

مواعظِ حَسَنَة

SOUND ADMONITIONS

Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Salīm
Dhorāt Sāhib

Dāmat Barakātuhum

Volume One

Translated by
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Foreword

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ، وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى
رَسُولِهِ سَيِّدِنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ، أَمَا بَعْدُ:

Neither am I of any worth, nor my words. I was born in a very small village in a remote and backward region, and that is where I grew up. I was ten years old when I came to Britain. For six years I attended a maktab together with school. I then took admission in Dār al-'Ulūm Bury. I spent six years studying there and then had the opportunity of serving my alma mater for four years. My father, Hadrat Hāfiz Ibrāhīm Dhorāt Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, passed away suddenly in 1412 A.H./1991, so I had to shift to my hometown, Leicester, in order to serve my honourable mother. A few months later, I was given the responsibility of imāmat at the oldest masjid of Leicester, Masjid an-Nūr, (where I had studied in my young days under my honourable father and other teachers).

I had started delivering speeches since childhood. My teachers – out of their affection – would ask me to memorize a speech which I then had to deliver in gatherings. My honourable mother too would wrap a turban around my head with intense love and send me off. I do not know with what du'ā's and with what hopes she must have been sending her little child.

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My honourable father was an embodiment of du‘ā’. From childhood he had been teaching me one lesson: When you get older, you have to become a Maulānā. You will have to learn about Allāh *ta‘ālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, and teach it to others. You will have to practise, and you will have to make others do the same.

When we were little children, we used to throw stones at the mangoes which were on the trees. My father used to say to us: “You will have to throw stones repeatedly, and you will eventually be lucky to strike one mango which will then fall into your hands. Rarely will you strike a mango with the first or second stone. The person who loses hope after one or two tries will remain deprived. Dear son! When Allāh *ta‘ālā* seats you on the pulpit, you must steadfastly speak about Dīn and you will eventually be able to hit the target and what you say will settle in the hearts.” This advice of my honourable father proved to be such an antidote to save me from despondency that I never felt weak, despondent, tired nor defeated. All praise is due to Allāh *ta‘ālā*.

During my childhood, I enjoyed the special kindness of my maktab teachers. Then during my student days in the Dār al-‘Ulūm, Allāh *ta‘ālā* blessed me with acceptance in delivering talks in the student assemblies. Here too, my teachers were most kind to me. They used to take me for lectures and also send me to different places. When I completed my fourth year, I was sent to America to spend the month of Ramaḍān. Subsequently, I was invited every Ramaḍān to some place or the other. The special du‘ā’s of my honourable father were largely influential in this. On one occasion when it was the month of Sha‘bān, I said to him: “I have received

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invitations from four places to spend the month of Ramadān. What should I do?” My honourable father burst out crying. I said to him: “I am only asking for your advice; I have no yearning to go. If you find my separation from you difficult to bear, then please tell me. I prefer remaining with you than going to some new country.” My honourable father said: “Dear son! I am crying out of joy. Everyday after the tahajjud ṣalāh, I go into prostration and beg to Allāh *ta’ālā*: ‘O Allāh! Embellish my son with knowledge and practice; and make him such that people from all over the world call him to convey Your words to them.’ I am crying over this bounty which Allāh *ta’ālā* blessed me with, and for having accepted the du’ā’ of a sinner like me so quickly.”

Lecture tours conveyed me to many countries, and I had the opportunity of going to some countries several times. There were also some countries where Allāh *ta’ālā* blessed me with the good fortune of being the first person from among the graduates of Britain to go to.

Leicester is now my permanent place of residence. The responsibility of imāmat of Masjid an-Nūr was placed on my shoulders. I have been delivering talks before the jumu’ah ṣalāh, the auspicious nights, lectures in the month of Ramadān, and Qur’ān and Hadīth lessons. These programmes were gradually transferred to Islamic Da’wah Academy. Journeys to various countries continued. In the meantime, Allāh *ta’ālā* placed the love for this sinful servant and his lectures in the heart of a person by the name of Sābir Patel. He began recording everything that I said. Then some of my other associates took this work further. Since 1994 to this day, they preserved all my lectures, Qur’ān and Hadīth lessons, and

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assemblies in the Urdu and English languages, on cassettes and compact discs. Allāh *ta'ālā* then instilled more enthusiasm in some brothers who began transcribing these recordings. We received the support of our seniors. In fact, some of them ordered us to do all this. After much encouragement and repeated reminders from many sincere 'ulamā' and pious people, this first volume was prepared. It is solely Allāh's kindness and generosity, because when I examine myself, I am overcome by shame and embarrassment. I feel as though this is a dream, and that the reality will dawn upon me when I open my eyes. May Allāh *ta'ālā* save me from disgrace on the day of Resurrection. Āmīn.

What is the reality of these lectures? It is the practice of this sinful servant to extend his begging bowl at the doors of the 'ulamā' and righteous servants. I then collect in my bowl whatever I receive from them. When I get an opportunity to be with my friends, I sit on the pulpit and try to present to them whatever I collected in that bowl. Whatever aspects of this collection the reader finds to be beneficial must be considered to be the grace of my most generous Allāh; the fruits of the efforts and attention of my parents, teachers and mentors; and whatever I received by begging from the 'ulamā' and righteous people. As for those sections of this collection which the reader finds to be of no benefit, the reason for it is the academic and practical weakness of this sinful servant.

Talks can be converted into words by referring to the recordings. In order to turn the spoken word into a written one, there is a need to make some additions and to leave out certain things. Certain points have to be brought forward while others have

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to be delegated to the back. I, together with my associates, tried as much as we could to ensure that every point is correct and authentic. Despite this, man is bound to commit errors, and I am deficient in every respect. In fact, I am the most deficient. Therefore, if you [the reader] come across any mistake then kindly do me the favour of informing me.

When deciding on a title for this collection, my friends offered many suggestions. We finally agreed on the title *Mawā'iz-e-Hasanah* (sound admonitions) so that we could draw the blessings of the following verse of the Qur'ān:

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ

Call to the path of your Sustainer with wisdom and sound admonition.¹

Furthermore, the collection of lectures of my shaykh is titled *Islāhī Mawā'iz*. The title *Mawā'iz-e-Hasanah* is – to a certain extent – similar to *Islāhī Mawā'iz*. In this way, some blessings will be obtained from it. Also, the word *mau'izat* (singular of *mawā'iz*) refers to a good word which is expressed in a manner which causes the addressee's heart to soften in order to accept what he heard, to remove heedlessness which is in his heart, to create a concern for the Hereafter in it, and for it to submit before Allāh *ta'ālā*. The word *hasanah* makes reference to the fact that the talk must be such that the addressee accepts it with an open and joyful heart; and he is not offended in any way. In fact, he must feel that the one addressing him desires

¹ Sūrah an-Naḥl, 16: 125.

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nothing but his wellbeing; and that he has no selfish or ulterior motives. Although my talks are devoid of these qualities, it is not far-fetched of Allāh's mercy to embellish them with these qualities through the blessings of this title; and that it becomes a means for all-encompassing guidance.

The sole objective of this effort is for the reader to be blessed with concern for the Hereafter. The zeal to act and practice must be revived in his heart, and he must get attached to Allāh *ta'ālā*. If this objective is realized, then this effort has been successful. This is the only du'ā' I can make for it:

O my Creator and Master! If You will,
you can turn drops into oceans, and
orphans into Prophets.

O Allāh! You can take that amount of work from a single drop of water which an ocean cannot do. You can give expansion to a single grain of sand which an entire desert cannot achieve. You can enable a single flower to engulf an entire orchard with its fragrance.

It is solely Your mercy that You enabled me to speak, and then provided the means for those spoken words to be penned. I beg You to overlook the slip ups of my tongue and pen. Create within the writers and readers of these lectures the yearning for knowledge and practice, and then fill their lives with striving and asceticism. Take from me that amount of work from this short life which I am supposed to be doing, and keep me away from those works which I am not supposed to be doing. Enable me to make up for those portions of my life which were wasted. O my Allāh! This is the sole wish of my heart. And You know fully well the wishes of the heart. O my Master! Fulfil this wish of

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my heart. O my Master! Accept this collection solely for Your pleasure. Make it beneficial to the readers. Make it a means of success in both worlds for the speaker and all those who helped him. Āmīn.

Muḥammad Salīm Dhorāt

28 Jumādā al-Ukhrā 1440 A.H./6 March 2019

Evaluation (1)

**Hadrat Maulānā Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib
Allāhābādī
*Dāmat barakātuhum***

This collection – *Mawā'iz-e-Hasanah* – was sent to Hadrat Maulānā Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib *dāmat barakātuhum* at a time when he was at the Haramayn Sharīfayn. It was sent with the intention that Hadrat will have a look at it while he is in the holy lands and we may receive Hadrat's du'ā's. In this way, it will become a means for guidance and blessings to be more all-encompassing. Maulānā Sājid Irshād Sāhib presented this collection to Hadrat in Makkah Mukarramah who then had a look at it and expressed his approval. It remained with Hadrat who then sat with Maulānā Sājid Irshād Sāhib in Masjid-e-Nabawī, noted his evaluation and sent it with him. After he left Madīnah Munawwarah, he wrote another letter on the same date and sent it with Maulānā Abū Bakr Ma'mūn Sāhib. The two letters which were written by Hadrat in the blessed lands are included in this collection. May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward Hadrat for his affection and bless him with long life together with his special and general blessings on the Muslim ummat. Āmīn.

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First letter

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

Honourable Maulānā Salīm Dhorāt Sāhib zīda
majduhum

As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh
Māshā Allāh, I received the *Mawā‘iz*. It is exceptionally beneficial. I will be very pleased when it is printed. Inshā Allāh, your *Mawā‘iz* will prove to be beneficial to the ummat. I make an earnest du‘ā’ for its acceptance and benefit.

Was salām

Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī

28 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1434 A.H.

Masjid-e-Nabawī, Madīnah Munawwarah

Second letter

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

Honourable Maulānā Muhammad Salīm Dhorāt
Sāhib

As-salāmu ‘alaykum wa rahmatullāhi wa barakātuh

I went through the booklets. Māshā Allāh, every lecture contains important themes which ought to be studied. They are of benefit to every person. I am of the opinion that everyone – the learned and the laymen – should read them and derive benefit from them. I make an earnest du‘ā’ that Allāh *ta‘ālā* causes your teachings to be even more beneficial. May He bless you with good health and wellbeing so that this programme of teaching and training may

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continue. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh
ta'ālā.

Was salām

Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī

28 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1434 A.H.

Madīnah Munawwarah

Evaluation (2)

Hadrat Maulānā ‘Abdullāh Sāhib Kāpaudrawī
Rahimahullāh

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى أَشْرَفِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ
وَالْمُرْسَلِينَ، سَيِّدِنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ وَأَتْبَاعِهِ إِلَى يَوْمِ
الدِّينِ، أَمَّا بَعْدُ:

Allāh *ta‘ālā* sent Messengers from Hadrat Adam *‘alayhis salām* coming down to Sayyidunā Muhammad Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* for the guidance of His servants. Revelation ended with Hadrat Muhammad Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, so the responsibility of guiding and steering mankind fell on the shoulders of his ummat. Allāh *ta‘ālā* says in this regard:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ

*You are the best of all nations which has been sent into the world - you enjoin good and forbid evil.*¹

Consequently, Allāh *ta‘ālā* prepared groups of reformers in every era, every level of society and in every nation. These reformers conveyed the message of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* to

¹ Sūrah Āl ‘Imrān, 3: 110.

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mankind. In various countries the ‘ulamā’ have been fulfilling the responsibilities of the Prophets through teaching, propagating and writing. All praise is due to Allāh *ta’ālā*.

Due to a wisdom known to Allāh *ta’ālā* alone, He provided the means for large numbers of Muslims to settle down in European countries. At the same time, He provided the means for the guidance of the Muslims and other citizens living there. ‘Ulamā’ who have been blessed with far-sightedness established a strong system of madāris in those countries. The graduates of those madāris upheld the heritage of their pious predecessors by calling towards Islam with sincerity and many sacrifices.

The Muslims of Britain established an excellent system of makātib and madāris in their country. Jāmi’ah Riyād al-‘Ulūm, Leicester holds a distinguished position in this regard. Through his Allāh-bestowed capabilities, its founder and principal, Hadrat Maulānā Shaykh Muḥammad Salīm Dhorāt Sāhib, has been able to align the youth to Dīnī works and is conveying the message of Islam to them. Young boys and girls in their thousands join the propagational programmes of Hadrat Maulānā, and reform their lives through his pleasant talks. The Maulānā’s lectures are delivered in a simple language which can be understood by all. There was a need to transcribe and print these valuable chapters so that they could reach people in distant lands and places.

All praise is due to Allāh *ta’ālā*, a collection of ten lectures has been prepared. These were delivered over different periods of time on various topics. The ‘ulamā’ expressed their approval. The importance of these lectures can be gauged from their topics:

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1. A simple prescription for Allāh’s love.
2. Muḥammad *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* – a great bounty.
3. The Qur’ān – a magnificent miracle.
4. Valuing and appreciating time.
5. Good character and good conduct.
6. Life-saving actions.
7. Genuine gratitude.
8. Love for your brother what you love for yourself.
9. The reason for earthquakes.
10. Final moments of the righteous servants.

While these lectures are beneficial to students, they are of use to Muslims in general as well. May Allāh *ta’ālā* honour the zeal and enthusiasm of Ḥaḍrat Maulānā with acceptance, and may He confer him with the best of rewards in both worlds. May Allāh *ta’ālā* inspire him to render even more services to His Dīn. Āmīn.

‘Abdullāh Kāpaudrawī
12 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1434 A.H.
25 March 2013.

Evaluation (3)

**Hadrat Maulānā Marghūb Ahmad Sāhib
Lāchpaurī
*Dāmat barakātuhum***

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The present era of tribulations has created new tests and tribulations in every department of life. In addition to worldly departments, even the departments of Dīn are becoming spiritless and lifeless. Those special forts of Islam – the denial of which is synonymous to denying facts and realities – namely the madāris, makātib, khānqāhs and the unique work of da'wat and tablīgh have left such effects on the Indian subcontinent, Europe, Africa and other continents of this world that have compelled not only our people but outsiders to acknowledge and accept their contributions. However, despite the external and superficial grandeur of these departments, our incompetence has rendered these great departments hollow, and the very same departments of preserving and propagating Dīn have succumbed to tribulations.

Not withstanding this, we find exceptions in everything. Thus, even in the Dīnī departments, there are such institutions and individuals who are continuing their efforts from various angles. All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*, the lamps of Dīn are burning through their untainted and selfless efforts.

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Hadrat Maulānā Salīm Dhorāt Sāhib is from among those fortunate individuals who, while living in a materialistic and modern country like Britain and having acquired modern education, is applying the old principles, following in the footsteps of the pious predecessors, and bearing the accusations of retrogression. He established a solid fort for the Dīn of Islam in the name of the Islamic Da'wah Academy in Leicester. This fort has conditioned the minds of little children by teaching them to read and memorize the Qur'ān, and embellishing them with the fundamental teachings of Islam through a syllabus comprising of Islamic literature.

One department of his maktab comprises of Arabic classes. The purpose of these classes is to attract students who are in a college and university environment and to enable them to combine worldly and Dīnī knowledge so that after completing their higher studies, they do not confine their knowledge to being a means for earning a livelihood but to make it a means for spreading Dīn as well. Furthermore, it is an effort to prevent secular knowledge from causing them to drown in the ocean of academic and practical apostasy. Instead, they must become manifestations of the following couplets:

By all means, you may succeed in the colleges and bloom in the parks. You may fly in the dust and swing in the skies. However, remember just one plea of this incapable servant: Do not forget Allāh and do not forget your reality.

Another department of this fort is a full time dār al-'ulūm in which a student takes admission to study the Qur'ān, Hadīth and jurisprudence; and then

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qualifies as an ‘ālim and Maulānā. All praise is due to Allāh *ta’ālā*, a considerable number of students have graduated from this dār al-‘ulūm and are rendering sterling services to Dīn within the country and abroad.

I have no hesitation in saying that due to the excellent administrative and rectificational skills of Hadrat Maulānā Salīm Dhorāt Sāhib, the graduates possess excellent qualities. In addition to focusing on the external sciences, Hadrat Maulānā created outstanding spiritual acumen in the students. I noticed that the graduates are regular in fulfilling spiritual practices, they have good manners, they are humble, and they have a concern for Dīn. O Allāh! Increase them in these qualities.

This fort also has a department for the purification and cultivation of the self – also known as a khānqāh. The fact of the matter is that this department of Dīn has retrogressed to such a level that pages upon pages are needed to demonstrate this. First of all, the khānqāhs of Gangoh, Thānah Bhawan, Sahāranpūr, Deoband, and Jalālābād have virtually closed down. Where some splendour still remains is confined to the month of Ramaḍān. If only every country had khānqāhs which operated throughout the year where the great objective of purification of the self could be realized.

By the grace of Allāh *ta’ālā*, Hadrat Maulānā initiated the majestic khānqāh system in his fort. Allāh *ta’ālā* caused it to progress to the extent that a group of ‘ulamā’ were seen expressing envious admiration. Māshā Allāh, in addition to the laymen, large numbers of ‘ulamā’ are aligned to this khānqāh. Young ‘ulamā’ are deriving special benefit from it. In the month of Ramaḍān this centre

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reminds us of the khānqāhs of our elders. May Allāh *ta'ālā* make the khānqāh effort of Hadrāt Maulānā an excellent centre for locals and foreigners who are seeking spiritual purification.

The scholars are fully aware of the role played by the media of today. Hadrāt Maulānā is not unmindful of this important area. He initiated a monthly periodical in the English language which he named *Riyād al-Jannah*. All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*, this rectificational newsletter enjoys immense popularity.

From among all of Hadrāt's services, his training and tutoring of the youth in Britain's materialistic, futuristic and atheistic environment has proved to be a most effect panacea. A few lines on this service will not do justice to the subject.

Another important department of this fort is the programme of assemblies of lectures and admonition. One day in the month is set aside for the people of Britain at large, and two days in the week for the people of Leicester and surrounding areas are devoted to rectificational programmes in the name of Qur'ān and Hadīth lessons. In addition to the many capabilities which Allāh *ta'ālā* conferred on Hadrāt Maulānā, He blessed him with unique oratory skills. He is able to speak frankly, effectively and forcefully in simple language which is not merely conveyed to the audience, but made to settle in their hearts and minds; which then prompts them towards action.

I feel it necessary to point out that delivering lectures has become a livelihood today. A large section of the ummat is presently focussed on rendering this Dīnī service solely for an income. It is so sad to see some lecturers demanding

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astronomical sums of money to deliver a talk. In addition to tickets and visas, you see them displeased with gifts to the value of thousands. This is no hearsay; it is based on experience and true facts.

If a teacher is (unqualified and materialistic) and the lawmaker is the same, then farewell to the path of Dīn and piety in Dīn.

Hadrat Maulānā is certainly not a money-orientated orator. Instead, like our seniors, Allāh *ta'ālā* blessed him with a concerned heart which is troubled by the conditions of the ummat. This is why his lectures are not mere talks; they are golden chapters for the reformation of society.

Those who are desirous of wealth and status cannot speak the truth. They will have to resort to flattery, adulation, and praising of the wealthy. Hadrat Maulānā is brave in speaking the truth, he abstains from every type of flattery while exercising his right to censure every level of society. He ensures that the committees of masājid and madāris, and those holding various positions of trust fulfil their trusts and promises. While honouring them within the limits of the Sharī'at, he expresses the truth without any fear or hesitation.

You can never be accused of ulterior motives. In your hand of reliance are the swords of independence.

As for those who criticize him and look at him with disapproval, the following Persian couplet is enough for them:

Is it the fault of the sun if the eyes of a bat cannot see the light of the sun?

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I repeatedly requested Hadrat Maulānā that since you cannot write (not because he does not have the capabilities but because of his many engagements), you should at least pay special attention to compiling and publishing your lectures. All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*, his lectures which are filled with valuable, beneficial and academic themes are now being published. Many of them have already been published and received with admiration by all sections of the community.

It was also my wish and request to Hadrat Maulānā to collate those short booklets into large volumes so that they will be a better means for their preservation.

One collection titled *Da'wat-e-'Ilm Wa 'Amal* has already been published. Another collection titled *Mawā'iz-e-Hasanah* is presently in the process of publication. Hadrat's sincere and devoted attendant and beloved student, Maulānā Ahmad Sāhib, asked me on several occasions to write something about these lectures. These few pages have been written in fulfilment of his order. May Allāh *ta'ālā* bless these lectures with acceptance, and make them a means of salvation for Hadrat Maulānā and those who compiled them. Āmīn.

Marghūb Ahmad Lāchpaurī

Thursday, 3 Jumādā al-Ūlā 1440 A.H./10 January
2019

A Simple Prescription For Allāh's Love

Date: Ramadān 1425 A.H./November 2004

Venue: Masjid an-Nūr, Leicester, U.K.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَكَفَى، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الرُّسُلِ وَخَاتِمِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ،
وَعَلَى آلِهِ الْأَصْفِيَاءِ، وَأَصْحَابِهِ الْأَتْقِيَاءِ. أَمَّا بَعْدُ: فَأَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ
الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ، بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ: ﴿وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا
تُحْصَوْنَهَا﴾. صَدَقَ اللَّهُ مَوْلَانَا الْعَظِيمُ، وَصَدَقَ رَسُولُهُ النَّبِيُّ الْأُمِّيُّ
الْكَرِيمُ، وَنَحْنُ عَلَى ذَلِكَ لَمِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ وَالشَّاكِرِينَ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ
الْعَالَمِينَ.

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي، وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي، وَاحْلُلْ عُقْدَةً مِنْ لِسَانِي
يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي، سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ
الْحَكِيمُ. اللَّهُمَّ انْفَعْنَا بِمَا عَلَّمْتَنَا وَعَلِّمْنَا مَا يَنْفَعُنَا. إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ
يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ، يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا،
اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ
وَأَتْبَاعِهِ وَأَزْوَاجِهِ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِ.

Allāh's countless favours

Allāh *ta'ālā* has conferred countless favours to us. Even if we were to spend our entire lives in trying to understand and count those favours, we will not be able to do it. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا تَحْصُوهَا

Were you to count the favours of Allāh, you will not be able to encompass them.¹

Allāh's favours are countless and eternal. They are so many that if all humans were to get together to count them, they would get tired and give up. There are many favours such as eyes, ears, a tongue, sustenance, children, etc. which we are aware of. They too are countless. However, those which we cannot perceive through outward thinking and pondering are much more. There are certain favours of Allāh *ta'ālā* which we do not perceive even after living our entire lives in this world.

A saint began suffering from urine incontinence in his old age. A person came to visit him and asked: “Had^{ra}t! How are you feeling?” He replied: “This is the punishment for sinning.”

A special feature of saints

Matters related to the saints are unique. They take stock of their selves in every matter. They search for their faults and make efforts to rectify them. On the other hand, we commit sins by day and night – without lagging in the least – but when we are caught up in a tribulation, then instead of taking stock of our selves and repenting over our sins, we focus on our few and defective good deeds. We make outlandish statements such as: “I perform my salāhs, keep fasts, and read the Qur'ān. Despite this, Allāh *ta'ālā* is treating me in this way!?” We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā* from such statements.

¹ Sūrah Ibrāhīm, 14: 34.

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The condition of the saints is the exact opposite. Despite their many good actions, they focus of their faults and shortcomings. They are icons of humility and submission.

Small in one's own eyes but big in the sight of Allāh

Now listen to the story of another saint! Hadrat Abū 'Uthmān Hiyarī *rahimahullāh* was going to some place. Someone threw out the filth and rubbish from the window of his upper-storey building. This act is obviously unbecoming in an Islamic society. It is against the teachings of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* because it causes harm and discomfort to others. And it is not permissible to discomfort or inconvenience anyone. Some immature people who are unaware of these teachings of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* commit offences of this nature.

Hadrat was passing that way and the filth fell on him. He fell into prostration immediately and thanked Allāh *ta'ālā*. He said nothing to the one who threw the garbage from above. Someone asked him: "Why did you not reprimand the person?" He gave a unique reply. My dear friends! We are in this blessed month of Ramaḍān. Beg to Allāh *ta'ālā* by saying: "O Allāh! Make our internal condition like this." The saint replied: "It is solely due to Allāh's kindness and affection that He sufficed with this [garbage being thrown on me]. Were it not for His kindness, I was more deserving of having fire from the heavens thrown down at me."¹ Despite being a senior saint of his time, he focussed on his faults.

¹ *Ihyā' 'Ulūm ad-Dīn*, vol. 5, p. 249.

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My dear friends! The one who considers himself to be insignificant is in fact great in the sight of Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Develop concern for the Hereafter

When a person develops concern for the Hereafter, he always focuses on his life to check if he has any defect or shortcoming due to which he would be taken to task at the time of death, in his grave, or in the Hereafter. As for those who are unmindful of the Hereafter, their 24-hour occupation is to look at the faults of others.

When we did not know about our own condition, we continued looking at the faults and perfections of others.

When a person focuses on looking at his own faults, he has no time to look at the faults of others. When Allāh *ta'ālā* showers His grace on a person and enables him to worry about his own faults, he will not look around searching for the faults of others. He will constantly think to himself that there is no one worse than him in this world.

When we did not know about our own condition, we continued looking at the faults and perfections of others. No sooner our gaze fell on our own evils, we realized that there is no one worse than us in this world.

A patient in a hospital does not spend his time looking at the pains and complaints of the other patients. He is concerned about his own illness. He will not show concern for the major pains and discomforts of other patients as he would over his smallest discomforts.

An admonitory incident of a woman

Hadrat Muftī Muḥammad Taqī ‘Uthmānī Sāhib *dāmat barakātuhum* relates the story of a woman from his family. She began suffering from a stomach ailment which caused her discomfort. Hadrat Muftī Sāhib took her to a doctor in a hospital. When they were going up in a lift, they came across a woman sitting in a wheelchair. The poor woman’s skin was burnt and she was in pain. Muftī Sāhib relates: “The thought came to my mind that I should say to my relative that this woman in the wheelchair is in more pain than her. I thought of saying this to her so that she may feel her own ailment to be less serious. So I said to her: ‘Look at how much misery this woman is in! Look at how serious her condition is!’ My relative cast one glance at the woman and said: ‘Yes, she is certainly in pain but at least she does not have a stomach pain.’”¹

My dear friends! When a person is worried about treating his own illness, it causes him to be unconcerned about the illness of others. He is worried about his cure all the time. In the same way, if we develop a concern for the Hereafter and we become conscious of the consequences of our ailments such as jealousy, malice, hatred, miserliness, backbiting, worshipping of the carnal self, love for name and fame, love for wealth, etc. we will not even look at the worst of sinners.

The greatest kashf

My dear brothers! We have to understand one point: The person who shuts his eyes from the faults of

¹ *Islāhī Khuṭbāt*, vol. 7, p. 59.

others and focuses on his own faults will be successful in this world and in the Hereafter. The person who is unmindful of his own faults and constantly looks at the faults of others will be disgraced and be a failure in both worlds. Our Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to say: “The greatest *kashf* (exposition) is when a person is able to look at his own faults.”¹

The story of a saint

I was relating to you the story of a saint who was suffering from urine incontinence and someone came to visit him. When the latter asked him how he was feeling, he replied: “This is a punishment for my sins.” The visitor said to him: “You are a man of Allāh *ta’ālā*. Even if you did commit a slip up, you would have repented immediately. What, then, is the meaning of being punished for your sins?” The saint replied: “I am referring to the sin of ingratitude. It is obligatory to express gratitude for every bounty and favour of Allāh *ta’ālā*, and I have been lagging in this regard.” The visitor said: “Hadrat! You and ingratitude! That cannot be. The worst of ungrateful people come to you and learn how to be grateful from you.” The saint replied: “For many years I had been able to pass urine without any difficulty, but it never occurred to me that this is also a bounty of Allāh *ta’ālā*. If I did not even think of it as a bounty, how can there be the question of expressing gratitude!? I have obviously been ungrateful for this bounty. The incontinence

¹ *Islāh Kī Sau Bāthei*, p. 7.

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which I am suffering from now is a punishment for my ingratitude.”¹

My dear friends! Just as finding a few drops of water to quench our thirst is a very great bounty, in the same way, the discharge of harmful particles from the body in the form of urine is a very great bounty.

A strange incident

A saint went to the Caliph Hārūn Rashīd on one occasion. Hārūn Rashīd asked for water. When water was brought to him, the saint said: “If you did not receive the water and your condition is deteriorating out of thirst, and a person comes to you with a glass of water and is prepared to give it to you in exchange for half your kingdom, what will you do?” Hārūn Rashīd replied: “I will buy that water [in exchange for half my kingdom].” The saint said: “You have drunk the water and after some time you came to know that you are unable to pass urine, and that every effort has proved to be unsuccessful. A doctor says to you: ‘I have a tried and tested cure for it, but you will have to give me half your kingdom in return.’ What will you do?” Hārūn Rashīd replied: “I will give the remaining half of my kingdom.” The saint said: “This is the value of your kingdom – one glass of water which you enter into your body and then release it. Thus, it is not something to compete or exult over.”²

¹ *Khutbāt Maḥmūd*, vol. 4, p. 147.

² *Al-Kāmil fī at-Tārikh*, vol. 5, p. 358.

The best nation

The crux of what I want to say is that Allāh's bounties and favours are countless.

وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا تَحْصُوهَا

Were you to count the favour of Allāh, you will not be able to encompass them.¹

Allāh *ta'ālā* created us humans, and not animals. As humans too, He did not make us lunatics and foolish; He made us intelligent. He did not make us cripple, He made us sound and mobile. He did not make us blind, He gave us eyesight. He did not deprive us of *īmān*; He made us Muslims. Allāhu Akbar! Just this one bounty is so valuable. Then after making us Muslims, He included us in the ummat of Muḥammad *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* which is the best of nations.

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ

You are the best of all nations which has been sent into the world.²

Why should your ummat not be referred to as the best of nations when you [Muḥammad *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*] are the best of humans, the best of Messengers, the best of the creation!

The ummat of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* has been given the title of “best of nations”

¹ Sūrah Ibrāhīm, 14: 34.

² Sūrah Āl 'Imrān, 3: 110.

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because he is the highest, most superior and the greatest of all creation. It is by virtue of this superiority that the ummat of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam will be the first from all nations to receive admission into Paradise. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

إِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ حُرِّمَتْ عَلَى الْأَنْبِيَاءِ كُلِّهِمْ حَتَّىٰ أَدْخُلَهَا، وَحُرِّمَتْ عَلَى الْأُمَّمِ
حَتَّىٰ تَدْخُلَهَا أُمَّنِي^١.

Paradise is forbidden to all the Prophets until I enter it. It is forbidden to all the nations until my ummat enters it.

We ought to drown in gratitude

My dear brothers! We have to constantly think about Allāh's favours and be grateful to Him for them. His favours are so many that we ought to drown in gratitude. My Hājī Sāhib rahimahullāh wrote in a letter to me: "We ought to drown in gratitude." What he meant is that Allāh's favours are so countless that we are drowning in them. This is why we ought to drown in gratitude as well. He wrote in another letter: "The gratitude of a defective creation [human] is also defective. How can we ever express gratitude in line with the grand status of Allāh *ta'ālā*? Since our gratitude is defective, we ought to seek forgiveness. O Allāh! Pardon me because I could not be grateful to You as I ought to be." These are the words of the saints who were blessed with Allāh's recognition and a bond with

¹ كنز العمال: ح ٣١٩٥٣.

Him. They had a correct understanding of Dīn because of this.

We are desirous of Your generosity

My dear brothers! Ponder over the favours of Allāh *ta'ālā*. Today we completed the Qur'an in the *tarāwīḥ* ṣalāh. Allāh *ta'ālā* enabled us to engage in *du'ā'*, seek forgiveness, repent, and cry. These are also the favours of Allāh *ta'ālā*. Take the case of a person who is remorseful, makes a firm resolution not to sin in the future, and then raises his hands submissively in Allāh's court and says: "O Allāh! Pardon me my sins." Allāh *ta'ālā* pardons him all his past sins. It is our hope that Allāh *ta'ālā* pardoned all of us. What a great favour! Allāhu Akbar!

Allāh *ta'ālā* enabled us to do the same thing last year. However, the moment the month of Ramaḍān ended, we began disobeying Allāh *ta'ālā*. Our eyes, ears, tongue and heart were occupied in sin throughout the year. Despite this, Allāh *ta'ālā* blessed us with the month of Ramaḍān again. He enabled us to worship Him, perform *tarāwīḥ*, complete the recitation of the Qur'an, engage in *du'ā'*, seek forgiveness, and repent. Allāhu Akbar! What a kind and affectionate Master He is! After the kindness of last year, our lives were soiled by sins. Despite this, He gave us this opportunity again.

We are inclined (towards giving) with generosity but here is no one to ask. Who should we show the path to when there is no one prepared to tread the path?

O most generous one! Is there anything which we did not receive from Your

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generosity? [We certainly received everything]. The fact of the matter is that my bag is small, while there is no shortage in Your treasures.

Our condition

My dear brothers! Despite these favours, our relationship with Allāh *ta'ālā* is not clean and clear. Even in these blessed months we are immersed in disobedience and evil. It is this distancing ourselves from Dīn which has withheld the help of Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Create an environment of Badr, and the angels can still come down to help you in groups upon groups.

If a person develops the īmān of Hadhrat Ibrāhīm *'alayhis salām* even today, the fire can be turned into a garden.

If non-Muslims try to wipe out Islam, there is nothing to be astonished about. What is really astonishing is when Muslims themselves wipe out the teachings of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu *'alayhi wa sallam*. We are wiping out Allāh's Dīn by abandoning salāh, disregarding the ways of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu *'alayhi wa sallam*, disobeying Allāh *ta'ālā*, and committing sins. This is what we have to be really astonished at. This is what we ought to feel sorry about. On the day of Resurrection, Islam will hold us by our collars and petition against us in front of Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Non-Muslims are nevertheless outsiders. If they voice their opposition to Islam and Muslims, then it is nothing to be surprised. Astonishment ought to be at us – Muslims – who are disobeying Allāh

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ta'ālā. We are immersed in temptations, evils and acts of disobedience. We are pained when we see our own Muslims in comfort, peace, honour, material progress, worldly progress and Dini progress. We cannot tolerate to see our own Muslims successful. Evil qualities and traits of this nature will harm no one but our own selves in this world and in the Hereafter. Our worldly life will be spent in turmoil and we will have to suffer the punishment of the Hereafter.

Become united and pious

My dear brothers! We ought to repent from all sins and strive to live a pure life. We must have love for each other in our hearts. There must be an atmosphere of mutual concern and desiring the wellbeing of each other. Become united and pious, then see whether Allāh's help comes or not. Be concerned about your reformation and rectification. Make your external self in line with Allāh's pleasure, and your internal self in line with Allāh's pleasure.

Make your external and internal selves like that of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. Make your appearance like that of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. Can there be any appearance better than that of Rasūlullāh's? His was the face which was most beloved to Allāh *ta'ālā*. Therefore imitate Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* externally and internally. This is the meaning of:

فَاتَّبِعُونِي

Then follow me.

That is, make your external self like his, and rectify your internal character and make it like his. The

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internal self must be pure from filthy traits such as jealousy, malice, stinginess, hatred, pride, love for wealth, worship of desires, love for name and fame, etc. It must be embellished with love, concern, fellow-feeling, patience, gratitude, generosity and other similar qualities. May Allāh *ta'ālā* inspire us and may He rectify our hearts. Āmīn.

I am saying to you again that no one can encompass Allāh's favours. If He has showered us with so many bounties, should we not live our lives in accordance with His pleasure? Make a firm pledge right now that you will abstain from all sins and live your life according to the pleasure of Allāh *ta'ālā*. And then make full efforts in this regard. True gratitude entails spending one's life in Allāh's obedience, and remaining pure from every act of disobedience.

An easy and beneficial action

Let me show you a very easy but beneficial action in this regard. If Allāh *ta'ālā* wills, it will be extremely beneficial, and you will start to feel a difference in your life. The action is this: Make it a habit to think about Allāh's favours. This is a short and easy action. The trader, teacher, student, old, young, healthy, sick, men, women – everyone – can carry it out easily. Set aside a time for this everyday. Inshā Allāh, this action will become a means for wilāyat (close friendship with Allāh *ta'ālā*). If you cannot spend a lot of time, start with just three minutes. For example, think about the bounty of the eyes and say to yourself in your heart: "O Allāh! You blessed me with eyes. Had You not given these eyes to me, I would not have been able to read the Qur'ān. I would not have been able to see my children. I would not have been able to see my parents. I don't know how many slip ups I would have committed.

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This is such a great favour of Yours. O Allāh! All praises and all thanks are due to You alone.”

Make it a point of setting aside a time daily and think about different favours of Allāh *ta'ālā*. In this way, you will gradually develop a love for Allāh *ta'ālā*. By doing this, your love for Him will increase. Once your heart brims with Allāh's love, you will find no difficulty whatsoever in carrying out any of His orders.

Conversing with Allāh

Together with the above, make it a habit to talk to Allāh *ta'ālā* 24 hours. An effort must be made to remain connected with Allāh *ta'ālā* at every moment. A very easy way of doing this is to make *du'ā'* to Allāh *ta'ālā* before commencing any task. For example, you are going to get up from here and go to your house. Say to Allāh *ta'ālā*: “O Allāh! Convey me safely to my house.” After leaving the masjid and sitting in your car, make *du'ā'* again: “O Allāh! Convey me safely to my house.” As you enter your house, say: “O Allāh! Enable me to meet my family in a condition that they are enjoying Dīnī and worldly wellbeing.” If you have to go to a doctor, say: “O Allāh! Guide the doctor to make a correct diagnosis and to prescribe the best treatment.”

In short, speak to Allāh *ta'ālā* before carrying out any task – whether big or small – and beg Him for success in it. You may find this difficult to do in the beginning, but once you habituate yourself to it, you will become conscious of Allāh *ta'ālā* for 24 hours, and you will remember Him. If you are conscious of Allāh *ta'ālā* at every moment, how will you be able to disobey Him?

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These are the things which we have to do. Brothers! Will you do them? (They all said, “Inshā Allāh”). Brothers! Will you do them? (They all said, “Inshā Allāh”). My dear brothers! Do all these things so that you develop a bond with the most affectionate Allāh. You then have to continue doing them so that the bond continues and increases.

Abstain from disobedience

I will conclude my talk by first emphasising the need to abstain from sinning. My dear brothers! Save yourselves from disobeying Allāh *ta'ālā*. I say this time and again: Abstain totally from disobeying Allāh *ta'ālā*. Abstain from sin in every situation. Yesterday too I said to you that we are deceived by the word “sin” and we show no attention to it. Forget the word “sin” because it has become too light in our sight. Replace the word “sin” with “disobedience to Allāh *ta'ālā*” and embed it in your hearts. Then think to yourself: “Since I am a believer, how can I disobey Allāh *ta'ālā*? Allāhu Akbar! Disobedience to Allāh *ta'ālā*! Allāh forbid! How can this be possible? That kind and generous Allāh *ta'ālā* brought me from non-existence into existence; He blessed me with eyes, ears, a tongue, a heart, brains, and air to breath. How can I disobey Him? How sorrowful! How can I disobey the One who gave me everything?”

Do not stop trying

My dear brothers! Repent over past sins and make a firm resolution that you will not sin in the future. You may lose your life, but you will not sin. Make this firm resolution. If you unwittingly commit a sin after this, repent immediately. For example, you made a firm intention now that you will never

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commit a sin in the future. All praise is due to Allāh *ta'ālā*. You have now commenced abstaining from sins completely. However, one day you went to some place, you were affected by the atmosphere there, your carnal self had the better of you, and you committed an act of disobedience. You felt very sorry about it. You thought about your previous repentance and your firm resolution to abstain from sinning. Repent immediately, and make a firm intention again that you will not commit that sin. Do not wait for tomorrow to repent. This is what you have to do your entire life. There must be no programme for sins; there must be total abstention. If a sin is committed, repent immediately.

If you cannot overpower the wrestler of the self, it does not mean you must allow your limbs to be left soft and weak. After all, you have to wrestle it throughout your life. Sometimes it will overpower you, and sometimes you will have to overpower it.

Even if he fails throughout his life, a lover can never give up trying. Maintain this bond of love. If it breaks a hundred times, reconnect it a hundred times.

The effect of repentance

My dear brothers! Repent even if you have to do it 100 000 times. Never allow despair and despondency to come near you. Despondency is a powerful weapon of Shaytān. Allāh *ta'ālā* did not lay down any limit for repentance. He did not say: "I will accept it until such and such number of times, and not beyond that." If the doors of mercy of the kind and affectionate Allāh are open all the time, why

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should a servant feel despondent? Allāh *ta'ālā* has placed immense blessings in repentance. The person who repents constantly is – sooner or later – blessed with continuity on repentance.

Shayṭān creates despondency and whispers to a person: “You repented yesterday and it broke today. You broke your repentance countless times before this. You will repent today and break it tomorrow. What is the benefit in this?” In this way he keeps a person far from repentance and conveys him towards destruction. My dear brothers! There are great benefits in repentance. If the habit of repentance remains, then while there will be sinning on one hand, there will be repentance on the other. This will result in pardoning of sins.

التَّائِبُ مِنَ الذَّنْبِ كَمَنْ لَا ذَنْبَ لَهُ¹

The one who repents from a sin is like one who has no sin.

The sins of person who does not repent are not pardoned. This will obviously result in his spiritual ailment becoming worse, and will prove to be dangerous to his imān.

The other point to bear in mind is that every action has a certain effect. The effect of repentance is that if a person pays special attention to it, abhorrence for Allāh's disobedience settles in his heart. Shayṭān obviously does not want abhorrence for sin to settle in our hearts. This is why he creates a state of despondency and keeps us away from repentance.

¹سنن ابن ماجه، أبواب الزهد، باب ذكر التوبة، ح (٤٢٤٨).

Why should we lose hope?

I say to my young friends: Shayṭān also has to strive to engross us in sin. He works tirelessly to cause us to commit thousands of sins. Sometimes he works on a person for 50-60 years, and immerses him in disobedience. However, after this, Allāh's mercy turns towards the person, he repents sincerely, and all his past sins are forgiven. Ever since the existence of man in this world, there are hundreds and thousands of people who repented genuinely and laid to waste all the efforts of Shayṭān within a few seconds. Despite this, Shayṭān never gave up hope. He is still striving in his efforts. He knows fully well that if a person repents after the many years' of effort which he made on him, Allāh's mercy will turn to the person and all his [Shayṭān's] efforts will go to waste. Despite this, Shayṭān does not lose courage; he does not lose hope. My dear brothers! If Shayṭān never gives up hope despite the possibility of losing everything; in fact, despite having experienced defeat repeatedly, why should we give up hope when we are to achieve everything through repentance?

Shayṭān's deception

I was saying to you that we have to abstain from all sins. Resolve right now that you will not disobey Allāh *ta'ālā* at all, and that if you do, you will repent immediately. My dear brothers! We must not sin in the least. If we experience an urge to sin, then think that Allāh *ta'ālā* is to punish us severely. Inshā Allāh, if you do this, you will be protected from sin. And if a sin is committed, there is no need to lose hope. Think that Allāh *ta'ālā* is all-forgiving and

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most merciful. Lower yourself in His court immediately and repent.

Remember! In order to prompt us towards evil, Shayṭān makes us think that Allāh *ta'ālā* is most forgiving and most merciful. And when we commit a sin, he then creates despondency in us in order to keep us away from repentance. Then he does not even allow us to think about the mercy and forgiveness of Allāh *ta'ālā*. This is part of his plot and deception.

A believer does not intend to commit a sin

My dear brothers! Understand one point! No one apart from the Prophets *'alayhimus salām* is innocent. Every one commits some sin or the other. We too are not excluded from it. However, we must never intend to commit a sin. A believer does not intend a sin. He does not make a programme to disobey Allāh *ta'ālā*. Instead, he constantly resolves and strives not to disobey his Master. Thus, he has no intention of committing a sin, but Shayṭān and his carnal self deceive him into committing it. If it is committed, he must repent immediately. This is why a Hadīth says:

كُلُّ بَنِي آدَمَ خَطَّاءٌ، وَخَيْرُ الْخَطَّائِينَ التَّوَّابُونَ¹

Every human is prone to sinning, and the best of sinners are those who repent, turn to their Creator and Master, and make peace with Him.

¹ سنن ابن ماجه، أبواب الزهد، باب ذكر التوبة، ح (٤٢٨٥).

A beautiful example

Try to understand the above by the following example: When we wear clean clothes on the day of 'īd or on a Friday, we know with certainty that they will get dirty after one day or after a few days. Although we know this with certainty, can there be anyone so foolish as to make them dirty intentionally? If one mark falls on a garment, will anyone wittingly cause a few marks to fall on it? Certainly not. No one will do such a thing. Instead, he will take soap and water, and wash off the dirt. In the same way, after repenting, we have a reservation – and some times we are certain – that we will commit a sin. After all, we do not belong to that august group of Prophets *'alayhimus salām* [who are divinely protected from sin]. Also because a Hadith states:

كُلُّ بَنِي آدَمَ خَطَّاءٌ

Notwithstanding this certainty, we must not wittingly plan to commit a sin, nor contaminate the heart with sins. Instead, full efforts must be made to abstain. If a sin is committed through the deception of Shaytān and the carnal self, and the heart is contaminated by sin, we must not make it more dirty. Instead, wash it off and clean it immediately with the detergent of repentance and seeking forgiveness. My dear brothers! Will you abstain from sins? (Everyone answered in the affirmative and said: Inshā Allāh).

The joy of 'īd

My dear brothers! The day of 'īd is a day of happiness, but for whom? For those who safeguard themselves against sin, and when a sin is

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committed, they repent sincerely. There is happiness for such people in this world and in the Hereafter.

