنْتُ بِاللّٰهِ صَدَقَ اللّٰهُ مَوْلَانَا الْعَظِيْمُ وَصَدَقَ رَسُوْلُهُ النَّبِيُّ الْكَرِيْمُ وَنَحْنُ عَلٰى ذٰلِكَ مِنَ الشَّاهِدِيْنَ وَالشَّاكِرِيْنَ وَالْحَمْدُلِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِيْنَ۔

First words

The discourse follows the previous in which I explained the first few verses of surah al-Muminun. They describe the qualities that will make a believer prosperous.

Khushu and Khudu

Allah taala mentions the first quality as khushu. Salah is the most important of a believer's tasks. So, Allah taala mentions khushu in salah before the other qualities. Generally, this word is paired with khudu which is to submit one's visible limbs before Allah taala while khushu is to concentrate one's heart towards Allah taala. Both these things are demanded in

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[1] Venue :Jame Masjid Baitul-Mukarram, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi.

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salah.

Reality of khudu

It is to bow down. One stands before Allah taala in such a way that all the limbs submit to Allah, there being no negligence and carelessness. But, it is not our reasoning that will tell us what method is proper manners. Rather, we must follow the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم method. The Prophet said to his sahabah رضى الله عنهم once after the salah:

صَلُّوا كَمَا رَأَيْتُمُونِي أُصَلِّي

"Offer the salah as you have seen me offer."

Thus, only this method is according to proper manners. There can be no deduction or addition in it.

Teachings of the righteous caliphs

This is why the sahabah رضى الله عنهم were careful to remember the method that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم taught them, they offered salah accordingly and they taught it to the others. The righteous caliphs Umar رضى الله عنه, Uthman رضى الله عنه and Ali رضى الله عنه ruled over more than half of the world. Wherever they went they taught the people the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم method of salah so that they might offer accordingly.

Proper posture of limbs is khudu

Abdullah ibn Masud رضى الله عنه said to his students:

أَلَا أُصَلِّي بِكُمْ صَلَاةَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ؟

"Shall I not offer the salah of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for you to see?"

Khudu is that all the limbs must behave according to the sunnah which is the first step towards khushu. When a worshipper does that while standing, bowing, prostrating and sitting (in salah), it is the first step towards turning the heart to Allah taala.

Outside thoughts

We often complain that our thoughts wonder about in the salah and we cannot concentrate. One main reason for that is that our salah is not according to the sunnah in its appearance, nor do we care for it. We do not learn or correct over what we

have been doing since childhood. The salah is so important that hundreds of pages are written in the books of fiqh, giving details of each posture from the takbir tahrimah, qiyam, ruku, sajdah to the salutation. But, we have no mind to learn these methods.

The honourable Mufti رحمة الله care

My respected father, Mawlana Mufti Muhammad Shafi رحمة الله used to say in the last days of his life. "Today, it has been sixty years since I have been learning and teaching the Quran and hadith and fiqh and issuing the fatawa. I have no other occupation besides that. In spite of that, I come across situation in salah when I do not know what I should do. So I have to consult a book on salah. This is my condition. But, I see people who have never given a thought to verify if their salah is according to sunnah or not." The reason is that we have no importance of salah in our minds. One must first of all correct the way he offers the salah.

Standing posture

Let me now outline the correct method of offering the salah. I will explain the verses in some other discourse. When one stands for the salah, his entire body must face the qiblah, even the chest. If the chest is not aligned to qiblah for a short while, Allah taala will accept the salah because he does not question minor discrepancies but the salah will lack the light of sunnah because this standing does not conform to sunnah. The toes and, in fact, the whole body must face the qiblah. Actually, it is neither difficult nor painful to do that. It only needs some attention which will make the salah conform to sunnah and it will have khudu and the light and blessing of sunnah.

Forming intention

I must make one thing clear. Intention is the resolve of the heart. It is not necessary to utter the words with the tongue. Many people think it necessary to utter the words with the tongue. They regard it to be fard or wajib, and even delay joining the congregation till they utter out the words of intention whereby they sometimes miss a rakah. Only the intention of the heart is enough.

Takbir Tahrimah

Again, they do not care how they raise their hands for

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beginning the salah. The sunnah is that the palms must face the qiblah and the pores of the thumbs must be in line with the earlobes. Any other way is not sunnah and the salah may not be negated but it is not according to sunnah, and will lack light. A little presence of mind will correct it.

Folding hands

The sunnah method of folding hands is to make a circle with the small finger of one's right hand and its thumb and hold the left wrist keeping the three middle fingers on the back of the left hand, folding the hands a little below the navel. This is sunnah and it will fetch the blessing and light too. If a different method is employed, then the salah will not be void but the sunnah would have been neglected.

Recital of the Quran

After folding the hands, he must recite the thana سبحانك اللهم..., surah al Fatihah and another surah. He must recite in a correct manner, with tajweed in proper articulation and pronouncement. It is not difficult to learn this. Only 69 letters are used in the Quran. It is very easy to pronounce them. However, there are between 8 and 10 letters that will have to be practiced, like ث(th), ح (ha), ض(dgard) and ظ (thow). One should practice this before a qari because sometimes, if they are interchanged then the meaning might change. This is not difficult to learn. Only we do not pay attention.

Summary

You must go to your neighborhood mosque and practice the letter with the imam there, or the qari if there is one. Insha Allah, your pronunciation of all the letters will improve. Then your salah will conform to sunnah.

Insha Allah, I will say more about these things in another discourse.

May Allah cause us to abide by these things. *Ameen!*

وآخِرُ دَعْوَانَا اَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ

And our last call be praise be to Allah Lord of the worlds.

