

NUMBER

25



FOR FRIENDS

Selected discourses of
Masíhul-Ummat Hadhrat Mauláná
Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib رحمه الله عليه
Prepared and published by
Dr. Ismail Mangera

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Mas'ihulláh Khán Sáhib رحمه الله عليه was born in Sarai Barlah in the district of Aligarh in the year 1329 or 1330 H. Hadhrat's رحمه الله lineage is linked to the noble Sharwání family of landed nobility and, being linked to Sayyid Hussain Ghaurí رحمه الله عليه, the lineage is also Sayyid. Hadhrat رحمه الله attended the local government school up to standard six, but did not continue with his secular education, rather preferring to study Dín which he studied initially in his hometown and, thereafter, completing his studies in Deoband. Hadhrat رحمه الله became bai'at to Hadhrat Ashraf Alí Thánwí رحمه الله عليه, from whom Hadhrat رحمه الله received his Khiláfat. This was in the same year that Hadhrat رحمه الله qualified from Deoband. Hadhrat Ashraf Alí Thánwí رحمه الله عليه stationed Hadhrat رحمه الله in Jalálábád, where Hadhrat رحمه الله established the madrasah, Miftáhul-Ulúm, and a khánqáh where sálikín stayed for their self-rectification. Hadhrat رحمه الله passed away in Jalálábád on the 17th Jamádul-Ulá 1413 A.H., corresponding to the 14th November 1992.



Number Twenty five: Muharram 1436 - November 2014

Prepared by: Dr. Ismail Mangera

Published by:

Al-Namal Publications

P. O. Box 96185

Brixton, 2019

South Africa

Telephone: (+27) 011 837-5736

E-mail: dr.imangera@mweb.co.za

ISSN: 1019-2409



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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

FOREWORD

Alhamdulilláh, with the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of our Sheikh رحمه الله عليه and the du'ás of well-wishers, this 25th booklet is now in front of you.

One of the prime responsibilities of a sheikh is to correct any shortcomings that he notices in any of his muríds. He does not ignore these. He may use a variety of techniques in doing this. Obviously, if, from the side of the muríds, there is persistence in doing something that is not acceptable, the sheikh will keep on drawing the attention of the muríds to this aspect of their errors. This means that there may be repetition in his majális. A particular topic may be repeated time and again, so that the points that the sheikh wants to emphasise are firmly embedded in the hearts and minds of the listeners.

The first part of this booklet, consists of a majlis wherein our Sheikh, Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib رحمه الله عليه, draws our attention to some basic issues. In doing this, he gives us a perspective on the priorities we should have. He also gives us a simple method whereby one can rectify oneself without having to trouble one's Sheikh unnecessarily.

As happens in a majlis, the sheikh will speak on different topics. He will discuss whatever issue he feels is appropriate to bring to the notice of the sálikín attending the majlis. In this majlis, having started with a specific topic, Hadhratjí رحمه الله عليه switches to another topic when there are a number of interruptions.

On the other hand, in a bayán, the speaker discusses issues around a special theme that he has chosen. Normally, there is a khutbah which precedes the actual talk. In the khutbah the speaker would normally quote from the Qur'án Sharíf and also quote a Hadíth Sharíf. He then expands on this theme. The second part of this booklet has a translation of a bayán and is not a majlis as such. It is a shortened version of a bayán that was printed in December 1983.



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

[This is a translation of a majlis conducted by Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhíb رحمه الله عليه in Jalálábád on the 9th Jumádu-ath-Thání 1409, corresponding with the 18th January, 1989.]

BEING AN ÁDMÍ AND BEING AN 'ABID

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ

The effects on a tálíbe-sádiq on listening to discourses

What should I say?

If a person is a tálíb of isláh – and he is a true tálíbe-sádiq – having listened to the talks again and again, again and again, then concern for carrying out the basic and obvious teachings of Islám should have entered into him – that is, what is fardh, wájib and sunnate-mu'akkadah. By listening again and again, again and again, he should have developed concern and vigilance for these, and this concern should have developed with the greatest degree of vigilance.

The five-times namáz would have been performed at their proper times in the masjid, with jamá'at, with the imám and with takbíre-úlá, provided that no obstacles present themselves. And if – Alláh forbid! – should this be missed out, the effect would be like a snake squeezing his heart and temperament; as if a mountain of grief had descended on him. By listening repeatedly, the least that should have happened is that he should have developed that degree of care and vigilance of performing what is fardh, wájib and sunnate-mu'akkadah. This much should have happened.

Also, by listening repeatedly, the degree of care, vigilance and commitment should have developed to discard the obvious items which are quite clearly forbidden. Changes should have appeared in the features of his face, and on his form and appearance. Before, he had no beard. Now, he keeps a beard. Before, he had a beard, but he used to trim it short. Now, he has stopped trimming it short. He now keeps a beard which is four fingers in length, which is called being one fist long. He has now stopped trimming

it short.

Before, he used to wear a skipper and other such clothing which came to his waist or lower. Now, he wears a kurtah – not very low, but at least down to his knees. When he goes into rukú and sajdah, the kurtah hangs down a bit.

Before, he used to wear tight-fitting pants, hugging his thighs. Now, his trousers are loose, not clinging to his thighs. A change has entered.

Before, his ankles were covered by his trousers. The trousers used to hang well below the ankles. He then came to know that this was harám. By his repeated listening, grief gripped his heart: “I make taubah for my previous actions and, now, I will see that the trouser legs are above the ankles; and, in such a manner, that even a person looking from a distance will see that, yes, the trouser legs are above the ankles.”

These are a’mál connected to the external, and these are plain and straightforward. If, up till now, after listening again and again, again and again, still no concern has been created for these, then what has he been listening to, seeing that the concern is not there?

[Just then, a person came and interrupted the discourse. Obviously, this was very upsetting, but Hadhrat did not show it. After the person had left and before continuing where he had left off, Hadhrat commented:]

There seems to be no limit to the number of people coming when the majlis is in progress. While I was speaking, he came to me and stretched out his hand. This is a simple, straightforward matter that one should not interrupt others when they are speaking. However, he has no concept of such a simple issue.

Here is somebody else arriving.

[After this second interruption and, after this person had left, Hadhrat continued:]

I do not allow any annoyance to show on my forehead, even though it is a vexing matter. Is it not a vexing matter? However, alhamdulillah, I do not show any annoyance. It is an annoying thing for a person to come during the middle of a majlis. I then have to keep quiet. And then I have to speak to him. I then commence speaking again (where I had left off). Just then somebody else pitches up. Is this not vexing? However, I do not show any annoyance.

I tell myself: “He has no understanding. This poor person does not know. He is ignorant of the etiquettes of a majlis.”

To be an 'ábid is one thing and to be an ádmí is another.

From this you should gauge the fact that being an 'ábid is one thing and being an ádmí is another. Do you understand? To repeat: being an 'ábid – one who makes 'ibádat – is one thing and being an ádmí is another.

A mu'min being a mu'min, the features of his being an ádmí is that, neither by the manner in which he speaks nor by the nature of his actions, should he burden another's heart. No weight should be placed on the other person's heart. To repeat: He should take the necessary care and vigilance that no burden or weight is placed on another's heart: There should be no grief entering another's heart; he should not become anxious; his mental equanimity should not be disturbed; he should not suffer any misery. These are the features of ádmíyat.

However, just cast your gaze around you. You understand Urdú very well, is that not so?

[This last statement was addressed to a person attending the majlis.]

Cast a very close look around you. Look at this mu'min: He is indeed performing his five-times namáz with punctuality. He has even performed his hajj. However, are people not being caused difficulties by him? Perhaps you have not seen it. Is he not speaking in a way to cause grief? Are his dealings not corrupt? In interacting with one another, in social matters, is he not causing difficulties? And, yes, he is also performing his five times namáz!

So, it can be that he is an 'ábid, but he is not an ádmí. Being an ádmí is another matter.

It is for this reason that the sage of this era, Hadhrat Hakímul-Ummat, Mujaddidul-Millat, Mauláná Ashraf'Alí Thánwí Sáhí, nurulláhu-marqadahú, used to say: “If you desire to become a ghauth, or a kutub, or a muftí, or an 'álim, or a muhaddith, then there are many places that cater for these. Go there. However, if you desire to become an ádmí, then come to me!”

You can assess the importance of being an ádmí from this statement: “If you desire to become an ádmí, then come to me!”

People have a passion for reciting tasbîhs, a passion for Tahajjud, a passion for wazífas, a passion to become a mudarris, a passion to become a muftí – but no passion to become an ádmí!

A person is studying Iftá, and he is doing the work of Iftá, but he is causing difficulties to his colleagues. He still does not know how to speak in a cultured manner. He does not ask himself: “In what manner should I speak? It must not be that my speaking in this way will hurt his feelings and that I cause him grief!”

Yet, he goes around dishing out fatwas! But he does not look at his own manner of speaking, his own actions, his own conduct and his own behaviour, that these are contrary to the Sharí’at and contrary to proper ádmíyat.

The statements of Hadhrat ‘Abdulláh bin Mubárák رحمه الله عليه

Concerning ádmíyet, let me relate an incident concerning Hadhrat ‘Abdulláh bin Mubárák رحمه الله عليه. You must have heard of him. If not, listen carefully now! He was of the tab’i-tá-bi’ín, a student of Imám Abú HanífaH رحمه الله عليه, who, in turn, was a tábi’í. That is, some sahábah رضي الله تعالى عنهم were the teachers of Imám Abú HanífaH رحمه الله عليه. So, ‘Abdulláh bin Mubárák رحمه الله عليه lived in that era and he was a student of Imám Abú HanífaH رحمه الله عليه. Additionally, his status was very elevated, in that he was one of the great auliyá-Alláh and an accomplished imám.

It is written about him that, once, having performed the Jumu’ah namáz, he reached the steps of the masjid and saw throngs of people rushing out after having performed the Jumu’ah namáz. He stood still for a moment and smiled bemusedly.

One should not laugh raucously, loudly and uninhibitedly. If one laughs out loudly just incidentally, well and fine. However, as far as possible, one should stop oneself from laughing out loudly. That Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم had laughed loudly, is proven only on two occasions. I cannot recall if there was a third occasion that he laughed loud enough for others to have heard him. Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم used to merely smile and that, too, out of consideration for the creation. There was just no question of laughing uninhibitedly.

To continue: 'Abdulláh bin Mubárah رحمه الله عليه made a comment. What did he say? He said: "All these people going from here, they are all dwellers of Jannat – ones who will fill Jannat." Looking at all those who had just performed their namáz, a smile came to his lips. Why was he smiling? The reason is in his full statement. He said: "They are all dwellers of Jannat – ones who will fill Jannat. However, there are only one or two ádmí among them!"

Have you understood or not? He ended by saying: "However, there are only one or two ádmí among them!" In other words, it was a figure of speech to indicate that there are only a few who could be termed to be ádmí.

From this, one can make an assessment: What era was that? And what era is it now? When it was stated that there were just a few ádmí in that era, the question does not arise at all about the deterioration of the situation now.

So, to be an 'ábid is very easy. It is no difficult task. Perform what is fardh and sunnate-mu'akkadah; and abstain from all that which are muharramat. One has become an 'ábid. However, one is not yet an ádmí.

The example is here in front of you: I was speaking to others when this person came right in the midst of the discourse and stretched out his hand to draw my attention to him. Is this ádmíyat? Is this insániyet? But, he is a Jannatí. Is he not a Jannatí?

At one stage I was studying in Deoband Madrasah, and I used to present myself regularly at Thánah Bhawan in the khidmat of Hadhrat Mauláná Thánwí Sáhib رحمه الله عليه. In those student days of mine, I used to hear Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه making the statement quoted above. I did not understand it at all, but, yes, I accepted the statement in my heart, that what he said was correct. But I did not understand it. I thought to myself: "Yá Alláh! What is this that they are Jannatí, but not ádmí? What is this?"

Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه did not go into any explanations. He only made a trite comment. No explanations were given with any illustrative corollaries. Yet, later on, I understood it very well, in a very excellent manner! Wáh! Wáh! What gems did my Hadhrat not come forth with!

This interruption is but one simple example. One cannot estimate how

many such issues arise by people coming here from morning till night. Nevertheless, I overlook them with a very cheerful heart because I am an ordinary person. How can I display anger or displeasure? This is my situation. However, over there in Thánah Bhawan, a bird would not dare flutter its wings!

You must be aware of the different courts that exist. The lower, administrative courts have no judges. The courts above them have judges. There is a difference between them. In the courts where the judge is present, it is difficult to even cough. Yes, a person coughing unexpectedly, the judge will understand that it was out of necessity. That is a different matter. But, it will not be tolerated that a person coughs repeatedly. He cannot go on coughing. Or can he? You people have more experience of the etiquettes to be observed in courtrooms.

The “court” held by Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه

I have witnessed judge-presided court proceedings. When I was schooling in Alígarh, I had this passion. So, occasionally, I used to slip into a courtroom presided over by a judge, just to see. This was when I was attending school in Alígarh. I witnessed a lot of the formal proceedings in the courtrooms. Nobody dared cough! This was even more so in the High Court. And even to a greater extent in the Supreme Court.

The awe of the poor Supreme Court was nothing compared to the “court” held by Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه, in his era. Just see: Did I not relate to you an incident yesterday? Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه had asked this person: “Why are you sitting with your back against the wall?” Do you remember the incident? Do you remember what this person’s reply was? You do not remember? You have forgotten? Well, he had replied: “I have backache.” Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه momentarily lowered his head, and immediately said: “You are lying! There is absolutely no pain in your back! Get up and leave!” Do you see? Who expelled him? It was Hadhrat Mauláná Thánwí Sáhib رحمه الله عليه!

He had asked this person as to why he was sitting with his back leaning against the wall. When this person had said that he had backache, Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه said, with firmness and conviction, that he was

lying, and that there was no pain in his back. Can anybody speak with such firmness? What would this other person think, even though he may not have voiced it? He would tell himself: “My back is sore. What is he saying?”

Now, can anybody make such a statement with so much firmness if the person has not been informed through forceful ilhám by Alláh Ta’álá? Later on, this person confessed: “I had spoken a lie. I had no pains in my back.” So, he was ordered to leave.

Now, seeing the behavioural patterns present in this age, I have to descend very greatly when interacting with others. Looking at the conditions prevailing in this era, I lower myself tremendously when dealing with members of the household, with outsiders, with persons in the madrasah and with students.

