

Irshaadul Mulook

SHAYKH AASHIQ ILAAHI MERATHI



A translation of Imdaadus Sulook – A detailed treatise
on Tasawwuf originally in the Farsi language by
Hadhrrat Shaykh Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi

Translated by:
Mujlisul Ulama of South Africa
P.O Box 3393, Port Elizabeth, 6056 South Africa

IRSHAADUL MULOOK

SHAIKH AASHIQ ILAAHI MERATHI

A translation of Imdaadus Sulook – A detailed treatise on
Tasawwuf originally in the Farsi language by
Hadhrrat Shaikh Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi
(Rahmatullah Alayh)

Translated By :
Mujlisul Ulama of South Africa
PO Box 3393
Port Elizabeth
6056 South Africa

PREFACE	III
INTRODUCTION	1
IRSHAADUL MULOOK	4
A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF MAULANA AASHIQ ILAAHI SAHIB	4
IMDAADUS SULOOK	9
RISAALAH MAKKIYYAH	15
SHARAH FAARSI	16
HADHRAT AQDAS HAAFIZ MUHAMMAD DHAAMIN SAAHIB SHAHEED (RAHMATULLAH ALAYH)	18
SAYYIDUT TAA-IFAH SHAIKHUL ARAB WAL AJAM HADHRAT HAAJI SAAHIB (RAHMATULLAH ALAYH)	30
INTRODUCTION OF IMDAADUS SULOOK	37
IRSHAADUL MULOOK THE TRANSLATION OF IMDAADUS SULOOK	42
FASL TWO	51
THE SHAIKH-E-KAAMIL	61
THE NECESSARY REQUISITES FOR THE SHAIKH	61
OBEDIENCE TO THE SHAIKH	67
FASL THREE	68
CONDITIONS FOR BIDAAYAT	73
THE FIRST REQUIREMENT	74
THE SECOND REQUIREMENT	75
THE THIRD REQUIREMENT	77
THE FOURTH REQUIREMENT	78
FASL EIGHT	97
REMEMBRANCE OF ALLAH	102
THE AADAAB AND CONDITIONS OF THIKR	108
THE SHAJARAH OF THE AUTHOR OF RISAALAH MAKKIYYAH	112
THE MUREED'S ATTITUDE	113
THE TYPES OF THIKR	115
THE SIX STAGES OF THIKR	121
THE SEVEN ATWAAR (STAGES)	121
HOW TO THWART SHAITAAN	124
FARHAT AND SUROOR	124
FASL NINE	134
THE KHAWAATIR	134
FASL TEN	142
FASL ELEVEN	143
FASL TWELVE	148

FASL THIRTEEN	150
IHTIRAAM-E-ZAAHIRI (OUTWARD RESPECT).....	154
THE BAATINI IHTIRAAM TO BE OBSERVED FOR THE SHAIKH	156
THE TIMES OF THIKR.....	156
FASL FOURTEEN	157
THE SIGN OF NOOR	158
CORRESPONDING EXISTENCES.....	159
THE SHAIKH.....	159
FASL FIFTEEN.....	163
DONNING THE KHIRQAH (MANTLE)	163
MANS BAATIN	164
FASL SIXTEEN	166
ADAB (RESPECT)	168
THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SUFIYA	169
MA'RIFAT	170
FASL SEVENTEEN	174
I'TIQAAD-E-SAHEEH	175
IMAAAN	176
KUFR	177
IBAADAT	185
HAQ.....	187
FASL EIGHTEEN	189
WISAAL.....	191
FASL NINETEEN	195
THE FOUR ELEMENTS (ANAASIR)	196
REVELATIONS.....	197
SPIRITUAL NOURISHMENT FOR NOVICES	201
A PLOY OF SHAITAAN.....	204
FASL TWENTY.....	209
SAHAABI AND TAA-BI-EEN.....	211
WILAAYAT	212
THE QUTB.....	213
FASL TWENTY ONE	215
CONCLUSION	218
MUSAA'S ROLLING IN THE DUST.....	219
BACKGROUND OF IRSHAADUL MULOOK.....	221



نحمده ونصلي علي رسوله الكريم

PREFACE

Irshaadul Mulook is a treatise on Tasawwuf. Tasawwuf is that branch of Islamic Knowledge which deals with self-purification and the attainment of Divine Proximity (Qurb-e-Ilaahi).

Although *Irshaadul Mulook* deals adequately with the initial phase of Tasawwuf, viz., self-purification which envisages the elimination of the evil attributes (Akhlaaq-e-Razeelah) and the cultivation of the lofty angelic qualities (Akhlaaq-e-Hameedah), its emphasis is on the second and higher stage of Tasawwuf, viz., Ser Fillaah or the Journey around the Zaat (Being) of Allah Ta'ala. This highest stage of Tasawwuf is the elevation or progress in the stages of Divine Proximity (Qurb-e-Ilaahi). The Slave of Allah soars in this stage from one lofty rank of Qurb to another, in an everlasting flight of progress. The elevation in the ranks of Qurb is never-ending. Allah Azza Wa Jal is The Eternal Being.

It must be stressed here that most people – laymen as well as Ulama – are incapable of comprehending many of the expositions recorded here in *Irshaadul Mulook*. Since the concept of Qurb-e-Ilaahi is inexplicable, human words cannot adequately convey what exactly the divine and spiritual stages of Qurb-e-Ilaahi are. Words fail to translate the experience, meaning and splendour of the stages in this Divine Journey of eternal Bliss. Imaam Ghazaali too had voiced his inability to describe this concept and said that the only way of discovering this Divine Reality is to enter the Path which leads to Divine Proximity.

We have to confess that in this age, there hardly remain any Mashaa-ikh of the calibre described in Irshaadul Mulook. The world is empty of such outstanding Auliya who dwell in the lofty realms of Ser Fillaah. The elevated stages of Fana, Baqa and Liqa mentioned and outlined in this treatise are not only inexplicable concepts nowadays, but remain mere theories for us to expound. The wholly inadequate explanation which men of our standing – unqualified in practical Tasawwuf of the higher stage – present to the public, is gleaned from the writings and teachings of the Mashaa-ikh. The need for stating our incompetence and inexperience in the higher stage of Tasawwuf, is for saving readers from the possible misunderstanding that the translators of this treatise are anywhere near to the ranks of those Auliya whose abode even here on earth was the Lofty Mansions of Divine Presence.

Although a considerable portion of the teachings expounded in this treatise will remain locked and hidden to most people, including the Ulama, there is a tremendous wealth of moral and spiritual benefit which the sincere seeker of Truth can gain from Irshaadul Mulook. Even the sections which appear inexplicable and confusing will provide some baatini illumination which in turn will aid the Mureed in his endeavour to purify himself from the evils of the bestial attributes of the Nafs.

Islaahun Nafs (Purification of the Nafs) is a Fardh (compulsory) duty on every Muslim just as Salaat and Saum are Fardh. This treatise will assist the sincere reader who is in the quest of Allah's Pleasure and Nearness, to go a long way in the Path of self-purification. May Allah Ta'ala save us all from the evil and mischief which lurk within our Nufoos.

MUJLISUL ULAMA OF SOUTH AFRICA
PO Box 3393
Port Elizabeth, 6056, South Africa

INTRODUCTION

From 1335 Hijri until 1385 Hijri, it has been the practice of this humble one to have his Qur'aanic recitation listened to from Asr to Maghrib. For ten years, from Ramadhaan 1344 until my Shaikh Hadhrat Aqdas Maulana Khalil Ahmad Sahib (rahmatullah alayh) resided in Sahaaranpur, Al-Haaj Haafiz Muhammad Husain Sahib, Naazim of Madrasah Ijaarah who was among the close associates of Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) and who had turned (for spiritual guidance) to Hadhrat Sahaaranpuri after the demise of Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh), would come to Sahaaranpur every Ramadhaan to be in the company of Hadhrat. After Zuhr he would listen to the Para (one Juz) of my Hadhrat (rahmatullah alayh) and after Asr he would listen to my Para.

On the 16th Shawwaal 1344 Hijri, Hadhrat Aqdas (rahmatullah alayh) departed for Makkah Muazzamah. I too accompanied him. After staying there for a year, I returned in Muharram 1346 Hijri. After my return, several friends rendered me the favour of listening to my Qur'aan recital. Even during the extreme heat they continued with this favour. For almost twenty five years the honourable Al-Haaj Mufti Muhammad Yahya and his brother, Al-Haaj Molvi Muhammad Ilyaas Sahib affectionately undertook the responsibility of listening to my Qur'aan after Asr.

For approximately thirty years some friends continued coming to spend Ramadhaan here. They too would participate in listening to the Qur'aan-e-Majeed after Asr. Although I had repeatedly requested them to involve themselves in their *auraad* (forms and practices of thikr), they nevertheless, continued listening to the Qur'aan out of love. However, in view of the fact that I recited according to the *Ajami* (non-Arab) style, I did not consider their participation in listening to my recital of much benefit. Since the past two or three years more people than the usual estimate began arriving. Last year the number exceeded two hundred and by the end of Ramadhaanul Mubaarak this year, the number was in excess of three hundred and fifty.

Even last year the idea of introducing something beneficial for these people, repeatedly came to mind. However, I could not devise anything in this regard. But, this year it dawned on me that the books, *Imdaadus Sulook* and *Itmaamun Ni'am* would be very beneficial, especially for the *Thaakireen* (those engaging in Thikr).

Imdaadus Sulook is the work of Shaikhul Mashaa-ikh, Qutbul Aqtaab, Hadhrat Aqdas Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh), but it is in the Farsi language. During that age, Farsi was considered to be the mother-tongue of the middle-class. When Farsi was no longer generally understood, Hadhrat Maulana Ashiq Ilaahi Sahib Meerati (rahmatullah alayh) translated it into Urdu and titled it *Irshaadul Mulook*. In the same way as Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) derived *barkat* by naming, *Imdaadus Sulook* after his Murshid, Al-Haaj Imdaadullah Muhaajir Makki (rahmatullah alayh). Hadhrat Meerati sought *barkat* from the name of Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh), hence he designated his translation *Irshaadul Mulook*.

Itmaamun Ni'am is the Urdu translation of *Tabweebul Hikam* which was translated by my Murshid, Maulana Khalil Ahmad Sahib (rahmatullah alayh) on the instructions of Shaikhul Mashaa-ikh, Hadhrat Haaji Imdaadullah (rahmatullah alayh). This is confirmed in the undermentioned comments of Hadhrat Aqdas Hakeemul Ummat Maulana Ashraf Ali (rahmatullah alayh). These comments (of Hadhrat Hakeemul Ummat) appear in the beginning of *Itmaamun Ni'am*. In view of *Itmaamun Ni'am* being a concise treatise, Hadhrat Maulana Abdullah Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh), the Khalifah Majaaz of Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Ahmad Sahib (rahmatullah alayh), acting on the instructions of his Shaikh (Hadhrat Khalil Ahmad) prepared an exegesis of it (*Itmaamun Ni'am*). The exegesis is titled *Ikmaalush Shiyam*. Maulana Abdullah Sahib (rahmatullah alayh), himself, confirms this in the preface of his treatise.

This humble one advises and stresses to his *thaakireen* friends (engaging in abundant thikr) that they should study, especially *Imdaadus Sulook* and *Itmaamun Ni'am*. *Irshaadul Mulook* and

Ikmaalush Shiyam are the Urdu translation and exegesis respectively of these two treatises. They are in the same category as these two books (viz. *Imdaadus Sulook* and *Itmaamun Ni'am*). Hadhrat Shaikhul Islam, Maulana Al-Haaj Sayyid Husain Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh) also emphasised the study of *Imdaadus Sulook* to his close associates. I too view the study of these two treatises highly beneficial for the *thaakireen*. I, therefore, stress to those friends who are related to me by way of Bay't (spiritual allegiance), to diligently study my books of *Fadhaa-il* (significance and excellences). To the *thaakireen* I emphasise especially to study *Irshaadul Mulook* and *Ikmaalush Shiyam*. For those who I have authorised Bay't (i.e. appointed them as khalifas), the treatise, *Tarbiyatus Saalik* by Hadhrat Aqdas Hakeemul Ummat Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh) and *Makaateeb-e-Rashidiyyah*, the epistles of Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh), are highly beneficial.

IRSHAADUL MULOOK

Irshaadul Mulook is the translation of Imdaadus Sulook which is the work of Qutbul Alam Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh). The original treatise is in the Farsi language which was the language understood generally at that time. When people no longer understood this language, Hadhrat Maulana Al-Haaj Ashiq Ilaahi Meerati (rahmatullah alayh) translated it (Imdaadus Sulook) into simple Urdu during the month of Shawwaal of the year 1332 Hijri.

(Apparently these are the comments of Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi – rahmatullah alayh – which were referred to earlier. – Translator.)

A brief Account of Maulana Aashiq Ilaahi Sahib

In *Al-Jawaahiriz Zawaahir*, the Urdu translation of *Al-Basaa-ir*, Hadhrat Maulana Ashiq Ilaahi (rahmatullah alayh), himself, describes in detail his early life which I recount here briefly.

His family tree is: Ashiq Ilaahi, the son of Yaad Ilaahi, the son of Rahm Ilaahi, the son of Fadhl Ilaahi. He was born on Friday, 5th Rajab in the year 1298 Hijri corresponding with 3rd June 1881 CE. At the age of four he commenced with *Alif, baa* (the Arabic Alphabet). At the age of 6 years he had learnt the recitation (naazirah) of the Qur'aan Shareef as well as some Urdu books. He could by this time fluently read newspapers. In the year 1305 Hijri he began the study of Arabic. Thereafter he acquired education for two years in an English medium school. In this way, pursuing education variously, he finally was admitted to the Madrasah in Meerat in Jamaadith Thaani 1311 Hijri at the age of 13 years. From the beginning, the study of *Mizaan* (a primary Arabic grammar text book), etc. was commenced. In the year 1312 Hijri *Mishkaat* began. This was a mere ten months after having started the Arabic course. Within two years he completed all the Sahih Books of Hadith and other Books of Deenyat. Hadhrat Maulana Meer Hasan Amrohi (rahmatullah alayh) rendered the *Dastaarbandi* (the graduation ceremony in which the turban is tied on the head of

the student graduating as an Alim Faadhill). He was 16 years at that time.

His first marriage was in Rabiuth-Thaani 1315. In the same year during the month of Rajab, he left for Lahore.

On the 4th Muharram 1316 Hijri he left for Lahore to collect his prize for having been an outstanding student. Along the route he stopped at Gangoh and was initiated as the mureed of Hadhrat Qutbul Alam Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh). He stayed over one night and then left for Lahore. On his return he accepted a post at Nadwatul Ulama in 1317 Hijri. Thus on 26th Muharram 1317 he was employed at Nadwah for a monthly salary of 25 rupees as an Ustadh in Darul Uloom Nadwah. However, on account of climatic conditions and the displeasure of the *Akhaabir* (senior Ulama), he resigned and returned at the end of Rajab. During the month of Safar 1318, he obtained a loan and opened a printing house, naming it *Khairul Mata-bi'*. While doing commercial printing he involved himself in the translation of Kitaabs.

The first translation he rendered was that of the Qur'aan Majeed in simple Urdu. In 1319 Hijri the first edition was printed and sold out quickly. A second edition was printed in 1320. He simultaneously printed his work, *Al-Islam*. The sales of this book were so successful that he was able to pay the loan which he had acquired to start his printing venture. Meanwhile, Hajj also became Fardh on him.

On the 17th Rajab 1321 Hijri he left for Hajj with his mother. After Hajj he was unable to proceed to Madinah Munawwarah because of political disturbances. During Muharram 1322 he returned from Hajj and continued with his printing trade. In Shawwaal 1323 he performed Hajj-e-Badl on behalf of his father. He returned from the Hajj journey in Rabiul Awwal 1324.

In 1326 he published *Tathkiratur Rashid*. During 1326 when Maulana Shah Abdur Rahim Raipuri (rahmatullah alayh) and Hadhrat Aqdas Maulana Khalil Ahmad Sahaaranpuri (rahmatullah alayh) embarked for Hajj, he suddenly decided to accompany them. In this same journey he visited Syria, Palestine and Egypt.

In the year 1333, he prepared and published this treatise, viz. *Irshaadul Mulook*, the translation of *Imdaadus Sulook*.

On 22nd Muharram 1337 his first wife passed away. She left three sons and two daughters. In Rabiul Awwal of the same year he married again. On 21st Shawwaal 1341 he went on his fourth Hajj with his second wife. He returned in Rabiul Awwal 1342. In Zil Qa'dh 1342 he left for his fifth Hajj. After Hajj he proceeded to Egypt to purchase printing equipment. After returning to Hindustan, he printed *Jam'ul Fawaaidh*. This information was extracted from *Al-Jawaahir*.

During the year 1346 Hijri when Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh) had decided to take up permanent residence in Madinah Munawwarah, he nominated three candidates for the selection of a rector for Madrasah Mazaahirul Uloom. The candidates were: Hadhrat Aqdas Maulana Shah Abdul Qadir Raipuri, Hadhrat Maulana Ashiq Ilaahi Meerati and Al-Haaj Shaikh Rashid Ahmad Meerati (later Pakistani). These august personalities remained as the overseers of Mazaahirul Uloom until the end of their lives.

Despite considerable pressure of work, Hadhrat Meerati (rahmatullah alayh) attended to the affairs of Mazaahirul Uloom with great enthusiasm and diligence. Regarding it as a memory of his Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh), he applied himself with such zeal to the affairs of Mazaahird Uloom that he repeatedly visited the Madrasah. He would also sit in the classes where the Mudarriseen (teachers) imparted lessons. He carefully scrutinised the financial records of the Madrasah since he was well-versed in book-keeping and examined the treasury. During the course of the year he would make numerous appearances, sometimes having been called and sometimes arriving suddenly without prior notification.

Towards the end of 1338 Hijri he left for his sixth Hajj. He returned on 20th Muharram 1339 from Hijaaz.

In *Al-Jawaahir*, Hadhrat Meerati (rahmatullah alayh) mentioned his five Hajj. Thereafter I recall one more Hajj. It is possible that Maulana may have performed another Hajj which I cannot recall.

Maulana was highly intelligent, exceptionally wise, witty and possessed a benign disposition. However, evil angered him

profoundly. Sometimes his anger for evil would engender in him harshness. Initially he was *bay't* to Hadhrat Aqdas Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh). After the demise of Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh), Maulana Meerati (rahmatullah alayh) turned towards Hadhrat Aqdas Maulana Khalil Ahmad Sahaaranpuri (rahmatullah alayh) from whom he later acquired *khilafat* to initiate mureedeen.

After the demise of Hadhrat Aqdas Sahaaranpuri (rahmatullah alayh), he compiled the biography of his second Murshid in the same way as he had written the biography of his first Shaikh. He named the biography of Hadhrat Khalil Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh), Tadhkaratul Khalil. In this biography he briefly narrates the lives of Hadhrat Maulana Muzaffar Husain Sahib Khandalwi, Shaikhul Hind Hadhrat Maulana Mahmudul Hasan Sahib, Hadhrat Aqdas Shah Abdur Rahim Sahib Raipuri, Hadhrat Maulana Siddique Ahmad Sahib Ambethwi and Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Yahya Sahib Khandalwi (rahmatullah alayhim).

Besides these, there are also other well-known works of Maulana.

On 1st Sha'baan 1360 Hijri (25th August 1941) at 6 a.m. on Monday, Maulana passed away. He was interred at about 4 p.m. in the family qabrستان which was in close proximity to his home.

A wonderful event occurred on the occasion of his demise. Hadhrat Aqdas Maulana Abdul Qadir Sahib Raipuri (rahmatullah alayh) had returned to Sahaaranpur after a journey. He said to me (Hadhrat Zakariyya Sahib):

“News of Hadhrat Meerati’s severe illness is being heard. I intend to visit Meerat before going to Raipur provided that you also accompany me.”

I accepted. It was decided to first spend Sunday in Deoband in the service of Hadhrat Aqdas Madani (rahmatullah alayh) and then depart for Meerat on Monday morning. Accordingly, we spent Sunday in Deoband. On Monday morning when permission to leave for Meerat was requested from Hadhrat Madani (rahmatullah alayh) he said:

“Today is Aqiqah. I shall have a goat slaughtered immediately. After eating you may leave.”

Anyhow, whether it is a miracle of Hadhrat Meerati or of Hadhrat Raipuri, we nevertheless, sought permission and left (i.e. before participating in the Aqiqah feast) for Meerat. On our arrival in Meerat we learnt that Hadhrat Meerati (rahmatullah alayh) had passed away at 6 o'clock that morning. A telegram had already been sent to Sahaaranpur notifying of Hadhrat's demise. A second telegram had also been despatched requesting my presence for the Janazah Salaat because Hadhrat Meerati (rahmatullah alayh) had made a *wasiyyat* for this humble one to lead his Janazah Salaat. A telegram had also been sent to Deoband notifying Hadhrat Madani (rahmatullah alayh) of Hadhrat Meerati's demise. On our arrival, the Janazah was ready in the Musjid which was adjacent to the house. A large crowd had gathered. At this juncture the regret which I felt for having been unable to abide by the request of Hadhrat Madani (rahmatullah alayh) was cleared. Later, Hadhrat Aqdas Madani (rahmatullah alayh) also confirmed the correctness of our having departed (i.e. before participating in the Aqiqah feast).

Hadhrat Meerati (rahmatullah alayh) had written a number of books. Besides being within the grasp of general understanding, the Deeni content and exceptionally high standard were very beneficial. Alas! All his books are out of print. This treatise, *Irshaadul Mulook* is also his work. May Allah Jalle Shaanuhu grant its benefit to the readers. May Allah Ta'ala award the thawab of the readers to the holy soul of Hadhrat Meerati (rahmatullah alayh) and to his Murshid Qutbul Alam Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) and may Allah's mercy cascade in abundance on these illustrious souls. The original kitaab and its translation are highly beneficial to the *Saalikeen* (those journeying along the spiritual path).

اللّٰهُ يُوَفِّقُنَا لِمَا يَحِبُّ وَيَرْضَىٰ

“May Allah grant us the Taufeeq for that which He loves and (with which) he is pleased.”

IMDAADUS SULOOK

This treatise which is the Farsi translation of a few sections of *Risaalah Makkiyyah*, is the work of Qutbul Alam, Qutbul Irshaad, Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh). A comprehensive biography, *Tathkaratur Rashid*, of Hadhrat (rahmatullah alayh) was published by Hadhrat Maulana Ashiq Ilaahi (rahmatullah alayh) in two volumes. A third volume, *Makaatib-e-Rashidiyyah* is a compilation of letters which Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) wrote to his Murshid and to his Mureedeen. These letters are, in fact, a treasure of great significance. Whoever wishes to study in depth the life of Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh), should read *Tathkaratur Rashid*.

I, too, have recorded a brief life-sketch of Hadhrat in Arabic in my kitaab, *Aujuzul Masaalik* which is a Sharah or *Explanation* of Muattae-Imaam Maalik as well as in *Laamiud-duraari alaa Jaamiul Bukhaari*.

Hadhrat Aqdas Maulana Al-Haaj Rashid Ahmad Ibn Maulana Hidaayat Ahmad Ibnul Qaadhi Al-Ayyubi Ansaari was born on 6th Zil Qa'dh 1244 Hijri on a Monday in the town of Gangoh. His father had died in 1252 Hijri when Hadhrat was seven years old. His father, Maulana Hidaayat Ahmad Sahib was among the senior Ulama. He was an authority of both the Shariat and Tareeqat and he was among the Khulafa of Hadhrat Shah Ghulaam Ali Mujaddidi Naqshbandi. Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) had studied the elementary Farsi text books under his elder brother, Maulana Inaayat Ahmad Sahib as well as under his maternal uncle, Maulana Muhammad Taqi Sahib. He learnt the primary Arabic text books in Rampur which is in the district of Sahaaranpur. Thereafter, he went to Delhi in 1261 Hijri to pursue higher knowledge. At this stage he was studying *Hidaayatun Nahw* (an Arabic grammar text book), etc. In Delhi he acquired higher knowledge under several Ustads. The greater part of the Arabic sciences was studied under Hadhrat Maulana Mamluk Ali Nanotwi (rahmatullah alayh) who at the time was at the famous Arabic College of Delhi.

Hadhrat Aqdas Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) would recite *Qaadhi, Sadrus Shams Baazigah*, etc. in the presence of his Ustadh, Maulana Mamluk Ali just as a Haafiz would recite the Qur'aan. Some kitaabs in logic and philosophy were studied under the famous Allamah Mufti Sadruddin (rahmatullah alayh). He studied all Hadith Kitaabs by Shaikhul Mashaa-ikh Hadhrat Shah Abdul Ghani Mujaddidi Naqshbandi.

His engrossment in his studies left him only seven hours a day for his other activities (such as eating, Salaat, sleeping, etc.) This meant that he daily devoted 17 hours to his studies.

At the age of 21 years, after having completed his academic studies, Hadhrat Aqdas (rahmatullah alayh) returned to his hometown, Gangoh where he involved himself in teaching. The subjects, Nahw(Arabic grammar), Ma-aani(Eloquence), Fiqh (Jurisprudence), Tafseer(Exegesis) and Hadith were his permanent occupations and this remained so until and end of 1300 Hijri. From the beginning of 1301 Hijri his occupation was confined to only teaching Hadith. He alone taught all Kitaabs of the Sihaah Sitta (the six most authentic books of Hadith). The teaching commenced during the month of Shawwaal and during Sha'baan all six Kitaabs of Hadith would be completed.

In about 1266 Hijri, Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) went to Thanabovan for some work. By the intercession of Hadhrat Haafiz Muhammad Dhaamin Shaheed (rahmatullah alayh), Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) became the mureed of Shaikhul Mashaa-ikh Hadhrat Al-Haaj Imdaadullah Muhaajir-e-Makki (rahmatullah alayh). This episode is recorded in detail in *Tathkaratur Rashid*. The intention was to stay a day or two in Thanabovan. However, Allah Ta'ala had willed Hadhrat to also acquire the lofty ranks of Sulook, hence, the stay was prolonged for 40 days. On the seventh day after having taken bay't, Hadhrat Imdaadullah Sahib (rahmatullah alayh) appointed him a khalifa and authorised him to initiate mureedeen. This significant account is recorded in detail in the first volume of *Tathkaratur Rashid*. Thereafter, he returned to Gangoh.

Those having an association with me should study in depth *Tazkaratul Khalil* and *Tazkaratur Rashid*. Both these books are of great significance. In *Tazkaratur Rashid*, Volume 2 is recorded a wonderful episode of a test by Hadhrat Haaji Imdaadullah Saahib (rahmatullah alayh). During his 40 day stay in Thanabovan, Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) was put to test by Hadhrat Haaji Imdaadullah (rahmatullah alayh). Regarding this test, Hadhrat Aqdas Maulana Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) said:

“After a few days in Thanabovan, I did not deem it proper to impose the burden of my food expenses on Hadhrat Haaji Imdaadullah Saahib (rahmatullah alayh). I thought that to make other arrangements for my food elsewhere would be difficult and improper as well. I therefore, requested permission to leave. However, Hadhrat did not consent and said that I should remain for another few days. I then maintained silence. Although I had decided to stay, I also resolved to make other arrangements for my food. Shortly afterwards, A’laa Hadhrat (Haaji Imdaadullah Saahib) prepared to leave for home. As he was about to leave, he said to me:

‘Rashid Ahmad, don’t be perturbed about food. Eat with us’.

During the afternoon two bowls of food arrived from his home. One bowl contained delicious kebaab and the other bowl had a simple type of gravy. A’laa Hadhrat instructed me to join in the meals. But he separated the bowl with the kebaab, keeping it near to him. He moved the gravy bowl towards me. We began eating. Meanwhile, Hadhrat Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib (rahmatullah alayh) entered. On seeing the bowl of kebaab out of my reach, he turned to A’laa Hadhrat and said: ‘Brother, Rashid Ahmad will be inconvenienced if he has to stretch his hand for the kebaab. Why don’t you put the kebaab near to him?’

A’laa Hadhrat (rahmatullah alayh) replied:

‘His mere sitting here with me is a boon for him. In fact, I had intended to give him a piece of bread and have him sitting like a slave in one corner.’

On making this statement, A’laa Hadhrat (rahmatullah alayh) glanced at my face to ascertain if I had taken offence. Al-hamdulillah! This comment did not affect me. I had understood

that, in all truth, whatever Hadhrat had said was the reality. In fact, receiving even a piece of bread from his court is a great boon regardless of the manner in which it is obtained. After this occasion, Hadhrat never again tested me.”

In short, Hadhrat Maulana Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) returned from Thanabovan to Gangoh with the Mantle of Khilaafat. He permanently settled in Gangoh. Night and day he was occupied with dars, tadrees, iftaa and reforming those committed to Sulook. Numerous people acquired from Hadhrat benefits in both Uloom-e-Zaahiriyyah (academic knowledge of the Shariah) and Uloom-e-Baatiniyyah (Tasawwuf).

A letter written by Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) in reply to a letter by Hadhrat Haaji Saahib (rahmatullah alayh) in which he requested information about the haalaat (spiritual and moral conditions) of Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh), is reproduced here verbatim:

“O my refuge of both worlds! You have requested information about the haalaat of this useless one. What can this non-entity present of his insignificant conditions in the presence of the Fountain of excellence and perfection? (This is a reference to Hadhrat Haaji Saahib). By Allah! I am highly ashamed. I am nothing. But on account of Hadhrat’s instruction, I am constrained to write something, Hadhrat Murshid! Regarding the condition (haal) of Ilm-e-Zaahiri, in the period of approximately more than seven years since I have departed from your august presence, until this year, more than 200 have qualified in Hadith. The majority of them have initiated dars (the profession of imparting Deeni Knowledge) and they are active in the revival of the Sunnah. They have been responsible for the dissemination of the Deen. There is no greater honour than this honour if it is accorded Divine acceptance.

In a nutshell, the fruit of my presence in Hadhrat’s service is that my heart is not concerned with either benefit or harm from anyone besides Allah Ta’ala. Wallah! Sometimes I am separated from my Mashaa-ikh, hence I am not concerned with the praise or

criticism of anyone. I regard both the one who praises me and the one who criticize me to be distant from me.

I have developed a natural dislike for sin and a natural inclination for obedience. This effect is due solely to that relationship (nisbat) which has reached me from the spiritual effulgence of Hadhrat.

To say more will be disrespectful.

May Allah forgive that I be a liar, for I have written on the instruction of Hadhrat. In reality I am nothing. It is only Your shadow – only Your existence. What am I? I am nothing. Only He is. You and me are shirk upon shirk. Astaghfirullah! Astaghfirullah! Astaghfirullah! Wala haula wala quwwata illa billah. Kindly absolve me from saying more.

Wasalaam. 1306 Hijri.”

This letter of Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) to his Shaikh and Murshid was in the year 1306 Hijri. Hadhrat passed away in 1323 Hijri. The lofty state of spiritual elevation which Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) had reached in these seventeen years may be gauged from the formidable array of Ulama who were among his Mureedeen (disciples) and Majaazeen (Khulafa). Among thirty great names, the following are a few: Hadhrat Aqdas Maulana Khalil Ahmad Sahaaranpuri (Muhaajir-e-Madani), Hadhrat Aqdas Shaikhul Hind Deobandi, Qutbul Atqiya Hadhrat Abdur Rahim Raipuri and Shaikhul Islam Hadhrat Madani (rahmatullah alayhim). A brief life-sketch of these personalities is given in *Tazkaratur Rashid*.

Hadhrat Aqdas Maulana Al-Haaj Muhammad Ilyas (rahmatullah alayh), the founder of Tabligh Nizaamuddin is the khalifah of Hadhrat Sahaaranpuri (rahmatullah alayh), the first among the khulafa of Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh).

The process of Ta’leem-e-Zaahiri and Baatini continued by Hadhrat Aqdas Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) until the end of 1313

Hijri. From the beginning of 1314 Hijri, the time which was allocated for Ilm-e-Zaahiri was also devoted for *Tasfiyah-e-Quloob*, (adornment of the hearts) and tazkiyah-e-Nufoos (purification of the nufoos) because he had lost his eyesight.

On Friday 8th Jamaadith Thaani 1323 Hijri, at the time of the Fajr Athaan he bade farewell to this lowly material world. Among the favours of Allah Jalle-Shaanuhu bestowed to Hadhrat, was the rank of *Shahaadat* as well. A very large and highly poisonous snake yearning to kiss the holy feet of Hadhrat, bit his foot during Tahajjud Salaat. However, on account of Hadhrat's total *istighraaq* (absorption) in Salaat, he remained unaware of the snake-bite. When Hadhrat set out for Fajr Salaat in the early morning light, his khuddaam noticed his foot and trousers soaked in blood. It was only then that Hadhrat realised what had happened. He thus acquired the rank of *shahaadat* as is stated in the Hadith (viz. one who dies by snake-bite attains martyrdom).

The episode of the snake-bite happened during the night of the 12th or 13th Jamaadil Awwal 1323 and he passed away on the 8th or 9th of Jamaadith Thaani 1323. According to some people, Hadhrat had died as a result of sihr (magic), hence every treatment was to no avail.

“When the appointed time of Allah arrives, it cannot be delayed.”

May Allah elevate his ranks and may Allah brighten his grave.

Hadhrat Aqdas Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) had written a khutbah at the beginning of *Imdaadus Sulook*. Hadhrat Maulana Ashiq Ilaahi Meerathi (rahmatullah alayh) had deleted it for the sake of brevity. At the end of the translation, a brief reference is made thereof in the section captioned: ‘A Request from the Translator’.

RISAALAH MAKKIYYAH

Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) translated a few *fasls* (sections) of the treatise, (*Risaalah Makkiyyah*, naming it (i.e. the translation) *Imdaadus Sulook*. *Risaalah Makkiyyah* is the work of Shaikhul Mashaa-ikh Shaikh Qutbuddin (rahmatullah alayh). Alas! Until now I have been unable to find a detailed account of the life of Hadhrat Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh). In *Kashfuz-Zunoon* it appears that *Ar-Risaalatul Makkiyyah* is the work of Imaam Qutbuddin Abdullah Bin Muhammad Bin Aiman al-Asfahidi. The Faarsi *sharah* (of *Risaalah Makkiyyah*) says that *Risaalayah Makkiyyah* is the writing of Shaikh Qutbuddin Damashqi (rahmatullah alayh). In the Faarsi *sharah* (explanatory composition), the following appears:

“I have written this book in Makkah – May Allah honour it (i.e. Makkah).”

From this it is learnt that the name, *Rasaalah Makkiyyah*, was adopted because it was commenced in Makkah Mukarramah. It is also learnt from the *sharah* that the honourable author while having commenced the treatise in Makkah Mukarramah, added to it and checked it in Damascus.

Copies of this treatise were not available in the popular libraries. However, two copies are present in the library at Aligarh University. At the end of one copy, the name of the author is written: Shaikh Qutbuddin Ad-Damashqi As-Suharwardi Al-Kubradi.

During the time of Shaikh Qutbuddin, the teaching of *Risaalah Makkiyyah* was given considerable prominence by a famous *buzrug* (saint), Hadhrat Jalaaluddin Bukhaari who was well-known by the name Jahaaniya Jahaa' Gasht (died 785 Hijri). His *Malfoozaat* compiled by someone and titled, *Malfoozul Makhdoom* whose Urdu translation, *Ad-Durrul Manthoom*, was published in 1209 Hijri by Ansaari Publishers of Delhi, also mentions *Risaalah Makkiyyah* several times. In the *Malfoozaat* it is also said:

“Risaalah Makkiyyah was given to me by the author himself.”

The *Malfoozaat* also mention that when Shaikh Makkah Abdullah Ta’fi and Shaikh Madinah Abdullah Mutri were about to die, they instructed their sons to go to Shaikh Qutbuddin Damashqi, the author of *Risaalah Makkiyyah*, to pursue Sulook. The *Malfoozaat* also cite copiously the subject matter of *Risaalah Makkiyyah*. In one *malfooz* it is mentioned that while Makdoom Saahib was imparting a lesson of *Risaalah Makkiyyah*, he commented:

“This is a beautiful treatise. In Makkah Mukarramah, the seekers of the spiritual path would recite it in the presence of Shaikh Makkah Abdullah Ya’fi. Duaago listened to the recitation. He could not afford buying paper to write it. His listening was beneficial at the time. On completion of the treatise, Shaikh Qutbuddin Damashqi sent it to Duaago.”

The year of Shaikh Qutbuddin’s death is not recorded in *Kashfuz-Zunoon*. However, in the biography of Makhdoom Jahaa’ Gasht it is mentioned that according to Makhdoom Saahib, Qutbuddin Damashqi passed away in 780 Hijri.

SHARAH FAARSI

(The Faarsi explanatory commentary of *Risaalah Makkiyyah*)

The written Faarsi manuscript of *Risaalah Makkiyyah* is present in the library of Mazaahirul Uloom. This *Sharah* of 824 pages is the work of Shaikh Sa’d Bin Budhan Ibn Shaikh Muhammad of Khairabaad. This is mentioned in the beginning and at the end of the *Sharah*. He was among the illustrious Auliya-e-Kaamileen of his age. The following description of him is given on page 78 of *Nazhatul Khawaatif*:

“Ash-Shaikhul Alimul Kabeer Allaamah Sa’duddin Ibnul Qaadhi Budhan Ibn Shaikh Muhammadul Qidwail Anaami Al-Khairaabaadi, one of the Ulama renowned in Nahw, Arabic, Usoolul Fiqh and Tasawwuf.”

His father was the Qaadhi of Khariaabaad, who died during the infancy of Shaikh Sa'd. He was brought up and trained by his mother. After having completed Hifz and Uloom-e-Zaahiriyyah, he acquired the Knowledge of Sulook and Tariqat from Shaikh Shaah Meena Lucknowi. He remained in the service of his Shaikh for 20 years. After the demise of his Shaikh, he remained for a considerable time in Lucknow fulfilling the function of spiritual instruction in the place of his Shaikh. Thereafter he relocated to Khairaabaad where he established a very large khaanqah.

He is the author of many books. Of these, the following five are mentioned in *Nuzhah: Sharah Bazdawi, Sharah Hussaami, Sharah Kaafiyah, Sharah Misbaah and Sharah Risaalah Makkiyyah*. In this *Sharah* he has narrated in abundance the statements of his murshid Shaikh Meena. He died in 882 Hijri.

A description of his Shaikh Meena is given in detail in *Nazhatul Khawaatir*. His great and stupendous acts of *Mujahadaat* are also mentioned. He was *Saa-imud Dahr* (fasting perpetually) and *Qaa-imul Lail* (spending the nights in Ibaadat). He would make dua for his persecutors. He died on 23 Thil-Qa'dh 873 Hijri. Different versions of the date of his death have been given.

In the Faarsi *Sharah*, he named his *Sharah, Majma-us Sulook Wal Fa-waa-id*. It is mentioned in the *Sharah* that someone enquired from Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh):

“What benefit does a mureed acquire from the *malfoozaat* and *hikaayat* of the Shaikh?”

Hadhrat Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh) said that the benefits were firmness of the heart, steadfastness in mujahadaat and renewal of the pledge of allegiance made with the Mashaa-ikh. The enquirer asked for Qur'aanic proof. Hadhrat Junaid presented the aayat:

“We rehearse to you the stories of the Rasul, which make firm your heart.”

The Akaabir have said that the statements of the Mashaa-ikh are an army among the armies of Allah. Thus, when shaitaan creates a doubt during the process of mujaahadah, then refer to the statements of the Mashaa-ikh. By so doing, shaitaan will be thwarted and he will not gain the opportunity of deceiving one. In this way one will be saved from the waswasah (evil whisperings) of shaitaan.

HADHRAT AQDAS HAAFIZ MUHAMMAD DHAAMIN SAAHIB SHAHEED (RAHMATULLAH ALAYH)

Imdaadus Sulook was written on the instruction of Hadhrat Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib (rahmatullah alayh). This is mentioned in the introduction of *Imdaadus Sulook*. On the intercession of Hadhrat Dhaamin Saahib, Hadhrat Qutbul Alam Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) was accepted as a mureed by A'laa Hadhrat Haaji Saahib (rahmatullah alayh). The detailed story of this episode is recorded in the first volume of *Tazkaratur Rashid* in the chapter dealing with the pursuit of Sulook and Tariqat by Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh).

Hadhrat Dhaamin Saahib (rahmatullah alayh) was the Peer-Bhai (spiritual brother-being bay't to the same Shaikh) of Hadhrat Haaji Saahib (rahmatullah alayh). He was also among the most senior khulafa of Shaikhul Mashaa-ikh Hadhrat Mia'nji Nur Muhammad Janjaanwi (rahmatullah alayh).

He was a man of great piety, a recipient of kashf (divine inspiration), a man of karaamaat (miracles) and extremely polite in disposition. His hometown was Thanabovan in the district of Muzaffarnagar. In the 1857 Mutiny (against the British Raaj) he participated in the Jihaad together with Hadhrat Haaji Saahib, Hadhrat Gangohi Saahib and Hadhrat Nanotwi Saahib and other seniors. In fact, he was among those in the forefront and was martyred in this campaign. About this episode it is mentioned in the first volume of *Tazkaratur Rashid* that, along with Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) having a very close khaadim-mureed relationship with A'laa Hadhrat (Hadhrat Haaji Saahib), he also

cherished a sincere and strong affection for Hadhrat Dhaamin Saahib (rahmatullah alayh). Similarly, Hadhrat Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib (rahmatullah alayh) also had a strong bond of affection with Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh).

In this furious battle, Hadhrat Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib called Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) and said to him:

“Rashid! When my life is departing, ensure that you are with me.”

A short while later, Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib was struck by a bullet. As he fell, a fountain of blood gushed from his body. As Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib (rahmatullah alayh) was about to collapse, Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) leapt to his side and supported Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib with his body. Lifting Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib on his shoulders he (Hadhrat Gangohi) took him to the nearby Musjid where he rested Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib’s head on his thigh and commenced tilaawat of the Qur’aan Shareef.