أُولَئِكَ جَزَاؤُهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَجَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا^ط وَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَمِلِينَ.

For them the reward is forgiveness from their Sustainer and gardens under which rivers flow. They will abide in them forever. What an excellent wage it is for those who labour!¹

Those who spend their lives in Allāh's disobedience, do not keep fast in Ramadān, come to the 'īd salāh with malice and jealousy in their hearts, then even the day of 'īd is not a day of joy for them.

How can there be 'īd for the one who was eating shamelessly during the day? How can there be 'īd for the one who was smoking cigarettes and drinking tea? How can there be 'īd for the one who meets you while having hatred and malice in his heart? What kind of 'īd is that when a person does not even meet you with a genuine heart on the day of 'īd?

Summary

The joy of 'īd is for the person who had been pleasing Allāh *ta'ālā* during the month of Ramadān, seeking His pardon, searching for His friendship, and making a promise that he will spend his entire life as a true servant of Allāh *ta'ālā*.

¹ Sūrah Āl 'Imrān, 3: 136.

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My dear brothers! Make every possible effort to bring into your lives all these points which we spoke about.

1. Make a habit of thinking about Allāh's favours. Set aside a time for this. Set aside at least three minutes daily for it.
2. Habituate yourself to speak to Allāh *ta'ālā* all the time.
3. Save yourself from Allāh's disobedience under every condition; even if it means losing your life.
4. If you commit an act of disobedience, repent immediately. If you cannot free yourself from a certain sin, and you are breaking your repentance repeatedly, then inform your shaykh and do as he directs you. You will gain proximity to Allāh *ta'ālā* through repentance, and you will gain eternal freedom from sinning.

O Allāh! I seek You alone!

Now make a firm resolution before getting up from here: "O Allāh! Make me Yours. This is the objective of my life from today." Cry before Allāh *ta'ālā* and say:

O Allāh! Different people ask for different things from You. O Allāh! You are the objective of my quest.

فَفِرُّوا إِلَى اللَّهِ

*Hasten towards Allāh.*¹

Run towards Allāh *ta'ālā* from His grasp. Humble yourself and beg Allāh for Allāh. The pious must beg of Him, and so must the sinner.

Shaytān's plot

Shaytān deceives a sinner into thinking: You are a sinner, Allāh *ta'ālā* will not listen to you.

My dear brothers! Allāh *ta'ālā* listens to everyone. He listens all the time, in every place, and to everyone. Everyone has a right to ask Him. He is near to everyone, and listens to everyone.

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ط أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ.

*When My servants ask you concerning Me, I am near. I accept the supplication of the supplicant when he supplicates to Me.*²

Look! Salāh is performed by the Auliyā' and by sinners as well. Everyone is ordered to beg in every rak'at:

إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

*Show us the straight path.*³

This shows that everyone has a right to ask. This is why everyone should turn to Allāh *ta'ālā* and beg of

¹ Sūrah adh-Dhāriyāt, 51: 50.

² Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 186.

³ Sūrah al-Fātiḥah, 1: 4.

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Him. My dear brothers! You yourself must make du'ā', and also request the saints, your parents and your friends and relatives to remember you in their du'ā's. May Allāh *ta'ālā* shower His mercy and affection on us, may He forgive us, may He fill us with effulgence and blessings, and may He include us among His close servants. Āmīn.

وَأَخِرُ دَعْوَانَا أَنْ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ

Muhammad ﷺ – A Great Bounty

Date: Safar 1427 A.H./March 2006

Venue: Masjid-e-Fārūq, U.K.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَكَفَى، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الرُّسُلِ وَخَاتَمِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ
وَعَلَى آلِهِ الْأَصْفِيَاءِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ الْأَتْقِيَاءِ، أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّى أَكُونَ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ وَالِدِهِ وَوَلَدِهِ
وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ¹.

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي، وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي، وَاحْلُلْ عُقْدَةً مِنْ لِسَانِي،
يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي. سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ
الْحَكِيمُ. اللَّهُمَّ انْفَعْنَا بِمَا عَلَّمْتَنَا وَعَلِّمْنَا مَا يَنْفَعُنَا.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ، يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ
وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا، اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى
آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ وَأَتْبَاعِهِ وَأَزْوَاجِهِ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِ.

Respected friends, elders, and dear young companions! Many 'ulamā' are in attendance in this blessed gathering on the sīrah of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. It would have been better and it was also my heartfelt desire (which I expressed to Maulānā Muḥammad Ghulām Sāhib) to have our respected teacher and tutor, Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth Maulānā Muḥammad Yūsuf Sāhib dāmat barakātuhum to shower us with his

¹صحيح البخاري، كتاب الإيمان، باب حب الرسول من الإيمان، ح (١٤).

words of advice so that the words which emanate from the depths of his pure and glittering heart may be of benefit to us. However, a student like me had no alternative but to sit before you and revise my lessons in front of the respectable ‘ulamā’. Make du‘ā’ Allāh *ta‘ālā* gives me the inspiration to say things which will be of benefit to me first of all, and to those who are present. Āmīn.

How can I speak about Rasūlullāh ﷺ?

The theme on the pure biography of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* is a shore-less ocean. What can a student like me whose knowledge is very little, who does not have the power of speech, who does not have the correct recognition of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* say in this regard?! A poet says:

My words are incapable, my tongue is powerless. What can I say in praise of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* when he is a shore-less ocean? How will I traverse such an ocean?

O Iqbāl! With what mouth can I praise Muḥammad *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*? My mouth is very small, while what needs to be said is huge.

He was the one who knew the paths, the seal of all Prophets, and the master of all. He gave to the [little and insignificant] dust of the path the huge extent of the valley of the Taurus mountains.

The words “the one who knew the paths” mean: Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* knew the

paths which would convey one to Allāh *ta'ālā*. He was the seal of all Prophets, and the last and final Messenger of Allāh *ta'ālā*. He was the master and chief of all. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* says in this regard:

وَأَنَا حَامِلٌ لِرِوَاءِ الْحَمْدِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَا فُخْرًا

I will be carrying the flag of praise on the day of Resurrection. Ādam *'alayhis salām* and other Prophets and Messengers will be beneath this flag. I am not saying this out of pride.

[Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* is saying]: The flag of praise will be in my hand on the day of Resurrection. All the Prophets from Ādam *'alayhis salām* to 'Īsā *'alayhis salām* together with all their followers will be under my flag, but this is nothing to be proud about because it is by virtue of my Allāh's favour and grace.

وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ شَافِعٍ وَأَوَّلُ مُشَفِّعٍ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَا فُخْرًا

On the day of Resurrection, I will be the first intercessor and the first one whose intercession will be accepted. And I do not say this out of pride.

وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ مَنْ يُحَرِّكُ حِلَقَ الْجَنَّةِ فَيَفْتَحُ اللَّهُ لِي

I will be the first to knock on the gates of Paradise, and Allāh will open them for me.

¹سنن الترمذي، أبواب المناقب، باب في فضل النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، ح (٣٩١٦).

²سنن الترمذي، أبواب المناقب، باب في فضل النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، ح (٣٩١٦).

³سنن الترمذي، أبواب المناقب، باب في فضل النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، ح (٣٩١٦).

إِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ حُرِّمَتْ عَلَى الْأَنْبِيَاءِ كُلِّهِمْ حَتَّىٰ أَدْخُلَهَا وَحُرِّمَتْ عَلَى الْأُمَّمِ
حَتَّىٰ تَدْخُلَهَا أُمَّتِي¹

Paradise will be forbidden to all the Prophets until I enter it. It will be forbidden to all nations until my ummat enters it.

He was the one who knew the paths, the seal of all Prophets, and the master of all. He gave to the [little and insignificant] dust of the path the huge extent of the valley of the Taurus mountains.

The dust of the path has no value – not in quantity nor in quality. Yet, the enchanting gaze of this great Messenger *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* gave to it the extent of the valleys of the Taurus mountains.

A single gaze turned men into messiahs

This Prophet is so great and his position is so lofty, that his mere gaze and attention on a person transformed him into a man of lofty levels.

Your eloquence turned drops into oceans. It illuminated hearts and gave sight to the eyes. Those who were themselves deviated now became guides for others. What a gaze it must have been which transformed men into messiahs!

He transformed Abū Bakr to *Siddīq*, ‘Umar to *Fārūq*, ‘Uthmān to *Dhin Nūrayn*, ‘Alī to *Asadullāh*, Hamzah

¹كنز العمال، ح (٣١٩٥٣).

to *Sayyid ash-Shuhadā'*, Ibn Mas'ūd to *Faqīh al-Ummah*, Ibn 'Abbās to *Mufassir-e-Qur'ān*, Abū Hurayrah to *Muhaddith-e-A'zam*, Bilāl to *Mu'adhdhin-e-Rasūl*, Abū 'Ubaydah to *Amīn al-Ummah*, Hasan and Husayn to the leaders of the youth of Paradise, and Fātimah to the leader of the women of Paradise. May Allāh *ta'ālā* be pleased with them all.

Your beneficence transformed minute particles into the sun.

The Sahābah *radiyallāhu 'anhum* number over 100 000. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* elevated them so high, that each one appears like a sun, a moon and a star in the sky. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

أَصْحَابِي كَالنُّجُومِ، بِأَيِّهِمْ إِقْتَدَيْتُمْ إِهْتَدَيْتُمْ

My Companions are like stars; whichever one you follow, you will be guided [straight to Paradise].

These were ordinary people before the advent of Islam. They were like small particles which are tiny and insignificant, and can only be seen in the bright sunlight. But when the gaze of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* fell on them, these ordinary people became extraordinary personalities, and these tiny particles became like the sun, and the entire world woke up to them.

Your beneficence transformed minute particles into the sun. Camel-herders became the leaders of their time.

¹جامع بيان العلم وفضله، ح (١٧٦٠).

Those who did not know how to tend to camels properly began ruling over the intellectuals of the time.

He was the one who knew the paths, the seal of all Prophets, and the master of all. He gave to the [little and insignificant] dust of the path the huge extent of the valley of the Taurus mountains. He is the first and last in the gaze of love and affection. He is the Qur'ān, the Furqān, Yā Sīn and Tā Hā.

**It is not possible to fulfil the right of Rasūlullāh's
ﷺ pure life**

Who is there who can explain and expound on the life of such a great Prophet *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*? It is not possible for anyone. An Arab poet says:

أَرَى كُلَّ مَدْحٍ فِي التَّيِّبِ مُقْصَرًا
وَإِنْ بَالَعَ الْمُثْنِي عَلَيْهِ وَأَكْثَرًا

I consider every praise of the Prophet sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam to be defective. Even if the one praising him goes to great lengths and praises him profusely.

No poem, no eulogy, no book on his life, no speaker and no orator could do justice to the pure life of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. Even if a person exaggerates in his praises of him, the status of our beloved Rasūl *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* is so high that he cannot do justice to it.

My dear brothers! I am an absolute non-entity. Even great philosophers, thinkers, and erudite 'ulamā'

cannot do justice to the pure life of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam. Even the Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum were tongue-tied in this regard. Hadrat ‘Alī radiyallāhu ‘anhu explains a few qualities of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam in a Hadīth. After listing a few qualities, his tongue comes to a stop and he says:

يَقُولُ نَاعَتُهُ لَمْ أَرَ قَبْلَهُ وَلَا بَعْدَهُ مِثْلَهُ

The one who explains his life is compelled into saying: My eyes never set on anyone like him before or after.

Complete and perfect

Hadrat Hassān ibn Thābit radiyallāhu ‘anhu says:

وَأَحْسَنَ مِنْكَ لَمْ تَرَ قَطُّ عَيْنِي – وَأَجْمَلَ مِنْكَ لَمْ تَلِدِ النِّسَاءُ
خُلِقْتَ مُبْرَأً مِنْ كُلِّ عَيْبٍ – كَأَنَّكَ قَدْ خُلِقْتَ كَمَا نَشَاءُ

My eyes never saw anyone more handsome than you. No woman has given birth to anyone more beautiful than you. You have been created free from every defect. It is as though you were created as you willed.

[Hadrat Hassān radiyallāhu ‘anhu is saying]: Till today, my eyes never saw anyone more handsome than you. Let alone my eyes, no woman has given birth to a more beautiful child than you. O my master! When I look at you from head to toe, I see everything faultless. Your eyes are totally perfect, your nose is perfect, your teeth are perfect; your

¹سنن الترمذي، أبواب المناقب، باب في صفة النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، ح (٣٩٣٩).

entire body is so complete and perfect that when I look at you, it seems as if Allāh *ta'ālā* created you according to your wishes. You asked Allāh *ta'ālā* how you want to be created, and He created you accordingly.

We quoted the words of Hadrat Hassān ibn Thābit *radīyallāhu 'anhu*. Now listen to the words of Hadrat Jibra'īl *'alayhis salām*. He looked at the entire universe of Allāh *ta'ālā*, he looked at the cream of humanity, i.e. the Prophets *'alayhimus salām*. He looked at Adam *'alayhis salām*, Ibrāhīm *'alayhis salām*, 'Isā *'alayhis salām*, Mūsā *'alayhis salām*; he looked at about 124 000 Prophets *'alayhimus salām*. When Allāh *ta'ālā* bestows certain capabilities to a person, he is able to see many things which others cannot see. Hadrat Jibra'īl *'alayhis salām* came to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* on one occasion and said:

قَلَّبْتُ مَشَارِقَ الْأَرْضِ وَمَغَارِبَهَا، فَلَمْ أَجِدْ رَجُلًا أَفْضَلَ مِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ¹

I observed the East and West carefully, but I did not see a man better than Muhammad sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam.

[Hadrat Jibra'īl *'alayhis salām* is saying]: As a result of the power which Allāh *ta'ālā* bestowed to me, I traversed the East and West, I looked at every single face, I looked at humans, angels and jinn, but my eyes did not set gaze on anyone better than Muhammad *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*.

¹المعجم الأوسط للطبراني، ح (٦٢٨٥).

If Allāh *ta'ālā* did not create anyone better than him in the entire universe, how could Hadrat Jibra'īl *'alayhis salām* find such a person?

Perfect in appearance, perfect in character

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu *'alayhi wa sallam* was perfect in appearance, perfect in character. His appearance, his face, his composition, and his body are all complete and perfect. His character is also complete and perfect. None can compare with him – not in his outer appearance nor in his excellent mannerisms.

The beauty of Yūsuf [*'alayhis salām*], the breath of 'Īsā [*'alayhis salām*], and the glittering hand [of Mūsā *'alayhis salām*]. These beauties are found separately in these personalities, while they are found collectively in you alone.

The beauty of Yūsuf *'alayhis salām* is in its place. The miracles of 'Īsā *'alayhis salām* and Mūsā *'alayhis salām* are in their place. The melodious voice of Dāwūd *'alayhis salām* is in its place. The kingdom of Sulaymān *'alayhis salām* is in its place. The close friendship which Ibrāhīm *'alayhis salām* had with Allāh *ta'ālā* is in its place. All these excellent qualities were distributed among the Prophets *'alayhimus salām*, but Allāh *ta'ālā* made all of them into a bouquet and sent them into this world in the form of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu *'alayhi wa sallam*.

Qāsim al-'Ulūm wa al-Khayrāt Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Qāsim Nānautwī *rahimahullāh* says:

All the perfect qualities of the universe are found collectively in you. Only some of your qualities are found in others.

O my beloved [Rasūlullāh] *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*! We will see a few of your qualities in ‘Īsā ‘*alayhis salām*, a few in Ibrāhīm ‘*alayhis salām*, and a few in Dāwūd ‘*alayhis salām*, a few in Ādam ‘*alayhis salām*. But if anyone wants to see any of the qualities of the other Prophets ‘*alayhimus salām* in you, he will certainly find them in you. Peace and salutations of Allāh *ta‘ālā* be on you.

My dear brothers! Our Prophet *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* is indeed very great. He is perfect in appearance, perfect in character. He is complete and perfect as regards his physical appearance, and complete and perfect as regards his character.

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ

You have been created on a sublime standard of character.¹

The heart of Muḥammad ﷺ

The heart is the centre and nucleus of all character. If there is generosity in the heart, the body will be generous. If there is no generosity in the heart, there will be no generosity in the rest of the body. If there is no patience in the heart, the body cannot display patience. The heart is the centre of character. The more character in the heart, the loftier one’s actions. In this universe of Allāh *ta‘ālā*, there is no heart greater than the heart of Muḥammad *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*. The high level of character which it contains was not given to anyone else by Allāh *ta‘ālā*. All character is found in his heart, and each characteristic is of the highest

¹ Sūrah al-Qalam, 68: 4.

level. Now just imagine how high the pure life of such a personality must be!

An excellent example

This is why Allāh *ta'ālā* appointed Muḥammad Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* as an excellent example for our success in this world and in the Hereafter. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ

*There is certainly an excellent example for you in the Messenger of Allāh.*¹

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* is an excellent example for a trader, a commander, for a father, a husband, an imām, a conqueror, an oppressed person, the king of a country...in short, he is an excellent example for every person. The teachings of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and his pure life contain guidance for all mankind until the day of Resurrection. A poet says:

We receive blessings at every step, and mercies at every breath wherever the intercessor [Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*] of sinners passed through.

No matter where Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* placed his foot, and wherever his inheritors – the '*ulamā*' – went with his teachings, blessings descended at every step, and mercies came down at every breath.

We receive blessings at every step, and mercies at every breath wherever the

¹ Sūrah al-Aḥzāb, 33: 21.

intercessor [Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam] of sinners passed through. As for the places where he [or his deputies] did not pass, they are still experiencing the darkness of the night. And where he passed through, they are experiencing the true light of dawn.

There was darkness all around, there was no light whatsoever. But once you [O Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam] arrived, everyone received light. Darkness departed from the assembly of the world when the light appeared from the cave of Hirā’.

The life of Rasūlullāh ﷺ in a single poem

We are in an assembly on the life of Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam. A poet extracts the essence of the life of Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam in a single poem and presents it to us. He says: If anyone would like to learn and understand the life of Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam, it is very easy:

This is the explanation of the perfect example of Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam: It is light, light, light and light.

From the time he was born until he departed from this world, it is nothing but light and effulgence. In fact, whatever good was seen before his birth, and whatever good we see throughout the world after his demise is by virtue of his blessings.

O Asad! What can I say about the blessings from the threshold of

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam!
No matter what fortune a person received and how much he received, he received it from none but Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam.

His status is below Allāh's, but above everyone else's

My dear brothers! Rasūlullāh's sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam status is very high, his character is lofty, his external self is very high, and his internal self is very high. Allāh *ta'ālā* made him so elevated that after Him, no one in the universe can compete with Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. A poet says:

Your status is below Allāh's, but above everyone else's. Our Muḥammad sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam is higher than both the worlds.

None from Allāh's creation was born who could compete with the orphan child – Muḥammad Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam – of Āminah.

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَجْوَدَ النَّاسِ¹

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam was the most generous.

¹صحيح البخاري، باب كيف كان بدء الوحي إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، ح (٦).

كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَحْسَنَ النَّاسِ^١

Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam was the most handsome.

وَأَشَجَعَ النَّاسِ^٢

Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam was the bravest.

إِنَّ أَتْقَاكُمْ وَأَعْلَمَكُمْ بِاللَّهِ أَنَا^٣

I [Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam] am the most knowledgeable of you with regard to Allāh ta‘ālā.

وَاللَّهِ إِنِّي لَأَخْشَاكُمْ لِلَّهِ^٤

By Allāh, I am the most fearful among you of Allāh ta‘ālā.

Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam was the most merciful. The amount of mercy which Allāh ta‘ālā placed in his heart is not found in any other creation.

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

We sent you solely as a mercy to the worlds.¹

¹ صحيح البخاري، كتاب الجهاد والسير، باب الشجاعة في الحرب والحين، ح (٢٨٣٧).

² صحيح البخاري، كتاب الجهاد والسير، باب الشجاعة في الحرب والحين، ح (٢٨٣٧).

³ صحيح البخاري، كتاب الإيمان، باب قول النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أنا أعلمكم، ح (٢٠).

⁴ صحيح البخاري، كتاب النكاح، باب الترغيب في النكاح، ح (٥٠٥٣).

The mercy to the worlds

If we link this verse of Sūrah al-Ambiyā’:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

*We sent you solely as a mercy to the worlds.*²

To the first verse of Sūrah al-Fātihah:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

*All praise is due to Allāh, the Sustainer of the worlds.*³

It will mean that the Sustainer of the worlds sent Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam as a mercy to the worlds. Allāh ta‘ālā is saying to us: O My servants! I am the Rabb of every atom and particle, and I sent My beloved [Muhammad sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam] as a mercy for every atom and particle. What, then, can we say about that mercy!? A poet says:

Even when outsiders looked at your character and kindness, they said you are a mercy to the worlds.

Even today, if non-Muslims were to study the pure life of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam and look at it with an open mind – not with prejudices, but with a clear mind – and search for the truth, they will very quickly conclude that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam was not sent for the

¹ Sūrah al-Ambiyā’, 21: 107.

² Sūrah al-Ambiyā’, 21: 107.

³ Sūrah al-Fātihah, 1: 1.

Quraysh alone, the Makkans alone, for the people of Hijāz alone, or for the Arabs alone. Rather, he was sent for the entire mankind. He was sent as a mercy for the entire universe.

An immense favour

My dear brothers! What a great favour Allāh *ta'ālā* did to us by attaching us to such a great Prophet! Allāhu Akbar! Allāh *ta'ālā* showered us with countless favours. Had He willed, He could have caused us to be born in the house of an unbeliever. He did not do this. Instead, He caused us to be born in the house of a believer and bestowed us with imān. Had He willed, He could have made us believers, but in the ummat of Ḥaḍrat Ādam *'alayhis salām* or Ḥaḍrat 'Īsā *'alayhis salām*. But He did not do this. Without us deserving it and without asking for it, Allāh *ta'ālā* made us members of the supreme ummat of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*.

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ

You are the best of nations, appointed for [the benefit] of mankind.¹

We received the title of being the best of nations from Allāh *ta'ālā*. What a great favour this is! What a great fortune! A poet says:

Why should your ummat not receive the title of “best of nations” when you [O Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*] are the best of humans, the best of Messengers, and the best of people!?

¹ Sūrah Āl 'Imrān, 3: 110.

Without deserving it, without endeavouring for it, and without any request from our side, Allāh *ta'ālā* made us members of the ummat of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* solely out of His kindness. This is indeed a very great bounty. O Allāh! All praise and thanks belong to You.

Fulfilling the duty of a favour

My dear friends! When a servant receives a bounty or favour from Allāh's court, he becomes duty-bound to fulfil its right, and to be grateful for it. Allāh *ta'ālā* linked us to Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and included us in his ummat. This is a very great bounty. We have to be grateful for it and fulfil its right. The manner of showing gratitude is to fulfil all the demands and requirements of this bounty.

One of the biggest demands of our link with Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* is for us to study and read his life. We have to study his teachings and apply them in our lives. If we make this responsibility the mission of our life, we will acquire success in both worlds.

The meaning of the Sunnat

We have to learn the teachings of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and live our lives in the manner and way which we see in his teachings. This is the road to success. Look! I am referring to it as the “manner and way”; I am not saying “Sunnat” because when we use the word “Sunnat” in our everyday conversations, we think about certain well-known Sunnats such as the Sunnats of eating, sleeping, drinking, etc. The real meaning of the word “Sunnat” is the manner and way of Rasūlullāh

sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam. And the meaning of “manner and way” is Rasūlullāh’s *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* entire life. He used to perform the five daily *ṣalāhs*, so we also have to adopt this way. He used to perform them in the masjid with congregation, so we will also have to perform them like that.

This is the meaning of Sunnat: No matter what action of Rasūlullāh’s *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* life – whether *fard*, *wājib*, *sunnah* or *mustahab* – it is his manner and way, and it is his Sunnat. All his teachings with regard to the external body are part of his way. The same applies to all which are connected to the heart, e.g. do not be jealous, do not bear malice, do not have hatred for anyone, do not adopt a life of animosity...and so on. We have been commanded by Allāh *ta’ālā* to ensure our external and internal selves are in accordance with the ways and mannerisms of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*.

How to become the beloved of Allāh

[Allāh *ta’ālā* says]: I love Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* so much that whoever moulds his external and internal self in accordance with his ways and mannerisms, I make him My beloved.

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ

*Say: If you have love for Allāh then follow my way so that Allāh may love you.*¹

[Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* is saying]: I am very particular about performing the five *ṣalāhs*

¹ Sūrah Āl ‘Imrān, 3: 31.

with congregation, you must do the same. I pay my zakāh, you must do the same. I perform hajj, you must also perform it. I keep fast, you must also keep. Adhere to the remaining actions and deeds in the same way. Adopt my way in your acts of worship, in your social relationships, in your monetary dealings, and in your character and mannerisms. Copy me in everything – whether related to the external or internal self. Emulate me, follow in my footsteps. If you carry out all your affairs according to my way, Allāh *ta'ālā* will make you His beloved.

Glory to Allāh! My dear brothers! You will become the beloveds of Allāh *ta'ālā*. Look at how elevated the life of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam is! The person who lives his life in accordance with his, becomes the beloved of Allāh *ta'ālā*. Look at Allāh's *ta'ālā* kindness for having ordered us to embellish our lives in accordance with the grand life of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam so that we too may become His beloveds, and consequently, the beloveds of every other creation.

The solution to contemporary issues

An easy solution to all contemporary issues is for us to come onto the way of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. In fact, this is the only solution. My dear brothers! There is no other solution. Bring the way of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam in every department of your life. Our beliefs must be in line with his, our acts of worship must be like his, our character must be like his excellent character, our social dealings and monetary transactions must be in exact conformity with his teachings. If the pure life of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam enters 100% in our lives, we will

become the beloveds of Allāh *ta'ālā*. When we become His beloveds, we will become the beloveds of everyone else. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam* said:

إِذَا أَحَبَّ اللَّهُ لِعَبْدٍ نَادَى جِبْرَائِيلَ

When Allāh loves a servant, He announces to Jibra'īl:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ فُلَانًا فَأَحِبُّهُ

Allāh loves such and such person, so you should also love him.

The moment Allāh *ta'ālā* makes this announcement, love for the person settles in the heart of Jibra'īl *'alayhis salām*. The person is thus beloved in the sight of Allāh *ta'ālā* and in the sight of Jibra'īl *'alayhis salām*. Acting under the order of Allāh *ta'ālā*, Jibra'īl *'alayhis salām* announces to the inhabitants of the heavens:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ فُلَانًا فَأَحِبُّوهُ

Allāh loves such and such person, you must also love him.

The moment this announcement is made, love for the person settles in the hearts of all the inhabitants of the heavens.

ثُمَّ يُوَضَّعُ لَهُ الْقَبُولُ فِي الْأَرْضِ¹

The person is then bestowed with general acceptance in the world, and everything begins to love him.

¹صحيح البخاري، كتاب الأدب، باب المقة من الله، ح (٦٠٤٥)..

How to become the beloved of the creation

My dear brothers! If we want the inhabitants of this world not to look at us with dislike and animosity – and to look at us with love instead – then the only way is for us to become the beloveds of Allāh *ta'ālā*. If we become the beloveds of Allāh *ta'ālā*, we automatically become the beloveds of Jibra'īl *'alayhis salām*, the angels, and all the creations on earth. The only way of becoming the beloveds of everyone is for us to first become the beloveds of Allāh *ta'ālā*. The Qur'ān shows us the way of becoming the beloveds of Allāh *ta'ālā*, viz. make your life like the life of My Prophet, and I will make you My beloved.

The enthusiasm of our pious elders in emulating the Sunnat

Our pious elders enjoyed general and total acceptance because they embellished their lives with the blessed Sunnats of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. They reached a level of perfection in their following of the Sunnat. We can gauge from their astounding stories the level of their attachment to following the Sunnat.

Hadrat Gangohī and his following the Sunnat

A close associate of Hadrat Gangohī *rahimahullāh* met Hadrat Maulānā Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūri *rahimahullāh*. The associate asked: “Hadrat, what is the Sunnat way in such and such act?”

These people would constantly inquire about the Sunnat way; it was their favourite occupation. It was their desire to mould their lives in line with the life of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*.

The man asked Hadrat about the Sunnat way for a certain act. Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* knew that the man had spent time in the company of Hadrat Gangohī *rahimahullāh*, so he asked him: “How did you see Hadrat Gangohī doing that act?” The man replied: “I saw him doing it this way.” Hadrat said: “Enough, this is the Sunnat way.” Allāhu akbar – Allāh is the greatest.

Hadrat Maulānā Khalīl Aḥmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh* had full confidence with regard to the way of life of Hadrat Gangohī *rahimahullāh* – that every act of his must be in accordance with the Sunnat. He did not even see the need to consult any books to verify this.

Hadrat Shaykh and his following the Sunnat

Hadrat Dr. Ismā’īl Memon Sāhib *dāmat barakātuhum* who is a khalīfah of Hadrat Shaykh al-Ḥadīth Maulānā Muḥammad Zakariyyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh* relates: A few moments remained before he could depart from this world. He was performing wudū’. His attendants were quite affected by his severe illness. While performing the wudū’ for him, they completed the gargling of his mouth, and began pouring water in his nostrils. They forgot about the miswāk. But look at this personality whose life’s every moment was spent in emulation of the Sunnat. He was to meet Allāh *ta’ālā* after a few moments, he was about to journey to the Hereafter. Yet he was so mindful about following the Sunnat that he directed his attendants by saying: “Bhāi (brother)! The Sunnat of the miswāk has been left out!?”

My dear brothers! If these personalities who were so particular about the desirable and Sunnat acts, just

imagine how particular they must have been about carrying out the obligatory actions!

Make a decision today

My dear brothers! Look at their love and enthusiasm in following the Sunnat. They did not abandon it even at the time of death, but we do not practise on the easiest of Sunnats even when we are experiencing well-being. We ought to connect ourselves totally to the teachings of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam as was done by these personalities. This is the only way to Paradise. A poet says:

The path to Paradise lies in following the footsteps of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam. The path of the Sunnat conveys one to Allāh *ta‘ālā*. If you all desire Paradise, place the chains of servitude to Muḥammad sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam around your necks.

My dear brothers! Let’s make a decision today to live our lives in accordance with the ways of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam. If we do this, we will become the beloveds of Allāh *ta‘ālā*. If we become His beloveds, we will be loved by Jibra‘īl *‘alayhis salām*, all the other angels, and the entire creation. When Allāh *ta‘ālā* makes us beloved in the eyes of the entire creation, it will bring about a revolution. The people of the world who are presently looking at us with hatred and animosity will be compelled into loving us.

There is a need for us to take stock of our actions and deeds. There is a need to worry about rectifying them. When our actions are in accordance with the way of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam, it

will result in the appearance of a special type of blessing which will bring about a solution to the issues of this world and the Hereafter. This is why it is most essential for us to turn our attention in this direction. If we get up today from this *sīrah jalsah* with the firm determination of studying the teachings of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam*, practising on them, and bringing all the *farā’id*, *wājibāt*, *sunan* and *mustahabbāt* in our lives, then – my dear brothers – we will certainly see success.

The only way of leaving the path of humiliation

I conclude my speech with the statement of *Ḥaḍrat ‘Umar Fārūq radiyallāhu ‘anhu*. He used to say:

إِنَّا كُنَّا أَذَلَّ قَوْمٍ، فَأَعَزَّنَا اللَّهُ بِالْإِسْلَامِ، فَمَهْمَا نَطْلُبُ الْعِزَّةَ بِغَيْرِ مَا
أَعَزَّنَا اللَّهُ بِهِ أَذَلَّنَا اللَّهُ!

We were a despicable people. Allāh honoured us with Islam. As long as we seek honour in anything different from what Allāh ta’ālā gave us honour, He will humiliate us.

We were so despicable that the superpowers of the time – the Persian and Roman Empires – were not prepared to rule over us, but Allāh *ta’ālā* gave us honour; with what? Allāh gave us honour by following the way of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam*. As long as we seek honour in anything different from what Allāh *ta’ālā* gave us honour, He will humiliate us. My dear brothers! Embed this point in your hearts: There is only one way of

¹المستدرك للحاكم، كتاب الإيمان، ح (٢٠٨).

coming out of humiliation: Total attachment to the ways of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam.

Popularize the sīrah

I emphasize one point wherever I go and whoever I meet, viz. undertake an in-depth study of the pure life of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. The honourable 'ulamā' have written excellent books on the life of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam in Urdu, English, Gujarati, etc. Obtain them, study them, and bring the character of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam in your lives. And whenever an opportunity presents itself – whether among Muslims or non-Muslims – to discuss this pure life, we must certainly make use of such an opportunity and not allow it to pass. May Allāh *ta'ālā* inspire me, you, and the entire *ummat* to practise. Āmīn.

وَأَخِرُ دَعْوَانَا أَنْ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ

The Qur'ān – A Great Miracle

Date: Rabī' al-Awwal 1430 A.H./March 2009
Venue: Islamic Tarbiyah Academy, Dewsbury,
U.K.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَكَفَى، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الرُّسُلِ وَخَاتِمِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ،
وَعَلَى آلِهِ الْأَصْفِيَاءِ، وَأَصْحَابِهِ الْأَتْقِيَاءِ. أَمَّا بَعْدُ: فَأَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ
الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ، بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ: ﴿إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ
لَحَافِظُونَ﴾. صَدَقَ اللَّهُ مَوْلَانَا الْعَظِيمُ، وَصَدَقَ رَسُولُهُ النَّبِيُّ الْأُمِّيُّ
الْكَرِيمُ، وَنَحْنُ عَلَى ذَلِكَ لِمَنِ الشَّاهِدِينَ وَالشَّاكِرِينَ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ
الْعَالَمِينَ.

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي، وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي، وَاحْلُلْ عُقْدَةً مِنْ لِسَانِي
يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي، سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ
الْحَكِيمُ. اللَّهُمَّ انْفَعْنَا بِمَا عَلَّمْتَنَا وَعَلِّمْنَا مَا يَنْفَعُنَا. إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ
يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ، يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا،
اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ
وَأَتْبَاعِهِ وَأَزْوَاجِهِ وَدُرِّيَّاتِهِ.

Senior scholars and luminaries are sitting here while I am a student. Furthermore, I am very much their junior in knowledge and practice. This is why I am feeling ashamed and a bit weighed down. May Allāh *ta'ālā* enable me to relate to you what I heard from the saints and what I read in their books, points which will be of benefit to me, useful to all who are present, and a means for the salvation of everyone. *Āmīn*.

The completion of the Qur'ān: A blessed occasion

This is an assembly for the completion of the Qur'ān. Before me, Maulānā 'Abd al-Awwal Sāhib and Shaykh al-Hadīth Maulānā Muḥammad Ayyūb Sāhib drew our attention to the fact that this is a very blessed assembly. Allāh *ta'ālā* has been most kind and affectionate to us for having enabled us to attend this occasion.

When Hadrat Anas *radiyallāhu 'anhu* used to complete the Qur'ān, he used to assemble his family members and make *du'ā*.¹ He also relates a Hadīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* on this subject:

لَهُ عِنْدَ خَتْمِ الْقُرْآنِ دَعْوَةٌ مُسْتَجَابَةٌ وَشَجَرَةٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ.^۲

Du'ā' is accepted on the occasion of completing the Qur'ān, and a tree in Paradise is given to the one who completes it.

Habīb ibn Abī 'Amr *rahimahullāh* says: When a person completes the Qur'ān, an angel kisses him on his forehead, between his eyes.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

مَنْ خَتَمَ الْقُرْآنَ أَوَّلَ النَّهَارِ صَلَّتْ عَلَيْهِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ حَتَّى يُمِيسِيَ، وَمَنْ خَتَمَهُ آخِرَ النَّهَارِ صَلَّتْ عَلَيْهِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ حَتَّى يُصْبِحَ.^۳

¹ سنن الدارمي، كتاب فضائل القرآن، باب في ختم القرآن، ح (٣٥٠).

² شعب الإيمان، باب تعظيم القرآن، ح (٢٠٨٦).

³ حلية الأولياء، ج ٥، ص ٢٦.

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When a person completes the Qur'ān at the beginning of the day, angels pray for him until the evening. When he completes the Qur'ān at the end of the day, angels pray for him until the next morning.

This assembly is therefore a very blessed assembly. Allāh *ta'ālā* has graced us by enabling us to attend it. May Allāh *ta'ālā* make it a means for our forgiveness, and a means for changing our lives. Āmīn.

The promise to protect the Qur'ān

Allāh *ta'ālā* says in the verse which we had the honour of reading in the sermon:

إِنَّا مَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

Surely it is We who revealed the reminder – the Qur'ān – and it is We who are its protectors.¹

This verse contains a claim and a proof. The words “Surely it is We who revealed the reminder” is a claim which states: The Qur'ān is Our speech and has been revealed by Us. The words “and it is We who are its protectors” is the proof for it: We are to protect it. We will protect and preserve the words and meanings of the Qur'ān from the time it was revealed until the commencement of the day of Resurrection. The slightest and most miniscule change will not be made to it.

لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَاطِلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ

No falsehood can ever attain to it – neither from in front of it nor from its rear.¹

¹ Sūrah al-Hijr, 15: 9.

This means that Shayṭān and his cronies cannot interfere with this Qur'ān in any way. They can neither add nor remove its words, nor can they distort its meanings. Allāh *ta'ālā* is enabling the script of the Qur'ān to be preserved through scribes and calligraphers, the words to be preserved through those who memorize the Qur'ān, the correct pronunciation of the words through the qurrā' (plural of qārī), and their meanings through the 'ulamā', the exegists, the Hadīth experts and the jurists. Allāh *ta'ālā* Himself sent down the Qur'ān, and He Himself is protecting and preserving it. The second part of this verse is a proof for the claim which is made in the first part.

The challenge of the Qur'ān

The claim is that this is Our speech and it is We who revealed it. There are two major proofs in the Qur'ān for this claim. The first proof is its miraculous nature. Allāh *ta'ālā* announces: Observe its eloquence and rhetoric. Look at its comprehensiveness. If you have the slightest doubt about it being the speech of Allāh, then prepare and present a similar book. If it crosses the mind of anyone that this Qur'ān is the written product of Muḥammad *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and that it is the product of his imagination, then very great linguists and litterateurs are living in Makkah at present. Ask them to also produce a book like it.

¹ Sūrah Hā Mīm as-Sajdah, 41: 42.

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قُلْ لَّيِّنَ اجْتَمَعَتِ الْإِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ
بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا.

Say: If mankind and jinn get together in order to produce similar to this Qur'ān, they will never produce a similar Qur'ān even though they were to help each other [in doing so].¹

Allāh *ta'ālā* first issues a challenge stating that if you have the slightest doubt about this Qur'ān being the speech of Allāh, then produce a book like it. Produce the number of sūrahs which have been revealed up to now. If Muḥammad *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* can do this, why can't you? The world was incapable in the face of this challenge. No one could produce a book like it. How could they? After all, this is the speech of Allāh *ta'ālā*. When their incapability was demonstrated, Allāh *ta'ālā* sent down this order:

قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِعَشْرِ سُوْرٍ مِّثْلِهِ مُفْتَرِيْتٍ وَادْعُوا مَنِ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِّنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ.

Say: Produce ten chapters like it, invented [by yourselves] and summon whomever you can apart from Allāh if you are truthful.²

When they could not do this much also, Allāh *ta'ālā* sent down another order:

¹ Sūrah Banī Isrā'īl, 17: 88.

² Sūrah Hūd, 11: 13.

قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا مَنِ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ
صَادِقِينَ.

Say: Produce just one chapter like it and summon whomever you can, apart from Allāh, if you are truthful.¹

وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّنْ مِّثْلِهِ
وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ.

If you are in doubt about this word which We have sent down to Our servant, then bring a chapter like it. And call those who are your helpers other than Allāh, if you are truthful.²

If you cannot produce ten sūrahs, then at least produce one. Bring a short sūrah like Sūrah al-Kauthar.³

فَإِنْ لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا

But if you are unable to do it - and you will never be able to do it...⁴

Allāh *ta'ālā* is saying: You will never be able to do it. The day of Resurrection will arrive but you will still not be able to accomplish this task. This is because it is the speech of Allāh *ta'ālā*, and the creation cannot produce a speech in opposition to it. Allāh

¹ Sūrah Yūnus, 10: 38.

² Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 23.

³ التفسير الكبير، ج ٢، ص ١٠٨.

⁴ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 24.

ta'ālā says a unique thing: You will not be able to do this while My beloved Prophet *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* is with you, nor will you be able to do it after he departs from this world until the day of Resurrection.

One thousand four hundred and thirty years have passed. During this time, there were countless conspiracies and plots against Islam. People must have certainly thought about this challenge and urged some people to try it. Despite this, the world is incapable to this day. Let alone one chapter, they cannot even produce a single verse which is similar to any verse of the Qur'ān. This challenge continues for the last 1 400 years. Allāhu Akbar! Even now there is no shortage of non-Muslims who have a knowledge of the Arabic language. There are many great scholars of the Arabic language. The challenge of the Qur'ān stands to this day, but no one has the courage to accept the challenge and produce a single verse similar to a verse of the Qur'ān. The world is incapable to this day, and – Allāh willing - will continue to be incapable until the day of Resurrection. After all, the Qur'ān says:

وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا

and you will never be able to do it...¹

'Alī Tantāwī and non-Muslim scholars

A few non-Muslim scholars who had an interest in Arabic sciences went to meet 'Allāmah Tantāwī. They were speaking about the eloquence and rhetoric of the Qur'ān. They were not prepared to

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 24.

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accept the point that the Qur'ān is a miracle as regards its eloquence and rhetoric. 'Allāmah Tantāwī said: It is very easy to decide this. It is an academic issue which can be put to a test right now. I will speak one sentence, you must think about it carefully, and then rephrase it in eloquent Arabic. The sentence is: "Hell is enormously large." They all pondered and thought about it and presented various sentences. When they all finished, the 'Allāmah said: "Now listen to how Allāh *ta'ālā* describes the vastness of Hell:

يَوْمَ نَقُولُ لِجَهَنَّمَ هَلِ امْتَلَأَتْ وَتَقُولُ هَلْ مِنْ مَزِيدٍ

*The day when We shall say to Hell: "Are you filled?"
It will reply: "Are there any more?"¹*

They were left astounded and admitted that no one can compete with the Qur'ān's eloquence, rhetoric and inimitability.

A proof for the divinity of the Qur'ān

One proof for the divinity of the Qur'ān is its miraculous nature, in the sense that no creation can produce anything like it. However, this proof can be understood by people of knowledge alone. It is beyond the understanding of the laity because they do not know what is eloquence and what is rhetoric. Allāh *ta'ālā* therefore presented another proof which can be understood by everyone:

وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

...and it is We who are its protectors.¹

¹ Sūrah Qāf, 50, 30.

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This Qur'ān is Our speech and We are its protectors. No one can make any additions or subtractions to it. Every single word of the Qur'ān is protected. Had it not been Our speech, changes as had occurred in other books would have taken place in the Qur'ān as well. However, because this is Our speech, We are protecting it. This is why not a single dot has been changed in it. Over 1 400 years have passed, but not a single diacritical mark has been changed.

The acknowledgement of non-Muslims

Non-Muslims also acknowledge this. Will they ever speak on whether the Qur'ān is Allāh's speech or not? If they accept that it is Allāh's speech, they will have to embrace Islam. Despite this, they will have to acknowledge that from the time that it came into the world to this day, not a single diacritical mark was changed in it. If no change whatsoever took place over such a long period of time, then it is certainly being protected by a Being who is unsurpassed. Can it be other than Allāh?

An incident with Ma'mūn Rashīd

A unique incident occurred during the rule of Ma'mūn Rashīd. 'Allāmah Qurtūbī *rahimahullāh* relates that an annual assembly of scholars used to be held in his court. Everyone – Muslims and non-Muslims were permitted to attend. They would then discuss various academic topics. During one such assembly, a man entered. He was clean and neatly dressed, he had a beautiful fragrance, he entered in a very dignified manner, and sat down dignifiedly in

¹ Sūrah al-Hijr, 15: 9.

his place. When it was his turn to speak, he spoke in a most eloquent and polished manner. When the assembly ended, Ma'mūn called for him and asked: "Are you a Jew?" He replied: "Yes." Ma'mūn invited him to Islam but he said: "I am happy with the religion of my forefathers." Saying this, he left.

One year later, he attended the same programme. On this occasion, he spoke in a highly academic and scholarly manner on the subject of fiqh. At the end of the assembly, Ma'mūn said to him: "You seem to be the same person who had come here last year." He replied in the affirmative. Ma'mūn asked him: "What is the background to your embracing Islam?" He replied: "After I left here last year, I thought to myself that I ought to examine and test the different religions of the world."

When is da'wat effective?

My dear brothers! Inviting towards Allāh *ta'ālā* has an effect provided the intention and the methodology is correct. The correctness of three things is essential when inviting to Allāh *ta'ālā*:

1. Intention.
2. Methodology.
3. Manner of speech.

Hadrat 'Allāmah Shabbīr Aḥmad 'Uthmānī Sāhib rahimahullāh used to say: "When the truth is said in a true manner with a true intention, it will certainly have an effect on the heart."¹

¹ *Tadhkirei*, p. 273.

أُدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ

Invite to the way of your Sustainer with wisdom and kind admonition.¹

The invitation of Ma'mūn to this scholar had an effect on him. The thought came to his mind that he ought to test the different religions which were prevailing in the world at the time. He said: "I prepared three excellent copies of the Taurāh, but made some alterations, additions and subtractions in each of those copies. I then took them to a synagogue where the people bought the three copies there and then. I then prepared three copies of the Injīl, made alterations, additions and subtractions to them. I took them to a church, and there too the people bought those copies immediately. I then prepared three beautiful copies of the Qur'ān, and made alterations, additions and subtractions to them. I went to a masjid with those copies. I observed a strange phenomenon there. Whoever came to buy a copy would first check its authenticity. When he saw the changes, he would give it back to me. When I saw this, I was convinced that if the believers in a book do not accept it without verifying its authenticity, then it is proof that there is an unseen power which is protecting and safeguarding it. This fact compelled me to embrace Islam."²

¹ Sūrah an-Naḥl, 16: 125.