[Hadhrat رحمه الله عليه is showing regret at having to adapt to lower standards out of consideration for others. He illustrates this by showing the high standards that were observed in the time of Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه, so much so that even the slightest aberration was corrected immediately. He gives one example above and others below. The slightest deviation, like the direction of the stripes on a kurtah, was not tolerated. Our Hadhrat رحمه الله عليه had to tolerate a tremendous amount of inappropriate behaviour from others. This was extremely difficult for him, having being brought up in an era where the slightest misbahaviour was not tolerated. The fact that he managed so well, is another sign of his elevated spiritual status.]

Previously, nobody could wear boots here. But, now, one has to lower oneself when dealing with others. It has become common usage; and when something becomes widespread among the masses, then one’s direction also changes. This is how the situation has deteriorated.

There are students also sitting here. These poor ones have come from far and distant places to study Iftá’. They are not only from Hindústán, but from outside as well, as well as from overseas. This is a majlis, is that not so? A number of topics should be discussed in it, covering everything.

The methodology of Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه in matters of isláh

Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه had great consideration for students. He treated them with a great degree of kindness. However, in matters pertaining to tarbiyet,

there was no such indulgence. For example: A majlis of Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه was in progress. It was a majlise-khás, held in the morning. Some students arrived from Deoband – there were no classes as it was holiday time. They sat down, and were welcomed. It so happened, incidentally, that one student from the group was sitting in front, just like the others. The student was wearing a striped kurtah, the stripes running longitudinally and not horizontally. Hadhratwálá's رحمه الله عليه gaze fell on him. He asked: “Is that a kurtah or a shirt (qamís)?” The student replied: “It is a kurtah.”

We have seen that age! Open your ears and listen carefully now! Then you can gauge how much I lower myself in my affairs.

To continue: Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه had asked: “Is that a kurtah or a shirt (qamís)?” The student had replied: “It is a kurtah.” Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه said: “The stripes on the sleeves of a kurtah are not like those. The stripes on the sleeves of a shirt are like that. And you said that it is a kurtah, whose stripes should be horizontal; but these stripes are longitudinal. It appears that there is tashayyen in your nature: being a student, your temperament is one of showing off. Get up and leave. Get up and go.” He was expelled. This is tarbiyet! Nowadays, one has to lower oneself and make tarbiyet.

Just see what excellent tálibe-sádiq are these that they come daily to sit in the majlis and listen, and remain where they are! Illá má-shá-Alláh – except for a few. Simple and straightforward issues they are not prepared to abstain from.

Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه used to put it this way: “I will admonish the tálibe-'ilm. However, if somebody else were to say anything to them in my presence, I shall shut his mouth.” This was the degree of adab, thoughtfulness and consideration for the students. “I shall shut his mouth. I am the one to tell them.”

There is a difference, is there not? Take this example: A father scolds his son. He uses some very harsh words. Now, if the neighbour were to use the same harsh words on the son, how will the father respond? He will say: “What's the matter? How can you speak to my son like that?” The neighbour responds: “But you spoke to him like this yourself. I spoke to him exactly like you did. So, what is the problem?” Is this answer of the neighbour correct? You will say that it is incorrect.

Similarly, the difference between an ustád admonishing his student and an ordinary Muslim scolding him, is like the difference between the heavens and the earth. This other person speaks contemptuously, whereas the ustád speaks for his tarbiyet, for his progress, for removal of his weakness; to alert him as to the noble status (shán) he should be aspiring to. He is being reminded what his rank as a tálibe-'ilm of the Dín should be – in his actions, in his speech, in his behaviour, in his dressing. Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه used to say that the tálibe-'ilm should be recognised from a distance that he is student of Arabic. Whereas, nowadays, one cannot be absolutely certain of this.

To continue: The tálibe-'ilm was told to leave. He left. Yet, what did Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه add? “However, if somebody else were to say anything to them in my presence, I shall shut his mouth. I will not let anybody else say anything to them.” This is the reflection of his respect, his observance of adab and of his muhabbat. Is that not so?

We have witnessed that age. This was the manner in which students were dealt with. What is there now? Those who may also have witnessed the age I saw, will affirm what I have stated. Yes!

Listen some more:

Some tálibe-'ilm came from Deoband to attend the majlis. They were seated. When the majlis ended, as it was time for Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه to go for lunch, he stood up and proceeded to the doorway, where shoes were kept. He put on his shoes and, as he proceeded farther, he saw two bicycles there. Niyáz Khán, the servant of Barí-Pírání Sáhibáh, رحمه الله عليه was with. Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه asked him: “Whose bicycles are these?” Niyáz Khán replied: “Hadhrat, these belong to the boys who came from Deoband, the ones who are sitting in the majlis.” “Well, call them.” When they came, Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه did not just take Niyáz Khán's word, but himself enquired: “Are these bicycles yours?” They replied in the affirmative. Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه said: “Well and good.” Detailed enquiries used to be made. “Do they belong to you or have you hired them?” They replied: “Hadhrat, they are not ours. We have hired them to come here.” “Well, with that money you could have bought train tickets and come by train.”

In those days, to come from Deoband to Thánah Bhawan, one had to take

a train from Deoband to Saháranpúr, then from Saháranpúr to Thánah Bhawan. It was a long journey. The round trip would cost two rupís.

Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه then said: “Being tálibe-’ilm, you have come here by hiring bicycles? You could not have come by train? Being tálibe-’ilm, you have utilised bicycles for the sake of status? Bicycles are a sign of ostentation. Leave right now!”

These were students who, a little while ago, were welcomed in the majlis and spoken to cordially. However, now, when it was an occasion for tarbiyet, there was just no question of showing consideration.

Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه told them: “Leave right now! Do you have any belongings? If so, bring them.” The students went and brought their belongings. Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه kept on standing there. Only when they had departed on their bicycles, did he proceed to his house.

Values have been overturned

Dear children, are you listening to my talk? Yes! We have seen such an age! Dear brothers! We are reduced to tears at the manner in which values have been overturned, and we dare not say anything!

Nowadays, the son talks back to the father. He confronts him. Does he not do this? You will have seen it in Kashmir and other places. This is the situation all over. The tálibe-’ilm now go on strike. The students confront their ustáds.

What can I say? To whom can I speak? Now, that aphorism comes true. Which one? Shall I mention it?

Leave the half and go for the full;

The full has not been obtained and the half has escaped!

This is what is happening nowadays. Never mind: even half is good enough. Look at the times, bearing in mind the details and circumstances. Now it is: “Eyes closed; pretend not to see.”

To continue: I was saying that, if a person is truly a tálibe-sádiq of his isláh, then why is it that, after listening again and again, again and again, straightforward, simple aspects of isláh that one is supposed to carry out, have not been carried out – no care and vigilance have been created for these. And those straightforward, simple aspects of isláh that one has to

abstain from, have not been discarded. So, what has he listened to? Is this the correct way of listening? What has he heard?

There is no change on the features of his face, in his form and appearance; there is no change in his clothing; and there is no change in the manner in which he speaks.

What I am saying is not directed only to the tálibe-'ilm. Whosoever comes to sit in the majlis, comes to sit for his isláh. For what other purpose is he coming to sit? He sits for the purpose of listening to talks on self-rectification. He is sitting for changes to come within him, at least, as far as the external aspects are concerned.

Issues pertaining to external aspects: dress and speech

So, why is the kurtah so high up? It should be extending to the knees at least, so that, when he goes into sajdah, a portion hangs over his rear. Why is it that the ankles are covered? This is harám! Warnings of severe punishments have come with regard to this. This is for every Muslim male and not only the tálibe-'ilm. It is for every Muslim male that the lungí, tahband or trouser which he is wearing, should be above the ankles. It is harám for a mu'min Muslim male to have his ankles covered.

If he were to pass away in this state, there is a severe warning that he will be burnt in hellfire till up to his ankles; and his namáz will not be accepted. What a severe warning! On the day of Qiyámat, on the plane of Hashr, Alláh Ta'álá will not look with a gaze of mercy at that mu'min who passes away in a state where his ankles are covered. What a severe warning is this not, that the gaze of mercy will not be cast on him!

So, is this for the general Muslims or is it only for the molví? Obviously, it is for all. So, even more so, the molví, the tálibe-'ilm and the imám should be taking care to an even greater extent with this regard. If the imám's namáz is not accepted, how can the namáz of the muqtadí be accepted?

These are plain and straightforward issues. He is not abstaining from them. He is not modifying his speech. He gives no thought to the manner in which he should speak. He does not ask himself: "Is my speech not hurting somebody's feelings?" So, first think: "If somebody else were to adopt this tone and this manner when speaking to me, would I find it objectionable or

not?” Your heart will tell you: “Yes, I will find it distasteful.” Then, why are you speaking to others in this manner that you are hurting their hearts?

These are aspects relating to the *zâhir* (external). Aspects related to the *bâtin* are still distant.

Issues pertaining to internal aspects: takabbur

What are examples of these *bâtinî* aspects? For instance, for a person to have takabbur in his *bâtin*. Takabbur is not connected to clothes. It is to do with the *bâtin*. It is a different matter that it will manifest in his clothes and on his face. He reasons: “My clothes should be in a certain style. I must have eminence in the eyes of people.” This is the situation with our Muslim youth. The shirt has become commonplace. And the trouser is worn wrapped around the thighs, skin-tight. Is this not so? Day and night they come here. And they cannot even sit properly because of the tight-fitting trousers! The trouser is not loose-fitting but skin-tight, revealing.

So, why is this so? The reason is that, nowadays, by wearing such apparel, a person gains respect and eminence in the eyes of people. Whereas, there is not the same respect and honour in the plain and simple, loose-fitting, Islâmic dress of the Muslim. The underlying basis is takabbur. In the final analysis, why this upending? Why have things changed? Were there these things previously? Not anywhere. People used to wear a kurtah and trouser. Why did this happen?

So, we have adopted the dress code of others. We were unable to pass on our dress code to others. They have not adopted our dressing, but we have adopted their dressing! Is that not so? Now, they laugh at us and flatter us. That Musalmán has not remained a Musalmán.

Before this, we had discussed simple, straightforward aspects that dealt with the external. This takabbur is to do with the internal. So, how can a mu'min, being a mu'min Musalmán, have takabbur? Takabbur is associated with kufr. Takabbur can never be associated with ímán. Ímán is associated with humility, with humbleness, with ijz and inkisárí. After reading namáz day in and day out, his whole life has passed, but he has not learnt this from it.

Namáz teaches humility

And this is what namáz is teaching. Namáz is saying, internally: “From the time you commenced with takbíre-tahrímah till you turned your head in making the final salám, there is no other method except the method of humility.”

When one lifts up one’s hands to one’s ears when reciting the takbíre-tahrímah, it is declaring humility. Just see: When a junior commits some indiscretion in front of an elder, he will lift his hands to his ears and clutch his ears in contrition, saying: “Taubah! Taubah!”

So, when one lifts one’s hands to the ears, with the palms facing towards the qiblah, it signifies the following: “Whatever lusts, whatever carnal pleasures, desires and connections I had in my nafs up to now, by this action of mine I have flung them all behind my back.” This is the method of performing namáz, with this awareness.

Have you understood? Yes?

When one lifted one’s hands in that manner, what did it mean? It meant that one has cast all those undesirable features in one’s nafs behind one’s back. But you are not doing this!

One now folds one’s hands: When a junior stands in front of an elder, does he not stand respectfully with his one hand over the other? So, by this folding of one’s hands in namáz, one is now internally admitting and confessing to one’s faults. This is showing humility. One then presents some requests and pleas, according to the teachings taught to one. In other words, one is reciting “*Alhamdu-Sharíf*”. One is showing one’s revulsion for those not in Islám; and with regards to those who are in Islám, with Islámiyet, one is attempting to gain the favours they received.

Take the illustration of a letter being written. The etiquette is to write, in the beginning, some suitable words befitting the addressee. Is that not so? So, Alláh Ta’álá has Himself taught the manner of addressing Him, that we should eulogise Him: “*Sub-hának’Alláh* – consider Me to be pure of all faults and shortcomings. Then, praise Me: ‘*Alhamdu-lilláhi rabbil álamín; arrahmá-nirrahím*’. Then think of Qiyámat: ‘*Málikí yow-middín*’.”

This is the preamble up to this point. Now, we put forward our case: “‘*Íyáka-na’budu*’. When You have such splendid qualities, way beyond description,

then who can there be who can be worshipped besides You?”

Have you taken note of the sequence?

“That is why I am stating: ‘Íyáka-na’budu’. Even though I am making this statement, yet, without Your help, I am unable to accomplish this task in a completely correct manner. My physique is frail – I am weak. I seek Your assistance.” The meaning of this is “taufiq”.

So, after saying, “Íyáka-na’budu”, one goes on to say: “Wa íyáka-nas-ta’ín.” Because “Íyáka-na’budu” comes first, by virtue of which restriction and specification are established.

“I am worshipping You only. Only You do I worship. However, where can my worship of You match up to Your grandeur?”

Here also, there is an admission of humility and humbleness, and one says: “ ‘Wa íyáka-nas-ta’ín.’ It is only from You that I seek assistance. It is only with tawfiq from You. I have no consideration for my ‘ibádat. I am performing my ‘ibádat, but I place no weight on it. I have no pride. I am not boastful. It has been accomplished only with Your help.”

You may have heard of the Fársí phrase: “*Himmat mardán – madad Khudá.*” That is: Courage is from me – assistance comes from Alláh Ta’álá. Have you heard it or not? It is as if the person performing namáz is saying: “O Alláh! I have taken up the courage – Íyáka-na’budu – but the assistance is Yours.” Do you understand the point?

This is exactly what Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم had stated in his du’á in the form of a request:

اللَّهُمَّ هَذَا الْجُهْدُ وَعَلَيْكَ التَّكْلَانُ

O Alláh! The effort, the toil, is from my side, but reliance is on You.

The full du’á is as follows:

اللَّهُمَّ هَذَا الدُّعَاءُ وَعَلَيْكَ الْإِجَابَةُ – اللَّهُمَّ هَذَا الْجُهْدُ وَعَلَيْكَ التَّكْلَانُ

O Alláh! The effort, the toil, is from my side, but reliance is on You. O Alláh!

This is a du’á from my side, but to fulfil it, is Your task.