Onlookers expressed surprise and admiration for the courage and devotion of Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh). He sat alone with his dying senior in that desolate Musjid witnessing the lasts moments of his senior who was departing on the journey into the Aakhirat. While his eyes were brimming with tears, his tongue was engaging in tilaawat of the Qur’aan Shareef until the very last moment when Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib (rahmatullah alayh) passed beyond the confines of this earthly abode. Hadhrat Maulana Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) was immensely pleased to have been able to fulfil the wasiyyat of Hadhrat Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib (rahmatullah alayh).

We have heard from the buzrugs that the full Nisbat (spiritual bond with Allah Ta’ala) was transferred to Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh).

ذلك فضل الله يؤتي من يشاء

‘That is the Fadhl of Allah which He bestows to whomever He wishes.’

Allah! Allah! The elevated Mureed who was accepted by A'laa Hadhrat (Haaji Imdaadullah) by a word of good intercession of Hadhrat Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib (rahmatullah alayh), was divinely appointed to fulfil the last rites of his illustrious intercessor when not a soul was nearby.

Finally, after being saved from the troops of the tyrants, Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) lifted the body of his spiritual master and placed him on a bed. He was later consigned to the earth in the west of Thanabovan.

Molvi Mujtaba Raampuri who was the khaadim-e-khaas and khalifa of Hadhrat Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib (rahmatullah alayh) describing the blessed turban which was on his mubarak head at the time of shahaadat, says:

“Among the tabarrukaat (articles of barkat) in my possession is the blessed turban on which the date of Shahaadat is written: Tuesday 24th Muharram 1274.”

Azeez Molvi Mujtaba was the son of Maulana Ahmad Saahib Raampuri Bin Maulana Hakeem Ziya-uddin Saahib. In all probability the turban reached him because of his very close association with Hadhrat Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib (rahmatullah alayh).

Hadhrat Haafiz Dhaamin (rahmatullah alayh) was a recipient of kashf (divine inspiration) and a performer of karaamaat (miracles). Several of his episodes which are recorded in *Arwaah-e-Thalaathah* are reproduced here.

EPISODE 1

A certain Saahib-e-Kashf went to recite Faatihah at the grave of Hadhrat Haafiz Saahib (rahmatullah alayh). After the Faatihah, he asked: “Brother, who is this buzrug? He is extremely jocular. When I started to recite Faatihah he said to me:

“Begone! Recite Faatihah on some dead person. What is the matter with you? You have come to recite Faatihah on the living.”

People then informed him that the inmate is a Shaheed.

EPISODE 2

Hadhrat Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib (rahmatullah alayh) would accompany his Murshid Hadhrat Mia’nji to Janjhaana. He would carry his Murshid’s shoes under his arm and hang his (the Murshid’s) bag around his neck. The future in-laws of Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib’s son were also living in Jhanjhaana, hence people advised Hadhrat Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib (rahmatullah alayh) not to go there in this condition as he would be held in contempt, with the possibility of the engagement being terminated. Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib replied:

“Confound the engagement. I shall never shun my good fortune (i.e. of being of service to my Murshid).”

EPISODE 3

A youth began to frequent Hadhrat Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib (rahmatullah alayh). With the barkat of Hadhrat, the youth’s condition began changing (i.e. morally and spiritually he improved). The boy’s father complained to Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib:

“Since he began coming to you, he has spoiled.”

Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib responded with vehemence:

“We only know how to spoil. Some others had also spoiled us. We do not call anyone. Whoever wants to become refined should refrain from coming to us as we only know how to spoil.”

EPISODE 4

Initially, when Hadhrat Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib (rahmatullah alayh) requested to become bay’t, Hadhrat Mia’nji (rahmatullah alayh) had refused. Despite this, he would steadfastly present himself in the service of Hadhrat Mia’nji (rahmatullah alayh),

without insisting on being accepted in bay't. After about three months had passed in this way, Hadhrat Mia'nji one day enquired:

“Are you still entertaining the same idea?”

Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib replied:

“In fact, this is my motive for coming, but for the fear of being disrespectful, I do not insist.”

Hadhrat Mia'nji feeling pleased, instructed him to take wudhu and perform two raka'ts Nafil Salaat. Hadhrat then initiated him into the *Silsilah*. A detailed explanation of Hadhrat Haafiz Saahib's bay't is in a letter of Maulana Al-Haaj Ali Mia, which will appear later.

In the majlis of Hadhrat Qutbul Alam Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh), stories and episodes of Hadhrat Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib (rahmatullah alayh) were narrated in abundance. Some of these appear in *Tazkaratur Rashid*. In Volume 2 it is said that Hadhrat Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib Shaheed (rahmatullah alayh) was a person of cheerful disposition and of soldiery countenance. Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) said:

“He had true affection for me. Once while he was in Gangoh, a woodcutter extended an invitation to him. Hadhrat accepted. After a short while, Haafiz Muhammad Ibrahim, Deputy Collector (who was the son-in-law of Hadhrat Gangohi) came. He also extended an invitation which Hadhrat Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib (rahmatullah alayh) also accepted. Someone commented: ‘Hadhrat, the first person will be displeased.’ Hadhrat Haafiz Saahib thereupon showing his fist, said: ‘Then I shall crack his jaw’. He will bring only five or six rotis and a bowl of daal. This will not be sufficient for so many people. We shall accept whatever both men bring and eat it together.’ When the woodcutter came he brought five or six rotis and a bowl of milk. Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib (rahmatullah alayh) accepted it and the woodcutter departed. When the second person brought food, Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib put the first lot of food together and all ate therefrom.”

I have not come across a detailed biography of Hadhrat Saahib (rahmatullah alayh). However, a variety of episodes pertaining to

this life could be found in the biographies of Hadhrat Aqdas Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh), Hadhrat Nanotwi (rahmatullah alayh) and others. Hadhrat's khaadim-e-khaas and Majaaz, Haakim Ziyaauddeen Saahib Raampuri, has however, written a book, *Munis-e-Ya'ra'* which is reported to be in the custody of Madrasah Saulatiyyah in Makkah Mukarramah. Some extracts of it have been copied by several Hujjaaj and these are being published in various magazines. On my request, Maulana Al-Haaj Abul Hasan Ali Mia sent me a copy from *Risaalah Tathkarah Deoband*, which I reproduce here:

“Hakeem Ziyaauddeen Saahib Raampuri writes about the character and practices of Hadhrat Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib, in his book, *Munis-e-Ta'ra'*:

‘Allah Ta’ala had indeed created this illustrious personality a unique being. In describing him, justice cannot be done. His appearance was dignified and awe-inspiring. His informality and simplicity precluded any vestige of pretence. The clarity and straightforwardness of all his affairs, whether baatin or zaahir, illustrated the total absence of the slightest iota of riyah (show). Everyone was aware of his great affection for me. The awe on his glittering face was so manifest and intense that no one was able to look him in the eyes. In appraising the character of people, his ability was such that he never erred. He spoke to people according to their level of intelligence. There were no extremes in his attitudes. He was of a noble family and displayed beautiful character to his family. He always remained independent and it appeared as if he never allowed worldly concern to approach him. He was among the wise men of contemporary times. All sincere Ulama were submissive to him. He had no fear for ignoramus and hypocrites. He was perpetually absorbed in Divine Love. The nobility of his heart shone on his blessed face. His eyes were always moist on account of Divine Love.”

HIS BAY'T

Hakeem Ziyaauddeen Saahib writes that at the time of Asr, Hadhrat Mia'nji (rahmatullah alayh) instructed Hadhrat Haafiz Saahib (rahmatullah alayh) to recite *Ayat-e-Kareemah* 125,000 times. He

thus began reciting *Ayat-e-Karreemah* after Asr and completed it the following day by Asr. During this time he would get up only for Namaaz and other needs. Besides this, he did nothing else. Thereafter, Mia'nji Saahib prescribed Thikr and Ashgaal which Haafiz Saahib executed with the same enthusiasm and steadfastness. Besides the other *Asghaal*, he was also put on the practice of *Habs-e-Dam* which he developed to the extent of rendering *Thikr Nafi-Ithbaat* 500 times in a single breath. If he was not instructed to stop at this stage (i.e. 500 with one breath) his progress would have been staggering.

For several years he ate only to stay alive. He developed an exceptionally strong bond with his Shaikh. He became completely annihilated in his Shaikh. For one and a half months, from the 15th Night of Sha'baan until the end of Ramadhaan, he was occupied the entire night. He completely abstained from sleeping and resting at night (during this period). Within a short while he accomplished the journey of Sulook with excellence and perfection. The lofty state of perfection of Tauhid and of the spiritual state he attained are beyond description.

At that time he was considered the leader of all the *durwaish* and of the Knowledge of Tasawwuf. Both the Khaas (elite) and aam (laeity) were amazed at the loftiness of his spiritual state.

SELF-DENIAL (CONCEALMENT)

Initially, Hadhrat Haafiz Saahib was fond of turtledoves. One day when he approached the cage to feed the birds, one of the doves sang such a rapturous rhapsody that Hadhrat Haafiz Saahib fell unconscious into an ecstatic swoon. After a short while when someone approached, he regained consciousness. He woke up with fear and said: 'Look! Most people spill water in the pathway. People slip and fall.'

Subhaanallah! From this incident it could be ascertained how much he concealed his spiritual states. He endeavoured to conceal his state by conveying the impression that he had fell on account

of the slippery ground. It is precisely for this reason that most of his spiritual states and miracles remain hidden.

OBEDIENCE TO THE SUNNAH

In following the Sunnah and eliminating bid'ah, Haafiz Saahib was very diligent. According to Hakeem Saahib, in his zeal to follow the Shariah, Haafiz Saahib would eradicate the slightest bid'ah by the roots. In masaa-il in which there was difference of opinion, he adopted the view in which there was *ihtiyaat* (caution). In matters pertaining to *Amr Bil Ma'ruf and Nahy anil Munkar* he possessed the awesome attitude and countenance of Hadhrat Umar Faruq (radhiyallahu anhu). His determination in zuhd and taqwa was such that he would not even spare his life. Allah! Allah! What description can I offer? He is indescribable and unique.

LOVE FOR SHAHADAT

During the year of his martyrdom, he would say:

“Look! The damsels of Jannat are on the thresholds of homes with drinking glasses. Whoever wishes should accept it.”

Hakeem Saahib writes that during those days, Hadhrat Murshid (Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib) was totally absorbed and annihilated in Divine Love. Frequently, talk of Shahaadat was on his lips and he would reveal numerous spiritual mysteries. When in this state, he did not care about concealing his condition. Whoever expressed the desire for bay't Haafiz Saahib would, contrary to his habit, immediately accept the person for bay't. Before this, he would always conceal his state and was very reluctant to initiate mureeds quickly. He was very careful about concealing his spiritual state. He would keep an informal appearance. On account of the intercession of Haaji Imdaadullah Saahib (rahmatullah alayh), Hakeem Saahib was accepted as a mureed of Haafiz Saahib.

Hakeem Saahib, describing the adornment adopted by Haafiz Saahib before issuing out in the battlefield of Shahaadat, says:

“When he had resolved to go to the battlefield, he made ghushl, donned new garments and adorned himself. He had acquired these garments a long time ago and had put them away although he had worn other clothing which he had sewn after these garments which he now donned. Although his shoes were not old, he ordered a new pair. He paid much attention to his dress on that day applying even surmah and perfume. With a bulky and coiled turban on his head he appeared like a soldier. With sword in hand, he set off on the quest of martyrdom into the battlefield and handed over his life.

Hakeem Saahib writes:

“On Monday 24th Muharram 1274, at the time of Zuhr, Haafiz Saahib drank from the Cup of Shahaadat.”

This information has been extracted from Ali Mia’s letter, the monthly *Tathkarah Deoband* of Jamaadil ula 1380 Hijri (November 1961). This is an article which was prepared by Maulana Naseem Ahmad Saahib Faridi Amrohi who had gone for Haj. He had copied some extracts from the treatise (of Hakeem Saahib) at Madrasah Saulatiyyah in Makkah Mukarramah. I have heard that the original treatise is quite lengthy. Molvi Naseem Ahmad had made some extracts from it and Ali Mia also made some extracts from the material extracted by Molvi Naseem Ahmad. Further extracts from the original *Risaalah* (Treatise) are presented here.

The name of the author in the original treatise is given as Muhammad Ziyaauddin Bin Ghulaam Muhayyuddin Bin Ghulaam Mustafa Ansaari Raampur. He writes that when Murshid-e-Kaamil Hadhrat Haafiz Saahib Thaanwi was martyred in the 1857 Jihaad campaign, the world darkened for those Mureeds who were journeying along the Path of Sulook. It was an era in which anxiety, fear and agitation prevailed. The grief of the separation of their beloved had settled over their hearts. In this atmosphere of hopelessness, deprivation, grief and sorrow was the brief biography of their Murshid written. In the original book, a section deals with the karaamat of his Peer and Murshid. An obituary written by Hadhrat Nanotwi (rahmatullah alayh) is also included.

The book also contains a character sketch of Haafiz Saahib written by Maulana Muhammad Yaqub Nanotwi. In spite of this, the book is silent on Haafiz Saahib's birth date, the conditions of his early life, his states of knowledge, his children and even his age. None of these facts are recorded in the book.

Describing a scene of Khanqah Thanabovan, Hakeem Saahib says:

“In its heyday that flower-garden of divine mysteries was a garden of divine mercy. The (spiritual) hue was wonderful. There were sessions of instruction and knowledge; classes of practical instruction; lectures and advice, contemplative silence meditating the Divine Being, sessions of tawajjuh, gatherings of Thikr-e-Jahr; some were absorbed in states of ecstatic grief, some were in ecstatic states of bliss and unconsciousness. Their hearts were cleansed of worldly attachments. All were engrossed in the Divine Quest. Everyone was lost in his ecstatic state. It was a garden of Divine Mercy. Suddenly it became desolate. Whenever mention is made of those wonderful days the heart brims up with sorrow and grief, and tosses in restlessness. No matter how much I struggle to control the emotions of my fluttering heart, it is to no avail.”

Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Yaqub Nanotwi (rahmatullah alayh) composed more than a hundred verses in the obituary of Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib (rahmatullah alayh). These are to be found in the original *Risaalah* (of Hakeem Saahib) from which Molvi Naseem Saahib had copied about half. Some facts, as follows, are summarized from these extracts:

Hadhrat Haafiz Saahib was still a young man when he was martyred. His beard was still black. He was always cheerful. He was fair in complexion and full of awe and dignity. There were some spots of chicken-pox on his face. But these had a beautiful appearance on his face.

He usually shaved the hair on his head. The hair on his chest was black. He had broad eyebrows. He was of average height. A smile was always conspicuous on his face. The spiritual effect of his association was so effective that thoughts of the world would

depart from the minds of his audience and the inclination for ibaadat would be engendered.

This assembly of goodness and blessings (i.e. Hadhrat Haaji Saahib, Hadhrat Haafiz Saahib, Maulana Shaikh Muhammad Saahib and others) had gathered in the Musjid Peer Muhammad of Thanabovan. On account of the intensity of the ta'leem and talqeen (Deeni instruction, both zaahiri and baatini), this venue acquired international fame within a short while. From all sides seekers of Allah came flocking. According to their individual capacities and potential, they derived spiritual benefit. The astonishing conditions of the spiritual environment prevailing there were neither seen by the eyes nor heard of by the ears.

Indeed, this assembly of illustrious personalities had no concern for worldly worries and comforts. Besides the remembrance of Allah, there was no emphasis on anything else. Anyone who had adopted the companionship (suhbat) of these illustrious souls with ikhlaas (sincerity) for even a short while, had gained some spiritual state (haal). Seekers in the quest of divine love who had lived for a few days in the *suhbat* of these noble personalities have been observed to excel those who had already acquired some effect of thikr from years of ibaadat. In short, from the very beginning the effect (athr) of a *nisbat* (a bond of divine proximity) was acquired in that noble abode.

The episode of Haafiz Saahib's *shahaadat* has already been narrated earlier. Hakeem Saahib says that when the blessed body was brought, it emitted a wonderful fragrance of rose perfume. Hakeem Saahib observes:

“The brains of this undeserving one (referring to himself) were ennobled by this perfume. Haaji Imdaadullah Saahib also confirmed this wonderful incident at that time. About a week or ten days before being martyred, Hadhrat Murshid wrote a letter to this worthless one.”

A translation of the letter, which was in Faarsi, is presented here:

“My Deeni Brother, Hakeem Muhammad Ziyaauddin! May Allah keep you in peace and safety. Know that according to your letter, my heart yearns for meeting you. Immediately after reading this letter, hasten to reach here. Delay may leave in the heart the regret of not having met. An indication suffices for an intelligent man. Further information will be given when meeting.”

An article written by the student of Mirza Ghaalib, Molvi Abdus Samee' Bedel Raampuri, which throws light on the Battlefield of the Jihaad, is recorded in *Tathkarah*.

After the martyrdom of Hadhrat Haafiz Saahib, Hakeem Ziyaauddin Saahib saw in a dream a vast plain in which there was luxurious growth. The freshness of the atmosphere was inexplicable. In that plain was a huge tree which almost touched the heaven. Its beauty was fascinating. Some of its overhanging branches were majestically swaying. From these branches hung large clusters of the most beautiful date-like fruit. In the midst of these branches rested a throne of astonishing beauty. On this throne was seated Hadhrat Murshid in great pomp. Observing this wonderful and astonishing scene of bliss, I lapse into an ecstasy. A thought occurred to me: 'It will be good if Hadhrat gave me some explanation of his martyrdom.' Simultaneous with this thought entering my heart, Hadhrat said:

'Great is my gratitude to Allah. He has granted me a lofty rank among the Shuhadaa as well as numerous bounties.'

Hakeem Saahib writes:

“One day Hadhrat Haafiz Saahib while walking saw a dead animal on the road. Two dogs which had come across the dead animal were fighting. The one was not allowing the other to eat of it. Hadhrat let out a heavy sigh and exclaimed: 'Look! In this, Allah Ta'ala has illustrated the condition of those hankering after the world. The world is carrion and the people of the world are like dogs fighting for the carrion.'”

Hakeem Saahib also writes:

“Once some (spiritual) deficiency developed in my heart. In a dream Hadhrat said: ‘Eat less and wear whatever you obtain’ (i.e. do not be fastidious about garments).

The author of *Tathkarah* has narrated some verses from the obituary prepared by Hadhrat Maulana Nanotwi (rahmatullah alayh). The full obituary has been recorded by Hakeem Saahib. This *qaseedah* has been printed in full in *Qasaa-id-e-Qasamiyyah*. Since the poem was written on the wish and request of Hadhrat Hakeem Ziyaauddeen Saahib, the last verse closes with his name. However, since Hakeem Saahib himself has revealed that the poem is the compilation of Hadhrat Nanotwi, there remains no confusion.

SAYYIDUT TAA-IFAH SHAIKHUL ARAB WAL AJAM HADHRAT HAAJI SAAHIB (rahmatullah alayh)

For deriving barkat (blessings) from the name of Haaji Imdaadullah Saahib (rahmatullah alayh), Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) named the treatise, Imdaadus Sulook. This has been mentioned in the Khutbah of the Kitaab by Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) himself.

The name given to Haaji Saahib by his noble father was Imdaad Husain and his *Tareekh** name was Muzaffar Ahmad. However, the contemporary spiritual authority, Shaikhul Mashaa-ikh Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Ishaq Saahib Muhaajir-e-Makki (rahmatullah alayh) having miraculously discerned the spiritual potential of the child regarded him as being the Help of Allah (Imdaad-ul-laah), hence he named him Imdaadullah. It was the karaamat of Hadhrat Shaah Saahib that this title (i.e. Imdaadullah) became famous.

Hadhrat Haaji Saahib’s fathers name was Haafiz Muhammad Ameen Bin Shaikh Haafiz Bhudda Bin Shaikh Haafiz Bulaaqi. In an earlier genealogical tree the name Imdaadul Mustaaq appears in several generations. His (Haaji Imdaadullah) lineage through 55

* Tareekh name: This means a sort of a nickname.

ancestral intermediaries links up with Hadhrat Ibrahim Bin Adham (rahmatullah alayh) who is also among the spiritual ancestors of Hadhrat Imdaadullah (rahmatullah alayh). However, Hadhrat Hakeemul Ummat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh) has made an indepth research in the lineage of Haaji Imdaadullah (rahmatullah alayh) which was published in An-Noor, Shawwaal 1343 Hijri. In this research some queries were raised regarding his genealogy. Hadhrat Ibrahim Bin Adham (rahmatullah alayh), being an ancestor was also queried.

Hadhrat Haaji Saahib (rahmatullah alayh) was a Faruqi (his lineage linking ultimately with Hadhrat Umar Faruq-radhiyallahu anhu). He was a follower of the Hanafi Math-hab. He was the Imaamul Aimmah (Leader of Leaders) in the field of Tariqat and Ma'rifat. Several biographies of Hadhrat Haaji Saahib (rahmatullah alayh) were compiled by Hadhrat Hakeemul Ummat Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh). These are: Karaamaat-e-Imdaadiyyah, Kamaalaat-e-Imdaadiyyah and Imdaadul Mushtaaq.

Haaji Imdaadullah Saahib was born on Monday 22nd Safar 1333 Hijri at Nanota in the district of Sahaaranpur which was the homeplace of his maternal grandfather. Hadhrat Haaji Saahib (rahmatullah alayh) had two elder brothers, a younger brother and a younger sister. At the age of three years he was given into the care of A'laa Hadhrat Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed (rahmatullah alayh) who initiated him by way of Bay't-e-Tabarruk. (*Imdaadul Mushtaaq*).

At the age of seven, his noble mother passed away. In view of her overwhelming love for her child (Haaji Imdaadullah), while she was dying, she directed that no one should touch 'this child of mine'. This bequest of his mother had an affect on the primary education of Haaji Saahib. On account of the wasiyyat (bequest and request) of his mother, close relatives did not pay much attention to him. But, Hadhrat Haaji Saahib was destined to become a guide for mankind. He, therefore, began making hifz of the Qur'aan Majeed without the encouragement of anyone.

In the year 1249 Hijri when he was 16 years, he accompanied Hadhrat Maulana Mamluk Ali Nanotwi (rahmatullah alayh) to Delhi. In Delhi he acquired education in the different branches of Ilm. He studied Faarsi and the primary kitaabs of Arabic under different Ulama. However, in view of the fact that he was destined to become Sayyidud Taa-ifah (Leader of the group of Auliya) in the field of Uloom-e-Baatiniyyah, Hadhrat Haaji Saahib was attracted to Uloom-e-Baatiniyyah from the beginning. Hence, at the age of 15, he became Bay't to Hadhrat Maulana Naseeruddin Naqshbandi. He commenced the Athkaar (plural of Thikr) of the Naqshbandi Silsilah. Within a short while he acquired from his Shaikh the authority to initiate mureeds (i.e. he was appointed a khalifah).

Thereafter, Hadhrat Haaji Saahib (rahmatullah alayh) was irresistibly drawn to the Kalaam of the Nabi (Hadith). As a result, he studied Mishkaat Shareef under Maulana Muhammad Qalandar Jalaalabaadi (rahmatullah alayh); Hisn-e-Haseen and Fiqh-e-Akbar by Hadhrat Maulana Mufti Ilaahi Bakhsh Khandalwi (rahmatullah alayh) and the great authority of Hind, Hadhrat Shah Waliullah (rahmatullah alayh). During these days, the influence of the Knowledge of Tasawwuf was overwhelming on Haaji Saahib (rahmatullah alayh). He devoted considerable time to the study of the Mathnawi of Maulana Rumi (rahmatullah alayh). He derived immense pleasure from this pursuit. Yearning, eagerness and anxiety permeated his heart.

Once he saw Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) in a dream. In this dream, he could not lift his feet on account of the awe which pervaded his being. Suddenly his honourable ancestor, Mullah Bulaaqi appeared and taking hold of Haaji Saahib's hand, presented him to Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). In turn, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) took hold of his (Haaji Saahib's) hand and assigned him into the care of Shaikhul Mashaa-ikh Hadhrat Mia'nji Nur Muhammad (rahmatullah alayh).

Haaji Saahib had no awareness of Hadhrat Mia'nji. He had never seen him nor heard of him. When he awoke, he was, therefore, very perplexed. His time passed in much anxiety. He wondered about the identity of the buzrug whom he had seen in the dream.

Who was this buzrug? Where does he live? Seeing Hadhrat Haaji Saahib so much perplexed, anxious and restless, his Ustaadh Maulana Qalandar Saahib advised him to go to Lohaari where there was a buzrug whose *suhbat* may reduce the restlessness. His restlessness was so overwhelming that on hearing this advice, he immediately set out on foot for Lohaari and helter-skelter reached there.

When his eyes fell on the buzrug he realized that this was the very person whom he had seen in a dream and in whose care Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had assigned him. This was the buzrug in whose quest he was all this time and now, finally, he located him. Immediately on beholding the glittering face, Haaji Saahib fell at his feet.

Hadhrat Mia'nji Saahib (rahmatullah alayh) lifted Haaji Saahib with both hands. Embracing him, Hadhrat Mia'nji (rahmatullah alayh) said:

“You have great conviction in your dream.”

This was the first karaamat of Hadhrat Mia'nji (rahmatullah alayh) which Haaji Saahib observed. He became bay't to Hadhrat Mia'nji (rahmatullah alayh) and stayed with him for a number of days. On Haaji Saahib's departure, Hadhrat Mia'nji (rahmatullah alayh), in order to test Haaji Saahib (rahmatullah alayh) said:

“Do you desire taskheer or kimiyya?”

(Taskheer in this context means the inner or spiritual capacity of overwhelming the hearts of others so that they become one's ardent followers. Kimiyya [alchemy] is the miraculous transformation of base metals into gold. – Translator).

On hearing this, Haaji Saahib sobbed and said:

“I only desire the True Love (i.e. Allah Ta'ala). I have no desire for anything of the world.”

Hadhrat Mia'nji (rahmatullah alayh) thereupon embraced Hadhrat Haaji Saahib (rahmatullah alayh) and profusely made dua for him.

Hadhrat Mia'nji (rahmatullah alayh) died in the year 1259 Hijri. After his demise, anxiety and restlessness again overwhelmed Hadhrat Haaji Saahib (rahmatullah alayh) and he became a wanderer. For six months he wandered around aimlessly not knowing night or day. In 1260 Hijri he was again blessed with the ziyaarat of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) in a dream. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) instructed: "Come to us". As a result of this dream the yearning to be in Madinah Tayyibah became overwhelming. Finally, on the 15th Thil-Hijjah 1261, Hadhrat Haaji Saahib (rahmatullah alayh) landed at a port near to Jiddah. He set off straight for Arafaat. After Hajj, he spent a few days in Makkah Mukarramah and derived benefit of the *fuyudh* (spiritual blessings) of Fakhrul Muhadditheen Hadhrat Shah Muhammad Ishaq Muhaajir-e-Makki and others. Among the advices of Hadhrat Shah to Hadhrat Haaji Saahib was that he should always consider himself to be the most inferior of all creation; that he should abstain from consuming *mushtabah* (doubtful) food because such food will certainly prove to be detrimental; that he should adopt the *muraaqabah* (meditation) of: "What! Do you not know that, verily, Allah sees?"

He also told Hadhrat Haaji Saahib that after having made ziyaarat of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), he should definitely return to Hindustan, Insha'Allah, and after having severed all ties, he will have to return again to Makkah Mukarramah for permanent residence. The desire to live there was overwhelming in Hadhrat Haaji Saahib.

Hadhrat Sayyid Qudratullah Benaarasi Makki, who was famous for his miraculous demonstrations, arranged for Haaji Saahib to proceed to Madinah Tayyibah in the company of some of his mureeds. He also instructed his mureeds to bring Haaji Saahib back along with them.

The details of the *fuyudh* and *barakaat* Haaji Saahib derived from his presence in Madinah Tayyibah are considerable. On one occasion while he was in the state of *muraaqabah* in *Rauddhatum min Riyaadhul Jannat*, he was blessed with the ziyaarat of Rasulullah

(Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) who placed and amaamah (turban) on his head.

During his stay at Madinah Tayyibah, Haaji Saahib expressed his desire to live in Madinah Tayyibah to Hadhrat Shah Ghluaam Murtadha Jhinjanwi Madani (rahmatullah alayh). Hadhrat Shah Saahib also advised him to have patience for a while and that he will have to return at another time, Insha'Allah. Thus, Haaji Saahib returned to Hindustan in the year 1264 Hijri.

Back in Hindustan, the Seekers (of Islaah) insisted that he should initiate the programme of bay't. However, on account of humility, Hadhrat Haaji Saahib would refuse. Then, by inspirational instruction he finally commenced the initiation of mureeds. Initially, the food for the handful of mureeds would come from the home of Haaji Saahib's sister-in-law. At this stage Haaji Saahib saw in a dream Sayyidul Kaunain Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) telling his (Haaji Saahib's) sister-in-law:

"I shall prepare the food for the guests of Imdaadullah. His guests are Ulama."

In the group of Ulama who had become bay't at the hands of Haaji Saahib (rahmatullah alayh), the very first was Hadhrat Aqdas Qutbul Irshaad Hadhrat Maulana Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh). The next was Fakhrul Mutakallimeen Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanotwi (rahmatullah alayh). The initiation of these two personalities set in motion the process of Ulama becoming bay't to Hadhrat Haaji Saahib (rahmatullah alayh). Meanwhile, the yearning for taking up residence in Hijaaz which was created in Haaji Saahib's blessed heart on the occasion of his first visit, was constantly increasing. Coincidentally, the 1857 Mutiny erupted and Britain betrayed the King of Islam. The heartrending episodes of this event and the karaamaat of Hadhrat Haaji Saahib are so numerous that even a brief narration thereof is difficult. Several treatises – Imdaadul Mushtaq, Karaamaat-e-Imdaadiyyah and Kamaalaat-e-Imdaadiyyah – written by Hadhrat Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh) record in brief his miracles.

As a result of this tumultuous upheaval, Hadhrat Haaji Saahib was compelled to bid farewell to Hindustan. Hence, he travelled to

Makkah Mukarramah via Karachi in the year 1276 Hijri. He stayed on Mount Safa in the Ribaat of Seth Ismail. He spent all his time absorbed in muraaqabah and solitude. Once, while in the state of muraaqabah, he was informed by inspirational direction (isharah ghaibi) that an Aarif should never abstain from any Sunnat of the Nabi. Therefore, Nikah is a necessity. His love for solitude and his renunciation of the world made him fearful of marriage. However, after this *ilhaam* (inspiration), he married on 21st Ramadhaanul Mubaarak 1282 Hijri after having passed almost 50 years as a bachelor. His marriage was with Khadija Bint Haaji Shafa-at Khaan Raampuri whose parents had already passed away. The mahr was fixed at 60 French Riyal which were the equivalent of 125 Indian Rupees.

In 1394 Hijri a few sincere Khuddaam of Hadhrat Haaji Saahib, after much insistence and despite Haaji Saahib's refusal, purchased a house in the neighbourhood of Haarratul Baab and presented it to him.

Haaji Saahib was exceptionally lean in body and light of flesh. Added to his weak and slight physique were his mujaahadaat and riyaadhaat (spiritual exercises) and the burning flame of divine love which consumed him. The accumulative effect of these factors had reduced him to a rake. It will not be an exaggeration to say that he had become like a dried out thorn.

This humble one (i.e. Hadhrat Zakariyya Saahib) had the honour of making ziyaarat of a gown of Hadhrat Haaji Saahib. The garment would, with difficulty, fit a child of 10 years.

Finally, at the age of 84 years, 3 months and 20 days, on Wednesday 12th or 13th Jamaadil Ukhra, at the time of the Fajr Athaan, the Sun which brightened Arab and Ajam and the Ocean which watered the World of Islam with the Noor of Ma'rifat met the True Beloved. He was put to eternal rest in Jannat Mu'alla alongside Hadhrat Maulana Rahmatullah Keraanwi Makki, the founder of Madrasah Saulatiyyah in Makkah Mukarramah. May Allah keep his soul in peace and may Allah elevate his lofty stages.

(Extracted from Mashaa-ikh-e-Chishtiyyah of Hadhrat Shaikh Zakariyya Saahib.)

INTRODUCTION OF IMDAADUS SULOOK

Hadhrat Aqdas Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) has also written an introduction to Imdaadus Sulook, which Hadhrat Maulana Ashiq Ilaahi (rahmatullah alayh) had deleted for the sake of brevity. However, he included a summary of it at the end of the treatise, captioned, 'A Request of the Translator'. I have included here the original introduction for the sake of barkat after having had it translated into Urdu by Hadhrat Maulana As'adullah Saahib, Naazim of the Madrasah.

هُوَ اللَّهُ
بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ أَحْمَدُهُ عَلَى مَا خَصَّنَا بِأَنْعَمَاءِ السَّوْغِ
بِغِ وَالْفَضْلِ الْإِثْمِ وَجَعَلَنَا مِنْ أَشْرَفِ الْأُمَمِ وَأَدْسَلَ إِلَيْنَا نَبِيًّا وَحِيدًا هُوَ
فَدَّ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَأَوْلَاهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ وَأَتْبَاعِهِ وَأَحْبَابِهِ
وَسَلَّمَ-

He is Allah!

In the Name of Allah, The Merciful, The Most Merciful.
There is no power and no strength but with Allah, The Lofty, The Great. I praise and eulogize Him for having blessed us Muslims with His perfect bounties and munificence. He has created us the noblest of all Ummats and has sent to us a unique Nabi who is the Pride of the Ambiya and the Leader of the Mursaleen. May the peace and blessings of Allah be on him, his As-haab, his followers and his lovers (Ahbaab).

This humble faqeer Rashid Ahmad – may Allah forgive him and grant him success in his aims – says that this treatise (Imdaadus Sulook) is a translation of some sections of *Risaaah-e-Makkiyyah* which was written on the instruction of Qudwatul Aarifeen, Zubdatus Saalikeen, Qutbul Waasileen Hadhrat Haafiz Muhammad Dhaamin Thaanvi. May Allah Jalle Shaanuhu keep him perpetually in peace and safety with His Grace and Bounties so that he continues for a long time with the instruction and guidance of

people. In the rendition of this translation a verbatim (lafzi) version has not been adopted. In the sequence of most of the *fusool* (sections) in the elaboration of the concise (ijmaal), in summarizing lengthy passages and in the deletion of repetitions, appropriate abridgement has been employed. This abridgement is named *Imdaadus Sulook*.

In this translation, I have sought blessings and aid from the elevated name of my Murshid, the guide of my Deen, the leader of the world, my master, my friend and my pivot and foundation of reliance, Hadhrat Shaikh Al-Haaj Imdaadullah Thaanvi Faruqi who is the pride of the illustrious Mashaa-ikh, the fulcrum of the laity and the elite, the fountain of celestial blessings, the manifestation of desirable spiritual effulgence, the vault of divine cognition, the treasure-house of realities, the embodiment of spiritual subtleties, the beacon of contemporaries, the crown of the people of the age, the Sultan of the Aarifeen, the king of the dervishes, the perfect Ghauth, the panacea for the seekers, whose proper praise cannot be rendered by pen and tongue, whose lofty attributes of character are beyond praise and description, whose baatin is the envy of the Mutaqaddimeen and Muta-akhireen (those of former and later times) and whose zaahir is the object of the jealousy of the transgressors and those who are forgetful of Allah. May Allah Ta'ala perpetually keep him safe with *hidaayat* and *irshaad*. May Allah Ta'ala eliminate deviation through his agency. I have sought refuge in the mantle of his munificence (*faidh*) and benevolence (*aatifat*). If it was not for his benevolence I would not have possessed any ability nor would I have been able to lift a foot in this Path (of Sulook).

I hope that the illustrious Hadhrat, in particular, and the readers in general, will not forget this worthless one in their pious supplications. It is hoped that readers who detect any error herein, will correct it because I do not consider myself free of error. Besides this, I am not concerned with the hasad (jealousy) of the haasideen (jealous people) nor with those whose aim it is to search for faults. The damage of their jealousy and search for

faults will settle on themselves and will remain strung to their necks.

My purpose for this translation and simplification is precisely that which the illustrious author has proclaimed – that if a sincere seeker genuinely studies this treatise and engages in self-purification and adornment thereby gradually acquiring the true path of Sulook then he will reach his goal of divine proximity. Allah Ta’ala will grant true Ma’rifat to the one who sincerely studies this treatise. He should inculcate yaqeen to the degree where he vividly perceives that the Court of Allah is absolutely devoid of impurities and that it is exceptionally pure, and that those contaminated with the impurities of sin are not befitting for the Divine Court; that Allah Ta’ala desires obedience from His servants, execution of His Commands and abstention from sins and from the Shar’i prohibitions. In other words, Allah Ta’ala says by implication:

“O Son of Adam! I am your Necessary Protector. Besides Me there is no other protector for you. Hold firmly onto the mantle of your Necessary Protector and I shall be sufficient for you in every affair. Besides Me, nothing will be adequate for you.”

After having attained this understanding and conviction, resolve to pursue the path of salvation.

Seeking the refuge of Allah, I now commence the translation. May Allah save me from every inappropriate act and grant me good taufeeq.

(End of Hadhrat Gangohi’s introduction).

At this juncture it is appropriate to add a certain compilation of Qutbul Alam Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh). In the article he discusses the definition and nature of Tasawwuf, and a concise list of the akhlāq (moral attributes) of the Sufiyya. This article is recorded in the second volume of *Tathkaratur Rashid* and it was written with the blessed hand of Hadhrat himself. Hadhrat

Maulana Ashiq Ilaahi has also translated it into Urdu. The Urdu version is presented here.

In *Tathkaratur Rashid*, Maulana writes:

“By a stroke of good fortune my gaze fell on a paper which Hakeem Maulana Mas’ud Ahmad had. The paper which was written by the blessed hand of Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) dealt with the nature of Tareeqat. He had written it in the initial stages of his life – Allah Alone knows for what purpose.”

The Translation:

“The knowledge of the Sufis refers to the external (zaahir) and internal (baatin) dimensions of the knowledge of the Deen and to the power of *yaqeen*. This is the highest knowledge. The state of the Sufiya is adornment of character and the perpetual cognition of Allah. The *haqeeqat* (nature, reality) of Tasawwuf is to become adorned with the *akhlaaq* of Allah Ta’ala, to annihilate one’s iraadah (will) and cultivate the *ridhaa* (pleasure) of Allah Ta’ala. The character of the Sufiya is identical to the character of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) which is, in accordance with the declaration of Allah Ta’ala:

“Verily, you (O Muhammad!) are established on a great character.”

Also, whatever is in the Hadith is included in the *akhlaaq* of the Sufiya. The description of the *akhlaaq* of the Sufiya is as follows:

To regard oneself as the most inferior. The opposite of this attributes is *takabbur* (pride). To deal kindly with creation and to bear patiently the difficulties others cause. To behave tenderly and cheerfully. To refrain from wrath and anger. To sympathise with others and to give them preferential treatment. To give priority to the *huqooq* (rights) of others over and above one’s desires. To be generous. To overlook faults and to forgive. To shun pretence and formality. To spend without being miserly and wasteful because waste reduces one to need. To have trust in

Allah. To be contented with few worldly possessions. To be abstemious. To refrain from quarrelling, fighting and wrath. To abstain from malice, jealousy and hatred for the truth. To abstain from the desire of honour and fame. To fulfil promises. To persevere. To be in agreement with far-sighted (wise) brothers and to love them. To be aloof from strangers*. To be grateful to a benefactor. To expend fame for the sake of Muslims. To adorn one's zaahir and baatin with the character of the Sufis. The entire Tasawwuf is, in fact, respect (good behaviour). Respect for the Divine Court is to divert the attention from everything besides Allah because of shame, His splendour and dignity. The worst of sins is the conversation of the nafs. It is the cause of (spiritual darkness)."

These few lines of Imaam-e-Rabbaani (rahmatullah alayh) – Hadhrat Gangohi – is, in fact, the title of all the various discussions of the noble subject of Tareeqat which the Auliya of Allah have compiled in thousands of voluminous books. The actual purpose underlying the creation of the world and of the elaborations of the Math-hab of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), written and compiled in books over the spanse of fourteen centuries, is summed up in the aforementioned few lines (written by Hadhrat Gangohi). In fact, these few lines are the essence of all this. Now, the actual kitaab, *Irshaadul Mulook* shall commence.

Zakariyya*

(May Allah forgive him).

Monday, 22nd Rabiuth Thaani 1387 (1967 CE)

* Strangers in the context refer to those who are lost in worldly pursuits and have no relationship with Tasawwuf.

* Zakariyya: Refers to Hadhrat Shaikhul Hadith Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya (rahmatullah alayh) of Mazaahirul Uloom, Sharanpur, India.

IRSHAADUL MULOOK THE TRANSLATION OF IMDAADUS SULOOK

SULOOK-TARIQAT: This means adornment of character by the elimination of envy (hasad), miserliness (bukhl), show (riya), pride (kibr), self-conceit (khlood-numa'i), etc., and to imbue oneself with all the noble attributes such as generosity (sakhaawat), sincerity (ikhlaas), humility (tawadhu'), inferiority (tathal-lul), etc. so that the ability to reach Allah is acquired.

In the terminology of the Sufiyah, *Tariqat* means the traversing of stages (manaazil) in the sojourn towards Allah. The first portal of *Tariqat* is the Shariat. In short, the engrossment in the Ibaadat of Allah by being submissive and subservient to the Shariat and resolution and steadfastness in the quest of Divine Pleasure are called *Tariqat*.

The initial stage of *Tariqat* is to put aside the concessions and latitude of the Shariat and to impose on oneself the *Mustahab* and *Mustahsan* acts as essential practices, e.g. the Shariat has permitted performance of Nafl Salaat in the sitting position even without reason. But, it is *Mustahab* to perform it standing. It is essential for the people of *Tariqat* to adopt the best and most meritorious method.

The *Nihaayaat* (Goal) of *Tariqat* according to Hadhrat Junaid (rahmatullah alayh) is to come towards *Bidaayat* (Beginning). Some have interpreted this statement of Junaid (rahmatullah alayh) to mean the Being of Allah Ta'ala because He is the Origination and Beginning of everything and He is the Abode of return and the Goal of everything. Thus, the Qur'aan Shareef states:

“Unto Him do all things return.”