² تفسير القرطبي، ج ١٢، ص ١٨٠.

An unending zeal to memorize the Qur'ān

I was saying that Allāh *ta'ālā* Himself is safeguarding this Book, and He is creating in every era the desire to memorize the Qur'ān in the hearts of thousands of children. My dear brothers! Parents encourage their children to become hāfīz because they know that if they do this, they too will benefit in the Hereafter, and their children will enjoy immense merits and virtues. However, a ten year old does not understand these virtues. Go to a hifz class in any place and ask the children from one side: “Dear son, why are you memorizing the Qur'ān?” The majority of them will not be able to tell you the virtues of memorizing the Qur'ān. Despite this, children in their thousands are enthusiastically occupied in memorizing the Qur'ān. If this is not the power of Allāh *ta'ālā*, what else can it be?

These children bear difficulties, they strive by day and night, and they sacrifice their playing and jumping. Teachers who are hard working and concerned will even call their students after the fajr ṣalāh, and will also teach them during the school holidays. Despite all this, the children do not think of giving up the memorization of the Qur'ān. My brothers! Just think about it! Which power is behind this entire system? Who is it apart from Allāh *ta'ālā* who is creating in the hearts of these children an undefeatable zeal to memorize His speech and preserve it?

Another unique point is that there are many actions for which there are great virtues. Despite this, people are not able to practise on them continuously. Whereas these children will remain occupied for three to four years in memorizing the Qur'ān even though they do not even know the

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virtues of doing this. Who is creating this zeal in their hearts, and who is maintaining that zeal?

O Muslims! Do not worry. Allāh's power still exists. Islam is still alive, and so is the Qur'ān.

Our children are learning earnestly and memorizing the Qur'ān in this irreligious and materialistic environment of England. Go to any madrasah and you will not hear: "We first had six classes for hifz and they have now dropped to five." Instead, there is a waiting list in almost every maktab. Parents are complaining that they are not getting place in any madrasah for their children to memorize the Qur'ān.

A miraculous angle to the Qur'ān

Furthermore, these children are memorizing a book which they do not understand. You will not find an example in the entire world where students are memorizing a book which they do not understand. Give a Gujarati article to a Punjabi child and ask him to learn to read it without understanding. Ask him to learn the Gujarati alphabet and read Gujarati without understanding it; and he will never be able to do it. Teach the English alphabet to a child and ask him to read English without understanding and he will not be able to do it. It is the uniqueness of the Qur'ān that millions of people read it and memorize it without understanding it. And that too, they will read so clearly and correctly that you will not be able to distinguish whether they are Arabs or non-Arabs.

Another miracle of the Qur'ān is that it is memorized in its entirety, and remains in the memory until the very end of a person's life. The huffāz are able to read the entire Qur'ān from

beginning to end. Even today, you will find a large number of huffāz who will be able to read the entire Qur'ān to you in a single sitting. Anyway, a person who does not know the entire Qur'ān cannot be called a hāfiz.

Qārī Raḥīm Bakhsh and his preoccupation with the Qur'ān

Hadrat Qārī Raḥīm Bakhsh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was a student of Hadrat Qārī Faṭḥ Muḥammad Sāhib Pānīpattī *rahimahullāh*. After memorizing the Qur'ān at the age of ten, he used to read approximately the entire Qur'ān daily to his teacher.¹ When he was young, it was his practice to read eight pāras in the tahajjud salāh.² When he was a student, he used to read 15 pāras daily.³ He used to say: “The person who cannot read the entire Qur'ān from beginning to end in a single assembly has no right to call himself a hāfiz.” If any person told him that he was a hāfiz, he would test the person immediately.⁴

I heard from my beloved Hadrat Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* that Qārī Raḥīm Bakhsh *rahimahullāh* had come to their place on one occasion. He performed wudū' after the 'ishā salāh and said: “Let me read two rak'ats of taḥīyyatul wudū'.” Hājī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* decided to become his muqtadī (follower in salāh). Qārī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* performed the taḥīyyatul wudū' salāh at a leisurely pace and read ten pāras in it.

¹ *Tadhkirah ash-Shaykhayn*, p. 142, 216.

² *Tadhkirah ash-Shaykhayn*, p. 210.

³ *Tadhkirah ash-Shaykhayn*, p. 216.

⁴ *Tadhkirah ash-Shaykhayn*, p. 361.

Memorizing the Qur'ān in childhood

Another miracle of the Qur'ān is that young children and old people can memorize the Qur'ān. There is a scholar by the name of Ibn al-Labbān *rahimahullāh*. He memorized the Qur'ān in one year, and he was only five years old at the time. He started when he was four years old and completed it when he turned five.¹

The commentator of *Sahīh Bukhārī*, *Hāfiz* Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī *rahimahullāh* had become a *hāfiz* by the age of nine. He was 12 years old when he led the people in the *tarāwīh ṣalāh* in Masjid-e-Harām.² A saint belonging to the Chishtī Sufi lineage, Khwājāh Hudhayfah *rahimahullāh*, had become a *hāfiz* of the seven modes of *qirā'ah* at the age of seven.³ Ask any *qārī* and he will tell you how hard a person has to work when studying the *qirā'at-e-sab'ah* (the seven modes of recitation). Despite this, he became a *hāfiz* of the Qur'ān, and that too, in the seven modes of recitation. 'Allāmah Zafar Aḥmad 'Uthmānī *Sāhib rahimahullāh* relates: "I came across a four year old girl in Rangoon regarding whom her father said that she was born a *hāfizah*. *Huffāz* used to come to test her by asking her to read from such and such place, and she would read without any hesitation."⁴

¹ تاريخ بغداد: ج ١١، ص ٣٧٦.

² الجواهر والدرر في ترجمة شيخ الإسلام ابن حجر: ج ١، ص ١٢١.

³ *Tārīkh Mashā'ikh-e-Chisht*, p. 145.

⁴ *Tuhfah-e-Huffāz*, p. 169.

Imām Muḥammad and Imām Zuhri

It generally takes three years to memorize the Qur'ān. This too is a miracle of the Qur'ān that such a voluminous book is memorized in so short a time. The famous Hadīth expert, Imām Ibn Shihāb az-Zuhri *rahimahullāh* memorized the Qur'ān in just 80 days.¹ The story of Imām Muḥammad *rahimahullāh* is even more amazing. He wanted to study fiqh and went to Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* for this. He had a precondition that a student has to know the Qur'ān by heart if he wanted admission. Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* therefore said to him: “First memorize the Qur'ān properly; you can then come here to study fiqh.” He had a desire to acquire knowledge so he occupied himself in memorizing the Qur'ān. He returned with his father in just one week and said: “I have memorized the Qur'ān, and I also know it quite well.”²

Why should Islam not enjoy distinction over the religions of the world!? After all, those religions are in books while the Qur'ān is in the hearts.

Women memorizing the Qur'ān

Like the men, there are countless women who rendered services to the Qur'ān. The wife of Hārūn Rashīd, Zubaydah, had 100 slave women and all of them were hāfizahs. They used to continue with the recitation of the Qur'ān while working in the palace.

¹تذكرة الحفاظ: ج ١، ص ١٣٧.

²بلوغ الأمان، ص ١٠.

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When a new guest came to the palace, he would feel as though he is listening to the buzzing of bees.¹

Qārī Fatḥ Muḥammad's attachment to the Qur'ān

I heard Muftī Muḥammad Taqī 'Uthmānī Sāhib *dāmat barakātuhum* saying that Qārī Fatḥ Muḥammad Sāhib Pānīpattī *rahimahullāh* was a sign of the miraculous nature of the Qur'ān.² He had such a deep attachment with the Qur'ān from childhood days, that he used to correct his future teacher, Sayyid al-Qurrā' Muḥīyy al-Islam *rahimahullāh*, in the tarāwīḥ ṣalāh. He knew the Qur'ān so well that he could even read it backwards. In other words, he could read the last verse first, and then the one before it, and so on.³ If someone asked him how many places the letter *lām* appears in the Qur'ān, how many sections (rukū') a certain sūrah has, or how many verses to the end of a sūrah there are from any particular verse of that sūrah, he could answer immediately.⁴

Qārī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* could read just the last word of each verse from beginning to end. For example, *al-'ālamīn*, *ar-rahīm*, *ad-dīn*, *nasta'īn*.⁵

In the nights of Ramaḍān, he used to read about ten pāras every night until the time of seḥrī. In this way, he would complete one Qur'ān every three nights. In

¹البداية والنهاية: ج ١١، ص ٥٧.

² *Nuqūsh-e-Raftagā*, p. 242.

³ *Tuḥfah-e-Huffāz*, p. 170.

⁴ *Tuḥfah-e-Huffāz*, p. 171.

⁵ *Tuḥfah-e-Huffāz*, p. 244.

the entire month of Ramaḍān, he used to make ten completions of the Qur'ān while reading it in the ten qirā'āt (ten modes of recitation).¹ Qārī Ṣāhib *rahimahullāh* used to sleep very little. Consequently, he would sometimes doze off while reading. However, the moment he woke up, he would continue reading from the word at which he had dozed off. He was never observed doing the contrary.²

My dear brothers! I was saying to you that when Allāh *ta'ālā* made the claim in the words:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ

Surely it is We who revealed the reminder – the Qur'ān.

He provided a proof for it by saying:

وَأَنَّا لَهُ حَافِظُونَ

*and it is We who are its protectors.*³

Allāh *ta'ālā* is demonstrating to us that the system of preservation of the Qur'ān which has been continuing for the past 1 400 years is a system which is beyond the creation. It is He and He alone who is doing it.

Memorizers of the Qur'ān are very fortunate

Just look at how fortunate these children are who are completing the hifz of the Qur'ān today! Those

¹ *Tuhfah-e-Huffāz*, p. 244.

² *Tadhkirah ash-Shaykhayn*, p. 47.

³ Sūrah al-Hijr, 15: 9.

who have been deprived of this great fortune of memorizing the Qur'ān lament over their misfortune. And why should they not lament when the Qur'ān is the speech of Allāh *ta'ālā*! How fortunate is that chest which becomes a treasure box for 6 000 verses of the Qur'ān! I just feel like kissing those chests!

The rights of the Qur'ān

My dear brothers! The Qur'ān is the greatest, the highest, and the most virtuous. We will have to think about the rights of the Qur'ān before we get up from here. We will have to think about what our responsibilities are to the Qur'ān. It is not enough to merely attend gatherings of this nature and to listen to the talks which are delivered. Instead, we will have to become people who fulfil the rights of the Qur'ān, and to link ourselves to the Qur'ān in a practical manner.

The Qur'ān has many rights over us. There are three which are extremely important. The first is for us to read the Qur'ān daily while adhering to the rules of tajwīd. Make a resolution today that you are going to read the Qur'ān daily. Inshā Allāh, we will read one pārah daily. If we cannot do this, we will start with half a pārah. If we cannot do this much, we will start with at least quarter pārah. And we will give due importance to this without missing a single day. There are immense benefits in reading the Qur'ān. Hakīm Fakhr ad-Dīn Sāhib rahimahullāh used to say that the Qur'ān is a *ma'jūn-e-murakkab*.¹ What is a *ma'jūn-e-murakkab*? Let me explain it to you in English. Let us assume that durūd sharīf is one

¹ *Fayd-e-Abrār*, vol. 1, p. 89.

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vitamin, istighfār is another vitamin, and tasbīḥ is a third vitamin. If these are separate vitamins, then the Qur'ān is a multivitamin.

Those who are weak in tajwīd, must continue reading the Qur'ān but together with it, they must take admission in tajwīd classes. After learning the rules of tajwīd, they must try to read the Qur'ān correctly.

The second right of the Qur'ān is that its meanings have to be understood. Attend the Qur'ān lessons which are conducted by the 'ulamā' in the masājid. In this way you will learn the message of the Qur'ān.

The third right of the Qur'ān is that it has to be practised upon. My dear brothers! Read the Qur'ān correctly and with tajwīd, sit in the company of the 'ulamā' and understand the message of the Qur'ān, and together with this, practise on the Qur'ān. These are the three major rights of the Qur'ān. There are many other demands of the Qur'ān. The more respect and love is shown to the Qur'ān, the more you will understand those demands.

Love itself will teach you the etiquette of love.

Maulānā Abrār al-Haqq Sāhib and respect for the Qur'ān

Hadrat Maulānā Abrār al-Haqq Sāhib Hardo'i *rahimahullāh* was a man of many unique qualities. One striking quality was respect, love and service for the Qur'ān. The mind is left astounded at the deep bond with the Qur'ān which Allāh *ta'ālā* blessed him with. He used to say things which our minds never thought of. He used to say: "You must

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wash the Qur'ān *juzdān*¹ occasionally.”² My dear brothers! Many months, if not years, will pass but we do not wash the *juzdān*. On the other hand, we will wear our clothes for only 2-3 days and get worried about washing them. Hadrat rahimahullāh used to emphasise that the *juzdān* should also be washed in this way.

He had so much respect that he used to say: “The water which is used to wash the *juzdān* should not be thrown down a drain or gutter because this water is now affiliated to the Qur'ān. It is the water which has become attached to the royal speech, and is therefore beloved.” He used to say: “Wash the *juzdān* in a dish so that the water remains in it. After washing it, sprinkle the water on the walls or on a bed of flowers.³ By doing this, there will also be no fear of anyone walking over those places.”

Love itself will teach you the etiquette of love.

Respect for people of knowledge

Included in the respect for the Qur'ān is to show respect to those who have the Qur'ān or its knowledge in their chests – whether they are 'ulamā', qārīs or huffāz. Nowadays there is much negligence in this regard. In fact, backbiting the 'ulamā' has become the subject of many assemblies. Allāh forbid! Allāh forbid! My dear brothers! Do your utmost to save yourself from backbiting the 'ulamā'. Hadrat Muftī Mahmūd Hasan Sāhib Gangohī

¹ The bag in which the Qur'ān is placed.

² *Ma'ārif al-Abrār*, p. 23.

³ *Ma'ārif al-Abrār*, p. 23.

raḥimahullāh related the statement of a certain saint who said: “Abstain from the flesh of ‘ulamā’ because it is poisonous.”¹ This means that do not backbite the ‘ulamā’ because this would entail eating their flesh. And because it is poisonous, there is a danger of spiritual death. This sin could even cause a person to lose his *īmān*. My dear brothers! Love the ‘ulamā’. If you cannot love them, then at least keep your hearts pure from disliking them.

Hadrat Abū ad-Dardā’ *radīyallāhu ‘anhu* says:

أَطْلُبُوا الْعِلْمَ، فَإِنْ عَجَزْتُمْ فَأَحِبُّوا أَهْلَهُ، فَإِنْ لَمْ تُحِبُّوهُمْ فَلَا تُبْغِضُوهُمْ.²

Seek knowledge. If you cannot do that, love the people of knowledge. If you cannot love them, then at least do not hate them.

The children of those who dislike ‘ulamā’ are deprived of knowledge

Knowledge does not go to the homes of those who dislike the ‘ulamā’. As for those who love the ‘ulamā’ – even though they may be ignorant and far from Dīn – knowledge goes to their homes. Allāh *ta’ālā* embellishes their children or grandchildren with knowledge. I personally witnessed this in my life. Since 1991 I was saying from the pulpit to the people of Leicester: If you want to see this reality, there is no need for you to go very far. We do not even have to go out of our residential area,

¹ *Malfūzāt-e-Faqīh al-Ummat*, vol. 2, p. 58.

² صفة الصفوة: ج ١، ص ٤٠.

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Highfields. Look in this very area. Those who are considered to be religious and religiosity is observed from their outer appearances, but they are in the habit of backbiting the 'ulamā', always looking for faults in them, and hate them; then despite intense efforts, they could not place their children on the path of knowledge. I ask you to also observe the people in your residential area. You will come across several people who appear to be religious, but due to the hatred of 'ulamā' and backbiting them, their children are not succeeding in the acquisition of knowledge. Furthermore, we have observed that even if one of them succeeded in making his child an 'ālim, then because of the father's hatred of 'ulamā', the son became affiliated to one of the false sects, got involved in unlawful activities, remained materialistic; and could not become a continuous charity for his parents.

My dear brothers! It is very difficult for me to say this. Although I am a student, people regard me as an 'ālim. Someone may therefore assume that I am inviting towards my respect. Despite this, I am saying this to you because it pains me severely. And this is not because the 'ulamā' suffer any loss because of it. How can they suffer losses when someone backbites them or speaks out against them?

The muṣallā is our royal throne. Of what harm will someone's short sightedness be to us!?

يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ

Allāh will raise the ranks of those who believe among you and those who have been given knowledge.¹

What more praises do they [‘ulamā’] need - those whom Allāh *ta’ālā* praised and regarding whom Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* spoke in glowing terms? What harm can anyone cause to them by backbiting them or speaking out against them? My heart is restless and restive for those who, by backbiting the ‘ulamā’, are placing their imān, their Dīn and their Hereafter in danger.

My dear brothers! I now conclude my talk. The Qur’ān is indeed a great book. Read it, understand it, and practise on it. Love the people of the Qur’ān, love the people of knowledge, and interact with them in a respectful manner. May Allāh *ta’ālā* inspire us to practise on whatever has been said. Āmīn.

وَأَخِرُ دَعْوَانَا أَنْ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ

¹ Sūrah al-Mujādalah, 58: 11.

Valuing Time

Date: Rabī' al-Ākhir 1423 A.H./June 2002

Venue: Masjid an-Nūr, Leicester, U.K.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَكَفَى، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الرُّسُلِ وَخَاتِمِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ،
وَعَلَى آلِهِ الْأَصْفِيَاءِ، وَأَصْحَابِهِ الْأَتْقِيَاءِ. أَمَّا بَعْدُ: فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: مِنْ حُسْنِ إِسْلَامِ الْمَرْءِ تَرْكُهُ مَا لَا يَعْينُهُ.

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي، وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي، وَاخْلُ عُقْدَةً مِنْ لِسَانِي
يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي، سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ
الْحَكِيمُ. اللَّهُمَّ انْفَعْنَا بِمَا عَلَّمْتَنَا وَعَلِّمْنَا مَا يَنْفَعُنَا. إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ
يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ، يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا،
اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ
وَأَتْبَاعِهِ وَأَزْوَاجِهِ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِ.

An important prophetic statement

Through the inspiration of Allāh *ta'ālā*, I had the honour of quoting to you a very comprehensive statement of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*:

مِنْ حُسْنِ إِسْلَامِ الْمَرْءِ تَرْكُهُ مَا لَا يَعْينُهُ.¹

Part of the beauty of a person's Islam is for him to discard futile activities.

¹سنن الترمذي، أبواب الزهد، ح (٢٤٧٢).

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From the treasure of Ahādīth, this statement of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam enjoys a very high status. May Allāh ta‘ālā inspire us to practise on it. Āmīn.

The status of Imām Abū Dāwūd

Imām Abū Dāwūd rahimahullāh whose name is Sulaymān ibn Ash‘ath as-Sijistānī was a well-known Hadīth expert. His compilation, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, is included among the most famous Hadīth collections. He is a distinguished Muḥaddith. Another Muḥaddith by the name of Mūsā ibn Hārūn rahimahullāh says:

خُلِقَ أَبُو دَاوُدَ فِي الدُّنْيَا لِلْحَدِيثِ وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ لِلْجَنَّةِ

Imām Abū Dāwūd rahimahullāh was born in this world for the service of Hadīth, and in the Hereafter for entry into Paradise.

When the *Sunan* of Imām Abū Dāwūd rahimahullāh reached the Muḥaddith, Muḥammad ibn Is-hāq San‘ānī rahimahullāh, and the Muḥaddith Ibrāhīm Harbī rahimahullāh, they said:

أَلْيَنَ لِأَبِي دَاوُدَ الْحَدِيثُ كَمَا أَلْيَنَ لِدَاوُدَ الْحَدِيدُ

The science of Hadīth has been made easy for Imām Abū Dāwūd rahimahullāh just as steel was made soft for Hadrat Dāwūd ‘alayhis salām.

Sahl ibn ‘Abdillāh Tustarī rahimahullāh was from among the senior saints of his time. He was blessed

¹تهذيب التهذيب: ج ٢، ص ٨٤.

²تهذيب التهذيب: ج ٢، ص ٨٤.

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with the company of Hadrat Dhun Nūn Miṣrī rahimahullāh. He came to Imām Abū Dāwūd rahimahullāh on one occasion and said:

لِي إِلَيْكَ حَاجَةٌ

I have come to you with a particular need.

Imām Abū Dāwūd rahimahullāh said: “You may present it.” He said: “I will only present it if you promise to fulfil it.” Imām Abū Dāwūd rahimahullāh said: “If I am able to fulfil it then I certainly will.” He said:

أَخْرَجَ إِلَيَّ لِسَانَكَ الَّذِي تُحَدِّثُ بِهِ أَحَادِيثَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ
وَسَلَّمَ حَتَّى أُقَبِّلَهُ¹.

Stick out your blessed tongue with which you relate the Aḥādīth of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam so that I may kiss it.

Imām Abū Dāwūd rahimahullāh stuck out his tongue and he kissed it.

Such was the status of Imām Abū Dāwūd ‘alayhis salām.

The most beloved Aḥādīth in the sight of Imām Abū Dāwūd

Allāh *ta’ālā* was especially kind to him by enabling him to preserve the Aḥādīth of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam. He says: “I collected 500 000 Aḥādīth of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam,

¹ سير أعلام النبلاء: ج ١٣، ص ٢١٣.

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out of which I selected 4 800 for my *Sunan*.” He then adds:

وَيَكْفِي الْإِنْسَانَ لِدِينِهِ مِنْ ذَلِكَ أَرْبَعَةٌ أَحَادِيثٌ

From this entire collection, four Ahādīth are sufficient to make a person religious.

The four Ahādīth are:

إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ

Actions are based on intentions.

مِنْ حُسْنِ إِسْلَامِ الْمَرْءِ تَرْكُهُ مَا لَا يَعْنِيهِ

Part of the beauty of a person’s Islam is for him to discard futile activities.

لَا يَكُونُ الْمُؤْمِنُ مُؤْمِنًا حَتَّى يَرْضَى لِأَخِيهِ مَا يَرْضَاهُ لِنَفْسِهِ

A person cannot be a complete believer until he likes for his brother what he likes for himself.

إِنَّ الْحَلَالَ بَيِّنٌ وَالْحَرَامَ بَيِّنٌ وَيَيْنُهُمَا أُمُورٌ مُشْتَبِهَاتٌ...

The lawful is clear and the unlawful is clear. Between the two are doubtful things.

Imām Abū Dāwūd *rahimahullāh* says that if a person acts on these four Ahādīth, he will become a religious person. If we ponder over them, we will realize that they contain the essence of Dīn. Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Muḥaddith Dehlawī *rahimahullāh* says that the first Hādīth is sufficient for setting right

¹جامع الأصول في أحاديث الرسول: ج ١، ص ١٨٦.

worship, the second is for the preservation of the valuable moments of life, the third is for the fulfilling of the rights of fellow humans, and the fourth is to abstain from doubtful things which then forms the foundation for piety and righteousness.¹

The selection of Imām Abū Hanīfah

The virtues and merits of Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* are known to all. He said to his son, Hammād *rahimahullāh*: “From a treasure of 500 000 Ahādīth, I selected five which will be sufficient for man. Four are the same as the previously quoted ones. The fifth one is:

الْمُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلِمَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَيَدَيْهِ

A true Muslim is one from whose tongue and hands other Muslims are safe.

This Hadīth is also very comprehensive and significant. It guarantees peace and safety in the entire world. It seems as though Imām Abū Dāwūd *rahimahullāh* must have had the selection of Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* before him when he was making his own selection because he [Imām Abū Dāwūd *rahimahullāh*] was born 52 years after the demise of Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh*. Furthermore, he acknowledged the merits and erudition of Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh*. He says:

¹بستان المحدثين، ص ٨١.

²أوجز المسالك: ج ١٦، ص ٦٥، ٦٦.

رَجَمَ اللَّهُ أَبَا حَنِيفَةَ كَانَ إِمَامًا

May Allāh ta'ālā shower His mercy on Abū Hanīfah; he was certainly an imām.

From the above prelude, you must have realized the importance of these Ahādīth. The Hadīth which I read in my sermon is one of those Ahādīth which they [these two imāms] selected. I am making this Hadīth the foundation of my talk today. Inshā Allāh, we will say something about it.

What are futile activities?

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

مِنْ حُسْنِ إِسْلَامِ الْمَرْءِ تَرْكُهُ مَا لَا يَعْنِيهِ.

Part of the beauty of a person's Islam is for him to discard futile activities.

This means that the sign that a Muslim is a good Muslim is that he does not get caught up in futile activities. Now what is a futile activity? It refers to anything which has no worldly benefit nor any benefit in the Hereafter. The selections and statements of Imām Abū Hanīfah rahimahullāh and Imām Abū Dāwūd rahimahullāh will mean that in order for a person to become religious, it is also necessary for him to abstain from every conversation and every activity in which there is no benefit in this world nor in the Hereafter.

¹الانتقاء، ص ١٠٣.

²سنن الترمذي، أبواب الزهد، ح (٢٤٧٢).

Futile activities result in wasting valuable moments

Obviously, if a person becomes occupied in an action which is of no use in this world nor in the Hereafter, then he is wasting the valuable Allāh-bestowed moments of his life. Just imagine what a loss a person will be in who wastes the valuable moments of his life! After all, it is a treasure which, when lost, cannot be reacquired.

The value of time according to worldly people

My dear brothers! Every person has some objective or the other in this world. A businessman has the objective of business. A ruler has the objective of ruling. A worldly person wants to acquire of this world. As for a Muslim, his most important objective as a Muslim is the Hereafter. Now observe any person. When he is occupied in his specific objective, he will not pay any attention to anything which will interfere with his objective. He does not let slip any opportunity for success in achieving his objective. He is not unmindful of his objective for a single moment. The intellect too demands this. When a businessman is occupied in his business, he does not like to socialize with anyone because he sees a loss on account of it. And he is not prepared to suffer this loss no matter what the price. Just look at how intelligent these worldly people are as regards their objectives! They are focused on their objective all the time, value their time accordingly, and spend it towards their objective. Consequently, they have reached the peak of realizing their objectives.

The pitiable condition of Muslims

On the other hand, the condition of Muslims is very strange. What is the objective of a Muslim as a Muslim? This poor fellow has no idea whatsoever. Countless valuable moments of his life are going to waste, whereas every moment and every second are taking him closer to the reckoning of the Hereafter. Despite this, he is sleeping the sleep of heedlessness. He is wasting his time in futile and fruitless activities. He has become the affirmation of the following verse of the Qur'ān:

اِقْتَرَبَ لِلنَّاسِ حِسَابُهُمْ وَهُمْ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مُّعْرِضُونَ

The time of their reckoning has drawn near to the people, yet they are slinking away heedlessly.¹

My dear brothers! It is so sad that we have gone so far away from the teachings of our beloved Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. Dīn has become a few customary actions. A poet says:

The custom of the adhān remains, but
the spirit of Bilāl has disappeared.
Philosophy remains, but the teachings of
Ghazzālī have disappeared.

A poet says:

O Anwar! The takbīr is still called out in
the space of the masjid, but we have
forgotten that beat which used to shake
the heart.

We have no knowledge of the teachings of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. If anyone

¹ Sūrah al-Ambiyā', 21: 1.

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does have some sort of knowledge, he is devoid of action. We are suffering losses because of this indifference of ours, and living lives of subjugation because of it. Our inclinations have changed. We enjoy occupying ourselves in futilities. Consequently, our time is wasted in futile and pointless activities. The Muslims of today are wasting countless moments of their valuable lives in activities which are of no use to them in this world nor in the Hereafter. Time is wasted in futile storytelling, political discussions, newspaper reviews, useless conversations, and various other futilities.

Wasting valuable time in listening to sport commentaries

Football, cricket and other sports have become the order of the day. I am left astounded at the madness of people. Countless valuable moments of their lives are wasted in listening to commentaries and voicing one's opinions on these sports. How can an intelligent man waste the valuable time of his life in such useless activities!? My dear brothers! It is an occasion to cry tears of blood when we see Muslims who are supposed to be teaching the world how to live in the proper manner wasting their precious time in listening to the commentaries of cricket and hockey. Countless hours are wasted in front of the television and in listening to commentaries over the radio. I ask such people: Does this occupation not cause a person to become unmindful of Allāh *ta'ālā*? Is Allāh *ta'ālā* ever remembered when one is immersed in these activities?

How unfortunate! How sad! Ṣalāh with congregation, in fact, the entire ṣalāh is missed. Even if a person goes to the masjid to perform

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salāh, his thoughts are on the match while sitting in the masjid; in fact, even while he is in salāh. If a match is being played at the time of jumu'ah, attending the jumu'ah salāh becomes a burden. He is neither listening to the sermon attentively nor is he bothered about performing the Sunnat salāhs. Does our religion permit preoccupation with activities which cause us to become unmindful of salāh, Allāh's remembrance and the fulfilling of rights? My dear brothers! Of what use are moments of this life if they cannot bring worldly and Dīnī benefit? Remember! Wasting time entails wasting one's life. Valuing time entails valuing one's life.

Spending time in useful activities

When a person values his time and spends it in useful activities, he acquires immense benefits in this world and in the Hereafter. If a few moments are spent in reading the Qur'ān, he will accumulate heaps of rewards. If some time is spent in Allāh's remembrance, he will accrue countless rewards. Saying *al-hamdulillāh* just once is so rewarding that a person's scale of deeds is filled. Saying *Sub-hānallāh* and *al-hamdulillāh* fills the area between the earth and the skies with rewards.¹ Any person who values time ascends the stations of progress.

Ḥaḍrat Dāwūd Ṭā'ī

How did our pious predecessors value time! You can gauge this from Ḥaḍrat Dāwūd Ṭā'ī *rahimahullāh* who was a great saint of the past. When he used to prepare his meal, he would break pieces of bread hurriedly and soak them in water. In the meantime,

¹ صحیح مسلم، کتاب الطہارۃ، باب فضل الوضوء، ح (۲۱۴).

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he would continue with his work. He would then eat the bread once it became soft. Someone asked him: “How is it that you do not eat the bread with curry as is done by others?” He replied: “I calculated the time it takes to eat bread with curry, and to eat it soaked in water. I concluded that I could read 50 verses of the Qur’ān if I did the latter.”¹ Ever since he did this calculation, he made this his practice so that he could acquire the benefit of reading the Qur’ān.

Ḥadhrat Jurjānī did not eat bread for 40 years

Ḥadhrat Sarīy *rahimahullāh* relates: “I observed Ḥadhrat Jurjānī *rahimahullāh* chasing down barley flour. I asked him: ‘You are eating it dry!?’ He replied: ‘I calculated the time it takes to chew bread and to chase down barley flour, and I found that if I did the latter, I can say *Sub-hānallāh* 70 times more. This is why I gave up eating bread for the last 40 years. I suffice with chasing down barley flour.’”²

Shaykh Sulaym Rāzī and his valuing of time

Shaykh Sulaym Rāzī *rahimahullāh* is a scholar of the fifth century. When his reed pen used to get worn out while writing, and he had to re-sharpen it, he would occupy himself in Allāh’s remembrance while doing this so that the time is not spent in doing only one thing.³

¹ حلبة الأولياء: ج ٧، ص ٣٥٠.

² إحياء علوم الدين: ج ٥، ص ٣١٠.

³ تبیین کذب المفتری، ص ٢٠٢.

Sharpening his reed pen [or pencil] was obviously an act of worship because it was done solely for the sake of knowledge. Despite this, he was so conscious of valuing time that he did two things at once so that his time is spent in a more profitable manner.

Hadrat Khadir meets Hadrat Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham

Perception of time is also a gift from Allāh *ta'ālā* which is not conferred to everyone. It is conferred to the one who has a concern for the Hereafter and has acquired the sweetness of Allāh's love. He then has no time for other activities. Hadrat Thānwī rahimahullāh relates an amazing incident of a well-known saint by the name of Hadrat Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham rahimahullāh. Hadrat Khadir 'alayhis salām came to meet Hadrat Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham rahimahullāh. After offering salām and shaking hands, Hadrat Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham rahimahullāh went back to his dhikr of Allāh *ta'ālā*. Hadrat Khadir 'alayhis salām was quite astonished at his disinterest. He said: "Brother! You seem to be quite disinterested. People spend many years hoping to meet me but are still not able to do so. I came on my own to meet you but you did not even pay any attention to me!?" Hadrat Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham rahimahullāh replied: "Only that person will hope to meet you who has spare time from meeting Allāh *ta'ālā*."¹ My dear brothers! We have all the spare time, this is why we do not value time. If only we realized the value of time.

¹ *Malfūzāt-e-Hakīm al-Ummat*, vol. 17, p. 164.

If you have no life, you have nothing

My dear brothers! It is an accepted fact that īmān is the most valuable of all of Allāh’s bounties and favours. However, when looked from another angle, time is even more important than īmān because if we did not have time, we would have no life. In the absence of life, we would be non-existent. And without an existence, we could not have acquired the bounty of īmān.

My dear brothers! Without the bounty of life, we can neither acquire the wealth of īmān, perform ṣalāh, keep fast, converse with Allāh *ta’ālā*, acquire the station of friendship with Him, go to Paradise, nor be able to set gaze on Allāh *ta’ālā*. It is through time that we get an opportunity to acquire the countless bounties of this world and the Hereafter. If we did not have those moments of time with which life is made, how could we take benefit from all those bounties? We learn from this that time is an immeasurably valuable treasure. When a person occupies himself in futile activities and destroys this treasure, he is – through his actions – announcing that time is the most worthless thing in his sight.

The value of time in the light of Aḥādīth

There are many statements of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* which direct us to make the moments of our life valuable and to abstain from wasting them away. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said:

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خَيْرُكُمْ أَطْوَلُكُمْ أَعْمَارًا وَأَحْسَنُكُمْ أَعْمَالًا

The best of you are those who have the longest lives coupled with the best of deeds.

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam says in another Hadīth:

إِعْتِنِمْ حَمْسًا قَبْلَ حَمْسٍ، شَبَابَكَ قَبْلَ هَرَمِكَ، وَصِحَّتَكَ قَبْلَ سَقَمِكَ،
وَعِنَّاكَ قَبْلَ فَقْرِكَ، وَفَرَاعَكَ قَبْلَ شُغْلِكَ، وَحَيَاتِكَ قَبْلَ مَوْتِكَ.^١

Treasure five things before the arrival of five things (and make them the means for Dīnī works). (1) Youth before old age. (2) Good health before illness. (3) Wealth before poverty. (4) Peace of mind before stress. (5) Life before death.

He says elsewhere:

نِعْمَتَانِ مَغْبُورٌ فِيهِمَا كَثِيرٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ الصِّحَّةُ وَالْفَرَاعُ.^٢

There are two bounties regarding which people are unmindful (they do not use them in a manner which would result in Dīnī benefit). They are good health and free time.

On one occasion, the Sahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum asked: “Who is the best person?” Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam replied:

¹مسند أحمد، مسند أبي هريرة، ح (٧٢١٢).

²المستدرک للحاکم، کتاب الرقاق، ح (٧٠٥٨).

³صحیح البخاری، کتاب الرقاق، باب لا عیش إلا عیش الآخرة، ح (٦٤٢٠).

مَنْ طَالَ عُمُرُهُ وَحَسَنَ عَمَلُهُ^١.

The one who has a long life coupled with good deeds.

This means that if a person is blessed with a long life and spends every moment of his life in good actions, then he is the best of people.

After reading these statements of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam, it is not difficult for us to realize how much Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam is emphasising on us to value every moment of our life. His objective in saying this is so that we do not waste moments of our valuable life in futilities.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ is more merciful than our own mothers

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam is more merciful to us than our own mothers, and more affectionate than our own fathers. He taught us everything which would take us closer to Paradise so that we may choose to do them. And he taught us everything which would take us closer to the Hell-fire so that we may stay from them. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam says:

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ لَيْسَ مِنْ شَيْءٍ يُقَرِّبُكُمْ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَيُبَاعِدُكُمْ مِنَ النَّارِ إِلَّا قَدْ أَمَرْتُكُمْ بِهِ، وَلَيْسَ شَيْءٌ يُقَرِّبُكُمْ مِنَ النَّارِ وَيُبَاعِدُكُمْ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ إِلَّا قَدْ نَهَيْتُكُمْ عَنْهُ.^٢

¹ سنن الترمذي، أبواب الزهد، باب ما جاء في طول عمر المؤمن، ح (٢٤٨٤).

² مصنف ابن أبي شيبة، كتاب الزهد، ح (٣٥٤٧٣).

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O people! There is nothing which would take you close to Paradise and keep you away from the Hell-fire which I did not order you to do. And there is nothing which would take you close to the Hell-fire and keep you away from Paradise which I did not prohibit you from doing.

What a great act of kindness from our beloved Rasūl sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam! Through his teachings, he showed us a clear path for protection against the Hell-fire and the acquisition of the eternal happiness of Paradise. Now before carrying out every action, each one of us will have to think: "Is this action of mine in line with the teachings of my Prophet sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam? Is it beneficial to my Hereafter? If it is not, is it beneficial for my worldly life? If it is not, then it is a futile, fruitless and useless action. And as a Muslim, how can it ever be condoned for me to occupy myself in it?"

To waste the valuable moments of one's life in something which is of no benefit is certainly a major loss. A person spends £100 000 in buying a worthless rock which is not harmful. Despite this, every intelligent person will say that this is a major loss because he spent his money on something which is worthless. In the same way, if the valuable moments of a person's life are spent in a futile but permissible activity which is not harmful, every intelligent person will still refer to it as a major loss because his time was spent in something which did not benefit him in this world nor in the Hereafter.

The value of time in the sight of non-Muslims

Look at how other nations value their time. Look at how much they are progressing by appreciating time. They have experts who prepare time

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management courses through which they teach the correct usage of time. School, college and university teachers and lecturers; and directors of large companies pay large amounts of money to take admission in these courses. They then learn the best ways of spending their time. Our seniors spent time with their mentors. By remaining in their company, they learnt the value of time. Thus, despite not taking admission in any time-management course, they left behind an example of time-management which is difficult to find. The Sufis have a phrase known as *nizām al-auqāt* (arrangement of time, or a time-table). The purpose is the same, i.e. not a single moment of a person's life must go to waste. Every moment must be spent in the best possible way. By remaining in the company of the Sufis and being trained by them, these elders were able to do work which left latter generations astounded.

Ḥaḍrat Thānwī and value of time

Ḥaḍrat Dr. 'Abd al-Ḥayy 'Ārifī *rahimahullāh* says with reference to Hakīm al-Ummat Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh*: “Ḥaḍrat *rahimahullāh* valued time immensely. It seemed as though Allāh *ta'ālā* had firmly embedded the value of time in his nature. He was very particular about spending every moment in the correct manner. He would always look at the clock and carry out every task according to a strict time-table.”¹

This is the testimony of a person who personally observed the life of Ḥaḍrat Thānwī *rahimahullāh*. It was by virtue of the importance which he gave to

¹ *Matā'-e-Waqt Aur Kārwan-e-'Ilm*, p. 95.

time that he left behind such a valuable treasure of guidance and rectitude for the Muslim nation.

The time-table of Hadrat Thānwī and Hadrat Sahāranpūrī

The following incident is quite well-known. One can clearly gauge how much importance he gave to following a time-table. Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind Maulānā Maḥmūd al-Hasan *rahimahullāh* was a teacher of Hadrat Thānwī *rahimahullāh*. The teacher came to visit his student on one occasion. Hadrat Thānwī *rahimahullāh* was with him when the time for his writing approached. He respectfully said to his teacher: “Hadrat! It is my practice to do some writing in this time. If you permit, I will go and complete my practice.” Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind *rahimahullāh* gave him permission. Although his heart did not feel like writing on that day because of the arrival of his teacher, Hadrat Thānwī *rahimahullāh* did not permit himself to leave it. He wrote a small amount, and came back to his teacher.¹

Maulānā ‘Āshiq Ilāhī Sāhib Mīrathī *rahimahullāh* writes with reference to Hadrat Maulānā Khalīl Aḥmad Sāhib Sahāranpūrī *rahimahullāh* that no matter what the situation, I never saw any change in the time-table of Hadrat *rahimahullāh* and his adherence to his practices.²

¹ *Ashraf as-Sawānih*, vol. 1, pp. 30-31.

² *Tadhkirah al-Khalīl*, p. 63.

The value of time in the sight of Hadrat Shaykh

The extent to which Shaykh al-Hadith Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Zakarīyyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh* valued time and how immersed he was in his work can be estimated from the fact that Hadrat used to have just one meal during the day, and that was in the afternoon. Even then, there were times when he used to forget to eat. At the time of ‘aṣr when about 30 hours passed without having eaten something, and he felt a bit weak, he would realize that he still has to eat.¹ It was due to this engrossment that he received the special attention of the saints and seniors.

In his *Āp Beiti*, he relates an incident which occurred in Thānah Bhawan. He went to Thānah Bhawan for some work related to the printing of *Badhl al-Majhūd*. He used to receive the proofs at the time of zuhr, he would proof-read them and return them by the evening. For this purpose, he used to sit in one section of the masjid and go through the proofs with intense concentration until ‘aṣr time. However, because this was also the time for the general assembly of Hadrat Hakīm Ummat *rahimahullāh*, he used to be regretfully disturbed for not being able to attend the assembly. He expressed his regret to Hadrat Hakīm Ummat *rahimahullāh* on one occasion by saying: “Hadrat! People from distant places come here and present themselves to you while this worthless person does not attend even though he is right here.” Hadrat Hakīm Ummat *rahimahullāh* said: “There is no need for you to worry. Although you are not in my assembly, I am

¹ *Āp Beiti*, vol. 1, p. 131.

in your assembly. I look at you repeatedly and think to myself that this is how work has to be done.”¹ May Allāh *ta’ālā* inspire us as well. Āmīn.

Futilities cause religious and spiritual loss

Time is something which has to be valued. It is the fundamental treasure of Dīn and this world. The person who values it will acquire the benefits of this world and the Hereafter. The one who destroys it will suffer losses in this world and the Hereafter. Dr. ‘Abd al-Hayy ‘Ārifi *rahimahullāh* says that futilities result in the disappearance of the effulgence of worship.²

Shaykh Abul Qāsim *rahimahullāh* is a student of Imām Abū Thaur *rahimahullāh*, and a nephew and disciple of Hadrat Sarīy *rahimahullāh*. He says:

علامة إعراض الله تعالى عن العبد أن يشغله بما لا يعنيه.³

If a person becomes occupied in futile activities, it is a sign that Allāh ta’ālā has turned away from him.

What a dangerous situation! May Allāh *ta’ālā* protect us. Āmīn.

Hadrat Hakīmūl Ummat Thānwī *rahimahullāh* says: I take an oath that if a person thinks about the futile and fruitless activities which he engages in, he will realize that he will certainly be conveyed towards sin on account of them. For example, I experience this: Sometimes a person unnecessarily

¹ *Āp Beiti*, vol. 1, p. 314.

² *Sawānih Wa Ta’līmāt Hadrat ‘Ārifī*, p. 477.

³ صفة الصفة: ج ١، ص ٥١٩، المستطرف، ص ١٥٦-١٥٧.

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asks me: “When will you go to such and such place?” This question places a burden on me, and to place a burden on a Muslim’s heart is in itself a sin. He says further: “There is no futile and useless activity which does not border on sin. A useless activity is initially permissible, but a sin at the end.”¹

Those who value time are most fortunate

My dear brothers! Those who valued time and saved themselves from futile activities were able to do a lot for their Hereafter, and left behind a vast legacy for the Muslim nation. When we look at their living legacy and contributions, it is not difficult for us to estimate the intense vigilance with which they spent their time.

Yahyā ibn Ma‘īn *rahimahullāh* was a distinguished Muhaddith. He wrote one million Ahādīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* with his own hands.²

‘Allāmah Ibn Jarīr at-Tabarī *rahimahullāh* is well-known to us. Three hundred and fifty eight thousand pages of Islamic sciences flowed from his pen.³

‘Allāmah Nawawī *rahimahullāh* is the commentator of *Sahīh Muslim* and the author of *Riyād as-Sālihīn*. He lived only to the age of 45. Despite this, when his

¹ *Dawā’-e-Dīl*, p. 50.

² تهذيب الكمال: ج ٣١، ص ٥٤٨.

³ قيمة الزمن عند العلماء، ص ٧٨.

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written works are calculated, they work out to four notebooks being written daily.¹

'Allāmah Sayyid Maḥmūd Ālūsī Baghdādī *rahimahullāh* is the author of *Tafsīr Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī*. He used to conduct 24 lessons in a day.² And he used to teach 13 lessons in a day when he was occupied with his tafsīr and the issuing of fatāwā. When he completed his work at night, he would write his tafsīr and hand over whatever he had written to his scribes. It is said that he used to write so much at night, that it used to take ten hours for several scribes to transcribe it.³

As per the bequest of 'Allāmah Ibn al-Jauzī *rahimahullāh*, when he passed away, only the shavings of his reed-pens which were used for writing Ahādīth were used to light the fire to heat the water for his ghusl. After heating the water, there were shavings which were still left over.⁴ From this we can gauge that if so much shavings were collected only for the writing of Ahādīth, how many more reed pens must have been used for writing the other sciences!

The famous Muḥaddith, Ibn 'Asākir *rahimahullāh*, wrote *Tārīkh Dimishq* which is in 80 volumes.⁵ Despite his academic occupations, he used to pay

¹قيمة الزمن عند العلماء، ص ١٣٠.

²المسك الأذفر: ج ١، ص ١٣٥.

³الآلوسي مفسراً، ص ١٥٩.

⁴وفيات الأعيان: ج ٣، ص ١٤١.