THE MASNUN METHOD OF SALAH
(The way the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم offered it) [1]

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ نَحْمَدُهٗ وَنَسْتَعِيْنُهٗ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهٗ وَنُؤْمِنُ بِهٖ وَنَتَوَكَّلُ عَلَيْهِ وَنَعُوْذُبِاللّٰهِ مِنْ شُرُوْرِ اَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّاٰتِ اَعْمَالِنَا مَنْ يَّهْدِهِ اللّٰهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَـهٗ وَ مَنْ يُّضْلِلْهُ فَلَا هَادِىَ لَهٗ وَ نَشْهَدُ اَنْ لَّآاِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهٗ لَاشَرِيْكَ لَـهٗ وَ اَشْهَدُ اَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا وَ نَبِيَّنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهٗ وَ رَسُوْلُهٗ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالٰى عَلَيْهِ وَ عَلٰى اٰلِهٖ وَ اَصْحَابِهٖ وَ بَارَكَ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيْمًا كَثِيْرًا۔ اَمَّا بَعْدُ۔

فَاَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ الرَّجِيْمِ

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

قَدْ اَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ o الَّذِيْنَ هُمْ فِىْ صَلَاتِهِمْ خٰشِعُوْنَ o وَالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُوْنَ o وَالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ لِلزَّكٰوةِ فٰعِلُوْنَ o اِلَّا عَلٰٓى اَزْوَاجِهِمْ اَوْمَا مَلَكَتْ اَيْمَانُهُمْ فَاِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُوْمِيْنَ o فَمَنِ ابْتَغٰى وَرَآءَ ذٰلِكَ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْعٰدُوْنَ o (سورة المؤمنون: ١ تا ٧)

اٰمَنْتُ بِاللّٰهِ صَدَقَ اللّٰهُ مَوْلَانَا الْعَظِيْم وَصَدَقَ رَسُوْلُهُ النَّبِيُّ الْكَرِيْمُ وَنَحْنُ عَلٰى ذٰلِكَ مِنَ الشَّاهِدِيْنَ وَالشَّاكِرِيْنَ وَالْحَمْدُلِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِيْنَ۔

Introduction

This is the third discourse on khushu in salah, the first quality of a successful believer as described in the first seven verses of al-Muminun.

We have seen that two words are used together, khushu and khudu. The former implies attention of the heart towards Allah taala while the latter is submission of the limb before

[1] Venue: Jame Masjid Baitul-Mukarram, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi

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Allah taala according to sunnah. This discourse takes up the subject from where we had stopped in the previous at recital of the Quran.

Standing posture

This is qiyam. The worshipper stands erect with eyes looking at the spot of prostration. This will mean that the upper limb bends slightly forward. It is disliked to bend it more than that. The back should not bend down for, it is against the sunnah. One stands upright, head slightly bowed to be able to look at the place of prostration.

Motionless

The worshipper should refrain from any kind of movement. The Quran says (in al Baqarah verse 238):

وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ۔ (سورة البقرة: آیت ۲۳۸)

Stand before Allah in total devotion.

Many people are careless in theis regard and they swing backward and forward in their salah, giving motion to their hands to wipe perspiration, etc. All these things are contrary to devotion (*qunut*).

In the presence of the ruler of all rulers

When you stand for the salah, tell yourself that you are before Allah taala. When a person is in the presence of a worldly king, he is careful of his manners and is not inattentive. So, why should he not be careful before the *Ruler of all rulers*. Unnecessary movement in salat is contrary to manners and sunnah. The jurists say that if anyone moves his hand thrice in a single posture without need then his salah stands nullified. This was explained in a previous discourse.

Rukn (bowing)

Bowing follows the standing posture. In bowing, the back must be straight, otherwise, some jurists say the salah is void. The fingers of the hands must be spaced and must grip the knee which too should be straight and firm, not sagging. The more this method is neglected, the more the sunnah is disregarded and there is a proportionate diminishing light and blessing.

The qawmah (standing from ruku)

The worshipper arises from the ruku saying:

سَمِعَ اللّٰهُ لِمَنْ حَمِدَهُ

This is the *qawmah*. One of its sunnah is forgotten now a days. It is to keep standing in qawmah for a while but many people do not stand straight preferring to go down into prostration while still half way up. According to a sahabi رضی اللہ عنہ the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم waited in qawmah for as long as he was in ruku before going down into prostration. Hurrying down is not sunnah.

Supplication

The Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم made this supplication in qawmah:

رَبَّنَا لَكَ الْحَمْدُ مِلْأَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَمِلْأَ مَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَمِلْأَ مَا شِئْتَ مِنْ شَيْئٍ بَعْدُ

or

رَبَّنَا لَكَ الْحَمْدُ حَمْدًا كَثِيْرًا طَيِّبًا مُبَارَكًا فِيْهِ كَمَا يُحِبُّ رَبُّنَا وَ يَرْضٰى

Thus one must remain in qawmah for at least the time it takes to recite this. If any one hurries down without straightening his back then he must redeem the salah.

An example

While the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم was in the Masjid Nabawi, a man came and offered the salah. But he hurried through its postures. On finishing it he offered salam to the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم on going to him. But he said:

وَعَلَيْكُمُ السَّلَام قُمْ فَصَلِّ فَاِنَّكَ لَمْ تُصَلِّ

And peace be on you. Stand and offer the salah (again) for, you have not offered it (correctly)."

He did so, but again it was the same story because that had become his habit. Anyway, he came to the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم and offered the salam but got the same reply. This happened the third time to, so he requested:

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يَا رَسُوْلَ اللّٰهِ أَرِنِى وَعَلِّمْنِى

"O Messenger of Allah, teach me the correct way."

So the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم taught it to him.

Why did he not teach straight away

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not teach him the first time because the man ought to have asked him. Since he did not, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not teach him. Thus, if a man does not himself seek to know, it is sometimes useless to teach him. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم waited for him to get the urge to learn.