Again the Qur'aan says:

“To Him will you all be returned.”

Also:

“(O Muhammad): Unto your Rabb is the end (goal) of all affairs.”

Therefore, when the Saalik has turned himself in entirety to Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta’ala, he has attained his *Nihaayat* (Goal).

Another interpretation is: when the mureed turns towards his *Bidaayat*, he has then reached the *Nihaayat*. When Allah Ta’ala created him in his mother’s womb, bestowed to him external form and infused in him rooh, then besides Allah Ta’ala Jall-e-Shaanuhu, he did not have there any protector and sustainer, even ostensibly. With perfect contemplation, dependence, humility and in the state of helplessness, he reposed complete trust in Allah. He was adorned with the attributes of humility, lowliness and inferiority. He was completely devoid of the evil qualities of malice, self-conceit, pride, etc. He was free of all defects. He was wholly unaware of ego and even the negation of ego. Similarly, when the Saalik eventually transforms his moral condition to resemble the state he had possessed initially in his mother’s womb, then it will be said that he has attained the *Nihaayat* (Goal). This condition is the Sufi’s precise state of perfection. It is in this state of perfect *abdiyat* (being the slave of Allah) that freedom from the vestiges of the nafs is achieved.

There are numerous ranks and stages in *Tariqat*. For every stage there is a *Bidaayat* (Point of Beginning) and a *Nihaayat* (Point of Ending). Without reforming the *Bidaayat*, it is impossible to reach the *Nihaayat*. Hence, Hadhrat Junaid (rahmatullah alayh) averred that no one can attain the *Nihaayat* as long as he refrains from reforming the *Bidaayat*. According to some Sufiyah, corruption of the principles (Usool) of *Haqiqat* and *Ma’rifat* leads to the destruction of *Wusool*. This is also the claim of Abu Sulaimaan Daaraani (rahmatullah alayh).

It is, therefore, imperative to adorn the *Usool* and *Bidaayat* so that the road ahead opens up and *Wusool* (reaching the goal) is attained. According to Hadhrat Junaid (rahmatullah alayh), the *Usool* (principles) of *Tariqat* are five acts:

Fasting during the day.
Qiyaam (Salaat and Ibaadat) during the night.
Ikhlās in every act.
Proper order and care in all actions.
Trust in Allah in all conditions.

Suhail Tastari (rahmatullah alayh) says: “Our Usool are seven things:

Firm adherence to the Kitaab of Allah.
Obedience to the Sunnat of Nabi (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam).
Eating Halaal.
Abstaining from causing hurt to creation (makhluq – human beings, jinn and animals).
Abstention from sins.
To make taubah.
Fulfilment of all huqooq (rights and obligations).

It is evident that the knowledge of the Sufiya consists of *haalaat* (states) and *kaifiyaat* (spiritual conditions). *Haalaat* are the fruits of A'maal (virtuous deeds). As long as deeds are not corrected, *haalaat* will not be experienced. It is for this reason that the Sufiya have averred that a man who is deprived of Durood and Wazaa-if is likewise devoid of *waaridaat* (inspirations) and *haalaat*. In this regard, Abu Sulaimaan Daaraani (rahmatullah alayh) said:

“An act which here on earth does not give rise to a contemplative heart and the condition of humility, will be of no benefit in the Akhirah.”

In view of the need of knowledge for the correctness of deeds, especially the knowledge of Fiqh in order to become versed with the Faraa-idh, Sunan, Waajibaat and Mustahabbaat of Salaat, Saum and other acts of Ibaadaat, it is incumbent on the Saalik after rectification of Aqaa-id (Beliefs), to firstly acquire the knowledge of Fiqhi masaa-il as much as possible.

Some Sufiya have said that righteous deeds without knowledge are indisposed; knowledge without practice is futile and knowledge with practice is Seeraatul Mustaqeem (The Straight Road). Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“The quest of knowledge is obligatory on every Muslim male and female.”

In one narration it is said:

“Seek knowledge (of the Deen) even if it be in China.”

It is quite obvious that by knowledge here means such knowledge by which Aqaa-id and Imaan are corrected and deeds are reformed. By virtue of Imaan, the obligation of the heart and by virtue of Ibaadaat, the obligation of the physical body are discharged. Such knowledge is not intended which conflicts with the Shariat and which leads to the squandering of time and to disgrace in the Akhirah.

The root of all the Knowledge of Reality is the Qur’aan Majeed because the Qur’aan is the basis of Beliefs, Imaan, Tauhid, Ma’rifat, Ibaadaat and Haalaat. Hence, Allah Ta’ala says:

“(O Muhammad! -) The Kitaab which We have revealed to you is the truth, confirming that (those Revelations) before it.”

“Follow that (Kitaab) which has been revealed to you from your Rabb.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“I am leaving behind two things with you. If you cling to them, you will never go astray: the Qur’aan and the Ahl-e-Bait.”

Therefore, if the Saalik is an Alim, he will be aware of the essential requirements of the Deen. If the Saalik is not an Alim, he should search for a Shaikh who will firstly reform his (the Saalik’s) Tauhid and Aqaa-id and instruct him in Fiqhi masaa-il. Thereafter he should indicate to the Saalik the road of mujaahadah, zuhd and taqwa.

There is a well-known saying: Whoever has no Shaikh, shaitaan is his Shaikh. This means that whoever has no guidance, i.e. neither does he possess knowledge by means of which he could discern the road nor was he fortunate to acquire the *suhbat* of a Murshid-e-Kaamil to indicate the Road of Truth, shaitaan leads him astray. In this path it is essential to be equipped with the torch of knowledge in whichever way possible so that one does not stray and fall into error.

Knowledge is the noor (light) of the heart. Without knowledge the heart is blind. Allah Ta'ala thus says:

“Whoever was blind on this earth, he will be blind in the Aakhirah and he will be the most astray.”

Whoever remains deprived of knowledge here, will fail to find the Path of Truth. He thus cannot acquire guidance. In the Aakhirah too, he will be lost.

Hadhrat Abu Ali (rahmatullah alayh) said: “My Ustaadh in Tasawwuf is Hadhrat Junaid (rahmatullah alayh); in the knowledge of Fiqh, Hadhrat Abul Abbaas Ibn Shuraih; in Nahw, Tha'lab and in Hadith Shareef, Ibraahim (rahmatullah alayhim).” For the reformation of the nafs these branches of knowledge are essential. Precisely for this reason do the Sufiyya-e-Kiraam aver that the quest of knowledge is the best of all righteous deeds because righteous deeds are dependent on knowledge.

Frequently, a man devoid of knowledge commits errors in beliefs. He regards bid'ah to be Sunnat and baatil to be Haqq. Consequently, many groups shave their beards, wear metal bangles or neck-chains and have adopted other evils as their path. They regard these deviations to be the means for *wusool-ilallaah* (reaching Allah). Sometimes an unlearned man, by the commission of blunders in practical deeds ruins his ibaadat while he is not even aware that his deeds have been eliminated and his efforts destroyed.

It is obvious that Allah Ta'ala accepts only proper and pure deeds. Any deed which does not conform to the Shariat cannot be pure, and a pure deed is an act which is rendered only for Allah Ta'ala. Awareness of all these facts is dependent on knowledge so that one understands whether the deed is in conformity or in conflict with the Shariah. Allah Ta'ala says that people have not been instructed to do anything but to be sincere and render ibaadat.

The Ummah is unanimous regarding the *fardhiyat* and *wujoob* (these are categories of compulsory acts) of all things which Allah Ta'ala has ordained obligatory in the Qur'aan Majeed and which are affirmed in the Hadith. As long as man is in his sane senses he is obliged to adhere to these injunctions regardless of the elevated status he may have attained, be he a Wali or a Siddique. No one is empowered to delete or add to these obligatory injunctions of the Qur'aan and Hadith. Regardless of any lofty rank acquired by the Saalik, he is never exempted from adherence to the Shariat. It is evident that no one can have a higher rank than the Ambiya (alayhimus salaam). However, despite the superiority of the Ambiya (alayhimus salaam), they remain under the obligation of the Shar'i impositions. What then, can be the position of others?

In reality, the loftier the status of a person, the greater is the demand on him to observe the Shariah's injunctions. In the same way will he be apprehended the more for any violations of the Shariah. The summary of this discussion is that the correctness of actions is not possible without knowledge. An opinion to the contrary is, in fact, the product of the corruption of ignorance. Without knowledge it is difficult to understand the necessity of knowledge. Precisely for this reason did Suhail Tastari (radhiyallahu anhu) advise:

“Flee like an arrow from the companionship of a proud, careless and a religiously weak qaari and an ignorant sufi. Sitting in their company is not without Deeni harm.”

Remember that Tauhid, Ma'rifat and Imaan are the principles of the Knowledge of the Shariat. They are like the roots and all acts

of Ibaadaat and virtuous deeds are their branches. *Ahwaal* (spiritual states) and *Maqaamaat* (spiritual ranks) are the fruits of these two (i.e. of the Usool and Furu’).

Ilm (Knowledge) is a statement of the Rasool or a Sahaabi, which has been narrated and (transmitted) by reliable narrators, or it (Ilm) is the Fiqh of the Aimmah, i.e. those masa-il which the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen have analogically deducted, or it (Ilm) is the Ilm-e-Kalaam which refutes the Ahl-e-Hawaa (People of Desire) and the Muftadi-een (Innovators), and which confirms Tauhid, or it (Ilm) is the knowledge of *Haqaa-iq* (hidden spiritual realities) and *Haalaat* and the knowledge of that which severs connections besides the relationship with Allah. This knowledge of *Haqaa-iq* and *Haalaat* is the noblest and the best of all Uloom (the various branches of knowledge). It is this knowledge which is the essence of all knowledge, the fruit and the aim.

Should someone commit an error in this knowledge, he should refer to only one who has full ability and qualification in this sphere. Besides such a person, none should be consulted because all knowledge is latent in this knowledge (of *Haqaa-iq* and *Haalaat*). This knowledge cannot be acquired from anyone besides the People of Knowledge in view of this being the knowledge of *Ma-aAarif* and *Asraar* (transcendental mysteries). Whoever is blessed with the wonderful fortune of having reached this realm has entered an eternal ocean.

A man who is qualified in the four branches of knowledge mentioned above, is the *Qutb* and perfect Imaam of his age because he calls creation to the Path of Haqq. In this regard Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“In my Ummat there will be a group steadfast on the Haqq. Those who oppose them (this group) and refrain from aiding them, will not be able to harm them. This group will remain on the Haqq until Qiyaamah.”

Hadhrat Ali (karramallahu wajhah) said:

“The earth is never devoid of those who establish the Haqq. Although they are few in number, they are noble in rank by Allah.”

Thus, the first necessary step for the Saalik is the acquisition of Ilm so that he may reform his beliefs and actions and ensures the correctness of his initiation (in this path of Tarriqat) to enable him to become deserving of *wusool ilallaah* (Reaching Allah) and to sever all ties with everything besides Allah.

The lowest stage of *Wisaal* (Meeting Allah) is the lifting of the heart's veils, enabling the Saalik to perceive with the eyes of his heart (spiritual eyes) the splendour of *Mahboob-e-Haqiqi* – the True Love (Allah Azza Wa Jal), even though this perception is from a far away distance. After having attained this stage, there will be progress in accordance with the Salik's determination by virtue of the barkat of constancy in *mushaahadah* and he will reach the lofty stages of *Wisaal*, viz. *Uns* (Affection), *Bast* (state of spiritual elation), etc.

Once Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said to the Sahabi, Abu Thar (radhiyallahu anhu):

“O Abu Thar! Did you know that when a Muslim sets out from his house to visit a brother Muslim, seventy thousand angels follow him and all of them supplicate to Allah for his forgiveness? They petition Allah in this way: ‘O Allah! Just as this servant has set out in Your Path for Your sake to meet You, and solely because of Islam has he set out to meet a Muslim, You too, allow him to meet You.’

This Hadith confirms the *Wisaal* (Meeting of the servants) with Allah. *Wisaal* of the bandah (servant of Allah) means the severance of bonds with *ghairullah* (beings other than Allah) and self-annihilation in the proximity of Allah. *Wisaal* is not the conception whereby some *mulhideen* (heretics) became *murtad*. Their belief of *wisaal* entails the fusion of the bandah with Allah. In this idea they have interpreted *wisaal* in the same way as the fusion of two

worldly objects into a single entity. May Allah protect us from such blasphemy. This conception of *Wisaal* is kufr.

The further the Saalik is distanced from *ghairullaah*, the greater will be his proximity to Allah Ta'ala. Progress in the stage of *Wasl* corresponds with the degree of renunciation of bonds with beings other than Allah. The more the Saalik renounces his relationship with others, the more will his stage of *Wasl* with Allah rise. Hence, the Seeker should strive to make progress in whichever stage he may be and seek greater *Qurb* (Divine Proximity). He should not become stagnant on having attained any stage, thereby terminating his quest.

It is not proper for any bandah to consider himself as the possessor of all knowledge. In consequence of this attitude, he will, on account of ignorance utter such statements which will make him a *zindeeq* (heretic) and a *bid'ati*. This attitude is indeed a fatal error. Allah Ta'ala says:

“They (the kuffaar) reject (as false) that (Kalaam) which their knowledge has not encompassed.”

Thus, to deny something which is beyond one's understanding, is a sign of ignorance. The Qur'aan says in this regard:

“When they (the kuffaar) could not understand it (this Kalaam of Allah), they said: “These are false stories of bygone times.”

When the Kalaam of Allah could not be comprehended by the kuffaar, they described it as false tales of times gone by.

Similarly, (i.e. as is the case with the Kalaam of Allah) some of the knowledge of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) in general, is for both the elite (*khawaas*) and the laity (*awaam*) alike, e.g. the knowledge of commands and prohibitions. On the other hand, some of his knowledge is exclusive for only the *khawaas*. Hence, *Sahib-e-Sirr* (the Companion of Secrets, Hadhrat Huzaifah Yamaani

–radhiyallahu anhu) was instructed in such knowledge. Also, Hadhrat Ali (radhiyallahu anhu) said:

“Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) taught me seventy such avenues of knowledge which he did not indicate to others.”

Certain knowledge has not been revealed to even the *khawaas*. Such special knowledge was awarded to only Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). No one in entire creation has been informed of such exclusive knowledge. Hence, he said:

“I take oath by Allah! If you knew what I know, you will laugh less, cry more and never derive pleasure from your wives in your beds. You will flee to the wildernesses and wail: ‘By Allah! I wish I was a tree which could be cut.’

When there are so many different stages of knowledge. How could it ever be proper for anyone to believe that he has encompassed all knowledge? There is no limit for knowledge. An accepted principle is that above every man of knowledge there is another with more knowledge. It is for this reason that in every conversation the person being addressed should be taken into consideration. One should not speak to a person such things which are beyond his intellectual ability. Similarly, it is incumbent on the listener not to make haste in claiming that the speaker has erred. On the contrary, he should hold a good opinion and attribute the supposed error to his own misunderstanding or lack of understanding. He should think that he could not understand the proper meaning. And, Allah Ta’ala knows best.

Fasl Two

It is imperative for the Saalik to have a Shaikh-e-Kaamil so that the Shaikh becomes his (the saalik’s) companion along this Road, and explains the ups and downs and the pitfalls of this journey. Hence, Allah Ta’ala says:

“O People of Imaan! Adopt Taqwa and search for a waseelah (medium) towards Allah.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“My Sahaabah are like the stars. Whomever among them you follow, you will attain (the Road of) guidance.”

It is therefore, clear that for finding the Road of Guidance, it is essential to appoint a man of Haqq as one's leader so that the Saalik by following him will attain the goal.

Imaam Ghazaali (rahmatullah alayh), in his Ihya-ul Uloom narrates the following Hadith of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam):

“Verily, the Shaikh in his jamaat is like a Nabi in his Ummat.”

The purpose of this Hadith is that a Shaikh-e-Kaamil being the representative of the Nabi, executes the function of service of Nubuwwat and shows the Road of Haqq to his Jama'at. He warns them of deviation (dhalaal). In this way, he becomes like the Ambiya, being a medium for the people's salvation.

Imaam Ghazaali (rahmatullah alayh) observes that this lofty status of the Shaikh is not on account of worldly affluence. His status is the product of intelligence, understanding and expertise in the ways of *Najaat*. It is for this reason that many men who became Mashaa-ikh, were not of noble lineage, but were poor members of such working classes which people despised. Many such men of lowly social rank attained the ranks of honourable Mashaa-ikh. Regardless of appearance, race or social rank, a Shaikh should be a man who follows the Road of Haqq and be aware of the pitfalls and dangers of the spiritual path, so that he may keep his mureedeen informed of its benefits and harms.

The standard of Tariqat is the Qur'aan, Sunnah and Ijma' (Consensus) of the Ummah. A path which conforms to this Standard is accepted. If it does not, it will be rejected and shunned. *(A path which diverges from the Shariah and Sunnah is satanism. - Translator)*

The *suhbat* of such a Shaikh (i.e. a Shaikh-e-Kaamil) is of immense value. It is a wonderful bounty. In the words of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), the companionship of a pious companion is like a perfume-vendor. Even if he does not give any perfume, nevertheless, one will derive the benefit of his fragrance by virtue of associating with him. In contrast, the similitude of an irreligious companion is like that of a blacksmith. Even if the fire of his furnace does not reach one's body or clothes, the smoke will most assuredly cause discomfort.

It is incumbent on one who intends to become a mureed to search thoroughly for a *kaamil* (qualified) Shaikh. He should scrutinize the person whom he intends to appoint as his Shaikh so that he may ascertain whether the person is the right man for acceptance as a Shaikh. Many seekers in this Path have been destroyed by following irreligious persons. In all truth, destruction in this path on most occasions is the consequence of incomplete searching for a Shaikh-e-Kaamil. Allah Ta'ala says that after those destined for Jannat or Jahannam have entered their respective abodes, Shaitaan will proclaim:

“Verily, Allah had made to you a promise of truth and I (too) had made a promise to you. But I broke (my promise) to you. Therefore, do not blame me. Blame yourselves.”

In this announcement, Shaitaan is in effect saying:

“Allah had promised Jannat to you if you practise righteousness, but if you disobey the Messengers you will enter Jahannum. I too made a promise to you if you liberate yourselves from the fetters of the Shariat, you will live in pleasure and if you become involved with the stories of resurrection and reckoning, you will become paupers, deprived and disgraced. But for my ability to honour my promise I had not presented any truthful proof to you. Besides inviting you, I had done nothing. I did not compel you to follow me. You had accepted my false call and of your own free will you wholeheartedly followed me. Today you are tasting its fruits. Why

do you then blame me? Blame yourselves for having turned away from the true promise.”

It is thus clear that numerous people strayed from the Road and became victims of deception. Since they were negligent in their search for a qualified Shaikh, they followed a shaitaan in human form. They will, thus, suffer the consequences of their folly in Qiyaamat. The result on that Day will be only regret and tears.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) warned that as long as one is not fully aware of the beliefs and conditions of the heart of a person, one should not become enamoured with his external display of Islam. This established that the basis of truth is the rectification of Aqaa-id (Beliefs) and that by Allah there will be a reckoning for the evil heart. A person whose heart is spiritually contaminated cannot enjoy divine proximity regardless of the external beauty of his ibaadat and mujaahadah. Allah Ta’ala does not approve of such a person nor is there any hope of acquiring guidance of the Road by following him.

Now listen carefully! Obedience to all the Ambiya (alayhimus salaam) in general, and to Sayyidul Mursaleen (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) in particular is obligatory. All the Ambiya have complete consensus on the Usool (Principles) of the Deen, viz. Ma’rifat-e-Zaat (Knowledge of Allah’s Being), His Sifaat (Attributes), the Rusul (Messengers), Malaa-ikah, the affairs of Aakhirah , etc. There does not exist the slightest vestige of difference among the Ambiya on these issues. Abrogation (Nuskh) pertains to only Ahkaam (laws) and A’maal (actions). The Shariat of Muhammad (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) has abrogated the Ahkaam of the former Shariats, e.g. in an earlier Shariat 50 Salaat were Fardh while in the Shariat of Muhammad (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) only 5 Salaat are Fardh. *Nuskh* does not apply to Aqaa-idh, because the Aqaa-idh of all the Ambiya (alayhimus salaam) are the same.

Further, the mutual differences of the Aimmah-e-Mujtahideen (jurists) of the Ummah of Muhammad (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam)

are related to *juziyaat* (particulars and details), not to the *usool* (principles) because the four Imaams are unanimous, not only in Aqaa-idh, but in the *usool* underlying the acts of the Shariah as well. Thus, the five Salaat are compulsory according to all. Differences pertain in the details of the Salaat, e.g. according to some, Rafa' yadain at the time of Takbir is Sunnat while others say it is not Sunnat.

Those who had erred in the *usool* became innovators and went astray. Salvation from this deviation (dhalaal) is not possible without following the Kitaab, Sunnah and Ijma' of the Ummah. In contrast, differences in the details (*furu-aat*) are a blessing and provide scope for the Ummah. Hence, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that even if the Mujtahid errs he receives one reward and if by his *ijtihad* he deducts the correct ruling which according to Allah Ta'ala is the truth, then he (the mujtahid) obtains a double reward. Thus, a Shaikh who subscribes to this Math-hab and whose beliefs conform to the Kitaab, Sunnah and Ijma' and at the same time is an expert in the knowledge of Tariqat and Haqiqat, is undoubtedly, qualified to be appointed one's Shaikh.

The novice (*mubtadi* – the beginner) in this path can gauge the truth and expertise of the Shaikh by examining the spiritual and moral conditions of his muredeen and by obtaining the attestation of contemporary men of piety. He should view the condition of his mureeds in regard to their firmness of Deen and obedience to the Shariah, and what the Sulaha (pious people) of the age have to say about him. If the Ulama of the age do not refute him, rather some Ulama and intelligent men of piety, young and old, are deriving benefit from him and regard him as an authority in Tariqat and Haqiqat, then understand that he is an expert of the Path of Truth. Cling to his mantle.

When having taken the oath of allegiance with him (i.e. becoming bay't), then be obedient to him. With singlemindedness submit to him wholeheartedly. Singlemindedness (*tauhid-e-matlab*) or unity of purpose, means that the mureed should believe that, on earth,

besides his Shaikh no one can guide him better to attain the goal despite there being other expert Mashaa-ikh with the same perfect attributes and qualifications.

Tauhid-e-Matlab (having one's gaze focused on only one's Shaikh) is an important fundamental of Sulook. The mureed who has not acquired this attribute will be perplexed, unstable and dwell in mental agitation. Even if he, in his aimless wandering, becomes lost and destroyed in some wilderness, Allah Ta'ala will have no care for him.

Thus, the idea that every one among the Mashaa-ikh of the age can also quench 'my thirst and deliver me to the goal' is detrimental in the Path of Sulook. Just as Haqq is one and the Qiblah is one, similarly the guiding Shaikh also is one. If the attitude of Tauhid-e-Matlab is not adopted, the result will be nothing other than destruction. Numerous people were destroyed in this state of uncertainty and perplexity.

Even if there occurs just a waswasah (stray thought) that 'besides this Shaikh, in the world there is someone else who can deliver me to the goal', then assuredly, shaitaan will set in motion his scheme to tighten his hold over the mureed and plunge him into error.

Sometimes shaitaan himself appears in the form of a Shaikh. Since the weak heart of the mureed lacking in firmness, believes that every Shaikh can guide him, his heart will incline towards shaitaan as well. Shaitaan will then impress on the mureed his (shaitaan's) mould and gain such a stranglehold from which the mureed will find it extremely difficult to extricate himself. In short, shaitaan will destroy him. He will demonstrate such *shu'bda* (conjuring – seemingly miraculous deeds) which will convince him to subscribe to baatil beliefs.

In contrast, the mureed who has adopted Tauhid-e-Matlab, will remain protected against such deceptive measures of Shaitaan because the latter is unable to appear in the form of a shaikh who follows the Shariat of Muhammad (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). On

account of Tauhid-e-Matlab, shaitaan cannot find a way to ensnare the mureed. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“A Shaikh (spiritual mentor) among his mureeds is like a Nabi in his Ummat.”

In addition, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) likened the Ulama of his Ummat to the Ambiya of Bani Isra-eel. Therefore, in the same way as the accursed shaitaan is unable to assume the appearance of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), so too is he unable to adopt the appearance of the Shaikh. In this regard, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Whoever sees me in a dream, most assuredly, he has seen me because shaitaan is unable to assume my appearance.”

Thus, by virtue of Tauhid-e-Matlab, the mureed remains in safety and proceeds to traverse the *maqamaat* (spiritual stages) in peace. The Sufiyah state that the *rukn* (fundamental basis) of *Wusool ilallah* (meeting or joining Allah) consists of four acts:

Ibrat (taking lesson) and yearning to emulate the good states of pious people; to grieve over the degenerate condition of irreligious men and to be grateful for one's own good state.

Sublime demeanour at the time of experiencing *Mukaashafaat* and *Tajalliyaat*. [*Mukaashafaat* – the sight of nooraani (spiritually radiant) forms]. By virtue of the purity of the heart and the effect of *thikr* and *shaghl*, sometimes past, future or distant episodes are revealed, or in the stage of *kayfiyaat* and *hallaat* various noorani forms become visible. When such states are experienced, the mureed should never regard them to be the *Maqsood* (the goal). The *Saalik* should not end his pursuit at the juncture. He should press on, knowing that the Ultimate Goal is the Pleasure of Allah, His proximity (*Qurb*) and Meeting (*Wusool*). He should continue along the Path courageously. (*He should beware of vanity - Translator*).

Maintain Courage – The Mureed should not lose courage in his quest for the *Maqsood* nor should he become frustrated by any

delay in the attainment of Wusool. Never should he abandon his quest.

Respect for the Shaikh and affection for brothers of the Path (Tariqat). This means to honour elders and to be kind to juniors.

Only people of perfect Imaan acquire the fortune of these things. People of defective Imaan are deprived of these wonderful treasures.

It is essential that the mureed be Saadiq, i.e. the rectification of his affairs with Allah externally and internally, in privacy and in public and in all circumstances, be in the quest of truth. The effect of sincerity should permeate his body, intelligence, nafs, sirr, heart and soul. All movement, rest, actions and statements should be solely for Allah's sake.

On the acquisition of Sidq (absolute truth) and Ikhlaas (sincerity), there is the strong hope of attaining Ma'rifat and Wusool. Thus, Hadhrat Abu Darda (radhiyallahu anhu) narrated that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that Allah Ta'ala said:

“Whoever searched for Me, verily He has found Me. Whoever searches for another besides Me, will not find Me.”

On account of this Hadith the Searcher and the Lovers (of Allah) hold high hope because He has related the search (*talab*) to His Holy Being. This implies that the ultimate aim is *Wusool-e-Zaat* (Meeting the Very Being of Allah Ta'ala). Most certainly, ikhlaas (sincerity), sidq (truth) and firmness of iraadah (resolve) are essential requisites for this attainment. Thus, the Sufiya-e-Kiraam (rahmatullah alayhim) explaining the conception of *Tauhid-e-Kaamil* (Perfect Tauhid), said:

“To remember only Allah; to have only His knowledge; to have only His understanding and to know that only He is the Beloved. Love for Allah should be purely for His Sake, not for the desire of Jannat nor for the fear of Jahannum.”

Love for Allah should be pure and unadulterated because it is the Zaat of Allah which is the actual object of Love. Allah's statement that the Mu'mineen are those who have hope in the Mercy of Allah and that they fear His Punishment, depicts the condition of the general body of Muslims, in contrast, the Qur'aan describes the condition of the Khawaas (the elite):

***“They deliver the divine message to the creation and they fear Allah.
Besides Him they have no desire for anything.”***

“They befriend Allah and He befriends them.”

Also, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) made dua as follows:

“From You, I seek Your protection.”

There are numerous such examples in the Qur'aan and Hadith, which beautifully substantiate the claims of the Sufiyah who maintain that the object of fear and desire is not Jahannum and Jannat respectively, but Zaat-e-Haqq by Itself is the Object of Love and Fear.

The Mureed should understand that the rooh of the Shaikh is not confined to any specific place. The roohaaniyat (spiritual effect and impressions) of the Shaikh reaches the mureed from anywhere. When the Mureed has thoroughly understood the Shaikh's proximity to him, he will then always remember his Shaikh and a heartfelt bond will be created. Thus, he will constantly acquire spiritual benefits from his Shaikh. *(The reference here is to a Shaikh-e-Kaamil. While it is possible to acquire the benefit of Islaah (moral purification) from even a Shaikh who has not attained perfection (Kamaal) in the higher category of Tasawwuf, such spiritual guides who have not achieved elevation and perfection in the baatini realm do not come within the purview of the conception of Shaikh-e-Kaamil mentioned in this treatise - Translator.)*

When the mureed is confronted with a problem requiring a solution, then by virtue of the strong roohaani bond which has been established, the rooh of the Shaikh, with the permission of

Allah, will apprise him (the mureed) thereof. However, the requisite for the manifestation of this effect of the Shaikh's rooh is a perfect bond. *(In addition to this bond, the Shaikh has necessarily to be of a very lofty standard of roohaaniyat. This elevated rank of roohaaniyat is not an automatic corollary or effect of mashikhat. In other words, it does not necessarily mean that every person who has been appointed a khalifah by a buzrug occupies the lofty state of roohaani kamaal mentioned in this treatise in relation to the Shaikh - Translator.)* It is only by virtue of the perfect bond with the Shaikh's heart that the heart of the mureed will become receptive to inspiration and Allah Ta'ala will open up the road. Allah Ta'ala will make the mureed a repository of inspiration (mulhaam – one to whom ilhaam comes). In the terminology of the Shariah such a man of inspiration is called Muhaddath. Allah Ta'ala inspires him with the truth. The correct and appropriate solution is inspired into his heart with such clarity that it appears as if someone has informed him and he heard it with his ears. In this regard, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "In the Ummats of bygone times there were Muhaddath. If there is any Muhaddath in this Ummat, it is Umar."

Thus, by virtue of the perfect roohani bond which the heart of Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) had established with the heart of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), the Haqq was inspired into his heart by Allah Ta'ala. Hence, several times Wahi came to Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) in conformity with the view of Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu). There were eighteen occasions on which Wahi came upholding his opinion. And, Allah knows best. *(It does not mean that Hadhrat Umar [radhiyallahu anhu] was the only Muhadith among the Sahaabah and in the Ummah. It only means that in this sphere, he was given a greater share by Allah Ta'ala. This choice of Allah Ta'ala [i.e. of greater share] is subject to His Wisdom and Will, not to the Bond which Hadhrat Umar [radhiyallahu anhu] had with Rasulullah [Sallallahu alayhi wasallam]. The Bond of Hadhrat Abu Bakr [radhiyallahu anhu] was stronger - Translator.)*

THE SHAIKH-E-KAAMIL

The Shaikh-e-Kaamil should be one who possesses the ability to entrench the Deen and the Shariat in the hearts of his muredeen. Without having adopted the Path of Sulook, it is not possible to be a Shaikh. *(Alas! Nowadays most khalifas have not traversed the Path of Sulook. Nevertheless, as long as they are pious followers of the Sunnah and strictly obedient to the Shariah, mureeds can benefit from them - Translator.)* By having traversed the stages of Sulook, he will have gained the experience of good and evil and have understood beneficial and harmful matters. Although a Majzub has attained the Goal (Matloob), he is not qualified to be a Shaikh because he is unaware of the dangers and calamities of the Road. He is unable to guide and conduct the spiritual sojourn.

The Necessary Requisites for the Shaikh

The following are necessary requirements for a Shaikh:

Knowledge of the Qur'aan and Hadith. Merely being an Alim is not sufficient. He should be adorned with the qualities of *kamaal* (perfection or excellence).

He should be devoid of the love of wealth. He should be one who had acquired Tariqat from such Mashaa-ikh-e-Rabbaaniyeen whose Silsilah (Chain linking one Shaikh with another) reaches Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) without any intervening break.

He should have achieved accomplishment in riyaadhat (spiritual exercises) and mujaahadah (striving against the nafs) according to the instructions of his Shaikh, thus having achieved reduction in association with people, in conversation, eating and sleeping while having attained abundant progress in Sadqah, silence, Salaat and Saum.

The noble qualities, e.g. sabr (patience), shukr (gratitude), tawakkul (trust in Allah), yaqeen (resolute faith), sakhaawat (generosity), qanaa'at (contentment), amaanat (trustworthiness),

sidq (honesty), burdbaari (perseverance), tawaadhu (humility), sukoon (peace), ikhlaas (sincerity), hayaa (modesty), waqaar (dignity), thinking before acting, contentment with the Aakhirah , renunciation of love of wealth and fame, etc. must have become his nature and character.

He has to be one who has inculcated in him the Torch of Nubuwwat and in the light of this Torch he has obliterated all the evil qualities such as takabbur (pride), ujub (vanity), bukhhl (stinginess), hasad (jealousy), keenah (malice), hirs (greed), amal (vain and distant hopes) and despicable acts (not befitting the dignity of Imaan).

The celestial illumination (tajalliyaat) of mujaahadah and riyadhat which permeates his being and the sweetness and pleasure of which he has acquired, should radiate from his face. The anwaar (plural of noor) of mushaahadah (vision/perception of spiritual reality) and kamaalaat (spiritual and moral excellences) should exude from him. As a result of the noor of his heart, he should have gained expansion of the (spiritual) breast – i.e. sharah sadr.

He has to be one who has adopted solitude and has divorced himself from the world and worldly people. He must be absorbed in the ocean of divine splendour (Jalaal) while being free from all mundane defects and fetters, thus having attained the stage of Ihsaan. In other words, he worships Allah as if he is in His Presence seeing Him. Conveying this state of divine presence is the following narration:

“Waseel Yamaani (rahmatullah alayh) asked Hadhrat Ali (radhiyallahu anhu):

‘O Ali! Can you see your Rabb!’ Hadhrat Ali (radhiyallahu anhu) replied:

‘If I cannot see Him, I shall not worship Him.’

Waaseel said: ‘How do you see Him?’ Hadhrat Ali (radhiyallahu anhu) replied:

‘O Waseel! The corporeal (physical) eyes cannot behold him, but the eyes of the (spiritual) heart adorned with Sidq and Imaan see Him’.

The Shaikh should have reached the stage where he has emerged from the difficulty of mujaahadah and riyaadhat and has attained the tranquillity of Wisaal (the Meeting with Allah). Hence, instead of ibaadat being a laborious task, it will have become a pleasurable exercise for him. He must have transcended the bitterness of hardship and have tasted the sweetness of haalaat (spiritual ranks of elevation). He should be deriving comfort from the zephyr of special divine favour.

He must have transcended physical space and be swimming in the fragrance of the vast celestial realm of Qurb (Divine Proximity). The door of Mushaahadah (Observation of spiritual and transcendental realities with all intervening veils lifted) must have opened up for him. He should have attained the balm for his pangs of separation (from his Beloved – i.e. Allah Ta’ala).

Words of hikmat (wisdom) must flow from him and the hearts of people should incline towards him. While his external appearance should be one of solitude and seclusion, his baatin (soul) should be engrossed and basking in the mushaahadah of the celestial realm. His state of spiritual elevation should be such that even in jalwat (public) he will in actual fact be in khalwat (seclusion and solitude – i.e. while his physical presence will be with the people, his heart and soul will be in the celestial sphere enjoying Divine Proximity).

The Shaikh should not be maghlubul haal (i.e. he should not be overwhelmed by states of spiritual ecstasy rendering him unfit to guide murideen along the spiritual road).

He should not utter shat-hiyaat, i.e. statements ostensibly in conflict with the Shariat, which emanates from him in the state of ghalbah-e-haal without his volition (ikhtiyaar).

He should be able to diagnose the ability and capability of others by way of his firaasat (which is the capacity of the spiritual heart and intelligence – an intuitive ability of discernment being the product of Divine Proximity). His spiritual rank must not be known to anyone. Such a man is fully qualified and deserves to be appointed as one's Shaikh because the tariqah of the Muhibbeen* and the haalaat of the Muqarribeen* have been bestowed to him by virtue of the deeds of the Abraar*, which he practises.

Sometimes such a Shaikh (i.e. Shaikh-e-Kaamil) has Khulafa (Deputies) in whom his Knowledge is transferred and by virtue of these Khulafa there remains barkat in his Tariqah.

Like the tenderness of the heart, even tenderness of the external skin appears in this Shaikh. This indicates that just as his heart has accepted the A'maal (acts of virtue), so too has his physical body. This is the effect of the excellence of Muhabbat-e-Khaassah (a special and very lofty stage of Divine Love). By virtue of this bond of Divine Love, Allah Ta'ala blesses him with progress and complete independence from all aghyaar (strangers – all those who are not companions in the roohaani sojourn) and causes him to become His waasil (i.e. union with Him). In this regard Allah Ta'ala Himself says in the Qur'aan Majeed that the external skins of the bodies become tender like the hearts. This is the haal (state) of the Mahbubeen (Lovers of Allah Ta'ala). Thus, He says in the Qur'aan-e-Kareem:

“Allah has revealed the best of Kitaabs, the words of which have a mutual resemblance and are repetitive. As a result of it (this Kitaab), the skins of those who fear Allah are aroused; then their skins and their hearts incline with tenderness to the Remembrance of Allah (finding rest and comfort therein).”

It is not a requirement for a Shaikh to be qualified in all branches of knowledge. However, he should possess sufficient knowledge

* These are different categories of spiritual hierachy of the Auliya.

pertaining to the Faraa-idh, Sunan and Nawaafil as well as the knowledge of the prohibitions and permissible things. However, it is incumbent that the Shaikh be well versed with the ways of treatment for the spiritual maladies and the methods of mujaahadah and riyaadhat for the Saalikeen of Tariqat so that he may treat and instruct every person according to his ability. It is necessary for a Shaikh to be a man of wisdom which enables him to recognize the different temperaments of the mureeds and diagnose their spiritual maladies and conditions. The Shaikh should possess the knowledge, expertise and deep spiritual insight (ma-aAarif) of those matters, which are necessary for the mureeds following the Path of Tariqat. He must be aware of the reality of maqaamaat (ranks), manaazil (stages), talweenaat^{*}, tamkeenaat^{**} as well as the benefits and harms of the Path.

He should be one who has already traversed the stages of mukaashafaat^{***}, muaa-inaat^{***} and mushaahadaat^{***} and be absorbed in the ocean of Fanaa-ul-fana and Baqa-ul-baqa^{****}. He should be one enjoying a high degree of recognition of Azmat (Divine Splendour), Kibriyaa'i (Divine Greatness) and Wahdaaniyyat (Divine Unity) so that he be fully capable of treating and guiding the mureedeen. Allah Ta'ala says in this regard:

“Say (O Muhammad!): This is my Road. I call you towards Allah on the basis of the Baseerat, on which I and those who follow me are.”

The Baseerat mentioned here refers to mushaahadah, the spiritual perception of the heart and confirmation of Imaan. From this it follows, that the followers of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) also call people towards the Deen and Imaan on the

^{*} Transformations—changing spiritual attitudes and conditions.

^{**} Stages of constancy.

^{***} These are stages of vivid spiritual vision and perception of reality.

^{****} These are extraordinary lofty states of self-annihilation and absorption in divine cognition.

basis of mushaahadah i.e. they have acquired this lofty stage of transcendental reality and truth. Thus, the Mashaa-ikh who are the followers of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) necessarily should have acquired that Baseerat, viz. the perfect cognition (Ma'rifat) of Divine Tauhid (Unity) and Splendour (Azmat). If the Shaikh lacks in this capacity, he will not be able to execute the functions which the Office of Prophetic Representation (i.e. being the representative of the Rasool) entails. He will not be able to call people towards guidance. *(Alas! This is generally the situation today - Translator.)*

It is also imperative for the Shaikh to be kind, benevolent, patient and forbearing. He should not be harsh and of sour temperament. His talk should not be bitter nor sarcastic. He should not wander around aimlessly going on futile visits and sight-seeing. He should not desire an abundance of mureeds. He should not hanker after the world nor be in the pursuit of adornment and fame. He should not be lost in a state of ecstasy (i.e. he should not be maghlubul haal), making statements in conflict with the Shariah. Although such a person will himself be absolved (be ma'zoor) on account of ghalbah-e-haal, he is not fit to be made a Shaikh.

The affection which the Shaikh should have for his mureedeen should be similar to the affection which Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had for his Sahaabah. Allah Ta'ala says:

“Verily, there had come to you a Rasool from among you. He becomes distressed with things which distress you and he is eager for (goodness and bounties) to settle over you. Towards the believers he is most kind and benevolent.”

When the Shaikh is one with these attributes (outlined above) and he is adorned with the character of the Nabi (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), then undoubtedly he will be the Heir of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) in respect of the spiritual reformation of the Mureeds.

Obedience to the Shaikh

Just as Hadhrat Musaa (alayhis salaam) was required to obey Khidhr (alayhis salaam) without raising any objections against his actions, so too, the mureed has to offer absolute obedience to his Shaikh. He should not object to anything the Shaikh does or commands and he should regard the Shaikh's instructions as being obligatory. The episodes of Hadhrat Musaa (alayhis salaam) and Hadhrat Khidhr (alayhis salaam) are recorded in some detail in Surah Kahaf. Musaa (alayhis salaam) had requested the companionship of Hadhrat Khidhr (alayhis salaam) who was divinely appointed to execute duties pertaining to the laws of Qadr (Taqqdeer – Predestination) and its hidden mysteries which sometimes are in apparent conflict with the Shariah, hence a man of the Shariah will find it difficult to tolerate. Musaa (alayhis salaam) sought the companionship of Khidhr (alayhis salaam) to gain the knowledge of these mysteries. In response, Khidhr (alayhis salaam) told Musaa (alayhis salaam) that he (Musaa) will not be able to tolerate him (Khidhr) because the ilm awarded to him pertained to the Laws of Qadr. Although Musaa (alayhis salaam) promised to obey him, he later was unable to do so and raised objections against the acts executed by Khidhr (alayhis salaam) since these appeared to be in conflict with the Shariah. Finally, on the third occasion when Musaa (alayhis salaam) raised an objection, Khidhr (alayhis salaam) terminated their association.