⁵تذكرة الحفاظ: ج ٤، ص ٨٦.

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full attention to worship. Out of the month of Ramadān, he used to complete one recitation of the Qur’ān every week; and in Ramadān he used to complete one recitation daily.¹

These are the achievements of our pious forbears. They valued the precious moments of life by virtue of which they left behind a treasure for the Muslim nation which it will take benefit from until the day of Resurrection, and which will – inshā Allāh – be continually added to their scale of deeds.

My dear brothers! Study history and you will learn that an important feature behind the progress of the successful personalities of this world is their valuing of time and using it in the correct manner. The value of time according to them can be gauged from the following statement of the chief of Arabic grammar, Khalīl ibn Aḥmad *rahimahullāh*:

أَثْقَلُ السَّاعَاتِ عَلَيَّ سَاعَةٌ أَكُلُ فِيهَا

The most burdensome moments for me are when I have to eat.

An amazing statement of Imām Rāzī

The distinguished exegetist, Imām Fakhr ad-Dīn Rāzī *rahimahullāh* left behind a treasure-house of 200 books for the Muslim nation. Despite this, he says:

¹تذكرة الحفاظ: ج ٤، ص ٨٧.

²الجامع في الحث على حفظ العلم، ص ٤٧.

وَاللّٰهُ اِنِّيْ اَتَّأَسُّفُ فِي الْفَوَاتِ عَنِ الْاِسْتِعَالِ بِالْعِلْمِ فِيْ وَقْتِ الْاَكْلِ فَاِنَّ
الْوَقْتَ وَالزَّمَانَ عَزِيْزٌۙ

By Allāh, I am most regretful at the time of eating because I am deprived of being occupied with knowledge. After all, time is extremely precious.

My dear brothers! That is one group of our past scholars who, despite valuing every moment of their lives, remained remorseful. Then there is our group which leaves no stone unturned in wasting time and occupying itself in futile activities; and let alone being remorseful over it, it does not even perceive it.

A Paradise-dweller will also regret wasting time

Remember! When a person of Paradise is admitted into it and acquires its bounties, he will express regret over the time which he wasted in the world. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam said:

لَيْسَ يَتَحَسَّرُ اَهْلُ الْجَنَّةِ اِلَّا عَلَى سَاعَةٍ مَّرَّتْ بِهِمْ لَمْ يَذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ فِيْهَا.

The people of Paradise will have no regret except those moments which were not spent in the remembrance of Allāh ta‘ālā.

Hadrat Imām Shāfi‘ī rahimahullāh learnt many beneficial points from the company of saints. One of them was:

¹قيمة الزمن عند العلماء، ص ١١٦.

²شعب الإيمان، باب في محبة الله، ح (٥١٢).

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الْوَقْتُ سَيْفٌ، فَإِنْ لَمْ تَقْطَعْهُ قَطَعَكَ^١

Time is a sword. Cut time in doing good deeds or else it will cut you.

In other words, it will occupy you in regrets and cut you down.

Someone wanted to speak to the well-known Tābi'i, 'Āmir ibn 'Abd Qays *rahimahullāh*, so he said: "Stop the movement of the sun for a short while, and I will speak to you."²

Life is melting away like ice

My dear brothers! Time is passing by. It is a flowing asset which cannot be stopped in any way.

Life is melting away like ice – silently, gradually, moment by moment.

Every passing moment is cutting away our life.

O you heedless one! This watch is announcing to you. Fortune has cut off one more moment from your life.

Hadrat Abū ad-Dardā' radiyallāhu 'anhu and Hadrat Hasan Baṣrī rahimahullāh say:

إِبْنِ آدَمَ إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ أَيَّامٌ فَكُلَّمَا ذَهَبَ يَوْمٌ ذَهَبَ بَعْضُكَ.^٣

O man! You are merely made up of days. Each time a day passes, a portion of you gets less.

¹قيمة الزمن عند العلماء، ص ٤٥.

²التبصرة لابن الجوزي: ج ٤، ص ٣١٥.

³شعب الإيمان، كتاب الزهد، ح (١٠٦٦٣)، حلية الأولياء: ج ٢، ص ١٤٨.

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The day which has passed will not come back. The day announces daily at the time of sunrise:

مَنْ اسْتَطَاعَ أَنْ يَعْمَلَ فِي خَيْرٍ فَلْيَعْمَلْهُ فَإِنِّي عَيْرٌ مَكْرَرٌ عَلَيْكُمْ أَبَدًا.¹

Whoever is able to do good must do it because I will never be coming back to you.

It is only death that is waited upon

My dear brothers! Think a little! The childhood part of our lives has passed. The youth of many has also passed. Scores of others have reached old age. It is only death that remains.

إِنَّ أَجَلَ اللَّهِ إِذَا جَاءَ لَا يُؤَخَّرُ

Surely when the term of Allāh comes, it will not be delayed.²

A poet says:

A long life was spent asking for four days. Two of those passed in hoping, and the other two in waiting.

Another poet says:

Childhood first fed you for a few years. Your youth then made you mad. Old age came and troubled you. Your death will bring a total end to you. This world is not a place to which you should attach your heart. It is a place of admonition, not an entertainment.

¹ شعب الإيمان، كتاب الصيام، باب ما جاء في ليلة النصف من شعبان، ح (٣٨٤٠).

² Sūrah Nūḥ, 71: 4.

Ways to preserve time

My dear brothers! We have to appreciate time before the approach of death. Come! Let us all resolve that after today – inshā Allāh – we will not waste a single moment of our life. We will make it a point to spend every moment in only beneficial works. May Allāh *ta'ālā* accept our intentions and bless us immensely. Āmīn.

In order to put this intention into a practical form, I will explain a few beneficial and time-tested guidelines in the light of the teachings of our elders and seniors. Listen to them attentively, preserve them in your minds, and practise on them.

1. A time-table

The first point is a time-table. Our seniors were very particular about having a time-table. It prevents time from being wasted. Prepare a programme for your entire day in the form of a time-table, and adhere strictly to it. Do the work which has been specified for a particular time, and do not delay any task from its appointed time.

Hadrat Hasan Baṣrī *rahimahullāh* said:

إِيَّاكَ وَالتَّسْوِيفَ^١

Protect yourself against procrastination.

In other words, save yourself from procrastinating your necessary and essential tasks. Do not defer any work for tomorrow or for the future, because “tomorrow” is solely a delusion and a deception. It is

¹آداب الحسن البصري، ص ١٢١.

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the biggest cause of man's failures and lack of concern. Therefore, make it a point to complete every task at its appointed time. If several tasks come before you, then give preference to the one which is most necessary and whose outcome will be most beneficial.

2. Stay away from futile activities

The second point is to keep away from futile and useless activities. We spend our time in a lawful but non-beneficial work and say: "It is lawful, so there is no harm in it." This is a wrong way of thinking. It is also a major loss because a very valuable treasure was wasted in something which is of no use. Before doing anything, it is our general habit to first think whether it is harmful to us in this world or in the Hereafter. If it is not harmful, then we feel that there is no harm in doing it even if it is not beneficial. This is the wrong way of thinking. Instead, before doing anything, we must think and check if it is beneficial in this world and in the Hereafter. If it is not, we must stay far away from it. Because even though it is not harmful in itself, we will be spending a certain portion of our life on something which is of no use in this world and in the Hereafter. This too is a loss. A person will never spend his money in something which is of no use. When spending his wealth, he will not check whether it is harmful or not. Instead, he will always check if it is beneficial or of no use. If it is of no use, he will not spend his money on it.

A very important point is understood from the above. If we have to be particular about abstaining from an activity which is of no benefit, how can it be permissible to spend our time in something which is harmful to us in this world and in the Hereafter?

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Nowadays, the worldly life and the life of the Hereafter is being destroyed via the internet, social media and immoral literature.

My dear brothers! Sinning and disobeying Allāh *ta'ālā* is harmful in both worlds. Save yourselves from Allāh's disobedience. There is nothing worse than Allāh's disobedience for the destruction of time. Sinning is the worst manner of wasting time. It causes nothing but destruction in both worlds. May Allāh *ta'ālā* protect us. Āmīn.

3. Unnecessary assemblies and gatherings

Ensure that you save yourself from gatherings which are unnecessary. The more you intermingle with people, the more your time will be wasted in futile conversations. Nowadays, we not only immerse ourselves in futile conversations in gatherings. Instead, we commit major and serious sins such as backbiting and slandering. On occasions of marriage, funerals, visiting the sick, etc. we will continue talking for long periods. Our time is spent in not only non-beneficial conversations, but in harmful discussions. We must therefore be very particular about keeping away from unnecessary gatherings and unnecessary intermingling with people.

4. Safeguarding the tongue

Pay due importance to safeguarding the tongue. Do not speak unless necessary. Hold on firmly to this principle: "Think before you speak." If it is really a time to speak, then keep a control over your tongue. Be brief in whatever you have to say. The tongue is the part of the body which occupies itself the most in futile activities. If you abstain from intermingling

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with people and you engage in Allāh’s remembrance, you will be able to safeguard your tongue.

5. Introspection

Set aside a time daily in which you engage in introspection for the past 24 hours. In this way you will know how you are spending your time – what you lost and what you gained. If it was spent in good works, express thanks to Allāh *ta’ālā* and ask Him for more inspiration. If it was spent in incorrect works, repent and make a firm resolution to abstain in the future.

Inshā Allāh, if you adopt these measures, you will save yourself from wasting time.

Remembrance of Allāh

Finally, I beg you again: Do not waste your time! Abstain from gatherings of futile discussions. Spend the moments of your life in Allāh’s obedience, obtaining His pleasure, acquiring Paradise, propagating Dīn, proliferating knowledge, Allāh’s remembrance, recitation of the Qur’ān, reading Dīnī books and books on the life of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, and in serving humanity. Do not waste a single moment in sin, fruitless conversations, and futile activities.

Engage in Allāh’s remembrance at every breath. Fill your chest with light. If you live, live as an obedient servant of Allāh *ta’ālā*. If you die, die as an obedient servant of Allāh *ta’ālā*.

May Allāh *ta’ālā* inspire us and make us of those who value their time. Āmīn.

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وَأَخِرُ دَعْوَانَا أَنْ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ

Good Character And Good Conduct

Date: Ramadān 1425 A.H./November 2004

Venue: Masjid an-Nūr, Leicester, U.K.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَكَفَى، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الرُّسُلِ وَخَاتِمِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ،
وَعَلَى آلِهِ الْأَصْفِيَاءِ، وَأَصْحَابِهِ الْأَتْقِيَاءِ. أَمَّا بَعْدُ: فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: لَأَنْ يُؤَدِّبَ الرَّجُلُ وَلَدَهُ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَنْ يَتَصَدَّقَ بِصَاعٍ¹.

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي، وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي، وَاحْلُلْ عُقْدَةً مِنْ لِسَانِي
يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي، سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ
الْحَكِيمُ. اللَّهُمَّ انْفَعْنَا بِمَا عَلَّمْتَنَا وَعَلِّمْنَا مَا يَنْفَعُنَا. إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ
يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ، يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا،
اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ
وَأَتْبَاعِهِ وَأَزْوَاجِهِ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِ.

The one with good etiquette is the winner. The one without it is the loser

Good conduct is essential in the life of a believer. Nothing can be achieved without good conduct. There is a famous saying:

The one who has good etiquette, has gained. The one who does not, has lost.

The person with good conduct is the fortunate one. The person who lives a life of good character and

¹ سنن الترمذي، أبواب البر والصلة، باب ما جاء في أدب الولد، ح (٢٠٦٦).

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conduct most certainly receives a share from Allāh's *ta'ālā* court. As for the person who is of bad character, he remains deprived. He receives nothing. For example, there is a student who wants to acquire knowledge. However, he is disrespectful to his teacher, his books, and to the other means and instruments of knowledge. Such a student will not acquire any knowledge.

مَنْ لَا أَدَبَ لَهُ لَا عِلْمَ لَهُ

The one who has no etiquette will remain deprived of knowledge.

The difference between knowledge and facts

A student who always comes out first in his class but does not pay any attention to good conduct may say: "Despite my failings as regards good conduct, I always come out first in my class. Who says that a disrespectful student does not get knowledge?" This is a misunderstanding which stems from ignorance of the nature of knowledge. Such a student must ponder over the statement of Hadrat Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh*. He said: "Knowledge does not comprise of mere letters. Rather, it is a special nūr (light, effulgence) through which Allāh *ta'ālā* guides whomever He wills."¹

These words and letters are not knowledge, but mere facts. Through these words, you learnt that such and such thing is halāl, and such and such thing is harām. Such and such thing is lawful, such and such thing is unlawful. This is not knowledge. Knowledge is a light which descends into the depths

¹جامع بيان العلم وفضله: ج ١، ص ٦٠٨.

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of the heart. Its rays emanate from it and spread throughout the body. It then compels every limb and part of the body to move according to the pleasure of Allāh *ta'ālā*. This is real and genuine knowledge. If you know that ṣalāh five times a day is compulsory but you do not perform them, then you do not really have knowledge of ṣalāh. Yes! The person who adheres to performing the five ṣalāhs after having learnt that they are compulsory, then it can be said of him that he has acquired knowledge of ṣalāh.

Genuine beauty is beauty of knowledge and good conduct

I had said in the beginning that the presence of good conduct is most important and essential in the life of a believer. There can be no progress without it, and nothing can be attained. In fact, if good conduct is not found in a person, he is really an animal in the form of a human.

A poet says:

Through good conduct alone is a human
a human. If there is no good conduct, he
is an animal.

It is through good conduct that humaneness comes into a person and he is able to progress. The person who embellishes his self with knowledge and good conduct is considered good in the sight of people. On the other hand, the person who has no good conduct becomes a source of aversion and dislike. People do not like him. Such a person ought to be called a bankrupt person and an orphan. An Arab poet rightly said:

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لَيْسَ الْجَمَالُ بِأَثْوَابٍ تُرْتَبِنَا - بَلِ الْجَمَالُ جَمَالُ الْعِلْمِ وَالْأَدَبِ
وَلَيْسَ الْيَتِيمُ الَّذِي قَدْ مَاتَ وَالِدُهُ - بَلِ الْيَتِيمُ يَتِيمُ الْعِلْمِ وَالْأَدَبِ

Genuine and complete beauty is not in clothes which beautify us. Rather, true beauty lies in the beauty of knowledge and good conduct. An orphan is not one whose father has passed away. An orphan is one who is deprived of knowledge and good conduct.

A person who is not embellished with knowledge and good conduct, and is devoid of good character is not liked by anyone no matter how appealing his clothing may be. On the other hand, the poor pauper who possesses knowledge and good conduct, and is an embodiment of praiseworthy qualities will be loved by everyone and be worthy of respect because he is adorned with genuine beauty. For example, you have a person of dark complexion, thick lips, a flat nose, and abnormal height. Obviously, in the first instance of seeing him, people will not be very much inclined towards him. But within a short while, when they observe his character and mannerisms, and listen to his wise words, each person will be enamoured by him. On the other hand, a person of fair complexion, and wearing very beautiful clothes will attract people to his self in the beginning. But once they interact with him, his evil characteristics will come to the fore, and their hearts will very quickly turn away from him.

As I was saying, good conduct is very important, and our elders paid particular attention to it. We come across such incidents in the lives of our pious elders which leave us astounded. They were very fastidious about good character and conduct,

showing us that this was an important part of their lives.

Respect in the life of Hadrat Maulānā Masīhullāh

I heard from Maulānā Ayyūb Kholwādia Sāhib who was an associate of Hadrat Maulānā Masīhullāh Khān Sāhib *rahimahullāh* that Hadrat was so overtaken by respect for Allāh *ta'ālā* that apart from absolute necessity such as *ihrām* and taking a bath, Hadrat would not remove his *topī* (hat) from his head. He would even wear it when he used to go to sleep. He used to say: “I feel ashamed to be bare-headed before Allāh *ta'ālā*.” So much of respect and etiquette are not necessary, but this is how Hadrat *rahimahullāh* was overcome by respect. He was thus compelled to do this. We must learn a lesson from this, and at least adhere to the essential level and amount of respect.

Respect for one's teacher

Imām Rabī' ibn Sulaymān *rahimahullāh* is a senior student of Imām Shāfi'ī *rahimahullāh*. The latter loved him intensely and said on one occasion:

وَدِدْتُ أَنِّي حَسَوْتُهُ الْعِلْمَ

I wish I could make him [Rabī'] drink knowledge.

The respect which Imām Rabī' *rahimahullāh* had for his teacher can be gauged from the following action of his. He says:

وَاللَّهِ مَا اجْتَرَأْتُ أَنْ أَشْرَبَ الْمَاءَ وَالشَّافِعِيَّ يَنْظُرُ إِلَيَّ هَيْبَةً لَهُ.¹

By Allāh, I never had the courage to drink water while Imām Shāfi'ī was looking at me. This was out of respect for him.

Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind and respect for his shaykh

Look at the respect of Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind Maulānā Maḥmūd al-Ḥasan Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. He was a personality who possessed many excellent qualities. Hadrat Thānwī *rahimahullāh* used to refer to him as Shaykh al-‘Ālam (the shaykh of the world).² He was the head teacher and shaykh al-Hadīth of Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband. He was such a senior personality, yet he had immense respect for his shaykh. He was a murīd of Quṭb Rabbānī Hadrat Maulānā Rashīd Aḥmad Gangohī *rahimahullāh*. Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind *rahimahullāh* used to go to his shaykh every Thursday from Deoband to Gangoh, and remain in the service of his shaykh until Friday. This remained his practice for many years. He would never miss it whether it was raining or extremely hot. Gangoh is thirty miles from Deoband. But look at the level of his respect. He would not go on any conveyance or vehicle to Gangoh; he would go on foot. This was the level of respect of Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind *rahimahullāh*.³

¹ مختصر تاريخ دمشق: ٤٠١٢١.

² *Malfūzāt-e-Ḥakīmūl Ummat*, vol. 5, p. 300.

³ *Dār al-‘Ulūm Deoband Kī Pachās Mithālī Shakhṣīyyāt*, p. 69.

Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind's respect for his teacher

Like the respect which he had for his shaykh, he had a lot of love and respect for his teacher, Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Qāsim Nānautwī rahimahullāh. This is why he rendered unmatched services to him. He was on a journey with him on one occasion and Hadrat Maulānā Nānautwī rahimahullāh fell critically ill and all those who were present lost hope in his survival. Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind rahimahullāh attended to him without any rest, as if neither day nor night existed. He remained awake for entire nights, and was more concerned about the comfort and rest of his teacher than his own.¹

Respect for his teacher's father

Let alone his teacher, he had absolute respect for his teacher's father. Hadrat Nānautwī's rahimahullāh father was on his death bed when he had diarrhoea and messed his bed. Those who were present were still looking at each other [not knowing what to do] while Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind rahimahullāh got up immediately and began collecting the stool with his hands, and went several times to throw it outside. Hadrat Nānautwī rahimahullāh [who was not present at the time] happened to come in. When he saw the scene before him, he was so pleased that he stood there and then and occupied himself in du'ā'. The du'ā' of a sincere teacher for his beloved student certainly had it's

¹ *Sawānih 'Ulamā'-e- Deoband*, vol. 2, p. 441.

effect, and Allāh *ta'ālā* turned Maḥmūd al-Ḥasan to Ḥadrat Shaykh al-Hind.¹

A unique incident depicting respect

I just remembered another incident depicting respect. There was a woman during the era of Ḥadrat 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* who had leprosy. When she used to enter the Ḥaram Sharīf, a stink would emanate from her body which would cause much aversion to people. Ḥadrat 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* called for her and said: “O slave-woman of Allāh! You must not come to the Ḥaram Sharīf because people are discomfited because of you. It will be better if you remain in your house.” In other words, Allāh *ta'ālā* knows well your intention. You will receive the full rewards by remaining in your house.

The woman stopped coming to the Ḥaram Sharīf. When Ḥadrat 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* passed away, some people went to her and said: “There is no restriction to your coming to the Ḥaram Sharīf now because the one who had stopped you has passed away.” The woman replied: “Ḥadrat 'Umar was not such that he must be obeyed when he was alive, and disobeyed when he has passed away.”²

What she meant was that Ḥadrat 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu* was a respectable and esteemed person. He will be obeyed under all conditions – both in life and in death.

¹ *Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband Kī Pachās Mithālī Shakhṣīyyāt*, p.73.

² موطأ إمام مالك، كتاب الحج، باب جامع الحج، ح (١٢٧٥).

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My dear friends! Look at the respect of this woman! What can be said about it! May Allāh *ta'ālā* inspire us as well. Āmīn.

Respect for elders

Dear brothers! Every believer has to become a person of good conduct and character. He has to have respect and love for everything which is worthy of respect, and he has to show the respect which is due to it. If the greatness and love for something is in the heart, there will certainly be respect for it. A poet says:

Love will automatically teach you the
etiquette of love.

We must have respect for our 'ulamā', teachers, mashā'ikh, elders of the family, elders of the community, parents, etc. and accord each one the respect demanded by their position. Nowadays, there are many shortcomings in this regard. Let's take the example of our parents. Their favours on us are countless. What do they not do for us? They sacrifice their youth to show us the rays and beams of youth. It is something for us to think about. How much of respect should we be according to them, and how much are we really doing? May Allāh *ta'ālā* guide us. Āmīn.

The seniority of our elders – our parents, teachers, mentors, etc. - demands on us to show respect to them. We should never do anything to surpass them, we must not walk in front of them, we must not commence eating before them, and so on. These are all included in showing respect to them.

On one occasion, Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* noticed Hadrat Abū Dardā' *radiyallāhu 'anhu*

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walking in front of Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ‘anhu*. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said: “O Abū Dardā! You are walking in front of a man who is better than you in this world and in the Hereafter. After the Prophets *‘alayhimus salām*, the sun of this world neither rose nor set on a person who is superior to Abū Bakr.”¹

This shows that juniors must show full consideration to seniors, bearing in mind the etiquette which have to be observed.

Sayings of the seniors with regard to good conduct

My dear friends! It is most essential to create reverence in our hearts for things which are worthy of respect, and then to accord respect to them. For example, respect for the sha‘ā’ir-al-Islām (the salient features of Islam), the Qur’ān, Dīnī books, the masjid, different foods, a person of knowledge, one’s teachers, parents, elders, and so on. Etiquette and good conduct are most important.

Hakīm al-Islam Hadrat Qārī Tayyib Sāhib *rahimahullāh* says: “Good conduct is a fundamental aspect of Dīn. The more a person’s conduct and respect, the stronger his Dīn will become. The more disrespect in a person, the weaker his Dīn.”²

Hadrat Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir Jīlānī *rahimahullāh* says: “A disrespectful person is castigated and disliked by both the Creator and the creation.”³

¹ حلية الأولياء: ج ٣، ص ٣٢٥.

² *Khutbāt Hakīm al-Islam*, vol. 3, p. 165.

³ *Kāmyāb Tālib-e-‘Ilm*, p. 75.

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Hadrat ‘Abdullāh ibn Mubāarak *rahimahullāh* says: “We are not so much in need of abundant knowledge as we are of a little respect.”¹

Imām Qarāfī *rahimahullāh* says: “A little good conduct and respect are better than many good actions.”²

Another pious elder says:

اجْعَلْ عَمَلَكَ مِلْحًا وَأَدَبَكَ دَقِيقًا³

Let your actions be like salt, and your good conduct like flour.

In other words, good conduct must be as much as the large amount of flour and the little salt which is added to it. A few good deeds which are filled with good conduct are better than many good deeds lacking in good conduct.

My dear friends! Be very particular about and give a lot of importance to good conduct. Progress without this is not possible. Whoever achieved anything in this path did so by virtue of good conduct.

أَدَّبُوا النَّفْسَ أَيُّهَا الْأَحْبَابُ - طُرُقُ الْعِشْقِ كُلُّهَا آدَابُ

All the paths of love [for Allāh] are made up of etiquette [and good conduct]. O friends! Set right your conduct.

¹مدارك السالكين: ج ٣، ص ٢٣٤٠.

²الفروق: ج ٤، ص ٤١٧.

³الفروق: ج ٤، ص ٤١٧.

Good conduct: Bringing comfort to others

When it comes to good conduct towards our elders, we have to remember one very important point. Good conduct means bringing comfort to a person. When dealing with our pious elders, shaykh, teacher, father, mother, any other elder, we must do it in a manner which brings comfort to them, and not discomfort. This is the real meaning of good conduct. For example, if a certain pious elder dislikes people standing up for him out of respect when he enters an assembly, then not standing will be considered good conduct.

The perceptiveness of Hadrat Abū Bakr

We find a beautiful incident in this regard from the pure life of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* when he was emigrating from Makkah to Madīnah. There were many people in Madīnah Munawwarah who had not seen Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* and Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ‘anhu*. When Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* reached Madīnah Munawwarah after a lengthy journey, people came in droves to see him and meet him. But they could not distinguish who was who. Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* appeared to be more senior in age, so people assumed he was Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* and went to shake hands with him. Look at the perfect understanding of Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ‘anhu*. He lowered his head and continued embracing the people and shaking hands with them without excusing himself. He did this because he knew Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* was tired after having undertaken such a lengthy journey. Conveying comfort to him at this point

entailed saving him from the strain of having to meet all these people. This is what good conduct demanded in this situation.¹

How to acquire benefit from the seniors

This is the real meaning of good conduct: If you want to show respect to someone, you must not cause him any discomfort. Some of those who are enamoured by a pious personality are only concerned about getting his blessings. They will not bother if someone gets killed in the process of fulfilling their objective.

I heard Hadrat Mufti Muhammad Rafi' 'Uthmānī Sāhib dāmat barakātuhum quoting the following statement of his shaykh, Hadrat Doctor 'Abd al-Hayy 'Ārifī rahīmahullāh, on several occasions. He used to say: "Those who are desirous of a pious personality can be divided into two groups. They are the *ahl-e-muhabbat* (people of love) and *ahl-e-'aqīdat* (those who have full confidence in the person). The *ahl-e-muhabbat* give full consideration to our needs, but it is a different matter with the *ahl-e-'aqīdat*. They are only worried about fulfilling their needs and objectives. It is only the *ahl-e-muhabbat* who really benefit because they are able to settle themselves into the heart of the pious personality."

My dear friends! Do not cause any discomfort to your seniors. Etiquette demands on us not to cause the slightest discomfort to those whom we are supposed to be serving. This has to be our constant effort. We love our pious elders and righteous personalities but do not bother about their comfort.

¹البداية والنهاية: ج ٣، ص ٤٥١.

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They are taken from one place to another without asking about what they want. This is a major wrong especially when they are old and sickly. We should rather ascertain their condition, temperament, make arrangements for their rest and comfort, seat them in one place, while we ourselves present ourselves to them and derive benefit from their company. Those who show concern for the comfort of these elders will derive internal spiritual benefits which will never be acquired by those who merely “drag” these elders from one place to another solely to acquire external and material benefits.

Social etiquette

I would also like to say a few things about social etiquette. The Dīn can be divided into five departments: (1) beliefs, (2) acts of worship, (3) transactions, (4) social dealings, and (5) morals and character.

The essence of social relationships (mu‘āsharat) is that no one must be harmed or discomforted by our demeanour and conduct. We have to learn the etiquette of social relationships so that we do not cause the slightest harm to anyone. The Sharī‘ah has laid down certain principles and regulations for our social life as regards our conduct with others, greeting, embracing and shaking hands, inviting, meeting and interacting, and so on. If we practise on these principles and regulations, everyone will be comforted and they will be free from discomfort.

Let us take the guest as an example. A person comes to us as a guest. Obviously there are certain etiquette of hospitality. The Western way is to ask the guest: “Would you like a cup of tea?” Our way is to ask: “What would you like?”

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This means: We would certainly like you to have something, but we are asking you the question so that we could ascertain what you like, and we do not present something to you which you do not like. If the guest refuses, we will ask him a second and a third time to remove the suspicion that he would like to have something but is shy to ask. After asking him a second and third time, we will be convinced that he is not refusing out of shyness. Now if he refuses even after asking him a third time, but we still insist on giving him something, this will be against the etiquette of good social relationships because the guest will be discomforted by this.

Discomfort in the name of comfort

Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* made a unique statement. He said: “Do not discomfort the guest in the name of comfort.”¹ In other words, we think we are honouring him and providing comfort to him whereas we are causing discomfort to the poor fellow. While the host has to worry about providing food and drink to his guest, he also has to give due consideration to the wishes of the guest. He may have eaten elsewhere, he probably promised someone that he is going to have a meal with that person, he is probably not hungry at the time, he has to reach a certain place by a certain time, and so on. After offering him two or three times, you must leave him to decide. This will comfort him, and increase love at the same time. The benefits in this world and in the Hereafter which are in store for sacrificing your own wants in order to convey

¹ *Khutbāt-e-Hakīmul Ummat*, vol. 2, p. 327.

comfort to the other can never be found in the case of causing discomfort to another while fulfilling your wants. It is most essential to pay attention to this because it is impermissible and harām to cause discomfort to any believer.

The importance of ṣalāh with congregation

My dear friends! Learn social etiquette and be particular about practising on them because it is harām to cause discomfort to anyone. Look! Ṣalāh with congregation is so important. Some jurists state that it is wājib (obligatory) to perform ṣalāh with congregation, while others say it is sunnat-e-mu'akkadah (an emphasised Sunnat).¹ In both cases, a person who leaves it out without a valid excuse will be sinful.² Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam emphasised ṣalāh with congregation both through his statements and his actions. When he was on his death bed and it was difficult for him to walk during the final moments of his life, he appointed Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr raḍiyallāhu 'anhu to lead the people in ṣalāh. Even in such a condition, Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam took support from two people and proceeded to the masjid to perform ṣalāh with the congregation.³ This shows how important it is to perform ṣalāh with congregation.

¹رد المحتار: ج ٢، ص ٣٤٠.

²رد المحتار: ج ٢، ص ٣٤١.

³صحيح البخاري، كتاب الأذان، باب الرجل يأتيه بالإمام ويأتيه الناس بالمأموم، ح (٧٢٢).

The following person is not permitted to come to the masjid

Despite the emphasis on salāh with congregation, all the jurists unanimously state that a person who is suffering from an illness which causes a stench to emanate from his body and would therefore discomfort the rest of the congregation, should not come to the masjid for the congregational salāh. Let alone being permitted to leave out the congregation, it is not permitted for him to come for it. If he comes to the masjid to join the congregation, he will be sinful. The reason for this is that if he were to perform salāh in the masjid with the congregation, he will be discomforting the rest of the Muslims. Islam does not permit causing undue harm to anyone.¹ So you see, despite the emphasised importance of the congregational salāh, such a person has been prohibited from joining it solely because it would discomfort the rest of the congregation.

Kissing the Black Stone

Who can deny the virtue and importance of the Black Stone (Hajar-e-Aswad)? Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said: “The sins of a person who kisses the Black Stone are pardoned.”² According to some narrations, this stone came down from Paradise.³ Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam

¹رد المحتار: ج ٢، ص ٥٢٥.

²مصنف عبد الرزاق، كتاب المناسك، باب الطواف واستلام الحجر وفضله، ح (٩٠٥٢).

³سنن الترمذي، باب ما جاء في فضل الحجر الأسود والركن والمقام، ح (٨٨٧).

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himself kissed it.¹ When he kissed an item, is there anyone who would not desire to kiss it? Doctor Iqbāl said that when we kiss the Black Stone, we are actually kissing the kiss of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* which is on the Black Stone:

When we kiss the Black Stone, we are really kissing the place which was kissed by Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*. Apart from this, what virtue can a stone have in the sight of Muslims?

On one hand, this is the position of the Black Stone. On the other hand, it is said to us that if there is the possibility of pushing a fellow Muslim or causing him harm in any way in the process of kissing it, then not only is it not permissible to kiss it, but a sin.²

Reading the Qur’ān in a loud voice

Reading the Qur’ān is a very meritorious act. Ten rewards are recorded for a single letter.³ It is better to read the Qur’ān in an audible tone than reading it silently, and there is more reward in it.⁴ But if your recitation is going to disturb a person who is performing *ṣalāh*, sleeping, or resting, then in such

¹صحيح البخاري، كتاب الحج، باب تقبيل الحجر، ح (١٦٢٤).

²رد المحتار: ج ٢، ص ٥٧٧.

³سنن الترمذي، باب ما جاء من قرأ حرفاً من القرآن ما له من الأجر، ح (٣١٣١).

⁴رد المحتار: ج ٢، ص ٥٢٤، ٥٢٥.

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a case, it is not permissible for you to read in a loud voice.¹

Examples of inconveniencing Muslims

My dear brothers! There are dozens of other examples in which lack of caution results in committing the sin of harming or discomforting a Muslim. For example, a person has just completed his salāh and is now engaged in his *ma'mulāt* (devotional practices). It would be disturbing to him if you were to go and shake hands with him or converse with him. If you are in a hurry, you must depart without shaking hands with him. Why do you have to disturb someone?

Similarly, it is disturbing to shake hands or meet a person in-between his Sunnat and optional salāhs. To wait for a person who is occupied in some work in a manner which could distract him would result in disturbing and discomforting him.

There are many items in the house which are used by several people, and there are special places for these items. You took an item, used it, and did not return it to its place. When someone else needs it, the poor person is inconvenienced because he cannot find it. These are all against social etiquette, and also cause harm to others.

You go to a toilet and leave it dirty, you use the wash-basin in an aeroplane and leave without cleaning it – this causes inconvenience to the person who enters after you. This is against social etiquette. There are countless other occasions which need special attention. In short, we must not do

¹رد المحتار: ج ٢، ص ٥٢٥.

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anything which would discomfort or inconvenience anyone.

Rasūlullāh's ﷺ particular attention to social etiquette

Together with instructing us to adhere to social etiquette, Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* himself was very particular about it. When Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* was delayed in returning at night and he had to pass the *As-hāb as-Suffah*,¹ he would offer *salām* in a tone which could be heard by those who are awake, but would not disturb those who are asleep.² Look at how he took due consideration of those who were awake and those who were asleep! Had he not offered the *salām*, those who were awake would have been deprived of it. Had he offered it in a loud voice, those who were sleeping would have woken up, and they would have been disturbed.

Rasūlullāh's ﷺ manner of waking up for tahajjud

Look at Rasūlullāh's *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* caution when waking up for tahajjud. He could not tolerate disturbing anyone in the least. His pure wife, *Hadrat 'Ā'ishah radiyallāhu 'anhā* relates that when he used to get up for tahajjud, he would carry out all his tasks without disturbing them in the least. He would get up silently, and open the door

¹ *Suffah* is a raised platform in Masjid-e-Nabawī which was set aside for poor Muslims during the time of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. Shelter and food was provided to them by Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*.

² صحیح مسلم، کتاب الأطعمة، باب إكرام الضيف وفضل إيثاره، ح (۲۱۱۳).

silently out of consideration for them.¹ Look at the extent of consideration he showed in whatever he did! If only we could appreciate these teachings and adopt these blessed ways.

Read the book *Ādāb al-Mu'āsharat*

May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward Hadrat Hakimul Ummat *rahimahullāh*. He compiled a small booklet titled, *Ādāb al-Mu'āsharat*, in which he discusses many social etiquette. This booklet ought to be in every Muslim home, and every person ought to study it. Similarly, the books *Ta'lim ad-Dīn*, and the tenth part of *Bahishtī Zewar* must be studied. If a few of these etiquette are read collectively and daily either in the masjid or at home, it will be very beneficial – inshā Allāh.

My personal experience

My dear friends! When due attention is paid to social etiquette, everyone experiences comfort. On one occasion I was sitting with Hadrat Aqdas Mufti Muhammad Rafi' Sāhib 'Uthmānī *dāmat barakātuhum* in the maṭāf between the maghrib and 'ishā *ṣalāhs*, and I needed to get up and leave. While seeking his permission to leave, I said to him: “Hadrat, inshā Allāh, you will be seated here until the 'ishā *ṣalāh*?” Hadrat replied: “That is what I intend to do.” I said: “When I complete whatever I have to do, I will come back to you.” Hadrat probably thought to himself: “If I had to get up for some need in his absence, and he were to return to this spot, he will be inconvenienced at not finding me here, and he might have to go around searching

¹ إحياء علوم الدين: ج ٦، ص ١٦٨.

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for me.” Hadrat may have also thought this: “If he is unable to return here for whatever reason, I will be worried about where he is. And he too will think to himself that Hadrat Muftī Sāhib must be worried about him.”

It is probably for these reasons that when I was about to leave, he said to me: “It is my intention to remain seated here, but let me be free to go anywhere if I have to, and you are also free, and you do not have to compel yourself to return here.”

At the time, I did not pay any particular attention to what he said. But when I returned to the place where I was staying and found a few guests waiting for me – and who remained seated with me until the ’ishā adhān – that is when I really valued Hadrat’s words. I thought in my heart: “Look at Hadrat’s advice which was so comforting to both of us!”

My dear brothers! There is a lot of comfort in social etiquette, so be very particular about it. If you make a promise with someone, or have an appointment with someone and you are delayed because of the traffic or some other reason, you must certainly inform him so that you do not put him through the inconvenience of having to wait for you.

An admonitory incident

Let me add another point since we are talking about social etiquette. When we go to visit a sick person, we do not bother about getting up and leaving quickly. The poor sick person has to bear our presence, and we do not know how much he is inconvenienced in the process. Mullā ‘Alī Qārī *rahimahullāh* relates an incident in *Mirqāt Sharh Mishkāt*: A person fell ill, and people began coming to visit him. One of them remained sitting there and

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made no move whatsoever of leaving. People continued arriving and departing, but he remained in his place. The sick person made a subtle reference to this by saying: “The large number of visitors has left me discomfited.” The reference was actually to the person who was sitting there for so long. But the poor fellow did not catch the reference, and said: “Hadrat! If you agree, I will close the door.” The patient said: “Yes, you must certainly close it, but not from the inside; from the outside.”¹

In the first case, a sick person is already in pain and discomfort; and now he has to suffer additional inconvenience from those who are visiting him. Yes, if a person knows for a fact that remaining for a long time with the sick person will bring him more joy, then there is no harm in sitting there longer than normal. This is because he will not be inconveniencing him, rather, he will be comforting him.

Similarly, we go to meet a person. We think that because we are free and have plenty of time to our disposal, everyone else is also free. So we remain seated there for several hours without bothering in the least about the person’s needs or occupations. Very well, we went to meet him, and obtained his permission. But now we must sit there for a short while and depart. If there is a need for a lengthy meeting, we must make an appointment from before hand.

¹مرقاة المفاتيح: ج ٤، ص ٥٤.

Speaking on the telephone for long periods of time

Muftī Muḥammad Shafi' Sāhib *rahimahullāh* writes in *Ma'ārif al-Qur'ān* that if you have to speak to a person for a long time over the telephone, you must first obtain his permission. Ask him: "I need to talk to you for some time. If you are free at present, I will continue the conversation. If not, tell me a suitable time to phone you later on."¹

Imagine if you were to phone him while he is busy doing some work, or entertaining his guests. And now you phone him and continue speaking to him for twenty minutes. Imagine the inconvenience you will be causing him!

Teachings of Rasūlullāh ﷺ

My dear brothers! We are so overjoyed at studying the teachings of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. Glory to Allāh! Look at the different etiquette which he taught us! If these etiquette and teachings of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam were to come in our lives and the non-Muslims had the opportunity of observing them in us, they would certainly be affected. Look at the different angles which he considered in each etiquette. Yet there is so much of negative propaganda against Islam. The fact of the matter is that the amount of consideration which Islam has accorded to the comfort of the creation has not been accorded by anyone else.

My dear friends! I suffice with these words. We must leave here with the firm resolution of paying full

¹ *Ma'ārif al-Qur'ān*, vol. 6, p. 394.

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attention to good conduct and good social etiquette. Read the necessary books on this subject, remain in the company of the 'ulamā' and mashā'ikh, and make a full effort to embellish your self with good conduct and manners. May Allāh *ta'ālā* give us the inspiration to practise. Āmīn.

وَأَخِرُ دَعْوَانَا أَنْ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ

Life-Saving Actions

Date: Dhū al-Qa'dah, 1425 A.H./January
2005

Venue: Islamic Da'wah Academy, Leicester,
U.K.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَكَفَى، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الرُّسُلِ وَخَاتِمِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ،
وَعَلَى آلِهِ الْأَصْفِيَاءِ، وَأَصْحَابِهِ الْأَتْقِيَاءِ. أَمَّا بَعْدُ: فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: إِنَّ الصَّدَقَةَ لَتُطْفِئُ غَضَبَ الرَّبِّ وَتَدْفَعُ مِيتَةَ السُّوءِ.¹

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي، وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي، وَاخْلُ عُقْدَةً مِنْ لِسَانِي
يَقْفُهُوا قَوْلِي، سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ
الْحَكِيمُ. اللَّهُمَّ انْفَعْنَا بِمَا عَلَّمْتَنَا وَعَلِّمْنَا مَا يَنْفَعُنَا. إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ
يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ، يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا،
اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ
وَأَتْبَاعِهِ وَأَزْوَاجِهِ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِ.

Disaster and adversities take place in this world. Sometimes it is an earthquake, a flood, a tsunami, or something other. On such occasions, a question comes up in the mind repeatedly: Is there any way to save one's self from calamities of this nature? How can an earthquake and a tsunami be avoided? There are some major forces of Allāh *ta'ālā* in this world. Water sometimes takes the form of a flood. The earth shakes and produces an earthquake. Lava pours forth from a volcanic mountain. Towns and villages are reduced to nothing. A wind turns

¹ سنن الترمذي، أبواب الزكاة، باب ما جاء في فضل الصدقة، ح (٦٦٥).

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into a whirlwind which then wreaks havoc. Sometimes, man himself becomes a storm of oppression and barbarism due to which he resorts to dangerous weapons to destroy towns after towns. How can man save himself from all those disasters which he finds himself incapable to combat?

Ḥaḍrat Mūsā عليه السلام and Plato

We get some reference to this from the story of Ḥaḍrat Mūsā 'alayhis salām and Plato. The latter asked Ḥaḍrat Mūsā 'alayhis salām: “If the sky becomes a quiver, all calamities become arrows, and Allāh ta'ālā is the One who rains down those arrows, how can we save ourselves?” Ḥaḍrat Mūsā 'alayhis salām replied: “There is only one way of saving one's self in such a situation. You must go and sit next to the One who is shooting the arrows.”

The cause of Allāh's wrath

The original method is to strengthen one's bond with Allāh ta'ālā through obedience to Him because His wrath descends on account of disobedience to Him. Allāh ta'ālā says:

وَكَمْ قَصَمْنَا مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ كَانَتْ ظَالِمَةً

*Many a sinful inhabitancy have We crushed.*¹

Allāh ta'ālā says in another place:

¹ Sūrah al-Ambiyā', 21: 11.

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وَكَمْ مِّنْ قَرْيَةٍ أَهْلَكْنَاهَا فَجَاءَهَا بَأْسُنَا بَيَاتًا أَوْ هُمْ قَائِلُونَ. فَمَا كَانَ دَعْوَاهُمْ إِذْ جَاءَهُمْ بَأْسُنَا إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا إِنَّا كُنَّا ظَالِمِينَ.

How many villages We destroyed!?! Our punishment reached them by night or while they were sleeping at noon. When Our punishment reached them, they could only cry out and say: “Surely we were sinners.”¹

There are many inhabitanancies whose inhabitants Allāh *ta‘ālā* destroyed. The punishment came to them at a time when they were asleep at night or having a siesta. When the punishment descended, they had no power to stop it. They could only say verbally: “We were wrongdoers. We were sinners. We had transgressed the limits. We were disobedient.” They could neither say nor do anything more. Why did the punishment come upon them? It was because of their disobedience. Look at the verse before the previously-quoted two verses:

اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْنَا مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ

Follow only that which has been revealed to you from your Sustainer and do not follow any associates other than Him.²

Accept with your heart and soul the Shari‘at of your Sustainer which has been sent to you, and practise on it. Do not cast aside your Sustainer by following other companions and friends. Do not adopt their ways. Follow the religion which has been sent to you

¹ Sūrah al-A‘rāf, 7: 4-5.

² Sūrah al-A‘rāf, 7: 3.

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by your Sustainer. There were many nations before you which left Allāh *ta'ālā* aside and followed other ways. Allāh *ta'ālā* then destroyed them.

Destruction of nations

Allāh *ta'ālā* destroyed nations and towns because of their disobedience.

فَكُلًّا أَخَذْنَا بِذَنبِهِ فَمِنْهُمْ مَن أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِ حَاصِبًا، وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ أَخَذَتْهُ
الصَّيْحَةُ، وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ خَسَفْنَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ، وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ أَعْرَفْنَا، وَمَا كَانَ
اللَّهُ لِيَظْلِمَهُمْ وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ.

Then every one of them We punished for his sin. There were those upon whom We sent a wind casting down pebbles. There were those whom an [awful] scream seized. There were those whom We caused to be swallowed into the earth. There were those whom We drowned. It was not Allāh who wronged them, but they wronged themselves.¹

Allāh *ta'ālā* seized and destroyed every disobedient nation because of its sinning. Winds were unleashed against some, the screaming sound of angels destroyed some, the earth swallowed some, and water drowned others. All this did not happen because Allāh *ta'ālā* wronged them. Rather, they had been wronging their own selves. They were committing evils due to which these calamities befell them. As you do so shall you reap.

If a farmer plants wheat seeds, he will reap wheat. If he plants rice seeds, his farm will produce rice. If a farmer plants wheat seeds and complains by saying:

¹ Sūrah al-'Ankabūt, 29: 40.

“Why is it that my farm is producing wheat and not rice like the other farms?” It will be said to him: “The fault lies with you. If you too planted rice seeds, you would have got a rice crop.”

In the same way, Allāh’s punishment descends on a person who lives a life of evil deeds. Allāh *ta’ālā* does not wrong people. He is most merciful and most affectionate. He is the One of justice and equity. Why should He be unfair? People commit sins and wrong their own selves. They do things which make the environment conducive to calamities and disasters.