Offer it peacefully

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also thought that after such repetitions, he would learn it to remember well. The teaching will be appreciated. So he taught him. When you offer the salah, go through its postures in a correct manner and make the recital in a composed way, and do so, throughout the salah. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم taught him how to offer the salah. The sahabah رضى الله عنهم heard him too and remarked, "Because of this man, we learnt the salah from beginning to end from the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم."

Will have to be repeated

The Prophets صلى الله عليه وسلم instruction to the man to repeat the salah shows that if there is a shortcoming in any of the postures then it is wajib to repeat the salah. Hence, many of us who are not careful about their salah must repeat them and offer correctly. So it is better to be careful from the first. As much time must be given to qawmah as to ruku.

An etiquette of qawmah

One of the sahabah رضى الله عنهم said that sometimes they wondered that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم might have forgotten because he stood too long in the qawmah. Actually, he matched it with the ruku that was also very lengthy. Then he went into prostration. This is one of the manners of qawmah.

Into prostration

First rest the knees on the ground, then the palms, then the nose and after that the forehead. The limb nearest the ground

touches it first. Observe this sequence.

Toes must be well grounded

All these limbs also go into prostration too. They are both the hands, both knees, both feet, the nose and the forehead. They must be well grounded. If the toes do not at all rest on the ground during the prostration then the prostration is not accomplished. The salah too would then be void. But, if the toes do rest on the ground for a moment for the time it takes to say subhan Allah then the prostration and salah would be valid, but it will not conform to sunnah. The sunnah is that the toes must rest on the ground throughout the prostration and their direction should be toward the qiblah. So, even if they are rooted on the ground but are not turned to the qiblah then too the salah is not according to the sunnah.

Prostration nearest to Allah

There is no worship more pleasant than prostration, and there is no other way to attain nearness to Allah taala than prostration. According to a hadith, a man is not as near Allah in any situation as he is in prostration. When he prostrates before Allah taala, his entire body, all his being submits to Allah taala. All the limbs must be bowed down and that must follow the way shown by the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and done by him.

Women must unlock their hair

It is disliked that women should offer salah with their hair locked or lied together though their salah would be valid. The ulama say that if their hair are tied then they would be erect in prostration and not bowed down. If they keep them untied when beginning the salah, the hair too will prostrate, falling downwards. They would benefit from the light and blessings of prostration.

Salah is believers miraj

Allah taala bestowed on the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم the grand rank of miraj that he gave no one else. He reached the place where even jibril عليه السلام could not go. He prayed to Allah taala there for his ummah to be given a similar honour of nearness to Allah taala. Allah taala gave him the gift of salah,

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five times a day. They would prostrate during the salah which would bring them near to Allah taala. This is why it is said:

اَلصَّلٰوۃُ مِعْرَاجُ الْمُؤْمِنِیْنَ

Salah is the *miraj* of the believers.

We could never hope to ascent the seven heavens into the higher world and up to the sidra tul muntaha. But by virtue of the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم we are granted the miraj when we prostrate. We must value this thing.

Merit of prostration

When you prostrate your entire being before Allah taala, the whole universe bows to you. When you are in prostration in Allah's taala presence, your feet are on the crown. The universe in wholly under it, Iqbal said:

یہ سجدہ جسے تو گراں سمجھتا ہے ہزار سجدوں سے دیتا ہے آدمی کو نجات

This one prostration gives you riddance from a thousand prostrations. If man were to refuse to make this prostration then he would have been compelled to bow to everyone, the governor, officer, etc. But he who prostrates to Allah taala does not bow before anyone else. So, esteem it and prostrate with love.

The condition

Shah Fadel Rehman Ganj Muradabadi رحمۃ اللہ was a saint of high order. Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رحمۃ اللہ once visited him. When he was returning, he said to him in low tones. "O Ashraf Ali, I tell you one thing. When I prostrate, it seems that Allah taala loves me."

So, make the prostration with love. It relieves you of a thousand prostrations. It brings you nearer Allah which cannot be achieved in any other way.

Keep elbows apart

The prostration must be made correctly in the way the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم made. The elbows must be apart from your sides but without causing inconvenience to the man at your either side. To put them very far is against sunnah and hurts the neighbours, so it is not allowed, for it is a grave sin to cause inconvenience to another person. You must recite:

سُبْحَانَ رَبِّیَ الْاَعْلٰی

at least thrice in prostration. You may add to that and recite five, seven, eleven times but in love and esteem.

The jalsah and supplication

The sitting down after the first prostration is called jalsah. One must sit for a while before making the second prostration. According to a sahabi رضی اللہ عنہ the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم sat for as long as it took him to prostrate. But, ths sunnah too is being abandoned. The Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم made this supplication in jalsah:

اَللّٰھُمَّ اغْفِرْلِیْ ذَنْبِیْ اَللّٰھُمَّ اغْفِرْلِیْ وَارْحَمْنِیْ وَاجْبُرْنِیْ وَاھْدِنِیْ وَارْزُقْنِیْ

After this the worshipper must make the second prostration.

This was the description of one rakah from the takbir tahrimah to the prostration.

Insha Allah, we will see more in the next discourse. May Allah enable us to offer the salah in accordance with sunnah. *Aameen*!

وَاٰخِرُ دَعْوَانَا اَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰہِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِیْنَ

And our last call be praise be to Allah Lord of the worlds.