Has humility not been achieved? Has servitude (‘abdiyet) not been achieved? Or is the focus on oneself? Not at all! He had stated: “Íyáka-

na'budu wa íyáka-nas-ta'ín." The ta'lím is from that side. The concept of presenting the request is from that side. It has not been initiated from the side of the servants.

Ponder a bit, and keep on listening! Then this topic came up even though it was not an issue. These are initial teachings, plain and simple.

Then comes a special plea: "Íhdinas-sirátal mustaqím. I am desirous of guidance from You on that path that is absolutely correct – that path, that road that has to be tread, the one that is absolutely straight and is termed 'sirátal-mustaqím', and one which is full of tranquillity – it is that straight path. Also, I am requesting from You to be treading this path always."

Ají! What is it? Which path is this? Everybody says that he is on correct guidance, is that not so? The Christians claim this; the Yahúd claim this; the Pársís claim this; the polytheists and others claim this. So, over here, which path and whose path is said to be the correct one?

This is described in the following áyet: "Sirátal-lazína an'amta alyhim." That straight path of those whom You have favoured: these being the Ambiyá عليهم السلام, the siddiqín, the shuhadá' and the sálíhín – the Messengers عليهم السلام, the pious, the martyrs and the righteous. So, the person performing namáz is saying: "I desire to be guided on the path tread by those on whom Your favours descend, for that is the straight path, the sirátal-mustaqím."

Well and good. When he has said this, then it is apparent that there is no reason to have a connection with those who are not such (as described above). Why should there be muhabbat with them?

This is the reason why he states: " 'Ghairil-maghdhúbi alyhim wa-laddállín.' That is: Not the path of those who have earned Your wrath, these being the Yahúd. And not the path of those who are misled and astray, these being the Christians, the Nasará." These were of the Ahle-Kitáb, even then, displeasure is expressed against them.

In the eloquence of the phraseology, this would indicate that, if there is displeasure with those who were of the Ahle-Kitáb, then the displeasure for those who were not of the Ahle-Kitáb, the mushrikín, would be even greater. So, why should attention be given to them? This is what the rhetoric of the phraseology would indicate.

So, the request is not for the path of those who have earned His wrath or

the path of those who are astray. But the request is for the path of those whom He has favoured. Now, who has taught these words of entreaty? It is Alláh Ta'álá. Not so?

Now, listen carefully! When somebody places some need of his in front of a ruler, and the petitioner appears to be honest and straightforward, the ruler, being a person whose nature is soft and bounteous, will say: "Fine. Very well. Go and write down your request in these words and then bring it to me."

So, when the ruler himself has instructed him to bring the request in the words shown by him, would this not create some hope of success in the petitioner? Yes, it would.

He now brings the request, written in the words dictated to him, and presents it. This written request is now taken by the ruler. The hope of acceptance is now stronger. The ruler had himself shown how to word the request and he had accepted it. The petitioner says: "In-shá-Alláh Ta'álá, my request will be granted and I will receive what I asked for."

Now, Alláh Ta'álá is a King – He is King of all kings. It is stated in the Qur'án Sharíf: To him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth. So, He is the one who has shown this du'á, that one should make the request in this form. So, will the request be fulfilled or not? Yes? Then, why do we not keep the thought of acceptance (qabúliat) while performing namáz? And, after having performed namáz, having made salám – having presented one's salám – one returns, so why should one not have in mind acceptance? Why this agitation?

Do you understand the issue?

Why not consider qabúliat, seeing that He has shown us the form the request should take and we had presented the same request to Him?

After having recited "*Alhamdu*", recite a little more, something in addition, whatever you know. It may only be "*Inná-a'taina*", or "*Qul-huwalláh*", or "*Izá-já'a-nasrulláhi*". Whatever you have memorised, recite that. So, from your side you recite something in addition. It is, like the ruler mentioned above, saying: "Take something in addition from my side and add it to the request."

This is what you did when standing. Now, bend forward and go into rukú.

This symbolises humility. Humbleness has entered. You were standing and conversing. In rukú, you continue. As you stand up from rukú, you say: “Sami-alláh,” adding: “Wa la-kal hamd.” You are saying: “You have heard me. The praise that I have just recited, You have also heard.”

You then fall into sajdah. The forehead, which has the most elevated status of all body parts, is placed on the ground, together with the nose. The greatest degree of humbleness has entered.

In the worldly situation, when anybody has a need, metaphorically it is said in Urdu: “He is rubbing his nose on the ground. He is rubbing his nose in the dirt in front of somebody important.”

So, in sajdah, it is as if you are rubbing your nose on the ground. This is humbleness of the highest degree.

After the sajdah, you sit with your head lowered, in front of Him. You then prostrate in sajdah a second time, by way of gratitude. What great bounty is it not!

Going back in our history, the angels عليهم السلام fell into sajdah twice. The first time was when they were ordered to do so by Alláh Ta’álá. Shaitán did not prostrate. When the angels عليهم السلام lifted their heads from the sajdah they were in, they saw that Shaitán had not prostrated – he was still sitting in the same position. Out of gratitude to Alláh Ta’álá for the taufiq to have made sajdah, the passion of love swelled up in the angels عليهم السلام and they performed a second sajdah. Humility manifested.

My dear friends! Honourable bondsmen! Is namáz inviting towards ’ájazí (humbleness and humility); or is it inviting towards takabbur (arrogance)? Is this ’ibádat teaching ’abdiyet; or is it teaching takabbur? Obviously, it is inviting towards ’ájazí and teaching ’abdiyet.

So, why is it that 10 years have passed, 12 years have passed, 50 years have passed, 60 years have passed, and this ’ájazí has not entered? Why has ’abdiyet not been achieved? Why has inkisáriyet not been attained?

The reason is that, although the namáz has been performed from beginning to end, at no point, at no rukn, was there any awareness, any consciousness. It had become an automatic ritual act. It had been memorised and it was, and is, performed on the basis of being memorised ritual, and not on the basis of conscious effort. Do you understand the difference?

Let me repeat: He is performing each and every rukn as a memorised ritual, and not as a conscious act. He should be performing his namáz as this humble servant has presented to you just now. If he performs it with this consciousness, then let us calculate: Namáz has to be performed five times daily. How many arkán are there in each namáz? If we were to take the fardh, sunnat and nawáfil, then how much 'ájazí will there not be with every rukn? And, if every rukn is performed with this consciousness, with this visualisation, with this mindfulness, with this talab, with this objective in mind, then there is no question of takabbur remaining. Why should it? Humility must enter.

And, when 'ájazí has entered and takabbur has departed, then why should there be ghussah (anger/rage) when somebody says something against your temperament? There is no reason for showing ghussah. This is the sequence. Yet, what do we see? Roommates have it out with one another. Members of a household have it out with one another. Homeowners have it out with one another. Passengers in a bus have it out with one another. Passengers in a train have it out with one another. People flare up just on a petty thing happening contrary to their temperament. So, why is this ghussah there?

It is one thing for ghussah to come; and it is another thing for the ghussah to be vented. For ghussah to appear is a natural, instinctive thing. It may just come. If there is some burden on your temperament, or your temperament finds something to be unbearable, ghussah will arise. There is no denying this.

Not allowing ghussah to arise at all is a stage to be seen later. If the person is seriously in sulúk, in Tasawwuf, and he is fully committed to removing the batiní akhláqe-razíláh, and he is making a full effort to attain the akhláqe-hamídah, then it will be seen at that time that ghussah does not come. However, it is not harám for ghussah to come. It is not a forbidden thing. Yes, to act according to the demands of the ghussah is forbidden.

This is a far off thing that ghussah should not come at all. It is a task that a person with great courage and one who has a very courageous heart will undertake. It is not in every person's capabilities, but one should endeavour to become so. Should one be courageous or cowardly? There is a saying:

“Aré-yár! Oh well! You are so spineless that on petty issues you become all disorientated; on little things you become angry.” They call such a person cowardly, do they not?

So, is cowardice good or is bravery good? The answer is that bravery is good. So, to be courageous is to pay no attention when anything is said against one’s temperament. It should not be that just on somebody saying something slightly offensive, one finds it intolerable and one pulls up one’s face. This is a sign of takabbur.

Coming back to what was said earlier: It is one thing for ghussah to be vented; and it is another thing for ghussah to come. To vent one’s anger is forbidden. Ghussah will make demands. “He swore me, so I will swear back at him.” This is the demand of ghussah. “He gave me a shot with his fist. So, I will also give him a shot with my fist.” However, will this person be able to make sabr and be satisfied with giving him just one shot? Not at all! If he is a bit powerful, he will give him several shots in retaliation, if not hit him with a lathí. Nowadays, people use firearms!

Rules pertaining to retaliation

So, to retaliate by giving the other only one, equal shot is permissible. However, only that person who has full mastery over his nafs, will be able to do this. Only he can do this. As for that person who does not have full control over his nafs, he will retaliate by hitting the other person several times. Has this escalated or not? That is why there has been laid down a restriction:

وَجَزَاءُ سَيِّئَةٍ سَيِّئَةٌ مِّثْلُهَا

The retribution of an evil is an evil like it. (S.42.40.)

You have permission to retaliate a malicious act with a similar act. It is já’iz. However, it has to be exactly the same as was done to you. Has a person the discipline to retaliate in exactly this manner if his isláh has not been made and he does not have complete control of his temperament? Only that person who has full control of his temperament can act “mithalan-bi-mithlin”. Otherwise, generally, this will not happen.

That person who is a tálibe-sádiq, seeking his isláh, and who comes

continually to sit and repeatedly listens, why has his tabiyet not become like this by now? By listening over and over again, why has he not become such that he pays no attention when somebody swears him?

These are examples of the batin which have been presented. Before this, examples were given concerning the zahir: the face and physique; form and appearance; the types of clothes; the kurtah and the ankles.

To repeat: By listening over and over again, why has he not become like that up to now, that he pays no attention when sworn at by others, or when harsh words are directed at him by his associates, whether this happens in the room, or the classroom, or in the home, or in the office? This has not happened up till now.

Attending a majlis is for the sake of one's isláh

He comes every day, and he sits and listens. This means that he has come for his isláh. What did Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه used to say in this regard? He used to say: "I do not have any family ties with anybody. So, if anybody comes here, what do I understand? My understanding will be the same as that of a physician. When any person goes to see a doctor, the doctor will take it that this is a patient coming for treatment."

What excellent examples did he not give! A doctor has a consulting room in which he consults. When anybody comes to him, he will attend to him. So, the persons going there will not be relatives or friends on a social visit. So, whoever comes there, the doctor will consider him to be a patient. When this person is a patient, the doctor will deal with him from the aspect of treating an ill person. The patient will mention a few things and the doctor will ask some questions. At the end, the doctor will write out a prescription and advise him on a correct diet (parhez).

If the patient does not follow the diet and he does not take the prescribed medication properly, will the doctor not scold him? He definitely will! Will he stop him or not? He will stop him! Will he forbid certain items or not? He definitely will!

So, Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه used to say: "When anybody comes here, I take it that it is somebody with a nafsání illness; that it is somebody with an internal, batiní illness. Therefore, when I notice that his sitting and walking,

his speech and mannerisms are incorrect, will I not reprimand him or not? I will consider him to be a patient, who has come here for treatment. So, when I see any such activity which is not according to the external and internal standards set down, but are contrary to the expected standards, will I reprimand him or not? Will I stop him or not? Will I prohibit him or not?"

So, why should you feel bad? You have come here as a patient. It is fardh for me to correct you. By coming here, you have given the responsibility to me. So, I shall reprimand you. Now, I will reprimand one person in one way; and another I will reprimand in another manner. At times, I will stop one person in one manner; and I will stop another person in another manner.

Take this example: You have a small child. You are going to restrain him in one manner. When he reaches adolescence, you will now restrain him in a different manner. Or will you still do in the same manner as before? No. Now you will use a different approach.

Similarly, over here one person will be reprimanded in one manner; and another person will be reprimanded in a different manner. One person will be stopped in one manner; and another person will be stopped in a different manner. This is another issue on how to stop any individual specifically. But, he will definitely be reprimanded. If he is not reprimanded, will this not be khiyánat, a breach of trust? Or will you consider it to be diyánat, honouring a trust?

If the doctor sees that the patient has not abstained from harmful items, will he not reprimand him? If he does not reprimand the patient, it will mean that the doctor is avaricious – he feels that it is a good thing that his illness should get worse! Nowadays, the doctors mostly dispense the medication themselves. So, the doctor thinks: "My medicine sales will increase!" So, he will tell the patient to come and see him again, collect more fees and sell him more medicines. This doctor is avaricious. If the doctor does not reprimand the patient on his wrongdoings, the doctor is out for money. It is fardh for the doctor to reprimand the patient.

The sheikh's position is similar. He will reprimand. At times, this will be done isháratan – by intimating and hinting. At times, he will mention some

incident. This is done without taking anybody's name. You yourself have to see whether the incident applies to you or not.

O, those who are sitting here! O, those who are listening! Keep on listening and keep on assessing yourselves. Each one ask yourself: "Why has this particular topic been mentioned? Oho! That statement applies to me! I have that very deficiency in me! And this is the very reason why I have come here. Therefore, I should remove this from within me!"

He should tell himself, by way of examples: "Oho! This illness that he is speaking about, is in me. This illness of ghussah is in me. I need to take it out. He spoke of the illness of the eyes, looking with lust (bid-nigáh). This is in me! Let some female come in front of me, a pretty one (or a handsome youth), knowingly and deliberately I will look at her time and again! Let my gaze fall on her and it will latch on to her, and I will stare at her repeatedly! But, now I am a tálib of isláh. I have come to stop my nafs. I have taken a step in the direction of mujáhadah. How can I then stand and look at her repeatedly? Can I say I am a tálib of isláh?"

This is a straightforward matter, but it has become very intricate for him. Being straight forward, why has it become so intricate? The reason is that the faculty of passion, nafsániyet, is stirring him up. He is not acting courageously. His gaze has shifted away. He has forgotten about his isláh. He does not remember his statement that he is a tálibe-isláh and that he should be chiding himself on this illness of bid-nigáh.

So, he needs to inform his sheikh. He needs to let him know about his illness. Will a patient not inform his doctor about his illness? He will.

Are you listening?

Advice on correcting oneself without causing vexation to one's sheikh

Now that you have to inform your sheikh, then ponder a bit. Ponder over what? Ask yourself: "If I were to write to him, would it be correct to write about my lustful glances?"