In short, it is not at all appropriate for mureeds to disobey the Shaikh's instruction. Musaa (alayhis salaam), despite his superiority by virtue of his Nubuwwat, had agreed to obey Khidhr (alayhis salaam) even in a branch of knowledge which was not necessary for him. His natural eagerness for the mysterious type of knowledge Khidhr (alayhis salaam) possessed induced him to accept Khidhr's condition for companionship. Although he committed no sin by voicing his objections, nevertheless he was deprived of the spiritual knowledge which Khidhr (alayhis salaam) possessed.

When this was the situation with Nabi Musaa's (alayhis salaam) acceptance of companionship of Khidhr (alayhis salaam), what can

then be concluded of an ignorant mureed who takes hold of the mantle of guidance of a Shaikh who is superior to him, and after adopting his companionship in an endeavour to gain a knowledge which is obligatory, viz. the Knowledge of Allah, he raises objections? Such a mureed will be deprived and will labour in nothing but loss. And, Allah knows best.

Fasl Three

THE SINCERE SEARCHER (TAALIB-E-SAADIQ)

When the sincere and honest searcher (for the Road of spiritual reformation and Divine Proximity) finds in him the desire for Sulook, his first act is to search for a Shaikh with the attributes and qualifications explained earlier. The Shaikh will instruct the mureed to recite appropriate forms of Thikr. The mureed should execute the Thikr with constancy according to the instruction of the Shaikh until the energy generated by the Thikr permeates his entire being, and he becomes qualified to instruct others and acquires the mantle of Tasawwuf, thus, becoming a Sufi by the Fadhl of Allah Ta'ala.

It is appropriate for the Muftadi (the beginner in the Path) to render the most important Thikr, i.e. Nafi and Ithbaat, either audibly or inaudibly as per the Shaikh's instruction in the following way: With the recitation of لا اله الا الله, he should contemplate on the negation of all good and bad, and with لا اله الا الله, he should affirm the Zaat (The Being) of Allah, for His non-existence is an act of absolute impossibility.

If during the course of Thikr the mureed experiences the vision of good or bad dreams, luminous lights, or a variety of colours, never should he pay the slightest attention to these manifestations. He should believe with conviction that Noor-e-Haqeeqi (The Noor of Allah) is devoid of form, shape, dimension, direction and space. He should, thus, assume that these manifestations which he is observing are the products of imagination which will swiftly dissolve into oblivion. It is obvious that it is not worthwhile to

attach the heart to transitory things. Thus, when Sayyidina Khaleelullah (alayhis salaam) saw the stars setting, he exclaimed:

“I do not love things which disappear.”

Transitory objects – objects which have no permanent endurance – are not fit to be made the object of worship and concentration.

Know that the realities of all visible things (in this material world) exist in Alam-e-Ma’na (the World of Meanings). These forms which become luminous in Alam-e-Mithaal (the World of Symbols) are the shadows and reflections of these realities (which exist in Alam-e-Ma’na). The mureed should not develop an affinity with them because Allah Ta’ala has created seventy thousand veils of light and darkness in the Path of Sulook. On account of reverence and splendour he has described them as the Veils of the Mysteries of the Ka’bah. Thus, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam), alluding to this mystery, said there are seventy thousand veils of noor (celestial light) and zulmat (spiritual darkness) of Allah Ta’ala. If these veils are lifted, the entire universe will be reduced to dust. These veils are the anwar-e-roohaniyyah (the celestial brightness of the soul) and zulmat-e-jismaaniyyah (the darkness of the physical body) viz. the five senses, temperaments, physical phenomena (such as colour, length, etc.), the lowly disgraceful attributes, the nafsaani desires, lust, shaitaan, etc.

Since the purified nafs has a natural aversion for darkness and a natural affinity for anwaar (celestial illumination), the lifting of the veils of darkness is easy for the Taalib. In contrast, the lifting of the Veils of Light is extremely difficult for it (the purified nafs).

There are 10,000 veils of zulmat (darkness) in the Lateefah-e-Qaalib (the meta-physical skeletal form) which, in fact, is the existence of the Saalik. These veils of zulmat are brownish in colour. As a consequence of constancy in Thikr, these darkneses, on account of the light generated by Thikr, appear to be rising and falling, and when the body becomes spiritually healed by virtue of the noor of Thikr, these veils of darkness assume the form of a pure white cloud.

The Lateefah-e-Nafs (this is a propensity of the nafs) contains 10,000 nooraani veils (Veils of Light). These veils have a sky-blue colour. It should be understood that the behaviour of the nafs is in accordance with man's training. The nafs constantly impresses its evil on man's existence. After the nafs has been trained and purified, the lustre of virtuous deeds will assert itself and permeate the Saalik. Thus, the dark veils will disappear.

Then there are 10,000 nooraani veils of the Lateefah-e-Qalb (the propensity of the spiritual heart), which are red like fire. If one eats according to desire, these veils will be contaminated with smoke, resulting in the 'flames' smouldering at low level, without being able to rise upwards quickly. On the other hand, if eating is curbed, these 'flames' rise rapidly.

There are 10,000 nooraani veils of Lateefah-e-Sirr. These veils are transparent as glass. They glitter as if sunlight is shining on them.

Then there are 10,000 nooraani veils in Lateefah-e-Rooh. They are yellowish in colour and are perfect in purity.

There are also 10,000 nooraani veils in Lateefah-e-Khafi. They appear highly polished like a mirror and have a colour of the pupil in the human eye.

In the Lateefah-e-Haqeeqat there are 10,000 nooraani veils of a green colour. All the various Lateefah* are hinged onto this Lateefah-e-Haqeeqat. The coolness of the eyes and the comfort of the heart originate from this Lateefah. This in fact is the colour of the life of the heart. After this remains the colour of cornelian (a reddish-yellow variety of gemstones).

* Lateefah: This is a spiritual entity just as the nafs and rooh are spiritual entities. The Rooh is the highest and the purest of these spiritual entities. All spiritual effects/substances/entities derive their direction from the Rooh with which they are related.

According to Najmuddin Kubra (rahmatullah alayh), the Saalik who has acquired these colours whether intentionally or unintentionally, will certainly reach the stage of Fana. The volitional intention of the Saalik is of no significance in this attainment.

After considerable hardship and numerous acts of mujaahadah, this colour easily asserts itself. Once the aforementioned veils have been lifted, the anwaar (celestial illumination) of the seven Lataa-if become manifest to the Saalik. This mushaahadah of the seven Lataa-if unfolds as follows:

The Lateefah-e-Qaalib beholds the jinaat; the Lateefah-e-Nafs beholds Jahannum; Lateefah-e-Qalb beholds Jannat; Lateefah-e-Sirr beholds the Angels; Lateefah-e-Rooh beholds the Auliya-e-Kiraam; Lateefah-e-Khafi beholds the Ambiya (alayhimus salaam) and Lateefah-e-Haqeeqat beholds Fakhr-e-Rusul Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

After the attainment of these stages, Noorul Anwaar (The Divine Lustre – The Noor of all Celestial lights) manifest Itself. In this Manifestation, all the anwaar mentioned earlier are relegated into oblivion. Sulook thus attains completion – the Goal having being attained and the journey of the Taalib is transformed into the state known as Jazbah Jali which is explained hereunder.

Let it be known that when the Saalik adopts Sulook for Allah's Love, involving himself in noble acts of worship, Salaat, Saum, Tahaarat, etc., and searches for the proximity of Allah, then this state of his quest is termed Jazbah Khafi and Sêr Ilallaah (The Journey towards Allah). This state is regarded as the inaugural stage of Sulook. Minus this jazbah (enthusiasm), it is not possible to tread the Path of Sulook. This state is conveyed by Allah's statement (in the Qur'aan):

“They love Allah...”

If the Saalik is constant in this stage, Allah Ta'ala makes him His beloved. He draws the Saalik towards Himself and He unravels the

mysteries of His Love. Thus, the Saalik becomes Waasil (i.e. he meets Allah Ta'ala). This state of Wusool (attainment of Divine Proximity) is called Jazbah Jali. This is referred to in Allah's statement:

“He loves them.”

It is absolutely impossible to attain this elevated rank of Jazbah Jali without obedience to the Shariat of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Hence, Allah Ta'ala says:

“Say (O Muhammad!) If you love Allah, then obey me (Muhammad) and Allah will love you.”

Whoever has not tasted this secret remains unaware thereof.

If the Taalib-e-Saadiq remains steadfast in the conditions (of his ibaadat and thikr) for a consecutive period of forty days, Insha'Allah, the door of Mukaashafaat (revelations from the spiritual realm) will open up for him. Firstly, spiritual noor and spiritual stars will become visible, followed by the manifestation of angels. Then will come the mushaahadah of Sifaat (Divine Attributes). By virtue of these Sifaat certain haqaa-iq (transcendental realities) will become unravelled to the Saalik. This haal (condition) occurs in the state of bidaayat (the initial state).

When he has transcended the stage of Alam-e-Mithaal, he will behold only truth in everything. When he returns from this lofty stage to this mundane world which is just like a shadow, he takes pity on creation. He is merciful to them as he knows that they are deprived of the True Beauty and dwell in the deception of this world of falsehood, contenting themselves with phantoms. Although this person is physically with creation, his heart is far away from them.

He looks on with surprise at the pre-eminence accorded to creation and is astonished to observe that creation has not

annihilated itself in the presence of Divine Manifestation. On the other hand, people are surprised at him. They ask: 'What has happened to him?' They wonder in surprise at his annihilation – that inspite of his physical body and existence, he is oblivious of himself.

These states are all the effects of Thikr. Initially it was verbal Thikr. This progressed to the Thikr of the heart. Then followed the predominance (ghalbah) of Thikr. This leads to absorption in Thikr – the Thakir becomes annihilated in the Object of Thikr (i.e. in Allah Ta'ala). In actual fact, this is the result of virtuous action and following the Sunnat. This is the Nihaayat (Ultimate Goal) of Sulook, which can be attained only after the reformation of the Bidaayat (Initial Stage).

Conditions for Bidaayat

Among all the paths for the acquisition of the Maqsood (Ultimate Goal), the nearest and most efficacious is the tareeq (way) of Imaam Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh). According to his tareeq there are eight requisites for the correct development of Bidaayat. These are:

Constancy in Ibaadat.

Constancy in Saum.

Constancy in Silence.

Constancy in Solitude.

Constancy in Thikrullah.

Constancy in maintaining the heart's connection with the Shaikh and to derive benefit from his knowledge to the extent of annihilating one's actions in the Shaikh's options.

To refrain from raising objections against Allah Ta'ala in all conditions, whether adversity or prosperity, difficulties or ease. The degree of contentment should be such as to constrain one from asking even for Jannat for the naf's comfort, and from seeking refuge from even Jahannam. There should prevail absolute contentment with every decree of Allah Ta'ala.

All this is dependent on taufeeq from Allah Ta'ala. The one to whom this taufeeq is bestowed, knows and understands that the only Goal is the Wisaal of Allah Ta'ala. He, therefore, entrenches in his heart the love of this Quest and diverts his gaze from creation. He directs his full attention towards Khaaliq. He traverses distant valleys in his search for qurb (divine proximity) and wisaal (divine union). Banishing indolence and neglect, he adopts difficulties and mujaahadah. Suhail Tastari (rahmatullah alayh) said:

“Hijrat (migration) will remain obligatory until Qiyaamah, i.e. migration from ignorance to knowledge; from ghaflat to thikr; from sin to obedience and from persistence in sin to taubah.”

Now, these conditions will be explained separately by the fadhl and aid of Allah.

The First Requirement

The first condition is to perpetually remain with wudhu. Not even a moment should lapse without wudhu. In the event of the inavailability of water, perform tayammum until water becomes available. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Be steadfast and firm. Do not be lazy. Know, that the best of your good deeds is Salaat and it is only a Mu'min who guards wudhu.”

“Wudhu is the weapon of the Mu'min.”

“Making wudhu on wudhu is noor upon noor.”

In Ihyaul Uloom, Imaam Ghazaali (rahmatullah alayh) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“The basis of Deen is on purity.”

“The key of Salaat is tahaarat.”

“Tahaarat is half of Imaan.”

In praise of the people of Masjid-e-Quba, Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'aan Majeed:

“In it are such men who love to purify (themselves).”

Therefore, be with wudhu in every condition, whether eating, speaking or sleeping so that baatini purity is acquired by virtue of zaahiri purity. In this way will one's breast be expanded and reformed. Only those whose hearts are faultless and purified from all contamination will gain acceptance in the Pure Presence (of Allah Ta'ala). *(Physical cleanliness and tidiness are essential for taqwa - Translator.)*

A man who refrains from maintaining his physical body clean and pure in accordance with the Shariah, his baatin (soul, heart) will never adapt for Tareeqat because the zaahir (external body) is the reflection and signboard of the baatin.

If the Saalik is constant in maintaining tahaarat, it is very likely that divine anwaar will be reflected on him. The reflection of these anwaar will be impressed on his mind and, Insha'Allah, the eyes of the heart will observe such anwaar through the darkness, which they never perceived before.

The Second Requirement

The second condition is to fast in abundance and to eat less at the time of iftaar so that neither the stomach becomes upset nor will one suffer on account of hunger. Eating much as well as eating so little that one's health suffers, are improper.

Allah Ta'ala says:

“Eat and drink, and do not waste.”

Similarly, He says:

“O people of Imaan! Do not make unlawful the wholesome things which Allah has made lawful for you. Do not transgress. Verily, Allah does not love the transgressors.”

When the intention to fast is made, it is best to eat less during the time of sehri in honour of the fast. Fasting, by virtue of the special significance Allah has accorded it, holds a distinguished rank among all the arkaan (fundamentals) and acts of ibaadat. Thus, in a Hadith-e-Qudsi it is narrated:

“For every act of virtue is a fixed reward from ten fold to seventy times, except fasting. The fast belongs exclusively to Me. I shall apportion its reward.”

In other words, only Allah is aware of the quantity or amount of thawaab for fasting. Others are not aware of it. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“The odour of the mouth of a fasting person is sweeter to Allah than the fragrance of musk.”

“Fasting is a shield.”

Whoever wages jihaad against the nafs and shaitaan, necessarily requires a shield to ward off the arrows and blows.

It is said in the Hadith that the worst thing to fill is the stomach because the root of lust, greed, malice and all spiritual maladies is a filled stomach. Hence, man should be contented with a little food, sufficient to keep him healthy. Isaa (alayhis salaam) instructed his Hawaariyyoon (Disciples):

“Keep yourselves hungry and thirsty... so that you gain the ability to see your Rabb with your hearts.”

In Ihyaaul Uloom, Imaam Ghazaali (rahmatullah alayh) says that the most important objective in all things is moderation because the accepted principles in all activities is the middle category (moderation). Extremes are detestable. From our discussion on hunger, the impression of extreme hunger may be gained. However, this is not so. Divine wisdom underlying anything pertaining to the Shariah, emphasises abstention from things of desire which are detrimental, to such a degree that one who is unaware (of the wisdom) gains the impression that the objective is

to act in complete conflict with the natural urge. However, the one who is aware, knows that the command is emphasised simply to combat the inordinate greed of the emotions, and that the objective is moderation. It is exceptionally far-fetched to assume that the Shariah's aim is the complete effacement of the natural demands and requirements of the physical body. The object is only to create the state of equilibrium (i'tidaal). In view of the insistence on decreasing food consumption, man will eat moderately and achieve the aim of equilibrium. The Shariat does not advocate total denial of natural wants.

By moderation in this respect is meant abstention from over-eating. One should not eat so much that one is constrained to belch. *(According to Hakeemul Ummat Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thaanvi - rahmatullah alayh - eating should cease when one feels that another couple of morsels could be eaten. Eating should not continue until the emotion (nafs) has been satisfied. - Translator).*

Moderation in consuming food will prevent indigestion and excessive hunger. Both these conditions impede ibaadat, by inducing lethargy and diversion from Thikr. Abstain from both. Eat only that quantity which will be quickly digested so that the effect of food does not linger. In this way will a resemblance with the angels be created. Angels neither experience indigestion nor hunger. Taufeeq is the prerogative exclusively of Allah (i.e. only He can guide to His Proximity).

The Third Requirement

The third condition is silence. Besides Thikr, Ibaadat and virtue, the lips should not be opened. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Whoever believes in Allah and the Day of Qiyaamah should speak goodness or maintain silence.”

It is also said in the Hadith that a man will be flung upside down into the Fire as a consequence of the statements of his tongue.

Hadhrat Ali (karramallahu wajhah) said that all virtue is enwrapped in four acts: Speech, silence, sight and movement. Thus, every statement which is not Thikrullah is nonsensical. Every silence shorn of contemplation is forgetfulness. Every gaze which is without ibrat (taking lesson), is ghaflat (negligence). Every movement which is not for Ibaadat, is mischief. May Allah have mercy on that bandah (servant of Allah) whose speech is Thikrullah, whose silence is fikr (contemplation), whose gaze is ibrat, whose movement is ibaadat, who saves others from the evil of his tongue and hand and who saves himself from falsehood and hypocrisy. When man complains, Allah Ta'ala says:

“They say with their mouths that which is not in their hearts.”

When Allah Ta'ala had willed to bestow speech to Isaa (alayhis salaam) in infancy, He (Allah) instructed Maryam (alayhas salaam) to inform people that she is fasting, hence unable to speak. This reply she was ordered to give when people questioned her about the legitimacy of her baby. According to the Shariah of Isaa (alayhis salaam), silence was a requirement of the fast. Thus, when Maryam (alayhas salaam) maintained silence, Isaa (alayhis salaam) spoke during his infancy.

Similarly, when you (O Saalik!) prevent your tongue from futile talk, then your heart which is an infant in the Road to Allah, will begin to hear. When the tongue converses, the heart pays attention in silence and when the tongue maintains silence, then the heart begins to speak. Therefore, restrain the tongue to save your heart from listening to nonsensical talk. Instead, engage your tongue in Thikr so that your heart too becomes accustomed to Thikr by listening to the tongue. And, Allah is the Bestower of taufeeq.

The Fourth Requirement

The fourth condition is perpetual solitude which envisages the sealing of the external senses for the sake of opening up the internal (spiritual) senses and faculties of the heart so that one sees such things in the state of awakefulness, which others see

only in dreams. The spiritual faculties of the heart will not open up while the external senses remain open. Precisely for this reason do many things which are not seen in awakefulness, become discernible in dreams. During sleep the external senses are inactive, leading to the opening of the faculties of the heart. Therefore, if the external senses are sealed even during awakefulness, the heart's faculties will open up and things which are seen only in dreams will become visible. This was the secret for the adoption of solitude by Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) fifteen years before Nubuwwat in the Cave of Hira where he would stay in solitude for a week or two at a time and experience the manifestation of anwaar.

According to Jaabir Bin Abdullah (radhiyallahu anhu), Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) would confine himself in the Cave in solitude for a month at a time.

The khalwat khana (the place of solitude) should be such a small cubicle wherein one may sit cross-legged at the time of Thikr and stand erect for Salaat. It should be dark inside, not allowing penetration of sunlight and the light of day.

The person in solitude should not emerge unnecessarily for relaxing himself, etc. Other than needs such as Wudhu, Salaat, Jama't and Juma', he should remain in his confined state of solitude. He should be courageous and manly, stepping forward with valour. Even at the cost of his life, he should not falter. He should not be indolent and cowardly. He should become a true Lover (of Allah), casting behind him all things other than his Maqsood (Goal).

He should remain resolute in peace of the heart, in contentment of the nafs and in the comfort of the rooh. He should purify his emotions from lust and desire and adorn his heart with taqwa, his intelligence with Imaan, and his limbs with obedience. He should brighten his anfaas (spiritual faculties) with sidq and ikhlaas and expand his breast with the glitter of Islam. Such men have been

described by Allah as the men of intelligence and the men whom Allah has guided.

He should become an embodiment of Akhlaaq-e-Hasanah (the Beautiful Attributes) such as respect, humility, forlornness, fear, etc. These qualities should be ingrained in the nafs. He should shun love for the world, wealth and fame.

He should make incumbent on himself eating less, silence, trust in Allah, firmness of faith, generosity, contentment, honesty, peace and thinking before acting. Food and clothing should be acquired in lawful ways so that there remains no scope for the waswasah (evil whisperings) of shaitaan.

It is best to inculcate the habit of solitude and riyadhat even before adopting khalwat (total solitude) and the Saalik should make eating less, meeting less, sleeping less and drinking water less his nature. He should not eat much meat because Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“When you eat meat in abundance, you will acquire the desire for sexual relations.”

Thus, eat meat once or twice a week and when eating meat, eat little. The Mashaa-ikh have permitted the Muftadi' (beginner) to eat meat in small quantities so that he does not become weak. He should eat light nourishment which will digest quickly and he should not fill his stomach completely.

The etiquettes of eating in solitude and in public are as follows: Recite Bismillah. Take the food in small morsels. Maintain the heart's presence (huzur-e-qalb) in Thikr so that the zulmat of the desire for food is transformed with the noor of Thikr. When swallowing each morsel, express heartfelt shukr to Allah Who has permitted the intake of the morsel and its easy passage down the throat. Only after the first morsel has reached its destination in the stomach, should another morsel be taken. Repeat the

procedure until eating is completed. Similarly, drink water in sips, saying Bismillah, and at the end express shukr to Allah Ta'ala.

According to some Sufiya it has been learnt from experience that thirst is a deceptive desire. Therefore, whoever develops the habit of drinking less water at the time of thirst, Allah Ta'ala will quench his thirst until he gains the ability of abstaining from water for several months at a time. He will not even have the desire to drink water. Despite this, his physical health will not deteriorate in anyway whatsoever. His body will be sustained by the moisture acquired from the food he eats.

Shaikh Muhayyuddeen (rahmatullah alayh) says in Riyaadhus Saliheen that when times are corrupt, then for the fear of being involved in fitnah and haraam, the adoption of solitude is best. And, Allah Ta'ala through the medium of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Run towards Allah. Verily, I am to you a clear warner (warning you) of Him.”

Muslim Bin Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqaas (radhiyallahu anhu) narrates that he heard Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) say:

“Allah Ta'ala loves the servant who is pious, pure, independent (i.e. he does not hanker after wealth and fame) and hidden (i.e. he has adopted solitude and is unknown).”

It is reported in Bukhaari and Muslim that Abu Saeed Khudri (radhiyallahu anhu) narrates that a man asked Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam): “Who is the best?” Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“The Mu'min who wages jihaad in the Path of Allah with his wealth and life.”

The man then enquired: “Who is best after him?”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“A man who has gone into seclusion on a mountain peak to worship Allah.”

In another narration the second best person was said to be “a man who fears Allah and saves people from his evil.”

A narration in Bukhaari also reports that Abu Saeed Khudri (radhiyallahu anhu) narrated that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“The time will soon dawn when the best wealth of a Mu'min will be goats. He will flee with them to some mountain peak (away from the mischief corrupting Deen) to protect his Imaan.”

Hadhrat Aishah Siddiqah (radhiyallahu anha) said that the incidence of Wahi began with true dreams which Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) saw. The interpretation of these dreams would materialize as clear as daylight. Thereafter, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) went into seclusion in the Cave of Hira, spending several nights at a time in ibaadat without going home. He would take along sufficient food for his stay in the Cave. This was his regular practice until finally Wahi came in this Cave. The Angel, Jibrael (alayhis salaam) arrived and commanded: “Recite!” Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “I am unable to recite.” Jibrael (alayhis salaam) then embraced Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), pressing him forcefully against himself (Jibrael). On releasing Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), Jibrael (alayhis salaam) said: “Recite!” But Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) again said: “I am unable to recite.” The Angel once again held him in a tight embrace and on releasing Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), the Angel said:

“Recite in the Name of your Rabb Who has created. He created Man...”

After this incident, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), with heart shivering, hastened to Hadhrat Khadijah (radhiyallahu anha) and exclaimed: “Cover me! Cover me!”

He lay covered up in a blanket for a considerable time until his fear dissipated. After narrating the episode to Khadija (radhiyallahu anha), he added that he feared for his life. But she allayed his fears and exhorted him never to have fear. She swore an oath that Allah Ta'ala would not disgrace him. She said: "You exhort kindness to relatives, speak the truth, assist with the loads of the weak, aid the poor, feed the wayfarers and you aid the truth." Such a pious man will not be destroyed. On the contrary, he will only advance, progress and be prosperous.

The Ahlullah, therefore, say that when even Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was fearful of calamities and when he feared for his life inspite of his noble character, enjoying divine protection and being sinless, then what can be said of others who enter the Path of Sulook and seclusion with the burden of a corrupt moral character?

When a person desires some rank by Allah and for protection against shaitaan, he should inculcate in him the noble attributes mentioned by Khadijah (radhiyallahu anha). Imaam Nawaawi (rahmatullah alayh) writes in Sharhul Muslim that seclusion is the way and practice of the Saliheen and the Aarifeen.

Abu Sulaiman Daarani (rahmatullah alayh) said that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) loved seclusion because the heart acquires tranquillity in seclusion; it aids in contemplation; it sets man free from worldly love and attachment and a high degree of concentration is achieved.

Know that when Jibraeel (alayhis salaam) first appeared in the presence of Fakhr-e-Alam Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) in the Cave of Hira, he instructed Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) to recite and propagate (Qira't and Tableegh) because Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had already passed the stages of practising riyaadhat, reduction in association with people, despising the world, adoption of seclusion, so much so that he had practically renounced the city and his home. He contented himself with the barest minimum need of food.

Sometimes he would abstain from even this bare minimum, saying: "I eat and drink from my Rabb." When finally, he was reformed and qualified for the office of Tableegh, Allah Ta'ala aided him with Wahi. Thus, the Mantle of Risaalat was bestowed to him.

This, then is the Way Allah chose for His Ambiya (alayhimus salaam). To follow the method of these illustrious personages is imperative for the acquisition of spiritual and moral reformation (tarbiyat). Divine Proximity and Favour can be acquired only after adoption of riyaadhat, seclusion, reduction in eating, renunciation and abandoning association (i.e. unnecessary association).

In a narration in AwaAariful Ma-aAarif, Hadhrat Ibn Mas'ud (radhiyallahu anhu) states that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"Soon will there dawn an age on people in which no one's Imaan will be safe, except he who takes his Deen and flees from city to city, mountain to mountain and from cave to cave like a fox attempting to escape the clutches of a hunter."

The Sahaabah asked: "O Rasulullah! When will such a time dawn?"

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"When sin will be committed in the pursuit of rizq and when abstention from nikah will be lawful."

The Sahaabah enquired: "We have been commanded with nikah. How will abstention therefrom be lawful in that age?"

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"In that age parents will be the cause of a man's destruction. If a man has no parents, his wife will be the cause of his destruction. If he has no wife, destruction will overtake him from the side of his close relatives."

The Sahaabah asked: “O Rasulullah! How will they destroy a man?”
Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“His relatives will criticize him because of his little earnings. As a result of their pressure he will transgress the limits in pursuit of opulence and become audacious in the commission of haraam. In the pursuit (of more wealth) he will destroy himself and his Deen.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) also said:

“After the second century, the noblest person will be he whose burden is the lightest.”

When the Sahaabah enquired about the meaning of the “lightest burden”.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“The person who has neither wife and children nor wealth. His reckoning will be lightest.”

(This is applicable to such times of corruption when even wives and children will destroy the Imaan of a man. In this regard the Qur’aan says: “O People of Imaan! Verily some among your wives and children are your enemies. Therefore, beware of them”. – Translator.)

Hadhrat Junaid (rahmatullah alayh) said:

“Whoever desires the safety of his body and the peace of his soul, should seclude himself from people because this is an age of terror. An intelligent man in this age is only he who adopts solitude.”

In a Hadith, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) has stated that association with people and tolerating their inconveniences, are superior to renunciation and solitude. This should not be misunderstood, because it applies to a Muslim who has already adorned his nafs with riyadhat and lofty attributes and has

attained an elevated stage of roohaani tranquillity. Allah Ta'ala has already bestowed to him a mountain of Sabr and an ocean of Ridha. Peace and tranquillity have already become entrenched in his heart. He has already become an embodiment of the virtues of perseverance, firmness, dignity, moderation in all things, purity, generosity, patience, courage, contentment, piety and honour. He should be a man who has achieved the ability of controlling anger and suffering hardships. He should be one who has already effaced greed, desire, anger, pride, vanity and arrogance. For such a man it will be superior to associate with people and tolerate their inconveniences and the difficulties which they strew in his path. Such a man constitutes a source of moral and spiritual benefit to others. In spite of association, the khalwat of a man of this virtuous character will not be disturbed.

Rasulullah's (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) direction (pertaining to association with people) does not refer to a person who has not ascended to the lofty stage of virtue (described above). It does not apply to a man in whom exist the bestial attributes (anger, wrath, vengeance, etc.), the attributes of animality (lust, craving for food, drink, sex, etc.) and the despicable attributes of temperament (greed, desire, love for wealth and fame, etc.). For such a person khalwat (seclusion) is waajib (incumbent) so that he does not inflict inconvenience and difficulty on others by his mingling with them and so that the servants of Allah are saved from the mischief which ensues in the wake of his back-biting, scandalising, jealousy, etc. One cannot expect better from a man who is enslaved to base desires.

In fact, a careful look at this Hadith will indicate that it confirms khalwat (seclusion). The relevant Hadith mentions "the Mu'min" which means a Kaamil Mu'min (or a perfect Mu'min). Only one who is spiritually and morally adorned is a Kaamil Mu'min. However, some people, because they do not understand the meaning of this Hadith, accord complete preference to ikhtilaat (association). But, the restrictive condition, viz., tolerating the inconveniences inflicted by others, stated by Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) implies that the one who should

associate, should be a reformed Mu'min. It also implies that for a man bereft of the ability of Sabr, the option will be the opposite, i.e. khalwat will be best for him.

Therefore, O Searcher! Strive diligently and struggle in abandoning evils and abstaining from bestial desires so that you acquire zaahiri and baatini peace and contentment.

Sirri Saqati (rahmatullah alayh) said:

“Only he is kaamil (perfect) whose light of taqwa is not dulled and damaged by mingling with people.”

Know that the Mashaa-ikh have many different methods for the tarbiyat (training and reforming) of the Saalikeen. After the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam (radhiyallahu anhum), the majority of Mashaa-ikh have adopted the method of seclusion and renunciation for training the Saalikeen in the Path of Sulook. As far as the Sahaabah-e-Kiraam (radhiyallahu anhum) were concerned, the companionship of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was adequate for their success and spiritual achievements. They achieved success without khalwat (seclusion). In a single session in the company of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) they would acquire such lofty spiritual knowledge which others could not gain in even years of seclusion.

The underlying cause for this fruit (of swift success acquired by the Sahaabah) was their iraadat. Iraadat means abstention from aadat (habit). It is common knowledge that the aadat of the Sahaabah was the culture of Jaahiliyyah which was their way of life prior to Imaan. When a total transformation occurred in their condition as a consequence of the spiritual illumination of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and they offered absolute and wholehearted obedience, it meant in effect they had already been put to test. They had emerged firm, truthful and solid. Allah Ta'ala then permeated their hearts with Imaan. Allah Ta'ala aided them with the Noor of His Special Hidaayat. Thus, inspite of association with their families and inspite of involvement in earning their livelihood and participating in Jihaad which

occasioned the association with even traders, munafiqs and kaafirs, they reached the pinnacle of perfection (Kamaal). Their entire effort was expended in following Rasul-e-Kareem (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and their total gaze was focused in contemplation on the spiritual beauty and excellence of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), the chief of that august circle of Muhibbeen (Lovers of Rasulullah –). Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was the embodiment and fountain of all virtue and excellencies.

When Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) discerned firmness in the iraadat (resolve) of the Sahaabah, he cast the reflection of the light of his blessed heart on them and by a glance of Hidaayat he transferred to them the anwaar (celestial illumination) and treasures of Nubuwwat. Thus, Shaikh Shuhaabuddin Suharwardi (rahmatullah alayh) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Whatever Allah Ta’ala had inspired into my heart, I transferred it into the heart of Abu Bakr.”

Thus, the hearts of the Sahaabah were illuminated with this Noor (emanating from the heart of Rasulullah – Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) which made the lamps of their lives brighten up. Their base human attributes (i.e. the lowly attributes of animality, passion and temperament) vanished and they became high-ranking worshippers, men of piety, men of knowledge and wisdom, men of divine perception, perfect believers in Tauheed, thus acquiring thorough grounding and firmness in all branches of knowledge.

Thereafter, the illumination of the Ma-aAarif of the illustrious Sahaabah was transposed to the Taa-bi’een, transforming their hearts and lives into an outstanding Noor. In this way was the spiritual illumination transferred from one generation of illustrious souls to the other in succession. Hence, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“My Sahaabah are like the stars. Whomever (of my Sahaabah) you follow, you will attain guidance.”

This points to that Noor which originated in the heart of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and cast its reflection like stars into the hearts of the various Sahaabah in varying degrees of strength and power. In turn, the reflected Noor was reflected from the hearts of the Sahaabah to others, elevating them to the celestial realms. In this way did they become Waasil (attaining the Goal of Divine Love).

Thus, when even a single glance of this Sun of Celestial Excellence and Spiritual Illumination elevates one to the lofty realm of spiritual perfection, then there is no khalwat which can be superior to this jalwat (mingling and association). Which intelligence can ever give preference to any khalwat in the presence of such suhbat (of Rasulullah – Sallallahu alayhi wasallam)? Khalwat, in fact, is adopted for the acquisition of the lofty state of excellence which the Sahaabah had acquired from the suhbat of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

However, whoever has not been fortunate to be blessed with this treasure (emanating directly from the faidh of Nubuwwat), has necessarily to adopt the initial way of khalwat and renunciation practised by Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) so that he may acquire the fragrance and breezes of Allah’s benevolence. In this regard Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“In your age there are fragrances and breezes. Therefore, stand in the path of those breezes and their fragrances.”

Standing in the presence of these celestial fragrances and breezes and acquiring their maximum benefit are dependent on total and beautiful submission to the Ahkaam of the Shariat. A man whose heart is involved in worries will not be able to fulfil the Ahkaam with excellence and perfection. He is, therefore, constrained to adopt seclusion so that his internal state of agitation and anxiety

dissipates and he gains peace and concentration of heart, focusing his attention in only one direction.

The one who adopts seclusion for this aim, should be constant and not abandon it because. It is a Ni'mat (a favour of Allah Ta'ala) which sets the heart free from the encumbrances of creation and solidifies the resolve in a matter pertaining to the Creator. It fortifies iraadah and qasd (intention) and produces a dislike for nafsani pleasures and worldly attachments. These effects of khalwat are on account of the blocking of the external physical senses by seclusion. The vista of the eye is the door of the heart. By way of this avenue all the calamities of the heart reach the external sphere, resulting in the production of carnal pleasures and lust. But, when khalwat is adopted, these avenues of physical senses are sealed, and in this way, the Salik is saved from the calamities of the heart. When the eye does not see anyone, the heart will neither crave for wealth nor incline towards females.

Thus, an intelligent and wise man can never deny the significance and value of seclusion, especially when there exists the clear basis for the validity of khalwat in Rasulullah's (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) practice of seclusion in the Cave of Hira. Repeatedly would he seclude himself in the Cave of Hira for engrossment in long spells of Ibaadat.

Some Mashaa-ikh have confined the duration of khalwat to forty days on the basis of the narration of Hadhrat Ibn Abbaas (radhiyallahu anhu) who reported that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"Whoever, adopts (the practice of) Ikhlas for the sake of Allah Ta'ala for forty mornings (days), fountains of wisdom will become manifest in his heart and on his tongue."

According to some Mashaa-ikh, the period of seclusion is one month. The basis for this view is the narration of Hadhrat Jaabir (radhiyallahu anhu).

Hadhrat Aishah (radhiyallahu anha) reports that the occurrence of Wahi was with the incidence of true dreams. Thereafter Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) developed a love for seclusion. This establishes that even prior to khalwat, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was a Nabi on the basis of the Wahi of Ru'ya Salihah (pious and true dreams). The love for khalwat was the effect of Wahi. Thus, seclusion too is among the affairs of the Deen. Besides this, even before the advent of Wahi, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was divinely protected against the commission of detestable acts and statements. Reprehensible acts and statements never proceeded from his venerable person. This act is well-illustrated by an episode which occurred during his childhood when he had participated in the renovation of the Ka'bah. When he was lifting a heavy stone an occasion arose when his aurah (the part of the body from the navel to the knees) was exposed. Exposure of aurah was not considered bad in the custom of the Arabs. However, when this happened, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) collapsed unconscious. While falling he lifted his gaze to the heavens and simultaneously concealed his satr. Thereafter, never again was his satr ever exposed or seen by anyone.

The adoption of repeated seclusion by Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is a confirmed fact. Allah Ta'ala did not forbid Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) from khalwat. In fact, khalwat was the medium for the appearance of the Angel and the revelation of the Qur'aan. We, therefore, understand that khalwat is a Deeni affair. If khalwat was in conflict with the Deen, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) would certainly have been prevented therefrom by Allah Ta'ala.

Just as khalwat was mubaarak (blessed) for Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), so too will it be mubaarak for us, Insha'Allah. Allah Ta'ala Himself says:

“Verily, there is for you in the Rasool a beautiful patten (to adopt).”

Allah Ta'ala also says:

“Say (O Muhammad!) If, indeed, you love Allah, then follow me (Muhammad) and Allah will love you and He will forgive you your sins.”

After the departure of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu anhum) could not find the opportunity for khalwat on account of the engrossment in the Fiqhi Laws of the Shariah and participation in Jihad. But, after the establishment and consolidation of the Shariat, they involved themselves in khalwat.

The many benefits of khalwat are: Being in a constant state of purity. Constant Thikr of the tongue and heart. Abundant tilaawat. Abstention of the tongue and all the physical senses from futile actions. Always performing the daily and Juma' Salaat in Awwal Waqt (i.e. in the best time stated by the Shariah) because the one in seclusion will always be in anticipation of Jamaat. Food will be eaten only when one is truly hungry. One will sleep only when truly overcome by sleep. Perpetual silence, speaking only when necessary. A beautiful conduct with Allah Ta'ala will be maintained. Sincerity, a true quest, concentration, contemplation, humility, dependence solely on Allah, trust in Allah and independence will be acquired. Pride and show will be abandoned. Corrupt desires will be relinquished.

The meaning of khalwat is wholehearted involvement and submission to the Shariah. The Mashaa-ikh have stressed adherence to the Shariah to the extent of even emphasising ghushl for Juma' even during winter.

This is the khalwat of the people of the Deen. Only an ignoramus and spiteful person will deny this noble practice of khalwat.

Nubuwwat was latent in Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) even prior to the progression of Wahi, hence he, himself said:

“I was a Nabi when Adam was still between water and sand.”

In other words, even before the physical form of Adam (Alahis Salaam) was created, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was already a Nabi. When in this external physical world, the manifestation of his Nubuwwat was desired, khalwat was adopted. All connections besides Allah were severed.

In the same way, Wilaayat (sainthood) is latent in a Wali prior to its manifestation. For it to assert itself, khalwat is necessary. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that man is like a mine of gold and silver. The gold and silver are brought to the surface only after a considerable effort and labour. Similarly, the anwaar of spiritual excellences become manifest only after mujaahadah (striving against the nafs). For this reason is it essential to engage in abundant Thikr and tilaawat; to remain in a perpetual state of wudhu; to be steadfast in Salaat and Saum; to abstain from lust and pleasure; to contemplate Allah's Presence and to supplicate and commune with Him. Allah Ta'ala says:

“It is not the eyes which are blind; but, the hearts within the breasts are blind.”

One whose heart is deprived of perceiving the anwaar of Divine Splendour is in reality blind.

The cause of this spiritual blindness is the abundance of shaitaani and nafaasani waswasah as well as the discardance of Thikrullah. Precisely, for this reason does Allah Ta'ala say:

“Whoever abstains from the Thikr of Allah, We appoint over him a shaitaan. Thus, he (the shaitaan) becomes for him a companion.”

Thus, the treatment for spiritual blindness is abundance of Thikr and purification and adornment of the nafs. In this way, with the permission of Allah, will the veils (of spiritual darkness) be gradually lifted and the devotee ultimately attains his Goal (i.e. Qurb-e-Ilaahi or Divine Proximity). He emerges then onto the stage of composure (jami'iyat), i.e. khalwat even in jalwat (public). Then, even if the devotee of Allah is in public association, his

heart, mind and soul will be enwrapped in true seclusion. Confirming this state, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Acquire fiqh and remain in solitude.”

When the heart gains strength and firmness from Thikr, and both seclusion and association become the same, then mingling with others will not be detrimental. This is exactly the purport of Rasulullah’s (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) exhortation to be with body in the company of people, while the heart is separated from them. And, this is the secret underlying the statement of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam):

“A Muslim who mingles with people and tolerates their indiscretion, is better than a Muslim who dissociates from them.”

O Beloved! Strive to open the eyes of the heart so that you perceive with vividness (mushaahadah) the illumination of Divine Splendour. Whoever has not emerged onto the stage of internal purity and splendour of the heart, not having reached the rank of the devotees of Allah, is in reality blind even though both his eyes are open. Allah Ta’ala said:

“Whoever here on earth is blind (being unable to perceive Allah), he will likewise be blind in the AAakhirah . In fact, he will be more astray.”

Therefore, be alert! Do not raise objections. The practice of khalwat is based on the action of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). If your understanding cannot comprehend the aforementioned mysteries of khalwat and if you have not been created to be a recipient of this bounty, then at least guard your tongue from criticizing and reviling those who have been blessed with this ni’mat. Have no hasad (jealousy) for these noble personages who protect their zaahir and baatin from sins and their stomach from haraam and mushtabahaat. They fear Allah Ta’ala, hence they adopt khalwat while you deny and denounce

khalwat. You prohibit these actions while it does not behove a Mu'min to create obstacles for those who protect the Deen.