Giving up sin: The fundamental way of saving one’s self from calamities

We learn from the above that punishment descends because of disobedience. Therefore, the first way of saving one’s self from Allāh’s punishment and the first way of saving one’s self from calamities is to strengthen one’s bond with Allāh *ta’ālā*. The bond with Allāh *ta’ālā* will be strengthened through practising on the Shari’at, and by embracing Allāh’s Dīn in its totality. The relationship with Allāh *ta’ālā* should not be one of selectivity, in the sense that you carry out some of His orders and discard others. It should not be that we perform *salāh* because it is easy for us, but we find it difficult to observe *purdah/hijāb*, so we discard it. Acts of worship are easy for us, so we do them. But transactions, social relationships, good mannerisms and good conduct are difficult for us, so we discard them. That should not be the case.

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اتَّبِعُوا مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ

Follow only that which has been revealed to you from your Sustainer.¹

This is the way to live with non-Muslims. This is the way to live with Muslims. These are your monetary duties. These are the rights of your neighbours. You must not look at anyone with scorn. You must not be jealous of anyone. You must not make fun of anyone. You must not oppress or wrong anyone. These are all the demands of Dīn. Adoption of Dīn in its entirety and practising on it are essential to establish a bond with Allāh *ta'ālā*. If you disregard Dīn, then remember that We destroyed and wiped out many nations before you. Let it not happen that you meet the same fate.

This is the fundamental and one way of saving one's self from calamities and disasters. However, there are three other points. We now have four points. The first and fundamental way is to repent from all sins, choose to live a life of piety, embrace the Dīn of Allāh *ta'ālā* in its entirety, and live your life according to it.

Seeking forgiveness: The second way of protection

The next point is to be particular about istighfār – seeking Allāh's forgiveness. We have to seek His forgiveness constantly. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

¹ Sūrah al-A'rāf, 7: 3.

وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَأَنْتَ فِيهِمْ ط وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ مُعَذِّبُهُمْ وَهُمْ
يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ

Allāh would never punish them as long as you are among them. And Allāh will never punish them as long as they continue asking for forgiveness.¹

My dear friends! Allāh *ta'ālā* does not destroy His servants when they are particular about seeking His forgiveness, and they beg Him for His pardon and petition him repeatedly. “O Allāh! Pardon us. O Allāh! Pardon us. O the most kind Master! We are sinners. We are weak. Pardon us.”

It is Allāh’s norm not to send punishment to a place whose inhabitants are constantly begging Him for forgiveness.

The unique condition of Allāh’s close servants

My dear brothers! We are in a despicable condition. We commit sins and still do not seek forgiveness. On the other hand, the close and pious servants of Allāh *ta'ālā* do good deeds and beg for His forgiveness. Allāh *ta'ālā* describes the people of Paradise as follows:

إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَبْلَ ذَلِكَ مُحْسِنِينَ. كَانُوا قَلِيلًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ مَا يَهْجَعُونَ.
وَبِالْأَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ.

They were doers of good before this [day]. They used to sleep but little at night. And in the hours of dawn they used to seek forgiveness.¹

¹ Sūrah al-Anfāl, 8: 33.

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Allāh *ta'ālā* is describing the condition of His righteous servants in these verses. One of their qualities is that they wake up at night to perform tahajjud. They keep away from their beds. They spend the major portion of the night in tahajjud *salāh*. Despite this, in the latter part of the night they feel that they displayed shortcomings in their worship, so they occupy themselves in seeking Allāh's forgiveness. They say: "O Allāh! We did not fulfil the right of Your worship as we ought to have done. Pardon us."

The special qualities of Allāh's servants

Allāh *ta'ālā* describes some of the qualities of His special servants as follows:

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجَاهِلُونَ
قَالُوا سَلَامًا. وَالَّذِينَ يَبِيتُونَ لِرَبِّهِمْ سُجَّدًا وَقِيَامًا. وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا
اصْرِفْ عَنَّا عَذَابَ جَهَنَّمَ ۚ إِنَّ عَذَابَهَا كَانَ غَرَامًا.

*The servants of the Merciful are they who walk humbly on the earth. When the ignorant ones address them, they reply: "Peace!" Who spend their night before their Sustainer, prostrating and standing. Who say: "O our Sustainer! Avert from us the punishment of Hell. Surely its punishment is inseparable."*²

The special servants of the Merciful Allāh *ta'ālā* spend their nights standing and prostrating before Him. Despite this, when they raise their hands in

¹ Sūrah adh-Dhāriyāt, 51: 16-18.

² Sūrah al-Furqān, 25: 63-65.

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prayer, they do not say: “O Allāh! We spent the major portion of the night in Your worship, so confer us with Paradise.” No! Instead, they fear Allāh *ta’ālā* and say:

رَبَّنَا اصْرِفْ عَنَّا عَذَابَ جَهَنَّمَ

*O our Sustainer! Avert from us the punishment of Hell.*¹

The special servants of Allāh *ta’ālā* do good deeds and still fear Him. On the other hand, we commit sins and have no fear. They do righteous deeds and, while acknowledging their shortcomings, they seek Allāh’s pardon. We disobey Allāh *ta’ālā*, but neither acknowledge our faults nor seek His pardon.

Seeking forgiveness after spending the day in ‘Arafāt

A pilgrim leaves ‘Arafāt while being pardoned. Even then, he is ordered to seek forgiveness:

ثُمَّ أَفِيضُوا مِنْ حَيْثُ أَفَاضَ النَّاسُ وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا اللَّهَ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ
رَحِيمٌ

*Then return from ‘Arafāt from where all the people return, and ask forgiveness of Allāh, surely Allāh is forgiving, merciful.*²

The question which arises is that why are we ordered to seek forgiveness even after being purified? The answer is that Allāh *ta’ālā* wants us to acknowledge our shortcomings. O Allāh! You are

¹ Sūrah al-Furqān, 25: 65.

² Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 199.

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most kind. Although we have heaps of sins, You made our broken and disjointed worship in 'Arafāt an excuse for our pardon. We cannot give thanks fully to You for Your pardon. We seek Your forgiveness for this shortcoming.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ and seeking forgiveness

Although Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* was divinely protected from sin, he used to pay particular attention to seeking forgiveness as a way of teaching his followers. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

وَاللّٰهُ اِنِّيْ لَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللّٰهَ وَاَتُوْبُ اِلَيْهِ فِي الْيَوْمِ اَكْثَرَ مِنْ سَبْعِيْنَ مَرَّةً¹

By Allāh, I seek forgiveness from Allāh ta'ālā and turn to Him in repentance more than 70 times a day.

Another Hadīth states:

اِنِّيْ لَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللّٰهَ فِي الْيَوْمِ مِائَةً مَرَّةً²

I seek forgiveness from Allāh ta'ālā 100 times in a day.

The other thing which is essential is repentance and seeking forgiveness. The most important thing is to establish a bond with Allāh ta'ālā. Repentance and seeking forgiveness are essential elements of this bond. When a sin is committed, it affects this bond and relationship. The bond is re-established with repentance and seeking forgiveness. Even if we live a life while keeping away from sins, seeking

¹صحيح البخاري، كتاب الدعوات، باب استغفار النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، ح (٦٣١٥).

²سنن الترمذي، أبواب تفسير القرآن، باب ومن سورة محمد، ح (٣٥٣١).

forgiveness is necessary because we cannot fulfil the right of gratitude which we owe to Allāh *ta'ālā*.

The blessing of seeking forgiveness

When a person makes seeking forgiveness his perpetual practice, Allāh *ta'ālā* protects him against calamities and fulfil his needs. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* says:

مَنْ لَزِمَ الْإِسْتِغْفَارَ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَهُ مِنْ كُلِّ ضِيقٍ مَخْرَجًا، وَمِنْ كُلِّ هَمٍّ فَرَجًا، وَرَزَقَهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ.¹

The person who adheres strictly to seeking forgiveness, Allāh ta'ālā provides him with a way out of every constriction, salvation from every worry, and provides him with sustenance from places he never imagined.

Allāh *ta'ālā* makes every difficulty easy by virtue of seeking forgiveness. He makes arrangements for all our worldly and Dīnī needs. If we are in need of sustenance, He provides for us. If we need knowledge, He gives it to us. If we need to be cured, He cures us. If we need patience, He confers us with patience. No matter what the need, Allāh *ta'ālā* fulfils it.

We therefore say that the first thing is to establish a bond with Allāh *ta'ālā*. This is done by saving ourselves from a life of sin and living a life of obedience, and remaining steadfastly on Dīn in its entirety. Together with this, the next thing is to give full attention to seeking forgiveness. Set aside a

¹ سنن أبي داود، باب تفریع أبواب الوتر، باب في الاستغفار، ح (١٥١٣).

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certain number of times, and count it on a rosary if you have to. Cry before Allāh *ta'ālā* and beg of Him by saying: “O Allāh! Pardon me. O Allāh! Pardon me.” When a person seeks pardon continually, Allāh *ta'ālā* will protect him against calamities.

Du'ā': The third element for salvation

The third element for salvation from calamities is *du'ā'*. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

لَا يَرُدُّ الْقَضَاءَ إِلَّا الدُّعَاءُ

Nothing diverts divine decree except du'ā'.

Divine will has decreed that a calamity will befall a certain place or a certain person. However, through the blessing of *du'ā'*, Allāh *ta'ālā* removes that calamity. *Du'ā'* is a powerful weapon through which the most serious problems can be solved. When a person makes *du'ā'*, he is actually presenting his application in Allāh's court. There is nothing difficult for Allāh *ta'ālā* to fulfil.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

الدُّعَاءُ يَنْفَعُ مِمَّا نَزَلَ وَمِمَّا لَمْ يَنْزِلْ، فَعَلَيْكُمْ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ بِالدُّعَاءِ

Du'ā' is beneficial for the calamity which has already descended and also against the one which has not descended as yet. O servants of Allāh! Make it a point of engaging in du'ā'.

¹ سنن الترمذي، أبواب القدر، باب ما جاء لا يرد القضاء إلا الدعاء، ح (٢٢٧٧).

² المستدرک للحاکم، کتاب الدعاء والتکبیر والتهليل والتسبیح والذکر، ح (١٨٣٩).

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We are ordered to hold on firmly to du‘ā’ because by virtue of du‘ā’, calamities are averted; and those which have descended are removed. Therefore, make du‘ā’ to Allāh *ta‘ālā* for the fulfilment of every objective – whether it be for good health, sustenance, protection against sins, protection against the mischief of Shayṭān and the carnal self, inspiration to do good, Paradise, protection against the Hell-fire, protection against punishment of the grave, a good death, refuge from a bad death, reformation and rectification, for all spiritual maladies such as miserliness, jealousy, malice, etc. Turn to Allāh *ta‘ālā* in du‘ā’ for salvation against all these maladies. Seek refuge in Allāh *ta‘ālā* against an evil decree, calamities, and disasters. In short, be very particular about making du‘ā’. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* himself was very particular about du‘ā’. He would also seek refuge from harmful things through du‘ā’.

Charity: The fourth element for protection

Charity is the fourth and last thing which is a means for protection against calamities and disasters. There is a slight difference between what we mean by *sadaqah* (charity) and what the Shari‘ah refers to as *sadaqah*. In the Shari‘at it refers to all types of charity including *zakāh* and *lillāh*. In the same way, if a person spends in Allāh’s path with the intention of protecting himself against a calamity or misery, it is referred to as *sadaqah*. A person takes a vow that if he is cured or a certain task is fulfilled, then he will give a certain amount in charity. If what he took the vow for is fulfilled and he gives that amount in charity, it is referred to as *sadaqah*. All these categories which we mentioned

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are known as sadaqah in the Shari'at. However, the recipients are not the same.

Where to spend charities

As for zakāh, it cannot be spent anywhere and everywhere. Allāh *ta'ālā* has specified its recipients:

إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْعَمِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ
وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغَرَمِينَ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ.

Zakāh is the right of the poor and the needy, those who are in charge thereof, those whose hearts are to be reconciled, in the freeing of those in bondage, those in debt, for the cause of Allāh, and for the wayfarer.¹

Zakāh can only be given to those who are listed in this verse. It will be given to them, and it is not permissible to give to anyone else. The same applies to the amount which is taken out as a fulfilment of a vow. For example, a person takes a vow: “If I am cured from this illness, I will give £100 in Allāh’s cause.” In such a case, only the above-mentioned categories of people can be given. Some people give in charity as a protection against calamities, without having taken a vow. For example, a person sees a sick person. He thinks about himself falling sick, so he gives in charity. A whirlwind blows, so he gives in charity. He has to go for a job interview or take an exam, so he gives in charity. These are examples of *lillāh*. They can be given for all those works where *lillāh* can be given.

¹ Sūrah at-Taubah, 9: 60.

The effect of charity and du‘ā’

I was saying to you that charity is also a protection against calamity. A person should be particular about paying his zakāh, and he must continue giving other charities as well. For example, for the construction and maintenance of masājid, expenses of a madrasah, orphans, widows, the needy, etc. These are all means for protection against calamities. One narration states:

بَادِرُوا بِالصَّدَقَةِ فَإِنَّ الْبَلَاءَ لَا يَتَخَطَّاهَا

Hasten in giving in charity because a calamity cannot surpass it.

We must not be lazy in giving in charity. Be particular about it because it is a barrier against calamities. It prevents calamities from advancing towards you.

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam said:

دَاوُوا مَرَضَاكُمْ بِالصَّدَقَةِ

Treat your sick people through charity.

We learn from these two Ahādīth that charity is similar to du‘ā’. Just as du‘ā’ prevents the onslaught of calamities, and removes the calamity which has descended; in the same way, charity stops calamities and removes the calamity which has descended.

¹ المعجم الأوسط للطبراني، ح (٥٦٤٣).

² المعجم الكبير للطبراني، ح (١٠١٩٦).

Charity is extremely advantageous

My dear brothers! Habituate yourselves to charity because it has many advantages. A narration of *Tirmidhī Sharīf* states that when Allāh *ta'ālā* created the mountains, the angels expressed their astonishment at their size, weight and strength. They said to Allāh *ta'ālā*: “O Allāh! Is there anything more powerful than this from among Your creations?” Allāh *ta'ālā* replied: “Indeed. It is steel.” (Because certain instruments can be made from steel which can break and crush mountains). The angels asked: “O Allāh! Is there anything more powerful than steel from among Your creations?” Allāh *ta'ālā* replied: “Yes. It is fire.” (Because it can melt steel). The angels asked: “O Allāh! Is there anything more powerful than fire from among Your creations?” Allāh *ta'ālā* replied: “Yes. It is water.” (Because it can extinguish fire). The angels asked: “O Allāh! Is there anything more powerful than water from among Your creations?” Allāh *ta'ālā* replied: “Yes. It is wind.” (Because when wind takes water under its control, it cannot flow its own course; it becomes subservient to the wind). The angels asked: “O Allāh! Is there anything more powerful than wind from among Your creations?” Allāh *ta'ālā* replied: “Yes. It is man’s charity which he gives with his right hand without his left hand coming to know about it.”¹

Calamities

Now ponder over this Hadīth. Firstly, mention is made of mountains which break forth from the

¹سنن الترمذي، أبواب التفسير، ح (٣٦٥٢).

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earth. From them we get lava spurting out and a major catastrophe takes place. Villages after villages are destroyed. Similarly, the ground shakes, an earthquake takes place and towns upon towns are left desolate. Then take the case of steel. Almost all weapons of war are made of steel. Thousands of lives are lost in wars, countless children are orphaned and women widowed. There is nothing but destruction. Then take the case of fire. When it goes out of control, it becomes a powerful unstoppable force which devours towns after towns. Man is left helpless. When forest fires start in Australia and America, entire forests are razed to the ground. Although these are modern and advanced countries, they cannot bring the fires under control. Then take the case of water which comes in the form of floods, and then the powerful tsunamis. Wind is also a powerful force which takes the form of whirlwinds. These are the different elements which bring with them major calamities and disasters.

The unique subject matter of the Hadīth

This is a unique Hadīth. It shows us how to safeguard ourselves from calamities. It tells us that these forces are of such a nature that none other than Allāh *ta'ālā* can control them. Yet, Allāh *ta'ālā* has created this effect in the charity of a believer that it comes as a barrier and a wall in the face of these calamities. The angels asked: “Is there anything more powerful than the wind?” Allāh *ta'ālā* replied: “Yes. When My servant spends sincerely on a poor and needy person for My sake to the extent that his left hand does not come to know of the generosity of his right hand, then it is more powerful than the wind. When charity comes

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forward, all these things are reduced to nothing before it:

بَادِرُوا بِالصَّدَقَةِ فَإِنَّ الْبَلَاءَ لَا يَتَخَطَّاهَا¹

Hasten in giving in charity because a calamity cannot surpass it.

Major benefits in spending for Allāh's sake

This is why is say to you – my brothers – to give in charity. Instil in yourselves the habit of spending in Allāh's cause. Especially in these days, there is a pressing need to spend on the poor and needy who are in large numbers. When a disaster strikes a place, countless people become homeless, helpless, thirsty, hungry and unclothed. In other words, they become needy and deprived in every possible way. Spend as much as you can, and do it with all your heart. Pay your zakāh and give lillāh as well. Religious people certainly pay their zakāh but are weak in giving lillāh. Make it a habit to give lillāh together with your zakāh.

There are many benefits in spending for Allāh's sake. We understood just one benefit now, i.e. by the blessing of charity, calamities are averted and those which have already descended are removed.

Forgiveness and monetary blessings on account of charity

Spending in Allāh's cause is also a means of forgiveness, and it results in blessings in one's wealth.

¹المعجم الأوسط للطبراني، ح (٥٦٤٣).

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وَاللَّهُ يَعِدُكُمْ مَغْفِرَةً مِنْهُ وَفَضْلًا

Allah promises you His forgiveness and bounty.¹

Allāh *ta'ālā* says in another place:

وَمَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَهُوَ يُخْلِفُهُ، وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ.

Whatever it be that you spend, He replaces it. And He is the best of providers.²

Allāh *ta'ālā* certainly recompenses a person who spends in His cause. Sometimes He recompenses him in this world, sometimes in the Hereafter, and sometimes in both worlds. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: “Allāh *ta'ālā* said to me: Spend on people and I will spend on you.”³

Angels pray for blessings for the charitable person

The angels also pray for blessings in favour of the person who gives in charity. A Hadīth of Sahīh Bukhārī and Sahīh Muslim states:

¹ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 268.

² Sūrah Saba', 34: 39.

³ صحيح البخاري، كتاب تفسير القرآن، باب قوله وكان عرشه على الماء، ح (٤٦٦).

مَا مِنْ يَوْمٍ يُصْبِحُ الْعِبَادُ فِيهِ إِلَّا مَلَكَانِ يَنْزِلَانِ فَيَقُولُ أَحَدُهُمَا: اللَّهُمَّ
أَعْطِ مُنْفِقًا خَلْفًا، وَيَقُولُ الْآخَرُ: اللَّهُمَّ أَعْطِ مُمْسِكًا تَلْفًا!

Two angels descend every morning. One of them says: “O Allāh! Recompense the one who spends.” The other one says: “O Allāh! Cause the one who withholds to suffer loss.”

Charity cools Allāh’s anger and repulses a bad death

Another benefit of charity is that the anger of Allāh *ta’ālā* is cooled through it, and a person is blessed with a good death. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said:

إِنَّ الصَّدَقَةَ لَتُطْفِئُ غَضَبَ الرَّبِّ وَتَدْفَعُ مِيتَةَ السُّوءِ^١

Charity extinguishes the wrath of Allāh and repulses a bad death.

By virtue of spending in Allāh’s cause, a person is saved from a death of unbelief, a death of polytheism, a death of hypocrisy, a death of Allāh’s disobedience, a death of poverty, and a death of a calamity.

Protection from punishment of the grave

A person who spends in Allāh’s cause is protected from the punishment of the grave:

¹ صحيح البخاري، كتاب الزكاة، باب قول الله فأما من أعطى، ح (١٤٥٣)، صحيح مسلم، كتاب الزكاة، باب في المنفق والممسك، ح (١٠٢٣).

² سنن الترمذي، أبواب الزكاة، باب ما جاء في فضل الصدقة، ح (٦٦٥).

إِنَّ الصَّدَقَةَ لَتُظْفِي عَنْ أَهْلِهَا حَرَّ الْقُبُورِ^١

Charity certainly extinguishes the heat of the graves of those who give in charity.

Success on the day of Resurrection

Spending for Allāh's sake will be a cause of receiving shade under Allāh's Throne on the day of Resurrection. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

سَبْعَةٌ يُظِلُّهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي ظِلِّهِ يَوْمَ لَا ظِلَّ إِلَّا ظِلُّهُ.

There are seven types of people whom Allāh ta'ālā will shade on the day when there will be no shade apart from His:

One of the seven will be the person who gives in charity:

رَجُلٌ تَصَدَّقَ بِصَدَقَةٍ، فَأَخْفَاهَا حَتَّى لَا تَعْلَمَ شِمَالُهُ مَا تُنْفِقُ يَمِينُهُ^٢.

A person who gives in charity but conceals it to the extent that his left hand does not know what his right hand spent.

The scale of deeds will be heavy

On the day of Resurrection, the scale of deeds of the person who spends in Allāh's cause will be heavy. Allāh ta'ālā says:

¹ المعجم الكبير للطبراني، ح (٧٨٨).

² صحيح البخاري، كتاب الزكاة، باب الصدقة باليمين، ح (١٤٣٣).

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لَنْ تَتَّالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ.

You will not acquire perfect goodness until you spend of that which you love.

When a person spends from the things which he loves, he will receive perfect goodness and great rewards. When the goodness will be perfect, the reward will obviously be great. Consequently, the scale of deeds will become heavy.

Protection from the Hell-fire

Spending in Allāh's cause protects a person from the Hell-fire. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

مَا مِنْكُمْ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا سَيَكَلِّمُهُ اللَّهُ لَيْسَ بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَهُ تَرْجُمَانٌ، فَيَنْظُرُ
أَيْمَنَ مِنْهُ فَلَا يَرَى إِلَّا مَا قَدَّمَ، وَيَنْظُرُ أَشْأَمَ مِنْهُ فَلَا يَرَى إِلَّا مَا قَدَّمَ،
وَيَنْظُرُ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ فَلَا يَرَى إِلَّا النَّارَ تَلْقَاءَ وَجْهِهِ، فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ وَلَوْ بِشِقِّ
تَمْرَةٍ.¹

Allāh ta'ālā will speak to every single one of you without an interpreter. A person will look to his right and see nothing but his deeds. He will look to his left and see nothing but his deeds. He will look in front and he will see nothing but the Hell-fire in his face. Therefore, save yourself from the Hell-fire even if it is by giving a piece of date in charity.

¹صحيح مسلم، كتاب الزكاة، باب الحث على الصدقة، (١٠٣٠).

Entry into Paradise

A person earns entry into Paradise by spending in Allāh's path. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

أَعَدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ.

Prepared for the pious. Who go on spending in prosperity and in adversity.¹

This means that pious people are so much in the habit of spending in Allāh's cause that they spend in every condition according to their means. If they have more, they spend more. If they have less, they spend less. They spend in both prosperity and adversity. Allāh *ta'ālā* will admit such people into Paradise.

Charity brings blessings in one's life and protects against pride

Charity increases one's lifespan and removes pride and haughtiness.

إِنَّ صَدَقَةَ الْمُسْلِمِ تَزِيدُ فِي الْعُمْرِ وَتَمْنَعُ مَيِّتَةَ السُّوءِ، وَيُدْهَبُ اللَّهُ بِهَا الْكِبَرَ وَالْفَخْرَ؟

The charity of a Muslim increases the lifespan, stops a bad death, and Allāh ta'ālā removes pride and haughtiness through it.

Bringing joy to a Muslim earns Allāh's pleasure

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

¹ Sūrah Āl 'Imrān, 3: 133-134.

² المعجم الكبير للطبراني، ح (٣١).

أَحَبُّ الْأَعْمَالِ إِلَى اللَّهِ تَعَالَى سُرُورٌ تُدْخِلُهُ عَلَى مُسْلِمٍ^١

The most beloved action in the sight of Allāh ta'ālā is the joy which you bring to a Muslim.

Bringing joy to a Muslim is intensely beloved to Allāh ta'ālā. If this is the case, imagine how much of Allāh's pleasure a person will acquire when he brings joy to the poor and needy by alleviating their poverty! It is difficult to estimate the extent of Allāh's pleasure. Furthermore, if you spend on the poor, you will receive their prayers which will emanate from the depths of their hearts. These prayers will reach directly to the Throne of Allāh ta'ālā. This is an additional benefit in spending on the poor, i.e. you get their prayers.

An amazing incident related to King 'Abd al-'Azīz

When I had completed my hajj, I read an Arabic newspaper which contained the transcript of a speech delivered by King Fahad in Minā to guests who had come that year from different Muslim countries. While expressing his thanks to Allāh ta'ālā, he said: “Whatever facilities you see as regards serving the pilgrims are solely by the grace of Allāh ta'ālā.” He then related an incident:

My father, King 'Abd al-'Azīz, was in the habit of announcing an open audience to any resident of the country to come to him without any hindrance and ask for whatever he wanted. One day, an old woman came forward and presented her needs. It was a time when oil hadn't been discovered in Saudi Arabia as yet. King 'Abd al-'Azīz ordered for the

^١المعجم الأوسط: ١٣٩/٦.

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needs of the old woman to be fulfilled. When the woman received whatever she needed and was about to leave, tears were flowing from her eyes and she was making this du‘ā’:

اللَّهُ يَفْتَحْ عَلَيْكَ كُنُوزَ الْأَرْضِ

May Allāh open the treasures of the land for you.

After relating this incident, King Fahad said: “This is the effect of that old woman’s du‘ā’ that the treasures of the land of Saudi Arabia were opened.”

We learn from this that we receive the du‘ā’s of the poor by spending on them.

Do not fear poverty on account of charity

My objective of saying this is that there are countless benefits in spending for the sake of Allāh *ta‘ālā*. We should therefore spend abundantly. Also bear in mind that blessings are experienced in one’s wealth through spending in Allāh’s cause. Wealth increases, it does not decrease. This is why we should not think of poverty. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said:

أَنْفِقْ يَا بِلَالُ وَلَا تَخَشَّ مِنْ ذِي الْعَرْشِ إِقْلَالًا

O Bilāl! Spend and do not fear poverty from the Master of the Throne.

The generosity of Hadrat ‘Ā’ishah

The quality of generosity was a salient quality in the lives of the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ‘anhum* and our

¹شعب الإيمان، حبّ النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، ح (١٤٦٦).

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pious predecessors. On one occasion, Hadrat ‘Abdullāh ibn az-Zubayr *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* who was a nephew of Hadrat ‘Ā’ishah *radiyallāhu ‘anhā* sent two bags of dirhams to her. They contained 180 000 dirhams. This was an astronomical amount. Hadrat ‘Ā’ishah *radiyallāhu ‘anhā* distributed it among the people before nightfall.¹ This is just one occasion which we are relating. It is difficult to estimate how much she must have spent in the course of her life.

The same nephew became displeased with her for spending excessively. He said: “If my aunt does not stop spending in this way, I will impose restrictions on her.” When Hadrat ‘Ā’ishah *radiyallāhu ‘anhā* heard of this, she became angry at him and vowed never to speak to him. She said: “Why is he stopping me from righteous works?” He was able to restore relations with her after much difficulty.² Such was her zeal to spend in Allāh’s cause.

The generosity of Hadrat Abū Bakr and ‘Umar

This is a well-known incident concerning Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ‘anhu*. Hadrat ‘Umar *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* relates: My financial position on the occasion of the expedition to Tabūk was very good, while that of Abū Bakr was quite weak. The thought came to my mind that this is a good opportunity for me to surpass him. I took half of all my wealth and brought it to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*. Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* also came in. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* asked:

¹ إحياء علوم الدين: ج ٦، ص ١٦٨.

² صحيح البخاري، كتاب الأدب، باب الهجرة، ح (٦٠٧٨).

يَا أَبَا بَكْرٍ! مَا أَبْقَيْتَ لِأَهْلِكَ؟

O Abū Bakr! What did you leave behind for your family?

Hadrat Abū Bakr radiyallāhu ‘*anhu* replied:

أَبْقَيْتُ لَهُمُ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ^١

I left Allāh ta‘ālā and His Messenger for them. (Apart from that, I brought whatever I had in my house).

The generosity of ‘Abd ar-Rahmān ibn ‘Auf

Hadrat ‘Abd ar-Rahmān ibn ‘Auf radiyallāhu ‘*anhu* was also from among those who were in the forefront of spending in Allāh’s cause. He presented 200 auqiyahs on this occasion [of Tabūk]. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘*alayhi wa sallam* asked him:

هَلْ تَرَكْتَ لِأَهْلِكَ شَيْئًا؟

Did you leave anything for your family?

He replied:

نَعَمْ، أَكْثَرَ مِمَّا أَنْفَقْتُ وَأَطَيْبَ

Yes. More and better than what I gave in charity.

Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘*alayhi wa sallam* asked: “What did you leave behind?”

He replied:

¹سنن الترمذي، أبواب المناقب، باب مناقب أبي بكر الصديق، ح (٣٩٧٨).

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مَا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ وَالْخَيْرِ

The sustenance and goodness which Allāh ta'ālā and His Messenger promised.

It was easy for these personalities to spend because the love of wealth had not entered their hearts. They knew fully well that wealth is a capital which has to be spent to acquire the bounties of Paradise which are much higher, far better and more everlasting than the bounties of this world.

My dear brothers! We too should turn our attention in this direction.

The generosity of Hadrat 'Uthmān

Hadrat 'Uthmān *radīyallāhu 'anhu* gave so much on the occasion of Tabūk that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said out of immense joy:

مَا عَلَى عَثْمَانَ مَا عَمِلَ بَعْدَ هَذِهِ

After this monetary sacrifice, 'Uthmān may do as he wants, it will not cause him any harm.

What this means is that Hadrat 'Uthmān *radīyallāhu 'anhu* pleased Allāh ta'ālā and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* so much through this charity of his that he may do as he likes. Whether he does any good in this world or not, he will not suffer any loss in the Hereafter.

¹ مختصر تاريخ دمشق: ج ١٤، ص ٣٥٠.

² سنن الترمذي، أبواب المناقب، باب مناقب عثمان بن عفان، ح (٤٠٠٥).

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How much did Hadrat Uthmān *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* spend? When Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* made an announcement for contributions, Hadrat Uthmān *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* donated 100 fully-laden camels. He then gave another hundred, and then another hundred.¹

Generosity: A hallmark of Prophets and righteous servants

Those who spend whole-heartedly in Allāh’s cause are actually following in the footsteps of the Prophets *‘alayhimus salām* and the righteous servants of Allāh *ta’ālā*. This is because there was no Prophet who did not possess the quality of generosity. All the righteous servants of Allāh *ta’ālā* were similarly generous. Therefore, a person who is generous, who feeds people, supports the needy, helps the poor, assists the masājid and madāris, spends in good causes; and has this zeal in his heart that if he has money he will do good works, then he is following in the perfect example of the Prophets *‘alayhimus salām* and the righteous servants of Allāh *ta’ālā*.

An amazing incident portraying generosity

Imām Wāqidī *rahimahullāh* was a great scholar. He relates his own story: “We were experiencing poverty in my house. The day of ‘īd was approaching. My wife said to me: ‘The day of ‘īd is almost here, think about something. We two can exercise patience, but how can we convince our children to do the same? We will have to think about new clothes for them, and some food items.’”

¹سنن الترمذي، أبواب المناقب، باب مناقب عثمان بن عفان، ح (٤٠٠٥).

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Imām Wāqīdī *rahimahullāh* continues: “I went to one of my friends who was a trader and related my entire story to him. He placed a bag of 1 200 dirhams in my hand and said: ‘Take this.’ I went home and placed the bag in my wife’s hand. She had just taken the bag when someone knocked on the door. When I went to check, I saw that it was one of my Hāshimī friends. He said: ‘The day of ‘īd has arrived and I have nothing in my house. My wife is saying to me that we two can exercise patience but we will not be able to convince our children.’”

“I seated him inside my house and consulted my wife after describing the man’s situation to her. She asked me: ‘What thoughts are passing through your heart?’ I said: ‘I think we should keep half the money for ourselves and give him the other half. In this way, our needs will be fulfilled and so will his.’ My wife said: ‘You went to a trader who is not even an ‘ālim, and he gave you 1 200 dirhams. On the other hand, you are an ‘ālim and yet you are talking about keeping half the amount for us!? This is not right. Give him the entire bag.’” Allāhu Akbar! Just look at her zeal to spend in Allāh’s cause! Imām Wāqīdī *rahimahullāh* then gave the bag as he had received it to this Hāshimī friend.

The Hāshimī had just reached his house when someone knocked on the door. When he opened the door, it was the same trader who had give 1 200 dirhams to Imām Wāqīdī *rahimahullāh*. After exchanging pleasantries, he too said the same thing. That is, the day of ‘īd has arrived and he has nothing in his house. His wife is saying that they can exercise patience but what will the children do? The trader had no money apart from the 1 200 dirhams.

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My brothers! Just think about it! A person does not even keep five dirhams for his wife and children; he gives everything to the person who asks him so that his need can be fulfilled.

The Hāshimī too places the bag of 1 200 dirhams in the hand of the trader. The trader immediately recognizes it as his own. He leaves it, proceeds directly to Imām Wāqidī *rahimahullāh* and says: “Tell me the truth! Where is the bag of dirhams which I had given to you?” Imām Wāqidī *rahimahullāh* asked him the reason for his question, so the trader related his story to him. Imām Wāqidī *rahimahullāh* realized that the trader had given him the dirhams while he had nothing else in his own house. Imām Wāqidī *rahimahullāh* too had given the money to the Hāshimī while he himself had nothing in his house. And the Hāshimī too was prepared to give the 1 200 dirhams to the trader while he himself had nothing in his house.

The minister of the time, Yaḥyā ibn Khālid, came to know of this amazing incident of self-sacrifice. He came with 10 000 dirhams, gave 2 000 to Imām Wāqidī *rahimahullāh*, 2 000 to the Hāshimī and 2 000 to the trader. He then said: “You all have done a meritorious act, but the most remarkable action is that of the wife of Imām Wāqidī who, despite being a woman, encouraged her husband to give the entire amount and was prepared to exercise patience. This is why for her I have this gift of 4 000 dirhams.”¹

¹المنتظم: ج ١٠، ص ١٧١.

Search personally for good works

I will now conclude my talk. I hope that you people will pay attention to this subject. May Allāh *ta'ālā* inspire us all to practise. Do not wait for someone to come to you and ask you. No. Instead, you your self must go out in search of good works.

Hadrat Abū Sa'īd *radīyallāhu 'anhu* says that if a Muslim feeds a fellow Muslim, Allāh *ta'ālā* will feed him of the fruits of Paradise. If he gives water to a thirsty Muslim, Allāh *ta'ālā* will give him the pure drink of Paradise which will have a seal on it. If he feeds an unclothed Muslim, Allāh *ta'ālā* will clothe him with the green garments of Paradise.¹

The rewards for feeding, clothing and spending are not restricted to spending on Muslims. Rather, to every human. In fact, rewards are promised for showing kindness to every living creature. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

فِي كُلِّ ذَاتٍ كَبِدٍ رَطْبَةٍ أَجْرٌ

There is a reward for feeding every living creature.

My dear brothers! By spending this fleeting wealth, we will receive much more in the Hereafter. This world is not forever. However, whatever is spent for Allāh's sake and sent forth, will remain forever in the Hereafter.

¹سنن الترمذي، أبواب الزهد، ح (٢٦١٨).

²صحيح البخاري، كتاب الأدب، باب رحمة الناس والبهائم، ح (٦٠١٤).

Develop the habit of spending continually

Bear in mind that spending for Allāh's sake should not be restricted to times of calamities, disasters and need. Rather, we must develop the habit of spending constantly from what Allāh *ta'ālā* has given us. If we make it a habit of spending for Allāh's sake, then – inshā Allāh – we will acquire all the benefits which were explained previously. May Allāh *ta'ālā* inspire us to practise. Āmīn.

وَأَخِرُ دَعْوَانَا أَنْ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ

Genuine Gratitude

Date: Ramaḍān 1428 A.H./October 2007

Venue: Maṣjid an-Nūr, Leicester, U.K.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَكَفَى، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الرُّسُلِ وَخَاتِمِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ،
وَعَلَى آلِهِ الْأَصْفِيَاءِ، وَأَصْحَابِهِ الْأَتْقِيَاءِ. أَمَّا بَعْدُ: فَأَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ
الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ، بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ: ﴿وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا
تُحْصَوْنَهَا﴾. صَدَقَ اللَّهُ مَوْلَانَا الْعَظِيمُ، وَصَدَقَ رَسُولُهُ النَّبِيُّ الْأُمِّيُّ
الْكَرِيمُ، وَنَحْنُ عَلَى ذَلِكَ لَمِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ وَالشَّاكِرِينَ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ
الْعَالَمِينَ.

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي، وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي، وَاحْلُلْ عُقْدَةً مِنْ لِسَانِي
يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي، سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ
الْحَكِيمُ. اللَّهُمَّ انْفَعْنَا بِمَا عَلَّمْتَنَا وَعَلِّمْنَا مَا يَنْفَعُنَا. إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ
يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ، يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا،
اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ
وَأَتْبَاعِهِ وَأَزْوَاجِهِ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِ.

Allāh's magnanimity

Allāh *ta'ālā* is most generous. His magnanimity is so much that we are totally immersed in His favours all the time. Look! Allāh *ta'ālā* created us and brought us from non-existence into existence. This is a bounty in itself. Then He made us humans and not animals. This is another bounty. Then He made us physically normal. He did not make us blind, deaf,

dumb, paralysed or lunatics. This is another bounty. Then He blessed us with the treasure of imān and made us Muslims. And in addition to all this, He made us followers of His most superior Prophet, Muḥammad Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*. It would have been a great bounty if we were the followers of Ḥaḍrat Ādam *‘alayhis salām*, Ḥaḍrat Mūsā *‘alayhis salām* or of any other Prophet. If, on the day of Resurrection, we were addressed as the followers of Ḥaḍrat Sulaymān *‘alayhis salām* or Ḥaḍrat Yūsuf *‘alayhis salām*, it would have been a remarkable achievement. However, Allāh *ta‘ālā* affiliated us to the chief of the Messengers, Muḥammad *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, solely out of His grace and kindness.

The special feature of the followers of Muḥammad ﷺ

By virtue of our affiliation to Muḥammad Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, we have been blessed with many other bounties and favours which were not conferred to other nations. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said:

إِنَّ أُمَّتِي يُدْعَوْنَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ غُرًّا مُحَجَّلِينَ مِنْ آثَارِ الْوُضُوءِ

On the day of Resurrection my ummat will be addressed as ghurran muhajjalīn due to the effects of wudū’.

When the followers of Muḥammad *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* are raised on the day of Resurrection, the parts of the body which used to be washed in wudū’ which they performed for ṣalāh and other acts of

¹صحيح البخاري، كتاب الوضوء، باب فضل الوضوء، ح (١٤٠).

worship will glitter. The faces, hands and feet will glitter due to which they will be given this special title which will not be given to any other ummat. They will receive the title – al-ghurr al-muḥajjalīn.¹

It is due to our affiliation with Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam that we will be the first to enter Paradise although we are the last of nations. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said in this regard:

إِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ حُرِّمَتْ عَلَى الْأَنْبِيَاءِ كُلِّهِمْ حَتَّىٰ أَدْخُلَهَا، وَحُرِّمَتْ عَلَى الْأُمَّمِ
حَتَّىٰ تَدْخُلَهَا أُمَّتِي.؟

Paradise is forbidden to all the Prophets until I enter it. It is forbidden to all nations until my nation enters it.

It is also due to our affiliation with Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam that we have been given the title of “the best of nations”.

Allāh ta'ālā says:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ

*You are the best of all nations which has been sent into the world.*³

A poet addresses Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam saying: O my master sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam! You are the best of humans. You are the

¹مرقاة المفاتيح: ج ٢، ص ١٦.

²كنز العمال، ح (٣١٩٥٣).

³ Sūrah Āl 'Imrān, 3: 110.

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best of Messengers. You are the best of creations. If you are the best in Allāh’s entire universe, we have become the best of nations by virtue of our affiliation with you.

Why should your nation not receive the title of “best of nations” bearing in mind that you are the best of humans, the best of Messengers and the best of the creation!?

My worship is not a recompense for Your mercies

Some of the bounties which we listed just now are: Allāh *ta’ālā* brought us from non-existence into existence, we were nothing but He made us into everything, He gave us eyes, a tongue, ears, brains, hands, legs, and made us physically normal. Then He made us believers, and that too, from among the followers of the seal of the Prophets, Muḥammad Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*. These bounties are such that if were to spend our entire lives in prostration as a way of expressing our gratitude to Allāh *ta’ālā*, we will not be able to fulfil the right of gratitude for even a single one of those bounties. Our servitude cannot be a recompense for the bounties which He blessed us with. We are doing no favour at all to Allāh *ta’ālā* by performing *ṣalāh*, keeping fast and observing *i’tikāf*. If we were blessed with the lifespan of *Ḥaḍrat Nūḥ ‘alayhis salām*, and we spent that entire life praising and thanking Allāh *ta’ālā* while in prostration, we will still not be able to repay Him for a single mercy from His countless mercies which are raining upon us.

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If You confer on me, it is out of Your generosity. My worship is not a recompense for Your mercies.

The family of Ḥaḍrat Dāwūd عليه السلام is ordered to give thanks

How can a servant ever fulfil the right of gratitude? The gratitude of a servant is limited while Allāh's bounties are limitless. We are absolutely nothing! Even the Messengers of Allāh *ta'ālā* found themselves wanting in thanking Allāh *ta'ālā* as He ought to be thanked. Allāh *ta'ālā* addresses the family of Ḥaḍrat Dāwūd *'alayhis salām*:

إِعْمَلُوا آلَ دَاوُدَ شُكْرًا

Work, O household of Dāwūd, in gratitude [to Me].¹

Obey Allāh *ta'ālā* in order to give thanks to Him for His bounties. Do actions which display your gratitude. Let it not be that you express gratitude verbally while your actions do not.

The exegists highlight a point here. I request the 'ulamā' and students to pay attention to it. Allāh *ta'ālā* did not say:

أَشْكُرُوا لِي آلَ دَاوُدَ

O household of Dāwūd! Give thanks to Me.

Instead, He said:

¹ Sūrah Saba', 34: 13.

إِعْمَلُوا آلَ دَاوُدَ شُكْرًا

O household of Dāwūd! Express your thanks practically.¹ It will not be enough for you to merely say with your tongue: “We praise You. We thank You.” Rather, thank Him verbally and then use every bounty of His in a manner which pleases Him. Express your practical thanks in this way. If a person uses a bounty given to him by someone in a manner which was not intended by the giver, then he has actually displayed his thanklessness and ungratefulness.

The pillars of gratitude

There are three pillars of gratitude. The first is that a person acknowledges with his heart and mind that the favour which he has received has been given to him by Allāh *ta’ālā* solely out of His kindness and generosity, without the person being eligible for it. Allāh *ta’ālā* enabled us to observe i’tikāf without being eligible for it. Our wives, children, businesses, factories, intelligence, honour, wealth, knowledge, religiosity, wisdom – these and all other bounties have been given to us by Allāh *ta’ālā* solely out of His kindness and generosity; without us being eligible for them.

Bounties are countless

My dear brothers! The bounties and favours are so many that we cannot count them. There are thousands of bounties which we do not even perceive and realize as bounties. The bounties

¹تفسير القرطبي: ج ١٧، ص ٢٧٨.

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which we perceive are too few in comparison to the total bounties of Allāh *ta'ālā* on us.

وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا تَحْصُوهَا

*Were you to count the favours of Allāh, you will not be able to encompass them.*¹

If I were to ask you to think about Allāh's favours on you and note them down, I don't think anyone will be able to list more than 100. This, despite the fact that His favours are in the millions and billions. There are many bounties which we only realize as bounties when they are taken away from us. There is an Arabic saying:

قَدْرُ النِّعْمَةِ بَعْدَ الزَّوَالِ

The value of a bounty is only realized when it goes away.

A person has a father at present. This is such a great bounty but the person does not even perceive it. A person has a mother, but he does not know what a great bounty he has. He has a wife, but does not know what a great bounty she is. A woman has a husband, but does not realize what a great bounty he is. A person is enjoying good health, but does not appreciate what a great bounty it is. Only when a bounty goes away does one realize its immense value.

An old saint began suffering from urine incontinence. As per the method of treatment in those days, he used to move around with a bottle in his hand and his urine would flow into the bottle.

¹ Sūrah Ibrāhīm, 14: 34.

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This was obviously an inconvenience. A person went to visit him.

It is Sunnat to visit a sick person. There are many rewards for it. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said that when a Muslim goes to visit a sick Muslim in the morning, 70 000 angels pray for his mercy and forgiveness until the evening. If he goes in the evening, 70 000 angels pray for his mercy and forgiveness until the next morning. An orchard is also reserved for him in Paradise.¹

Hadrat Jābir *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said: “When a person goes to visit a sick person, he remains immersed in an ocean of mercy until he returns. When he sits next to the sick person, he dives into the ocean of mercy.”²

Hadrat Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu ‘anhu* narrates that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said: “When a person goes to visit a sick person, an angel announces from the heavens: You are pure, your going [to visit the sick person] is pure, and you have reserved a place for yourself in Paradise.”³

I was relating to you the story of the saint who was suffering from urine incontinence and a person went to visit him. The man asked him: “How are you feeling?” The saint replied: “This is the punishment for ingratitude.” My dear brothers! This is the difference between us and those who have acquired

¹ سنن الترمذي، أبواب الجنائز، باب ما جاء في عيادة المريض، ح (٩٨٦).

² مسند أحمد، مسند جابر بن عبد الله، ح (١٤٢٦٠).