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THE THREE STAGES OF KHUSHU [1]

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ نَحْمَدُهٗ وَنَسْتَعِيْنُهٗ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهٗ وَنُؤْمِنُ بِهٖ وَنَتَوَكَّلُ عَلَيْهِ وَنَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنْ شُرُوْرِ اَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّاٰتِ اَعْمَالِنَا مَنْ يَّهْدِهِ اللّٰهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهٗ وَ مَنْ يُّضْلِلْهُ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهٗ وَ نَشْهَدُ اَنْ لَّآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهٗ لَاشَرِيْكَ لَهٗ وَ اَشْهَدُ اَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا وَ نَبِيَّنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهٗ وَ رَسُوْلُهٗ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالٰى عَلَيْهِ وَ عَلٰى اٰلِهٖ وَ اَصْحَابِهٖ وَ بَارَكَ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيْمًا كَثِيْرًا۔ اَمَّا بَعْدُ۔

فَاَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ الرَّجِيْمِ

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

قَدْ اَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ ○ الَّذِيْنَ هُمْ فِيْ صَلَاتِهِمْ خٰشِعُوْنَ ○ وَالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُوْنَ ○ وَالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ لِلزَّكٰوةِ فٰعِلُوْنَ ○ اِلَّا عَلٰى اَزْوَاجِهِمْ اَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ اَيْمَانُهُمْ فَاِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُوْمِيْنَ ○ فَمَنِ ابْتَغٰى وَرَآءَ ذٰلِكَ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْعٰدُوْنَ ○ (سورۃ المؤمنون: ۱ تا ۷)

اٰمَنْتُ بِاللّٰهِ صَدَقَ اللّٰهُ مَوْلَانَا الْعَظِيْمُ وَصَدَقَ رَسُوْلُهُ النَّبِيُّ الْكَرِيْمُ وَنَحْنُ عَلٰى ذٰلِكَ مِنَ الشَّاهِدِيْنَ وَالشَّاكِرِيْنَ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِيْنَ۔

First words

In the previous discourse, we saw that both khudu and khushu are demanded in the salah. The former concern our visible limbs while the latter is linked to our heart. The limbs should be in conformity with the Prophet's صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم teaching and most of it was covered previously. In this discourse, I speak of the remaining and then take up khushu.

Fingers and toes in ruku and sajdah

The fingers of the hand must be kept apart while grasping

[1] Venue :Jame Masjid Baitul-Mukarram, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi.

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the knees in ruku. In sajdah, the fingers must be closed together, unspaced. The hands must be placed with the face between them, wrists near the shoulders and the thumbs opposite the earlobes. The elbows must be away from the ribs not touching them.

Sitting for attahiyat

The right foot must be erect in the sitting posture, its toes turned forward facing the qiblah. The left foot must be laid down for sitting on it. The fingers of the hand must be on the thighs with their tips above the knees, but it is not good to suspend them over the knees.

Salutation

When turning in salam, the neck should be turned fully to the right side with the glance on the right shoulder. Then it should be turned to the left side fully, and the glance on the left shoulder. If these things are observed, the salah shall be according to sunnah. And, because of that the light of sunnah and its blessing will be available. The salah will have khushu in it. Moreover these things do not take much time nor call for strenuous efforts. May Allah taala enable us to do this. *Aameen!*

The fact of khushu

Now, let us turn to khushu. It means the submission of the heart to Allah taala. The worshipper realizes that he stand before Allah taala. The highest rank of it is as described by the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم:

اَنْ تَعْبُدَ اللّٰهَ كَاَنَّكَ تَرَاهُ فَاِنْ لَّمْ تَكُنْ تَرَاهُ فَاِنَّهُ يَرَاكَ۔ (بخاری۔ باب بدء الوحی)

"That you worship Allah as though you see Him, but if you cannot visualize that, then he sees you." (Bukhari (base wahy), Muslim # 8, Trimdhi # 2619, Abu Dawud # 4695, Ibn Majah # 63, Ahmed 184)

This is the highest form of khushu.

Not necessary to be visible

We do not see Allah taala nor do we observe him seeing us. Then how may we understand these things? The answer is

that there are not all things in this world that we can see but we are convinced at heart that they are present. We can give the example of people hearing someone over the loudspeaker though he is inside the mosque invisible to them. They will confirm that the speaker is there and will identify him by his voice.

Passengers in the aeroplane

Or, for instance, an aeroplane flies overhead. We know that there are passenegers inside though we cannot see them. We know that there also is a pilot flying it, for it cannot fly without a pilot.

Sunlight

We get sunlight in the mosque but do not see the sun yet we are convinced that the sun is there.

Just as the aeroplane can fly only if it has a pilot, so too this wide universe with everything it contains speaks of its Creator.

Everything is evidence of Allah's being

Therefore, the worshipper should, when he stands for salah, tell himself that everything points out to Allah's taala existence and creation, so he also stands before Allah. He should say, "Allah taala sees me. And I am convinced to such an extent that I see him." If you will build this idea in your mind and offer the salah, then you will have a spiritual experience in your salah. May Allah taala grant this kind of experience to every Muslim. This is why the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that we must offer the salah as though we see him, or he sees us if we cannot do that.

First step are the words

To achieve that highest form of salah, we have to climb up the stairs one by one. Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanwi رحمه الله said that the first step is to concentrate on the words we utter. We must be aware of what we say, like when we say, الحمد لله رب العالمين. We must know the words. However, today the moment a worshipper begins his salah with Allahu Akbar, it is as though it is the word 'Go' and he speeds through. It is the habit that brings the words on the tongue without effort. The result is that he does not know what he has recited. This is the general picture with us.

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First step to khushu

Hence, he must concentrate on his word. This seems difficult in the beginning but Mawlana Thanwi رحمہ اللہ said that it has to be done.

Second step is the meaning

The next step is to concentrate on the meanings. When one says الحمد للہ رب العلمین he must know that, All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds; And so to the end of this surah with Allah's attributes of mercy, his being the Master of the day of requital. Then one must know that one confirms one's worship of him and one seeks His help to guide him on the straight path. And when one utters the last verse, one must know that one asks him to guide one on the path of those whom he has favoured, not of those on whom is his wrath or who go astray.