Aré! You are a tálibe-isláh. Why write and vex your sheikh? Tell yourself: "He will not get angry. He is a physician. He will not consider me to be contemptible. He considers himself to be the lowest among all. He will not look contemptuously at me. He will not read my notes with eyes of

disdain. But, the knowledge will have implanted itself in his mind. Whereas, I am a tálibe-sádiq. Therefore, why should I not carry out the treatment myself? Why not? I can do it because, just as looking is in my ikhtiyár, so not looking is also in my ikhtiyár. So, why should I look? It is as a tálíb of isláh that I have taken a stand. So, why should I look at all?"

Just as looking is in a person's ikhtiyár, so is not looking is also in a person's ikhtiyár. Is that not so?

That is it! Immediately, he makes a vow. What vow? Is my voice reaching you or not, dear children? These are isláhí matters being discussed.

Immediately he makes a vow: "Why should I cause difficulty to such a humble soul by writing to him? The knowledge of my illness will be in his mind. Therefore, I take a vow that I will not deliberately lift my eyes to look at what I should not. Just as looking is associated with resolve and choice (irádah aur ikhtiyár), similarly, not looking is also associated with resolve and choice."

So, on the turn, there and then, he has treated himself. The treatment is done. Was there any delay? Any delay is self-imposed.

My speaking is directed at the tálibe-sádiq. The sheikh speaks with fundamentals and with principles of isláh in his majlis. If you are a tálibe-sádiq, then is one majlis not sufficient for you to move away from bid-nigáh?

So immature, so raw? You call yourself a tálíb, yet, on a daily basis, you keep on writing such matters in your notebook and hand it over to me?

Mentioned above are some fundamentals and principles. To understand them, take this illustration:

For illness to come is ghair-ikhtiyári; Steps for removal are ikhtiyári

Physical illnesses befall people, is that not so? If a person is so affected, does he summon the illness? Will anybody say: "Fever, come! Fever, come!"? He does not. What is his wish? He wishes that he should not develop fever. He does not want to become feverish. Now, if he develops fever (or any other illness), is it ikhtiyári or ghair-ikhtiyári?

Is my voice reaching you or not? These are fundamentals and principles for the tálíb concerning isláh.

Let me ask again: For fever (or any illness) to develop – is it ikhtiyárí or ghair-ikhtiyárí? You agree that it is ghair-ikhtiyárí. Jazákumulláhkhairan!

[Hadhrat رحمه الله عليه had a very faint response to his question the first time from those attending the majlis. Hadhrat رحمه الله عليه repeated the question and, this time, he received a clear and loud reply to state that it was ghair-ikhtiyárí.]

So, the illness came on a ghair-ikhtiyárí basis. Now, to dispel the illness – is it ikhtiyárí or ghair-ikhtiyárí? In other words: Is it ikhtiyárí to use the means to dispel the illness or not? You agree that it is ikhtiyárí. He resolves to dispel the illness. Now, will he adopt those means, those avenues and methods that are required, or will he not? Or, will he embrace that fever? Does he say: “If it increases, let it increase. It does not matter.”

Will anybody do this? Not at all! To cure the illness, or for it to have come, is ghair-ikhtiyárí, but to adopt the means and methods of curing the illness, is ikhtiyárí. So, he will adopt these means. In what manner? He will consult a doctor. Even a doctor himself, when he falls really ill, will not undertake his own treatment, but will consult another doctor. So, the patient now consults a doctor, one in whom he has faith and confidence – i’timád and i’tiqád. These are basic principles that I am stating. He will call a doctor in whom he has i’timád and i’tiqád. If he is able to go to the doctor, he will go to him. If he is unable to go to him, he will call him home. So, he calls the doctor. This is ikhtiyárí and irádí.

The doctor now writes out a prescription. He will explain certain dietary restrictions (parhez). So, will the patient take the medication, with ikhtiyár and irádah, or not? Will he follow the dietary instructions or not? If he does not follow the dietary instructions, then the effect of the medication will be diminished.

There is a famous saying: One parhez is equivalent to 100 medicines.

Is my voice reaching you, children?

To repeat: One parhez is equivalent to 100 medicines. If the parhez is not there, the medicines may have some effect, but the effect will be diminished. It will not show its full effect. This is because the bid-parhezí – cheating on the dietary restrictions – has diminished and eliminated the expected

effect of the medicines.

So, the patient makes use of the medicines that have been prescribed. This is one “amal” – it is one activity. He is making use of one part of the treatment. The second “amal” is the parhez. What does it involve? It means that the patient has to abstain from something that he loves. The doctor had said: “You are not to drink tea for the next three months.” He is a lover of tea. Will he drink tea? He will abstain from drinking tea, even though he loves tea. This is an example of parhez.

What is the name given to this parhez in the terms of the Shar’at? It is called “taqwá”. It is there to remove the bátiní illnesses. This is “taqwá”, equating with the second “amal” mentioned above.

So, what is equivalent to the first “amal” mentioned in the example above? It is “a’mále-sálihah”. These deeds can be in the category of medication or in the category of nutrition: His temperament is such at the moment, that he still has some inhibition in performing a’mále-sálihah, even though he wishes to perform these. At this point a’mále-sálihah are still in the category of medication and they have not reached the level of nutrition.

Whether a’mále-sálihah are in the category of nutrition, or whether they are in the category of medication (because his temperament still feels inhibited), in both there are benefits. There is no harm. There is benefit.

Coming back to taqwá: What is taqwá? It is to refrain from doing those things that are prohibited when you are also following the treatment of a’mále-sálihah. Refrain from them when performing a’mále-sálihah. There is loss in it.

So, what is the name given to the act of abstaining from prohibited things, termed “manhí-anhá”? The name given is “taqwá”.

Do you understand these concepts?

Treating the illness of bid-nigáh

Now, he is busy thinking. “One does not always find a doctor, but I have committed myself to my isláh. I have this illness of bid-nigáh, that whenever my gaze falls on a pretty girl or boy, I keep on looking time and again. Then, looking from this side to that side, I again start looking. But, I have now geared myself for my isláh.”

Fair enough, he is at the initial phase. But, for how long will he carry on? Listening over and over again, and attending the majlis time and again, being a tálibe-sádiq, how can he continue to allow his gaze to fall on them?

I had mentioned with regard to physical illnesses that, for an illness to come is ghair-ikhtiyárí, but to purposefully use the means to dispel the illness is ikhtiyárí. Similarly, bid-nigáh is also an illness. However, this illness is ikhtiyárí. It is with his ikhtiyár that he adopts it, that he looks deliberately at them. So, to remove this illness is also ikhtiyárí. On the one side is “ithbát” – to look. On the other side is “nafí” – not to look. So, just as looking is ikhtiyárí, not to look is also ikhtiyárí. And this person is a tálibe-sádiq!

Now, to cure a physical illness is ghair-ikhtiyárí – it is not in one’s control. However, in curing a nafsání illness, one’s ikhtiyár plays a great part.

Seeing that one’s ikhtiyár plays an important role in nafsání illnesses, this person has himself brought on the illness of bid-nigáh. His illness of bid-nigáh is self-inflicted. He just does not want this illness of bid-nigáh to go away.

So, the bringing on of bid-nigáh is ikhtiyárí; and to remain immersed in bid-nigáh is also ikhtiyárí. The opposite is also true: not to allow it to come; and not to allow it to stay – both are volitional and out of a person’s choice (ikhtiyárí). To dispel an illness is also ikhtiyárí.

So, whatever Alláh Ta’álá has made us responsible for (mukallaf) – those deeds we are commanded to do (mámúr-bihá) – are also in the category of ikhtiyárí. And those deeds that He has made us responsible for to refrain from, to refrain from them is also ikhtiyárí. Alláh Ta’álá has not made us accountable for any deed which is ghair-ikhtiyárí. Alláh Ta’álá states:

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

Alláh does not task a soul greater than it can bear. (S.2.286.)

It is apparent that whatever deeds we have been commanded to do, and whatever deeds we have been commanded to refrain from, have not been commanded beyond our powers.

And how can it be so? Just see: When a father tells his son to do some task for him, the father will instruct him to do that task that is within his capabilities. He will not tell him to carry a weighty object which he cannot carry. When it comes to abstention, the father will tell him to refrain from such deeds which he is capable of refraining from.

Alláh Ta'álá is most merciful

Alláh Ta'álá is “*Ar-hamur-rá-himín*” – he is the most merciful of those who show mercy. And, additionally, he has also stated in the Qur’án Sharíf:

كَتَبَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ

Your Lord has ordained mercy for Himself. (S.6.54.)

Alláh Ta'álá is stating: “Your Rabb has made mercy compulsory on Himself.” This is its translation. How full of ardent love is this statement! Your Rabb, your Nourisher, has made it compulsory on Himself to show mercy. The meaning of “*kataba*” is “to make compulsory/to make necessary”. In actual fact, there is nothing that Alláh Ta'álá is compelled to do. However, He is showing us that He has now made it compulsory.

There are other places that the word “*kataba*” has been used. In other places in the Qur’án Sharíf Alláh Ta'álá has stated:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ

O you who believe! Fasting has been made compulsory upon you. (S.2.183.)

Keeping rozah – what has it been made? It has been made compulsory. The meaning of “*kutiba*” is “made compulsory”.

Alláh Ta'álá has used the same word in connection with Himself. What a loving statement is it not! Having heard this, if one were to use a phrase commonly used, one would say: “Is this what He is saying? Then we should be falling at His feet!”

So, it is apparent – what is apparent? It is apparent that the person involved in bid-nigáh is himself summoning affliction from Alláh Ta'álá. “I am bringing on myself afflictions, difficulties, hardships, calamities and chastisement!” However, treatment can be undertaken – bitter medicine

can be prescribed.

If a medical doctor or rúhání doctor would write out a most affectionate prescription and instruct on parhez, and stop the patient from bid-parhezí, then there are no words to describe what compassion would be shown from Alláh Ta'álá's side! Alláhu-akbar! After all, He is the one who created us; and He is the one who stated: *"I have made it compulsory on Myself to show mercy."*

Can it ever be that He will order any bondsman to do any such task that he is unable to do and which is beyond his resolve and which is beyond his ikhtiyár? He cannot do so. And can He order any such action to be refrained from which the bandah cannot refrain from? So, why did He state the following?

كَلَّفُ اللّٰهُ نَفْسًا اِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

Alláh does not task a soul greater than it can bear. (S.2.286.)

Additionally, He stated: *"I have made it compulsory on Myself to show mercy."*

Ponder over this that by combining everything, one will know that those deeds that we have been instructed to refrain from, we can refrain from. And those deeds that we have been instructed to carry out, we can carry them out.

Therefore, just as the manner in which you have adopted bid-nigáh by choice, in the same manner you are able to refrain from it by choice, seeing that you are a tálibe-sádiq of your isláh.

Examples of illnesses are being given. The illness of takabbur was mentioned earlier. Mention of the illness of bid-nigáh has been mentioned now. This is an illness of qúwate-shahwiyah (faculty of lust/passion). Takabbur is an illness of qúwate-ghadhbiyah (faculty of rage). Takabbur is to do with status.

Just as it is in one's ikhtiyár to utilise qúwate-shahwiyah in inappropriate situations, similarly, it is in one's ikhtiyár not to utilise qúwate-shahwiyah in inappropriate situations. This is applicable to all mu'mínín generally. However, for the tálibe-sádiq who is intent on his isláh, it would apply

even more.

To continue with questions the tálibe-sádiq asks himself, he now takes all this into account and he now ponders: “Should I write to my sheikh about this illness?” Immediately, the thought arises: “Why should I write? I am a tálíb. And I find this illness of bid-nigáh is in me. Just as I am looking with ikhtiyár, similarly, I can also not look with my ikhtiyár.”

The thought of his being a tálibe-sádiq is forceful. There and then, he makes a vow: “I make a vow that I shall not look with bid-nigáh in future. Now that I have made a vow, why should I write to my sheikh?”

It has become easy. In this manner isláh has become easy. Every quality will become easy in this manner. That being the case, will it be necessary to write to one’s sheikh every time to inform him? Not at all. Will he place a greater burden on his sheikh? Not at all. He tells himself: “He takes great pity on me. I should also show him some mercy.”

As I said right in the beginning: Whether he read daily in the kitábs which he studied, or whether he came to the majlis daily and heard repeatedly, why is it that he has not discarded the simple and straightforward issues up to now? Seeing that he has not left off the simple, straightforward matters, when will the time come to tackle the finer points which are connected to rúháníyet? These are points related to subtle and delicate issues – issues concerning taqarrub-ilalláh (closeness to Alláh Ta’álá), how to increase this taqarrub and how to attain elevated stages. When will he have the time and opportunity to taste of these when he has not discarded the simple, straightforward matters? And he is a tálibe-sádiq!

He could have stayed at home and, if he is a tálibe-sádiq, discarded those deeds that he knows to be sins. He could have refrained from even while sitting at home. Even after going to the rúhání physician and he still does not refrain from them, then why did he go? Even though he has commenced studying “Mikshkát Sharíf”, he is still not abstaining from these. Even though he is studying “Dorah Sharíf”, then too, he is not discarding the simple, straightforward matters.

The purpose for searching for a sheikh is to attain rúháníyet

He should have discarded these. Thereafter, there are a few delicate matters

pertaining to rúháníyet that still needed to be attended to. These were kept in abeyance. Now, for these, one needs to search for a sheikh.

One does not search for a sheikh in order to make the five-times namáz on their specific times, in the masjid, with jamá'at, with takbíre-úlá, with khushú and khudhú (provided that some shar'í obstacles do not present). Yet, he is not doing even this!

However, if he has achieved this, and he plods along persistently, then, máshá'Alláh Ta'álá, the simple and straightforward features like takabbur, will depart; the ghussah that flares up when anything upsets the temperament, also will begin to decline and depart. Now, a very small deficiency remains. If a matchstick is lit and applied to dry wood, the dry wood will quickly flare up. Is that not so?

If the matchstick is applied to wood that is still green and wet, it must not happen that matchstick after matchstick is lit and the box of matches gets used up, and there is a lot of smoke, but this wood does not light up!

So, during the years as a tálibe-'ilm, he is discarding these deeds; and he proceeds to perform what is fardh, wájib, sunnate-mu'akkadah with care and vigilance; and he discards what is harám; so, now, only some rúhání matters need to be seen to. These are related to an increase in rúháníyet, an increase in ímán, matters related to taqarrub-ilalláh. Alláh Ta'álá states:

وَلِكُلِّ دَرَجَاتٍ مَّا عَمِلُوا

For all there will be ranks for what they did. (S.6.132.)