³ سنن ابن ماجه، كتاب الجنائز، باب ما جاء في ثواب من عاد مريضاً، ح (١٤٢٥).

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a bond with Allāh *ta'ālā* and His recognition. We disobey Allāh *ta'ālā* on countless occasions, but we encounter a difficulty, our minds go to our paltry good deeds. We think to ourselves: “I perform ṣalāh, yet I have been treated in this manner!?” “I spend so much in Allāh’s cause, yet this has happened!?” On the other hand, the saints spend every moment of their lives in line with Allāh’s pleasure. Despite this, they think to themselves that they are experiencing a certain hardship because of an error committed by them.

So the saint said: “This is the punishment for ingratitude.” The man said: “Hadrat! You are a man of Allāh *ta'ālā*. You are a pious person. You spend your life in Allāh’s obedience. What type of ingratitude did you display that you are saying that this is the punishment for ingratitude?” The saint gave an amazing reply. He said: “Harmful substances were being dispelled from my body a few times a day in the form of urine. Whenever I felt the need to pass urine, I would go to the toilet, relieve myself within a few minutes, the impurity would be dispelled, and I would feel at ease. I had been receiving this bounty of Allāh *ta'ālā* daily for many years. I never thought for once that this is a bounty of Allāh *ta'ālā*. Only when there was a blockage in passing urine, I realized that this is also a great bounty from Allāh *ta'ālā*. If I did not even realize that it was a bounty, how would I have given thanks for it? This is the ingratitude for which I am being punished.”¹

¹ *Khuṭbāt-e-Mahmūd*, vol. 4, p. 147.

The release of filth from the body is also a bounty

My dear brothers! Just as obtaining water to quench one's thirst is a bounty of Allāh *ta'ālā*, releasing the water from our bodies in the form of urine is also a bounty of Allāh *ta'ālā*. This is why we are taught to read this du'ā' when we leave the toilet. In this way, we will be giving thanks to Allāh *ta'ālā* for this bounty.

عُفْرَانِكَ، الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَذْهَبَ عَنِّي الْأَذَى وَعَافَانِي

O Allāh! I seek Your pardon. All praises are due to Allāh who removed from me the thing which would have caused me harm, and caused to remain inside my body that which would be of benefit to me.

The first pillar of gratitude

Bounties are countless and it is obligatory on us to give thanks for every single one. The first pillar of gratitude is that we must acknowledge with our heart and mind that whatever bounty we received, Allāh *ta'ālā* gave it to us solely out of His kindness and generosity, without us being eligible for it.

My dear brothers! What great feat did we achieve that it became necessary for Allāh *ta'ālā* to create us? What favour did we do to Allāh *ta'ālā* that it became His responsibility to give us eyes, a tongue, ears and *īmān*? Allāh *ta'ālā* conferred all these bounties to us solely out of His kindness and generosity, without us being eligible for them. We

¹ سنن الترمذي، أبواب الطهارة، باب ما يقول إذا خرج من الخلاء، ح (٧).

² سنن ابن ماجه، كتاب الطهارة وسننها، باب ما يقول إذا خرج من الخلاء، ح (٣٠٣).

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have to embed this in our hearts and minds. This is the first pillar of gratitude.

The second pillar of gratitude

After acknowledging it with your heart, say it verbally: “O Allāh! You blessed me with countless bounties even though I was not eligible for them. You gave them to me solely out of Your kindness and generosity. I express my gratitude to You. I thank You for them.”

اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ الْحَمْدُ وَلَكَ الشُّكْرُ، اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ الْحَمْدُ وَلَكَ الشُّكْرُ، اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ
الْحَمْدُ وَلَكَ الشُّكْرُ.

This is the second pillar of gratitude. That is, the reality which has been embedded in the heart and mind must now be expressed by the tongue. It must be acknowledged with the praises of Allāh *ta'ālā*.

The third pillar of gratitude

The next thing to do is to thank Allāh *ta'ālā* with other parts of your body. The way to do this is to use the bounty which Allāh *ta'ālā* gave us in a manner which pleases Him. Never use it in His disobedience. Understand this point with the following example.

The eyes are bounties of Allāh *ta'ālā*. You think to yourself in your heart and mind: “Allāh *ta'ālā* gave me these eyes even though I was not eligible for them. He gave them to me solely out of His kindness and generosity. I was never eligible for them nor am I eligible for them now. Despite this I continue committing sins with my eyes. I ought to have been deprived of my eyesight long ago. However, my most affectionate Allāh gave them to me solely out of his

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kindness and generosity.” Now acknowledge this fact with your tongue as well, and praise and thank Allāh *ta’ālā*. “O Allāh! I express my gratitude to You.”

اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ الْحَمْدُ وَلَكَ الشُّكْرُ

My dear brothers! This much is not enough for giving thanks. One more important pillar remains. And that is, do not disobey Allāh *ta’ālā* with these eyes. Do not look at movies, do not look at non-mahram women, do not look at evil things. Instead, do good works. Read the Qur’ān, read Dīnī books, look at the ocean, look at the mountains, look at the land, look at the sky. Develop the consciousness of Allāh’s greatness within you. Think to yourself: The Being who created these massive creations, how much greater He must be! If the One whose creation is so faultless, how faultless He must be! In the same way, look at the Qur’ān with love. Look at the Ka’bah. Look at the pious friends of Allāh *ta’ālā*. Look at your parents.

This third pillar is extremely important. That is, Allāh’s bounties must be used correctly. It must not happen that we express our thanks verbally, but due to misusing the bounties, we are displaying our ungratefulness through acts of disobedience. Allāh *ta’ālā* gave this order to Hadrat Dāwūd *‘alayhis salām* and his family:

اعْمَلُوا آلَ دَاوُدَ شُكْرًا

Work, O household of Dāwūd, in gratitude [to Me].¹

¹ Sūrah Saba’, 34: 13.

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O family of Dāwūd! Express your gratitude practically. In other words, together with expressing gratitude with your heart, mind and tongue; you must express it practically. This body has also been given to you by Allāh *ta'ālā*. So the first thing you have to do is acknowledge with your heart and mind: “Allāh *ta'ālā* gave me this body solely out of His kindness and generosity, without my being eligible for it.” Then acknowledge it verbally and say:

اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ الْحَمْدُ وَلَكَ الشُّكْرُ

Thereafter, protect every part of this body from the disobedience of Allāh *ta'ālā*, and devote it to the obedience of Allāh *ta'ālā*.

If you continue using your eyes, ears, tongue, brains, etc. in the wrong places, if your wealth is spent in the disobedience of Allāh *ta'ālā*, if your children have not be trained and tutored correctly, if the month of Ramaḍān has not be spent properly, the moments of your i'tikāf have not been valued correctly, and you continue saying with your tongue:

اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ الْحَمْدُ وَلَكَ الشُّكْرُ

Then this is not gratitude. It is merely a deception. Neither is Allāh *ta'ālā* pleased with gratitude of this nature, nor do we absolve ourselves of our responsibility. In order for real gratitude to be realized, it is essential for us to carry out the three above-mentioned pillars. Only when they are fulfilled will we be able to absolve ourselves of our responsibility.

A beautiful example to understand genuine gratitude

I was in Madīnah Munawwarah before the month of Ramadān, and I met Hadrat Muftī Ahmad Khānpūrī Sāhib there. He is the chief muftī of the Jāmi'ah in Dhābel and a khalīfah of Hadrat Muftī Maḥmūd Hasan Sāhib Gangohī rahimahullāh. Hadrat is a very kind-hearted personality. A few students of the Academy were with me. I invited Hadrat Muftī Sāhib to join us for tea at the place where we were staying, and requested him to give us some advice. Hadrat accepted our invitation and gave us a short but comprehensive piece of advice. The point which he emphasised was that our visit and stay in Madīnah Munawwarah was a priceless bounty whose appreciation is essential. He said that a bounty can be truly appreciated only when it is used correctly. He then explained this with a beautiful example.

He said: Assuming in the course of your stay here in Makkah and Madīnah, the thought comes to your mind that you ought to take something as a gift for the imām of your masjid. You went to the shops and bought a beautiful scarf for your imām sāhib. On returning to your house, you presented the scarf to your imām. He accepted it happily, thanked you and said: “I am very thankful to you. You did a great act of kindness to me. You demonstrated your love for me.” He made many other comments demonstrating his appreciation. You too were rejoicing over his gratitude and were waiting for the day of Friday to arrive because you thought that the imām sāhib will put it on his head on Friday and enter the masjid to deliver the Friday sermon.

The imām sāhib entered the masjid on Friday but there was no scarf on his head. You thought to

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yourself that the month of Ramadān is approaching, so he will wear it on one of the Fridays in Ramadān. The first, second, third and fourth Friday of Ramadān passed, but there was no sign of the scarf. You thought to yourself that the imām ṣāhib has appreciated your gift immensely. It seems that he will wear it on the day of ʿīd. The day of ʿīd arrived but he did not wear it.

On the other hand, whenever the imām meets you, he speaks highly of the scarf, thanks you profusely and says: “You were most kind to me. You thought of me when you were in Makkah and Madīnah. You brought an exquisite scarf for me. You gave me a very beautiful gift.” Despite all these praises and thanks, he is just not wearing the scarf. The correct use of the scarf demanded that he wore it on his head and came to the masjid to perform ṣalāh. Had he done this, your heart would have rejoiced. You would have thought to yourself: “The imām ṣāhib has appreciated my gift.” Even if he did not utter a single word of thanks to you. But here the case is the opposite – he is showering you with verbal praises one after the other, but there is no sign whatsoever of his wearing it.

One day, the imām ṣāhib suddenly fell ill. You went to visit him. The moment you entered his house, your heart received a knockout blow because the imām ṣāhib had laid out the scarf on the floor where people remove their shoes before entering the house.

After giving this example, Hadrat Muftī Sāhib asked those who were present: “Will you be satisfied with the verbal thanks which the imām ṣāhib had been showering upon you? Will you be ready to accept him as a person who appreciated your gift?”

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Certainly not. Instead, you will think to yourself that he did not appreciate your gift, and has been ungrateful.”

The stay in Madīnah is a great favour of Allāh

The stay in Madīnah Munawwarah is also a great favour conferred by Allāh *ta'ālā*. The correct utilisation of this bounty entails: no sinning, no backbiting, no malice, no fighting and arguing, and no wasting of time. Instead, every moment must be spent in righteous deeds, abundant *durūd sharīf*, full importance to *ṣalāh*, presenting one's self at the blessed *Rauḍah* for *ṣalāt* and *salām*, recitation of the *Qur'ān*, engaging in worship, learning and teaching, *du'ā'*, repentance and seeking forgiveness. You may be expressing your thanks verbally by saying: “O Allāh! I thank you for enabling me to come to Madīnah Munawwarah”, but you are unmindful of the correct utilization of your stay here, then tell me, are you a grateful servant of Allāh *ta'ālā* in this favour which He blessed you with, or are you an ungrateful person?

The gratitude of Dāwūd ﷺ

If a bounty is not utilized correctly, it means that gratitude has not been expressed for it. This is why Allāh *ta'ālā* did not say:

أَشْكُرُوا لِي آلَ دَاوُدَ

O household of Dāwūd! Give thanks to Me.

Instead, He said:

إِعْمَلُوا آلَ دَاوُدَ شُكْرًا

O household of Dāwūd! Express your thanks practically, and utilize the bounties which you have been given in the correct manner.

Hadrat Dāwūd *'alayhis salām* was a senior Messenger of Allāh *ta'ālā* and an obedient servant. This point was firmly embedded in his heart that whatever bounties he has, they are solely from Allāh *ta'ālā* who gave them to him out of His kindness and generosity, without his being eligible for them. He used to acknowledge these bounties verbally, and engage in Allāh's exaltation while thanking Him.

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ عِلْمًا ط وَقَالَا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي فَضَّلَنَا عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِّنْ عِبَادِهِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ.

*We bestowed knowledge to Dāwūd and Sulaymān. They said: "All praise is due to Allāh who gave us excellence over many of His believing servants."*¹

This was his verbal expression of gratitude. Together with this, he used to utilize all the bounties correctly and displayed his practical thanks in this way. In addition to the obligatory acts of obedience, he used to engage in a lot of optional worship. A narration of Sahīh Bukhārī states that Hadrat Dāwūd *'alayhis salām* used to alternate between fasting and not fasting on a daily basis.

¹ Sūrah an-Naml, 27: 15.

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Furthermore, he used to spend one third of the night in ṣalāh.¹

My dear brothers! Just imagine how Ḥaḍrat Dāwūd 'alayhis salām must have expressed his gratitude when he received this order from Allāh *ta'ālā*! A Messenger is free from sin, so there is no shortcoming in his actions. He must have expressed his gratitude with his heart, mind and tongue as well. He enjoyed a lofty level of Allāh-recognition. Therefore, there must have been no shortfall whatsoever in his mental, verbal and practical gratitude. Allāhu Akbar! Despite all this, he knew that it is not possible to fulfil the right of gratitude to Allāh *ta'ālā* as it ought to be. This is why he said:

يَا رَبِّ، كَيْفَ أَشْكُرُكَ وَشُكْرِي لَكَ نِعْمَةٌ مِنْكَ عَلَيَّ

O my Sustainer! How can I fulfil the right of gratitude to You when I know for a fact that the inspiration to give thanks is also Your favour on me?

What he meant was: When I received the inspiration to express my gratitude over Your past favours, then this inspiration in itself is a favour on its own. Obviously, I have to thank You for every favour. It now becomes obligatory on me to thank You for this new favour as well.

May Allāh *ta'ālā* bless us with an understanding of Dīn. Āmīn.

¹صحيح البخاري، كتاب التهجد، باب من نام عند السحر، ح (١١٣٧).

²تفسير ابن كثير: ج ٤، ص ٦٢٦.

A unique point which crossed the mind of Dāwūd

ﷺ

A unique thought crossed the mind of Hadrat Dāwūd *'alayhis salām*. He thought to himself: Allāh *ta'ālā* ordered me thus: “O Dāwūd! Give thanks to Me for the bounties which I conferred to you.” When I expressed my gratitude, then the inspiration to express it is a bounty in itself. It will therefore be necessary for me to give thanks for it as well. When I am given the inspiration to give thanks a second time, it will be another bounty. I will then have to express my gratitude again. I will then get the inspiration to express thanks a third time which will be a bounty in itself.

Hadrat Dāwūd *'alayhis salām* thought to himself that this is a never-ending practice. Each time he gives thanks, it will be a new bounty for which he will have to give thanks. This will therefore continue until death. This is why he said that it is just not possible to absolve one's self from the responsibility of expressing gratitude. After all, every inspiration to give thanks is a bounty in itself which will necessitate another thanks. This is why he said in all submission:

يَا رَبِّ، كَيْفَ أَشْكُرُكَ وَشُكْرِي لَكَ نِعْمَةٌ مِنْكَ عَلَيَّ!

O my Sustainer! How can I fulfil the right of gratitude to You when I know for a fact that the inspiration to give thanks is also Your favour on me?

Hadrat Jibra'īl *'alayhis salām* came down with Allāh's message:

¹تفسير ابن كثير: ج ٤، ص ٦٢٦.

الآن شَكَرْتَنِي يَا دَاوُدُ!

O Dāwūd! Now that you have realized that you are unable to give thanks to Me, you have expressed your gratitude in the true meaning of the word.

When a person acknowledges with his heart and mind that he is incapable of fulfilling the right of expressing gratitude, he will be able to give thanks in the true meaning of the word. The reason for this is that our gratitude is limited while the bounties and favours of Allāh *ta'ālā* are limitless. It is just not possible to fulfil the right of gratitude.

The tiniest favour cannot be recompensed by an entire life's actions

Hadrat Mūsā *'alayhis salām* submitted in the court of Allāh *ta'ālā*: “O Allāh! How can I give thanks to You when the tiniest of Your favours is so valuable that my entire life's actions cannot recompense for it?” Allāh *ta'ālā* replied:

يَا مُوسَى! الْآنَ شَكَرْتَنِي!

O Mūsā! You have now given thanks to me in the true sense of the word.

If You confer on me, then it is out of Your generosity. Apart from this, my worship is no recompense for Your mercies.

¹تفسير ابن كثير: ج ٤، ص ٦٢٦.

²حلية الأولياء: ج ٦، ص ٥٦.

The story of a worshipper of the past

Each and every bounty of Allāh *ta'ālā* is so priceless that our entire life's worship cannot be a recompense for the tiniest bounty. Imām Ḥākim *rahimahullāh* relates a Ḥadīth which contains an amazing story of a worshipper of some past nation. Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* entered an assembly of the *Ṣaḥābah radiyallāhu 'anhum* and said: “My friend, Jibra'īl, left just now. He related something to me. He said: ‘O Muḥammad! I take an oath in the name of the Being who sent you with the truth, there is a servant of Allāh *ta'ālā* who remained occupied in Allāh's worship for 500 years. This was on a mountain-top which is in the centre of the ocean. It was an island. Allāh *ta'ālā* caused a spring of sweet water to flow from the top of the mountain.”

My dear brothers! What can we say about Allāh's power! An island which is surrounded by salty water, yet sweet water is flowing from its mountain! In the same way, Allāh *ta'ālā* –through His power – caused a pomegranate tree to grow there. It used to produce one pomegranate daily. This man used to spend his entire time on the mountain-top in the worship of Allāh *ta'ālā*. In the evening, he would come down, eat and drink, and reoccupy himself in Allāh's worship. A long period of time passed in the same fully-absorbed worship of Allāh *ta'ālā*. When this man was about to pass away, he made a request to Allāh *ta'ālā*: “O Allāh! It is my heart's desire that when the angel of death comes to extract my soul, I must be in a state of prostration. After I die, my body must remain intact; the ground must not be able to decompose my body because it is my

wish to be resurrected on the day of Resurrection while I am in a state of prostration.”

My dear brothers! Just look at the type of people who have passed through this world! Allāhu Akbar! Just look at the aspiration of this worshipper! On the other hand, look at our sorrowful condition. We find it difficult to perform the five compulsory salāhs. This worshipper remained in worship for as long as he was alive. And he still has this desire that after he passes away, he must be raised up on the day of Resurrection in a state of prostration. Allāhu Akbar!

My dear brothers! There is a need for us to work on our hearts. Once the heart is purified, the sweetness of worship and obedience will overpower the false enjoyment of sinning and disobedience.

Allāh has kissed me

Hadrat Maulānā Faḍl ar-Rahmān Sāhib Ganj Murādābādī *rahimahullāh* was a distinguished saint. Hadrat Maulānā Thānwī *rahimahullāh* had presented himself very respectfully before him. He [Maulānā Faḍl ar-Rahmān Sāhib *rahimahullāh*] used to say: “When I go into prostration, I feel as though Allāh *ta’ālā* has kissed me.”¹

My dear friends! Just imagine what enjoyment these saints must have been experiencing in their salāh! May Allāh *ta’ālā* pardon us. Our condition is that we neither experience any enjoyment in prostration, in the bowing posture nor in the standing posture of salāh. The real value of these things are known only

¹ *Arwāḥ-e-Thalāthah*, p. 317.

to the people of Allāh *ta'ālā*. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

أَقْرَبُ مَا يَكُونُ الْعَبْدُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَهُوَ سَاجِدٌ

The closest a servant is to his Sustainer is when he is in prostration.

Despite this we do not experience tranquillity in prostration. There are many who find it burdensome to go into prostration, and those who are inspired to prostrate have no attachment to it. They hasten so much in getting up that they will get up even before the imām.

An enviable death

Allāh *ta'ālā* accepted the *du'ā'* of that worshipper and, as per his wish, he died while in a state of prostration. Jibra'īl *'alayhis salām* said: “He is still in that position. When we, angels, descend towards the earth and ascend to the heavens, we pass by him.”

My dear brothers! What a fortunate servant he was! He is in prostration even after death. It is an enviable death and an enviable prostration. He will remain in that position until the day of Resurrection.

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* says that Jibra'īl *'alayhis salām* also related to me what will happen to that man on the day of Resurrection. He said: “Allāh *ta'ālā* will bring him to life on the day of Resurrection, stand him in front of Him, and say to the angels:

¹ صحيح مسلم، كتاب الصلاة، باب ما يقال في الركوع والسجود، ح (٤٧٢).

أَدْخِلُوا عَبْدِي الْجَنَّةَ بِرَحْمَتِي

Admit this servant of Mine into Paradise by virtue of My mercy and kindness.

My dear brothers! Make du'ā' that Allāh *ta'ālā* treats all of us like this on the day of Resurrection. That Allāh *ta'ālā* must say to the angels: “Admit My servants into Paradise by virtue of My mercy and grace.” The mercy and kindness of Allāh *ta'ālā* is a phenomenal bounty – in this world and in the Hereafter. This is why you must always beg Allāh *ta'ālā* for His grace. I say to my friends: “When you are faced with hardships, difficulties and worries; do not ask Allāh *ta'ālā* for justice. Instead, ask Him for His grace because we are sinners. Let it not happen that we are taken to task in retaliation for any act of disobedience.”

An admonitory incident

I heard an admonitory incident from my beloved, Hadrat Hājī Fārūq Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. He relates: During the time when the British were ruling over India, the police apprehended a person for murder. He was absolutely innocent so he was at total peace with himself. He was thinking to himself: “I am absolutely innocent. I did not murder anyone. The police do not even have any proof against me. They have apprehended me by mistake. Their case will be rejected very quickly and I will be released.”

However, when the case was presented, the judge passed judgement that this man is guilty and he should be hanged. Now imagine, the death-sentence has been passed against him while he is totally innocent! He just couldn't understand what happened. He turned to Allāh *ta'ālā* and cried before

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Him saying: “O Allāh! You know fully well that I am innocent, and yet this judgement has been passed against me. It is most certainly a sin which I committed which has put me in this predicament. I beg You to expose the reality to me.”

While in that condition, he heard a voice saying: “Have you forgotten the time when you were killing ants – one after the other - with the point of a needle? Ants are also My creation, and they too have lives. The death-sentence which has been passed against you is because of those ants which you killed.”

أَعَادَنَا اللَّهُ مِنْ كُلِّ شَرٍّ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْكَ

May Allāh *ta'ālā* keep us under His protection and bless us with His grace. We must really fear His might and grasp.

Allāh's favours can never be repaid

I was relating to you the story of that worshipper. On the day of Resurrection, Allāh *ta'ālā* will say to the angels: “Admit this servant of Mine into Paradise by virtue of My grace.” He will say: “No. Admit me by virtue of my actions.” Allāh *ta'ālā* will say to the angels: “Admit this servant of Mine into Paradise by virtue of My grace.” He will say: “No. Admit me by virtue of my actions.” Allāh *ta'ālā* will say a third time: “Admit this servant of Mine into Paradise by virtue of My grace.” The man will remain obstinate on his point and say: “No. Admit me by virtue of my actions.”

He will think to himself: “I spent so many years in worship. Then I expressed the wish to die while in prostration, and to remain in that position until the

day of Resurrection. Yet there is no mention of these things!?” Allāh *ta’ālā* will say to the angels: “Calculate all his actions against the bounties and favours which I conferred on him.”

My dear brothers! The point which I am trying to make is that we cannot repay Allāh *ta’ālā* for even just one favour. The angels will start their calculations. From the countless favours of Allāh *ta’ālā*, they will start with the eyes. When they complete their calculations, they will realize that the man’s 500-year worship was recompensed by just his eyes. The other parts of the body still need to be calculated. Demands will be made against him for the rest of the body. However, because his acts of worship have been expended, he will find himself unable to pay.

Allāh’s mercy

Allāh *ta’ālā* will say: “Cast this servant of Mine into the Hell-fire.” The angels will drag him and move forward. The poor fellow will call out to Allāh *ta’ālā* and beg to Him:

رَبِّي بِرَحْمَتِكَ أَدْخِلْنِي الْجَنَّةَ

O my Sustainer! Admit me into Paradise by virtue of Your mercy.

Obviously, the man does not have a single good deed remaining. How, then, can he be admitted into Paradise on the basis of his actions? Allāh *ta’ālā* will issue an order and he will be made to stand before Allāh *ta’ālā* again. Allāh *ta’ālā* will ask him:

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يَا عَبْدِي مَنْ خَلَقَكَ وَلَمْ تَكُ شَيْئًا؟

O My servant, who created you when you were nothing?

He will reply:

أَنْتَ يَا رَبِّي

You, O my Sustainer?

مَنْ قَوَّكَ لِعِبَادَةِ خَمْسِ مِائَةِ عَامٍ؟

Who gave you the strength for 500 years of worship?

أَنْتَ يَا رَبِّي

You, O my Sustainer?

مَنْ أَنْزَلَكَ فِي جَبَلٍ وَسَطِ الْأُلْجَةِ وَأَخْرَجَ لَكَ الْمَاءَ الْعَذْبَ مِنَ الْمَاءِ الْمَالِحِ، وَأَخْرَجَ لَكَ كُلَّ لَيْلَةٍ رُمَّانَةً، وَإِنَّمَا تَخْرُجُ مَرَّةً فِي السَّنَةِ؟
وَسَأَلْتَنِي أَنْ أَقْبِضَكَ سَاجِدًا، فَفَعَلْتُ ذَلِكَ بِكَ.

Who conveyed you to a mountain in the middle of the ocean? Who provided you with sweet water in the midst of salty water? Who gave you a pomegranate every night whereas a pomegranate tree bears fruit only once a year? You requested Me to take your soul while you are in prostration, and I did that for you.

He will say:

أَنْتَ يَا رَبِّ

You, O my Sustainer.

Allāh ta'ālā will say:

فَذَلِكَ بِرَحْمَتِي، وَبِرَحْمَتِي أُدْخِلُكَ الْجَنَّةَ، أَدْخِلُوا عَبْدِي الْجَنَّةَ، فَنِعَمَ
الْعَبْدُ كُنْتَ يَا عَبْدِي

All this happened through My mercy, and it is through My mercy that I am admitting you into Paradise. O angels! Admit this servant of Mine into Paradise. O My servant! You were an excellent servant to Me.

Jibra'il 'alayhis salām will then say:

إِنَّمَا الْأَشْيَاءُ بِرَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى يَا مُحَمَّدُ

O Muhammad! Everything depends on the mercy of Allāh ta'ālā.

It is obligatory to be thankful for every bounty

Allāh ta'ālā blessed us with innumerable bounties. Each one is so valuable that our entire life's worship is of no significance whatsoever in comparison to a single bounty. Furthermore, it is impossible for us to encompass His bounties, and we cannot thank Him sufficiently. Despite this, after realizing that we are incapable and powerless, we have to make every possible effort to thank Allāh ta'ālā for His bounties. This is because it is obligatory to give thanks for every bounty. Make a resolution from today that you will express gratitude to Allāh ta'ālā for all His bounties and favours. We will – with our hearts, minds and tongues – acknowledge that we received every favour of Allāh ta'ālā solely out of His kindness and generosity, and without us being eligible for it. We will praise and extol Allāh ta'ālā

¹المستدرک للحاکم، کتاب التوبة والإنابة، ح (٧٨٤٦).

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for it and, at the same time, utilize every bounty in a manner which pleases Him.

An easy prescription to develop Allāh's love

My dear brothers! Set aside a time daily to think about Allāh's favours. This is an easy prescription to develop Allāh's love. Set aside a few minutes daily, sit in solitude, and think about Allāh's bounties. Allāh *ta'ālā* blessed me with eyes, a tongue, ears, a nose, hands, legs, brains, a heart, fingers, and many other bounties. Furthermore, all these bounties are healthy and functioning normally. Think about the bounties in this way, thank Allāh *ta'ālā* from the innermost recesses of your heart, and praise Him:

اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ الْحَمْدُ وَلَكَ الشُّكْرُ، اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ الْحَمْدُ وَلَكَ الشُّكْرُ، اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ
الْحَمْدُ وَلَكَ الشُّكْرُ.

Inshā Allāh, the love of Allāh *ta'ālā* will develop in this way because:

الْإِنْسَانُ عَبْدُ الْإِحْسَانِ

Man by nature becomes a slave to the one who does him a favour. He then begins to love such a person.

Once the love of Allāh *ta'ālā* is developed, His bounties will not be used in His disobedience. My dear brothers! Make a firm resolution today that you will utilize all of Allāh's bounties in His obedience. If any bounty is being used in His displeasure, then repent sincerely with your heart that you will never misuse any bounty in the future.

I'tikāf is also a bounty

My dear brothers! I'tikāf is also a valuable bounty. It is essential to value and appreciate it. In order to show our appreciation, it is necessary to utilize this bounty in the proper manner. Generally what happens is that the first day of i'tikāf goes well and is spent in the proper manner. The next day also goes well to a certain extent. The third day goes okay. The carnal self starts to make inroads gradually, and so does Shaytān. In this way, a person is deprived of the blessings which were acquired in the beginning by virtue of spending the time [of i'tikāf] in the proper manner.

My dear brothers! Just look at Allāh's immense grace that he assembled us here from distant places. People from different areas of Leicester, various cities of England, and yet others from overseas countries have been assembled here in Allāh's house by Allāh *ta'ālā* for the fulfilment of an important Sunnat. This assembly will obviously have some pious and righteous people. There will be people of impeccable character and excellent mannerisms. There will be people who lead righteous lives. We must make the intention of being in the company of these people. We must also make this du'ā': "O Allāh! Bless us with sound and excellent qualities by virtue of remaining in the company of these righteous servants of Yours – these who are of sound character and have acquired Your friendship."

Actions to be observed in i'tikāf

Pay due importance to sitting in the assemblies and talks of the 'ulamā'. Listen attentively to everything that they say. Make whatever they say into a mirror

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for yourself. Then look at your life and do some introspection. If the 'ulamā' draw attention towards any good, check whether it is in your life or not. If it is, then thank Allāh *ta'ālā*. If it isn't, then repent and resolve to embellish your life with it. If they speak about abstaining from a certain evil, then check if it is in your life or not. If it isn't, then thank Allāh *ta'ālā*. If it is, purify your life immediately from it.

Take stock of your past life in the same way. Think about what actions your life was spent in. Ponder over the purpose behind which Allāh *ta'ālā* created you. Think about the extent to which you ought to have progressed as regards your Dīn, knowledge, practice, spirituality and piety. Ask yourself if you have been successful in this regard. If you haven't, then think about what steps are needed to be taken to make up for your loss. What will your goal of life be for the future? Think about how much of your life has passed, and what remains. It may well be that only one day remains. It is possible that you have just one hour left. Sit in solitude and think over all these things. Then make a firm resolution that the object of your life is going to be Allāh's love, establishing a bond with Allāh *ta'ālā*, and treading on the Dīn of Allāh *ta'ālā*. In short, instead of wasting your time in futilities and useless conversations, spend it in reflecting over your past and thinking about your future. Resolve to inhabit your heart with the love of Allāh *ta'ālā*.

The timetable which has been drawn is for the benefit of everyone. We will have to act according to it. The times which have been set aside for resting must be spent in resting so that when it is the time to carry out actions, we will be fresh and energized;

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and we will be able to occupy ourselves with full concentration and focus. If someone feels that the time for resting is too much, he must spend the extra time in reading the Qur'an and other similar actions.

A person should also be concerned about his qadā'-e-'umrī (making up for the salāhs which he missed in the past). He must start making up for them from today. In the same way, he will have to think about his missed obligatory fasts, outstanding obligatory qurbānīs, inheritance which has not been distributed according to the Sharī'at, other rights which are owed to fellow humans, and so on. Make a firm resolution to fulfil them and repent, because death is hovering above our heads.

No human knows the time of his death. He may have possessions of a hundred years, but he does not know what is to happen tomorrow. Death came without a sound and said: "O brother! You have to come with me now. I have come to take you by the order of Allāh. O brother! You have to come with me now."

My dear brothers! Take benefit from this opportunity and prepare for death. While being here [for i'tikāf], you must have just one objective. Remove your factory, business, wife, children and all other worldly occupations from your heart and mind for the next ten days. While staying here, have just one concern and du'ā' for your wife, children, parents, friends and relatives: "O Allāh! Include my wife and children among Your Auliya'! Include my parents among Your Auliya'." Make du'ā' for the entire ummat: "O Allāh! Include every member of this ummat among Your Auliya'." You must have

just one sole concern, viz. Allāh’s love and a bond with Him. There must be no other thoughts. Remain focussed on Allāh *ta’ālā* all the time.

Be constant in devotion to Him, and spread His light in the world.

Abstaining from interacting with others

One very important point is to abstain from intermixing and interacting with people, meeting them, engaging in conversations with them, conducting your own assemblies where you while away your time in light and humorous conversations, and so on. Devote yourself to the work at hand. I heard my honourable and affectionate teacher, Hadrat Maulānā Hāshim Sāhib dāmat barakātuhum, relating the following on several occasions. He said that Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth Maulānā Muḥammad Zakarīyyā Sāhib raḥimahullāh used to say to those observing i’tikāf in the month of Ramaḍān: “The other mashā’ikh prescribe many arduous acts of worship. Here, I have no such prescriptions. You may eat and drink to your fill, and sleep as much as you want, but abstain from conversations with each other. I consider engaging in conversations to be a major crime.”

Hadrat Maulānā Hāshim Sāhib also said that Hadrat Maulānā Abul Ḥasan ‘Alī Nadwī raḥimahullāh explained this statement of Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth raḥimahullāh by saying: “There is a limit to eating and drinking, but there is no limit to speaking.”

Allāh *ta’ālā* brought us to His house and we have become mu’takifīn (those observing i’tikāf). Our 24 hours are counted as worship because i’tikāf is an

act of worship in itself. Whether a mu'takif occupies himself in worship or in sleep, it will be counted as worship. Even if a mu'takif spends Laylatul Qadr in sleep, he will still acquire the virtue of Laylatul Qadr. However, the person who remains awake and occupies himself in worship will obviously receive more rewards. He will receive the rewards for his good actions, and for his i'tikāf. However, if, while engaging in worship, he starts to speak to someone and they end up backbiting another person, they will be deprived of the virtue of Laylatul Qadr and the blessing of the i'tikāf. What a severe loss even after such a major sacrifice!

While we are desirous of the blessings of Laylatul Qadr and hopeful for the benefits of i'tikāf, Shayṭān is striving to deprive us of both. He takes benefit from our interactions with people, takes control of us, and destroys whatever we achieved. This is why we must be most wary of interacting with others, conversing with them, and wasting our time in futilities.

Keep yourself occupied in your work and adhere to the timetable.

Du'ā'

May Allāh *ta'ālā* inspire us to practise. May Allāh *ta'ālā* bless us with Laylatul Qadr. May Allāh *ta'ālā* rectify our internal and external selves. May He attach us with the righteous in the true sense of the word. May He inspire us to derive maximum benefit from the righteous ones. May He enable us to tread the path of the pure Sharī'at as shown to us by the righteous. May Allāh *ta'ālā* bless us with an accepted Laylatul Qadr in this Ramaḍān and in all the months of Ramaḍān which are to come for the

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rest of our lives. May Allāh *ta'ālā* forgive us and bless us with salvation from the Hell-fire.

O Allāh! Bless us with the good which was asked by Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, the *Sahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum*, the *Auliya'* and all those who valued the month of Ramaḍān from the time of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* to this day. And give us refuge against all those things from which they sought refuge.

May Allāh *ta'ālā* protect us from sins and give us courage to engage in ardent worship. May Allāh *ta'ālā* enable us to spend our time in what pleases Him. May Allāh *ta'ālā* bless us with eternal acceptance, eternal pleasure, eternal obedience and eternal friendship. May Allāh *ta'ālā* decree a good end for us. May Allāh *ta'ālā* bless us with the company of the Prophets, the truthful, the martyrs and the righteous in Jannatul Firdaus. Whatever we asked for, may Allāh *ta'ālā* give it to us, to those of our people who have passed on, to our parents, our families, our *mashā'ikh*, our teachers, our students, our associates, our friends and beloveds, and our benefactors. May Allāh *ta'ālā* give it to those who requested us for *du'ā'*, those who were hopeful of our *du'ā'*, and to the entire *ummat*. *Āmīn*.

وَأَخِرُ دَعْوَانَا أَنْ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ

Love For Your Brother What You Love
For Yourself

Date: Rabī' al-Ākhir 1430 A.H./April 2009

Venue: Masjid an-Nūr, Lusaka, Zambia

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَكَفَى، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الرُّسُلِ وَخَاتِمِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ،
وَعَلَى آلِهِ الْأَصْفِيَاءِ، وَأَصْحَابِهِ الْأَتْقِيَاءِ. أَمَّا بَعْدُ: فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّى يُحِبَّ لِأَخِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِهِ، أَوْ
كَمَا قَالَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي، وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي، وَاحْلُلْ عُقْدَةً مِنْ لِسَانِي
يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي، سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ
الْحَكِيمُ. اللَّهُمَّ انْفَعْنَا بِمَا عَلَّمْتَنَا وَعَلِّمْنَا مَا يَنْفَعُنَا. إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ
يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ، يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا،
اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ
وَأَتْبَاعِهِ وَأَزْوَاجِهِ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِ.

Like for others what you like for yourself

I had the good fortune of quoting to you a pure teaching of Allāh's beloved Messenger and our pure master, Muḥammad Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. It is a well-known Hadīth whose translation is known even to children. Hadrat Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* has included it in his magnum opus, Sahīh *al-Bukhārī*. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّى يُحِبَّ لِأَخِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِهِ¹

You cannot be a perfect believer until you love for your brother what you love for yourself.

As long as a believer does not develop this mindset in him that he must like for others what he likes for himself, he cannot become a perfect believer. He may be particular about performing his ṣalāh; paying his zakāh; he may have performed hajj already; he may be fasting in the month of Ramaḍān; doing many charitable works; performing tahajjud, ishrāq, chāsht and awwābīn regularly; he may be fully engrossed in the recitation of the Qur’ān; doing many other good works; and may be having sound qualities in his life. Despite this, Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam is announcing that as long as he does not develop the above-mentioned quality in him, he is not a perfect believer in the sight of Allāh ta’ālā and His Messenger ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam.

A believer desires only good

One question could crop up at this point. If a person likes wine for himself, does it mean he must like wine for his Muslim brothers as well? Similarly, if he likes to gamble, does he have to like gambling for his Muslim brothers? In the same vein, if he likes stealing, music, movies, etc., does it mean he has to like these evils for his fellow Muslims in order for him to become a perfect believer?

The answer to this is that the Hadīth is speaking about a *mu’min* – a believer; and a believer can

¹صحيح البخاري، كتاب الإيمان، باب من الإيمان أن يحب لأخيه ما يحب لنفسه، ح (١٣).

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attach himself to nothing but good. Therefore, whenever the subject matter is about believers, the speaker and the addressees will think of good things. This Hadīth will therefore mean: You cannot become a perfect believer unless you like those good things for your brother which you like for yourself. This precondition is mentioned in the narration of *Sunan an-Nasa'i*:

وَالَّذِي نَفْسُ مُحَمَّدٍ بِيَدِهِ، لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّى يُحِبَّ لِأَخِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ
لِنَفْسِهِ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ¹.

You cannot be a perfect believer until you love for your brother the good which you love for yourself.

Objections against Hadīth are due to lack of understanding

Another question may crop up. If a person cannot be a perfect believer until he loves for his brother the good which he loves for himself, does it mean that if a person is a king of a certain place, he must have the desire that his Muslim brother must also become a partner in his kingdom? Or take the case of a wealthy man who has an exotic car and a palatial home. Does he have to buy these things for others? If he does not have the means to buy for them, does it mean that he must allow the alternating use of these items between himself and them? Can anyone explain this Hadīth by saying that if a person buys an exotic car for himself, he must do the same for others? If he has the money, then he must buy it for everyone? And if he does not

¹سنن النسائي، كتاب الإيمان وشرايطه، باب علامة الإيمان، ح (٥٠٦١).

do this, then – as per this Hadīth – he is not a perfect believer? If this meaning of the Hadīth is taken, then it will not be possible for anyone to be a perfect believer.

My dear brothers! This is not what this Hadīth means. The reason for this question is an error in establishing the correct meaning of this Hadīth. Understand one point before understanding the correct meaning of this Hadīth.

Allāh *ta'ālā* conferred Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam with a miracle known as *jawāmi' al-kalim*. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said in this regard:

أُعْطِيتُ جَوَامِعَ الْكَلِمِ

I have been conferred with jawāmi' al-kalim.

This means that Allāh *ta'ālā* has endowed the speech of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam with such distinction that he would make a small statement, but countless pearls could be fathomed from it. This was a peculiarity of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. Sometimes, he would make just one statement, but the Sahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum used to make several conclusions from it. The 'ulamā' too have derived thousands of rulings from small statements made by Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. There is an Urdu maxim which translates thus: “He has encapsulated an ocean in a water-pitcher.” In other words, a water-pitcher may appear to have a little

¹صحيح مسلم، كتاب المساجد ومواضع الصلاة، ح (٥١٣).

water, but if you were to turn it upside down, an ocean will flow from it.

In the same way, the statements of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* may comprise of just one sentence, but they contain oceans of knowledge. If we ponder over the Hadīth under discussion, we will learn several meanings.

Desiring good for others

One meaning of this Hadīth is that when a person likes something for himself, it must be his desire that Allāh *ta‘ālā* gives the same bounty to others as well.¹ For example, Allāh *ta‘ālā* blessed a person’s business, gave him an exotic car, gave him a house, blessed him with good health. Together with this, Allāh *ta‘ālā* blessed him with a pious and obedient wife, and children who bring joy to his eyes. He must now have this desire in his heart that Allāh *ta‘ālā* should confer these bounties to his fellow Muslim brothers as well. They too should have the means which he has. His heart must not think: “No one should receive what I have. I have become the biggest businessman, now no one else must become like me.” No. This should not be the attitude. Instead, he should think to himself: “Whatever I have must remain with me [it must not be destroyed], and my fellow brothers should also receive the same.”

You can understand this through an example. There are four hungry men, and you have only one slice of bread to feed them. From the four, the life of only one man can be saved. If this slice was divided

¹فتح الباري، ج ١، ص ١٢٥.

equally among the four, they will all die. In such a situation, you can obviously save only one person. Nonetheless, it will be your heart's desire: "If only I had three more slices so that I could save all four."

This is what the Hadīth means. That is, it must be our heart's desire that whatever bounties Allāh *ta'ālā* gave to us, He must give them to others as well. Clearly, you cannot give what you have to the entire world. However, you can have this desire that all Muslims must also have whatever good things you have. This is one meaning of the Hadīth.

Desire the same treatment for others

The second meaning of this Hadīth is that you cannot be a perfect believer until you like that type of treatment for your Muslim brothers which you like for yourself.¹ When you are engaged in a conversation, you want people to speak in a soft manner to you; they must not express any anger. In order to become a perfect believer, you must want the same treatment for your fellow brothers.

Take another example. A person came to you for a loan. What would you desire for him? You will certainly wish that when you go to someone for a loan, that person must not turn you down. Now in this case, you cannot be a perfect believer until you respond to his request as you would want others to respond to your request for a loan.

If you make a mistake, you would want to be rectified in privacy, and in a kind and affectionate manner. Now if someone else commits a mistake, you ought to treat him in the same manner. When

¹فضل الباري، ج ١، ص ٣٣٤.

you go to a certain place, you would expect people to receive you warmly. You cannot be a perfect believer unless you receive people in the same warm and affectionate manner. When you go to a person's house, you would want him to receive you warmly and respectfully. So you too must do the same with people who come to your house.

Give the same advice as you would like for yourself

The third meaning of this Hadīth is that you cannot be a perfect believer unless you like for your brother the same piece of sound advice which you would like for yourself.¹ In this Hadīth, Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam draws our attention to the point that if someone comes to us for advice, we must think to ourselves: “If I was in his place, what would I want for myself? I would want the correct piece of advice which will be to my wellbeing and my benefit.” Thus, if someone comes to you for advice, you will not be a perfect believer until you give him correct advice.

For example, a person comes to you and says: “There is a plot of land in such and such area which is selling at such and such price. I do not have any experience in this field. You have purchased several plots already, so you are quite experienced. What do you think I should do?” In order for you to be a perfect believer, it will be necessary for you to like for this person what you would like for yourself. You will have to think to yourself: “What would I do if such an opportunity was presented to me?” If the

¹ فضل الباري، ج ١، ص ٣٣٥.

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answer comes to your mind that you would have certainly purchased it, then you will have to advise your fellow Muslim brother saying: “Brother! Buy it quickly, do not waste time! If you let it slip from your hands, you will suffer immense loss.”

Our condition

Unfortunately, our condition is the exact opposite. If the thought comes to our mind that the person who buys this plot will suffer losses, we will advise the person to buy it. If we think that it is a bargain and will prove profitable, we will stop the person from buying it. We will then think of ways and means to obtain that plot in such a way that this person does not come to know of it. What a sad state of affairs!

Take another example. A person comes to you for advice with regard to getting his son married to the daughter of a certain person. You must think to yourself: “If my son was to get married now and someone informed me of this girl, what would I do? Would I like that girl for my son?” If the answer is that you would, then you must inform the person that it is a good family. If the answer in your mind is to the contrary, and you would not want that girl for your son, then inform the person by saying: “Brother! I am not too happy about it.”

Our condition is the opposite. If someone asks us about a good girl for his son, we will discourage him so that we could get our son or someone in our family married to her.

Sometimes the wrong advice is given solely because we cannot see our fellow Muslim happy. If it is not going to be a good relationship, we advise him to get married there; and we do not express our real thoughts about the matter. The poor fellow gets his

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son married to that girl on the basis of our advice, while we go around in our circles and say: “That poor fellow got caught. He got his son married to the wrong girl.”

My dear brothers! He did not get caught. We gave him the wrong piece of advice and caused him to get caught.

Wrongs which are committed when consulting

Nowadays many wrongs are committed in taking advice and giving advice. A major failing today is that we are not prepared to take the advice of others. Each person considers himself to be superior. People have this misconception that taking advice from someone means that they are juniors while the person whose advice is sought is senior. And no one is prepared to become a junior. In actual fact, there is more comfort in remaining a junior, while there is much pain in becoming a senior.