Have mercy on yourself and your Deen. Do not attempt to prevent others from guarding their Deen. Such action is evil and irreligious. There are many mureeds who are unable to protect their hearts and Deen without khalwat. To expect them to live in jalwat (mingling with people) and guard their Deen is an imposition which is beyond their capabilities. And this is injustice. Allah Ta'ala, Himself says that He imposes on every person only what is bearable to him. Every Muslim knows that khalwat is permissible in the Shariat. Hence, objection against it can never be valid. The Qur'aanic verse, depicting the statement of Ibraahim (alayhis salaam), viz. "I am going to my Rabb, for surely, He will guide me.", implies khalwat because this departure of Ibraahim (alayhis salaam) was dissociation and withdrawal from society. He left his home, family and the people. This is what khalwat entails.

The Qur'aan also mentions that Allah Ta'ala bestowed Ishaq (alayhis salaam) to him when he had withdrawn from society. In the episode of Maryam (alayhas salaam), whenever Zakariyyah (alayhis salaam) visited her in the mihrab (chamber), he saw her with out-of-season fruit. This mihrab was Maryam's (alayhas salaam) cloister of khalwat.

Similarly, Allah Ta'ala says: *"We promised Musaa thirty nights and completed (the period) with (another) ten nights."* These forty nights were a period of khalwat. He had withdrawn from his home and society for this time.

In the same way Dawood and Sulaimaan (alayhimas salaam) would withdraw from society and go into seclusion. It is narrated that the practice of Dawood (alayhis salaam) was to render public service one day, withdraw into khalwat the next day and preach the third day.

When the time for the demise of Sulaimaan (alayhis salaam) drew close, and the construction of Baitul Maqdis had not yet been completed, he instructed that his death should not be revealed. His body should be left standing, leaning on his staff. This

instruction was carried out. The jinn, thinking he was alive, continued with the construction work. Since the jinn were aware of his practice of withdrawal from society and seclusion, they did not call on him. They laboured under the impression that, in accordance with his normal habit, he was in khalwat. Only when Sulaimaan (alayhis salaam) finally fell to the ground on account of the collapse of his staff which was eaten by borer beetles, did the jinn realize that Sulaimaan (alayhis salaam) was dead.

These facts confirm that khalwat is the Sunnat of the Ambiya (alayhimus salaam). Whoever objects to khalwat, in fact, objects against the illustrious Ambiya (alayhimus salaam).

Some Mashaa-ikh remain in khalwat perpetually until they have accomplished their mission (of attaining divine proximity, i.e. they have become waasil). In view of their accomplishment in spiritual excellence and perfection, they perform the duty of guiding mankind on the instruction of Allah Ta'ala (an instruction which Allah Ta'ala inspires into their hearts).

Some Mashaa-ikh take a rest a week between two periods of khalwat. This form appears to be the better one because it conforms with the mujaahadah of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) according to Jabir and Aishah (radhiyallahu anhuma). Their narrations have already been mentioned earlier. It was the practice of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) to go into the seclusion of the Cave of Hira sometimes for a week, two weeks and even a month. After the period of khalwat, he would return to the city. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said to Abdullah Bin Amr Bin Al'As:

“Your nafs too has a right over you. Therefore, remain awake at night (for ibaadat) and sleep as well.”

The reason for this is that all acts of ibaadat are executed via the agency of the nafs. The nafs is like a horse. The rider reaches his destination by riding the horse. The permanent adoption of khalwat will be a severe imposition on the nafs which will not be able to bear the rigours of such prolonged seclusion. It will

consequently rebel and shaitaan will gain an opportunity to give effect to his scheme. In collusion with the nafs, he will deflect and destroy the Saalik. The Saalik will completely abandon khalwat which will then appear dreadfully detestable. Without the special fadhl of Allah Ta'ala it will then not be possible to return to seclusion.

The nafs will be encouraged if it is occasionally given a rest. Thus, it will enter a second period of khalwat eagerly, enthusiastically and with a true resolve to diligently practice riyaadhat. In this way will the nafs compensate for even the intervening holiday period. It will remain in peace and rest, without clashing with the Saalik. Evil thoughts will become negligible. A Saalik who has adopted this way of khalwat will experience such spiritual illumination and revelation which another Saalik will not acquire even after a considerable time of striving.

Fasl Eight

The fifth requirement is verbal Thikr. Keeping in the heart its meaning, it should be recited with full force either silently or audibly as the Saalik has been instructed (by the Shaikh). He should be constant in this form of Thikr until the Thikr manifests its effect in his veins.

The best form of Thikr as reported in the Hadith is لا اله الا الله. Allah Ta'ala commanded Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) to become aware of this very Kalimah. Thus, He says: "Know that there is no being worth of worship, but Allah."

After the thaakir has constantly and steadfastly engrossed himself in the Thikr for a considerable time period, he will attain peace of heart. In this regard Allah Ta'ala says: *"Verily, with the Thikr of Allah do hearts find peace."*

The Saalik then derives affection (uns) from Allah and His remembrance. At the same time he will detest such association which interferes with the khalwat of the heart.

When the heart has attained the stage of total absorption (istighraaq) in Thikr, the Saalik is instructed to refrain from verbal Thikr. His attention is then totally focused on Allah Ta'ala. His absorption in divine contemplation reaches the stage where he becomes divorced from ego and stands in the presence of the Divine Attributes.

Baihqi says that Baayazid was asked about the conception of Ma'rifat. He replied: "Wonder and astonishment in Thikrullah."

In other words, by the perception and vision of the excellence and splendour of the Object of Thikr, i.e. Allah Ta'ala, the Saalik in this elevated stage considers even Thikr as a cause of astonishment and amazement. Describing jahl (ignorance), Baayazid (rahmatullah alayh) said: "Jahl is to be forgetful of the Thikr of Allah."

Najmuddin Kubra (rahmatullah alayh) said that after being engrossed in verbal Thikr for a considerable period of time, the Saalik's heart perceives a tiredness and becomes perplexed. To gain concentration of the heart, his tongue refrains from Thikr. Then besides the Fardh and Sunnat-e-Muakkadah Salaat, verbal Thikr does not emanate from him for years. However, even though there is verbal Thikr in the Faraa-idh and Sunnat-e-Muakkadah, it will never be permissible to discard these acts of ibaadat. In this regard his heart will direct him not to abandon these acts of ibaadat for the sake of abstention from thikr-e-lisaani (verbal Thikr). This is precisely the purport of Rasulullah's (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) statement: "Seek a fatwa (direction/verdict) from your heart."

Although this Saalik (in this elevated stage) is unable to resort to verbal Thikr, he is a man of Imaan and Iqaan (Imaan of a very high degree of spiritual conviction and perception). Now his Thikr is transformed into Thikr-e-Unsi (Thikr of Love) and Thikr-e-Qudsi (Thikr of Divine Holiness). These are exceptionally lofty states of contemplation. This is known as Thikr-e-Haqeeqi which is the stage where the Thaakir is annihilated (the stage of Fana) in

Mathkooor (The Object of Thikr, viz. Allah Ta'ala). He now abstains from Thikr-e-Soori* (Ritual or external form of Thikr). This is what the Sufiya convey by the statement: "The Thikr of the tongue is taqlaqah (movement of the jaws) and the Thikr of the heart is waswasah (idle thought) because true (haqeeqi) Thikr is to rise above the Thikr of tongue and heart and be annihilated in the Object of Thikr." *(These exceptionally lofty states of Thikr do not apply to ordinary people still grounded in the jihad against the nafs - Translator.)*

Know that Allah Ta'ala reforms the heart by way of Thikr because the goal –the Beloved of the heart–is Allah Ta'ala and the Thikr of His Sifaat (Attributes). Thus, the heart derives nourishment and strength from the Thikr of its Beloved. By Thikr the heart becomes purified, illuminated, polished and achieves Divine Proximity.

Firstly, Allah Ta'ala pervades the heart with His Thikr so that it becomes bright and pure by the light and effect of Thikr. Among all forms of Thikr, Kalimah Tayyibah is specified for Tauheed. It is the highest and most efficacious Thikr. Allah Ta'ala, in the Qur'aan Shareef, has clearly mentioned His Thikr on two occasions:

(1) "When it is said to them: **لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ**
(There is no being worthy of worship, but Allah), they become proudful." (Surah Saaffaat)

(2) "Therefore, know that verily, **لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ**
(There is no being worthy of worship, but Allah)." (Surah Qitaal)

Since this Kalimah is for the correctness and validity of Tauheed, it will most certainly be superior in benefit than the other forms of Thikr. This is so because Tauhid is the secret underlying all acts

* Thikr-e-Soori: This should not be misunderstood. It does not mean the discardence of the Shar'i acts of ritual Ibaadat, e.g. Salaat, Saum, etc. Such abandonment of Shar'i rituals is advocated by jahil self-styled sufis.

of obedience. According to the Hadith, **لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ** is the most superior form of Thikr.

Hadhrat Suhail Tastari (rahmatullah alayh) said that Jannat is the recompense of all righteous actions while the reward of the Kalimah **لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ** is the vision of Allah Ta'ala. This is the very Kalimah which eliminates the darkness of kufr if a kaafir recites it and his heart becomes illuminated with the Noor of Imaan. If a Muslim recites it, a degree of kathaafat (spiritual heaviness on the heart) is removed with each recitation even if it is recited a thousand times daily. At the same time his rank will be elevated.

There is no limit to the Knowledge of Allah Ta'ala, hence limitless recitation of this Kalimah will bring about limitless ranks of elevation. It is precisely for this reason Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), when ordered:

“Know that besides the True Being, there is no object of worship,” he replied: “I am aware thereof.”

Although Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had already acquired the knowledge of Allah (prior to this command being given), in fact his knowledge surpassed that of the entire creation as he was Ra-eesul Muwahhideen (the Head of the Believers in Tauheed), nevertheless it was correct to command him to ‘know Allah’ because of the limitless nature of Divine Knowledge. It was also correct to reply: “I have become aware”, because this will mean an increase in the present knowledge. Similarly, if the command is renewed and abided by every moment, then too, the acquisition of stages in divine knowledge will not end on account of such knowledge being infinite.

When Ibraahim (alayhis salaam) was ordered to accept Islam, he responded: ‘I have already accepted Islam in Allah Who is Rabb of all the worlds.’ The reason for so saying, is that the meaning of Islam is obvious. With external obedience, Islam is accepted. Its stages are, therefore, not limitless. It would not have been correct to have said in compliance to this command: ‘I have improved on

my earlier Islam'. On the contrary, to have said regarding knowledge: 'I have already known it', would not have been proper because it would have created the doubt that the knowledge of Tauheed is limited and unable of progress.

Some Sufiya said that the reciter of لا اله الا الله should certainly acquire four things:

Tasdeeq, i.e. To accept with the heart the Ma'budiyyat (divinity) of Allah Ta'ala, minus Tasdeeq, a verbal profession will be nifaaq (hypocrisy).

Honour for this Thikr. He should consider it to be the greatest of all things. If not, he will be a bid'ati.

The sweetness of this Thikr. If not, it will be riya (show).

Respect for this Thikr. If he does not respect this Thikr, he will be a faasiq.

Once Suhail Tastari (rahmatullah alayh) came out of the Musjid on a Friday and said: "Numerous people proclaim لا اله الا الله, but among them, few are sincere."

The four abovementioned qualities are to be found in the highest and most perfect state in only Hadhrat Muhammad (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). No one else besides him possesses these virtues in their most perfect state. This is why he was commanded with the knowledge of this Kalimah. A command is issued only to one who possesses the qualification and ability for the function. On account of the inherent (zaati) honour (azmat) of his mubaarak heart, he was qualified to assume the obligation of the knowledge of these words. Others were only commanded to recite these words. They were not commanded with its knowledge because of the lack of ability. A command in such circumstances would be tantamount to the imposition of an unbearable burden.

Remembrance of Allah

Know that the remembrance of Allah is fardh (compulsory) on the Taalibeen (Seekers of Divine Proximity) and Muhibbeen (Divine Lovers). In the tafseer of the ayat:

“Thus, remember Allah while you are standing, sitting and on your sides (i.e. while sleeping).”

Hadhrat Ibn Abbas (radhiyallahu anhu) said:

“Remember Allah night and day, on the land and sea, while travelling and while at home, in prosperity and adversity, in health and sickness and in private and in public.”

Some Sufiya say that Allah Ta’ala has fixed a limit for every Fardh Ibaadat and when there is a valid excuse, one is even excused from its observance. But, there is no limit for Thikr. There is no point of termination where Thikr comes to an end, neither is any excuse or reason for abstention from Thikr acceptable. No one is ever absolved of Thikr. If anyone could ever have been absolved, it would have been Hadhrat Zakariyyah (alayhis salaam). In spite of having attained such advanced age in which he did not have the strength to even speak, he was instructed to remember Allah in abundance. And, if anyone has been absolved of Thikr, it would have been the mujaahid in the battlefield. However, despite his involvement in the difficult and dangerous activity of Jihaad, the Qur’aan commands:

“O People of Imaan! When you meet a contingent (of the kuffaar), then be firm and remember Allah in abundance so that you attain victory.”

On the Day of Qiyaamah, Salaat, Saum and all acts of Ibaadat will be abrogated because in the Realm of the Aakhirat the bandah will not be under obligations. But, even in Aakhirat, Thikr will not end. Hence Allah Ta’ala says:

“(The people of Jannat will say): ‘Hamd (Praises) unto Allah who has removed from us grief.’”

“Hamd unto Allah Who has fulfilled His Promise to us.”

It is also said that the call of the inmates of Jannat will be:

“Subhaanakallaahummah...” (Glory unto You, O our Allah!)

When meeting one another, they will say:

“Salaamun Alaika.” (Peace on you.)

Another call of them will be:

“Al-hamdulillaahi Rabbil Alameen.” (All Praises unto Allah, the Rabb of all the worlds.)

In another place of the Qur’aan it is mentioned that their call will be:

“There is no deity, but Allah and only He is deserving of praise in the world and the Hereafter.”

It is thus clear that in both worlds there is the prevalence of the Thikr of Tasbeeh and Tahmeed. Perpetuity of Tasbeeh (reciting Subhaanallah) and Tahmeed (reciting of Al-hamdulillaah) is in fact perpetuity of Thikr because these imply Tauheed which is among the forms of Thikr.

Riya (show) is possible in Salaat, Saum, Zakaat, Hajj and the other acts of Ibaadat. In Sadqah there could also be the taint of mushtabah (doubtful) wealth. But no man of Imaan will proclaim Kalimah Tayyibah without Ikhlaas (sincerity). Whoever proclaims it without truth and Ikhlaas is, in fact, not a man of Imaan. On the contrary, he is a munaafiq (hypocrite). Like the kuffaar he will never be saved from the punishment of the Aakhirah . Our discussion pertains to the Ibaadat of the people of Imaan. Thus, in the Kalimah Tauheed of a Mu’min there can be no riya. On the contrary, there can be riya in all the other acts of Ibaadat. Hadhrat Ibn Abbaas (radhiyallahu anhu) narrates:

“Allah will open up the portals of Jannat. From below the Arsh a voice will proclaim: ‘O People of Jannat! And, O bounties of Jannat! Say to whom do you belong.’

They will reply:

‘We are yearning for the people of Laa-ilaaha illallaahu. We do not desire anyone besides the people of Laa-ilaaha illallaahu. Besides the people of Laa-ilaaha illallaahu, no one can enter us. We have been made haraam for whoever has not said Laa-ilaaha illallaahu. Besides the proclaimer of Laa-ilaaha illallaahu, we have no faith in anyone.’”

At that time Jahannam and the punishment of Jahannum will say:

“Only the deniers of Laa-ilaaha illallaahu will enter me. I yearn for none other but the rejecters of Laa-ilaaha illallaahu. I have been made haraam for those who proclaim ‘Laa-ilaaha illallaahu’. I shall not be satiated but with the deniers of Laa-ilaaha illallaahu. My wrath and my chastisement are only for the rejecters of Laa-ilaaha illallaahu.”

Thereafter Rahmat (Mercy) and Maghfirat (Forgiveness) will say:

“I am for the proclaimers of Laa-ilaaha illallaahu. I am the helper of those who proclaimed Laa-ilaaha illallaahu. My bounties are reserved for only the proclaimers of Laa-ilaaha illallaahu. I love only the proclaimers of Laa-ilaaha illallaahu. Jannat is halaal for the reciters of Laa-ilaaha illallaahu and haraam for those who had refrained from Laa-ilaaha illallaahu.”

Forgiveness of all sins and mercy are only for the proclaimers of Laa-ilaaha illallaahu. This is not hidden from the adherents of Laa-ilaaha illallaahu.

Narrating from Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), Ibn Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) said:

“There will be no fear on the reciters of Laa-ilaaha illallaahu, neither at the time of death nor at the time of their resurrection from their graves. It is as if I am looking at the proclaimers of Laa-ilaaha illallaahu rising from their graves at the sounding of the Trumpet, dusting sand from their hair and saying: ‘Grateful are we to Allah who has kept fear far from us.’”

According to some Sufiya, on the Day of Qiyaamah the sun, moon and all the stars will be dark, without any light. This is mentioned by Allah Ta'ala in Surah Takweer. The cause for the darkening of the stars will be the manifestation of the Noor of Laa-ilaaha illallaahu on that Day. The artificial light of the stars will fade away in the presence of the true Noor of the Kalimah Tayyibah. Since the light of Laa-ilaaha illallaahu is Divine Light, it will overshadow the light of the stars. In the presence of true light, the artificial light will be annihilated. Thus, the existence of all things on that Day will be extinguished in the presence of the Divine Existence. Hence, Allah Ta'ala says:

“Everything will be destroyed, but His Being (Zaat).”

It has been narrated that when the bandah recites Laa-ilaaha illallaahu, the thawaab he obtains therefor equals the number of kafir men and women inhabiting the earth because by his proclamation of Kalimah Tayyibah he is launching an attack on all kuffaar. Thus, he acquires a reward equal to their combined number.

Ibn Abbas (radhiyallahu anhu) said that besides Allah Ta'ala there is none worthy of worship and besides Him no one can cause any harm or give honour or disgrace.

When certain Ulama were asked about the meaning of the dilapidated and disused wells and strong palaces mentioned in Surah Kahaf, they said:

“The disused wells refer to the hearts of the kuffaar, which are bereft of the Kalimah Laa-ilaaha illallaahu. The strong palaces refer to the hearts of the Mu'mineen, which are adorned with the Kalimah.” *

Also, Allah Ta'ala says:

“If you remember Me, I shall remember you”.

* This is an esoteric interpretation which does not conflict with the literal meaning of the ~yat.

On the basis of this Divine Statement, Hadhrat Thaabit Bunaani (rahmatullah alayh) averred: "I know when Allah remembers me."
He was asked: "How do you know this?"
He replied: "When I remember Him, then I know that he remembers me."

Again, Allah Ta'ala says:

"Remember Allah much."

"Remember the Name of your Rabb and turn yourself fully to Him."

Hadhrat Saeed Khudri (radhiyallahu anhu) narrates that someone asked Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam):
"On the Day of Qiyaamah which Abid (worshipper) will have the best ranks of proximity to Allah?"

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "The one who engaged the most in Thikrullah."

"I (Abu Saeed Khudri) asked: 'O Rasulullah! Will his rank be superior to even a man who wages jihad in the Path of Allah?'"

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) replied:

"Even if the Ghaazi fights the kuffaar with such ferocity that his sword breaks and he becomes wounded and dyed in blood, then too, the Thaakir is superior in rank (than the Ghaazi)."

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) also said:

"A man who engages in Thikrullah morning and evening is superior to a man waging jihad in the Path of Allah and breaking his sword as a result of the abundance (and intensity) of his fighting, and, he (the Thaakir) is superior to the one who gives Sadqah in the state of bukhl (miserliness)."

The state of bukhl refers to the state of youth and health when most people on account of the hope of long life tend to be stingy.
Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:
"O People! Hasten forward. The Mufarrideen have gone ahead."

The Sahaabah asked: “Who are the Mufarridoon?”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Those who yearn much for Thikr. Thikr has removed the burden of their sins. Thus, on the Day of Qiyaamah, they will arrive without encumbrances.”

Now listen, O my honourable friend! It has already been revealed to the people of Baseerat (insight into the spiritual realm) that Thikr is the noblest of all righteous deeds, hence its rank is the most elevated. Allah Ta’ala, therefore, says:

“Verily, the Thikr of Allah is the greatest.”

In the tafseer of this aayat, Ibn Abbaas (radhiyallahu anhu) says that there are two meanings: One – Allah remembering you is greater than your remembrance of Allah. Two – Allah’s remembrance is greater than all other acts of Ibaadat and obedience. In a Hadith it is mentioned:

“As long as the servant engages in My Thikr and moves his lips with My Thikr, I am with him.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was asked: “Which deed is the best?” He said: “Maintaining the tongue moist with the Thikr of Allah and the arrival of death in the state of Thikr.”

Among all the Saalikeen, the Thaakir is the noblest searcher of Allah Ta’ala. No one can attain union with Allah (i.e. become Waasil) without Thikr. The commencement of Thikr is from Allah and its end is also with Allah. The Qur’aan Shareef says:

“Unto Him do virtuous words rise and these virtuous words (i.e. Kalimah Tauheed) elevate righteous deeds.”

Thikr unites the Thaakir bandah with Mathkoor (Allah Ta’ala). Allah therefore says:

“If you remember Me, I too shall remember you.”

Know that the ultimate aim of all acts of Ibaadat is this very Thikr. Allah's statement testifies to this: *"Establish Salaat for My Thikr."*

The meaning of Thikr is to reach Allah Ta'ala by means of His Ma'rifat, Muhabbat, Fana and Baqa* and by the acquisition of perfection in Tauhid and Imaan. May Allah Ta'ala grant us all this treasure. Ameen.

In describing the quality of Thikr, Allah Ta'ala says:

"Remember Allah just as you remember your fathers. In fact, (remember Him) with a remembrance of greater intensity."

He also says:

"Remember your Rabb in your heart with fear and humility, without raising the voice (i.e. silently), morning and evening and do not be of the neglectful ones."

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"Every morning and evening moisten your tongues with Thikrullah and every morning and evening free yourself from all sin."

The Aadaab and Conditions of Thikr

Thikr has several aadaab (etiquettes) and conditions, the observance of which is essential so that the barakaat (blessings) and fruits of Thikr materialise. Among these rules of Thikr are the following:

1) Constancy in the noblest Thikr, viz. Nafi-Ithbaat (Laa-ilaaha illallaahu). [This Thikr is termed Nafi (NEGATING) and Ithbaat (AFFIRMING) because it negates all things and affirms Allah – Translator.]

* These are lofty states of Divine Proximity and communion with Allah Ta'ala in which the Thaakir is annihilated in Divine Cognition

Allah Ta'ala says:

“O People of Imaan! Adopt taqwa and say a righteous word.”

The Tafseer of “righteous word” is Kalimah Tayyibah. Therefore, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said;

“Say, ‘Laa-ilaaha illallaahu’ so that you attain success.”

2) The Thaakir should maintain his body, clothes and place clean. He should acquire perfect purity by wudhu and ghusl and then sit in the Tashahhud position facing Qiblah, keeping both his hands on his thighs in close proximity to the knees. Alternatively, hold the back of the right hand with the palm of the left hand, gripping the right thumb with the left thumb. In his Kitaab, Ilmi says that this was the mode of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) thereafter, close the eyes and either inaudibly or in a slightly raised voice, in whatever manner the Shaikh has instructed, focusing the heart on Allah, recite Laa-ilaaha illallaahu repeatedly, expelling with full force and with full attention of the heart all good and bad thoughts from the heart. Draw Laa-ilaaha from the heart and deliver with full force illallaah in to the heart. In this way affirm the Zaat (being) of Allah Ta'ala, keeping the heart fully directed towards Allah Ta'ala. Continue in this manner until it becomes impressed in the heart that nothing besides Allah exists. Be constant in this Thikr in the manner described. The demand of this Thikr is to be engrossed in it at all times. At no time should the tongue be without the words of this Thikr and the heart devoid of its meaning. It should become the essence of the heart's Thikr so that the veils which are obstacles to Mushaa-hadah are lifted and Thikr and the Thaakir become fana (annihilated) in Mathkoor-e-Haqeeqi (i.e. Allah Ta'ala). Thikr is fardh on Muslims.

Allah Ta'ala says:

“What! He whose breast Allah has expanded for Islam (can he be equal to a man whose heart has been darkened with misfortune?). Verily, He is on a Noor from his Rabb. Destruction for those whose hearts have become hard as a result of abstention from Thikrullah.”

In this ayat Allah Ta'ala describes the condition of hardness of the heart. Hardness is the quality of stone. Hence, Allah Ta'ala Himself, describing the Jews after they had witnessed the mu'jizah of the restoration of the dead to life, etc. says:

“Then, your hearts became hard after this, like stone or harder.”

It is apparent that a hard stone will not break without striking it strongly. Similarly, Thikr should be with full force and strength so that the heart is cleansed and saved from Shaitaan. Allah Ta'ala says:

“Whoever turns away from the Thikr of Allah, We appoint for him a shaitaan who becomes his companion.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Shaitaan sits on the heart of the son of Adam with outspread legs. When man resorts to the Thikr of Allah, he (shaitaan) flees. When man is forgetful of Allah's Thikr, shaitaan takes into his mouth the heart of man and involves him in wasaawis, corrupt thoughts and baseless hopes.”

3) Among the conditions for Thikr, is to acquire the Thikr from a Shaikh of Thikr just as the Sahaabah took their Thikr from Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). In a narration of Shaddaad Bin Aus (radhiyallahu anhu) supported by Ubaidah Bin Saamit (radhiyallahu anhu), they say:

“We were in the company of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) when he said: ‘Is there (present) any stranger (i.e. a Jew or Christian)?’

We replied: ‘No! (i.e. no alien is present).’

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: ‘Close the door.’ After we closed the door, he said: ‘Raise your hands and say: ‘Laa-ilaaha illallaahu’.

We did as instructed. After some time Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) lowered his hands and said: ‘O Allah! I am grateful that You have sent me with this Kalimah; You have commanded this Kalimah; You have promised Jannat on the basis of this Kalimah and You will never act in conflict of Your Promise. Be happy, Allah has forgiven you.’

This Kalimah has been instructed to people by the Sahaabah, Taabi’een, Tabe Taabi’een and by one Shaikh after another down the centuries until this time. Allah Ta’ala says that Kalimah Taqwa (viz. Laa-illaaha illallaahu) has been made obligatory on the Sahaabah. They were the most deserving recipients of this Kalimah. The anwaar (radiance) of this Kalimah were impressed firmly in their hearts.

When the mureed enters into the companionship of a Shaikh who is a Saalik of Tareeqat, a knower of Haqeeqat and an expert of the subtleties of Tarbiyat (spiritual training), and he (the Mureed) is prepared for instruction (talqeen from the Shaikh), then he should be ordered with Thikr and seclusion. He should be made accustomed to khalwat and constant Thikr until his yearning increases and he has developed love for solitude and dislike for association with people. He should then observe a period of solitude (chilla).

According to the Sufiya (rahmatullah alayh) it is confirmed that Hadhrat Ali (karramallahu wajhah) said:

“O Rasulullah! Show me the road which is the nearest and the easiest for the servants of Allah and which is the best by Allah Ta’ala.’

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: ‘Close your eyes and listen to me.’

Then Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said thrice: ‘Laa-ilaaha illallaahu’ while Ali (karramallahu wajhah) was listening.”

After this, Hadhrat Ali (radhiyallahu anhu) instructed this Kalimah to Hasan Basri and he instructed it to Abdul Waahid Bin Zaid and Habib Ajami. In this way did this Thikr continue from one to the other in succession until a variety of ways and methods came into being. Everyone's Shajarah (spiritual ancestral tree) is well-known and there is no need to go into detail at this juncture.

The Shajarah of the Author of Risaalah Makkiyyah

The author of Risaalah Makkiyyah has outlined in brief his shajarah as follows:

“Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had made talqeen of Kalimah Tayyibah in this manner (as described above) to Ali (karramallahu wajhah). From Ali (karramallahu wajhah) the talqeen was transmitted in succession from one Shaikh to another as follows:

Ali ⇨ Hasan Basri ⇨ Habib Ajami ⇨ Dawood Taai ⇨ Ma'roof Karkhi ⇨ Sirri Saqati ⇨ Junaid ⇨ Abu Ali Rooh Baari ⇨ Abu Ali Kaatib ⇨ Abu Uthmaan Maghrabi ⇨ Abu Qaasim Girgaani ⇨ Abu Bakr Nussaaj ⇨ Ahmad Ghazali ⇨ Abu Najeeb Surdarwi ⇨ Ammaar Bin Yaasir ⇨ Najmuddin Kubra ⇨ Majduddin Baghdadi ⇨ Ali Lalah ⇨ Ahmad Kubraani ⇨ Abdur Rahman Karkhi ⇨ Burhaanuddin Samarqandi ⇨ and he transmitted it to this Faaqeer (the author of Risaalah Makkiyyah).”

The translator (Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi – rahmatullah alayh) stated in poetic form his own Shajarah with greater brevity. The illustrious names in Maulana Rashid Ahmad's spiritual tree (Shajarah) are:

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam)



Ali Ibn Abi Talib ⇨ Hasan Basri ⇨ Abdul Waahid ⇨ Fudhail Bin Iyaadh ⇨ Ibraahim Bin Adham ⇨ Huzaifah ⇨ Habeerah ⇨ Abu Ishaq ⇨ Muhammad ⇨ Abu Yusuf ⇨ Maudood ⇨ Shareef ⇨ Uthmaan ⇨ Mueenuddeen Habeeb ⇨ Qutbuddeen Maqtool ⇨ Fareeduddin ⇨ Alauddin ⇨ Shamsuddeen ⇨ Jalaaluddeen ⇨ Ahmad Abdul Haq ⇨ Ahmad Aarif ⇨ Muhammad ⇨ Abdul Quddus ⇨ Jalaaluddeen ⇨ Nizaamuddin Balkhi ⇨ Abu Saeed ⇨

Muhibbullah ⇒ Muhammad ⇒ Izzuddin ⇒ Abdul Haadi ⇒ Abdul Baari ⇒ Abdur Rahim ⇒ Noor Muhammad ⇒ Imdaadullah Makki.

The Mureed's Attitude

It behoves the mureed to embark on perpetual Thikr after a sincere Taubah. He should resolutely adhere to honesty, sincerity and piety. With the exception of Thikrullah, he should not move his lips and he should remain in a state of Thikr in all conditions, be it in public or privacy, in motion or rest.

He should remain in submission and with respect and dignity to his expert Shaikh just as a mayyit is in the hands of the one who gives it ghusl. Once Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said to a group of Sahaabah:

“Whoever wishes to see a dead man walking on earth, should look at Abu Bakr.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Talhah is among those people who have fulfilled their vow of shahaadat (martyrdom).”

Yet Talhah was alive at that time. The meaning of this death and martyrdom is perfection of fanaaiyat (self-annihilation) and perfection of obedience. In the Hands of Allah and His Rasool they became like dead people neither vaunting their will nor choice.

In Kash-shaaf it is mentioned that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Whoever wishes to see a martyr walking on earth, should look at Talhah.”

He also said: “Die before you die.”

In other words, here in this very life, annihilate your will in submission to the command of Allah and His Rasool (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

When the mureed becomes like a dead person, his remembrance of Allah Ta'ala will be for the sake of Allah, not for the sake of his nafs. The Thaakir becomes Waasil by means of the Thikr of Allah, not by way of the Thikr of his transitory nafs. Therefore, when the nafs has been annihilated and there is no intrusion of the transitory nafs in Thikrullah, then the mureed's Thikr will acquire perpetuity (the condition known as qadeem). Thikr will thus be perpetual even after maut. The effect of maut is only on the nafs and the physical body, not on this Thikr in which the role of the nafs and iraadah (one's will) was eliminated before.

After his awakening (from his slumber of negligence), it behoves the mureed to assign himself to a Shaikh who is a Saahib-e-Ma'rifat (accomplished in the higher, spiritual knowledge of Allah). He should be well-known for his honesty, integrity, trust and sympathetic concern (for mureeds). He should be aware of the subtleties of Tariqat. The mureed should not oppose the Shaikh in anything because the Shaikh apprizes him of the manner of Rujoo' ilallah (Turning towards Allah), instructs him in the Shar'i ahkaam of Islam and teaches him Sulook. Only he who embeds the Deen and Shariat in the hearts of the mureeds is a Shaikh. The islaah (rectification and reformation) of eating, drinking and dressing has priority over all these issues. Without the reformation of these acts, there can never be progress. According to the Hadith, the quest for halaal rizq is the next obligation after Imaan. The Sufiya have said that the search for halaal rizq is obligatory on every Muslim. However, this obligation has far greater emphasis and importance for the group which has chosen Sulook.

After having effected the islaah of these three matters (food, drink and dress), follows the fulfilment (making qadha) of the omitted obligatory acts of the Shariah, e.g. Salaat, Saum, etc. Then follows the restoration to the rightful owners of their rights which were usurped. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said in this regard:

"The restoration of one daang (a negligible sum) of haraam wealth (i.e. which was unjustly taken) to its owner is equal to seventy Haj by Allah."

If someone was assaulted or injured, appropriate compensation should be offered to the mazloom (oppressed). If someone was abused or gheebat was made of him, his pardon should be sought if he is alive. If he is no longer alive, ask Allah Ta'ala to forgive him (make istighfaar on his behalf).

After this, regard your nafs as your mortal enemy. Train and tame it by means of riyadhat (spiritual exercises) because there are two states in the nafs:

Engrossment in fulfilling carnal desires.
Abstention from obedience.

Therefore, apprehend it sternly with mujahadah, i.e. abstention from things desirable to it, and by acting in opposition to its dictates. Practice aurad (forms of Thikr) in abundance and be constant in Saum and Nawaafil. Always oppose the nafs. Embitter its tastes and restrain it from evil habits.

Endeavour to induce the nafs to adopt wakefulness instead of sleep; hunger instead of satiation and austerity instead of luxury and comfort until it repents and Allah Ta'ala substitutes its errors with virtues. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "Allah loves a youngman who repents." Desires in an oldman are naturally weak, hence the youngman's repentance has greater merit and excellence.

The Types of Thikr

Know that there is a difference between Taqleedi Thikr and Tahqeeqi Thikr. The Thikr which the laeity acquired from their fathers and seniors is known as Taqleedi Thikr (Thikr by following others). Although this Thikr does ward off shaitaan and certainly strengthens and protects Imaan, it is not as efficacious as Thikr Haqeeqi, in that it cannot enable the Thaakir to attain the lofty ranks of Wilaayat and Qurb (Divine Proximity).

The Thikr which is acquired from a Saahib-e-Talqeen and Tasarruf (i.e. a qualified Shaikh of Tareeqat) whose Silsilah of Thikr is an unbroken chain linking up with Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), is known as Tahqeeqi Thikr. It is this high grade of Thikr which acts in the baatin (heart, soul, etc.) of the mureed.

When this Thikr takes root in the heart of a sincere mureed by way of talqeen (instruction of the Shaikh), it flourishes with obedience to the Sunnah and A'maal-e-Saalihah. In consequence the rays of the illumination of Wilayat strike the mureed. At that stage, by the command of Allah, the fruits of mukaashafaat and mushaahadaat are continuously acquired by the mureed. By virtue of Ikhlâas and honesty of intention, he will, Insha'Allah, reap the gain of Ma'rifat and Muhabbat. Talqeen plays a vital role in the deliverance of the Mureed to the goals of Ma'rifat and Muhabbat. It is on this account that the Hadith likens the Mu'min to a date tree. A date tree will not bear fruit if it has not been paired. Similarly, as long as the Mureed does not acquire Talqeen from a Shaikh-e-Kaamil, his tree of Ma'rifat will not bear fruit.

Abdullah Bin Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“There is a tree which does not shed its leaves and its similitude is like that of a Mu'min. Which tree is it?”

The Sahaabah began thinking about the trees in the desert.

Abdullah Bin Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) said: “It occurred to me that it is the date tree. However, on account of the presence of seniors, I could not voice myself.

Finally the Sahaabah said: ‘O Rasulullah! Which tree is it?’

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

‘The date tree. Until it is not paired it will not bear.’ ”

The condition (shart) for Talqeen is first fasting three days in succession on the instruction of the Shaikh. Throughout the

duration of these three fasts, remain with wudhu and engrossed in Thikr, maintain eating, speaking, sleeping and association with people at a minimum. After the three days have passed, take ghusl with the intention of emerging from ghaflat (negligence) and advancing towards Huzoor (concentration) and Muraqabah with Allah. According to the Hadith, a man with the intention of embracing Islam came to Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) who instructed him:

“Take ghusl with the intention of embracing Islam.”

Thereafter, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) made talqeen of Kalimah Tauheed to him.

When taking ghusl, say: “O Allah! I have purified my body by virtue of the taufeeq You have granted me. Only this was within my control. You, now purify my heart and illuminate it with the Noor of Ma’rifat. You are the One Who operates the hearts and everything is in Your control and power.”

After ghusl, sit in the presence of the Shaikh in the Tashahhud position. Sit silently in meditation with the Shaikh until he draws a breath and says ‘Laa-ilaaha illallaah’. Taking it from the Shaikh, the Mureed should absorb it into his heart. He should understand that ‘Laa-ilaaha’ negates all thoughts and by il-lallaah he is confirming the True Existence of Allah Ta’ala. In other words:

“There is no ma’bood (object of worship), no maqsood (goal), no maujood (existence) and no mahboob (beloved), but Allah.”

Thereafter, the Mureed should loudly pronounce this Kalimah, drawing a breath while concentrating on the meaning. The Shaikh and the Mureed should then repeat it a second time. Then for a third time the Shaikh should say it, followed by the Mureed. Thereafter, the Shaikh, raising his hands, should make dua:

“O Allah! Accept this Kalimah from this Mureed and open up to him all the doors of excellence which You had opened for Your Ambiya and Auliya.”

Thereafter, the Mureed should be constant in the recitation of this Kalimah until he attains the Maqsood (Goal) by the Fadhl and Taufeeq of Allah Ta'ala.

Hadhrat Shaikh Najmuddin Kubra (rahmatullah alayh) averred that Thikr, even if it is only Thikr-e-Lisaani (verbal Thikr) holds great power, but on account of the strong barrier which wujood (existence) constitutes, the effect of Thikr-e-Lisaani does not become manifest. However, Thikr manifests its effect when the Saalik is denuded of the barrier of his existence either during sleep or on account of abundance of Thikr. He then perceives a Noor approaching from above or from infront or behind. This Noor shakes the Saalik from his place. At this juncture this Mureed recites the Kalimah because of fear. As a result of his recitation he discerns greater pressure. Feeling helpless, he falls into Sajdah, directing his attention to Allah. He now becomes a true Muslim and Mu'min. Since he has fully submitted himself to the Almighty Khaaliq. This effect of Thikr is in proportion to the amount of Thikr made. The more the Thikr, the greater the effect.

Know that the Thikr of the huroof (alphabetical letters) without concentration of the heart is termed *Thikr-e-Lisaani* (Thikr of the Tongue). Presence of mind and concentration are known as *Thikr-e-Qalbi* (Thikr of the Heart). When even huzoor (concentration) disappears and the Thaakir is annihilated in the Divine Presence, then such Thikr is called *Thikr-e-Sirr*. Hence, while making Thikr, if the Thaakir is still involved in concentration of the meaning, then he still occupies an inferior platform. If the Thikr lacks huzoor, the inferiority is doubled. This Thikr without huzoor is called Laqlaqah (mouth motions).

The essence of Thikr is total absorption in the remembrance of the Object of Thikr, i.e. Allah Ta'ala. If during the process of Thikr, the Thikr is remembered, then this too is a hijab (veil / barrier). The stage of annihilation is called Fana which means to be oblivious of one's nafs, limbs, senses and all external things. Everything has to be annihilated in Allah Ta'ala and whenever the Thaakir returns to his senses, he should find only Allah. If in this condition the Saalik

is aware that he has become fully annihilated, then this awareness is a contamination of a sort.

The state of Kamaal (Perfection) is to become annihilated of even the state of annihilation, i.e. the Thaakir is totally oblivious of being annihilated (fana). This lofty state is the limit of fana. May Allah bestow this rank to us and to all Taalibeen (Searchers of Allah's Proximity).

The reciter of Kalimah Tayyibah should necessarily observe certain things. Minus these, there is no benefit:

1) He should understand what he is saying. "What am I negating and what am I affirming?" He should understand this. All things claiming divinity are negated, e.g. the nafs, shaitaan, desire and lust. Thus Allah Ta'ala says:

"What! Have you seen the one who has taken his desires as his god?"

The Zaat of Allah Ta'ala is affirmed. This is the conception of the Thikr known as Nafi-Ithbaat (Negation and Affirmation).

2) At the time of Thikr keep the heart brimming with the glory and grandeur of Allah and understand that besides Allah there is no mahboob and maqsood.

3) Be in the search of Wisaal (meeting, union) and Mushaahadah (vivid perception) of Allah Ta'ala with a sincere intention and true love. In this quest if there is slackness in intention and deficiency in love, the Saalik will never reach Him. Therefore, if someone in order to test or verify adopts any particular shaghl which the Mashaa-ikh say results in the successful attainment (of spiritual stages), never will he succeed because the motive underlying his shaghl was to test and gain experience whereas the intention should be ikhlaas and muhabbat.

4) The recitation of Kalimah Tayyibah should be with honour and respect. If this is not observed, hardness of heart and denseness of

mind will set in. Such a Mureed will not qualify for the muhabbat of the Mashaa-ikh. The Doors of Qurb (Divine Proximity) and Mushaahadah (Divine Perception) will not open for him. Even if someone has reached the loftiest realms of Il-liyyeen by virtue of his noble character, his disrespect for Kalimah Tayyibah will bring about his fall into the lowest depths of Saafileen (the low stages of degradation).

5) Absolute concentration. Focusing the mind with full determination on Allah Ta'ala. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Your days in time are the waves of fragrance. Come in front of these waves.”

Presence in front of the waves of fragrance of Allah's Rahmat is in fact Muraaqabah (meditation). In the language of the Mashaa-ikh it is designated Lamhah, Mul'ah, Wajd and Wujood.