Now is the time to search for such a person who is a rúhání physician.

When a person has presented himself like some dried wood, then a few months or a few weeks are sufficient.

As I had said: When a person has not discarded the simple, straightforward matters, when will the time come for learning the finer points? It is very easy for a tálib to gain closeness to Alláh Ta'álá (taqarrub-ilalláh).

I had been saying that a majlis takes place daily. There is enthusiasm to attend. This servant is there – he is present to serve. However, one should also evaluate oneself and give this poor person some consolation. That is why I had said: “What should I say?” As an answer to this question, I had

said: “Why is it that, up to now, we are still unable to discard the simple, straightforward issues?” Ahqar followed this up with the following:

It is easy to be an ‘ábid – he has become an ‘ábid – but to be an ádmí is difficult. Therefore, in order to achieve this ádmíyet, together with the ‘ibádat, search for a sheikh. He will teach you ádmíyet. It is very difficult to learn aspects of ádmíyet just by studying kitábs. It is very easy to become an ‘ábid by studying, by academic learning. However, in order to become an ádmí – that is, to be able to tackle the challenges that present themselves on a continuous basis with regard to one’s living, on which appropriateness is checked, on which judgments are made, on which testing takes place, on which there are reprimands – one has to search for such a sheikh. He will continuously instill yád-dásht; make him aware of the presence of Alláh Ta’álá (yád-dhiyání); and get him to practise. Search for such a sheikh.

Summary

So, he has become an ‘ábid, but ádmíyet has not been attained. A sheikh is needed for this. That is why my sheikh, Hadhratwálá رحمه الله عليه, used to say: “To become an ‘ábid is easy. Yes. What is the highest aim? It is to become a Jannatí. This is easy, but to become an ádmí is difficult. So, whosoever wants to become an ádmí, should come here.”

It is with regard to this that I have presented to you honourable people various illustrations: Examples of reprimands were presented; of judges and the judiciary; of the high court; of the supreme court.

Rók-tók – reprimanding, prohibiting – this is fardh for a sheikh. I have related incidences of rók-tók to you. I presented examples of rók-tók of students, did I not? The incident of the individual leaning with his back against the wall, was related. Other incidents were related. This is the appraisalment and scrutiny of a tálíbe-sádiq. This is the manner in which to introspect. Then, there will be no necessity to write very much, and there will not be much difficulty.

Final advice – the importance of ihtisáb (stocktaking)

When talab and awareness have been created, then, until the objective has not been attained, there is just no question of sitting back with ease.

Ihtisáb, nigrání – stocktaking and supervision – should be constant.

There used to be a muhtasib under Islámic rule – that is, one who used to do inspections; one who used to patrol. Hadhrat Umar رضى الله تعالى عنه, carrying a whip in his hand, used to patrol the streets of Madínah and admonish the people. Historically, this took place. Similarly, under Islámic rule, there is such a muhtasib, an inspector. You can go and look.

So, this insán should be a muhtasib, a supervisor, within himself. This insán, mu'min – one who has brought ímán, having entered into Islám – should be what? He should be a muhtasib, a supervisor. He should ask himself: “What is demanded from me by virtue of my ímán, as far as deeds? As regards aqídah, is there no smell of shierk – that is, riyá – in me? By virtue of the demands of my Islám, is there not any takabbur in my character?”

He should continue to take stock, introspect. When he continues to do this, then that which was shierk, will come to an end; and those characteristics which make up akhláqe-razíláh, they will also disappear.

So, every insán Muslim mu'min is a muhtasib over his own life, over himself, from the aspect of the demands of his ímán and the demands of his Islám. If he continues stocktaking (ihtisáb) – that is, self-scrutiny, self-assessment – then there is no reason why progress and constancy in pious deeds (sálíhát), and attainment of taqwá should not take place. One should continue taking stock of oneself. And when one has taken the step in the direction of one's isláh, then self-scrutiny and stocktaking become compulsory.

Du'á

May Alláh Ta'álá grant us the taufíq to make ihtisáb within ourselves. May Alláh Ta'álá bless us with the taufíq to discard the simple and straightforward prohibited deeds; and may He grant us the taufíq to progress farther in taqarrub.

وَآخِرُ دَعْوَانَا إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

Khudá háfiz.



A MUSLIM IS ONE WHO DOES NOT HARM OTHERS

In 1983 (1404 Hijri) Mauláná Abdur-Rahím Sáhib, who ran the bookshop, Makatabah Faidhe-Ashraf, Jalálábád, printed a bayán of our Hadhrat, Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masihulláh Khán Sáhib رحمه الله عليه, the title of which is “Islám aur amane-ám” - “Islám and peace for all”. This is an abridged version of the same kitáb. Not to confuse it with the unabridged version, the name we have chosen for it is “A Muslim is one who does not harm others.”

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ وَنُؤْمِنُ بِهِ وَنَتَوَكَّلُ عَلَيْهِ وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ
أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ وَنَشْهَدُ
أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَنَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدَهُ وَرَسُولَهُ صَلَّى
اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ وَبَارَكَ وَسَلَّمَ أَمَّا بَعْدُ فَقَدْ قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ : أَلْمُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلِمَ أَلْمُسْلِمُونَ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَيَدِهِ

All praises are due to Alláh. We praise Him, seek aid from Him, seek forgiveness from Him, believe in Him and repose our trust in Him. We seek refuge from Alláh from the evil lurking within us and from our wrongdoings. Whoever Alláh guides there is no one to lead him astray, and whoever He leads astray there is no one to guide that person. We bear witness that there is no god but Alláh alone. There is no partner unto Him. And we bear witness that our leader and master Muhammad is His servant and messenger. May Alláh Ta'álá send salutations to him, to his family and to his companions, together with blessings and peace.

Verily, Nabí صلى الله عليه وسلم said: “A Muslim is he from whose tongue and hand other Muslims are safe.”

Honourable friends! At this moment I have presented to you a Hadíth Sharíf, a statement, guidance and teaching, of Nabí-e-Karím, Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم. I have the intention of giving a bayán in connection with it. However, before speaking on this Hadíth Sharíf, I consider it necessary to warn you and make you aware of an important matter. It is the following:

The seven aims and objectives of those attending the majlis

The aims and objectives of those attending the majlis of a w'az and listening to a bayán are varied. However, they are not all correct and beneficial, or in a manner that is fully beneficial.

The explanation is as follows:

Firstly: Some come just because others came; they come as a ritual and custom; they come to fulfil a passion; they come to please themselves, to lighten their moods, to attain some pleasure; or because others having called them to the w'az. One sees others go and enjoy themselves by attending domains of sensual pleasure, so, in the same manner, these also come to a w'az.

Secondly: Some come to examine and enquire with this attitude that they wish to see the manner and characteristics in which the bayán is given. They make an assessment of the bayán: of what calibre it is; is it sequential or is it all muddled? How does the subject matter flow?

Thirdly: Some come with the object of trying to adduce the thinking of the speaker by listening to the topics: What school of thought does he follow?

Fourthly: Some come with the purpose of picking out faults in the subject matter and the bayán.

Fifthly: Some come with the intention of attaining thawáb by participating in the majlis of a w'az.

Sixthly: There are some who come with the objective of gaining emotional effects, so that they may shed a few tears.

The first five types of intentions and motives, even though they may be good and admirable, are not sufficient. The reason is that these are not the objectives for listening to a w'az, because thawáb may be attained by other means as well – nafl namáz, tiláwat of the Qur'án Sharíf, tasbíhát, azkár, words of zikr, and so forth. These can bring great rewards.

As for the sixth type of objective, that the advice in the w'az should have an emotional effect, may be of benefit. However, the effect is limited to the shedding of tears from the eyes. It is temporary and transitory, and ends there. Therefore, even this is not worthy of any credence. Mostly, this is a nafsání effect. So much so, that, on occasions, one may be affected merely

by the voice of a person, and tears may even be shed.

The seventh aim and objective is the correct one

Seventhly: In this seventh category are people who come with the specific intention of their isláh. Having seen rúhání illnesses within themselves, they have come with the object of seeking a remedy. They have looked very deeply and with great thought within themselves, and analysed all the illnesses that are present. Listening to the bayán, they ask themselves: “Which illnesses mentioned in the w’az exist within me?” They keep on assessing the bayán to their own condition.

The effect of this is that they feel ashamed and remorseful of their previous misbehaviour, sins and crimes. This results in them repenting over past sins and vowing not to go near these sins in future. They, then, do just that and develop repugnance for sins, and enthusiasm for obedience and ibádat. They compensate for any deficiencies and shortcomings with regard to huqúqulláh: whatever ’ibádat they did not perform with regard to the fará’idh and wájibát of namáz, they now complete the qadhá. They also start diligently fulfilling any shortcomings in regard to huqúqul-’ibád.

The basic, fundamental and correct purpose of listening to a w’az is this. To listen to a w’az with this thought and objective is beneficial. Besides this, there is no special benefit from all other motives. When one comes to know this, then one should not be concerned if one derives not even the least bit of pleasure in listening to any w’az.

In any case, the objective in listening to a w’az should be this, that the listener should relate the w’az or bayán to his conditions. There should be remorse for past shortcomings by means of taubah for the past, a vow for the future; and there should be a concern for one’s isláh. This is the objective as far as the Sharí’at is concerned.

Alláh Ta’álá has stated this in another manner. In the 15th párá, in Surah Baní Isrá’íl, it is stated: (S.17.19.)

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

And whosoever desires the hereafter and strives for it with the necessary effort, being a believer; for (people like) these their efforts find favour (with their Lord).

That is, that person who has made an intention of attaining thawáb in the ákhirat and, after making the intention, he has made an all-out effort as well...

To digress for a moment: Those who know Arabic will know that here, the phrase “s’a-yahá” is termed “mafúl-mutlaq”, which is used to emphasise an action. By this term being brought here, it is to show that “making an effort” is not merely to attend to a task, but the purpose and objective is to fulfil the rights involved and make a full and truthful – that is, an absolute, complete and all-out – effort.

Then, for this effort to be qabúl – have credence and be accepted – the pre-condition is ímán. This is stated in the phrase: “Wa-huwa mu’minún.”

In essence, this means that, after adopting ímán, one should not sit back unconcerned and freed from further action. However, one should toil ceaselessly in preparing totally for the ákhirat.

Trials and tests are to be expected

One will be confronted with a variety of difficulties and tests. This has been mentioned at a different place in the Qur’án Sharíf:

أَحْسِبَ النَّاسَ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا آمَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ

Do men imagine that they will be left (at ease) because they say: “We believe,” and they will not be tested with adversity?(S.29.2.)

Alláh Ta’álá is saying: “Do the people have this thought in mind that that they will be left alone just by them proclaiming ímán, and that will be all? They will be tested. They will be trialled. Difficulties, hardships and adversities will be placed on them. By means of ikhtiyárí and ghair-ikhtiyárí

mujáhadah, will they be assessed to see to what degree of firmness they have in their claim to have ímán.

From this we can conclude that Alláh Ta’álá has made His bondsmen mukallaf for resolve (irádah) and toil. In other words, the bondsmen are responsible and accountable for making an effort and making mujáhadah. We have to make a resolve and make an effort.

Those bondsmen who make use of their resolve and make an effort as ordered, by way of good news and glad tidings, the áyet states that these are the people whose resolve and effort Alláh Ta'álá will value.

From this, the error of some people is obvious: These people say: "Nothing is in our power and control. We are helpless." This concept has been refuted by the above áyet. It points out that you have been created with resolve and power within you. You have been given the capability to make use of the means (asbáb). Make use of these because you are accountable (mukallaf) for the power to use the means.

Just ponder on the following: If some king were to announce that the citizens are requested to carry out a certain task. Whoever does this will be specially honoured by him. Every person will make a full effort, according to his capabilities, according to his strength, according to his limitations. This is done to gain the favours of the king, these being a special status, rank and closeness to him.

The responsibility of the mu'min is to make an effort

Honour and status are loved by every person, and these are objectives. Therefore, negligence and apathy, laziness and comfort and a desire for ease, are all dispensed with and sacrificed to attain honour and status. A common expression used is: all these comforts will be set on fire to attain the goal. It means that attention will be diverted from all these comforts. All these comforts will be discarded.

When this is the condition of us people that, for a another human being like us – one who has some degree of power and control – we are prepared to make such an effort in order to gain closeness to him and become a person of honour, then what should our effort be to gain the favours of Alláh Ta'álá, taking into consideration that His power and control are unlimited and unfathomable and beyond everything; and that all kingdoms and dominions are captured in His fist? In reality, only He is King! All kings hold no significance in front of Him.

A Fársí couplet states:

True sovereignty is acknowledged to be wholly His.

Nobody has the strength to interfere even an iota in His workings.

So, when a full, concentrated effort is made to carry out the order of an earthly king, a human being like anybody else, then what can one say of the effort that should be made when it comes to the order and promise of the real King, King of all kings?

وَكَانَ وَعْدًا مَّفْعُولًا

And the promise (of Alláh) is irreversible. (S.17.5.)

The promise of Alláh Ta'álá will definitely be fulfilled.

Therefore, one should be hastening and leaping towards what has been promised by Him. It is stated in a Hadíthe Qudsí:

مَنْ تَقَرَّبَ إِلَيَّ شِبْرًا تَقَرَّبْتُ إِلَيْهِ ذِرَاعًا وَمَنْ تَقَرَّبَ إِلَيَّ ذِرَاعًا تَقَرَّبْتُ إِلَيْهِ بَاعًا وَإِذَا قَبَلَ إِلَيَّ يَمْشِي أَقْبَلْتُ إِلَيْهِ أَهْزُولًا

Whoever comes close to Me a hand's span, I come close to him a cubit's length. And whoever comes close to me a cubit's length, I come closer to him a fathom's length.

And when he comes to me walking, I go to him running."

In other words, through the blessed tongue of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم Alláh Ta'álá is stating: "That person who approaches Me one hand's breadth, I will come closer to him one arm's length; and whosoever approaches Me one arm's length, I will come closer to him two arm's length; and that person who comes towards Me hurriedly, I will come running towards him; and that person who comes running towards Me, I will lift him into My lap!"