Another noteworthy point is that a person who considers himself a junior is looked up with high regard by Allāh *ta’ālā* and the creation. And the one who thinks that he is great, he is actually insignificant in the sight of Allāh *ta’ālā* and the creation; irrespective of how great he may consider himself to be.

The point which I was making is that no one is prepared to take advice. We are passing through an era where each person is exulting in his own opinions:

إِعْجَابُ كُلِّ ذِي رَأْيٍ بِرَأْيِهِ

Each person sees good in his own views, whereas there is immense blessing in seeking advice.

My father's statement

My father *rahimahullāh* used to say: “Brother! If I am 25 years old while another person is 60 years old, why should I feel hesitant in deriving free benefit from his 60 years’ experience? He is not going to charge us any fees. Furthermore, it is not even necessary for us to act on his advice. If it appeals to the heart, accept it. If not, leave it out.”

This is the meaning of *mashwarah* – we ascertain the opinions and views of other people, ponder over the various opinions and views, and then think about which one will be the most advantageous for the realization of your objective.

Allāh *ta’ālā* also instructed Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* to seek counsel:

وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ

Take counsel from the Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum in specific matters.¹

There was no need whatsoever for Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* to take counsel from the Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum. Allāh *ta’ālā* could have sent revelation to him at every step of the way. However, Allāh *ta’ālā* knew that divine revelation will stop after the departure of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* from this world. He therefore

¹ Sūrah Āl ‘Imrān, 3: 159.

taught the ummat this procedure for the realization of success. Allāh *ta'ālā* lists certain qualities of the believers in Sūrah ash-Shūrā. One of those qualities is:

وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَى بَيْنَهُمْ

*They conduct their affairs by mutual counselling.*¹

Get into the habit of seeking advice

Our first mistake is that we do not seek counsel. We consider it below our dignity. We feel that if we seek counsel from someone, we will become “small”. Whereas, through the blessing of seeking counsel, a person achieves success and is saved from regret. When counsel is sought, many points and factors come out in the open, due to which a person is protected. But if he undertakes a task without seeking advice, it may very well get spoilt, and people may say to him: “Brother! Had you consulted us before embarking on this venture, you would not have to suffer this loss.” The person now regrets not having sought advice. And if something goes wrong even after consulting friends and associates, the person will be consoled into thinking: “I did whatever I could. It seems that this is what was destined for me.” He will neither have any doubts nor any regrets.

Thus, the first thing is to get into the habit of seeking advice. Inshā Allāh, through its blessings, you will experience good and be protected against regret. The habit of seeking advice should be applied to all matters of one’s life.

¹ Sūrah ash-Shūrā, 42: 38.

Whose advice should be sought?

The other essential point is to seek advice from a person who can give an opinion, who is sincere, noble-minded, pious, equitable, desires your wellbeing, and has love for you. If he has these qualities, he will give you correct advice.

The responsibility of the one giving advice

The person giving advice must first think about the matter carefully. He must think to himself: “What will I do if I was in his place?” He must then advise according to whatever comes to his heart. My dear friends! There is a major challenge nowadays. A person gives advice honestly and with a sincere heart. The man who sought the advice with regard to a certain person then goes to the latter and says: “I had a firm intention of dealing with you. However, when I consulted such and such person, he prohibited me.” This results in unnecessary fights. This is why when people give advice, they speak in vague terms. They fear that if they speak clearly and explicitly, whatever they say will be conveyed to the other person.

My dear brothers! This is indeed a serious matter. However, it is very wrong to abstain from viewing your opinion clearly. If you do not want to give your advice, say it frankly to the person. Say to him: “I advise you to consult someone else. I am not in a position to advise you on this matter.”

A Hadīth states:

المُستَشَارُ مُؤْتَمَنٌ^١

The one whose advice is sought is placed in a position of trust.

When the person whose advice you seek gives you advice after thinking and pondering over the matter, then it is a trust. It is a trust on the one who gives the advice, and has to be fulfilled. If he does not have the courage to fulfil this trust, he must clearly state that he cannot give advice on that particular issue.

Abstain from jealousy

The fourth meaning of the Hadīth under discussion is that you must abstain from jealousy as regards your fellow Muslim.² Previously one of the explanations which was given is that if you have a bounty which others do not, you must have the desire in your heart that they too receive it. Here, another meaning is given. If a person has a bounty which you do not have, think to yourself: “Would you not want to have that bounty as well?” If you desire that bounty for yourself and Allāh *ta’ālā* did not give it to you for whatever reason, then you must like that bounty for your brother by saying to yourself: “All praise is due to Allāh *ta’ālā* that He conferred this bounty to my brother.” Do not be jealous when you see that bounty with him.

¹ سنن الترمذي، أبواب الأدب، باب أن المستشار مؤتمن، ح (٣٠٣٩).

² *Imdād al-Bārī*, vol. 4, p. 364.

Jealousy devours good deeds

What is jealousy? When you see a bounty, progress or success in your fellow brother and think to yourself: “Why is he enjoying this bounty, progress or success? I wish he is deprived of it.” A certain person has good obedient children. You think to yourself: “I wish they become disobedient and rebellious.” Or: “I don’t even have a bicycle while he has such an expensive car! I wish it is taken away from him.” This is jealousy. The Ahādīth speak out against this quality. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam said:

إِيَّاكُمْ وَالْحَسَدَ

Beware of jealousy.

A statement of this nature is made at the time of extreme danger. For example:

إِيَّاكُمْ وَالْأَسَدَ

Beware of the lion.

Keep away from the lion because it will attack you and maul you to death. In the same way, keep away from jealousy because it will not permit you to live with wellness. It will destroy your worldly life and your life in the Hereafter. It will snatch away your worldly peace and security, and your comfort of the Hereafter. You should therefore stay far from jealousy.

إِيَّاكُمْ وَالْحَسَدَ فَإِنَّ الْحَسَدَ يَأْكُلُ الْحَسَنَاتِ كَمَا تَأْكُلُ النَّارُ الْحَطَبَ.¹

Beware of jealousy because it devours good deeds just as fire devours firewood.

When dry wood is ignited with fire, it burns very swiftly and is reduced to ash within moments. In the same way, the person who suffers from the ailment of jealousy commits very serious and major sins. And the few good deeds based on which he had the hope of salvation in Allāh’s court are also devoured and destroyed.

Jealousy is an objection against Allāh

Jealousy is a very dangerous illness. The jealous person is not fighting against the one whom he is jealous of, but against Allāh *ta’ālā*. If you have an objection against the imām of this masjid leading you in salāh, then you actually have an objection against the masjid committee. The committee has assigned the salāh and the pulpit to an unsuitable and unqualified person. The committee should not have appointed such a person. Now look! Outwardly your objection is against the imām but in reality it is against the committee.

In the same way, when a person makes an objection and thinks to himself: “Why has such a bounty been given to this person?”, then you are actually levelling an accusation against Allāh *ta’ālā*. You are asking: “Why did Allāh give it to him? Why did He not give it to me?” In reality, this is an objection against Allāh’s decree and His distribution.

¹سنن أبي داود، كتاب الأدب، باب في الحسد، ح (٤٨٦٧).

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My dear brothers! Both conditions are contemptible. It is neither good to be jealous, nor to have someone to be jealous of you. The person who you are jealous of will – inshā Allāh – receive plenty in the Hereafter. However, a person's worldly life sometimes becomes very bitter on account of jealousy. A person has to suffer many tests and tribulations. A jealous person does not know what else he will do. He will backbite; he will slander; if he sees the need, he will use his influence to get the person arrested; if he is not satisfied with this, he may even resort to black magic. Let alone others, he may even try to destroy the lives of his wife, children, relatives and associates. May Allāh *ta'ālā* protect us against jealousy, and from anyone being jealous of us. Āmīn.

A jealous person burns in both worlds

Jealousy burns a jealous person incessantly. He burns in both worlds. In this world, the fire of jealousy burns him. In the Hereafter, the fire of Hell will burn him. Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ahmad Partābgarhī *rahimullāh* says:

Why are you burning in the fire of jealousy? Why are you wringing your hands in remorse? Why are you displeased with the decisions of Allāh? Why are you advancing towards the Hell-fire?

When Allāh *ta'ālā* confers a bounty on a person, we ought to be happy about it. If we perceive any negative sentiments about it, we must conclude that it is an ailment and have it treated. Fall into prostration and beg of Allāh *ta'ālā*: “O Allāh! You blessed one of Your servants by giving him a bounty

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from Your treasures. My heart is filthy. I am so depraved that I am experiencing objections against Your decree and distribution. O my Allāh! Rescue me. You are the Master of the hearts. Give me salvation from this filthy illness.”

My dear brothers! Remember one point. Jealousy does not result in any bounty being taken away from the person. Instead, the more you are jealous of a person, the more progress Allāh *ta’ālā* confers on him. When a jealous person displays jealousy, Allāh *ta’ālā* goes into a rage and says: “You are such a weak and insignificant creation, yet you are objecting to My decree!?” Allāh *ta’ālā* then punishes him by giving more to the person whom he is jealous of.

The treatment for jealousy

My dear brothers! In the beginning the matter is very easy. A thought merely crosses your mind and you think to yourself: “Why does this person have such a beautiful car? It would have been good if he did not have it.” This seed is still in the stage of a thought. If a person turns immediately to Allāh *ta’ālā* and seeks His forgiveness, it will be uprooted and become non-existent. Think to yourself: “Why am I thinking like this? What wrong has he done to me? He always meets me with love, offers salām to me. I never had any dealing with him nor any argument. Even if I did have an argument with him, I shouldn’t have had bad thoughts of this nature about him.”

Think in this manner, then perform two rak’ats of salāh, repent to Allāh *ta’ālā* and seek His forgiveness. If you continue making du’ā’ for a few

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days, then – inshā Allāh – you will gain salvation from this ailment.

Unfortunately, we do not do this. We continue irrigating this seed of jealousy which is still in the stage of a thought until it becomes a huge tree of jealousy and hatred.

My dear friends! Give attention to making du‘ā’ for salvation from jealousy. Make good du‘ā’s also for the person whom you are jealous of. You will find it difficult initially, but this practice is most effective and beneficial. If you are jealous of a person because of the obedient children which he has, then make du‘ā’: “O Allāh! Make the children of this brother even more obedient. Let his children always be sources of joy to him.” Inshā Allāh, if you continue in this way, the ailment of jealousy will come to an end.

The moment you experience thoughts of jealousy, you must resort to du‘ā’ – du‘ā’ for yourself for salvation from jealousy, and for additional blessings in the bounties of the person whom you are jealous of. In this way, your filthy thoughts will – inshā Allāh – leave you, and you will develop emotions of love and desiring the wellbeing of that person. A Hadīth encourages us towards making du‘ā’ for a fellow Muslim in his absence. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam said:

إِنَّ أَسْرَعَ الدُّعَاءِ إِجَابَةٌ دَعْوَةُ غَائِبٍ لِغَائِبٍ^١

The du‘ā’ which is most swiftly accepted is the one which a Muslim makes for a fellow Muslim in the latter’s absence.

It is accepted quickly because it is devoid of show and ostentation. It is made solely to please Allāh ta‘ālā. Another Hadīth states:

مَا مِنْ مُسْلِمٍ يَدْعُو لِأَخِيهِ بِظَهْرِ الْغَيْبِ إِلَّا قَالَ الْمَلَكُ وَلَكَ بِمِثْلٍ،
وَلَكَ بِمِثْلٍ.^٢

When a Muslim makes du‘ā’ for his brother in the latter’s absence, an angel says: “May Allāh give you something similar. May Allāh give you something similar.”

When you make du‘ā’ for your fellow Muslim, it will have two benefits: (1) Your heart will be purified of jealousy. (2) You will also receive the bounty due to which you were jealous of him. In addition to this, your du‘ā’ made in his absence in his favour will be accepted in his favour. He will progress in this way. Since you no longer have that jealousy, you will be pleased with the bounties which he has. You will experience additional pleasure over the fact that you have a share in his progress because you made du‘ā’ for him.

¹ سنن أبي داود، باب تفریح أبواب الوتر، باب الدعاء بظهر الغيب، ح (١٥٣٠).

² صحيح ابن حبان، كتاب الأدعية، ح (٩٨٥).

We have to change our mindset

My dear brothers! There is a need for you to change your mindset. We must not “burn” when we see our fellow brother prosperous. If a certain person is successful in his business while we are not, then think: “Although I am a failure, at least my brother is successful. All praise is due to Allāh *ta‘ālā*.” You need to be magnanimous and high-minded. He is not an outsider; he is our brother. Therefore, his success is our success.

The profit of that nation is one, and so is its loss. They all have one Prophet, one religion and the same *īmān*.

The profit of this Muslim nation is one, and so is its loss. If any one of us acquires a benefit, we must think that the entire nation has benefited. If any one person from our nation suffers a loss, we must think that the entire nation has suffered a loss.

If there are 15-20 wealthy people in Lusaka, how much of *zakāh* will there be? And to whom will it be given? It will obviously be given to Muslims. Just imagine how many hungry stomachs will be filled! How many orphans will be taken care of! How many widows will be provided for! How many *madāris* will benefit! From their *lillāh* monies, how many *masājid*, *madāris* and welfare organizations will be assisted? We do not know how far and wide their wealth will go. We thus conclude that when one Muslim makes a profit, the entire nation profits from it. And when one Muslim suffers a loss, the entire nation suffers a loss.

The Muslims are like a body

If a poor Muslim villager in Africa goes through some sort of suffering, a Muslim living in a palatial home in Britain ought to feel the effect of that suffering. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

مَثَلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي تَوَادُّهِمْ وَتَرَاحُمِهِمْ وَتَعَاطُفِهِمْ مَثَلُ الْجَسَدِ، إِذَا اشْتَكَى مِنْهُ عُضْوٌ تَدَاعَى لَهُ سَائِرُ الْجَسَدِ بِالسَّهَرِ وَالْحُمَّى.¹

The similitude of the believers in their love for each other, their mercy for each other and their affection towards each other is like a body. When one part of the body experiences pain, the entire body responds with restlessness and fever.

الْمُسْلِمُونَ كَرَجُلٍ وَاحِدٍ إِنْ اشْتَكَى عَيْنُهُ اشْتَكَى كُلُّهُ، وَإِنْ اشْتَكَى رَأْسُهُ اشْتَكَى كُلُّهُ.²

The Muslims are like a single body. When the eye or head is in discomfort, the entire body experiences discomfort.

All Muslims are like a single body. If the eye is hurt, the entire body becomes restless. The ear does not say: “That is your problem. I am tired now so I want to sleep.” The hands do not say: “That is your problem. I am tired, I want to have a rest.” This is not the case. When the eyes are in pain, the mind immediately responds and thinks: a doctor has to

¹ صحيح مسلم، كتاب البر والصلة، باب تراحم المؤمنين وتعاطفهم وتعاضدهم، ح (٢٦٦٩/٢).

² صحيح مسلم، كتاب البر والصلة، باب تراحم المؤمنين وتعاطفهم وتعاضدهم، ح (٢٦٦٩/٣).

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be consulted. The feet will respond by enabling him to walk to his telephone. The hand will respond by lifting the phone from its cradle. The fingers will respond by dialling the number. The ear will listen to what the doctor has to say. The tongue will speak to him. All the body parts go into motion because of the pain experienced by their one “companion” [the eye]. The believers too spend their lives by assisting each other with love, affection and kindness.

To rejoice at the pain of others

What is our attitude? When we see a Muslim brother suffering, we take enjoyment by looking at him like spectators.

My dear brothers! This is the bitter reality of life which we will have to admit. If not, this ailment will not be treated. If a young girl leaves her parents and goes away, it becomes an excruciatingly painful experience for not only her family but the entire society. We should not discuss it in any assembly. The most we should do is demonstrate our concern by saying to the family: “We have heard that your daughter has disappeared. We are severely pained to hear this. She is our daughter as well. You must certainly ask us if you need any help. As for du‘ā’, we are already making it for you.” An incident of this nature should not be discussed with anyone; neither your friends nor your family. Why? Because it is a bad thing; and noble people do not speak about such things in their society. When the honour of a family becomes tainted, how can we as believers spread and proliferate it? It is very distressing. It is most astonishing that we revel in the suffering of others! Brother! Is someone’s daughter left her parents and disappeared, you should convince yourself into thinking that she is our daughter as

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well. If a person's car is stolen, think that it is also our car. If a thief breaks into someone's house and steals his wealth, then think to yourself that it was our wealth. We ought to feel the same pain that is experienced by the person. If we do not feel the same pain, we should feel some percentage of it.

The profit of that nation is one, and so is its loss. They all have one Prophet, one religion and the same īmān. They have one Haram Sharif, one Allāh, and one Qur'ān. Can there be anything greater than all the Muslims living as one?

It is indeed sad that we all share the same things but we are not united as one. We have to think about treating illnesses and ailments of this nature.

How can there be 'īd when you meet your fellow brothers with malice in your heart!

Even if a superficial thought of jealousy crosses the mind, think of ways to get rid off it. Make du'ā' for yourself and also for the person whom you are jealous of. If you did not show any concern in this regard and the matter deteriorated to jealousy, it means that your purification has not been realized. You still need to rectify yourself. Your īmān and conviction are weak. You are still attached to this world, and not to the Hereafter. Such a person has to worry about his Dīn.

If you are lackadaisical in treating this ailment and the matter deteriorates towards jealousy, it will increase and take the form of malice. The fact of the matter is that your jealousy most certainly does not harm the person whom you are jealous of. Notwithstanding your accusations, backbiting, carrying tales, and placing obstacles in his path; he

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will still progress. This will result in anger and hatred in you. You were initially jealous of him, but now you hate him. The hatred will increase and you will sever ties with him. Now when you see him on a path, you will change your direction, you will turn your back to him, you will turn away from him. This is because now you cannot even tolerate looking at his face. Your life will become bitter and you will not experience joy and happiness even on occasions of joy and happiness.

How can there be ʿīd for the one who was eating shamelessly during the day? How can there be ʿīd for the one who was smoking cigarettes and drinking tea?

The joy of ʿīd is for the person who spent the month of Ramaḍān in the obedience of Allāh *taʿālā*. How can those who had been eating and drinking during Ramaḍān and disobeying Allāh *taʿālā* experience the joy of ʿīd? They take a bath, wear new clothes, put on a cloak over the clothes, wear a turban, apply a special perfume, and come and sit in the first row for the ʿīd ṣalāh. But their hearts are filthy – they are filled with jealousy, hatred and malice. Can that be a joyous ʿīd?

How can there be ʿīd for the one who was eating shamelessly during the day? How can there be ʿīd for the one who was smoking cigarettes and drinking tea? How can there be ʿīd for the one who meets you while having hatred and malice in his heart? What kind of ʿīd is that when a person does not even meet you with a genuine heart on the day of ʿīd?

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Of what benefit is that day of 'īd if we cannot meet others with a true heart even on the day of 'īd? My dear brothers! The night of Barā'ah will arrive and so will the night of Qadr. 'Īd al-fiṭr will arrive and so will 'īd al-aḍ-ḥā. There will be a wedding in your house and it will be an occasion of celebration. But the person who is immersed in jealousy will be deprived of all happiness while being in the midst of these occasions of happiness. He will experience discomfort in his heart even when in an environment of this nature. This is why Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam prohibited us from these traits:

لَا تَحَاسَدُوا وَلَا تَبَاغَضُوا وَلَا تَقَاطَعُوا وَلَا تَدَابَرُوا، وَكُونُوا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ
إِخْوَانًا

Do not be jealous of each other, do not hate each other, do not sever mutual ties, and do not turn your backs to each other. O servants of Allāh! Live as brothers.

If you become jealous of someone, turn to repentance and rectify yourself. Treat your hatred as well. Be particular about saving yourself from severing ties of kinship. Live as brothers.

Summary of the four meanings of the Hadīth

The Hadīth under discussion taught us four qualities:

1. No matter what bounty, favour, grace or goodness Allāh *ta'ālā* conferred us with, we

¹سنن ابن ماجه، كتاب الدعاء، باب الدعاء بالعتق والعافية، ح (٣٨٧٥).

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must have an ardent desire in our heart that our fellow Muslims should also be conferred with them.

2. We must treat our fellow Muslim brother in exactly the same way as we would like to be treated ourselves.
3. When giving advice to our fellow Muslim brother, we must advise him with what we would like for ourselves.
4. If we see any bounty with a Muslim brother, we must not be jealous of him. We may like that bounty for our self, but Allāh *ta'ālā* did not give it to us for a reason known best to Him. We must then be happy that at least our Muslim brother has it.

As long as these four qualities are not developed within us, we cannot consider ourselves to be perfect Muslims. If you find a weakness in any of these qualities, consult your seniors and mentors to find a way to redress the weakness. Inshā Allāh you will benefit if you practise on their guidelines. Together with this, make a point of engaging in Allāh's remembrance because it removes the filth and grime of the heart. Also pay particular importance to making *du'ā'* to Allāh *ta'ālā*. Allāh's remembrance and a spiritual mentor are both means, but the real purifier and rectifier is Allāh *ta'ālā*. If He accepts your *du'ā'*, you will be blessed in the other two means [Allāh's remembrance and a spiritual mentor], your heart will be purified, and you will gain emancipation from all internal spiritual ailments.

An example of desiring good for others

Before concluding my talk, let me relate a unique story related to practising on the Hadīth under discussion so that you may learn about some of the great personalities who lived in this world. There was a saint in whose house rats had settled down and were making life most inconvenient for him. They would disturb his sleep, spoil his food items, damage his clothes, and so on. One day he related his problem to his friends. They advised him to get a cat, and his problem will be solved. The saint did not pay heed to their advice. Within a few days he got fed up with the rats again, and complained to his friends. They gave him the same advice but he responded in the same manner. This continued for quite some time – whenever he got fed up, he would relate it to his friends, but would not act on their advice.

His friends said to him: “We are giving you a tried and tested solution which will certainly solve your problem. Yet you are not acting on it!?” When his friends persisted, he said: “The fact of the matter is that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said that none of you can be a perfect believer unless he likes for his brother what he likes for himself. If I were to bring a cat into my house, the rats will flee to the houses of my neighbours. They will then suffer just as I am suffering. I desire the same comfort for them which I desire for myself. My conscience does not permit me to get a cat and sleep peacefully while my neighbours will be disturbed and vexed by the rats.”¹

¹ إحياء علوم الدين، ج ٤، ص ٢١٦.

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My dear brothers! This is what you call a true and genuine heart. People of this nature have hearts which are filled with *īmān*, conviction, cognition, divine effulgence, love of Allāh *ta'ālā*, love of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and other similar priceless treasures. There is a need to nurture our hearts in that direction. For this we will have to work on our hearts. May Allāh *ta'ālā* inspire us. *Āmīn*.

وَأَخِرُ دَعْوَانَا أَنْ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ

The Reason For Earthquakes

Date: Safar 1429 A.H./February 2008
Venue: Islamic Da'wah Academy, Leicester,
U.K.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَكَفَى، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الرُّسُلِ وَخَاتِمِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ،
وَعَلَى آلِهِ الْأَصْفِيَاءِ، وَأَصْحَابِهِ الْأَتْقِيَاءِ. أَمَّا بَعْدُ: فَأَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ
الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ، بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ: ﴿يَأْتِيهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ
ح إِنَّ زَلْزَلَةَ السَّاعَةِ شَيْءٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾. صَدَقَ اللَّهُ مَوْلَانَا الْعَظِيمُ، وَصَدَقَ
رَسُولُهُ النَّبِيُّ الْأُمِّيُّ الْكَرِيمُ، وَنَحْنُ عَلَى ذَلِكَ لَمِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ
وَالشَّاكِرِينَ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ.

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي، وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي، وَاحْلُلْ عُقْدَةً مِنْ لِسَانِي
يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي، سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ
الْحَكِيمُ. اللَّهُمَّ انْفَعْنَا بِمَا عَلَّمْتَنَا وَعَلِّمْنَا مَا يَنْفَعُنَا. إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ
يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ، يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا،
اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ
وَأَتْبَاعِهِ وَأَزْوَاجِهِ وَدُرِّيَّاتِهِ.

An earthquake in Britain

Britain experienced an earthquake a few days ago. Many people felt the quake. There are some people who look at events of this nature with the eyes of admonition. They consider them to be warnings from Allāh *ta'ālā* and make a firm determination to set right their lives. There are others who regard these phenomena to be nothing more than

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entertainment. These events are neither admonitions for them, nor the means to wake them up from their sleep of heedlessness. Today I would like to speak briefly about earthquakes from an Islamic perspective so that we can take maximum benefit from this event.

Scientists and earthquakes

Scientists are of the view that there are certain plates in the depths of the earth. When these plates shake about, it results in an earthquake. Other scientists are of the view that there are minerals in the earth. There are various types of treasures in the earth, e.g. silver, coal, diamonds, steel, etc. Gas collects within these minerals, and when they have no way of exiting, it results in an increase in pressure which then causes an earthquake.

We conclude from this that scientists believe that an earthquake either takes place because of the movement of plates or the increase in pressure when gas collects within the minerals which are in the ground. As per their views, an earthquake has nothing to do with the actions of man.

There is a limit to the intellect

The investigations of scientists are limited to the intellect. However, there is something beyond the intellect, and it is referred to as divine revelation. The Prophets *'alayhimus salām* steer mankind through the same divine revelation. From their teachings we learn that Allāh *ta'ālā* blessed man with a very valuable treasure which is known as the intellect. Man can learn and acquire many things through it. However, it has certain limits. As long as the intellect remains within those limits, it can be of

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immense benefit. Once it goes beyond those limits and tries to understand something, it suffers many knocks and blows.

The essence of what I am saying is that the intellect has a limit. If it wants to understand anything beyond that limit, it will need divine revelation. In other words, it will have to revert to the Shari'at which was brought by Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. Without this, it will not be able to reach its objective.

The first catalyst for action

At this point you must bear in mind one other principle; you will benefit tremendously from it. There are three things which prompt man towards an action. In other words, any one of these three things are the catalysts for action. Whenever you intend doing a certain work, and you think about what is prompting you to do it, you will see one of these three things. It could be the desire within you, the demand of your heart, your feeling, your emotion, your sentiment, your inner verve.

Take the example of a person who intends eating a chocolate. If he were to ask himself: "What is prompting me to eat a chocolate?" The answer will be: "It is the desire of my heart which is urging me." It is saying: "You will relish it." Thus, the first thing which prompts man to do something is his temperament.

The second catalyst for action

The second thing which prompts man towards action is his intellect. For example, a mother – despite all her motherly love and affection – will hold her few-month's old baby firmly and allow a doctor

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to give an injection to her child. If you were to ask her what prompted her to do this, she will reply: "My intellect has steered me in this direction."

The third catalyst for action

The third thing is divine revelation. For example, a person spends in Allāh's cause: he feeds the poor and orphans, clothes them, constructs masājid and travellers lodges, prints Islamic literature, etc. In short, he spends a lot, and that too in a manner that no one comes to know of it. Outwardly, there seems to be no benefit for him to spend in this manner. Had he spent five and received ten in return, we could say he is making monetary profit. But this is not the case. If he gained popularity from his spending, we could say he gained something. His name could be published in the newspapers, or an announcement could be made in a masjid that such and such person contributed a certain amount towards the construction of this masjid. But he spends secretly. He does not allow anyone to come to know of it.

Ask someone: "There is a person who spends secretly in good causes. He is receiving nothing in return – neither wealth, fame nor any other pleasure. What do you think of such a person?" He will reply: "This is against the intellect. It doesn't make sense because if there is no benefit in doing a certain act, why do it?" However, if you were to ask the man who is spending his wealth: "There is neither any monetary benefit, fame nor any other pleasure for you in spending your wealth in this way. Why, then, do you spend it? What is prompting you to spend it?" He will reply: "Divine revelation. The teachings of Allāh *ta'ālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*."

Only three catalysts for action

Go to any person of this world and ask him: “Why are you doing this particular action?” and he will reply: “It is the desire of my temperament, it is the desire of my heart, it is because of my feelings and sentiments.”

“Brother! Why are you crying so much?”

“My internal feelings are compelling me.”

“Why are you remaining awake the entire night? Why are you forgoing such a sweet sleep?”

He will reply: “My intellect is saying to me: ‘If you wake up and study hard, you will succeed in your exams.’”

It is a winter’s night, and you are in your warm bed. You leave your bed in absolute silence. You do not allow anyone in the world to come to know of it. You do not have hot water. You bear the discomfort of performing wudū’ with cold water. You then perform tahajjud salāh. You neither experience enjoyment, fame nor wealth. Why are you performing this salāh? What has prompted you? The answer will be: It is divine revelation.

تَتَجَافَى جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَمِمَّا
رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ. فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ، جَزَاءً
بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ.

Their sides remain away from their sleeping places, calling on their Sustainer with fear and longing. They spend out of what We provided for them. So no self

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*knows what bliss is in store for them – a recompense for what they used to do.*¹

Divine revelation is asking me to do this. In return for it, I will receive the bounties of Paradise which no eye has seen, no ear has heard of, and no mind has ever imagined.

We conclude that there is one of three catalysts for any action. It is also possible for there to be two or three catalysts. No matter what, they are these three.

An important principle

Now remember this important principle. Anyone who applied it will experience success in this world and in the Hereafter. The one who does not apply it in his life – whether a Muslim or a non-Muslim – will remain a failure. (A non-Muslim does not believe in divine revelation, but if he too discards the remaining portion of this principle, he will not be able to succeed in this world). What is that principle? If there is a clash between his temperament and intellect – for example, his temperament says he must do it while his intellect says he must not or vice versa – then the only way for success is for him to cast aside his temperament and accept what his intellect says. The greatest businessmen in this world, people holding the highest positions, the greatest politicians, and the most successful people all adhered to this principle. Had they continued paying heed to their temperament and disregarded their intellect, they would never have succeeded. This is because the

¹ Sūrah as-Sajdah, 32: 16-17.

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temperament demands comfort, while the intellect demands effort. The temperament of a diabetic instructs him to consume sugary foods while the intellect instructs him not to consume such foods. If he follows his temperament, he will be destroyed very soon. If he follows his intellect, then – inshā Allāh – he will remain healthy. This is a general principle which can be applied in all walks of life. When there is a conflict between the intellect and the temperament, you must act on the demands of the intellect.

If there is a conflict between the intellect and divine revelation, you must cast aside the demands of the intellect and act on divine revelation. Just as in the case of a conflict between the temperament and intellect, the one who follows his temperament is always a failure; in the same way when there is a conflict between the intellect and divine revelation, the one who follows his intellect will always be a failure. It can never happen that a person discards divine revelation, acts on his intellect, and is successful. This can never happen.

This point was mentioned by the way. The actual point which I was making is that the intellect must be kept within its limits.

Three sources of knowledge

There are three sources of knowledge. There are three things from which we acquire knowledge. The first is the five senses – to look, to hear, to taste, to smell and to touch. By looking we are able to learn if an item is black or white, big or small, a human or an animal, and so on. We also learn about an item by hearing and tasting. The same can be said of the ability to smell. By touching an item, we can gauge

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whether it is hot or cold, soft or hard, and so on. This is the first stage of knowledge. The second thing through which we acquire knowledge is the intellect. And third is divine revelation.

The knowledge which is acquired through the intellect cannot be comprehended by the five senses. This is an accepted principle. The thing which the intellect understands cannot be understood by the seeing of the eyes, smelling of the nose, tasting of the tongue, hearing of the ears, or touching of the hands. It is impossible. Presently there is oxygen here. We know this through our intellect because if there was no oxygen, no one would remain alive. The eyes cannot see it, the ears cannot hear it, the nose cannot smell it, the tongue cannot taste it, and the hand or any other part of the body cannot touch it. Despite this, the intellect tells us that there is oxygen. This is because it is an accepted principle that man cannot survive without oxygen. The intellect is thus saying to us that because everyone here is alive, there has to be oxygen. If someone says: "I do not believe in the presence of oxygen because I can neither see it, taste it, hear it, nor touch it", then we will say to him that the five senses cannot reach where the intellect can. You are trying to acquire with your five senses a type of knowledge which is acquired through the intellect. This is a major error on your part. You ought to know that the intellect can perceive things which the five senses cannot.

My dear brothers! Just as the five senses cannot comprehend the things which the intellect can, in the same way, the intellect cannot comprehend the things which divine revelation can. The person who tries to fathom with the five senses something which

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can only be fathomed by the intellect is immature. In the same way, that person is foolish who rejects divine revelation solely because his intellect cannot understand it. We will say to him: “Brother! The intellect cannot comprehend divine revelation.”

Revert to Allāh and His Messenger in every matter

I was saying to you that when a believer experiences anything in his life – no matter how insignificant it may be – he reverts to Allāh *ta’ālā* and Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* in order to understand it. An earthquake was experienced. Scientists say that gas accumulates in the minerals in the ground, this creates a pressure, and so the ground quakes. Or, there are plates in the ground which start to shake. This results in the ground quaking. We are believers, so we will have to learn the reality of an earthquake in the light of divine revelation.

The reality of an earthquake

My dear brothers! An earthquake is experienced and the ground shakes because Allāh *ta’ālā* causes it to shake. There is no need to reject the investigations of the scientists. Whether the ground quakes due to the pressure caused by gases or because of the movement of underground plates, one thing is certain – Allāh *ta’ālā* causes it to quake. Whether He does it by shaking the plates, the pressure of the gases, or in some other way; the fact is that Allāh *ta’ālā* is the one who does it. The question now is what is the cause? When we revert to the teachings of Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* we learn that when Allāh’s servants transgress the limits in disobeying Him on His land, He causes it to quake. This is the actual reason.

Allāh's order

Allāh *ta'ālā* is most forbearing and tolerant. An insignificant human ascribes partners to Him while breathing the air provided by Him, eating the food given by Him, drinking His water, and using all His bounties. In fact, man goes to the extent of even rejecting the existence of Allāh *ta'ālā*. Despite this, Allāh *ta'ālā* does not do anything. My dear brothers! The issue of the Oneness of Allāh *ta'ālā* is a very significant one. He is One, He has no partner.

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ. اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ. لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ. وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ.

*Say: He is Allāh, the One. Allāh is independent. He neither gave birth to anyone nor was He begotten. There is none equal to Him.*¹

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ

*There is nothing like Him.*²

Just think! What a serious injustice to say that a Being like Him has offspring! The heavens ought to have burst and the earth ought to have been reduced to smithereens, and the mountains ought to have been crushed to powder. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

تَكَادُ السَّمَوَاتُ يَتَفَطَّرْنَ مِنْهُ وَتَنْشَقُّ الْأَرْضُ وَتَخِرُّ الْجِبَالُ هَدًّا. أَنْ دَعَوْا لِلرَّحْمَنِ وَلَدًا.

The heavens are almost torn by this [claim], the earth maybe rendered asunder and the mountains may fall

¹ Sūrah al-Ikhlās, 112: 1-4.

² Sūrah ash-Shūrā, 42: 11.

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*crumbling. On this that they ascribe a son to the Merciful.*¹

This is such a dangerous statement! It entails polytheism with Allāh *ta'ālā*. Despite this, Allāh *ta'ālā* does not seize them because He is most forbearing, He is most tolerant. However, there is a limit to everything. When humans transgress the limits of disobedience, and Allāh's land is filled with sins, Allāh's self-respect is stirred and He causes the ground to quake.

Listen attentively my dear brothers! Allāh *ta'ālā* shakes the ground. Initially there are small quivers. No harm is caused; if there is, it is minimal. It is virtually non-existent. They start as minor vibrations so that man may take admonition and repent from his sins. Those who had disconnected themselves from Allāh *ta'ālā* may reconnect themselves. When looked at from this angle, these minor quakes and vibrations are a mercy from Allāh *ta'ālā* through which He awakens the heedless from their heedlessness. But when His servants do not take heed, a major quake suddenly strikes. It is a powerful earthquake which abruptly presents a scene of the Resurrection.

The cause of an earthquake

An earthquake took place during the rule of Ḥaḍrat 'Umar *radiyallāhu 'anhu*. He immediately addressed the people: "O people! The only reason for this earthquake is that you have committed a new sin."² Another narration states that Ḥaḍrat 'Umar

¹ Sūrah Maryam, 19: 90-91.

² السنن الكبرى للبيهقي، كتاب صلاة الخسوف، ح (٦٣٧٧).

radiyallāhu 'anhu stamped the ground and addressed it: “Why are you shaking? Am I not standing on you with justice and equity?”¹ What he meant was: “You ought to quake only when sins become common on you. I myself am upholding justice and maintaining others on justice and equity, so there is no reason for you to quake now.”

An earthquake took place in the time of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. He was with his *Sahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum* at the time. He placed his blessed hand on the ground and said: “Stop! That time has not arrived as yet. The Resurrection has not come as yet.” Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* then turned to the *Sahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum* and said: “Your Sustainer wants you to turn in repentance. You should therefore repent.”²

An earthquake: A means of admonition

We learn from the above that an earthquake is unleashed because of the sins of man, and through it, Allāh *ta'ālā* turns the attention of His servants to repentance. There are many places in the world which experience minor quakes which cause no damage whatsoever. There will be a quake for a few seconds, people are overcome by fear, and the quake comes to a stop. No damage or loss is suffered. Allāh *ta'ālā* sends these minor quakes to awaken man from his dream of heedlessness. It is a form of mercy, but man does not take an admonition from them. He does not take a lesson. When he sees this earthquake, he does not practise

¹طبقات الشافعية الكبرى، ج ٢، ص ٣٢٤.

²موسوعة ابن أبي الدنيا، كتاب العقوبات، ح (١٨).

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on the teaching of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* by turning in repentance.

The alcoholic remains in his intoxication. The adulterer continues in his gratification. The person who acquires wealth in unlawful ways continues in his pilferage. The one who is attached to singing and music is still jiving to the music. The one who is disobedient to his parents continues in his disobedience. In the same way, those who watch movies, gamble, rob and steal, impose usury, watch evil on the internet, commit acts of immorality and shamelessness – are all intoxicated in their respective evils.

Allāh *ta'ālā* then sends an earthquake which is an example of the Resurrection. Towns upon towns are left desolate. Towns having 300-500 homes are swallowed by the ground leaving behind no trace whatsoever; as though there was no town there. Events of this nature were experienced in the recent past. Many of those who witnessed them are still alive.

Numerous earthquakes: A sign of Resurrection

My dear friends! Nowadays there are numerous earthquakes throughout the world. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said that excessive earthquakes is a sign of the Resurrection.¹ Previously, earthquakes would occur occasionally. They were so few and far between that if people heard of an earthquake, they would be overwhelmed by fear. Everyone would talk and comment about it. Nowadays we receive news of an earthquake every

¹صحيح البخاري، أبواب الاستسقاء، باب ما قيل في الزلازل والآيات، ح (١٠٤٥).

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six months. This is why when the earthquake occurred here in Britain, no one bothered about it because it was so minor.

Allāh is being disobeyed at sea as well

The question which arises is this: Why will there be so many earthquakes at the approach of the Resurrection? The reason is that acts of disobedience against Allāh *ta'ālā* will increase on the land. My dear brothers! Look around you and you will notice Allāh *ta'ālā* being disobeyed everywhere. People have always been disobeying Allāh *ta'ālā* on land. But now they go on sea cruises and disobey Allāh *ta'ālā*. They take a day-cruise or a few days' cruise with the excuse of travelling and relaxing, while music; singing; dancing; alcohol; immorality; nudity and every other type of sin is committed. O Allāh! We repent to You. O Allāh! We repent to You.

Going on holidays

We have now developed a culture of holidaying. Our people go to Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Malaysia and various other places. They are unmindful of Allāh *ta'ālā*, intoxicated in sinning, immersed in watching movies, listening to music, intermingling with the opposite sex, and drowning in play and amusement. These are the things which invite the punishment of Allāh *ta'ālā* and which stir His self-respect. People from good families go and stay in hotels, and then get caught up in sins which they would never have imagined had they been in their homes.

Touring and travelling

When people who are normally strict in their adherence to the Shari'at happen to go on a holiday

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for a few days, they feel these are days of enjoyment so there has to be some relaxation in matters of Dīn. Consequently, they become unmindful of their spiritual practices, good actions and cautious attitude. They gradually become overwhelmed into committing acts which they probably never imagined. The environment will obviously have an influence. Even if a person is able to save himself, just look at the evil activities which are committed at the place where he goes and where he stays! Are these things not enough to invite the wrath and punishment of Allāh *ta'ālā*? Should they not fear the sudden descent of Allāh's punishment? If you need to go touring, go with a good intention and go to places which are not inviting Allāh's wrath. Go to places which provide you with inner peace, where you can stay aloof from the attractions of the world, be in solitude, introspect, and are able to improve your bond with Allāh *ta'ālā* so that you can progress in Dīn. The situation at present is such that instead of progressing in Dīn, people are retrogressing. The carnal self is enjoying itself while the poor soul is totally ill; if not on the verge of dying.

Allāh's power

I was making the point that Allāh *ta'ālā* sends earthquakes because of our sins. Look! Scientists are saying that our country [Britain] is very far from those underground plates, so it is not possible for a major earthquake to strike this country. However, my dear brothers, the words of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* are enough for us. He informed us that when disobedience of Allāh *ta'ālā* on earth goes beyond the limits, Allāh *ta'ālā* causes it to quake. And He needs no gas and no plates to do this. You can imagine His power and might from

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the fact that a single scream of just one angel can result in the destruction of towns after towns.

وَأَخَذَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا الصَّيْحَةَ فَأَصْبَحُوا فِي دِيَارِهِمْ جُثْمِينَ، كَأَن لَّمْ يَعْنُوا فِيهَا

A terrifying sound seized the wrongdoers, and by morning they were left in their homes lying face down, as though they had never lived there.¹

Desolateness pervaded the entire town in a single moment. It seemed as though it was never inhabited by anyone. They were utterly destroyed at once. Allāh ta'ālā sent Jibra'īl 'alayhis salām to the people of Lūt 'alayhis salām. He raised the entire town to the skies with his wing and then flung it down. Allāh ta'ālā then rained stones onto them.²

فَلَمَّا جَاءَ أَمْرُنَا جَعَلْنَا عَالِيَهَا سَافِلَهَا وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهَا حِجَارَةً مِّن سِجِّيلٍ لَّا مَنصُودٍ.

Then when Our order reached them, We turned the town upside down, and We rained down upon them rocks of limestone, layer upon layer.³

Allāh ta'ālā is that all-mighty Being, the One who has no partner, the all-powerful. He needs no one; He is not dependent on anyone.

¹ Sūrah Hūd, 11: 67-68.

² تفسیر القرطبي، ج ۱۱، ص ۱۸۵.

³ Sūrah Hūd, 11: 82.

Every atom of the universe is a part of Allāh's army

A screeching sound, the ground, the air, water – these are all the soldiers of Allāh *ta'ālā*. Every atom of this universe is a part of His army. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

فَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِ حَاصِبًا

There were those upon whom We sent a wind casting down pebbles.

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ أَخَذَتْهُ الصَّيْحَةُ

There were those whom an [awful] scream seized.

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ حَسَفْنَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ

There were those whom We caused to be swallowed into the earth.

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ أَعْرَفْنَا

There were those whom We drowned.

Allāh *ta'ālā* has every type of power. If He wills, He can drown our entire country or put an end to it with a single push. Whether it takes the form of a hurricane, tsunami, cyclone or earthquake – the fact of the matter is that Allāh *ta'ālā* is angered by our sinning and inflicts these calamities upon us.

فَكُلًّا أَخَذْنَا بِذَنْبِهِ

Then every one of them We punished for his sin.

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ

*Corruption has spread on land and in the sea on account of what the peoples' hands have earned.*¹

Corruption becomes widespread in the world because of man's evil actions. Peace and security is taken away. There is neither peace on land nor at sea. Calamities and disasters encircle them from all sides.

Allāh is the sole doer

My dear brothers! There is a cause behind everything which happens in this world. Allāh *ta'ālā* is the sole doer, but He laid down a cause for everything. When a man and woman get together, a child is born. Despite this, it is our belief that Allāh *ta'ālā* is the One who creates the child. If the earth quakes because of the movement of the plates or the accumulation of gas, it still quakes by the order of Allāh *ta'ālā*. No matter what the reason, Allāh *ta'ālā* is the One who shakes it. And He does this because of our sins. A resident of Britain should therefore not be under the delusion that because Britain is not the place where these plates join and that they are far from here, a major earthquake cannot strike here. This is a serious deception. Allāh *ta'ālā* can cause this ground to shake, He can cause us to be swallowed in it, He can rain down stones upon us, He can disfigure people and turn them into pigs and monkeys – He can do anything. May Allāh *ta'ālā* have mercy on us and keep us under His protection and safety. Āmīn.

¹ Sūrah ar-Rūm, 30: 41-42.

Which sins invite earthquakes?

There is a Hadith in *Sunan Tirmidhī* in which Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam lists certain sins. He then says: “When this becomes the condition of people, then you can expect red whirlwinds, earthquakes, being swallowed into the ground, the disfiguring of faces, the raining down of stones from the skies, and other calamities which will come upon them one after the other just as when a rosary of beads breaks, and those beads fall off in succession.”

What this means is that when the string which holds a rosary of beads snaps, the beads start to fall off one after the other. In the same way, punishments of Allāh *ta'ālā* descend in different forms one after the other. When will this happen? Hadrat Abū Hurayrah radiyallāhu 'anhu narrates that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

1. When booty is regarded as personal wealth. This means that booty to which all Muslims have a right is spent by people for their personal benefits. In the same way, in the absence of integrity and trustworthiness, the funds of madāris, masājid and religious institutions will not be spent on those who are eligible for them. Instead, they will be spent for personal benefits.
2. Trusts will be considered to be booty. This means that trusts will be handled deceitfully. Like booty, people will acquire trusts for free and they will not even think about the deceit which they are committing.
3. Zakāh will be considered to be a tax. This means that zakāh will not be spent with a

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happy heart after believing it to be an act of worship. Instead, it will be treated as a burden, and people will therefore delay in its payment. If they have to pay it, they will do it very unhappily.