When he does that, he will rid himself of unnecessary thoughts that come to his mind.

Why the distraction

The main reason for such thoughts invading the mind is that ablution is not done properly according to sunnah. People converse while making ablution though this is wrong. They must make the supplication taught by the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم. They must come early to the mosque and offer the optional and sunnah salah before the congregation begins because these things are the preface to the fard so that concentration may be built for it. Insha Allah, this will drive away interrupting thoughts.

Return if distracted

However, man's mind is given to stray. So, if he gets an uninvited interrupting thought in spite of these measures then Allah taala will not punish him. But, the moment he realizes that he has strayed, he must (regain his concentration and) return to the salah whenever he is. He must do this exercise every time it happens.

Exercise and effort

Nothing may be achieved in this world without practice and effort. So the same applies here. The worshipper must resolve when he begins the salah that he will concentrate on

the salah whether he recites or is in the ruku. But, every time he stray, he must come back. This practice will make him near perfect and gradually the straying will diminish, Insha Allah. The only thing is that he must not give up. He must keep trying. Try he must all his life. A time will come, Insha Allah, when most of his mind will be in the salah.

Third step thought of Allah

When that is achieved, the next step is to think in salah that Allah taala stands before him. When this is visualized, the objective is achieved, *Insha Allah.*

This is the brief discourse on obtaining khushu to which the Quran refers in the first two verses of al Muminun:

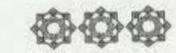
قَدْ اَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ ۝ الَّذِيْنَ هُمْ فِيْ صَلَاتِهِمْ خٰشِعُوْنَ ۝

These believers who practice khushu in their salah are prosperous.

May Allah enable us to abide by these teachings and to grow khushu in our salah. May he cause us to concentrate and to offer the salah according to sunnah. Aameen!

وَاٰخِرُ دَعْوَانَا اَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ.

And our last call be praise be to Allah Lord of the worlds.



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HOW TO KEEP AWAY THOUGHTS IN THE SALAH[1]

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ نَحْمَدُهٗ وَنَسْتَعِيْنُهٗ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهٗ وَنُؤْمِنُ بِهٖ وَنَتَوَكَّلُ عَلَيْهِ وَنَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنْ شُرُوْرِ اَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّاٰتِ اَعْمَالِنَا مَنْ يَّهْدِهِ اللّٰهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهٗ وَ مَنْ يُّضْلِلْهُ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهٗ وَ نَشْهَدُ اَنْ لَّآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهٗ لَاشَرِيْكَ لَهٗ وَ اَشْهَدُ اَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا وَ نَبِيَّنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهٗ وَرَسُوْلُهٗ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالٰى عَلَيْهِ وَعَلٰى اٰلِهٖ وَاَصْحَابِهٖ وَبَارَكَ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيْمًا كَثِيْرًا۔ اَمَّا بَعْدُ۔

فَاَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ الرَّجِيْمِ ○

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

قَدْ اَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ ○ الَّذِيْنَ هُمْ فِيْ صَلَاتِهِمْ خٰشِعُوْنَ ○ وَالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُوْنَ ○ وَالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ لِلزَّكٰوةِ فٰعِلُوْنَ ○ اِلَّا عَلٰٓى اَزْوَاجِهِمْ اَوْمَا مَلَكَتْ اَيْمَانُهُمْ فَاِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُوْمِيْنَ ○ (سورة المؤمنون: ١ تا ٧)

اٰمَنْتُ بِاللّٰهِ صَدَقَ اللّٰهُ مَوْلَانَا الْعَظِيْمُ وَصَدَقَ رَسُوْلُهُ النَّبِيُّ الْكَرِيْمُ وَنَحْنُ عَلٰى ذٰلِكَ مِنَ الشَّاهِدِيْنَ وَالشَّاكِرِيْنَ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِيْنَ۔

Introduction

We continue our commentary on the first few verse of surah al Muminun which describe the believers who are prosperous in both the worlds. Their first quality is:

اَلَّذِيْنَ هُمْ فِيْ صَلَاتِهِمْ خٰشِعُوْنَ ○

Who adopt khushu in their salah.

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[1] Venue: Jame Masjid Baitul-Mukarram, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi

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Three stages of khushu

There are three stages or steps to attain khushu:

(i) To be attentive to the words spoken by the tongue,

(ii) to concentrate on their meaning, and

(iii) to visualize while offering the salah that one sees Allah taala, or , at least, that Allah taala sees him. These verses alert us that it is not enough to offer the salah but one must try to grow khushu in the salah.

Disturbed by thoughts

Many people complain that they get various thoughts while they offer the salah. There is no point in worrying about it, but it is necessary to adopt ways to remove the difficulty and shortcoming.

Prefaces of the salah

Allah taala has placed certain thing (prefaces) that are done before the salah which is the real end. The worshipper comes to the salah through those things. If he observes them correctly then the distracting thoughts would be diminished.

The first preface: purification

Allah taala has made purification (or taharah) essential before salah. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

مفتاح الصلاة الطهور

"The key to salah is purity."

He also said:

لاتقبل الصلاة بغير طهور

"The salah is not accepted (by Allah) without purity."

Istinja begins purification

Purification begins with istinja or abstersion. It is wajib to make istinja. A person must satisfy himself that he has obtained purity thoroughly. If he feels that even after passing urine drops are likely to follow, then he must wait for them to finish. This is called istibra in juristic language. If he does not obtain a proper purity and his clothes or body have the impurity on them then his thoughts will distract him.

Impurity is cause of thoughts

Allah taala has given peculiarities to everything. Impurity has the characteristic of creating evil thoughts in man. Hence, the first introductory task for salah is to remove impurity (to make istinja).