Just see: From this Hadíth Sharíf it is quite openly demonstrated that the initial advance is desired from our side. Our talab (quest and desire) is first noted. Therefore, if we had not been given the faculty of irádah (resolve) and if we had not been given the power to choose and control (ikhtiyár), then it follows that the order for us to walk and to advance would be oppression. Whereas Alláh Ta'álá is free and pure of this that the bondsman that he should be accountable for deeds which are ghair-ikhtiyarí.

A normal human being will not instruct a weak and frail person to carry out such a task which is beyond his strength to do. For example, a three-year old child would not be told to go and fetch a full bucket of water. Alláh Ta'álá's statement is quite explicit:

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

Alláh does not task a soul greater than it can bear.(S.2.286.)

That is: Alláh Ta'álá does not make any individual accountable except what is in the individual's power and capacity. The power to use the means (asbáb) has been given to us. Thus, we have been given commands to the degree of the strengths that we have; and to that degree have we been made accountable for tasks. And we have not been given commands and we have not been made accountable for degrees which are beyond our power. This is the level of bringing the means into effect (wujoode-musabbabaat).

An illustration: The bondsman is mukallaf for preparing the field and sowing seeds. This is at the level of "sabab" – using the means. As for the rest – for the plants to sprout and the crops to grow, which are results and "musabbab", the bondsman is not accountable. This is an act carried out by Alláh Ta'álá. There is a statement to this effect:

وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ رِزْقًا لَكُمْ

And (Alláh) causes water to descend from the sky and thereby producing fruits as food for you. (S.14.32.)

It states the He caused it to rain from the sky. Then, by means of this, He brought forth fruits for your rizq. This is proof that there should be questing (talab) and making an effort. The bondsman is mukallaf of this.

In any case, the basic objective of those listening and the correct purpose of listening are to apply the topics narrated in the w'az to one's own condition, to understand one's own shortcomings and then to attend to their rectification and correction.

Therefore, ponder over what Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم is saying. His statement is:

أَتُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلَّمَ أَتُسْلِمُونَ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَ يَدِهِ

A Muslim is he from whose tongue and hand another Muslim is safe and protected from every harm, difficulty and grief.

Apply this to yourself and ponder: To what extent does the title of "Muslim" truthfully befit us? Those qualities that should be in the Muslim, as stated in this Hadíth Sharíf, if they are found in us, and our condition is

corresponding to this Hadíth Sharíf, then we are entitled to this title and we are worthy of being said to be Muslim; otherwise not.

Dear brethren! As such, each one of us considers himself or herself to be a Muslim. However, who is a real Muslim and who is a Muslim in its true meaning? This has been stated in the Hadíth Sharíf. The meaning and definition of a Muslim appears in it: A Muslim is one from whose tongue and hand the Ahle-Islám are at peace and safe.

Thus, the one to whom this definition can be truthfully applied, will be a true Muslim. Check yourself.

Recognising an item by its attributes. The position of women.

Everything has certain attributes with which it is recognised.

Take a female: she is said to be a female on the basis of her feminity. If she has modesty (hayá), purdah and other feminine features, then she will be said to be a female. If this is not the case, then she would fall outside and be distancing herself from the definition of being feminine and female, because the word “aurat” (female) has in it the meaning of “purdah”. And this is not to be seen in her. So, now, from the aspect of the root word, the word “aurat” (female) will not be applicable to her. In the true sense, she will not be worthy of being called “female”.

A female (aurat) is basically that person who keeps herself concealed. She also conceals her clothes and jewellery, as Alláh Ta’álá instructs:

وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ

(Tell the believing women) not to reveal their adornments. (S.24.31.)

However, an amazing condition has overtaken women. Nudity and shamelessness have crept in. The burqah is worn for the sake of fashion, the garment coming in different colours and flowery decorations, which are reasons for greater sins. These are immediate steps in the process of corrupting one’s thinking.

In any case, when the true features are found in anyone, then the true and fundamental meaning will be applicable. For example: A eunuch will not be called a female even though, by looking just superficially, this person may

appear to be female by the person's apparent dressing. However, seeing that the features defining a female are not to be found in this person, therefore, despite the external signs, this person is not a female.

To continue: This digression came incidentally when discussing the definition of a Muslim. Now, listen to the original theme:

We had said that Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم had said, in regard to the definition of a Muslim, the following:

أَلْمُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلِمَ أَلْمُسْلِمُونَ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَ يَدِهِ

A Muslim is that person from whose tongue and hand – from both – other Muslims are safe. Thus, if these features are not to be found in any Muslim, then he is not Muslim – that is, he is not a Muslim in the full and true sense. The reason is that correct Islám, that is, the complete Dín is a combination of five things: First is aqá'id; then is 'ibádat; together with which comes mu'ásharat, akhláq and mu'ámulát. From the Hadíth Sharíf quoted, the following three, mu'ásharat, akhláq and mu'ámulát, are clearly indicated, while aqá'id and 'ibádat are alluded to indirectly.

Detailed explanation of the Hadíth Sharíf

The detailed explanation of this is:

The Hadíth Sharíf has stated in clear terms that others should be safe and sound from harms caused by the hand and the tongue. We now have to see what the means (asbáb) are for causing difficulties and harm. By pondering and careful thought, the following become quite clear: Difficulties that do arise do so from improper mu'ásharat, akhláq and mu'ámulát – that is, from corrupt lifestyles, bad behaviour and improper or dishonest dealings.

For example: Transactions are made with regard to buying and selling, or with regard to partnerships and formation of companies. Or other types of transactions are enacted. Then persons act contrary to the agreements made.

Another example: A person has agreed to keep something in trust for another. He then misappropriates the trust, thereby causing difficulties and grief to others.

Another example: A person has acted inappropriately in his social

interactions with others. This may be in regard to the person's age; or his 'ilm and piety; or his status and position; or his position as a relative or ties of kinship. As for those who are older, he did not approach them with due respect and honour. Or he did not show affection and love for those who are junior. Or he did not treat his equals with a brotherly attitude, one displaying equality, but approached them with condescension and contempt. It is obvious that others will be caused difficulties and harm by this.

Another example: A person comes across a trifling incident which upsets him. Instead of displaying sabr and forbearance (tahammul), he responds with harsh words, bitter remarks, swearing and cursing, and so forth. He is displaying a nasty character which causes harm and difficulties to others.

Another example: A person steals something or usurps something. In other words, he has taken an item without the permission of the owner and uses it for himself. What is worse, he does not return it after using it. He does not even inform the owner that a particular item of his is with him.

Another example: He removes somebody else's item from its specific place and puts it somewhere else. These wrong actions cause difficulties to others. We see this happen day and night.

In essence: Through corrupt akhláq, mu'ámulát and mu'ásharat people are causing harm to others physically and financially, with regard to his life and his heart. That is why the Hadíth Sharíf quoted above has been stated to focus attention to remove the corruptions to be found in character and behaviour, dealings and social interactions. All these are in relation to the creation. So, the conclusion to be reached is that one should have the correct relationship with the creation. And when the relationship with the creation has been rectified, it then necessarily follows that the relationship with the Creator will be kept correct and rectified. A Fársí poem puts it as follows:

*When the relationship with the creation is kept correct, then how
can it be correct to approach the Creator with cunning and guile, bent and
crooked, obdurate and perverse?*

So, to rectify our relationship with our Creator is necessary even to a

greater extent. To rectify our relationship with our Creator is dependent on having correct aqá'id and correct 'ibádat. In this manner, rectification of aqá'id and 'ibádat are also included in this Hadíth Sharíf, by way of proof and necessary deduction.

This is also apparent if we approach it from another direction: The word "Al-muslimu" appears in the Hadíth Sharíf. This is derived from the word "Al-Islám," which means "*Ghardan nahádan bi-tá'at*" – he bows his head in submission. This means that a Muslim is one who is ever prepared to carry out the orders of the Sharí'at. He is one who executes each and every order.

From the orders, the first falls in the category of tauhíd. That is, accept that the zát and sífát of Alláh Ta'álá are pure of any defects and weaknesses, and that they are at the pinnacle of perfection. It necessarily follows that one has to believe in nabúwat and risálat. The reason is that, among the attributes and perfections of Alláh Ta'álá, one attribute is that of His kalám (speech), that one should believe His kalám to be truthful. So, the kalám of Alláh Ta'álá has given proof of nabúwat and risálat. The Qur'án Sharíf states:

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

Muhammad is the messenger of Alláh. (S.48.29.)

Thus, tauhíd necessarily includes nabúwat, and reward and punishment will depend on either believing or not believing in these two. The fundamental or basic place where reward and punishment will be meted out will be in the ákhirat on the Day of Qiyámat. Therefore, it necessarily follows that tauhíd and nabúwat are connected to the ákhirat; and all these three necessitate the performance of 'ibádat; the most important categories of which are namáz, rozah, giving zakát, performing hajj, and also other categories like qurbání, sadaqát, kaffárát, nazar, and so forth.

So, in this manner, in the term "Al-muslimu" is kept the principles of aqá'id and 'ibádat.

Thus, it has been proven in this Hadíth Sharíf:

اَلْمُسْلِمُ مِّنْ سَلَمٍ اَلْمُسْلِمُوْنَ مِّنْ لِّسَانٍ وَ يَدٍ

That is, in it are included all the branches and offshoots of the Dín. Thus, a complete Muslim is one in whom all the five categories are to be found, the categories of aqá'id, 'ibádat, mu'ásharat, khláq and mu'ámulát.

From the apparent words of the Hadíth Sharíf, it is established that avoiding causing difficulties and harms to others is the special attribute of a kámil díndár person. The objective and purpose is the following: Neither from the being of a Muslim, nor from his speech or action, nor from his activity or tranquil state, nor from his behaviour, nor from his manners, should he cause others any difficulty or unpleasantness. He should spend his life and conduct his social interrelationships with such a degree of mental alertness, wisdom, insight and foresight, with full concentration, care and vigilance, as to achieve the foregoing. This is the command of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم. It is the core and life of all social interrelationships.

Thus, from the side of the Muslim there is salámatí and aman – peace and safety. The whole creation is safe and protected from him. The correct status of a Muslim is this that, from his side, no grief in any form befalls any person.

However, because, by habit, people tend to have contact with fellow religionists, in this Hadíth Sharíf consideration of this habit and custom are taken into account, and it is stated that a Muslim is safe from another Muslim.

Take note of another Hadíth Sharíf:

كُلُّ الْمُسْلِمِ عَلَى الْمُسْلِمِ حَرَامٌ دَمُهُ وَمَالُهُ وَعِرْضُهُ

Every Muslim is harám upon another Muslim – that is, his blood, his wealth and his honour.

This means that every item of a Muslim is harám for another Muslim, his blood, his wealth and his respect and honour – all are to be held in complete sanctity. For this reason one Muslim will not cause harm to another Muslim in regard to these three. It is with such a degree of care and vigilance that a Muslim has to live his life.

Non-Muslims also should not be oppressed

It does NOT mean that it is correct for a Muslim to oppress a non-Muslim.

Thus, on one occasion it was stated:

مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلَا يُؤْذِ جَارَهُ

Whoever believes in Alláh and the Last Day, then let him not hurt his neighbour.

This means that a person having ímán on Alláh Ta'álá and the ákhirat will not cause any difficulty to any neighbour of his. It is apparent that the demands of ímán are that one should not cause any difficulty to any human being, whether he is a Muslim or a non-Muslim. This is a command for all people in general.

We can conclude that the objective of the Shar'at of Islám is that the life of a mu'min, the existence of a Muslim, should be completely filled with peace, tranquillity and serenity. No human being should experience even the slightest difficulty from him.

However, seeing that mostly the hand is used or the tongue is moved in causing difficulties to others, in usurping the rights of others or oppressing them, these two parts of the body have been singled out with special emphasis that they should be brought under control, in that others should be safe from the hand and the tongue.

In any case, up to this point of the bayán, you honoured people will have come to know, briefly, that difficulties can be caused in three ways: (1) Jismání aur jání – physically and bodily; (2) málí – financially; and (3) ábrú aur qalbí – with regard to honour and his heart (emotional/mental). In the same way, you will have come to know that, in causing harm to others, the hand and the tongue play a great part. For example: Somebody is murdered or somebody is physically assaulted. This is physical and bodily harm. However, it may be the person has not been assaulted, but the person has been threatened or frightened by brandishing a knife or weapon. This is causing him difficulty mentally and emotionally. Somebody's wealth is stolen or seized. This is harm caused to his wealth by means of one's hands. Somebody is sworn at, wrongly accused or slandered. Or his faults are related in front of him or behind his back. This is causing harm by means of the tongue, to another's respect and honour, causing him mental and emotional anguish. Or another is instigated to steal somebody's wealth, which this person does. This is causing harm to his wealth by means of

the tongue of the instigator.

These are various ways in which vexations, difficulties and grief are caused to others. All this is zulm. And that person who is an oppressor is never loved by Alláh Ta'álá. To the contrary, instead of mercy descending from Alláh Ta'álá on the zálím, His curse descends on him. The statement of our Rabb is:

أَلَا لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الظَّالِمِينَ

Now, the curse of Alláh is on the wrongdoers.(S.11.18.)

Open your ears and listen! The curse of Alláh Ta'álá descends on those who make zulm. That is why the Dín of Islám, the Sharí'at of Islam, gives absolutely no permission for anybody to be oppressed. Every type of zulm, at any time and on any occasion, has been halted. The statement of Alláh Ta'álá is:

إِنَّمَا السَّبِيلُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يَظْلِمُونَ النَّاسَ وَيَبْغُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

The blame is only against those who oppress people and wrongfully rebel on the earth. For them is a painful punishment. (S42.42.)

These dealings concerning the rights of the creation – huqúqul-'ibád – are not superficial and trivial. Usurping the rights of others brings destruction in the dunyá, and it is also the basis for punishment in the ákhirat.

Different ways in which others are oppressed

There are many forms of usurping others' rights.

For example: Wives have many rights. There are many who usurp their rights and oppress them. There are some who do not provide them with food, or provide very little for them, and keep them in straightened conditions. Some even beat them.

One type of zulm on the wife is also this: Whatever the husband is earning, he gives to his parents, while the poor wife is kept without any finance. And his parents are such that they take no interest in her welfare. If his wife wishes to stay separately, they do not allow them to stay on their own. They say: "The wind of the house will leave." In other words, the

special charm that exists in the home will not be there any longer. The older women used to have such thoughts.