The sign of having acquired these five conditions is the experience by the Thaakir of a pleasure and sweetness emanating from Allah Ta'ala. Without these five qualities, the acquisition of spiritual sweetness is not possible.

Another requisite for the Thaakir is to be in the state of perfect purity (Tahaarat) at all times. He should not tolerate even a moment in the state of hadth (impurity). When hadth occurs, he should immediately take wudhu. Taking ghusl will be better because on the basis of Ijma' it is proven that ghusl is better.

It is also conditional that there be not the slightest deficiency in rendering the Faraa-idh and Sunnat-e-Muakkadah.

After observance of all these conditions, become engrossed in the Thikr of Nafi-Ithbaat. This Thikr is an adequate substitute for all Athkaar (forms of Thikr), Tasbeehaat and Nawaafil (acts of Nafil Ibaadat), and it saves one from all sin.

Refrain from talking and associating with people, especially in the initial stage of khalwat (seclusion), Tareeqat and Haqeeqat.

If the honest Mureed adheres to all these conditions consistently for forty days, then most certainly the door of Mukaashafaat (spiritual revelations) and Mushaahadaat (spiritual perceptions) from the realms of Roohaniyat will open up for him. It is narrated in the Hadith that when a person adopts Ikhlaas for Allah Ta'ala for forty days, words rising from the fountains of wisdom in his heart will flow from his lips.

The Six Stages of Thikr

Allah Ta'ala commands:

“Remember Allah in the manner He has shown you.”

The affairs indicated by Allah Ta'ala to His Thaakireen consist of six stages. The **first stage** is verbal Thikr. Thikr is done audibly by reciting the huroof (letters) while the heart is inattentive. The **second stage** is the Thikr of the Nafs. In this stage, the words are contemplated in such a way that the nafs hears. The **third stage** is the Thikr of Qalb (the heart). The heart takes cognizance of the Thikr. The cognition of the heart is the opposite of ghaflat (negligence) and *nisyaan* (forgetfulness). The **forth stage** is *Thikr-e-Sirr* which consists of *Muraaqabah* (meditation) for the attainment of Divine mysteries. The **fifth stage** is the Thikr of the *Rooh* in which occurs the manifestation of the Divine Attributes (Sifaat) and the *mushaahadah of anwaar* (celestial illuminations). The **sixth stage** is *Thikr-e-Khafi* which is the vision of the anwaar of the Beauty of Zaat (Allah's Being).

The Seven Atwaar (Stages)

Allah Ta'ala says:

“Verily, We have created you in stages.”

There are seven stages. The Qur'aan Majeed has alluded to each of these stages.

1) The physical body which consists of soil. It is a dense body. Allah Ta'ala says:

“Verily, We have created insaan from a mixture of soil.”

2) The Nafs is a jism-e-latief (subtle or metaphysical body). It permeates every part of the body just as the oil permeates in almonds. Allah Ta'ala says:

“O Nafs-e-Mutma-innah! Turn towards your Rabb.”

This points to the entity known as jism-e-latief.

3) The interior of the Qalb and Nafs. It has greater celestial glitter than the nafs. Allah Ta'ala says:

“Imaan has been written in the hearts.”

This aayat indicates this stage of man's life.

4) *Sirr* is the instrument for the Noor of the Rooh and Nafs. Without this entity, the nafs is unable to execute its functions. If the nafs acts without it, benefit will not be acquired. Any act which the nafs intends doing without the *Sirr*, cannot be accomplished.

5) *Rooh* is a purely spiritual light. It is the instrument of the nafs. The Divine Habit (*Adat*) is to establish life in the nafs with the presence of the *Rooh*.

6) *Rooh-e-Khafi*. It is mostly called *Khafi* although the correct version is that it should be named *Akhfa*. The Qur'aan, therefore, describes it as *Akhfa*.

“He knows the sirr (the hidden) and the akhfa (what is hidden more).”

This aayat points to two constituents (*Sirr* and *Akhfa*), mentioned above while the verse:

“Say (O Muhammad!) the Rooh is the Command of my Rabb.”

points to the constituent of the Rooh.

Constituent No. 6, i.e. *Akhfa*, is more hidden than *Rooh*, *Sirr* and *Qalb*. *Akhfa* is the most subtle Noor. It has the greatest proximity to *Alam-e-Haqeeqat* (the Realm of Reality). For the nafs seated in the Holy Court, *Akhfa* acts like a guard. When the *Nafs*, *Qalb*, *Aql*, *Sirr* and *Rooh* become negligent in this Majestic Court, it (*Akhfa*) casts a light reprimanding glance on them. They then quickly become alert. Allah Ta'ala has appointed *Akhfa* to execute this function for the sake of the Rooh.

The negligence which *Akhfa* has been appointed to dispel, affects the Mu'mineen and the Auliya in general. As far as the Ambiya (alayhimus salaam) and the highest ranking Auliya are concerned, moments of forgetfulness are extremely rare. When their *Sirr* does not even glance at the lower spiritual ranks, *ghaflat* (negligence) cannot be attributed to them. Regarding these illustrious personalities, Allah Ta'ala says:

“They fear Allah, and besides Allah they fear none.”

This special *Rooh* is the servant of *Alam-e-Qudrat* (The Realm of Divine Power) and is in constant mushaahadah of *Alam-e-Haqeeqat* (The Realm of Reality). It never turns its attention towards creation.

According to some Auliya, the *Nafs*, *Sirr*, *Rooh*, *Qalb* and *Akhfa* are all the same entity. However, this view is not acceptable because Allah Ta'ala has imbued every constituent with a different characteristic. The minority view leads to the conclusion of the futility of these spiritual entities which have all been referred to separately by Allah Ta'ala. It is, therefore, only necessary that there be some wisdom inherent in their separate enumeration. Sometimes the word *Qalb* mean the *Nafs* and sometimes the *Aql*. This is merely a figurative (majaazi) use of the term because the *Nafs* too is located within the body. Hence, it is said that the *Nafs* is in *Qalb* of the body.

7) Constituent No. 7 is *Aql* which is a celestial Noor. Its location (in the physical body) is the left side of the *Qalb* (heart).

Hadhrat Dawood (alayhis salaam) asked his son, Sulaimaan (alayhis salaam): “Where in you is the *Aql* situated?”

In his answer, Sulaimaan (alayhis salaam) said that the location of the *Aql* is the *Qalb* because the *Qalb* is the *qaalib* (receptacle/container/substratum) of the *Rooh* and the *Rooh* is the *qaalib* of hayaat (life).

How to Thwart Shaitaan

There is no better method than Thikr for thwarting the deception and plots shaitaan.

Allah Ta’ala says:

“Verily. Salaat prevents from shamelessness and sin. Most certainly, the Thikr of Allah is the greatest.”

Thus, the Thikr of Allah is most efficacious in the effacement of pride, arrogance and the despicable attributes in general. In this regard, the effect of Kalimah Tayyibah is the greatest. According to the majority of Mashaa-ikh this Qur’aanic aayat means:

“Allah’s remembrance of you is indeed great.”

This interpretation is also appropriate because Allah remembering us with His mercy, kindness, bounty and acceptance will efface all the despicable attributes. Hence, in so far as purification and reformation of the nafs is concerned, Allah’s Remembrance exercises a greater effect than even Salaat

Farhat and Suroor

To ensure the illumination of the *Qalb* and *Nafs*, an important condition (shart) is farhat* and suroor* in Ibaadat and obedience.

* This means spiritual exhilaration and pleasure.

Precisely for this reason did Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Become imbued with the Attributes of Allah because a virtuous character is of the Divine Character.”

Contentment and happiness with the Divine Decree (Taqdir) are integral parts of a virtuous character.

Siraatul Mustaqeem

Understand well, that for attaining the Divine Goal (Wisaal) and for Divine Perception (Mushahad-e-Ilaahi) the only way is to follow Seeratul Mustaqeem and permanency in Thikrullah. Allah Ta’ala says:

“(O Muhammad!) This is My Straight Road, therefore, follow it and do not follow different roads, for then (these roads) will deflect you from His Road.”

Allah Ta’ala also said to His beloved (Muhammad – Sallallahu alayhi wasallam):

“Hold firmly to that which has been revealed to you. Verily, you are on the Straight Road.”

Thus, it is incumbent on the Muhibbeen and Taalibeen to permanently adopt muraaqabah, khalwat and thikr, Allah Ta’ala says:

“Say (O Muhammad!) Allaahu! Then leave others in their deception.”

In other words: “My Mahboob and Matloob are only Allah and no one else.”

Allah Ta’ala also says:

“Strive in the Path of Allah according to the demand of Mujaadah (i.e. striving to attain Divine Proximity). He has chosen you.”

In other words, He has drawn you to Him and loves you.

It is clear from this verse that the demand is for mujahadah in Alam-e-Haqeeqat because the order for mujaadah is stated after the Saalikeen are informed that they have been chosen by Allah Ta'ala. Such mujaahadah is, therefore, only the mujaahadah of Alam-e-Haqeeqat which the Saalikeen adopt. Furthermore, the fact that both the Muftadi (beginner in the Path) and the Muntahi (the one who has attained the Goal) have always to adopt mujaahadah, is substantiation for this claim (mentioned above). This is also the secret underlying the following statement of Allah Ta'ala:

“Worship your Rabb until there comes to you Yaqeen.”

In other words, worship Him until the arrival of maut (death) because the value of the Aarif is in proportion to his Ma'rifat. The degree of Ma'rifat is in proportion to the Aarif's Ser-fillaah (Journey in Allah). There is no limits in the Divine Being, hence there is no limit to Ser-Fillaah. Thus, it is not lawful for the one to whom the Door of the lofty realm (Alam-e-A'la) has opened up to stop at any stage. He has to involve himself in life-long mujaahadah so that his Ma'rifat progresses in accordance with Ser-Fillaah. Allah Ta'ala Himself promises:

“Those who strive in Us, We shall most certainly give them the guidance of Our Roads.”

The Muntahi and the Waasil (the Muntahi and Waasil, in fact, refer the same person) is therefore, well-pleased with his Mahboob. In contrast, the Muftadi (Beginner) who searches for Wisaal is on the shore of Wisaal. Besides these two (i.e. the Muntahi and the Muftadi), all others are worthless. They lack honour. The attainment of Wisaal is confined to only those who devote their bodies to mujaahadah and subordinate the nafs to riyaaadhat and engross the Qalb in muraaaqabah the Sirr in Ser and assign the Rooh to the quest of the Mahboob until the Sirr and Rooh reach Khafi, achieving the success of Alam-e-Haqeeqat (The Realm of Reality). Khafi in fact is Alam-e-Haqeeqat.

When the mysteries of Haqeeqat unravel upon Khafi, then via, its agency these mysteries are revealed to the Nafs, Aql and Qalb. Sirr is like a lantern. As a result of its illumination, Nafs, Aql and Qalb perceive Haqeeqat (The Realm of Reality). This is the initial stage. When the Mureed acquires firmness and rises above the stage of Haqeeqat, then in relation to Sirr, Rooh and Akhfa, the Nafs attains greater strength, priority and subtlety. At this juncture, although the Nafs, Aql and Qalb are inside the body of the Mureed, their rays of spiritual illumination are in such lofty planes of Alam-e-Heret (The Realm of Marvels) into which even the close Malaa-ikah are not admitted.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that whoever assigns himself to Allah, Allah assigns Himself to him. In other words, in the search for Allah Ta'ala, when the servant imbues his actions with ikhlaas, then Allah Ta'ala assumes the responsibility for all his (the servant's) affairs. Allah Ta'ala removes all his difficulties. Hence He says:

“Is Allah not sufficient for His servant?”

Undoubtedly, He suffices more than all others. It is narrated that Musaa (alayhis salaam) asked: “O Allah! When will You become mine?” The Divine response came: “When you no longer belong to your nafs.” Musaa (alayhis salaam) said: “At what stage will I not belong to myself?” Allah Ta'ala said: “When you annihilate yourself and become oblivious of yourself.”

Ya'qoob Susi (rahmatullah alayh) said:

“When the muhib (lover) transcends the knowledge of love and enters the knowledge of the Mahboob (The Beloved), then he has mounted the stage of true love.”

In that stage of true love, the muhib has annihilated even the knowledge or the awareness of love. Besides the Mahboob, he is no longer aware of even his own love (for the Beloved). Formerly, when the Mahboob was detached from Mahboob, the love was non-existent. Now, on account of the perfection of mushaahadat,

the lover annihilates even the knowledge of his love. When he mounts this lofty stage of Love, the lover becomes a lover without love. *(Although this lofty conception of Love – True Divine Love – will appear paradoxical, nevertheless, it is a reality which words cannot adequately express. Only those lofty souls who have traversed the elevated stages of Love can comprehend this conception of Muhabbat. Beings such as us, grounded in the material world and enslaved to the lowly nafs will not understand this – Translator.)*

Know that in all conditions and circumstances, be it grief, happiness, prosperity or adversity, the true Searcher of Allah's Love should always remain in the quest of Wisaal. Such a constant yearning will indicate true love. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that when Allah Ta'ala befriends any of His servants, He involves him in hardships. If the servant endures the hardships patiently, Allah Ta'ala grants him acceptance. If he bears the hardships with ridha (contentment), Allah Ta'ala chooses him and draws him into His Proximity because ridha has greater significance than sabr.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) also instructed the performance of Ibaadat with pleasure. In the absence of pleasure, sabr (patience) should be adopted in things which are displeasing to the nafs. There is great merit in such sabr. Once Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) asked a group of people: "Who are you?" They replied: "We are Mu'mineen." Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam): "What is the sign of your Imaan?" They replied: "We have patience in adversity; grateful in prosperity, and are pleased with the Divine Dispensation (Qadha-e-Ilaahi)."

In one narration it is said that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) commented:

"These people are Hukama (philosophers/wisemen) and Ulama. It is likely that, by virtue of their understanding, they become Ambiya (i.e. The attainment of the lofty ranks of the Ambiya in the spiritual realm)."

According to some senior Auliya, the Thikr of Allah Ta'ala, on account of the purity of the heart, effaces the bitterness of the hardship because Allah Ta'ala reveals the signs of His Qudrat to His Thakireen servants. Thus, it becomes clear to those servants that Allah Ta'ala with His splendour and eternal attributes is absolutely independent and everything else is reliant on Him for its existence.

When this Muhib (Lover) is overwhelmed by Mushaahadah and he finds everything besides Allah Ta'ala to be annihilated (non-existent), then his gaze is absolutely on only Him. Thus, hardship and its bitterness do not occur to him.

This degree of Ma'rifat is the capital of the Aarifeen and Siddiqueen who are the repositories of Mushaahadah and Mukaashafah. It is from this lofty pedestal that some have proclaimed: "I have seen Allah before everything."

This seeing is the perception of the eyes of Sirr, with Yaqeen and Ikhlās.

Hadhrat Husain (radhiyallahu anhu) said: "Difficulty is a saviour which reaches the servant from Allah Ta'ala."

Suhail Tastari (radhiyallahu anhu) said:

"If there were no calamities and hardships reaching the servants from Allah Ta'ala, there would not have been a way to Him."

Abu Saeed Khar-raaz (rahmatullah alayh) said:

"A calamity is Allah's gift to the Muhibbeen (His lovers) and it rings the hidden (door) bell of Wisaal."

Zun-nun Misri (rahmatullah alayh) said:

"Among the people, a man of great patience is the one who surpasses them in concealing the hardships (which befall him)."

Raim (rahmatullah alayh) said:

“Allah Ta’ala has given his servants movement (or made them active) by way of hardships. They thus become active (i.e. restless). If they have to remain motionless (remaining steadfast in the abode of Sabr), they would be successful in the attainment of Wisaal.”

Abu Ya’qoob Mahrpuri said:

“The world complains of hardships and schemes to overcome them whereas the Aarif derives pleasure from hardships and never wishes for their removal.”

Junaid Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh) said:

“Hardships are a lamp for the Aarifeen; a warning for the mureedeen and a disaster for the ghaafileen (the careless people).”

Ibn Ataa (rahmatullah alayh) said:

“The truth and falsehood of the servant become manifest at the time of hardships. During good times he remains stagnant. He refrains from shukr and does not progress in ibaadat. When he bewails his lot in hardship, he displays his falsehood.”

Ali Bin Bindaar (rahmatullah alayh) said:

“The foundations of this worldly abode are hardships and difficulties. Therefore, life on earth without effort is not possible.”
The summary of these pronouncements of the Auliya is:

It is imperative for the Taalib-e-Haqq (the Searcher of Allah) to be firm in ridha (contentment) and suroor (happiness) and in the observance of the necessary conditions. In accordance with the instruction of the Shaikh, he should, with full determination, be constant in Thikr so that the impression of Thikr penetrates his baatin, thereby permeating his veins, thus burning up the darkness, heaviness and contamination of wujood (existence) with

the fire of Thikr. In this way will the heart attain rest with the noor of Thikr.

Thikr contains both noor (celestial light) and naar (fire). By means of the noor of Thikr the heart finds rest and solace. On the otherhand, the contaminations of existence and humanity are devoured by the naar of Thikr. The natural dryness and hardships are displaced.

As a result of this process of elevation, the muhib emerges from the impressions of humanity (bashariyat) freed of material encumbrances, transcending with his heart even beyond the realm of the Angels, ultimately reaching the heaven of the highest divinity (Ruboobiyat-e-A'la).

The full effect of Thikr is experienced when the Thaakir has been denuded of all activities because seeing people and listening to their talks are diversions. The place should be confined and Thikr be made with much emphasis. Hadhrat Abu Saeed Khudri (radhiyallahu anhu) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) exhorted that the Thikr of Laa-ilaaha illallaah be made in such abundance that people begin to regard you to be "insane."

The sign of Thikrullah being with Sidq and Ikhlaas is the tenderness (riqqat) and fear (khouf) of the heart. In this regard, Allah Ta'ala says:

"Verily, the Mu'mineen are those whose hearts become fearful when the Thikr of Allah is made."

They develop this state because their Thikr is the Thikr of Uboodiyat (the state of being a slave) and Ibaadat, and it is the Thikr of alertness and love. It is not Thikr of mere habit and negligence.

The Thaakir acquires these beautiful attributes because Allah Ta'ala discusses him with pride in the assembly of the Malaa-ika-tul Muqarribeen (the Angels closest to Allah). In this regard the Hadith says:

“Whoever remembers Me in his heart, I (i.e. Allah) too remember him in My Heart and whoever remembers Me in a gathering, I too remember him in a superior gathering.”

When Allah Ta’ala remembers a person, he (that person) is blessed with the state of absorption in the Thikr of the Qalb and Sirr, and in the Mathkoor (The Object of Thikr) and he disappears in the Zaat-e-Baht (Allah’s being). His heart becomes imbued with states of splendour and his body with virtuous deeds. Subhaanallah! How wonderful is the special grace and mercy which Allah Ta’ala cascades upon His servants! He has commanded Thikr and decreed for it tazkiyah (self-purification), nooraaniyat (spiritual lustre) and purity.

The discernment of good and bad, the acquisition of excellences, protection against evil, the recognition of shaitaan, the life and purity of the heart, Divine Proximity, domination over the nafs, the way of restraining the nafs and its admittance into the service of the Deen and the acquisition of hikmat, Ma’rifat, ilm and the lofty spiritual states are all bestowed to the servant of Allah by virtue of Thikr.

All these bounties are restricted to mankind. Junaid (rahmatullah alayh) said that, inspite of the considerable ibaadat of shaitaan, he did not attain the stage of Mushaahadah, hence his pride was exposed when the sajdah for Adam (alayhis salaam) was commanded. In contrast, even at the moment of committing the error, Adam (alayhis salaam) did not lose his Mushaahadah. He, therefore, professed his profound regret and remorse and supplicated for forgiveness.

Just as Allah Ta’ala has adorned and illuminated the heavens with Angels, the sun and the moon, so too has He illuminated the hearts and souls with the anwaar of His Zaat and Sifaat by means of Thikr. The Noor of Ism-e-Zaat, i.e. الله and the Kalimah, viz. لا اله الا الله, is the brightest and clearest. When the Thaakir is constant in this Thikr, then its Noor unites with the noor of the heart. Then, this Noor of Thikr takes up in the heart a position from

which it cannot be dislodged. It ultimately becomes the attribute of the heart. This is the meaning of the statement of the Sufiya:

“Kalimah Tayyibah embeds itself in the Qalb and Sirr.”

In other words, its Noor becomes firmly embedded. Thus, knowledge is acquired from the very inception of Thikr. Rasulallah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Whoever acts according to his knowledge, Allah Ta’ala grants him, by virtue of his action (amal), such knowledge which he does not possess.”

By virtue of the abundance of Thikr, Hikmat (Wisdom) is acquired, hence Rasulallah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Whoever practises virtue with sincerity for Allah for forty days, fountains of wisdom emanating from his heart will flow from his lips.”

The Sufiya have said that the Mathkoor (the Object of Thikr, viz. Allah Ta’ala) is one. Although the forms of Thikr are diverse, the root of Thikr, viz. its acceptance by Allah Ta’ala, is among the essentials which is acquired from every Thikr.

Shibli (rahmatullah alayh) said to a group:

“You are Thaakireen (people of Thikr) and Allah Ta’ala says: *‘I am the Companion of the Thaakireen’*. You, therefore, hold the rank of companionship with Allah Ta’ala.”

When certain Auliya were questioned regarding Thikr in Jannat, they replied:

“The purpose of Thikr is to ward off ghaflat (forgetfulness). When there will be no ghaflat in Jannat, what will be the need for Thikr?”

(This is a reference to prescribed and obligatory forms of Thikr. Thikr by way of expressions of praise for Allah, happiness and gratitude will exist in Jannat – Translator.)

Fasl Nine

The sixth condition is the perpetual negation of thoughts. This is very difficult on those who are involved in mujaahadah.

Recognition of the khawaatir (thoughts) is part of the knowledge of the Sufiya. By virtue of this knowledge they are able to distinguish the khawaatir so that they may conform with true khawaatir and oppose the baseless khawaatir. It is necessary to know the details of the khawaatir.

The Khawaatir

1) **Waarid:** The inspiration which descends on the heart of the bandah without his endeavour, is called Waarid whether it appears in the form of an address or not, e.g. Huzn (worry), Qabdh (the state of dejection), Bast (the state of elation) etc.

Sometimes these conditions occur to the Saalik who is not even aware of the reason for the occurrence. These conditions are not acquired by volitional choice (ikhtiyaar).

Khaatir: Khaatir is an inspiration which comes to the heart in the form of an address. According to the majority of Sufiya, there are four kinds of Khawaatir (plural of khaatir) as follows:

(a) Khaatir-e-Haq

This is an inspiration from Allah Ta'ala. It is a knowledge which Allah Ta'ala reveals from the Unseen Realm and inspires directly into the hearts of the Ahl-e-Qurb (those who have attained proximity to Him) and the Ahl-e-Huzoor (those whose minds and hearts are perpetually in the Divine Presence), without any intermediate medium. (*Ahl Qurb and Ahl-e-Huzoor refer to the high-ranking Auliya – Translator*). In this regard Allah Ta'ala says:

“Say (O Muhammad!) Verily, my Rabb Who inspires the truth (into the hearts) is the Knower of the Unseen.”

(b) Khaatir-e-Malaki

This is a condition (pervading the heart) which encourages obedience and virtue; saves from sin and detestable acts, and infuses a feeling of remorse and self-criticism when sin is committed and when laxity in ibaadat occurs. Thus, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“In the son of Adam there is an influence of shaitaan and an influence of an Angel. The influence of shaitaan is to refute the truth and to provide the bait of pleasure for the commission of sin. The influence of the Angel is to engender hope of reward for virtuous acts and to acknowledge truth.”

(c) Khaatir-e-Nafsaani

This is the manifestation of desire for the transitory pleasures of the world and the pursuit of false (and sinful) emotions. Thus, Allah Ta’ala, mentioning the statement of Ya’qoob (alayhis salaam) says:

“O my sons! Your anfus (plural of nafs) has adorned for you (this) matter (of the disappearance of Yusuf).”

Allah Ta’ala also mentions the statement of Yusuf (alayhis salaam):

“I do not consider my nafs free of evil, for verily, the nafs is a great commander of evil.”

It is thus confirmed that the nafs plays an important role in the encouragement of evil and adornment of sin. This is the meaning of Khaatir-e-Nafsaani.

(d) Khaatir-e-Shaitaani

This is the call towards sin and transgression. Allah Ta’ala says:

“When a group of the shaitaan touches the pious ones, they resort to Thikr and they see (the plot of shaitaan and are saved from sin).

And he (shaitaan) drags his brothers (the kuffaar) into deviation and they (therefore) do not lag behind (in deviation).”

“Shaitaan promises you poverty (i.e. he scares you with the hardships of poverty should you be obedient to Allah and pay Zakaat, etc.) and he commands you with immorality. And, Allah promises His Kindness and Forgiveness.”

“Verily, those who became murtadd after the guidance has been made clear to them, shaitaan has adorned for them (his whisperings) and he has deceived them.”

“After the affair (of Qiyaamah) has materialised, shaitaan will say: ‘Verily, Allah had promised you a promise of truth and I had made to you promises which I violated. And, I had no proof (for my claims and promises) for you. ’

“Shaitaan whispers to his companions.”

“We have appointed for all the Ambiya enemies from human and jinn shayaateen. They (the human and jinn shayaateen) whisper falsehood to one another.”

“Whoever turns away from the Thikr of Allah, We appoint over him a shaitaan who becomes his companion.”

It is narrated in the Hadith that shaitaan sits firmly on the heart of man. He is perpetually in the state of alert, ever ready to deceive and deflect him. When man engages in Thikr, shaitaan flees, and when he becomes forgetful, shaitaan makes a morsel of man’s heart (holding it in his mouth). He then afflicts the heart with baseless thoughts and corrupt desires.

The difference between Khaatir-e-Haq and Khaatir-e-Malaki is that nothing can oppose the former. When Khaatir-e-Haq manifests itself, all parts of the body become subservient to it. All the other Khawaatir are annihilated in its presence. When senior Auliya were asked for the meaning of Khaatir-e-Haq, they said that it is a waarid (inspiration) which settles over the heart and it prevents the nafs from rejecting the truth. Neither the nafs nor

shaitaan has the courage to confront and repudiate Khaatir-e-Haq. They are also unable to resist acceptance of the impression of Khaatir-e-Haq.

In contrast, Khaatir-e-Nafs and Khaatir-e-Shaitaan are able to resist Khaatir-e-Malaki.

The difference between Khaatir-e-Nafs and Khaatir-e-Shaitaan is that Khaatir-e-Nafs does not cease with the Noor of Thikr. Despite Thikr, it continues putting forward its demands. However, it is possible for it to be terminated if Allah Ta'ala grants the taufeeq for its severance.

Khaatir-e-Shaitaan is put to an end by means of the Noor of Thikr although the possibility of it returning does exist. It was mentioned earlier on in a Hadith that shaitaan flees when Thikr is made and returns when ghaflat sets in.

The Sufiya have said that the bandah sometimes obeys and sometimes disobeys Khaatir-e-Malaki, but it is not possible to oppose Khaatir-e-Haq.

The following meanings have also been given to the Khawaatir: Khaatir-e-Haq is admonition; Khaatir-e-Malaki is the demand for Ibaadat; Khaatir-e-Nafs is the desire for pleasures and Khaatir-e-Shaitaan is the adornment of sins.

By virtue of the Noor of Tauheed, the Saalik accepts the true inspirations, (i.e. Khawaatir-e-Haq) and by virtue of the Noor of Ma'rifat he accepts Khaatir-e-Malaki. With the Noor of Imaan he admonishes and warns the nafs and with the Noor of Islam he refutes the enemy, shaitaan.

When Hadhrat Junaid (rahmatullah alayh) was asked about the Khawaatir, he said that there are four Khawaatir: Khatrah Rahmaani which points towards the Divine Secrets and Hidaayat (Divine Guidance). Khaatira-e-Malaki which shows the path of

obedience, Khatrah-e-Nafsaani which attracts towards fame and the world. Khatrah-e-Shaitaan which takes towards sin and lust.

The actual Khawaatir which are from Allah Ta'ala are four. When Allah Ta'ala desires to bestow the mantle of His Proximity on His servant, He despatches a group of Angels onto his heart. The Angels are in reality an army of Arwaah (Souls). These Angels fortify the Rooh and the Qalb of the servant. The fortified Soul then transcends and takes flight into the domain of Divine Proximity and it acquires the inspirational capacity for Khaatir-e-Haq. When He desires to drive away someone then He despatches groups of shayaateen onto the person so that these shayaateen aid the nafs. In this way man plunges headlong with greater intensity into the degraded pits of his natural desire. The Khawaatir-e-Nafs manifest themselves in full force in this state. May Allah Ta'ala save us and all Muslims from such a catastrophe.

Correct differentiation in the various Khawaatir is possible only after the natural corrosion of the heart's mirror has been removed with the polish of Taqwa and Thikr and the appearance of the forms of Kaifiyaat (spiritual states) becomes discernible in their original state in the mirror of the heart.

A person who has not attained this rank by means of zuhd and taqwa, should necessarily weigh the Khatrah which enters the heart on the Scale of the Shariat. If he discerns it to be Fardh, Wajib, Sunnat or Mustahab, he should act accordingly. If it is haraam or Makrooh, he should abstain therefrom. If it is Mubaah (permissible), then he should adopt the option which is more difficult on the nafs because the nafs on account of its corruption, generally inclines towards contemptible things. Therefore, the option which is in conflict with the nafs will most certainly be less in contemptibility.

Some essential huqooq (rights) also come within the scope of the demands of the nafs. It is necessary to fulfil these because the life and existence of the nafs are associated with these huqooq, e.g. the desire for nikah, water and food. There is, thus, a need to choose between huqooq (essential rights) and huzooz (those

desires which are in excess of huqooq). By fulfilling the huqooq, the huzooz could be warded off.

It is essential for the beginners to know the huqooq and the limit of need. It is sinful for them to transgress the limit of need. However, there is latitude for the Muntahi (the one who has attained the Goal). He emerges from the narrow confines of needs and enters the sphere of ease. Now, with the permission of Allah, the fulfilment of huzooz will not be harmful to him.

Some Sufiya have described the obligatory and necessary Khatrah as Khaatir-e-Haqqaaani and a haraam Khatrah as Khaatir-e-Shaitaani. A Khatrah of Mushtabah is called Khaatir-e-Malaki while a Makrooh Khatrah is described as Khaatir-e-Nafsaani. Something which is Mubaah is not even described as Khatrah according to some Sufiya because in the concept of Khatrah, it is necessary to give preference to one of two opposing options whereas there are no such options in Mubaah. Since there is neither reward for adopting Mubaah nor punishment for abstaining therefore, it is said that both options are equal, hence it is not a Khatrah. *(However, a khaatir pertaining to Mubah -permissible act-can come within the shaitaani ambit. Shaitaan sometimes ensnares a person to indulge in a permissible act in order to lure him away from ibaadat or to open up an avenue for evil - Translator.)*

According to the interpretation of Shaikh Mujaddidud Deen Baghdaadi (rahmatullah alayh), in addition to the aforementioned Khawaatir, there should be another three, viz. Khaatir-e-Rooh, Khaatir-e-Qalb and Khaatir-e-Shaikh.

Some Mashaa-ikh have added Khaatir-e-Aql and Khaatir-e-Yaqeen. However, the reliable view is that all those additional Khawaatir are included in the scope of the four Khawaatir explained earlier because Khaatir-e-Qalb and Khaatir-e-Rooh fall under Khaatir-e-Malaki. If Khaatir-e-Aql is for the aid of the Rooh and Qalb, then it is Malaki and if it aids the Nafs and Shaitaan, it is shaitaani.

Khaatir-e-Shaikh is an aid which the Shaikh delivers to the heart of the Mureed via the medium of his (the Shaikh's) spiritual energy. When the Mureed is confronted by some difficulty and requires aid, he concentrates on his Shaikh. By the aid of Allah Ta'ala, the problem is immediately solved. Therefore, this Khaatrah comes within the purview of Khaatir-e-Haqqaani because the heart of the Shaikh is like a doorway opening up into the Unseen Realm. Whatever passes through this doorway, in reality, emanates from the Unseen Realm. The fuyoodh (spiritual effulgence, blessings and aid) which come from Allah Ta'ala to the Mureed at all times, reaches him viz. the medium of the Shaikh.

Khaatir-e-Yaqeen is a waarid (inspiration) which enters the heart. Opinion, doubt and suspicion cannot oppose it. Thus, this too, is within the scope of Khaatir-e-Haqqaani.

According to the noble author of AwaAariful Ma-aAarif, Khaatir-e-Aql is in the middle of the four Khawaatir. Sometimes it is supportive of the Nafs and Shaitaan. By its presentation of rational proofs it involves the bandah in lust and sin. Man without Aql would not be the subject of reward and punishment, hence there is no punishment for an insane person falling into sin and lust. It is the scheme of Aql to involve the bandah in lust and sin, thus delivering him into punishment. *(This refers to Aql which has become subservient to the nafs and shaitaan as a result of abstention from Thikr - Translator.)*

Sometimes Khaatir-e-Aql comes out in support of the Angel and the Rooh, enabling the bandah to readily practise righteousness of his own freewill, gaining thawab thereby. One devoid of Aql is not rewarded for any goodness he renders.

Khaatir-e-Yaqeen is in actual fact peace and increase of knowledge. It is not an independent Khaatir.

Khatraat descend like a great deluge on the people of Mujaahahdah and the Saalikeen. In the initial stage, the Muftadi (beginner) has no alternative other than to ignore all Khatraat

whether these are good or evil because of his inability to discern and distinguish the good from the bad. It is quite possible that he interprets evil to be virtue. When he negates all Khawaatir, the praiseworthy Khawaatir, i.e. Khaatir-e-Rabbaani and Malaki will become rooted in his heart. Then, it will not be possible to eliminate them even by effort. In consequence the Shaitaani and Nafsaani Khawaatir will be displaced.

The method of negating or displacing all Khawaatir is to reflect so much on the form and meaning of the Thikr that the mind does not turn to anything else. In fact, do not attempt to even distinguish between the Khawaatir because some of these are whispered by the Nafs and Shaitaan while some are Malaki and Ilhaam-e-Rabbaani (Divine Inspirations). Involvement with the Khatraat and engrossment therein are, in fact, very detrimental. Therefore, negate all Khatraat. This cannot be achieved without full concentration on the words and meanings of the Thikr. Allah Ta'ala, Himself says (in the Qur'aan) that He is the Companion of those who engage in Thikr. Therefore, when involved in Thikr, maintain such a degree of honour and reverence as if you are in the Court of the Greatest King – Glorious is His Name.

While the true and conscientious Mureed very swiftly acquires the state of Tajreed, this attainment is possible only after a considerable time after he has succeeded in the negation of the Khawaatir because the objects which the Mureed (beginner) observes externally become impressed in his imagination. When the Mureed sits in solitude to engage in Thikr, these tangible objects of the external domain sometimes give rise to Khatraat and sometimes they become mixed with his Mushaahadaat resulting in a conflict with these perceptions (Mushaahadaat).

In addition, there are the Khatraat of the Nafs, which come and go. These are called Hawaajis. Together with all these interferences are the demands of lustful emotions and Shaitaani Wasaawis which all combine to produce a variety of contaminations and turbulence which unsettle the Mureed's state of solitude, clouds the vision of the spiritual eyes of his heart and produce frustration

in his baatin. Thus, the sweetness of Thikr and pleasure of communion (with Allah) are snatched away. Such objects which produce these diversions are, for example, the wife, children, money, etc. On account of prolonged exposure to these tangibles, they have become embossed in the subconscious mind, hence these things come to mind at the time of Thikr. Sometimes, they attract the Mureed and induce carelessness in him and sometimes they simply divert his attention in order to prevent him from the pleasure and nooraaniyat of the Thikr.

The acquisition of freedom from all these diversions and attractions of the tangibles is called Tafreed. This state is attainable after considerable time.

The awareness that no one equals Allah Ta'ala Shaanuhu in grandeur, and no one besides Him is the great and Ultimate Goal of Love, is called Tajreed. This attitude is developed quickly, relatively speaking.

Thus, constancy in ignoring all Khawaatir, which in fact is the objective of khalwat (solitude), will result in the attainment of Tafreed and Ilqa-e-Shaitaani (Whisperings of shaitaan) will be substituted with Ilhaam-e-Rabbaani (Divine Inspiration). Hadeeth-e-Nafs (Prompting of the Nafs) will be changed with Mukaalamah-e-Rooh wa Qalb (Conversation of the Soul and Heart).

Fasl Ten

The Seventh condition is to maintain with complete resolution (Iraadat) the heart's bond with the Shaikh because the Shaikh is the guiding companion along the journey. Allah Ta'ala says:

“O People of Imaan! Fear Allah (i.e. become pious) and join the ranks of the Truthful ones (i.e. the Auliya).”

“Ask the People of Thikr if you do not know.”

“O People of Imaan! Fear Allah and search for a Waasilah (Medium) towards Him.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“My Sahaabah are like the Stars. Whomever (among them) you follow, you will attain the Road of Guidance.”

The Shaikh is a person who has experience of the Road; who is aware of the pitfalls, perils and dangers along this Sojourn, and he informs and guides the Mureed accordingly. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that the similitude of a pious companion is like a perfume-seller. Even if perfume is not procured from him, at least one is assured of its fragrance. Thus, the companionship of the Shaikh is in no way less than such a companion.

Fasl Eleven

The eighth condition is: Never raise any objection against Allah Ta’ala. (In other words, he should always be contented with whatever circumstances Allah Ta’ala imposes on him – Translator.) Allah Ta’ala says:

***“When He (Allah) said to him (Ibraahim):
‘Submit fully’, he said: ‘I have fully submitted unto Rabbul Aalameen.’***
”

“Whoever submits his face to Allah while he has assigned himself (to the obedience of Allah), verily, he has taken hold firmly of a powerful ring.”

Praising the Sahaabah for their noble attitude on the occasion of the Battle of Khandaq when they beheld a vastly superior army of the Kuffaar, Allah Ta’ala says:

“And it (the superior kuffaar army) did not increase them (the Sahaabah) in anything but Imaan and total submission (to Allah Ta’ala).”

When the Mureed resorts to khalwat, it behoves him to first take ghusl with the intention of it being the ghusl of maut. Then, in the presence of Allah he should become like a mayyit is in the hands of those giving him ghusl. Adopting ridha (contentment) and tasleem (complete submission), he should fully and wholeheartedly submit himself to Allah Ta'ala. He should also adopt total tawakkul, never raising the slightest objection against Allah Ta'ala no matter what the conditions and circumstances may be, whether prosperity or adversity, difficulty or ease.

If the Mureed is blessed with the spiritual elation of the heart (Inshirah-e-Qalb), he should be grateful. He should believe with conviction that the cause for this blessed state is only Allah.

In the Divine Presence the Mureed should assign himself to Allah Ta'ala just as an ailing person hands himself over to his physician. When the sick person has accepted the physician to be an expert in his sphere (of medicine and treatment), he gives himself over to the physician in all conditions (of health and ill-health). He does not raise the slightest objection, no matter what the condition may be. Whether the medicine is sweet or bitter, pleasing or displeasing, he wholeheartedly accepts it, never objecting. He accepts that his cure is in wholeheartedly submitting to the physician.

Similar should be the Mureed's attitude with Allah Ta'ala. When the Mureed has understood that Allah Ta'ala is more merciful and loving to His servants than even parents and brothers and He has the knowledge of the benefits and harms of every atom in the heavens and earth, not an atom being hidden from Him, and that the bandah is unjust to himself with all his efforts aimed at the ruin of his Qalb and Rooh, and that he is unaware of his means of salvation and success, then it behoves him to assign all his affairs to Allah Ta'ala and submit himself fully to the Decree of Allah Ta'ala.

When Allah Ta'ala bestows to this Mureed elation (bast), the latter will necessarily be grateful and with Yaqeen will he believe that

the treatment for his spiritual maladies and his cure are connected with Allah Ta'ala. If sometimes, the state of Qabdh (spiritual dejection) occurs, the Mureed will understand that his spiritual health and its remedy are related to this state.

Allah Ta'ala, Jalle Shaanuhu, says:

“Many a time you dislike a thing while (in fact) it is good for you, and many a time you love a thing while it is evil for you.”

“Perhaps you dislike something while Allah has put in it goodness in abundance.”

When the Mureed engenders in himself spiritual ability by virtue of tasleem and tafweedh from the very beginning, he will ultimately attain the lofty stage of Uboodiyat. Attainment of this lofty rank is a gradual process, step by step. The very first step in this process is to refrain from raising objection. When the degree of tasleem has reached the high level similar to the submission to Allah Ta'ala on the Day of Qiyaamah, the plethora of doubts will vanish. On the Day of Qiyaamah, Allah Ta'ala will proclaim:

“For Who is Ownership (of creation) today?”

Ownership of creation whether on that Day of Qiyaamah or today, here on earth, belongs solely to Allah Ta'ala. However, on account of superficial control and ownership awarded to man here on earth, it appears as if he too owns and controls things. But on that Day, even this superficial or outer facade of ownership will be negated. But, as far as the Mureed who submits himself to Allah Ta'ala is concerned, this superficial control is negated even here on earth. As far as he is concerned ownership in total, even here belongs to only Allah Ta'ala. This is his vivid perception which he acquires by way of his tasleem.

With the disappearance of all doubts, the Mureed enters into the angelic domain of the heart and from the clouds of Rahmat will cascade Anwaar and Tajalliyaat (Celestial light and Manifestations

of Divine Splendour). The Mureed will then be the recipient of such marvellous bounties known to only Allah Ta'ala, and his tongue will be wholly incapable of describing the glory and grandeur of Allah Ta'ala Shaanuhu. With the tongue of his heart he will declare that people have failed to understand the grandeur of Allah Ta'ala and that they have not rendered justice to the demand of His Honour. This stage is the state of Kamaal (spiritual excellence) and Jamaal (spiritual beauty).