Ablution

The second introductory task of salah is to make ablution (or wudhu). It is an amazing thing. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "When a man who make ablution washes his face, Allah taala washes off the minor sins committed by the eyes. When he washes his hands, Allah taala washes off the minor sins committed by his hands. When he washes his feet, Allah taala forgives him the sins committed by his feet. The four limbs washed in ablution are generally these four that take him toward sin. Allah taala has arranged for man to be pure of sins before standing for salah. But these are minor sins. The major sins are forgiven only by making repentance.

Ablution washes off sin

It is known about Abu Hanifah رحمه الله that he could see forms of sin in the residual water of a person performing ablution. Allah taala had given him this kashf, or means of disclosure. Anyway, wudhu is instrumental in not only producing outward cleaning but also inward cleansing and riddance from sin.

Which kind of ablution

However, this advantage accrues only when ablution is made in the sunnah way. The Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم habit was to face the qiblah while making ablution. So it is part of manners of ablution. He said بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم before beginning ablution and he never spoke to anyone while performing ablution.

Concentration

The best thing in concentrating while making ablution is that one thinks while washing the limbs that his sins are being washed off. Also, he must not waste water but use only as much as is necessary. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

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ایاك والسرف وان كنت على نهر جار

"Beware of waste, even if you are at a running river."

Now, the river will not lose any water if you use much, but the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said that even there you must not be wasteful.

Prayers during ablution

One must make prayers while making ablution. When he made ablution, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited often:

اَشْهَدُ اَنْ لَّا اِلٰـهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَاَشْهَدُ اَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهٗ وَرَسُوْلُهٗ

and he made this supplication in between:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْلِیْ ذَنْبِیْ وَ وَسِّعْ لِیْ فِیْ دَارِیْ وَ بَارِكْ لِیْ فِیْ رِزْقِیْ

After having performed ablution he made this supplication:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اجْعَلْنِیْ مِنَ التَّوَّابِیْنَ وَاجْعَلْنِیْ مِنَ الْمُتَطَهِّرِیْنَ

If a person observes these manners while making ablution then it is its characteristic that it removes divergent thoughts from his mind,turns his attention towards Allah taala.

Conversation during ablution

However, we begin to commit mistakes while making ablution itself. We do everything that is wrong. We converse with each other, exchange gossip and are lost elsewhere in thought while discharging our duty in haste. The result is that the fruit and benefit of ablution is lost to us. If, instead of that, we make a proper and careful ablution observing its manners and making supplication then the preface to the salah will be correct.

The third preface

The third preface of the salah is to perform ablution and come to the mosque a little before the congregational salah and offer two rakaat supererogatory salah as Tahiyat ul Masjid and Tahiyat ul wudhu. There is much merit in these two rakaat. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم asked Bilal رضى الله عنه, "O Bilal, during my miraj while I visited paradise, I heard your footsteps ahead of me. Tell me about a deed that you do regularly for which Allah taala has given you this place." He said, "O Messenger of

Allah, I cannot think of any deed other than that I have resolved ever since I embraced Islam that I would surely offer two rakaat after every ablution that I perform. I do that regularly whether it precedes a fard salah or not." The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, This is the deed for which Allah taala has raised you to this station."

When to offer

It only takes a couple of minutes to offer the two rakaat. It is very virtuous to offer the Tahiyat ul Masjid on entering the mosque before sitting down but if he sits down by mistake then he may arise on remembering and offer them.

The fourth preface

Before every fard salah, there are some sunnah salah, both muakkadah (emphasized) and ghayr muakkadah (non emphasized). These sunnah are the fourth preface of salah. There is not as much virtue in offering sunnah salah before Maghrib because we have a command to offer them promptly. However, some ahadith speak of two rakaat before fard of Maghrib.

The four introduce khushu

If the four prefaces are observed and the worshipper begins the fard salah then he will not complain about distracting thoughts. The short gap of fifteen minutes or more between adhan and the congregational salah is given so that these prefaces may be observed. When he begins his fard salah afterwards, Insha Allah, Allah taala will give him khushu and concentration. These prefaces take only a few minutes but they improve our salah and we will gain prosperity.

Ignore the thoughts

If the distracting thoughts continue to pester you then do not worry. If they come to mind on their own then Allah taala forgives that. Some people blame themselves and their salah because of these thoughts. They underestimate their salah because of it.

Value the prostration

These things result from a poor estimation. Allah taala does not like that. These people must appreciate that they are

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enabled to offer the salah and to make prostration to Allah taala. Let them thank him for that. How many a people are deprived of this blessing! We are not deprived! It is not anything ordinary. Allah taala has enabled us to present ourselves before him.

قبول ہو کہ نہ ہو پھر بھی ایک نعمت ہے وہ سجدہ جس کو تیرے آستاں سے نسبت ہے

The opportunity to rest the head before him is itself a great blessing. Be grateful for it. And keep trying but if you fail and distracting thoughts haunt you, make istighfar for that. Repent over it.

After the salah

Abu Bakr Siddiq رضی اللہ عنہ said that a man must do two things after offering the salah. He must say الحمد للہ and استغفر اللہ to thank Allah for the opportunity to do good, and to seek forgiveness for not being able to do justice to it.

The Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم used to say, after making the final salutation of a salah, استغفر اللہ three times though he had offered the salah (which is a good thing) and had not committed sin. He made istighfar because, "O Allah, the salah that I ought to have offered presentable to you, I have not been able to do."

Summary

The message is that we should not underestimate this salah nor indulge in egoism. We must be grateful to Allah taala for enabling us to worship him and we must seek his forgiveness for our shortcomings. At the same time we must do our best to improve our salah. We must continue to do it all our lives. Insha Alah, Allah taala will accept it, merciful as he is.