Here, we have to give special attention to the following: It is not *já'iz* to obey or give consideration to any instructions given by anybody to commit sins and go against the *Shari'at*. Thus, if the wife wishes to stay separately, then it is her necessary right to live separately.

There is great ease in staying separately in this age, because staying together is the cause of disputes and strife. These older women tend to harass the daughters-in-law to a great extent. If it is said that nowadays, the daughters-in-law are very unworthy and that they tend to pick a fight with their mothers-in-law and torment them. This, then, also necessitates that they live separately. So, there is consideration for both parties, the wife and the mother, in staying separately.

Similarly, some men fall short in fulfilling the rights of the parents, being partial towards the wife. Rectifying this situation also involves staying separately. Then there will be no such situations – there will be no opportunity for partiality, taking sides, complaints and criticisms.

Some husbands distance themselves from their wives and develop relationships with others (*ghair*). This is an extremely severe form of *zulm*. They should abstain from this and resume relationships with their wives with tremendous cheer and excellent behaviour. It is necessary for the husband to be on good speaking terms with his wife and be jocular. In essence, he should not make *zulm* on her in any form. He should have the fear of Alláh Ta'álá all the time. He should note that Alláh Ta'álá has the power to let a calamity overcome him, have a court case brought against him, inflict him with a severe illness or set an oppressive ruler over him.

The calamities inflicted on people because of *zulm* are mostly manifested in this world. In ancient communities, a calamity used to befall openly and instantaneously. It is Alláh Ta'álá's mercy that this *ummat* does not experience His punishment in an open and apparent manner. The reason is that there is disgrace in this. However, the punishment comes in a concealed manner, so that people do not come to know that this punishment is because of sins or of a particular sin committed by an individual. The calamity is attributed to some external cause. In actual fact, the calamity

is the punishment for his zulm. This is especially so when the mazlúm (oppressed) also curse him, because the bid-du'á of an oppressed is very readily accepted. This is not restricted to the bid-du'á of an oppressed Muslim: If somebody were to oppress a non-Muslim, his bid-du'á is also accepted. One buzurg has put it thus:

Fear the “Áh!” that escapes from the lips of the mazlúm.

The moment has arrived from the heavens for his bid-du'á to be accepted!

It appears in the Hadíth Sharíf:

اتَّقِ دَعْوَةَ الْمَظْلُومِ فَإِنَّهُ لَيْسَ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَ اللَّهِ حِجَابٌ

Fear the du'á of the oppressed for, verily, there is no veil between it and Alláh.

This means that one should fear the bid-du'á of the mazlúm because there is no barrier, no obstacle and no prohibitive factor between him and Alláh Ta'álá. This encompasses each and every mazlúm who has been oppressed, irrespective of which religion he follows. There is a strict prohibition of vexing him and causing him difficulties, whether this is to do with his life and physical well-being, finances or whether his rights have been usurped.

Listen to another Hadíth Sharíf! The statement of Nabí صلى الله عليه وسلم is as follows:

أَلَا مَنْ ظَلَمَ مُعَاهِدًا أَوْ اتَّقَصَّه أَوْ كَلَّفَهُ فَوْقَ طَاقَتِهِ أَوْ أَخَذَ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا بَغَيْرِ طِيبٍ نَفْسٍ فَأَنَا حَاجِيْجُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

Harken! Whoever commits injustice to a partner with whom an agreement has been enacted, degrades him, imposes on him more than what he can bear, or takes from him anything against his will, then I will argue his case on the day of Qiyámat.

This means: “Look! Listen with open ears! If anybody makes zulm on a káfir or zimmí, or causes him any harm, or burdens him with something exceeding his strength, or takes any item of his without him being willing, then I will be the one to compensate him his right in Qiyámat.”

From this, two points come to be known:

Firstly, that zulm can take many forms, as can be seen by the translation.

Secondly, if the one who has made zulm on somebody or usurped somebody's rights, does not fulfil his rights or does not achieve relief from his obligation in this world, then he will not have escaped. In Qiyámat, the one whose right has been usurped will be the plaintiff. The case will be brought forth in the supreme court of the Lord of both the worlds.

There is no escaping the justice in the ákhirat

The situation there will not be like it is in this world. Here, even after having committed zulm, the zálím still wins the case in court, with the assistance of lawyers and barristers, and he is freed. The proceedings in the ákhirat in Qiyámat will be with complete and full justice and fairness. Over there, nobody will be around to assist and support the one making zulm. He will have neither lawyer nor barrister. On the other hand, the greatest messenger of Islám, Muhammad, Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم himself will assist the mazlúm and see that his rights are compensated.

Friends! No other religion can present such an example of help and support for the adherents of that religion.

Further, the matter does not end there that the issue of zulm has been set aside for the ákhirat. However, the whole ummat has been bound, with great emphasis, to abstain from zulm. Not only that, but the ummat have been told to stop even others from committing zulm. Apply your strengths to this so that zulm is eradicated from the world. So much so, that Alláh Ta'álá states:

لَنَّا خُذْنَ عَلَىٰ يَدِ الظَّالِمِ وَلَتَأْطِرُنَّهُ إِلَىٰ الْحَقِّ أَطْرًا وَلَتَقْصِرُنَّهُ عَلَىٰ الْحَقِّ قَصْرًا

You are most certainly going to grab the hand of the oppressor (i.e. restrain him), turn him towards the haqq and return him towards what is right.

Definitely but definitely! Catch hold of the hand of the zálím. Do not let him commit zulm. And keep on pulling him towards truth and justice; and force him on truth, so that he cannot not usurp the rights of others. And bind him to justice. In essence, as far as it is possible, do not let zulm take place at all.

We had digressed on this topic when discussing the Hadíth Sharíf:

أَلْمُسْلِمُ مِّنْ سَلَمٍ أَلْمُسْلِمُونَ مِّنْ لِّسَانِهِ وَ يَدِهِ

We had said that it does not mean that only Muslims should not be caused difficulties and that permission has been granted to cause difficulties to those who are not Muslim. From the explanation given, it is apparent that the purpose of the Sharí'at and of Islám is that nobody should be caused any difficulty. Do not usurp the rights of anybody and do not make zulm on anybody. Do not cause harm to others, and do not break the heart of others.

As stated, this Hadíth Sharíf is warning us specifically in regard to those people we are in contact with all the time – those with whom we have to interact. We have to behave correctly towards them. Do not be unconcerned and neglectful about your behaviour towards those with whom you are staying and associating, those with whom you have an on-going contact and relationship of one type or another.

Also, the objective is not to focus your gaze only on your own aims and goals, but you should supervise the rights of others fully and completely. There should not be the slightest harm or usurping of their rights. So much so, that there should be no burden placed on the hearts of others or cause them any displeasure.

Rights of children/parents/ustád/sheikh

This is also worth pondering over: Among these people, those who enjoy rights are of various categories. In the broader sense, there are two categories: those who are relatives and those who are not relatives. Then, there are three categories under each of these two: those who are older, those who are younger, and those who are equal. The Sharí'at of Islam has laid down the rights of all in detail. It is necessary to fulfil the rights of all. There is no permission for causing anybody any harm or to usurp his or her rights, especially when it comes to the rights of parents. To usurp their rights or to cause them difficulties and grief is extremely evil, extremely calamitous. In a Hadíth Sharíf Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم has stated that the punishment for all sins may be postponed by Alláh Ta'álá till Qiyámat for whomsoever He wishes, however, the punishment for disobedience to

parents and usurping their rights is also meted out in the world, before ákhirat.

At times, the parents may say or do certain things which the children find objectionable and unpleasant. The children then become angry, and this then leads them to withhold their services to their parents. There is also now a deficiency in the respect and honour they should accord their parents. The tones of their words indicate ill manners and rudeness, intending injury and insult.

So, one should remember that, on occasions like these, there is a need for greater care, and to adopt sabr and forbearance. Even in such situations, the children have no right to take revenge on the parents. Even in these conditions, there are severe warnings of punishment on causing difficulties.

Nowadays, children steal money from the house and go on holidays without informing anybody. This causes all the people in the household great anxiety, sadness and sorrow. The parents, especially, suffer in a number of ways. They feel hurt and feel a loss. Because of their affection and love, their hearts are agitated. They travel all over in their efforts to search for their loved ones, suffering the difficulties of travel and the toil involved. The cost of transport is an added financial loss, besides the loss of the money taken by the child and squandering it.

This calamity is widespread nowadays. The children have become a calamity to the lives of the parents. It is not permissible in the least for children to do this. This is open zulm inflicted on the parents. Children should develop the fear of Alláh Ta'álá. It should not happen that some calamity and punishment befalls them. Those who cause grief, and cause vexations and difficulties to their parents are deprived of a life of tranquillity. Also, most of them are put into difficulties in regard to their rizq.

That is why, if any child has committed such actions in regard to the rights of the parents, he should very quickly have his faults and wrong-doings forgiven, and hasten to make them happy. If the parents have passed away, he should make du'á of forgiveness for them. As far as possible, he should let them gain the thawáb of giving out charity and sadqah, and nafl 'ibádat like namáz, rozah, tasbíhát in abundance. For example:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ - الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ - لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

One's ustád and sheikh are also like one's parents. It comes in the Hadíth Sharíf that your father is of three types: First type: He is the biological father, the one who was the means for you to come into the world. The second type: One who has taught you "ilm – that is, one's ustád. The third type: One who has performed the nikáh of your marriage – that is, your father-in-law. That is why the rights of these latter two are like the rights of your biological father. In other words, one has to obey and be submissive to them; one has to behave with good manners, with respect and honour; one should not act headlong, physically or mentally, when in their presence; when speaking, one should not raise one's voice, one should not show terseness; one should not show effrontery; one should display humility in every aspect – in one's speech and action, in one's gait and postures, and in one's social etiquettes.

Rights and privileges of one's wife

In dealing with one's wife, various kinds of zulm are perpetrated on her. People tend to keep womenfolk, their wives, as maids and subordinates. Therefore, they will not tolerate even a minor affront to their temperament. They do not want their wives to give them a contrary reply. Should she venture to do this, then follows a beating and thrashing, even to the extent of swearing and cursing. Finally, it even reaches the point where taláq is issued. This is zulm on wives.

Some husbands want their womenfolk to live with them in the cultured and well-mannered manner that they live. That is why, when some woman does something which is uncultured or ill-mannered, she is severely punished.

At times, womenfolk will make certain remarks very informally, playfully and with an apparent air of conceit (náz). The men will also not tolerate and bear this. At the most petty incident, they will pull up their faces and show their displeasure by refusing to speak to their wives. Whereas, one of the rights that the wife has is that her informality and airs are tolerated.

That leaves some wives who are uncultured. This is also a right that women

have over the men, that the men tolerate their bad manners. It comes in the Hadíth Sharíf that women have been created from a crooked rib. That is why there is crookedness in their akhláq. If you try to straighten it, it will break. So, take benefit from her with her crookedness.

The following is also something to ponder over and to understand: It is a suitable condition for women to have a slight degree of indiscriminate behaviour (be-tamízi). The reason is that those who are like this, tend to be plain and simple women. These women are extremely chaste, modest and obedient. So much so, I have seen and heard that some women are such that they may be ill – so ill that they do not have the strength to stand. Yet, if the husband is also ill at the same time, she will forget her own illness. She will be restless and anxious, and will spend all her time in nursing her husband.

And this is a daily occurrence that women will be the last to eat. The wife will see that the husband eats first. If it so happens that a visitor arrives at that point, the food that she had saved for herself, she will send forth to feed the visitor, remaining hungry herself.

Also, if it happens that the husband has been on a journey and returns in the middle of night, she will sacrifice her rest and sleep, get up and cook for her husband at that hour, and be at hand to serve him.

This type of women, those who dote on their husbands, are mostly those who tend to be plain and simple, and tend to have a slight degree of impropriety as well. That is why husbands should not be of such a harsh temperament, that the slightest impropriety on the part of the wife will cause him to fly into a rage.

What is of greater amazement and pity – and a great zulm – is that the husband's rage is not restricted to these ikhtiyári actions of the wife, but it extends even to the ghair-ikhtiyári aspects as well. He rages at her even when she has no control over the situation. For example: Some address their wives as follows: “Scoundrel! You can't even bear children!” What can the poor woman do? The bearing of children is in no way in the control of any person. It can happen that even kings do not have any offspring. Despite consuming a variety of nutritious foods, and making use of different medications, then, too, nothing happens. It is only in the control of Alláh

Ta'álá and in His ikhtiyár. What fault is it of the woman?

We have seen that some husbands get cross with their wives and scold them as follows: “Scoundrel! You can only bear girls!” Firstly, what fault is it of hers if she does not bear boys? If you consult some physicians, they may perhaps point out the fault to be with you, the male! Secondly, it may not be something to be displeased with. A Fársí couplet states:

*That Being that has not made you wealthy,
He knows what is good for you better than what you do.*

Just see: The killing of the child by Hadhrat Khidr عليه السلام was in the best interests for the child and for the parents. Mauláná Rúmí رحمه الله عليه states:

*The killing of the child by Hadhrat Khidr عليه السلام
Is a mystery not fathomed by the general populace.*

In the same way, Hadhrat Khidr عليه السلام had removed a plank from the boat in which he was ferried. From outward appearances, he wanted to create a defect in the boat. However, there was great wisdom behind this act. Mauláná Rúmí رحمه الله عليه states:

*Though Hadhrat Khidr عليه السلام damaged the boat in the river;
However, there were many hidden wisdoms in damaging it.*

Further on, from the narrations it comes to be known that, after the child was slain, Alláh Ta'álá blessed the parents with a daughter. From her progeny there arose Ambiyá عليه السلام.

So, the response to the husband who berates his wife for giving birth to girls only, is the following: What if you had a son and he turned out to be like the one that Hadhrat Khidr عليه السلام had slain, then what would you have done? It is Alláh Ta'álá's great favour on you that He has given you girls. The reason is that, generally, girls do not bring dishonour to families. Also, they are very obedient to the parents. Whereas, nowadays, boys tend to be arrogant and stubborn, that one can only exclaim: “May Alláh Ta'álá protect us!” It is better for such sons not to be than for them to be!

In this age, even if Hadhrat Khidr عليه السلام is not going to come around and kill such sons, however, Alláh Ta'álá is able to slay them. And, for sons not to be born, is also equivalent to one type of “slaying”. As for those whom Alláh Ta'álá has given no children, neither sons nor daughters, this is also in their interest, because Alláh Ta'álá is better aware of what is best for

His bondsmen than themselves.