Among the requisites for shunning objections is to be pleased with the Divine Dispensation (Taqdir-e-Ilaahi). The manifold states and conditions such as poverty, wealth, worry, fear, despondency, elation, affection, awe, divine recognition, love, engrossment, divine presence, divine perception, proximity, farness, consciousness, unconsciousness, striving (mujaahadah), revelation (mukaashafah), communion (munaajaat), the external kindness, perpetual sustainment, etc., should be wholeheartedly accepted.

The Mureed should see refuge in divine mercy and kindness through divine lights and the glitter of wahdaaniyat (Unity of Allah's Being). Allah is so kind and merciful that He, Himself awarded the stock of noble qualities to His Nabi (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), then He, Himself lauded praise, saying:

“(O Nabi!) Verily, you are established on a wonderful character.”

When Waasti (rahmatullah alayh) was asked the reason for the superior character of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), he replied:

“His was the first Rooh created. No other soul had such opportunities of prolonged stay in the celestial realm as the Rooh of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). All other souls were created after him.”

(The purpose of glancing at and examining the souls was not because Allah Ta'ala–Nauthubillah!–lacked awareness of the most brilliant soul. But since in creation everything is subject to the law of cause and effect, the choice of the Soul of Muhammad [Sallallahu alayhi wasallam] by the procedure of examination was for the comprehension of the other souls who now rationally

understood the reason for the superiority of the Soul of Rasulullah [Sallallahu alayhi wasallam] – Translator.)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) himself said:

“I was already a Nabi while Adam was between body and soul.”

According to some Mashaa-ikh, when Allah Ta’ala glanced at the hearts of all humanity, He did not find anyone’s heart with greater yearning and love than the heart of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Precisely for this reason did he experience an early Mi’raaj here on earth. In the tenth year of Nubuwwat he was blessed with the momentous favour of Mi’raaj. By virtue of his perfect state of yearning was he drawn towards Divine Communion and Divine Vision.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “I was sent to perfect the lofty attributes of character.” It is narrated that someone asked: “What is Deen?” Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “A beautiful character.”

He also said that Husn-e-Khulq (beautiful character) is the character of Allah Ta’ala. In another narration he says:

“The noblest Mu’min is the one with the best character.”

“Islam is moulded with the noblest attributes and most beautiful etiquettes.”

Without the acquisition of these noble attributes and beauties full admission into Islam is not attainable. Thus, when the Saalik is firm in the state of Tasleem, then he will be adorned with true Islam and a beautiful character. Insha’Allah he will then attain the lofty mansions of the Roohaani Sphere.

The benefit of these eight conditions is the reformation of man, making him fit for the Divine Court. Since, self-purification and spiritual ability cannot be acquired without driving away aliens,

viz. Wujood (existence), Nafs and Shaitaan, these eight requisites have been elaborated. Without adoption of these requisites, the aliens cannot be repelled.

Wujood (existence) is an intense darkness comprising of the four base elements, viz., water, sand, air and fire. Elimination of these elements is essential by means of Mujaahadah.

The nafs is a subtle entity like air in the body. It too is contaminated and dark. It permeates every part of the body. Its purification by means of effort and striving is essential.

Shaitaan is a dark, contaminated fire which is further aggravated with the darkness of kufr which flows in the body of man wherever his blood flows. He too permeates the entire body of man. It is imperative to expel him too. The expulsion of Shaitaan is similar to a chemical process. The subtle element of Noor is extracted from the aforementioned three darknesses. From the very beginning when the Qalb arrived on earth, a variety of images and pictures became impressed in it. These pictures are themselves darkness which corrodes the heart making it neglectful.

Fasl Twelve

Among the variety of Ibaadat, the Saalik should adopt one specific Ibaadat as a regular practice. He should understand Allah Ta'ala will demand an account from him on every little issue. Hence, He says:

“Even if it be an act (the size of) a mustard seed, We shall bring it forth.”

The Mureed will be able to acquire this perception (of constant Muhaasabah) in several ways as follows:

1) TAUBAH – This means to turn towards Allah Ta'ala; perpetual remorse and abundance of Istighfaar.

2) INABAT – This means to abandon ghaflat (negligence, lethargy) and to return to the state of Thikr. According to some Sufiya, Taubah refers to the physical return (zaahiri rujoo’ – i.e. verbal expression of repentance and humility) while Inabat means the spiritual return (baatini rujoo’ – i.e. the remorse, regret and repentance of the heart and soul). Ahead of Inabat is Iffat.

3) IFFAT – This means abandonment of lust and desire.

4) WARA’ – This is the stage higher than Iffat. Wara’ means to abstain from any act which diverts one from the remembrance of Allah. Thus, Ibraahim Bin Adham (rahmatullah alayh) said:

“Abstinence from Haraam is Fardh (compulsory) while abstinence from Halaal is afdhal (meritorious). Abstinence from Shubhaat (doubtful things) is noble.”

Allah Ta’ala eliminates the desire for even lawful things from those upon whom He is merciful.

5) FAQR – Higher than Wara’ is the rank of Faqr. Faqr is absolute poverty. In Faqr one does not own anything. At the same time the heart is devoid of any desire for anything which one does not possess. Neither does the Saalik own something physically nor is there the slightest concern in the heart to possess anything.

6) IRAADAH – This means the perpetual sustainment of difficulties and the abandonment of comfort.

7) SIDQ – Beyond Faqr is Sidq which means equanimity of both zaahir and baatin. Both exoteric and esoteric dimensions of the Saalik are equal. In privacy and public his state of honesty, truth and lofty morality are the same.

8) TASABBUR – This is to accustom the Nafs to hardships and things which are displeasing to it.

9) SABR – Higher than Tasabbur is Sabr which means total abstention from complaint to anyone besides Allah Ta’ala.

10)RIDHAA – This is the experiencing of pleasure in hardship.

11)IKHLAAS – This means to maintain all affairs with only Allah Ta’ala, no other being featuring in-between. Regardless of the pleasure or displeasure of others, the Saalik does not tolerate the slightest diversion in his acts of obedience rendered to Allah Ta’ala.

12)TAWAKKUL – Tawakkul is to repose full trust in Allah Ta’ala in matters pertaining to Divine Promise (Wa’dah) and Divine Warning (Wa-eed), and to sever every hope in all beings besides Allah.

May Allah Ta’ala bestow these lofty stages to us and to you!

Fasl Thirteen

The Mashaa-ikh (rahmatullah alayhim) have instructed that every speech should be motivated by the intention of naseehat, hidayat and benefit of the awaam (the general Muslim public), and to speak according to the intellectual capacity of the audience. Further, do not discuss an issue about which a query was not made. When a question is asked, answer according to the understanding and ability of the questioner. Someone asked Hadhrat Junaid (rahmatullah alayh):

“A man questions you, and you give him an answer. Another person asks you the same question and you answer differently. What is the reason for this variance?”

Hadhrat Junaid (rahmatullah alayh) replied:

“The reply should be in accordance with (the audience’s) intelligence and understanding.”

One who asks a question should likewise ask such questions which befit his rank. He should not seek to probe matters beyond his intellectual capability.

Knowledge should not be expended on unqualified persons. One should not speak in the presence of a person of greater knowledge. Once someone posed a question to Ibn Mubaarak (rahmatullah alayh) in the presence of Sufyaan Thauri (rahmatullah alayh). Ibn Mubaarak said: "I cannot speak in the presence of Ustaadh."

Some Sufiya said that it is proper for only a Sahib-e-Haal (a Saalik who has traversed the lofty spiritual stages) to discuss the knowledge of Tasawwuf because he can speak of his actual states and acts. It is not proper for an imitator to discuss this subject.

It is also necessary to refrain from speaking before time because in its wake ensue many calamities which totally deprive one from benefit.

It is vital to abstain from searching for name and fame from worldly people otherwise one will never gain the benefit of one's knowledge. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) sought refuge from such knowledge which is not beneficial. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"Whoever pursued knowledge in order to be lauded (and considered to be) in (the ranks of) the Ulama; to gather around him ignoramuses and to attract people to him, should search for his place in the Fire."

It is essential to strive diligently to act according to the knowledge acquired. The Hukamaa (Wisemen of Islam – the Sufiya) said that when a person practises according to the knowledge of People (i.e. knowledge on the Deen acquired from the Ulama and Mashaa-ikh), then such knowledge becomes hikmat (inspired wisdom) in his heart. Whoever then hears from him, derives benefit. One who does not practise on the Knowledge he has acquired, will soon forget it even if it is one narration. The Mashaa-ikh have said that

a word which issues forth from the heart, penetrates the hearts of the listeners and a word which simply comes from the tongue, does not traverse beyond the ears of the audience.

One in whose heart is embedded the seed of Sulook Ilallah (the Journey unto Allah), should diligently protect it because in reality, it is a guest from the Unseen Realm. It will become annoyed and depart with the slightest indifference shown to it. It will then no longer return. Therefore, it is necessary to show it proper hospitality and to regard its presence as a great boon. It should be well-nourished. Its nourishment is available only from the Mashaa-ikh of Tareeqat. The seed of Iraadat in the heart of the Mureed is like a child being born from Aalamul Ghaib (the Unseen Realm) and entering Aalam-e-Shahaadat, i.e. the corporeal world (this earth). Its nourishment, therefore, is only from Aalamul Ghaib like the nourishment of a baby is only its mother's milk.

Similarly, the tarbiyat (training, sustainment and development) of the Noor of Iraadat which is born in the heart of the Mureed by the taufeeq of Allah is effected only by the water of the Ma'rifat which Allah Ta'ala brings forth from the Unseen Fountain and despatches it to the hearts of the Ahl-e-Ghaib.

The Ahl-e-Ghaib are those Mashaa-ikh who are blessed with obedience to Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and who are the recipients of the fuyoodh of Allah Ta'ala. They have become the people of Allah. Thus, in AwaAarif it is narrated that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

"Whatever Allah has inspired into my heart, I have cast it into the heart of Abu Bakr Siddiq-e-Akbar."

Therefore, a man who has acquired Iraadat, should not be contented with his opinion and intelligence. Rather, he should set out in search of a Shaikh who possesses the attributes already described, whether he is in the east or the west, because such a Shaikh is indispensable. The Mureed should assign himself to the Shaikh and abandon his own freedom of action.

Shaitaan will collude with the Nafs and whisper into the Mureed ideas such as: 'Is this Shaikh qualified or not?' Never become the victim of this deception of shaitaan. After having ascertained the credentials of the Shaikh and having found in him the conditions and attributes required for a Shaikh-e-Kaamil, banish this type of evil thought which enters the heart. With manly courage drive away such thoughts. Remember the Hadith:

"Make incumbent on you to hear and obey even if your ruler is an Abyssinian slave who does not have good looks."

In short, do not do things of your own accord. Submit to the Shaikh because the Sufiya have stressed the excellence of Iraadat and abstention from contradicting the Shaikh, to such an extent that they said:

"For the Mureed to be under the control of a cat is considerably better than him being under his own control (i.e. the control of his nafs and opinion)." Yes, it is incumbent to heed the conditions which we have explained to be the requisites of a Shaikh.

Allah Ta'ala has sent Nabi (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) to invite the Ummah towards Allah Ta'ala. By His Permission, He made Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) the Haadi (Guide) of the Straight Road. Allah Ta'ala says in this regard:

"(O Muhammad!) Verily, you guide towards the Straight Road."

Allah Ta'ala also says:

"O Nabil Verily, We have sent you as a witness, a conveyer of glad tidings, a warner and a caller towards Allah with His permission, and (We made you) a glittering lamp."

When Rasulullah's (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) life ended here on earth, he left his Sahaabah as his representatives. In this way, by successive generations, will there always remain in every age those who call towards Allah Ta'ala until the Day of Qiyaamah. Thus, he said:

“My Sahaabah are like the stars. Whomever you follow, you will attain guidance.”

But, this Hidaayat will be in possession of only such a person who has acquired the inheritance of both zaahiri and baatini Knowledge from Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) viz. the agency of reliable authorities (i.e. Ulama and Mashaa-ikh-e-Rabbani). Thus, whoever manages to locate such a Shaikh-e-Kaamil who is prepared to accept one under his control, should not be found wanting in upholding the zaahiri and baatini honour and respect of the Shaikh.

Ihtiraam-e-Zaahiri (Outward Respect)

The outward display of respect for the Shaikh consists of the following acts:

- 1) The Mureed should not debate with his Shaikh.
- 2) The Mureed should not dispute with his Shaikh even if he is convinced of the Shaikh's error because the gaze of the Shaikh is further than the gaze of the Mureed and the Shaikh's knowledge is greater than the Mureed's knowledge. *(Obedience to the Shaikh (spiritual guide) is sometimes misunderstood. Some people believe that total obedience to one's Shaikh is incumbent in every aspect and every sphere of life. Commenting on this attitude, Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh) said:*

"Total obedience to the Shaikh is not incumbent in either Aqaaid (Beliefs) or Kashfiyaat (spiritual inspiration and revelation which comes to the Shaikh), nor in all the Masaa-il and worldly affairs. For example, if the Shaikh desires that the mureed gives his daughter in marriage to his (the Shaikh's) son, it is not incumbent on the mureed to comply. Total obedience to the Shaikh is necessary only in the sphere of Islaah (moral reformation). The mureed has to compulsorily obey the instructions and prescriptions of his Shaikh. His obedience to the Shaikh is related to the masaa-il (rules and laws) of Islaah and Tarbiyat. Even in this regard, obedience is not total. Obedience is valid only if both the Shaikh and the Mureed unanimously believe that the methods and treatments prescribed are lawful in the Shariah. If they differ

in this aspect, neither should the mureed argue with the Shaikh nor disobey the Shariah. The mureed should seek the guidance of the Ulama (if he believes the prescription of the Shaikh is unlawful). If for some reason he cannot acquire the guidance of the Ulama, he should himself arrive at a decision after careful investigation. He should then inform his Shaikh that a certain act is not permissible. If the Shaikh persists in this (unlawful) instruction, the mureed should terminate his relationship with the Shaikh. This is the meaning of perfect obedience."

The Standard of Haqq (Truth) is the Shariah. Obedience to the Shaikh is not lawful if he instructs the mureed to commit acts which are in conflict with the Shariah. If the Shaikh leads a life in conflict with the Sunnah, he should not be obeyed. If one had the misfortune of having accepted such a guide, it is incumbent to sever one's ties with him. Sometimes unsuspecting people submit to every instruction and desire of a spiritual guide who himself may be in deception and deviation. In present times, there are numerous shaikhs of deception and misguidance. Before accepting any man as one's Deeni guide, it is essential to examine his lifestyle. A guide should be accepted only if he measures up to the Standard. If his daily life does not conform to the Sunnah and if he is devoid of Taqwa, never should he be accepted as one's Murshid.)

3) The Mureed should not sit on the musallah (prayer-mat) in the presence of his Shaikh unless it is time for performing Salaat. Immediately after Salaat, he should remove his musallah and sit on the ground.

4) The Mureed should not perform Nafl Salaat in front of his Shaikh.

5) The Mureed should obey whatever instruction his Shaikh issues.

6) The Mureed should not put his foot on the musallah of his Shaikh.

7) Such acts should not be done in front of the Shaikh. In fact, one should refrain from these acts even in regard to others. Any act which is in conflict with the attributes of the People of Ma'rifat should not be done.

8) The Mureed should not repeatedly glance at the face of his Shaikh.

9) The Mureed should not behave informally and too freely with the Shaikh unless he consents.

10) The Mureed should not express himself in any manner which displeases the Shaikh. He should always conduct himself humbly with lowered gaze.

11) Likewise the Mureed should not stare at people, for this causes ghaflat (negligence).

The Baatini Ihtiraam to be Observed for the Shaikh

1) The Shaikh should not be refuted in anything.

2) The Mureed should maintain his baatin and zaahir (inside and outside) and his statements and acts with equanimity, otherwise he will become involved in nifaaq (hypocrisy).

If the Mureed finds any conflict in him, he should eliminate it so that by the grace of Allah his internal and external states become the same.

The Times of Thikr

The Saalik should necessarily engage in Thikr and Nawaafil during the times of significance mentioned in the Hadith. These times are:

ISHRAQ – The time of Ishraq is from about ten minutes after sunrise. Four raka'ts should be performed in this time. According to one narration, two raka'ts could also be performed. This is Mustahab.

CHASHT – Its time is from after sunrise (i.e. about 10 minutes after sunrise) and lasts until just before Zawaal. Either 12 raka'ts or two or four or six or eight may be performed.

FAY-E-ZAWAL – This time commences after Zawaal. Performance of four raka'ts in this time is Masnoon.

BETWEEN MAGHRIB AND ISHA – Six raka'ts have to be performed during this time. Twenty raka'ts will be better. This Salaat is called Salaatul Awwaabeen.

All these Nawaafil are substantiated by the Ahaadith.

Thereafter the Mureed should engage, with presence of heart, in Thikr-e-Khafi (silent Thikr) or Thikr-e-Jali (audible Thikr).

DURING THE NIGHT – During the night thirteen raka'ts, the three Witr inclusive, should be performed. This is the Tahajjud Salaat. The minimum is two raka'ts besides the Witr. Thereafter the Mureed should remain engaged in Thikr until Ishraaq.

TAHYATUL WUDHU AND TAHYATUL MUSJID – Two raka'ts Tahyatul Wudhu and two raka'ts Tahyatul Musjid should be performed with constancy.

When a person observes the aforementioned eight conditions and executes with constancy the acts of Ibaadat in the times mentioned above, while at the same time being observing the rules and etiquettes, he will become a Mukhlis (sincere) and shaitaan will not be able to exercise his control over him. He will become a pure Ahlullah and Jannati because Jannat and Jahannum are existing realities for the Ahl-e-Sulook even today. It is not that they have to await for its materialisation in Qiyaamah. Hence, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“I went into Jannat and heard the sound of Bilaal’s sandals ahead of me.”

“I reached Jannat and saw a palace. On asking whose palace it was, the Mala-ikah said: ‘It is Umar’s (radhiyallahu anhu).’ I then recalled Umar’s honour, hence did not enter.”

“I saw Abu Talib in the shallow depths of Jahannum. If I was not his nephew I would have seen his abode in the centre of Jahannam.”

Fasl Fourteen

The greatest miracle of the Auliya is that Imaan of Ghaib which is based on the Kitaab and Sunnat, viz. belief in Aakhirat, the promise of Jannat, the Warning of Jahannum, resurrection, etc., is Shuhudi. The perception of these transcendental realities is with such clarity that the nafs is unable to deny it nor is shaitaan able

to cast any doubt in the Auliya regarding such matters. This Imaan has achieved such strength that even if all intervening veils are lifted and these abodes are physically seen, the Imaan will not be strengthened further (because these Auliya have already acquired the maximum degree of conviction even before lifting of these veils).

They have yaqeen that Allah Ta'ala has power over all things and his qudrat (Power) is not without hikmat (Divine Wisdom). It should be well understood that as long as the bandah has not risen to the degree of Tasdeeq, he will not reach the haqeeqat (reality) of Imaan. In this regard, the episode of Haarithah (radhiyallahu anhu) is narrated. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) asked:

“O Haarithah, how have you commenced the morning?”

He replied: “As a true Mu'min.” Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “Think and speak because every claim has a reality. Now say, what is the reality of your claim?”

Haarithah said: “I have held my nafs from the world. I have imposed thirst on it during the days (i.e. by way of fasting). During the nights, I kept it awake (with Tahajjud). It appears as if I am perceiving the Divine Arsh (i.e. perceiving its existence just as the Shariah has instructed). And, I perceive the inmates of Jannat exchanging mutual greetings and the inmates of Jahannam in their mutual recriminations.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “You have answered correctly.”

After Haarithah (radhiyallahu anhu) left the gathering, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) commented: “This is a servant whose heart Allah Ta'ala has illuminated with divine light (Noor).”

The Sign of Noor

The sign of the heart of the Thaakir having been imbued with Noor is the spiritual expansion of his breast and acquisition of tranquillity as a result of Thikr. He does not experience displeasure and fear.

And, the sign of the spiritual expansion of the breast is his complete lack of any desire for the perishable material possessions of the world.

Corresponding Existences

Every form (soorat) has a meaning and every tangible object has an intellectual existence. For every discernible (zaahir) object, there is a symbolic form (soorat-e-mithaaliyah) in Aalamul Ghaib (The Unseen Realm).

Whoever does not believe in the existence of a form (soorat) for a meaning (ma'na) is a mulhid (heretic) and a baatini mu-anid (intransigent rebel denying spiritual realities). Whoever denies the existence of a meaning for a form, his zaahir (outward life) is contaminated.

Whoever shall become an embodiment of zaahiri and baatini excellence, believing in the concept of intellectual (Aqli) existence for the tangibles (mahsusaat), and contemplates on this worldly realm and the Unseen Realm, he will be a true Sufi, Sunni and a man of fortune and guidance.

Never be prejudiced towards the Aimmah-e-Muslimeen (whether the Imaams of the Zaahiri mathaa-hib, viz. Hanafi, Shafi, etc., or of the Baatini mathaa-hib, viz. Chishtiyyah, Naqshbandiyah, etc.) Regard all of them to be on the Haqq although one should follow only one math-hab.

As far as possible give an appropriate interpretation for an unbecoming or bad statement uttered by one who subscribes to Kalimah Tauheed and Risaalat. If a suitable interpretation could be offered, do not criticize the person.

The Shaikh

Know that only such a person should be accepted as a Shaikh, who has trained and adorned his nafs by means of mujaahadah and has accustomed it to the imposition of difficulties and hardships. He must have sat with respect at the feet of Sulahaa and the leaders among the Mashaa-ikh.

He should be one who, after having understood the laws and limits of the Usool (Principles) and Furoo' (Details) of the Math-hab, has transcended the lofty spiritual states. It is haraam to accept as a Shaikh a man who lacks these attributes and qualifications.

Some authorities have said that it is not permissible to follow a person who does not understand the evil of his deeds and the rebellion of his nafs, nor has he acquired the ability of Ijtihaad in the sphere of treating and eliminating these evils, neither has he acquired the aadaab of walking in this Road of Sulook. It is, therefore, essential for the Mureed to firstly understand these issues, and then involve his nafs in mujaahadah. In this process, he should keep his Shaikh informed of every condition which develops. A well-known adage is: whoever does not reveal his condition to his physician is not intelligent.

Thereafter, the Mureed should systematically pursue the attainment of spiritual states and ranks (Manazil and Maqaamaat). He should not direct his attention to another Maqaam before having correctly attained with perfection the Maqaam which he is presently pursuing, e.g. he should become involved in zuhd only after the successful accomplishment of wara'. He should proceed and progress in this way until finally matters are inspired into his heart by the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala.

According to some Sufiyah, deeds which are the manifestations of the heart's actions are infinitely superior to deeds which are the results of the actions of the physical limbs. In this regard, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that if the Imaan of Abu Bakr (radhiyallahu anhu) is weighed, its weight will be heavier than the combined weight of all the Imaan of all the believers on earth. He also said that Abu Bakr's (radhiyallahu anhu) superiority is not the consequence of abundance of Salaat and Saum, but is the fruit of something embedded in his heart. Precisely on account of this "thing" in his heart, did he demonstrate such a high degree of self-control and perfect composure which no other Sahaabi possessed. Thus, on the occasion of Rasulullah's (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) demise he

mounted the mimbar and after reciting the praises and glories of Allah Ta'ala, announced:

“Whoever had worshipped Muhammad, should know that he has passed away, and whoever worships Allah, should know that He is alive, for He is the One Who lives eternally.”

Furthermore, Abu Bakr (radhiyallahu anhu) waged war against the murtaddeen (renegades) and immediately despatched Usamah's army which was delayed on account of the last illness of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), despite the unanimous opinion of the Sahaabah to temporarily cancel the expedition. They foresaw danger in the hasty despatch of the army at such a delicate juncture in the history of the nascent Ummah. But, he had no fear. Ultimately, Allah Ta'ala protected the Deen through the agency of Abu Bakr (radhiyallahu anhu).

It is incumbent that the Mureed does not keep his zaahir without Thikr and his baatin without iraadat. His engrossment in these acts will result in the incidence of waaridaat (inspirations from Allah Ta'ala). At this stage, he will be relieved of iraadat and by the taufeeq of Allah, he will become engrossed in Waaridaat. Hence, Abu Sulaimaan Daaraani (rahmatullah alayh) said: “When the matter reaches the heart, the physical limbs take rest.” The Mureed should therefore, be constantly involved in developing his baatin, maintaining the Ahwaal (spiritual conditions), honour the Asraar (spiritual mysteries) and regulate his breathing (to ensure that not a single breath of his is devoid of Thikrullah). Thus, the Sufiya say that the ibaadat of the faqeer is the negation of the khawaatir. This ibaadat pertains to the baatin dimension and constitutes perpetual protection (for the Faqeer against deviation).

Some Mashaa-ikh have asserted that when a Mureed is observed to be involved in nafsani desires and pleasures, it should be understood that he is a false. If he does not distinguish between praise and criticism, rejection and acceptance, then too, regard him to be false. The first state of corruption (i.e. nafsani pleasures) is related to the body and the second state (i.e. the

inability to distinguish between praise, criticism, etc.) is connected to the heart.

Junaid (rahmatullah alayh) said that if there were no signs of recognition, every person would have laid claim to Sulook. Allah Ta'ala says:

“(O Muhammad!) You will most assuredly recognize them (the Munaafiqeen) from their foreheads and you will recognize them from their mode of speech.”

Their very style of action and way of speech are based on kufr and nifaaq.

It is imperative for the Mureed to understand with yaqeen that no rank, no state and no ibaadat is valid without ikhlaas and without having eliminated riya. It is waajib that he guards his nafs every moment and that he takes stock of his moral character, for the nafs commands nothing but evil. Even if the Saalik reaches the limits of Ma'rifat, he should not be neglectful of his nafs. Even Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), despite his rank of splendour and Ma'rifat, would guard his nafs and seek refuge from its mischief.

Ali (karramallahu wajhah) said:

“I am for my nafs like a shepherd is for his sheep. When he gathers them to one side, they escape from another side.”

Abu Bakr (radhiyallahu anhu) said:

“The nafs is in the state of riya in all circumstances and in most conditions it is a munaafiq. In some conditions it is a mushrik. In its desires and claims it proclaims itself the opponent and associate of Allah, because whereas Allah Ta'ala commands His servants to praise and glorify Him, the nafs too desires its praise. Allah Ta'ala orders that His Commands be not violated and the nafs too repeats this desire (for itself). Allah Ta'ala commands that He be acknowledged as the Being of Awe and Desire. The nafs too wishes that it be desired and feared. This, then, is its shirk and its nifaaq. Its riya is very conspicuous.”

The Mashaa-ikh say that the Nafs is a Lateefah (a spiritual propensity – a spiritual sense as opposed to the physical senses) inside the physical body. This Lateefah, viz. the Nafs, is the abode of Akhlaaq-e-Zameemah (the lower bestial qualities). The Rooh too, is a Lateefah in the body, which is the abode of Akhlaaq-e-Hameedah (the lofty moral attributes) in the same way as the nose, eyes and ears are the abodes of the senses of smell, sight and hearing respectively.

The Mashaa-ikh have also said that the Rooh is the mine of virtue and the Nafs is the mine of vice. Aql is the army of the Rooh. Taufeeq-e-Ilaahi (the inspiration to do good) is for the aid of the Rooh, while Khuzlaan (the elimination of Taufeeq or the withdrawal of divine guidance) is the aid of the nafs. Usually the heart is subservient to the dominant force. If evil dominates, the heart becomes evil and if virtue gains ascendancy, then the heart will become adorned. And, Allah Ta’ala knows best.

Fasl Fifteen

Donning the Khirqah (Mantle)

It will be permissible for the Mureed to don the khirqah after he has successfully traversed the maqaam (stage) of Taubah; planted his feet firmly in the stages of Wara’ and Taqwa; having entered the stage of Zuhd and having accomplished the training of his Nafs by means of riyaadhat and mujaahadah. After having acquired these accomplishments, donning the khirqah will be permissible, if he so desires. However, it will be essential to observe the respects of the khirqah.

Thus, understand that Insaan (man) comprises of a zaahir (physical body) and a baatin (spiritual existence – the Rooh, etc.) The garments of both components of Insaan are different. Allah Ta’ala says:

“The garment of taqwa is best.”

The garments for the physical body of Insaan are such clothes permitted by the Shariat and whatever Allah Ta’ala has bestowed

to him. Hence, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) would sometimes wear an expensive mantle with wide sleeves and sometimes with narrow sleeves. Sometimes, he would wear a cloak and kurtah of an expensive kind and sometimes of a cheap kind made of rough cloth.

Mans Baatin

The Baatin of man consists of several spiritual faculties. These are:

- 1) NAFS: The garment of the Nafs is the Shariat. It should remain subservient to all the halaal and haraam orders of the Shariat.
- 2) QALB: The garment of the Qalb is Tareeqat.
- 3) SIRR: The garment of Sirr is Haqeeqat.
- 4) ROOH: The garment of Rooh is Uboodiyat.
- 5) KHAFI: The garment of Khafi is Mahbubiyat.

The other veils which cover man have already been discussed. Whomever Allah Ta'ala has granted the taufeeq of following the Shariat, reaches the most perfect stage of Uboodiyat and by virtue of Uboodiyat, Allah Ta'ala bestows to him salvation from the hijaab (veil) of Noor of the Rooh until he attains the most perfect stage of Muhbubiyat. Allah Ta'ala says:

“Say (O Muhammad!) If you love Allah, then follow me, and Allah will love you.”

The veils of zulmat (darkness) are lifted by the permission of Allah Ta'ala by virtue of obedience to the Shariat. When all the veils have been removed, then one becomes truly sincere and a man of Allah. The Saalik is then freed from the terrestrial limitations of the body and the celestial limitations of the Rooh. He then soars higher and higher and reaches the highest stages. He settles on

فِي مَقْعَدٍ صِدْقٍ عِنْدَ مَلِكٍ مُّقْتَدِرٍ
Saats of truth by an All-Controlling King.

This is precisely the meaning of Hadhrat Khidhr's statement:

“Neither is there room on earth for the Sufi nor can the heaven conceal him.”

Mutaa-ba’at (obedience or following) of the Shariat is the external form while Uboodiyat (the concept of being a slave) is its reality. It is not possible to be separated from Mutaa-ba’at (the external form) and Uboodiyat (the inner reality) in any condition neither on earth nor in the Hereafter. It is only an accursed one driven away from the Divine Court who opposes the Shariat, thereby casting himself in destruction and darkness. The episodes of Bal’am*, Barseesa*, etc. have already been heard. O Allah! Save us from decline after progress!

The Saalik should protect his zaahir and baatin against the predications of his disposition (tabiyat) and habit (aadat). He should not step beyond the confines of the Shariat by even a hair’s breadth. O Allah! Grant us the mutaa-ba’at of your Habib (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), in the zaahir and the baatin; in word and deed and in ibaadat and aadat.

Know, that for baatini perceptions, there is also another veil. Lusts and pleasures are a veil for the Nafs. Focusing the attention on anyone besides Allah, is a hijaab for the heart. Rational meanings are a hijaab for the Aql. To become stagnant in asraar (mysteries) are a veil for the Sirr. Mukaashaafaat (revelations) are a veil for the Rooh. Greatness is a hijaab for the Khafi. In reality, a Kaamil (perfect) person is he who does not concern himself with any of these states. On the occasion of Mi’raaj, at the location of Sidratul Muntaha, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) did not cast his gaze at any of the wonders and treasures which were there in front of him, hence, Allah Ta’ala says:

“When the Sidrah was covered by whatever was covering (it), the eyes (of My Habib) did not stray nor did they move away (from focusing on the True Object Of Love).”

* Bal’am and Barseesa were two great saints among the Bani Israeel. After a lifetime of piety and worship, they fell into transgression and kufr. Their end was terrible.

If an intelligent man of taufeeq entertains the slightest vestige of worldly consideration, he will not be safe from shaitaan.

It is narrated that Isaa (alayhis salaam) went to sleep with his head on a clay brick. On waking up, he found shaitaan at his headside.

Isaa (alayhis salaam) said: "Why have you come to me?"

Shaitaan replied: "I thought of casting a waswasah in you."

Isaa (alayhis salaam) said: "O Mal'oon! I am Roohullah. How can your vain desire affect me?"

Shaitaan replied: "I cherished this hope with regard to you, because you have something of mine in your possession."

Isaa (alayhis salaam) said: "What is that?"

Shaitaan said: "This brick below your head."

Isaa (alayhis salaam) then flung away the brick and shaitaan fled. May Allah protect us against shaitaan. The slightest degree of worldly desire in one, attracts the attention of Shaitaan.

Fasl Sixteen

There are five outward (zaahiri) fundamentals of Tasawwuf, viz. Khidmat (service), Hurmat (Honour), Khalwat (Solitude), Suhbat (Companionship) and Jawaanmardi (Chivalry). There are also five inwards (baatini) arkaan (fundamentals) of Tasawwuf, viz. Amal (deeds), Ilm (Knowledge), Haal (Condition or State), Qalb (Spiritual Heart) and Ma'rifat (Recognition of Allah).

According to some Sufiya, the first constituent of Tasawwuf is Ilm; its centre constituent is Amal and its end is Ata-e-Ilaahi (Divine Bestowal).

Ilm means the lifting of the veils and the manifestation of the hope of the Saalik. Amal is the aid which the Saalik obtains in his quest for his hope (murad). Ata-e-Ilaahi (Divine Bestowal) is the attainment of the goal of Amal.

The Saalik (Traveller) along the Path of Haqq is of three Kinds:

(1) Mureed Taalib (2) Mutawaassit Saa-ir (3) Muntahi Waasil.

The stage of the Mureed Taalib (the Beginner) is Mujaahadah. He should make incumbent on him mujaahadah and riyaadhat against the nafs. He should totally abstain from carnal pleasures except fulfilment of the huqooq (rights and obligations).

The stage of the Mutawassit Saa-ir (the middle-class traveller in the spiritual path) is the adoption of perilous and fearful options in the pursuit of the Maqsood (Goal). In every condition he should be truthful in his quest. The etiquettes of every stage should be observed.

The stage of the Muntahi Waasil (The one who has attained the Goal) is the proper fulfilment of the demand of the process of Truth observance. He should be involved in this process of fulfilment with full alertness and constancy. Difficulty and ease, prosperity and adversity, etc. – every condition – should be the same for him. His hunger and eating, his wakefulness and sleep, etc. should all be alike for him. The pleasures of the nafs should be completely effaced so that there remain only the Huqooq. His participation in worldly affairs will be solely to discharge obligations and not for deriving pleasures. While his physical presence is with people, his baatin is with Allah Ta'ala. All these conditions prevailed in Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and the Sahaabah.

In the initial stage he took to solitude in the Cave of Hira. In the end while he became the Daa-ee, calling creation to Allah Ta'ala, he never was separated for a moment from Allah Ta'ala in spite of his physical presence with the people. His khalwat and jalwat (being in public) were the same.

The same state of firmness existed in the Ahl-e-Suffah*. Although they later became wealthy and even rulers, their association with people neither influenced them nor harmed them.

* Suffah is the madrassah which Rasulullah (ﷺ) conducted in Musjid-e-Nabawi. The students who studied in this Madrasah were called Ahl-e-Suffah.

Adab (Respect)

Adab is the most significant fundamental of Tasawwuf. Abu Abdullah Bin Khafeef (rahmatullah alayh) said that Adeem (rahmatullah alayh) advised him as follows:

“Son! Make your deeds as salt and adab (respect) as dough. While the dough is the actual food, its consumption without salt is difficult.”

Similarly, Adab is the root of Sulook, but Amal is necessary for it, hence it is said that the whole of Tasawwuf is Adab (respect).

Every time and every stage has different respects. Whoever has incumbently observed Adab, has joined the ranks of the Men of Allah. One who remains deprived of Adab, will slip far from even his present stage of Qurb (if he had attained any such stage). Any hope of Qubooliyat (acceptance) will be denied to him. This is the interpretation of the statement:

“He who remains deprived of Adab, remains deprived of every virtue.”

The Path of the People of Tasawwuf is extremely perilous. Hence, if Adab is even slightly discarded, one will suffer severely. It is for this reason that the Sufiya-e-Kiraam refrain from turning their attention to people, their nafs and even their families. *(This should not be misconstrued. Their attitude does not imply neglect of their duties towards others and their families. It only means that even while involved with their earthly duties and obligations, their hearts and minds are with Allah Ta’ala. They do not derive pleasure nor gain any peace from their necessary association with people. The pleasure they display is merely an overt facade induced by obedience to the Shariah - Translator.)*

If they had to consciously and by deliberate design think of others, their hearts would incline towards them. When a yearning for anyone besides Allah develops in the heart, they will be deprived of the lofty spiritual virtues and excellencies. Junaid (rahmatullah alayh) was asked: “Who are the Sufiyah?” He replied: “They are a group whom Allah Ta’ala has chosen and endeared above the entire creation. If He keeps them hidden, He befriend them and if He reveals them, then too, does He befriends them.”

When Ibn Ata (rahmatullah alayh) was asked: “What is Tasawwuf?”, he said:

“It is the purity of man’s moral disposition (tabiyat). It remains hidden in man, and it (Tasawwuf) is the display of a virtuous moral character which embraces the physical existence of man.”

Adeem (rahmatullah alayh) asked Junaid (rahmatullah alayh):
“What is the inherent attribute of the Sufi?”

Junaid (rahmatullah alayh) replied:

“O Aba Muhammad! Beware! Beware! Concern yourself with the zaahir (external attributes). Do not ask of the Sifat-e-Zaati (inherent attributes) of the Sufi.”

Nevertheless, when he persisted with his question, Junaid (rahmatullah alayh) said: “It is the companionship of Allah. The haqeeqat (reality) of this Divine Companionship is known to none besides Allah Ta’ala.”

Suhail Tastri (rahmatullah alayh) said:

“Tasawwuf means such companionship with Allah Ta’ala which is concealed from everyone. It is known to none besides Allah.”

The Characteristics of the Sufiya

The Akhlaaq of the Sufiya are:

Magnanimity of heart, humility, sympathy, affection, toleration of difficulties, tenderness, kindness, to prefer the benefit of others over personal benefit, service, love, display of happiness, generosity, abandonment of wealth and fame, courage, chivalry, forgiveness, peace, gratitude, modesty, maintaining a smiling face, dignity, supplication, praising (Allah), regarding oneself as the most inferior being, honouring the bretheren, respecting the Mashaa-ikh, mercy to little ones, viewing the favours of others as being great and significant while viewing one’s own favours to be insignificant.

When Suhail Tastari (rahmatullah alayh) was asked the meaning of a virtuous character, he replied:

“The lowest degree of a virtuous character is to bear hardships; to refrain from the intention of vengeance; to feel pity for an oppressor and to

supplicate for him (in other words, to ask Allah Ta'ala to keep him away from zulm)."

Ibn Mubarak (rahmatullah alayh) said:

"A beautiful character is to keep a smiling and pleasant countenance; to refrain from causing harm and inconvenience to others and to have the quality of perfect forgiveness."

Ma'rifat

Ma'rifat is hidaayat (guidance) from Allah Ta'ala. It consists of two kinds:

Istidlaali and Shuhudi.

1) Istidlaali (logical deductive process) entails the attainment of Allah's Proximity by viewing and studying the objects of the world. Hence Allah Ta'ala says:

"Soon shall We show them Our Signs (of Qudrat) in the universe and in their own bodies."

This is the pedestal of those Ulama who are grounded firmly in the Knowledge of Allah. (They are known as the Ulama-e-Raasikheen.) By studying the signs and manifestation of Allah's Power in creation, they find the Road to their Khaaliq (Creator).

In reality this Ma'rifat too is acquired by those Ulama who had experienced glimpses of the unseen realm by means of kashf. This enables them to logically deduct the existence of Allah Ta'ala from both zaahiri and baatini entities. Just as Allah Ta'ala has fixed the zaahiri or the material world as a proof of Ma'rifat, so too has He indicated the baatini (spiritual) world as a daleel (proof) of Ma'rifat. Thus, whoever is able to reason and conclude from only the external world, lacking the ability to deduct from the internal (spiritual) world, his process of deduction is deficient. Example: the Nafs has an exoteric as well as an esoteric dimension. The proof presented by a person who is able to present proof from the zaahir of the Nafs, but not from the baatin as well, will remain defective in both dimensions. In fact, in so far as the baatin of the Nafs is concerned, his proof will be utterly baseless and devoid of

substance. A proof lacking in substance is not proof in actuality despite everyone having the ability to present proofs from the zaahir Nafs.

While one should deduct proofs from external manifestations and signs, one should be involved in the endeavour to adorn one's character so that the Aalam-e-Malakut (The Realm of the Angels) opens up for one. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that if shaitaan was not revolving around the heart of man, he would be able to view angels in the heavens.

Understand well, that a man whose baatin has not been brightened with the Noor of Ma'rifat, is in reality blind even though both his physical eyes are open. Allah Ta'ala says: "Whoever is blind in this world, will likewise be blind in the Aakhirat. In fact, he will be more astray."

Therefore, a man who is involved in futility, is deprived of Taufeeq-e-Ilaahi (Divine Guidance). Ma'rifat-e-Ilaahi (Divine Recognition) is not his fortune because he has resolved to follow in the footsteps of the Nafs. Allah Ta'ala, therefore, casts him far away (from Guidance) and deprives him of the Mushaahadah (perception with the roohani eyes) of His Ausaf-e-Qudsiyyah (Attributes of glory and holiness).

2) Ma'rifat-e-Shuhdi is an obvious fact. It is acquired at first sight without any process of logical deduction. In this regard Allah Ta'ala says:

"What! Is your Rabb not sufficient as a Witness over everything."

This rank (referred to in this ayat) belongs to the People of Mushaahadah. It is the Ma'rifat of the Siddiqueen. In this Ma'rifat, the Aarif makes his deduction with the Baatin of the impressions of Divine Power. Thus, some Mashaa-ikh have said: "We have seen Allah Ta'ala before everything."