May he cause us to abide by these teachings. *Aameen!*

وَاٰخِرُ دَعْوَانَا اَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ

And our last call be praise be to Allah Lord of the worlds.

CONSISTENTLY OBSERVE THE SALAH[1]

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ نَحْمَدُهٗ وَ نَسْتَعِيْنُهٗ وَ نَسْتَغْفِرُهٗ وَ نُؤْمِنُ بِهٖ وَ نَتَوَكَّلُ عَلَيْهِ وَ نَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنْ شُرُوْرِ اَنْفُسِنَا وَ مِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ اَعْمَالِنَا مَنْ يَّهْدِهِ اللّٰهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهٗ وَ مَنْ يُّضْلِلْهُ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهٗ وَ اَشْهَدُ اَنْ لَّا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهٗ لَا شَرِيْكَ لَهٗ وَ اَشْهَدُ اَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا وَ نَبِيَّنَا وَ مَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهٗ وَ رَسُوْلُهٗ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالٰى عَلَيْهِ وَ عَلٰى اٰلِهٖ وَاَصْحَابِهٖ وَ بَارَكَ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيْمًا كَثِيْرًا – اما بعد!

فَاَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ الرَّجِيْمِ o

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ o

قَدْ اَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ o الَّذِيْنَ هُمْ فِيْ صَلَاتِهِمْ خٰشِعُوْنَ o وَالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُوْنَ o وَالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ لِلزَّكٰوةِ فٰعِلُوْنَ o وَالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ لِفُرُوْجِهِمْ حٰفِظُوْنَ o اِلَّا عَلٰٓى اَزْوَاجِهِمْ اَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ اَيْمَانُهُمْ فَاِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُوْمِيْنَ o فَمَنِ ابْتَغٰى وَرَآءَ ذٰلِكَ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْعٰدُوْنَ o وَالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ لِاَمٰنٰتِهِمْ وَ عَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُوْنَ o وَالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ عَلٰى صَلَوٰتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُوْنَ o اُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْوٰرِثُوْنَ o الَّذِيْنَ يَرِثُوْنَ الْفِرْدَوْسَ ط هُمْ فِيْهَا خٰلِدُوْنَ o (سورة المؤمنون: ١-١١)

اٰمَنْتُ بِاللّٰهِ صَدَقَ اللّٰهُ مَوْلَانَا الْعَظِيْمُ وَ صَدَقَ رَسُوْلُهُ النَّبِيُّ الْكَرِيْمُ وَ نَحْنُ عَلٰى ذٰلِكَ مِنَ الشَّاهِدِيْنَ وَالشَّاكِرِيْنَ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِيْنَ

[1] Venue: Jame Masjid Baitul-Mukarram, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi.

www.sirat-e-mustaqeem.net

First words

This is one of the discourses on the *surah al-Muminun* whose initial verses describe the qualities necessary for the success of a believer. This last discourse on the *surah* is on the verses {9 to 11}.

وَالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ عَلٰى صَلٰوتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُوْنَ O أُولٰئِكَ هُمُ
الْوٰرِثُوْنَ O الَّذِيْنَ يَرِثُوْنَ الْفِرْدَوْسَ ط هُمْ فِيْهَا خٰلِدُوْنَ O

They are those who observe *salah* consistently and they are heirs of *al-Firdaws* where they will abide forever. *Al-Firdaws* is a high station in Paradise.

All characteristics in one perspective

Let us review these characteristics together. Those believers are successful who have these qualities:

1) They observe humility in their *salah*.
2) They abstain from every thing that is vain.
3) They observe the *zakah* which means that they pay the *zakah* that is due on them and purify their character.
4) They purify their character of bad habits.
5) They guard their private parts except from their wives and their female slaves who were kept in the olden times. They keep their sexual desires in check except with their wives and female slaves and they are not blamed if they uses them. Those who seek other ways are transgressors and are criminals in Allah's taala sight.
6) They are faithful to their trusts and do not commit treachery in what is entrusted to them.
7) They honour their promises.

We have thrown a detailed light on all these attributes and praise belongs to Allah for that.

Similarity in the first and the last quality

Allah taala mentions the eighth and the last quality وَالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ عَلٰى صَلٰوتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُوْنَ Those believers are successful who observe their salah consistently. The noble *Quran* has mentioned the eight qualities that make a successful believer, beginning with *salah* and ending with it. They are humble in their *salah* or

observes humility therein, and they are consistent in their *salah*. These are respectively the first and the last characteristics. This suggests that the important way to gain success is through the *salah*. While elaborating on the first characteristic, we had described *khushu* or humility, humbleness.

Punctuality of time

Observing the *salah* implies many things. One must be consistent and regular, not offering it now and then. The second meaning is to be careful of the hours of *salah*. Allah taala has bound the *salah* to their hours. He says in surah *an-Nisa* verse 103 إِنَّ الصَّلٰوةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ كِتٰبًا مَّوْقُوْتًا *salah* is duty imposed by Allah for which He has appointed the hours. *Fajr* is from dawn till sunrise, *Zuhr* from end of declination of the sun till when shadows are twice in length, and from then till sunset is Asr. There is a time duration for every *salah* so, it is not merely to observe the *salah*. But also to respect its hours.

The salah of the hypocrite

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "It is the hypocrite's *salah* that when it is the time of the *Asr*, he sits unconcerned till the sun is at the edge (when it turns yellowish and can be seen with the naked eye and at this hour the *salah* is disliked). He gets up hurriedly and goes through four pecks and finishes the *salah*." This is the hypocrite's *salah*. Hence, it is not that only the *salah* is offered and the obligation is thus discharged, but the hour must be respected. The *Fajr salah* must be offered before sunrise when its time ends, but if anyone over sleeps and gets up after sunrise and offer the *salah* then he has redeemed it but has not observed it consistently because he was not careful of the hours prescribed by Allah taala.