Take this situation: Because a person has no children, he is involved in doing some Díní work without any other concerns. Now, if he were to have children, how do we know that he will still have this freedom from other worries? There are a thousand worries associated with having children: Someone has an earache; another has a stomach-ache; another has fallen down; another has gone missing. And the parents are, naturally, distressed. So, it is possible that Alláh Ta'álá has not given him any children in order to keep him unencumbered.

If these matters are kept in mind, then one will not be distressed under any circumstances. Most of our difficulties are brought on by our stupidity, or our wrong actions, or apathy or misconceptions. We entertain unfounded doubts (wehm) and nonsensical ideas, causing us difficulties. In actual fact, there may not be any problems but the situation may be a blessing and a cause of happiness – something to make shukr for and the basis for making abundant 'ibádat.

More on the rights of children

To continue with the topic of neglected rights:

Not fulfilling rights is also observed when it comes to the rearing and moral upbringing of children. So much so, that some parents beat their children like someone beating animals, or like one hammering the ceiling. If anybody tries to say something, the parents silence him by saying: “We are the parents! It is our choice!”

Remember very well: Being parents of children does not mean having ownership. That is why the parents cannot sell their children. The high status that the parents have been given is not for them to cause any difficulties for the children, but to see to their rearing and their comfort. Yes, for the sake of bringing comfort to them, it may be necessary to mete out some punishment and chastisement. There is permission for this. However, only that much of rebuke and punishment is permitted as would be an aid to the process of rectification and rearing, but not that much as would cause them difficulties.

For the parents to exceed the limits is indeed a sin. Additionally, it is

contrary to insániyet and natural instincts. Alláh Ta'álá has created a mother and father with the quality of rahmat (mercy). So, for them to exceed the limits is a sign of them being outside the fold of insániyet.

Similarly, some ustáds also beat their students excessively. The poor children are powerless and are beaten relentlessly at their hands. They scream and they sob but, unmoved, the ustáds carry on beating them. Most of them exceed the limits of punishment. Their objective really is not disciplining the children, but they merely give vent to their anger. They start brimming with anger, and they need to get it out of their system. This is plainly causing harm and it is open zulm. Additionally, this is not of any benefit in teaching, but is actually harmful, as is evidenced. The minds of the children develop bluntness and their hearts become weak. Whatever they have learnt they forget. This topic on the actions of the ustáds has come in incidentally, but it was necessary to mention it.

The discussion was on the theme of the position of the mother and father. Some rights rest on the parent in regard to their children: they have to rear them if they are still ná-báligh; and after becoming báligh, there are still some social rights that the children have. Even here, their rights are not fulfilled.

After the son is married, when his wife comes home and lives there, the boy's parents harass her on petty issues. The daughter-in-law, being young and inexperienced, also starts answering back, either in a suitable manner or a crude manner. So, the mother and father-in-law become even more infuriated, to such an extent that they now pressurise their son to issue a taláq to his wife. There is no basis for this according to the Sharí'at. They give this command to issue a taláq merely on the basis of thinking that they are older and that they are his parents and that they have rights on their son exceeding the limits; and on the basis of having a tremendous dislike and repugnance of, and excessive rage and fury over, his wife's minor indiscretions. This is also zulm and very clearly not já'iz. It is not wájib for the son to obey their orders and to issue a taláq.

Similarly, various types of excesses, zulm and injuries are committed by the rich on the poor, by the nobility on their subjects, by people of authority on their subordinates and employees. Those who are subordinates are not

personal servants and, therefore, it is absolutely not permissible to treat them like personal servants. For example: It is not permissible to get them to do your personal domestic work for you.

Precautionary methods to be employed to avoid oppressing others

The method of saving oneself from all these types of zulm and infliction of harms is the following: Whatever dealings one has with the next person, think as follows: “If I were in his situation, and he was in place, would I have liked to be treated in this manner?” In essence, the manner in which you would prefer others to attend and deal with you, that is the manner in which you should deal with your subordinates and employees. Also, think as follows: “That particular quality which I possess and which allows me to commit excesses and zulm on my subordinates and employees can be snatched from me.” At all times, Alláh Ta’álá has absolute power to snatch that blessing from whomsoever He wishes and whenever He wishes. Nobody can raise even the slightest objection. A Fársí couplet states:

True sovereignty and absolute rule, complete control and power, are His specific qualities. This is accepted by all. Nobody has the daring or power to question Him in the least of His edicts.

In any case, it does not take long for Alláh Ta’álá to change conditions. That is why one should not live a life of unconcern and without fear. Also, life in this world is but for a few days and will end very quickly. When this day comes, everything will come to an end: Family and friends; overseers and subordinates; rich and poor; rulers and ruled. On the basis of being the creation of Alláh Ta’álá, the whole of mankind will appear in the court of the King of kings, the Mighty, the Powerful, the Majestic, the Honourable. All dynasties will be destroyed and an announcement will be made:

لَمِنَ الْمُلْكِ الْيَوْمَ لِلّٰهِ الْوَاحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ

And whose is the sovereignty this day? It is Alláh’s, the One, the Mighty! (S.40.16.)

That is to say: Who is there today who has any kingdom (and who are there today who are its citizens)? It is for nobody! Today, the temporary, ephemeral dynasties and kingdoms of the world have terminated. Today, the all-encompassing kingdom only of Alláh, Wáhidul-Qahhár, is to be seen.

That is, today everybody is subjugated and in need. Everybody is present in His court of justice. Today is the day when all those who have been oppressed will be able to take revenge on their oppressors.

There, every oppressed person will present his or her case, without any hesitation, against the oppressors and those who usurped the rights of others. At that time, those who committed acts of oppression in the world, will have no one to help or assist. The friends, companions and colleagues of this world will be of absolute no help. Distancing themselves from him, they will state quite clearly, in today's terminology: "*We wash our hands off you!*"

Alláh Ta'álá's clear statement is as follows: (S.43.67.)

الْأَخْلَاءُ يَوْمَئِذٍ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ إِلَّا الْمُتَّقِينَ

Friends on that Day will be foes, one unto another, save those who are muttaqí.

That day, friends will oppose one another and will be enemies. The friendship of others will be of no use. Yes, those who associated for the sake of developing taqwá and piety, and in order to correct their Díní condition, will be of assistance to one another. They will be able to be of benefit one to the other.

That is why insán, by using his fleeting strengths, friends and companions, clannish and brotherhood forces and powers, should not cause difficulties and should not hurt the feelings of any individual or party by defaming or mocking or despising anybody; or by narrating their shortcomings and deficiencies. It is extremely necessary to abstain from this.

One should be continuously fearful of being seized by Alláh Ta'álá, and also be fearful of His wrath and chastisement. Also, one should remember one's death, the questioning and punishment in the qabr and Qiyámat – without doing this all the time, it is extremely difficult to save oneself from inflicting injury and zulm.

Thus, the objective of the Sharí'at of Islám is that the personality of the Muslim should be composed of such qualities and goodness that there is absolutely no evil in it. There should be no unjust difficulty or grief caused to any of the creation, including even animals.

So much so, in the Hadíth Sharíf it has been forbidden to hit or kill an

animal unjustly. Also forbidden is hitting an animal on its face or to brand it on its face, or to swear at it; or getting animals to fight one another, like arranging cock-fights. Even when killing venomous animals, one is forbidden to do so by torturing them in the process. So, even animals have been saved from being harmed.

If this is the case with animals, then no harm of any type should be caused especially to insán in general; and to a greater extent to Muslims specifically. There is a special focus on them by the Sharí'at.

اَلْمُسْلِمُ مِّنْ سَلَمٍ اَلْمُسْلِمُوْنَ مِنْ لِّسَانِهِ وَ يَدِهِ

So, in this Hadíth Sharíf the tongue and hand are mentioned, that other Muslims remain safe and sound from the harm of the tongue and the hand of a Muslim. These two have been stated because it is mostly through the agency of these two parts of the body especially that harm is caused. Also, in gaining benefit (husúle-manfa'at) and warding off harm (daf'a-e-mudharrat), the significant role that these two parts of the body play, is not played by other parts of the body. The tongue directly hurts the feelings of others and causes them grief. The hand causes physical and bodily harm, and financial loss to others. So, by means of these two parts of the body, all types of difficulties and harms are caused to others.

Greater zulm is caused by the tongue

The tongue is involved in many great tasks. Other parts of the body and the hand will get fatigued by toiling. They will get weak and they will pain. That is why they will stop what they are doing and postpone their tasks. However, the tongue can wag for hours on end. Even then, it shows no signs of weakness or fatigue. That is why the tongue is entrusted with many tasks. Also, wagging the tongue necessitates that excessive harms in large numbers will follow, whereas the tongue itself suffers no harm. However, its actions cause calamities to befall other parts of the body, other individuals, and these harms even reach other communities and other countries.

That is why it is stated in the Hadíth Sharíf that at the start of the day, every day, all the parts of the body humble themselves in front of the tongue, and say: "Huzúr! Your actions will not harm you in the least – you

are protected, surrounded by 32 (teeth). However, there is no mercy for us by your excessive, inappropriate and improper actions. We will be thoroughly oppressed.”

The difficulties caused by the tongue and the harms caused by the tongue are most severe. The effects are felt on the heart, and the effects are profound and severe. There is a famous saying: “All wounds will heal, but the wounds caused by the tongue do not heal.”

Just ponder: Very often, when a person uses his tongue to swear, and he uses harsh language, and he speaks out of turn, the opposite party will lift his hand. So, his lifting his hand, on many occasions, is caused by the other’s using the tongue. Possibly, this is the reason why mention of the tongue comes before mention of the hand in the Hadīth Sharīf under discussion. Whatever is of greater importance is given priority and is given preference. In any case, the evils of the tongue are multitude.

At times, even without speaking, the tongue will cause difficulties to others. A person will stick out his tongue in a rude manner just to provoke the next person. This is distasteful to this person and causes him to become angry.

By stating, “*bi-lisānihi*” a complete prohibition has been placed on the harms of the tongue. In essence, it means that, never mind saying something, even without speaking, as an act of provocation, no difficulties should be caused to anyone.

The evils and the calamities of the tongue are many. The more well-known evils are the following: Deceiving and defrauding; ghībat; tale-bearing; laying false accusations and blame; swearing and hurling abuse; taunting and cursing; mocking and ridiculing; arguing and debating; ordering evil or acts contrary to the Sharī’at; addressing others in an offensive manner or calling them offensive names; degrading and dishonouring others.

The remedy for this is as follows:

Remedy for avoiding sins committed by the tongue and the hand

When you think of something that you wish to say, then stop at least two to three seconds to think first and ask yourself: “Will my statements cause anybody any displeasure, difficulty or any kind of harm?” If you have even

the slightest apprehension or doubt that it would, then do not speak. In this manner, in-shá-Alláh Ta'álá, you will be saved from all the calamities of the tongue.

In a similar way, before you lift your hand and start using it, think to yourself: "Am I not lifting my hand to use it wrongly and unjustly against somebody's wealth or body?"

If you are writing something, ask yourself: "Am I not writing anything that will constitute a sin or something that is useless and redundant, or ghíbat, or hurtful, or a criticism? Am I not narrating the faults of somebody?"

If you have satisfied yourself that your actions or statements are not such as to cause grief and difficulty to insán, then ponder whether this action or speech or behaviour will not cause any difficulty to the malá'ikah or to Rasúlulláh ﷺ. The reason is that, twice every week, the actions of the entire ummat are presented to Rasúlulláh ﷺ. Therefore, when those of our actions which are contrary to the Sharí'at and the sunnat, are brought before Rasúlulláh ﷺ, then he will experience grief. Therefore all our actions and behaviour should be such as would make Rasúlulláh ﷺ happy. There should be not the slightest displeasure caused to him. For any shortcomings, by way of compensation, making taubah, showing remorse, and making abundant istighfár will cause Rasúlulláh ﷺ to remain happy.

It comes in the Hadíth Sharíf:

طُوْبُ بِي لِعَبْدٍ وَجَدَنِي صَحِيفَتِهِ اسْتِغْفَارًا كَثِيرًا

Congratulations to the servant who finds in his scroll abundant istighfár.

There will be tremendous goodness and good fortune for that bondsman who will be found to have an abundance of istighfár and taubah in his book of good deeds.

Living such a life is not impossible. Our Nabí Rasúlulláh ﷺ lived such a life and, thereby, set an example for us. Now, no one has any excuse. Alláh Ta'álá has Himself stated:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ

Verily, in the Messenger of Alláh you have a beautiful example. (S.33.21.)

I am now ending my wáz. Our duty is to present the haqq to you, whether it tastes bitter to some or sweet. I re-iterate that:

اَلْمُسْلِمُ مِّنْ سَلَمٍ اَلْمُسْلِمُوْنَ مِنْ لِّسَانِهِ وَ يَدِهِ

Keep this Hadíth Sharíf in front of you and you will find that your life in the dunyá will pass with peace and tranquillity; and, as for the ákhirat, there you will have benefit upon benefit.

Du'á

I am now terminating my bayán. Make du'á that Alláh Ta'álá grant us taufiq. We should adopt irádah and efforts in our Díní affairs, together with du'á.

وَمَا عَلَيْنَا إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ وَآخِرُ دَعْوَانَا أَنْ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

Khudá háfiz.



The series, ***For Friends*** is directed at those who wish to become the Friends of Alláh Ta'álá. This process is linked to undertaking a journey to Alláh Ta'álá, and is termed *Sulúk*. This "journey" involves looking at oneself and detecting any shortcomings within oneself. These shortcomings are then corrected stage by stage until that stage is reached where the individual is firmly connected to Alláh Ta'álá, this situation being termed Nisbat (connection with Alláh Ta'álá).

The ***For Friends*** series consists of discourses delivered by Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib رحمه الله عليه dealing with this subject of *Sulúk*. The reader will find that a very wide range of topics is discussed in any one discourse. *Sulúk* is not merely confined to making Zikr: As every aspect of a Muslims life has to be according to the tenents of Islam, the readers attention is drawn to various areas that are problematical, providing the solutions to the obsticals that the traveller along the path of *sulúk* may be facing along his journey. The approach adopted by Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib رحمه الله عليه has such an appeal that individuals from all over the world have benefitted from his discourses.

Published by:

Al-Namal Publications

P. O. Box 96185

Brixton 2019

South Africa

+27 11 837-5736

ISSN: 1019-2409