4. Knowledge will be acquired for purposes other than Dīn. This means that knowledge of Dīn will not be acquired for the Hereafter. Rather, it will be acquired for worldly gain, name and fame, authority, and the praises of people.
5. A man will become obedient to his wife. This means that a husband will do whatever his wife wants of him without bothering about the rights of others. He will side with her irrespective of whether she is right or wrong, whether it is lawful or not.
6. A son will become disobedient to his mother. The contempt with which parents are treated by their children today is observed glaringly.
7. A man will get close to his friend and distance himself from his father. This is quite common today. A friend becomes more important. The poor father takes cares of him, feeds him and does everything else for him, but the son neither obeys him nor fulfils his rights. He has no time for his father. He will be with his friends most of the time and do as they say.
8. Voices will be raised in the masājid. Go to any masjid today and see for yourself. There is neither any silence before a ṣalāh nor after, before a marriage ceremony nor after, before a lecture nor after. Go to the Ḥaram Sharīf,

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go to Masjid-e-Nabawī, and you will see the same thing there – the majority of the people will be engaged in conversations.

9. The flagrant sinner will be made the chief of his tribe.
10. The most contemptible person of a nation will be made its leader. Look at the world today! See what type of people are holding the top positions. Look at those who are appointed as Prime Ministers and Presidents. Those who know about them are left astounded when they see them at the top. They are the ones who have no vestige of nobility, and who are extremely base in character. Despite this, the people make them their leaders for their own benefit. This is also a sign of the Resurrection – that the most contemptible is made the leader.
11. A person is respected in order to be saved from his mischief. This means that people will respect a person because this is the only way of saving themselves from his mischief. He will not be respected on the basis of sound character and nobility.
12. Singing and dancing women, and musical instruments will become common. This is observed throughout the world today.
13. Wine will be consumed. This means that it will become widespread and become a part of life.
14. The latter people of this ummat will denigrate and criticize the early people. This means that people will speak ill of the *Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum*, the Imāms of

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jurisprudence, and other seniors of this ummat.¹

When these evils come into existence, punishments from Allāh *ta'ālā* will descend in various forms.

Earthquakes arrive because of sinning

We learn from the previously quoted narrations that the earth quakes because of disobedience to Allāh *ta'ālā*. He first sends a minor quake so that people may be given a chance to repent. The ground will shake, and no major loss is suffered. It will shake again, and still nothing happens. This happens again. The minor quaking of the ground is an announcement from Allāh *ta'ālā*: “O My servants! Turn quickly to Me and repent! Remember the teaching of My beloved *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* that I send earthquakes because I want you to repent. You should therefore turn in repentance.”²

When man still does not turn to Allāh *ta'ālā*, He inflicts them with a major earthquake due to which towns after towns are destroyed. People die in their thousands, countless become homeless, women become widows, children become orphans, and the wealthy are reduced to paupers.

An all-encompassing punishment

When the majority of the people of a place are disobedient to Allāh *ta'ālā*, He sends down an all-encompassing punishment which does not leave

¹سنن الترمذي، أبواب الفتن، باب ما جاء في علامة حلول المسخ والحسف، ح (٢٣٥٩).

²موسوعة ابن أبي الدنيا، كتاب العقوبات، ح (١٨).

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even the pious ones of that place. The entire town is destroyed. Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

وَاتَّقُوا فِتْنَةً لَا تُصِيبَنَّ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْكُمْ خَاصَّةً

Continually guard yourselves against a sedition which will not afflict the wrongdoers among you alone. (No one will be saved. The disobedient will be destroyed because of their disobedience. The spectators will be destroyed because they did not stop them).¹

Four types of people after an earthquake

A punishment descended in the form of an earthquake. Some people died, others became paralyzed. The bones of some people broke, others became orphans, widows, poor, homeless, injured, despondent, and so on. After the earthquake, they become divided into four parts. Those who died make up two parts, and those who survived make up the other two parts. From those who died, there are those who were good people and those who were not. In the same way, from the survivors, there are those who were good people and those who were not. The people are thus divided into four groups:

1. The first group is made up of those who were evil and they died. They will proceed to the Hell-fire.
2. The second group is made up of those who were good and righteous. They were obedient to Allāh *ta'ālā* and they passed away. This calamity will be a means for the elevation of

¹ Sūrah al-Anfāl, 8: 25.

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their rank in the Hereafter. They would have died as martyrs and will proceed to Paradise.

3. The third group is made up of those who are good people and they survived. The earthquake is a test for them. At the time of this calamity, are they pleased with the decree of Allāh *ta'ālā* or not? If they succeed in this test, they become eligible for even more proximity to Allāh *ta'ālā*.
4. The fourth group is made up of those who are evil doers and they survived. The earthquake is an admonition and a warning to them. It is also an encouragement to them to repent.

An earthquake is thus a warning for sinners, a piece of advice and an admonition. It comes to awaken them from their dream of heedlessness. Through the earthquake, Allāh *ta'ālā* sends a message to His servants: “O My servants! You have now transgressed the limit. Repent and turn to Me quickly.”

The first task: Repentance and turning to Allāh

The first thing to do on such an occasion is to turn to Allāh *ta'ālā*. A person has to engage in excessive repentance and seeking of forgiveness. He will have to cry and invoke Allāh *ta'ālā*. He must desist from his evil ways and actions. Together with carrying out the obligatory actions, he must pay full importance to optional good deeds. While repenting and seeking forgiveness, he must think to himself that this earthquake descended because of man's sins. And that if a list of the sinners is made, he will be at the top of the list because he is the worst of sinners. The earthquake descended because of him.

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His sins have increased to such an extent, that even the earth of Allāh *ta'ālā* is shuddering at them.

In addition to repentance and seeking forgiveness, a person must say to Allāh *ta'ālā*: “O Allāh! This happened because of me. Pardon me. Pardon me.”

My dear brothers! This incident is an excellent opportunity for us to come towards good. If we consider it to be a warning from Allāh *ta'ālā*, a type of fear will develop in our hearts. We will think to ourselves: “I am not performing *ṣalāh*. I am not paying *zakāh*. I am not fasting. I am committing adultery. I am consuming wine. I am taking drugs. I am oppressing people. I am backbiting...The earth had merely shook. What if I was swallowed by it? Allāhu Akbar! My Allāh saved me. O Allāh! I seek Your pardon. I promise You I will not commit any sin in the future.”

My dear brothers! Repent in this way and set right your lives. Take maximum benefit from this occasion. Sit in solitude and cry to Allāh *ta'ālā*. Beg Him for pardon. “O Allāh! Pardon me. O Allāh! Pardon me.” Together with this, make a firm resolution to rectify your life, and make a point of keeping away from sins.

The second task: Charity

Together with repentance, seeking forgiveness, piety, optional good deeds and *du'ā'*; a person must give in charity.

Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

إِنَّ الصَّدَقَةَ لِتُطْفِئُ غَضَبَ الرَّبِّ وَتَدْفَعُ مِيتَةَ السُّوءِ¹

Charity cools the anger of Allāh and repulses a bad death.

Just imagine what a bad death that will be if we are swallowed into the earth as sinners! Or a building falls onto us, or we are rained upon by stones! We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*! We seek refuge in Allāh *ta'ālā*!

The first task is for us to consider ourselves to be in the wrong, to repent sincerely, seek forgiveness, and cry before Allāh *ta'ālā*. "O Allāh! Pardon me." Allāh *ta'ālā* loves submission and servitude. The second task is to give in charity. Even after giving in charity, we must continue with repentance and seeking forgiveness. We must adopt piety and make full efforts to abstain from sinning.

The third task: Thinking of the Hereafter

While taking benefit from this occasion, we must also develop a consciousness of the Resurrection. It is certainly going to come, and it may well come in our very lifetime. If we became so terrified by a ten-second earthquake, imagine how much our hearts will be affected by the earthquake of the Resurrection! It will be far more powerful. The sun will lose its lustre. The stars will fall. The mountains will fly like wool. The skies will be rendered asunder. The earth will spew out all its burden. In short, this entire factory of the world will collapse and be reduced to nothing.

¹سنن الترمذي، أبواب الزكاة، باب ما جاء في فضل الصدقة، ح (٦٦٥).

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Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

يَأْيُهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ ۚ إِنَّ زَلْزَلَةَ السَّاعَةِ شَيْءٌ عَظِيمٌ. يَوْمَ تَرَوْنَهَا
تَذْهَلُ كُلُّ مُرْضِعَةٍ عَمَّا أَرْضَعَتْ وَتَضَعُ كُلُّ ذَاتِ حَمْلٍ حَمْلَهَا وَتَرَى
النَّاسَ سُكَرَىٰ وَمَا هُمْ بِسُكَرَىٰ وَلَكِنَّ عَذَابَ اللَّهِ شَدِيدٌ.

O people! Fear your Sustainer, for surely, the earthquake of the [last] hour is a mighty thing. The day when you behold it, every suckling mother will forget her suckling, and every pregnant woman will deliver her burden, and you will see the people intoxicated yet they are not intoxicated. Rather, the punishment of Allāh is severe (and this is what will cause them to become like this).¹

The exegetes have two views with regard to the verses which make reference to the earthquake of the Resurrection. One view is that it refers to the earthquake which will be experienced in this world before the blowing of the trumpet. The second view is that it refers to the earthquake which will be sent to bring the dead back to life in the Hereafter. Some scholars reconcile these two views by saying that it is not far-fetched to assume that there will be two earthquakes. Even if the Resurrection does not take place in our life, we will have to experience this earthquake when we are raised from our graves.

إِذَا زُلْزِلَتْ الْأَرْضُ زِلْزَالَهَا.

When the earth is shaken with its quaking.

¹ Sūrah al-Hajj, 22: 1-2.

وَأَخْرَجَتِ الْأَرْضُ أَثْقَالَهَا.

When the earth brings forth its burden from within.

وَقَالَ الْإِنْسَانُ مَا لَهَا.

And man asks: "What has happened to it?"

يَوْمَئِذٍ تُحَدِّثُ أَخْبَارَهَا.

On that day it shall recount its tidings.¹

This means that every part of this land will testify in Allāh's court against man. It will say: Adultery was committed on me, wine was consumed, this sin was committed, that sin was committed.

A narration of *Sunan Tirmidhī* states that whatever deed a person did on the earth – whether good or bad – the earth will speak about it. This will be its testimony.²

The exegetes say that this sūrah probably refers to the earthquake which will take place when people come to life after death. This is because the remainder of the sūrah speaks about the accounting of deeds and other scenes of the Resurrection.³

¹ Sūrah az-Zilzāl, 99: 1-4.

² سنن الترمذي، أبواب الزهد عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، ح (٢٥٩٩).

³ روح المعاني، ج ٢٩، ص ٢٤٩.

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The earthquake of the Resurrection is a mighty event

I was saying to you that the earthquake of the Resurrection is a mighty event. It will be a terrifying and horrifying event.

Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

أَلْقَارِعَةُ. مَا أَلْقَارِعَةُ.

The thing which causes a trembling. What is it that causes a trembling?

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا أَلْقَارِعَةُ.

What have you understood as to what is that thing which causes a trembling?

يَوْمَ يَكُونُ النَّاسُ كَالْفَرَاشِ الْمَبْثُوثِ.

The day when people will be like scattered moths.

When moths gather around a lamp, they gather in large numbers. In the same way, all the past and latter peoples will assemble on a single field. They will be in their billions and trillions. They will be restless and weak like moths.

وَتَكُونُ الْجِبَالُ كَالْعِهْنِ الْمَنْفُوشِ.

The mountains will be like coloured wool, carded.¹

Due to the earthquake, these mighty mountains will be reduced to smithereens and be seen flying in the wind like carded wool. At the time, countless atoms

¹ Sūrah al-Qāri'ah, 101: 1-5.

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will be flying in the air. When we were young, we saw how wool is carded and reduced to bits. In the same way, the mountains will be reduced to bits and will fly in the air.

Allāh *ta'ālā* says in another place in the Qur'an:

إِذَا وَقَعَتِ الْوَاقِعَةُ لَئِيسَ لَوْقَعَتِهَا كَاذِبَةٌ

When the inevitable comes to pass. There is no lie in its coming to pass. (Rather, it will certainly come to pass; it is definite).

خَافِضَةٌ رَّافِعَةٌ

(The Resurrection is) abasing, exalting.

It abases and shames evil people. It elevates righteous people and honours them. In the same way, it conveys proud people to the Hell-fire, while it conveys the humble believers who are looked down upon to the lofty levels of Paradise.

إِذَا رُجَّتِ الْأَرْضُ رَجًا. وَبُسَّتِ الْجِبَالُ بَسًّا. فَكَانَتْ هَبَاءً مُنْبَثًّا.

When the earth is shaken with a [severe] shaking. The mountains will be split into smithereens. They will then become dust, flying about.¹

We ought to remember the Resurrection now

My dear brothers! When an earthquake takes place in this world, a scene of the Hereafter is depicted to us. We do not know where to run and in which direction. Each person is worried about his own self. Many women go to the extent of forgetting their

¹ Sūrah al-Wāqī'ah, 56: 1-6.

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suckling children. This is why people who have experienced an earthquake say: “We have seen the Resurrection.”

My dear brothers! We ought to take a lesson from this earthquake and create a concern for the Hereafter. Together with this concern, we have to repent. Let it not happen that because of our sins, we are inflicted with an earthquake a second time; and towns after towns are destroyed and wiped out. May Allāh *ta’ālā* protect us from that.

Get up from here with the full resolution that you will never disobey Allāh *ta’ālā* after this day. Repent to Him, seek forgiveness from Him, and make a firm intention of staying away from sins. Together with this, make efforts towards your reformation and rectification. Set right your internal and external selves. Give due importance to charity as well. Think repeatedly that the Resurrection is certainly going to come. If we cannot bear this minor earthquake, how will we bear the major earthquake of the Resurrection?

The waning world is saying to us: We now have to prepare for the Hereafter. Whatever is to come is now very near. We now have to remember the Resurrection.

May Allāh *ta’ālā* enable us to take admonition and to practise. May Allāh *ta’ālā* make this earthquake a means for us to change our lives. Āmīn.

My dear brothers! If we take a lesson from this earthquake, if we repent, if we change our lives, and are conscious of the fact that Allāh’s punishment can descend at any time – an earthquake can strike, the land can be split asunder, stones can be rained

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down onto us – then, inshā Allāh, we will succeed. But if we do not change our condition and our lives remain tainted with sins, then we are in real danger. We will have to pay special attention to this. May Allāh *ta'ālā* inspire us. Āmīn.

It is of grave concern when an earthquake strikes where we live. It means that those who are living here are so immersed in sin that Allāh *ta'ālā* is displeased. Repentance and seeking forgiveness are required to please Allāh *ta'ālā*. This is why we have to engage in excessive seeking of forgiveness, and make an earnest effort to change our lives. Together with this, while making du'ā' to Allāh *ta'ālā*, we will have to make efforts on others. May Allāh *ta'ālā* inspire us to practise. Āmīn.

وَأَخِرُ دَعْوَانَا أَنْ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ

Final Moments of The Righteous Servants

Date: Jumādā al-Ūlā 1429 A.H./May 2008
Venue: Islamic Da'wah Academy, Leicester,
U.K.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَكَفَى، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الرُّسُلِ وَخَاتِمِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ،
وَعَلَى آلِهِ الْأَصْفِيَاءِ، وَأَصْحَابِهِ الْأَتْقِيَاءِ. أَمَّا بَعْدُ: فَأَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ
الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ، بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ: ﴿يَا أَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ.
إِرْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً. فَأَدْخِلِي فِي عِبْدِي. وَادْخُلِي جَنَّتِي﴾.
صَدَقَ اللَّهُ مَوْلَانَا الْعَظِيمِ، وَصَدَقَ رَسُولُهُ النَّبِيُّ الْأُمِّيُّ الْكَرِيمُ، وَنَحْنُ
عَلَىٰ ذُلِكَ لِمَنِ الشَّاهِدِينَ وَالشَّاكِرِينَ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ.

رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي، وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي، وَاحْلُلْ عُقْدَةً مِنْ لِسَانِي
يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي، سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ
الْحَكِيمُ. اللَّهُمَّ انْفَعْنَا بِمَا عَلَّمْتَنَا وَعَلِّمْنَا مَا يَنْفَعُنَا. إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ
يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ، يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا،
اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَىٰ آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ
وَأَتْبَاعِهِ وَأَزْوَاجِهِ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِ.

As you live, so shall you die

Allāh *ta'ālā* created us and sent us into this world to live our lives in accordance with a certain principle. We will die in the manner in which we live. And we will be raised on the day of Resurrection in the manner in which we died. If a person spends his life in Allāh's disobedience, he will be raised on the day of Resurrection as a

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disobedient person. If he spends his life as Allāh's obedient servant, he will be resurrected as an obedient servant. This is why every person should try to make his life as best as possible.

The final moments of Hadrat Bilāl ﷺ

Hadrat Bilāl radiyallāhu 'anhu was very happy at the time of his death. When he realized that he was in the final moments of his life and that he will bid farewell to this world in a short while, and he will be going to the next world, he said:

وَاطْرَبَاهُ! عَدَا نَلْقَى الْأَجَبَةَ مُحَمَّدًا وَحِزْبَهُ

How wonderful! Tomorrow we will meet our beloveds – Muḥammad ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam and his companions.

He spent his life in the love of Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam, the love of the Sahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum and a yearning for the Hereafter; and so, he was blessed with a death like that.

The final moments of Hadrat Abū Bakr ﷺ

When Hadrat Abū Bakr radiyallāhu 'anhu fell ill, some Sahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum went to visit him and said: “Should we get a doctor for you?” He replied: “The doctor has already seen me.” Someone asked: “What did the doctor say?” He replied: “The doctor said:

¹ إحياء علوم الدين، ج ٩، ص ٢٦.

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إِنِّي فَعَّالٌ لِّمَا أُرِيدُ

I do as I will.

He was making reference to a verse in the Qur'an in which Allāh *ta'ālā* says:

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ فَعَّالٌ لِّمَا يُرِيدُ

Surely your Sustainer does whatever He wills.²

Hadrat 'Ā'ishah *radiyallāhu 'anhā* then came to him, and on seeing the condition of her father, she quoted a few couplets. Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* replied: That is not how it is. Instead, read the entire verse:

وَجَاءَتْ سَكْرَةُ الْمَوْتِ بِالْحَقِّ، ذَلِكَ مَا كُنْتَ مِنْهُ تَحِيدُ

The stupor of death has certainly arrived. This is the very fate which you used to try to avoid.³

Look! As he lived, that is how he died. Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu 'anhu* spent his life fully attached with Allāh *ta'ālā*, immersed in the Oneness of Allāh *ta'ālā*, and fully occupied with the Qur'an. Thus, when the time of his death approached, these very things came before him. He then advised that the clothes which he is wearing must be washed and used as his shroud because a living person is more in need of new clothes.⁴ When he spent his life

¹ حلبة الأولياء، ج ١، ص ٣٤.

² Sūrah Hūd, 11: 107.

³ Sūrah Qāf, 50: 19.

⁴ الكامل في التاريخ، ج ٢، ص ٢٦٧.

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saving himself from wastage and extravagance, and being content and satisfied with whatever he had, then the same conditions presented themselves before him at the time of death.

The time of his death was now extremely close. Hadrat Salmān Fārsī radiyallāhu ‘anhu entered and said: “O deputy of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam! Advise me.” Hadrat Abū Bakr radiyallāhu ‘anhu replied: “When Allāh *ta’ālā* opens the gates of worldly treasures for you, do not attach your heart more than necessary to them.”¹ He passed away after these words of advice. He spent his life unattached to this world, constantly concerned about Dīn, the Hereafter, and that people too should remain on Dīn; and so, his death came while having the same concerns.

The final moments of Hadrat Mu’ādh ibn Jabal ﷺ

Hadrat Mu’ādh ibn Jabal radiyallāhu ‘anhu passed away as a young man in the ‘Amawās plague.² He is a distinguished Ṣahābī. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam said with reference to him:

وَأَعْلَمُهُم بِالْحَلَالِ وَالْحَرَامِ مُعَاذُ بْنُ جَبَلٍ³

From the Ṣahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum, Mu’ādh ibn Jabal radiyallāhu ‘anhu has most knowledge about the lawful and the prohibited.

¹ الطبقات الكبرى، ج ٣، ص ١٤٤.

² صفة الصفوة، ج ١، ص ١٩٠.

³ السنن الكبرى للنسائي، كتاب المناقب، ح (٨٣٨٢).

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On the day on which he passed away, he said: “Welcome to death! Welcome to death! A guest which comes periodically. What a beloved who came at the time of poverty. O Allāh! I had always been fearing You, but today I am hopeful of You. O Allāh! You know very well that I did not want to live long in this world to cause streams to flow and plant trees. Rather, I wanted to live in this world to fast by day and feel thirsty, to bear hardships, and to sit in the assemblies of the ‘ulamā’.”¹ When death came nearer, he said: “O Allāh! I take an oath by Your honour! You know that I love You.”² He passed away while concerned about the very actions with which he had passed his life.

The final moments of Hadrat Hudhayfah ibn Yamān ﷺ

Hadrat Hudhayfah radiyallāhu ‘anhu is a senior Sahābī. He was a confidant of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam had shown him the list of the hypocrites.³ He spent his life in preparation of death. When his final moments arrived, he said: “O Allāh! You know that I preferred poverty over wealth, servitude over honour, and death over life.” He passed away after that.⁴

¹ حلية الأولياء، ج ١، ص ٢٣٩.

² المنتظم، ج ٤، ص ٢٦٤.

³ المنتظم، ج ٥، ص ١٠٥.

⁴ حلية الأولياء، ج ١، ص ٢٨٢.

The final moments of Hadrat 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz

Hadrat 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz *rahimahullāh* was a distinguished Tabi'i and a righteous caliph. Allāh *ta'ālā* enabled him to render sterling services to Islam. He initiated the compilation of Hadith. He was immensely humble. When he was on his death bed, someone said to him: "I wish you passed away in Madīnah Munawwarah and was buried near the blessed grave of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*." He replied: "I prefer Allāh *ta'ālā* inflicting all types of punishment except for the Hell-fire on me than ever considering myself to be eligible for that place [i.e. being buried near Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*]."¹

He began crying when his final moments arrived. Someone asked him: "Why are you crying? Allāh *ta'ālā* revived the Sunnat through you, and caused justice to reign supreme." When he heard this, Hadrat 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz *rahimahullāh* began crying even more. He then said: "Will I not be made to stand in the court of Allāh *ta'ālā* and be questioned about whether I fulfilled the rights of His creation or not?"² He added: "O Allāh! You asked me to do certain things but I was lax in that regard. You asked me to keep away from certain things but I could not. O Allāh! Despite this, I testify that You

¹ البداية والنهاية، ج ٦، ص ٣٢.

² تاريخ دمشق، ج ٤٥، ص ٥٤.

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are One and there is none worthy of worship except You.”¹

He then indicated to those who were present to leave the room saying: “There is a creation standing before me which is neither human nor jinn.” The people left the room. Only his attendant remained. After some time, he recited the following verse:

تِلْكَ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ نَجْعَلَهَا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُرِيدُونَ عُلوًّا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا
فَسَادًا، وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ.

*That abode of the Hereafter – We shall give it to those who do not seek to exalt themselves in the land, nor to cause corruption. The blessed end is for those who fear.*²

The attendant then went out to inform the people that they could come in. When they came in, they saw Hadrat ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Aziz *rahimahullāh* facing towards the qiblah, and his soul had left him.³

The final moments of Hadrat Ibrāhīm Nakha’ī

Hadrat Ibrāhīm Nakha’ī *rahimahullāh* was an erudite Tābi’ī. When his final moments approached, he began repeating the fourth kalimah:

¹تاريخ دمشق، ج ٤٥، ص ٢٥٤.

² Sūrah al-Qaṣaṣ, 28: 83.

³موسوعة ابن أبي الدنيا، ج ٥، ص ٣٢٦.

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَهُوَ الْحَمْدُ، وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ.

When the discomfort increased, he began reading:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

He passed away while reading the above.¹

My dear brothers! Death will come to us as we lived our lives. If we want a good death, we will have to set right our lives. We will have to acquire correct knowledge of the Shari'at and live our lives according to it. We will have to bear in mind the orders of Allāh *ta'ālā*. We will have to learn the ways of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and practise on them. We will have to rectify our internal and external selves.

Imām Muḥammad

Imām Muḥammad *rahimahullāh* was an eminent jurist. After burying him, the Caliph Hārūn ar-Rashīd said:

دَفَنْتُ الْفِقْهَ بِالرَّيِّ

I have buried jurisprudence in Rayy.

He was a teacher of Imām Shāfi'i *rahimahullāh*, and a student of Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* and

¹ موسوعة ابن أبي الدنيا، ج ٥، ص ٣٣٩.

² البداية والنهاية، ج ١٠، ص ٤٨١.

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Imām Mālik *rahimahullāh*.¹ He was a man of profound knowledge. Imām Shāfi'ī *rahimahullāh* says with reference to him: “I acquired so much of knowledge from Imām Muḥammad *rahimahullāh* that if it was written down and collated, a camel will be needed to carry it.”²

Imām Muḥammad's academic obsession

Imām Muḥammad *rahimahullāh* had a strange and unique obsession with knowledge. He used to say:

لَدَاتُ الْأَفْكَارِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ لَدَاتِ الْأَبْكَارِ³

The joy in thinking and pondering over academic issues surpasses the joy which is experienced with virgin women.

In other words, when I ponder and reflect over the Qur'ān and Hadīth, and become engrossed in them, and I dive into the oceans of knowledge to extract pearls from them; then the joy which I experience is far better than the joy which is experienced with virgin women. It was his practice to remain awake until late in the night to study and teach. People would say to him: “You ought to take a rest as well. You ought to think about your health.” Imām Muḥammad *rahimahullāh* would reply: “People go to sleep while thinking to themselves that if they are faced with any issue, they will go to Muḥammad ibn Hasan and ask him for a solution. If Muḥammad

¹ الفوائد البهية في تراجم الحنفية، ص ٢٦٩.

² مناقب الإمام أبي حنيفة وصاحبيه أبي يوسف ومحمد بن الحسن، ص ٨١.

³ حقائق الحنفية، ص ١٥٤.

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ibn Ḥasan also goes to sleep, there is a danger of Dīn being lost.”¹

The ‘ulamā’s favour on the ummat

My dear brothers! The ‘ulamā’, Ḥadīth experts and jurists have done a phenomenal favour to the ummat. They made many efforts for our sake. They did not bother about whether they were tired or not, whether it was day or night. Had they not striven for the preservation of knowledge, extracted rulings through their farsightedness and juridical acumen, and not codified the rules and regulations; it would have been very difficult for us to tread on Dīn.

Imām Muḥammad’s journey to the Hereafter

I was speaking to you about Imām Muḥammad *rahimahullāh*. He spent his entire life in academic occupations. And so, his death too came in the same form. Someone saw him in a dream after his demise. The person asked him: “How did you fare?” Imām Muḥammad replied: “Just before I could pass away, I was thinking about a ruling with regard to a *mukātab*.² I passed away while in that condition. My mind was so occupied on that ruling that I did not even realize when and how my soul was extracted from me.”³

¹قيمة الزمن عند العلماء، ص ١٩٢.

² A mukātab is a slave whose master has given him the permission to buy his freedom. Once he pays the price which was agreed upon, he will be free.

³حدايق الحنفية، ص ١٥٣.

Imām Muslim’s academic engrossment

My dear brothers! Such was the level of the academic engrossment of the ‘ulamā’, Hadīth experts and jurists. Someone asked Imām Muslim *rahimahullāh* about a certain Hadīth. The Imām could not think of it at the time. He returned home and began searching for it. In the midst of that, a bunch of dates were brought and presented to him. He continued searching for the Hadīth and was eating from the bunch at the same time. He was so engrossed in his academic work that he did not realize that he was eating more than what is normally eaten. The dates were eventually finished, and he also found the Hadīth. Eating too many dates is obviously harmful. This became the cause of his demise.¹ Such was the level of his academic engrossment.

The academic engrossment of a young student

Maulānā ‘Abd al-Hayy Lucknowī Firangī Mahallī *rahimahullāh* was a distinguished scholar. This incident occurred during his early student days. While he was busy studying, he asked for a glass of water. His father became worried that how could he think of water while studying!? He ordered a worker not to give him water, but to fill the glass with oil. Maulānā ‘Abd al-Hayy Sāhib *rahimahullāh* drank the oil without even realizing what he was drinking. His father was satisfied over his level of concentration.²

¹تهذيب التهذيب، ج ٤، ص ٦٧.

² *Ādāb al-Muta’allimīn*, p. 52.

The final moments of Imām Abū Yūsuf

I was saying to you that the entire life of Imām Muḥammad *rahimahullāh* was spent in acquiring knowledge, and so, that is how he passed away. Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* was a companion of Imām Muḥammad *rahimahullāh*. He too passed away in a similar manner. The seeking and proliferating of knowledge was his most beloved preoccupation. He spent his entire life in this. Ḥadhrat Ibrāhīm ibn Jarrāh *rahimahullāh* said: Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* had fallen ill. When I went to visit him, he was unconscious. When he opened his eyes, he asked: “O Ibrāhīm! Tell me, in which condition is it best to perform *ramy*?¹ While on foot or while on an animal?” Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* is posing this academic question during the final moments of his life. Ibrāhīm ibn Jarrāh *rahimahullāh* replied: “It is superior to perform it while on foot.” Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* said: “You are wrong.” Allāhu Akbar! Just look at how conscious he was of academic matters even in this condition! Ibrāhīm ibn Jarrāh *rahimahullāh* relates: “I said to him that it is preferable to perform it while on an animal.” Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* said: “This is also wrong.” Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* then explained by saying: “When a *ramy* is followed by another *ramy*, it is better to perform it while on foot. But when a *ramy* is not followed by another *ramy*, it is better to perform it while on an animal.”

¹ Ramy refers to the pelting of the Jamarāt in Minā. It is one of the rites of ḥajj.

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What he meant is that it is better to perform the *ramy* of the Jamarah-e-Ūlā and Jamarah-e-Wuṣṭā while on foot, and better to perform *ramy* of the Jamarah-e-‘Aqabah while on an animal.

Ibrāhīm ibn Jarrāh *rahimahullāh* relates: “I got up and left some time after this conversation. I hadn’t reached the exit as yet when I heard the sounds of crying. Imām Abū Yūsuf *rahimahullāh* had passed away.”¹

My dear brothers! Just look! His entire life was spent in academic works, so he left this world in the same manner.

My dear brothers! If your living is good, your death will be good. It cannot happen that you live a life of obedience and you have a bad death. It is also difficult for a life to be spent in disobedience and to have a good death. Therefore, set right your lives, set right your actions, and set right your dealings. If your actions are in order, your social dealings are upright, and your external and internal selves are righteous; Allāh *ta’ālā* will bless you with a good death.

The final moments of Abū Zur’ah

Imām Abū Zur’ah *rahimahullāh* was a Hadīth expert. He was an imām of his time. Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥambal *rahimahullāh* says that Imām Abū Zur’ah *rahimahullāh* knew 600 000 Aḥādīth from memory.² When he was on his death bed, he said: “O Allāh! I am desirous of beholding You.” He adds:

¹ الجواهر المضية، ص ٢٨.

² صفة الصفوة، ج ٢، ص ٢٩٠.

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“If Allāh *ta‘ālā* asks me: ‘On what basis did you pluck the courage to make such a request?’ I will reply: ‘On the basis of relying on Your mercy.’”¹ When he was in the throes of death, Abū Hātim and other Hādīth experts were present. They thought of prompting him to read the kalimah but their respect for him prevented them from doing it. They discussed among themselves: “Come, let’s read some Ahādīth.” One of them commenced with the following chain of a Hādīth:

حَدَّثَنَا الضَّحَّاكُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ عَنْ عَبْدِ الْحَمِيدِ بْنِ جَعْفَرِ بْنِ صَالِحٍ

Ad-Dahhāk ibn Makhlad related to us on the authority of ‘Abd al-Hamīd ibn Ja‘far ibn Sālih.

The person read this much and fell silent. While in that condition [of being in the throes of death] Imām Abū Zur‘ah *rahimahullāh* continued reading the Hādīth by saying:

Bundār related to us on the authority of Abū ‘Āsim, on the authority of ‘Abd al-Hamīd, on the authority of Sālih, on the authority of Kathīr ibn Murrāh, on the authority of the Companion of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, Mu‘adh ibn Jabal *radiyallāhu ‘anhu*, who said that Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam* said:

مَنْ كَانَ آخِرُ كَلَامِهِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

The one whose final words are: Lā Ilāha Illallāh...

My dear brothers! It would have been a great achievement had he died while reading Hādīth. It

¹ تاريخ الإسلام، ج ١١، ص ٣٦٤.

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would also have been a great achievement had he died while reading the chain of transmission. Nonetheless, Allāh *ta'ālā* treated him in an astounding way. He was reading the Hadīth and when completed reading the words:

مَنْ كَانَ آخِرُ كَلَامِهِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

The one whose final words are: Lā Ilāha Illallāh...

He passed away. Allāhu Akbar! He passed away while reading a Hadīth and the kalimah was on his tongue. Allāh *ta'ālā* called him to Himself with such a grand reception that he completed the Hadīth practically and become eligible for the words “shall enter Paradise”. He spent his life in the service of Hadīth, so his final moments were spent in the same way.¹

The final moments of Maulānā Muḥammad Zakarīyyā Sāhib

Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth Maulānā Muḥammad Zakarīyyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh* passed away in Madīnah Munawwarah. He was speaking and then stopped. He began repeating the words *Yā Karīm* (O the most kind and most generous). These were the last words of his life.² His life was spent in the remembrance of Allāh *ta'ālā* and concern about his final moments, and so, he was blessed with a good death with Allāh's remembrance.

¹ صفة الصفوة، ج ٢، ص ٢٩١.

² *Sawānih* Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth, p. 177.

The final moments of Hadrat Hājī Muḥammad Fārūq Sāhib

My beloved mentor, Hadrat Hājī Muḥammad Fārūq Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, was constantly ill. He used to undertake journeys for the sake of reformation and instruction. He used to say: “Our borrowed life has been decreed in the knowledge of Allāh *ta’ālā*. We can neither decrease it nor increase it.” He used to say: “There is no objective to live. I have just two objectives: (1) To go to the corners of this world and to speak about the love of Allāh *ta’ālā*. (2) To visit the Haramayn Sharīfayn whenever I get the opportunity.”

Hadrat *rahimahullāh* had an intense love for the Haramayn Sharīfayn. His special attendant, Hadrat Dr. Sābir Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was with Hadrat at the time of his demise. He relates: “Hadrat said to me: ‘Read the kalimah.’ Then he himself began reading it in a loud voice. He then uttered the words: ‘Makkah, Madīnah.’ And passed away.”

His soul left him while he was engaged in Allāh’s remembrance and while thinking of Makkah and Madīnah. He received a death similar to the way he led his life.

My dear brothers! The life of this world is for a few days. It is not eternal. The eternal life is in the Hereafter. We have to strive for it. All these personalities were humans just like us. If they can make the Hereafter their objective, strive for it and reach high ranks; why can’t we?

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إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا
وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ. نَحْنُ أَوْلِيَائُكُمْ فِي
الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ، وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِي أَنْفُسُكُمْ وَلَكُمْ
فِيهَا مَا تَدْعُونَ. نُزُلًا مِنْ غَفُورٍ رَحِيمٍ.

Surely those who said: “Our Sustainer is Allāh”, and then remain steadfast on this, angels descend upon them [saying]: “Do not fear, nor grieve! Listen to the glad tiding of Paradise which you were promised. We are your companions in this world and in the Hereafter. There is for you therein whatever your souls desire, and there is for you therein whatever you ask for.” This is a hospitality from the Forgiving, the Merciful.”¹

The overriding fear of Imām Shāfi’ī

My dear brothers! You must be concerned about your death. Great personalities used to tremor when they thought of death. Imām Shāfi’ī *rahimahullāh* was a distinguished scholar. He was an ardent worshipper, a Sufi and a true lover of Allāh *ta’ālā*. Despite this, when someone asked him when he was on his deathbed:

كَيْفَ أَصْبَحْتُ؟

How was your morning?

He replied:

¹ Sūrah Hā Mīm as-Sajdah, 41: 30-32.

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أَصْبَحْتُ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا رَاحِلًا، وَإِلْخَوَانِي مُفَارِقًا، وَلِكَأْسِ الْمَنِيَّةِ شَارِبًا،
وَلِسُوءِ أَعْمَالِي مُلَاقِيًا، وَعَلَى اللَّهِ وَارِدًا، فَلَا أَدْرِي رُوحِي تَصِيرُ إِلَى
الْجَنَّةِ فَأَهْتِيهَا أَوْ إِلَى النَّارِ فَأَعْرِضُهَا!

I got up in a state that I am departing from this world, separating myself from my friends, drinking the bitter drink of death, having to face my evil actions, and meeting Allāh ta'ālā. I do not know whether I should congratulate my soul or console it because I do not know whether I am going to Paradise or the Hell-fire.

Concern for one's final moments

My dear brothers! The final moments of a person's life are very difficult. This is why we have to constantly make du'ā' to Allāh ta'ālā for a good end. All the saints of the past paid particular attention to this. They used to be very far from Allāh's disobedience, and were very particular about carrying out good deeds. At the same time, they used to engage in abundant supplication to Allāh ta'ālā. Hadrat Yūsuf 'alayhis salām is a great Prophet of Allāh ta'ālā. His du'ā' is quoted in the Qur'an:

فَاطِرَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَنْتَ وَلِيِّ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ ۖ تَوَفَّنِي مُسْلِمًا
وَالْحَقِّي بِالصُّلْحَيْنِ.

O Creator of the heavens and the earth! You alone are my guardian in this world and in the Hereafter.

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Make me die as a Muslim and join me with the righteous.¹

The Qur'ān also quotes the du'ā' of those who are firmly embedded in knowledge:

رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ
الْوَهَّابُ.

O our Sustainer! Do not swerve our hearts after You have already guided us. Bestow upon us mercy from You. You alone are the giver of all things.²

A similar du'ā' is taught for the janāzah ṣalāh:

اللَّهُمَّ مَنْ أَحْيَيْتَهُ مِنَّا فَأَحْيِهِ عَلَى الْإِسْلَامِ، وَمَنْ تَوَفَّيْتَهُ مِنَّا فَتَوَفَّهُ عَلَى
الْإِيمَانِ.³

O Allāh! The one whom You keep alive from among us, cause him to live as a Muslim. The one whom You cause to die from among us, let him die with imān.

We learn from this that the final moments of a person's life are extremely important. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالْخَوَاتِيمِ.⁴

The basis of actions is on the end result.

¹ Sūrah Yūsuf, 12: 101.

² Sūrah Āl 'Imrān, 3: 8.

³ سنن الترمذي، أبواب الجنائز، باب ما يقول في الصلاة على الميت، ح (١٠٤١).

⁴ صحيح البخاري، كتاب القدر، باب العمل بالخواتيم، ح (٦٦١٥).

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May Allāh *ta'ālā* bless us with a good death, a good end, a death with the kalimah, and a death which He is pleased with.

Admonitory couplets

My dear brothers! Engage in *du'ā'* and make efforts also that our final moments are good, and that we leave this world while we are smiling. A poet says:

وَلَدَّتْكَ أُمُّكَ يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ بَاكِيًا - وَالنَّاسُ حَوْلَكَ يَضْحَكُونَ سُورًا

فَاعْمَلْ لِنَفْسِكَ أَنْ تَكُونَ إِذَا بَكَوْا عَلَى يَوْمِ مَوْتِكَ ضَاحِكًا مَسْرُورًا

O man! Your mother gave birth to you while you were crying, and the people around you were laughing with joy. Now, while living in this world, do good actions for yourself so that on the day you die, you are laughing with joy at seeing the bounties of Paradise, while the people are crying.

The concern of Hadrat Shaykh for a good end

Hadrat Maulānā Manzūr Nu'mānī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* wrote a letter to Hadrat Shaykh Maulānā Muḥammad Zakariyyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. Allāh *ta'ālā* was especially kind to him by conferring him with unique and astounding qualities. He was a fountainhead of knowledge and practice, and a confluence of oceans. Hadrat Maulānā Manzūr Nu'mānī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* wrote that people do not value and appreciate a person while he is alive, and they do not go to derive benefit from him. When they learn about his excellent qualities after his demise, they realize this and express regret by saying: "We had such a great saint in our midst but we deprived ourselves of his blessings. This is why I want to pen whatever I

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observed about you, and publish it. In this way, people who do not know you will realize who you are and begin to derive blessings from you.”

Hadrat Shaykh *rahimahullāh* wrote a short reply: “Dear Maulwī Manzūr! Neither do you nor I have any knowledge about how my end is going to be; and the end is what is taken into consideration.”¹ Allāhu Akbar! He was such a great scholar and a saintly person, yet he was so concerned about his final moments in this world.

A few details from the life of Hadrat Shaykh

The above reply was really an indication of his humility. He was a lofty personality, and a manifestation of the following Hadīth:

(أَوْلِيَاءُ اللَّهِ) الَّذِينَ إِذَا رُؤُوا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ

(A way of recognizing the true friends of Allāh ta’ālā) is that when you look at them, you are reminded of Allāh ta’ālā.

I had the good fortune of seeing Hadrat Shaykh *rahimahullāh*. I must have been about 16-17 years old. By the blessing of my father’s training, I had love for the saints since childhood. By virtue of reading *Fadā’il-e-A’māl* and hearing about Hadrat Shaykh *rahimahullāh* repeatedly, I developed an intense yearning to meet him. I was a student in school when Hadrat Shaykh *rahimahullāh* came to Britain for the first time. I took leave from school and accompanied my father to Dār al-‘Ulūm Bury. I

¹ *Fayd-e-Abrāri*, vol. 3, p. 262.

² مسند البزار، ح (٥٠٣٤).

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had the opportunity of staying over for as long as Hadrat Shaykh *rahimahullāh* was there. The next time he came to Britain, I was a student at the Dār al-'Ulūm. Thousands of people used to attend his assemblies. Generally, he would not deliver any lecture. If he did say anything, it used to be very short and brief. He did not go into any formalities when speaking. He would merely say a sentence or two. For example: "My beloveds! Do this! My beloveds! Be concerned about the Hereafter." Hadrat *rahimahullāh* would often be overcome by crying. He would say: "My beloveds! We have to go to our graves." He would then start to cry.

Hadrat Shaykh *rahimahullāh* was over 80 years old at the time. He was also paralysed. He used to be pushed around in a wheelchair. His attendants would then carry him and seat him on the stage. He would lower his head and sit in meditation. He would not move for over an hour. He would be completely immersed in the remembrance of Allāh *ta'ālā*. Even this silent state of his had a unique effect on those who were present. If you looked around, you would see someone crying, someone screaming out, someone saying *Lā Ilāha Illallāh* in a loud tone. The spiritual effulgence of the assembly was such that an hour would pass without even realizing it. It was a unique experience. Those eyes which had the opportunity of looking at Hadrat Shaykh *rahimahullāh* are indeed very fortunate because looking at him most certainly reminded a person of Allāh *ta'ālā*.

Hadrat Shaykh *rahimahullāh* also held a lofty position in the field of knowledge. If a person were to study his *Aujaz al-Masālik* with an open mind, he would be compelled to acknowledge that Hadrat

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Shaykh *rahimahullāh* was indeed a man of academic acumen. This book has been well received by both Arab and non-Arab scholars. Apart from this, there are hundreds and thousands of people all over the world who are affiliated to Hadrat Shaykh *rahimahullāh* through the thousands of madāris, the work of Da'wat and Tablīgh, and other major organizations. Despite all this, he was so fearful about his final moments that he wrote: “Dear Maulwī Manzūr! Neither do you nor I have any knowledge about how my end is going to be; and the end is what is taken into consideration.”

The final moments of Hadrat Rābi'ah Baṣrīyyah

When it was the final hour of Hadrat Rābi'ah Baṣrīyyah *rahimahallāh* she said: “Let me be in privacy with Allāh *ta'ālā*. Everyone left the room. Soon thereafter they heard a voice from the entrance of the house:

يَايَتَهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُظْمِئَةُ. اِرْجِعِي إِلَى رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَرْضِيَّةً. فَادْخُلِي فِي
عِبَادِي وَادْخُلِي جَنَّتِي.

O the self which has acquired tranquillity. Return to your Lord – you pleased with Him, He pleased with you. Join, then, My servants. And enter My Paradise.¹

On hearing this, the people went in and noticed that Hadrat Rābi'ah *rahimahallāh* has departed from this world and met with Allāh *ta'ālā*.

My dear brothers! Strive to the utmost so that our lives are also good so that when our soul leaves us,

¹ Sūrah al-Fajr, 89: 27-30.

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we too are said the same thing. We will have to make a firm resolution today and then think seriously about it. May Allāh *ta'ālā* bless us with a true concern, may He bless us with a good death and a good resurrection, and may we be admitted into Jannatul Firdaus without reckoning. Āmīn.

وَأَخِرُ دَعْوَانَا أَنْ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ

Translator's Note

All thanks are due solely to Allāh *ta'ālā* for having enabled me to complete the English translation of this blessed and inspiring book. I make an earnest *du'ā'* to Allāh *ta'ālā* to accept this translation, and to make it a means for my salvation in this world and the Hereafter.

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ
الرَّحِيمُ

As with all human endeavours, there are bound to be errors, mistakes and slip-ups in the translation. I humbly request the reader to inform me of them so that these could be corrected in future editions. Constructive criticism and suggestions will be highly appreciated. I can be contacted via e-mail: maulanamahomedy@gmail.com

Was salām

Mahomed Mahomedy

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