Religion is obedience to Allah taala

I have repeated very often that, religion is the word for obedience to Allah.' It is not the question of an appointed hour but merely the command of Allah taala to observe a *salah* at a particular hour and another later. Thus, if anyone offers the *Fajr salah* when the sun is rising then that is forbidden. *Salah* must be offered within the prescribed time.

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With the congregation

The third thing that is necessary for a consistent observation is to offer *salah* in its perfect method. This means that men must go to the mosque and offer the *salah* with the congregation; it is *sunnah muakkadah* (emphasised sunnah) for men to join the congregation and this approaches the *wajib* (obligatory). Some *ulama* hold that it is *wajib* to offer the *salah* in congregational form. But, Imam Abu Hanifah رحمة الله held the former view. If a man offers the *salah* by himself then it is an incomplete observation, *ada qasir*. But *ada Kamil* (perfect observation) is that a man offers the *salah* with the congregation. Besides, the degree of a congregation *salah* is higher in terms of merit and reward. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Offering a *salah* with the congregation fetches twenty-seven times higher reward than offering it by oneself." A few minutes more will be spent in the mosque. How foolish it is to miss the congregation for those few minutes and, make it incomplete. Men must go to the mosque.

Waiting for the salah

Allah taala has made the mosque His house. If a man sits in the mosque waiting for a *salah* then Allah taala goes on giving him reward of *salah*. He gets the same reward as is given or offering the *salah* even if he does nothing but merely sit. His record of deeds is continuously credited. So to observe *salah* consistently is to offer it with the congregation.

Put their houses on fire

When the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم led the *salah* as an *imam*, in the *Masjid Nabwi*, all the *sahabah* رضى الله عنهم اجمعين offered the *salah* in his leadership. But some people, resembling the hypocrites, did not join the congregation. They did not have faith in their heart but only professed it orally, so they made lame excuses for neglecting the congregation. However, it could never be imagined that any *sahabi* would do so. One day, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "I got the thought that I should ask someone else to lead the *salah* and begin it, while I should go to houses and see who is there not attending the congregation. I wish that I should set their homes on fire."

Advantages of the congregation

Fathom the importance of the congregational *salah* from these words of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The *muadhdhin* calls but this man sits home. May Allah taala preserve every Muslim from the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم anger. *Aameen*. Those who sit home and fail to attend the congregation must think of these words. Allah taala has made the mosque His House and a center for the Muslim *ummah*. When the Muslims meet, they discuss their problems and ask their welfare.

Do not imitate Christianity

The idea that has grown in us that we will go to the mosque only on Fridays and keep away from it all the week is an imitation of Christians. The Christians went to the church on Sunday but now they do not go there on Sunday too. In Europe and the us; the churches are now empty and deserted. Any way, *salah* is fard everyday of the week five times a day and must be offered in the mosque.

Women must offer the salah in the initial hour

The women are told that as soon as the time begins, they must offer the *salah* . Generally, they procrastinate and waste much time and finally offer the *salah* when the disliked hour is on. The men must go to the mosque.

The importance of salah

Allah taala described His successful slaves beginning the description with the *salah* and ending it with it. The most important duty of a believer is the *salah* .

Umar رضى الله عنه ruled over more than half the world. Today rulers of minor governments think very high of themselves and call themselves 'king' and so on. There are as many as fifteen independent states that add up to the area under Umar's رضى الله عنه rule. He wrote a letter to each of his governors. It is to be found in *Muwatta Imam Maalik* (Kitab us-salah hadith # 6)

ان اهم امركم عندى الصلاة فمن حفظها و حافظ عليها حفظ
دينه و من ضيعها فهو لما سواها اضيع (موطا امام مالك، كتاب
وقوت الصلاة حديث نمبر٦)

"Know that the most important of your task is the salah. He,

who is careful of his salat and consistent with it, preserve his religion. He who neglects the salat will neglect other things more than that"

Inheritors of al-Firdaws

The *Quran* begins the description with mention of the *salah* and ends it with it. After recounting the eight characteristics, the *Quran* says that these people are inheritors of paradise. They will dwell therein forever

May Allah taala be merciful to us and grant all of us all these attributes and then through His mercy admit all of us to paradise. *Aameen*

وَاٰخِرُ دَعْوَانَا اَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ

And our last call be, praise be to Allah, Lord of the world

❁❁❁

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★ Authored more than 50 books in Arabic, Urdu and English.

وسلم has cursed them because he him self has made another supplication:

"O Allah those whom I have cursed, turn the curse into a prayer for them."

In the beginning of the Hadith with the supplication, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had said:

اِنما أنا بشـــر أغضب كمـــا يغضب البشـــــر

O Allah, I am human and get angry as any human being can. So, if through this anger I have caused trouble to anyone or cursed him or reproached him then turn all that into a prayer for him.

So the Hadith mentions the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم curse in anger which is a human trait. It may be turned into a prayer. If the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has cursed anyone for a sin or because *Shari'ah* calls for it then that Hadith of supplication does not cover it.

Summary

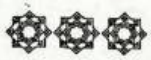
Thus, if you have violated anyone's rights and you cannot atone for that then make a supplication for them. It is not difficult to do that.

Only sit down and say to Allah, "O Allah, I do not know how many I have hurt and violated their rights. O Allah, let my wrongs turns into prayers for them and means of mercy. O Allah, clear their hearts of anger for me and cause them to forgive me."

These two things are known from the Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم *Sunnah* and the practice of our elders. May Allah cause us to do both these things! *Aameen.*

وَاٰخِرُ دَعْوَانَا اَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ

And our last call be, praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds.



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