The name of this Ma'rifat is Yaqeen and Ihsaan because the knowledge of things is acquired from Khaaliq. The knowledge of

Khaaliq is not derived from created objects. It is narrated that the following Wahi came to Dawood (alayhis salaam):

“O Dawood! Do you know what My Ma’rifat is?”

He said: “O Rabb! I am not aware.”

It was revealed to him: “It is the life of the heart in Our Mushahdah.”

Ahmad Bin Antaaki (rahmatullah alayh) said:

“I do not envy anyone except one who has acquired the Ma’rifat of his Rabb. It is my supreme yearning that I should not die until I have not acquired the Ma’rifat (of Allah) which the Aarifeen and Muhibbeen possess. I love yearning for the acquisition of Ma’rifat.”

Wasti (rahmatullah alayh) said:

“Ma’rifat is perception with one’s senses. Ilm is to acquire recognition by means of information.”

According to some Auliya, Ma’rifat is the knowledge which is acquired after ghaflat (neglect). It is for this reason that the term Ma’rifat cannot be attributed to Allah Ta’ala nor can it be said that Allah is Aarif because His Knowledge is eternal, not of temporal origin. This state of ghaflat (and acquisition) does not apply to Him.

Suhail Tastari (rahmatullah alayh) said:

“The Path of the Aarif is to purify his nafs from contamination, adhere to the commands, abstain from the prohibitions, perfect following of the Sunnah and total observance of the Adaab. Along with these accomplishments, he should correct his resolve and advance into Divine proximity with his purified Nafs.”

Ibn Ataa (rahmatullah alayh) said:

“One should maintain such a relationship with Allah Ta’ala that if one ponders over the bounties which He has already bestowed to one, then neither will walking on the surface of water nor flying in the air appear amazing because every act of Allah Ta’ala is marvellous.”

Shibli (rahmatullah alayh) was asked for the meaning of Ma’rifat. He replied:

“When one’s relationship with Allah has reached such a degree that one’s gaze is neither on one’s deeds nor on anyone besides Allah, then one will have acquired perfect Ma’rifat.”

The Mashaa-ikh have said that the Vision of Allah Ta’ala in Aakhirat will be like Ma’rifat on earth. Here on earth the Aarif, by virtue, of his Ma’rifat, cannot encompass the Zaat of Allah in entirety because He is the eternal uncreated and infinite Being devoid of form, dimension and direction. Similarly, In Aakhirat Rooyat (The Vision of the Zaat of Allah) will not be all-encompassing.

Idraak means to know the Zaat of Allah. Allah Ta’ala expresses this concept in the ayat: “The eyes cannot perceive Him!”

The Mashaa-ikh say that silence is incumbent on the person who lacks the Ma’rifat of Allah Ta’ala, for it is quite probable that on account of unawareness, he may mistakenly utter a disrespectful word.

Silence descends automatically on the one who possesses Ma’rifat because the true perception of the unexplained Divine Reality leaves him speechless, unable to explain even that infinitesimal aspect of the Eternal Zaat which he has glimpsed. This is the meaning of the statement of the Mashaa-ikh:

“Whoever has recognised Allah, his tongue has become dumb.”

When someone enquired from a certain Shaikh regarding the purpose of Ma’rifat, he said: “To be with Allah Ta’ala.”

Hadhrat Siddique (radhiyallahu anhu) said:

“Starvation and fear will never overtake one who has recognised Allah because he is with Allah every moment. He is annihilated in Allah Ta’ala.”

According to some Sufiyah, an Aarif is a person into whose heart the Knowledge of the Divine Reality flows freely. He is totally devoid of negligence and inertia. The effects of such Divine Knowledge.

Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) narrated that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Everything has a mine. The mine of Taqwa is the hearts of the Men of Ma’rifat.”

Hence, such a man is described an ‘Aarif’. Like a mine, the treasures of his Ma’rifat are limitless.

Fasl Seventeen

It is Wajib for the Saalik to be well-versed in the principles of the Deen so that his Ma’rifat, Uboodiyat and Ibaadat are rendered correctly. A Hadith-e-Qudsi says:

“O My Servant! Become pious so that you recognize Me; remain hungry so that you see Me and become free so that you attain Ma’rifat, Uboodiyat and Ibaadat.”

The Usool (Principles) of the Deen are Islam, I’tiqaad-e-Haqq, Imaan, Iqaan, Ma’rifat and Tauheed.

Islam – Zaahir (External Dimension) Islam consists of five fundamentals. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that the basis of Islam consists of five things:

- 1) To bear testimony that there is no object of worship besides Allah and Muhammad (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is His Rasool.
- 2) The establishment of Salaat.
- 3) The payment of Zakaat.
- 4) Fasting the Month of Ramadhaan.
- 5) Performance of Hajj.

The haqiqat (reality) of Islam is a Noor which is inspired into the breasts of the Mu’min. Allah Ta’ala says:

“He whose breast Allah has expanded for Islam, he is on a Noor from his Rabb.”

Now since the reality of Islam is the inspired Noor and the exoteric dimension of Islam is the five Arkaan stated in the Hadith, the meaning of the narration:

“A Muslim is he from whose tongue and hands Muslims are safe.”, will be that the excellence of Islam and its effect mean that a true Muslim will keep other Muslim safe from his evil.

I'tiqaad means the knowledge of the existence of the Unseen things such as Jannat, Jahannum, etc. This knowledge becomes grounded in the heart.

Haqiqat-e-I'tiqaad (The Reality of Belief) is a Noor in the heart, which constantly effaces doubts.

I'tiqaad-e-Saheeh

Correct I'tiqaad (Beliefs) are such beliefs which conform with the Aqaa-id of the Sahaabah, Taabi-een and Tabe-Tabieen (radhiyallahu anhum). The Believer should not entertain any of the corrupt beliefs of the people of Baatil and Bid'ah. Only those beliefs which are according to the beliefs of the Kitaab, Sunnah and the Ijma' of the three Blessed Ages, will be correct. All beliefs other than these will be corrupt and baseless. Hence, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) in praising the first three ages, said:

“The best of times is my age, then the next age and then the next (i.e. the first three successive ages of Islam).”

Ilm-e-Raajih is the name of such I'tiqaad (Belief) which conforms to truth and cannot be displaced.

The haqiqat (reality) of this Ilm is the same Noor which descends from Allah Ta'ala into the heart. The rays of this Noor intersperse the object of knowledge just as the rays of the physical eyes conjoin the object of vision. This Noor enters the hearts of the Servants from Allah Ta'ala via the agency of the Mishkaat (niche) of Nubuwwat. This Noor, in varying degrees of strength and grades, draws the servant towards Allah Ta'ala, viz. Ma'rifat-e-Zaati, or towards the Affairs of Allah Ta'ala, viz. Ma'rifat-e-Sifaati,

or towards the Command of Allah Ta'ala, viz. the Shariat. This Knowledge (Ilm-e-Raajih) has three categories:

- 1) Ilmul Yaqeen which is acquired by means of proofs.
- 2) Ainul Yaqeen which is attained by means of vision and spiritual perception.
- 3) Haqqul Yaqeen. In addition to the means of proofs and vision, this knowledge is further enhanced by practical participation with the object of knowledge. Example: The knowledge of water in the ocean is termed Ilmul Yaqeen. Seeing the ocean and walking along the shores will elevate this knowledge and it will now be known as Ainul Yaqeen. Swimming in the ocean will further enhance the status of this knowledge which is now known as Haqqul Yaqeen.

ILM LADUNNI is the acquisition by the heart's MushaAhadah of the Ma'rifat of the Zaat and Sifaat of Allah Ta'ala to a very high degree of absolute certitude. This is the type of Ilm which according to the Qur'aan was bestowed to Khidhr (alayhis salaam).

ILM-E-SAHEEH YAQEEN is the product of correct Imaan. One can never reach this stage of Ilm without correct and valid Imaan. As long as the effect of Imaan does not settle into the recess of the heart, Ilm-e-Yaqeen will never manifest itself in the breast.

Imaan

Imaan is to have absolute conviction in the Unity of Allah and to believe in the truth of everything which was handed down by Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

Haqeeqat-e-Imaan is the Noor which is embedded in the heart of the Mu'min. Allah Ta'ala says:

“He has written Imaan into their hearts.”

Certain statements of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) such as: “A Mu'min is he who keeps his neighbour safe from his harmful acts”, do not refer to Haqiqat-e-Imaan, but to the effect and excellence of Imaan.

Imaan is either a bestowal of Allah Ta'ala as He has mentioned in the aayat ("He has written Imaan into their hearts"), or it is acquirable by effort of man. The Imaan which has been bestowed is strengthened by effort. In other words, the Imaan which is a bestowal of Allah Ta'ala is strengthened by the verbal testimony of Tauheed and Risaalat. Such verbal testification is the act of the bandah.

Kaamil (Perfect) Imaan is only an Imaan which consists of both Tauheed and Ta'zeem (i.e. to revere and honour Allah Ta'ala in the heart). The aayat, 'Nothing is like Him', indicates Tauheed and the aayat; 'He is the All-Hearing, The All-Seeing', points to Ta'zeem.

When the Servant knows that Allah Ta'ala is One, Unique and Incomparable in His Zaat (being) and Sifaat (Attributes), and that the bandah is every moment in His Presence and View, and that not a particle is concealed from Him, then awe and reverence will develop in his heart. The servant will then not act in the slightest conflict with His Pleasure. This is the perfection (kamaal) of Imaan.

Kufr

Rejection of the Rasool, his Risaalat (Prophethood) and the Message he brought is kufr. Even if just one item of his teachings is refuted, it will be kufr and the rejecter thereby becomes a kaafir.

If the rejection is overt (i.e. clear and open), it will be termed kufr. If the rejection is covert, i.e. in the heart, it will be called nifaaq. Salvation from kufr and nifaaq is possible only by the heart's sincere belief in the truth of all the requirements of Islam and by the verbal testification of the heart's belief. The Believer has to truly believe in the Unity and Uniqueness of Allah Ta'ala, in His Angels, Ambiya, the heavenly Scriptures, the Last Day, Resurrection after death, The Reckoning in the Hereafter, Jannat, Jahannum, etc. He has to believe in Taqdeer (that good and bad is predetermined by Allah Ta'ala).

He has to believe that all the verses of the Qur'aan are the Kalaam (Speech) of Allah Ta'ala. He has to acknowledge that the Ka'bah is

the Qiblah and subscribe to all the beliefs and affairs of the Kitaab, Sunnah and Ijma' of the Ummah. He has to accept that the Shariah of the Nabi will remain in force until Qiyaamah.

If he has entered Islam after withdrawing from a false religion, he should proclaim his dissociation from that religion. If he has subscribed to any belief in conflict with the Ijmaa' of the Ummah, he should categorically renounce such belief. Example: If a Yahood embraces Islam, then along with acknowledging Tauheed and the Risaalat of Muhammad (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), he should proclaim his renunciation of Judaism. Allah Ta'ala says:

“Whoever rejects shaitaan (and the false religions), and accepted Imaan, he has taken hold of a strong ring (on which to hold).”

Ma'rifat is the Hidaayat of Allah Ta'ala. In this regard, the Qur'aan mentions the statement of Ibraahim (alayhis salaam):

“If my Rabb does not guide me, then most certainly, I shall be among those who go astray.”

Aishah (radhiyallahu anha) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“The pillar of a house is like the foundation. The pillar of the Deen is the Ma'rifat of Allah Ta'ala and Yaqeen. Aql is that which prevents (from transgression and kufr).”

Aishah (radhiyallahu anha) said:

“May my parents be sacrificed for you! What is the meaning of an Aql which prevents?”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“It is the intelligence which prevents from sins and exhorts obedience to Allah Ta'ala. And, Ma'rifat of Allah is the root of the Deen. Istighfaar and Ibaadat are its branches.”

It is obvious that the roots are prior to the branches. Hence, Allah Ta'ala says:

“Know that there is no object of worship but Allah, and seek forgiveness for your sins.”

“Verily, there is no Object of worship, but Me, therefore, worship Me and establish Salaat for My Remembrance.”

In both these aayats, Ma'rifat and Tauheed have been mentioned before Istighfaar and Ibaadat.

In Urf (popular usage) Ma'rifat means the knowledge which was acquired after being unaware. According to the Sufiyah, Ma'rifat refers specifically to the knowledge which is related to the Zaat and Sifaat of Allah Ta'ala. It does not admit the slightest scope for doubt and uncertainty.

The understanding that Allah exists, is One, Unique, Independent and is Self-Existent, is known as Ma'rifat-e-Zaati.

The understanding that Allah is Ever-Living, the One of Knowledge, the See'r, the Hearer, the Powerful, the One Who wills and He is the Bearer of all attributes of perfection and excellence, and that He is free of all defects, is called Ma'rifat-e-Sifaati.

Tauheed is the Rooh of Ma'rifat. The Ma'rifat of one who is not a Muwahhid (Believer in Tauheed), is worse than jahl (ignorance).

The sign of Ma'rifat is that MushAahadah of Allah Ta'ala has become the life of the Aarif's heart.

Ma'rifat-e-Shuhudi is vastly superior to Tasdeeq (acknowledgement with the heart). Ma'rifat-e-Shuhudi attains correctness when the Sirr acquires from the Qalb that stage of Rooyat (Vision) and Mushaahadah because Ma'rifat-e-Haqeeqi occurs between Rooyat. In this state Allah lifts some of the veils and displays the rays of His Zaat and Sifaat from behind the veils

so that the Aarif gains Ma'rifat. Allah does not lift all the veils. Should He do so, everything besides Him will be reduced to ashes.

Tauheed literally means to know something to be unity. According to the Ulama it is the concept of Allah's Unity – to profess the Unity of Allah. According the Sufiyah, Mushaahadah of the unity of Allah Ta'ala is Tauheed.

The root of Tauheed is the negation of the non-existent and transitory things and the confirmation of the everlasting things. Someone asked Junaid (rahmatullah alayh) to describe Allah Ta'ala. He said:

هو يلا هو لا هو الا هو

***“He is without He (i.e. even the sign of the pronoun has no function).
There is no he, but He.”***

Hearing this, the questioner let out a scream and died. Hadhrat Junaid (rahmatullah alayh) commented:

“I endeavour much to refrain from bringing the words of Tauheed to my tongue.”

Some Sufiya say that Tauheed means to distinguish between the Eternal (Qadeem) and the temporal (Haadith) and to turn away from the temporal and to be at all times fully engrossed with the Eternal. The annihilation in the Eternal should be of such a degree that one does not perceive even one's own existence. If in the state of absorption in the Eternal, one perceives one's own existence, it will not be Tauheed, but Tathniyah. (Tathniyah means the idea of being two.)

Understand that Allah is eternally One and Unique and besides Him there existed nothing. In the Hadith narrated by Imran Ibn Haseen (radhiyallahu anhu) it is explicitly mentioned that Allah Ta'ala existed and nothing else existed with Him. His Arsh (after creation) was extended over the waters. Thereafter He created all things.

When you now know that Allah Ta'ala was One before creation, and will remain One after creation, then you will understand that He has no need for being proclaimed One. His Unity is above all unity as He is Self-Existent and absolutely independent of others. Thus, the concept of Tauheed professed by the Servant envisages that he perceives Allah's Unity in the same way as the Unity which belongs to Him eternally. At the time of Mushaahadah there should not remain the cognition of anything else.

He should be glorified and honoured according to the Kitaab and Sunnat – that He is in His Zaat, Waahid (One); He has neither resemblance nor association with anyone in His Zaat and Sifaat. He is free from place, dimension and direction. He is beyond the comprehension of every person. In this regard, Allah Ta'ala says:

“They cannot encompass Him with knowledge.”
“Nothing is like Him.”

Thus, the Tauheed proclaimed by the Bandah did not – Nauthubillah! – award to Allah Ta'ala the attribute of Wahdaaniyat (Unity). On the contrary, by professing Allah's Tauheed, the proclaimer himself became a Muwahhid. Allah Ta'ala forever remains Unity which is His eternal attribute.

Haqiqat-e-Tauheed is the Noor which brings about the Mushaahadah (vivid realisation) of Khaaliq's existence and the non-existence of Makhluq (creation). This stage of Tauheed is vastly superior than Tauheed-e-Ilmi (Tauheed derived by knowledge) and Tauheed-e-Bayaani (Tauheed verbally proclaimed). Ilm does not eliminate doubt and the existence of others. It is apparent that news received is not the same as seeing. Therefore, there is no relationship between Tauheed-e-Bayaani and Tauheed-e-Mushaahadah.

A person who has been blessed with the Liqa (meeting) of his Rabb together with Tauheed, his errors too are transformed into virtues. Allah Ta'ala has made haraam the Fire for the person who has acquired Tauheed with a truthful heart. The Ahaadith-e-Mutawatirah testify to this fact.

There are numerous rational and narrational proofs for Tauheed. Among these are:

“Allah bears testimony that there is no object of worship but He.”
(Qur’aan)

“Your Ma’bud is One Ilaah. There is no object of worship, But He.”
(Qur’aan)

“There is no object of worship, but I.” (Qur’aan)

“Do not take (unto you) two gods. Verily, He is the One Ilaah.”
(Qur’aan)

“What! Is there a creator besides Allah?” (Qur’aan)

“Allah is the creator of everything.” (Qur’aan)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that Tauheed is adequate for Ibaadat and Jannat is sufficient for thawaab.

In short, while there are numerous rational and narrational proofs for Tauheed, four of these are very conspicuous. These are: Creation, development, killing and resurrecting. Allah Ta’ala says:

“Allah is He Who has created you; then nourished (sustained and developed) you; then he will cause death to you; then, thereafter He will resurrect you.”

Uniqueness is the most exclusive of His Attributes. Hence, unanimously all the Ulama, Sufiyah and Imaams of the Mathaa-hib believe that in Tauheed no one has any resemblance with Allah nor is there the slightest vestige of possibility of Him becoming impotent. In reality actual Tauheed is to believe Allah Ta’ala to be so unique that one does not discern the existence of others and even of one’s own knowledge.

To the Sufiyah, true Tauheed means the abandonment of even Tauheed during the state of Tauheed because any focus of the attention on any being other than Allah is within the scope of tashbeeh (comparison). The concept of Tauheed too is other than the Zaat of Allah, hence the exceptionally lofty stage of Mushahadah-e-Haqq in which the Aarif is in the direct presence of Allah’s Zaat precludes diversion from the Divine Zaat to the concept of Tauheed. (In Actual fact, this extremely lofty stage of

Tauheed is inexplicable. Its meaning cannot be adequately conveyed by words. – Translator).

Yaqeen is the state when the Noor of Haqiqat manifests itself in the heart of the Mu'min and leads to the removal of the veils of bashriyat (the physical existence of humanity), thus inducing the state of ecstasy. It does not refer merely to the Yaqeen which is acquired from rational and narrational proofs. Hadhrat Ali (karramallahu wajhah) said in this matter:

“If the veils are lifted, then too, there will be no increase in my Mushaahadah and clarity (of perception).”

This was because he had already acquired the most excellent and perfect state of Mushahadah in which the clarity of perception was limitless.

The difference between the Noor of Imaan and the Noor of Yaqeen is that the Noor of Imaan is concealed behind a veil, hence, Allah says:

“They believe in the Ghaib (Unseen).”

On the other hand, Yaqeen is the Noor which becomes manifest on the heart of the Mu'min after removal of the veil. In reality, besides this difference, both Noor are the same. Its similitude is that of Subh Saadiq. Some moments of the night's darkness are effaced, indicating the impending rise of the sun. Such is the analogy of Imaan, i.e. Yaqeen of the sun's rise has been gained, despite the sun being concealed by the veil of darkness. When finally the sun rises and becomes visible, then the clear vision of the sun with the eyes is like the Noor of Yaqeen. Therefore, Imaan is the root of Yaqeen while Ilmul Yaqeen, Ainul Yaqeen and Haqqul Yaqeen are its branches.

According to the Hadith, Imaan is complete Yaqeen. Ilmul Yaqeen is the comprehension of the meanings of the Qur'aan, which are gained by the understanding bestowed by Allah Ta'ala. He says:

“We made it comprehensible to Sulaimaan.”

The knowledge of Ilmul Yaqeen which the Servant acquires by the grace of Allah Ta’ala (by inspiration) without his effort and intention, is a rahmat (mercy). Thus, Allah Ta’ala says in regard to this bestowal of knowledge:

“We bestowed to him (Khidhr) rahmat from Our Side.”

In other words, Allah Ta’ala had bestowed Noor and Baseerat (Roohani insight).

The knowledge bestowed to Hadhrat Khidhr (alayhis salaam) was the Ilm of culture and love for humanity. It is thus seen that the acts he executed were calculated for the welfare of others. Those in need were covertly aided by his commissions. The damaging of the boat of the poor owner was designed to save it from the clutches of the tyrannical king who was confiscating all sound boats. The killing of the child was to save his pious parents from kufr to which the child would have introduced them. The repairing of the wall was to prevent the collapsing wall making inaccessible the treasure which a pious father has buried under the wall for his orphaned children who were destined to unearth it after attaining puberty.

In short, whoever has acquired proper knowledge, his Aqeedah and Imaan have become correct; his Ma’rifat and Tauheed too are rectified. A person with correct Ma’rifat and Tauheed here on earth, will be blessed with the Supreme fortune of the Divine Vision in the Aakhirah .

رَدِّقْنَا اللَّهَ تَعَالَى

May Allah Ta’ala grant us this Bounty.

Yaqeen is also the cure of the heart from the maladies of ignorance and doubt. It is quite obvious that the health of the heart is superior to the health of the physical body.

Some authorities say that the difference between Imaan and Yaqeen is similar to the difference between a blind person and a person with sight. The blind man's knowledge of the rising of the sun is not by way of Mushahadah (practical experience), but is by way of authentic information reaching him. On the other hand, a person of sight personally observes and experiences the rising of the sun with his own eyes. Such conviction (and knowledge) is termed Yaqeen.

Ibaadat

Ibaadat (Worship) has three stages:

- 1) For the purpose of acquiring thawaab and salvation from punishment. This stage is well-known.
- 2) For the purpose of acquiring the rank of being Allah's Slave (the Mantle of Abdiyat). Some Sufiyah have named this category Uboodiyat. Hence, of all names, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) loved the name of Abdullah most.
- 3) That Ibaadat which is rendered solely on account of Allah's instruction and for the sake of His glory, grandeur, existence, shame and love. This is the highest category of Ibaadat which some Sufiyah term Uboodat.

The vehicle for the execution of Ibaadat is the body to which is related the Commands of Allah (Salaat, Saum, etc.) The abode of Uboodat is the Rooh because the meaning of Uboodat is to be pleased with the Command of Allah Ta'ala. The connection of ridha' (pleasure) is the Rooh.

The mahal (substratum or abode) of Uboodiyat which is higher than both Ibaadat and Uboodat is the Sirr. This Ibaadat is the highest and the actual Ibaadat.

Both Ibaadat and Uboodiyat are Mujahaadah and Riyaadhath which entail the effort of the Servant. Uboodat is guidance which is pure bestowal of Allah Ta'ala. Thus, Ibraahim (alayhis salaam), in an episode related in the Qur'aan, said:

“I am going to my Rabb. Soon will He guide me.”

In other words: “He will grant me the stage of Uboodat.”

The Muhaqqiqeen have said that Hadhrat Siddique Akbar (radhiyallahu anhu) worshipped only for the sake of Allah’s Honour, splendour, shaam and love. This is indicated by the following statement of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam):

“Abu Bakr’s superiority over you is not on account of abundance of Salaat and Saum. His superiority is because of something which has been put into his heart.”

That ‘something’ refers to the special effect of Ibaadat and is called Uboodat.

Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) worshipped on account of the Divine Fear and Awe. It is for this reason that he exercised such awe over people. When a man fears Allah, then His creation fears that man. Therefore even shaitaan feared the shadow of Umar (radhiyallahu anhu).

Uthmaan (radhiyallahu anhu) worshipped on account of shame and Divine Splendour. Hence, he was gifted with the attribute of modesty in the most perfect and excellent state. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said about the modesty of Uthmaan (radhiyallahu anhu):

“Should I not adopt haya (shame) for a man for whom the angels in the heaven adopt haya?”

Ali (radhiyallahu anhu) worshipped on account of Divine Love and Respect. Thus, the following aayat was revealed in praise of him:

“They feed for His Love the poor, orphan and captive.”

Similarly, all the Sahaabah rendered their Ibaadat on the basis of some specific attitude the effects of which became conspicuous in them.

Whoever has acquired the stage of Uboodat, has reached the pedestal of Rooyat (Divine Vision – The Sight of Allah). Now, in this lofty state of Divine Presence, displeasing Allah Ta’ala is for him more painful than actual punishment because he knows that the disobedient one will most certainly be debarred (from Divine Love and Mercy), and for him (the slave) there is no greater punishment than being debarred (from the Divine Presence and Love). Disobedience, therefore, is not possible from his side. And, Allah knows best.

Haq

Haq is the Name of the Being who is present, established, perpetual, the Benefactor, the One Who can harm and the One Whose mercy is vast and limitless. That Being is only Allah Ta’ala. Therefore, the use of the name Haq literally is exclusively for Allah Ta’ala. It could be used figuratively (majaazan) for others.

Allah’s existence is by His Self (Bith-Thaat), i.e. independent, while the existence of others is by Allah’s act. Hence, the word Haq in its original and first use, is applicable to only the Being Whose existence is independent. Allah Ta’ala says:

“What else is there other than Haq? Nothing but deviation.”

(i.e. Besides Haq everything is deviation).

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Very true is Labid’s statement: ‘Hark! Everything besides Allah is baseless.’”

Since everything besides Allah is baatil, the logical conclusion is that Allah is Haq because the opposite of baatil is Haq. Haq extinguishes baatil. Thus, Allah Ta’ala says:

“We fling the Haq on baatil and it (Haq) smashes baatil.”

Haqiqat literally means knowledge and understanding. In the terminology of the authorities of language and eloquence, it is the use of a word for its original and true meaning. In the language of the Sufiyah, Haq means Zaat and Haqiqat means Sifat, i.e. the Zaat (Being) and Sifaat (Attributes) of Allah Ta’ala.

When the Mureed rids himself of this mundane world, transcends the limits of nafsani desire and reaches the domain of Ihsaan, then it is said that he has reached Alam-e-Haqiqat. He has become the Waasil of the Realm of Realities. At this stage he is still in the Realm of Sifaat (Attributes) and Samaa (Heaven). When he rises higher and reaches the Zaat, then it is said that he has attained Haq.

The Sufiyah use the terms Haq and Haqiqat figuratively for things other than the Zaat and Sifaat of Allah Ta’ala very rarely because their only aim is Tauheed. They are not concerned with anything else.

Abu Darda (radhiyallahu anhu) narrated that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Everything has a haqiqat (reality).”

Here, haqiqat is used figuratively for things besides Allah Ta’ala. The Hadith means that for every being or thing there is a Sifat (attribute) which is exclusive with that being.

It has already been mentioned that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) asked Haarithah (radhiyallahu anhu):

“O Haarithah! In what condition did you find yourself this morning?”

When he answered: ‘On Haq in Imaan.’, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “What is the haqiqat of your Imaan?” It is obvious that by this question, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi

wasallam) was referring to the special attribute necessary for Imaan. When Haarithah described this special attribute, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) approved of it.

The term Haqqul Yaqeen also refers exclusively to Allah Ta'ala in its actual and original meaning. It is used figuratively for others as well. It is the well-known belief of the Sufiyah that everything is with Allah; everything is from Allah and everything will return to Him.

Fasl Eighteen

Allah Ta'ala says:

“Aid one another in acts of piety and virtue.”

“Exhort one another in (acts of) Sabr.”

“Exhort one another in (acts of) mercy.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “Deen is Naseehat.”

In view of these exhortations, I (the author) say that without proper knowledge and good deeds, one should not entertain the hope of Divine Proximity and Wisaal (Meeting Allah). Without these two requirements it is ignorance to expect Ma'rifat and Wisaal. Both these requirements should be taken from the Kitaab of Allah.

In matters pertaining to Aqaa-id, A'maal, Ahwaal, Tauheed, Ma'rifat, etc., the Qur'aan Majeed is the guide and the leader. Correction of deeds is not possible without correct knowledge. Since Ahwaal (spiritual condition / states) are the effects of A'maal (practical deeds of righteousness), it is not possible to acquire them (Ahwaal) minus the correction of A'maal. Allah Ta'ala accepts only correct and pure deeds.

TAQWA – Saheeh Amal (correct deed) is a deed which conforms to the Shariah and is the product of sincerity. A deed is pure when it is solely for the sake of Allah Ta'ala. A deed without Taqwa is not acceptable. Without Taqwa there will be no salvation for anyone

except upon whomever Allah Ta'ala decides to have mercy. Allah Ta'ala says:

“Allah will save the people of Taqwa.”

Imaan and Taqwa are imperative. Imaan and Taqwa have four stages, the one higher than the other. In this regard, Allah Ta'ala says:

“There is no fear on those who believe and practise righteous deeds, regarding what they had eaten (prior to these having been proclaimed unlawful) provided they have adopted Taqwa and practised righteousness; then again they adopt Taqwa and are kind. And, Allah loves those who are kind.”

This ayat mentions three stages of Imaan. The fourth stage is described as Ihsaan.

First Stage

This comprises acceptance of Imaan and the Shariat. Minus complete abstinence (from evil), one lapses into fisq and fujoor (disobedience and immorality).

Second Stage

In addition to Imaan, the adoption of Taqwa pertaining to righteous deeds and prohibitions i.e. performing deeds of virtue and abstaining from unlawful acts. In this stage, adopting all lawful concessions and alternatives is acceptable. This second stage is superior to the first stage of Taqwa.

Third Stage

In this stage, Taqwa requires abstinence from both the prohibitions and the lawful concessions. Lawful things will also be abandoned for fear of indulging in unlawful things. This stage is higher than the second stage.

Fourth Stage

In this stage, Imaan and Taqwa are accompanied by Ihsaan. It is higher than Imaan bil-Ghaib. The knowledge in this category is the knowledge of Yaqeen which is acquired by way of Mushahadah, not by the method of logical deduction. In this stage of Taqwa, everything besides Allah Ta'ala is abandoned.

Wisaal

The Kitaab of Allah is the Road by which the Saalik attains Qurb (Divine Proximity) and Wisaal (the Meeting with Allah). Whoever abandons this Road falls into deviation and destruction.

Wusool means that Allah Ta'ala glances at the heart of His servant with His Noor. This Noor which pervades the bandah is inseparable from Allah Ta'ala because it is one of His attributes. The bandah perceives this Noor with the strength of Divine Noor because it is not possible for man to be imbued with the attributes of Allah Ta'ala. Thus, the meaning of Wisaal is nothing other than the Mushaahadah (spiritual vision – perception) of Allah Ta'ala on earth by the Sirr and Qalb, and by the corporeal eyes in the Akhirah .

The concept of Wisaal which asserts that the Zaat of the servants fuses into the Zaat of Allah Ta'ala is pure ilhaad (apostasy) and zindaqah (blasphemy). May Allah protect us from such blasphemy. He is above this baseless concept of pantheism.

The Vision of Allah Ta'ala will be beyond description (kayf) just as Tauheed, Ma'rifat, Ilm and Imaan are without kayf (description) here on earth. The Vision of Allah in the Akhirah will be possible only if Imaan here on earth conforms to the Kitaab, Sunnah and Ijma' of the Ummah. Who ever is deprived here on earth of valid Imaan, his Akhirah will be in ruins and loss.

Thus, valid Imaan and Taqwa are the fundamentals of Wisaal. Under no circumstances is it permissible to discard any of these fundamentals. After having gained the knowledge of Usool of the Deen, it is incumbent to maintain Imaan and Taqwa in all stages

(Maqaamaat) because Taqwa is the provision of the Road. Hence, Allah Ta'ala says:

“The best food (for a journey) is Taqwa.”

The garments of the heart are Taqwa. These garments conceal and protect the heart from the onslaught of Shaitaani deceptions. Allah Ta'ala says:

“The garments of Taqwa are the best.”

Garments and food are essential requirements for any journey.

Allah Ta'ala says:

“We have made incumbent on them the Word of Taqwa.”

Sidq which is also an essential of Wisaal, is the fruit of Taqwa. Allah Ta'ala, thus, says:

“They are the people of Sidq. They are the people of Taqwa.”

The knowledge which Allah Ta'ala has revealed in His Book is for the guidance of the Muttaqeen. Knowledge should, therefore, be acquired with Taqwa. Allah Ta'ala says:

“Fear Allah and know.”

“Fear Allah. Allah will teach you.”

Even during the time of pursuing knowledge (i.e. during student days), it is not permissible to be neglectful of Taqwa. Taqwa is the goal in all actions, statements, motion and rest. Allah says:

“Fasting has been made incumbent on you just as it was made incumbent on those before you so that you gain Taqwa.”

“Take along provisions (for the Hajj journey). The best provision (for the journey) is Taqwa.”

“Neither its (the sacrificial animal) flesh nor its blood reaches Allah. But, it is taqwa from you which reaches Him.”

“Verily, Allah had helped you in the Battle of Badr whilst you were a weak group. Therefore, have Taqwa for Allah so that you may be grateful.”

“Consume lawful and wholesome food from that which Allah has provided for you and have Taqwa for Allah.”

“Consume lawful and wholesome food from the spoils of war which you have acquired and adopt Taqwa for Allah.”

“O People of Imaan! Have Taqwa for Allah and leave (i.e. do not accept) the balance of riba which remains!”

“Whoever adopts Taqwa for Allah, He will open up an avenue for him and provide sustenance for him from such a source which he never even imagined.”

“Whoever adopts Taqwa for Allah, He forgives for him his sins.”

“Adopt Taqwa for Allah to the best of your ability, and listen.”

“O People of Imaan! Adopt Taqwa for Allah in the way in which Taqwa has to be shown to Him and do not die, but as Muslim.”

There are numerous similar verses and narrations. Allah Ta’ala has chosen the pious servants for wilayat (sainthood) and muhabbat (love), hence He says:

“Allah is the Friend of the Mu’mineen.”
“Verily, His Auliya are only the Muttaqoon.”

Allah Ta’ala befriends the Saabireen and loves the Muhsineen. He loves those who thoroughly purify themselves. He befriends those who have tawakkul. There are numerous narrations stating that Allah loves His Kaamil (perfect) servants. Among these verses, the following ayat is of special significance:

“Verily, none besides the muttaqeen are the friends of Allah.”

In this verse, it is stated with clarity that besides the pious ones, no one is the friend of Allah. A person who is not a Muttaqi can never be His Friend.

In short, this verse as well as other verses which we shall not mention for the sake of brevity, indicate that Taqwa is a vital fundamental. Among the objectives of the Deen it is the most important.

Ponder the conditions of Iblis, Bal'am and Barseesa. Despite their excellences, lofty conditions and karaamat, they became the victims of their nafsani desires when they slackened their Taqwa. In consequence, they lost whatever lofty ranks they possessed and were assigned to the lowest of low. May Allah save us from such a calamity. Indeed, someone had made an excellent statement when he said:

"If there was excellence in knowledge bereft of Taqwa, the noblest creation of Allah would have been Iblis."

Since the Muttaqi knows that companionship with evil persons produces worldly harm and disgrace in the Akhirah, he will most certainly flee from such people and seek refuge with Allah Ta'ala. Who says:

"Run towards Allah."

"That Day (of Qiyaamah) some (friends) will be the enemies of other (friends), except the Muttaqeen who will aid one another."

In contrast, the consequence of evil friendship will be nothing other than regret. They will regret for not having acquired the companionship of the pious. Regarding their evil friends, they will exclaim:

"Would that between me and you was the distance between east and west."

Evil companions refer to the kuffaar, oppressors, proud persons, anarchists, abusers of trust, extravagant ones, transgressors, etc.

Allah Ta'ala mentions them in many places in the Qur'aan. In this regard, He says:

***“Verily, Allah does not love the kaafireen.”
“Allah does not love the oppressors.”***

Similarly, does He mention others with evil attributes. The common factor among them all is that whoever is not a Muttaqi, Allah does not love him.

It, therefore, does not behove a person to turn away from the Shariah and incline towards the drivel of those ignoramuses who have deceptively donned the garments of the Sufiyah, and have made the fulfilment of the functions of the shayaateen their trade. In turning away from the Shariah, the gain is only loss and destruction. For an intelligent person, a sign suffices.

“O Allah! Grant us the fortune of following Your Habib. O Most Merciful One! Grant us the Taufeeq for deeds which are pleasing to You, Ameen.

Faṣl Nineteen

Some episodes of the People of Khalwat shall now be narrated here.

In the story of Hadhrat Yusuf (alayhis salaam) Allah Ta'ala says:

“When he (Yusuf) said to his father: ‘O my father, I have seen (in a dream) eleven stars, the sun and the moon prostrating to me.’

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that true dreams are one forty sixth part of Nubuwwat. Therefore, understand that when the Saalik commences Mujaahadah and strives in the purification and adornment of the Nafs and Qalb and he is steadfast in Muraaqabah (meditation), then he journeys across Aalam-e-Malakut (The Realm of the Angels). Things of the unseen realm are revealed to him at every stage according to the spiritual condition (of progress he has attained). Sometimes the revelations

are by way of Mukaashafah (revelations in the state of wakefulness); sometimes by way of pious and true dreams and sometimes by way of Waaqiah. During the state of Thikr and Istighraaq (complete absorption in Divine remembrance), the Saalik becomes oblivious of his physical senses. The incidence of revelation of an affair from the unseen realm while the Saalik is in a state between sleep and wakefulness is termed Waaqiah in the language of the Sufiyah. The revelation in the state of complete wakefulness is termed Mukaashafah. If the revelation occurs during sleep, it is called Ru'ya Saalihah.

Sometimes a dream may be false, but Mukaashafah will always be true because Allah Ta'ala makes the revelations while the Rooh has been denuded of the incumbrance of the physical veils.

On most occasions the Nafs joins with the Rooh resulting in an admixture of truth and falsehood. Whatever is the truth, is the attainment of the Rooh and whatever is false, is the commission of the Nafs. Truth is the attribute of the Rooh while falsehood is the quality of the Nafs.

True dreams are part of Nubuwwat. According to the narration of Hadhrat Aishah Siddiqah (radhiyallahu anha), the initiation of Wahi to Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was with true dreams. The interpretation of these true dreams were crystal clear, immediate and in accordance with fact.

When the Mureed sees himself in the state of Waaqiah in confrontation with wild beasts and serpents or with kuffaar and mulhideen (heretics), the Shaikh knows that the Mureed is engaging in mujaahadah against his nafs. It is then incumbent on the Shaikh to instruct the Mureed to be steadfast and observe Sidq so that he (the Mureed) does not become lax in the matter of mujaahadah nor becomes entrapped in the snares of the Nafs.

The Four Elements (Anaasir)

Each of the four elements (soil, water, air and fire) has natural qualities attached to it. The natural qualities of soil is density

(kathaafat), contamination, darkness, ignorance, dissatisfaction, and hardness of heart. When the Saalik in Khalwat resorts to mujaahadah, these attributes are displaced and substituted with loftiness and purity. As the Saalik journeys across the attributes of the soil, he sees in the state of Waaqiah, wildernesses, jungles and desolate houses.

The natural qualities of the element of water are the desire to mingle with people, fluctuations in temperament, to be quickly influenced, forgetfulness and the inclination to sleep much. When crossing this stage, the Saalik sees rivers, oceans and lakes.

The natural qualities of the element of air are lust, the desire for abundant wealth and quick change from one state to another. While transcending this stage, it appears to the Saalik that he is rising and flying in the air.

The natural attributes of the element of fire is anger, pride, desire for rank, power and fame. When crossing this stage, the Saalik sees lighted lamps, lightning and other substances which burn. Of all the elements, this is the last one.

The attributes of the elements of fire preponderate in most people. The last of all the qualities of the elements to leave the Saalik are the attributes of fire. This is the meaning of Rasulullah's (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) Hadith:

“From the hearts of the Siddeeqeen, the last quality to be removed is the love of fame and power.”

Revelations

When Mukaashafah is the product of the Haqiqat of the Rooh, it becomes visible in the form of the Sun. If it is the result of Haqiqat-e-Qalb, it is visible in the form of the moon. If the Sifaat-e-Qalbi (Attributes of the Heart) illuminates the Saalik, then the revelation appears in the form of stars. Although there is the possibility of falsehood occurring in this last form, the whole revelation is not false because the perception of the Rooh plays a

role in the revelation. A characteristic of the Rooh is Sidq (Truth), hence, part of this Mushaahadah will certainly be true.

It, therefore, behoves the interpreter to distinguish between the Khatraat-e-Nafsaani (the false perceptions of the Nafs) and the acquisitions of the Rooh. He should present an interpretation for the acquisitions of the Rooh and discard the Khatraat-e-Nafsaani.

A plain thought is also a Khatr-e-Nafsaani. The imagination clothes every idea and presents it to the Nafs. This Nafsaani Khatrah being the product of imagination appears in certain forms in dreams, e.g. a man resorts to mujaahadah against nafsaani desires for the sake of gaining acceptance and fame in society. This man then sees in Waaqiah that all creation is honouring him and prostrating to him. An interpreter should not present an interpretation for such a revelation. He should consider it to be a baseless thought which is the consequence of his nafsaani desires, hence he sees things according to his wishes. Such dreams are said to be Adhgaath-e-Ahlaam (manifestations of one's nafsaani desire presented by one's imagination to conform to the Nafs). Such Waaqiah and dreams are false. They do not deserve any interpretation.

It is possible for certain things of Alam-e-Ghaib to materialise in this mundane world in a temporary form. The original form which is the reality and nature of the being is confined to Alam-e-Ghaib. Examples are the angels and the souls. Thus, Jibraeel (alayhis salaam) would sometimes appear to Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) in the form of Hadhrat Dayha Kalbi (radhiyallahu anhu) and at times in the form of a villager. Those present would see him in these forms. The forms which Jibraeel (alayhis salaam) assumed were obviously not his original form, but were of a temporary nature.

These forms were not the products of people's imagination. If these different forms which Jibraeel (alayhis salaam) had assumed were the figments of the imagination, then every person would have perceived a different form because of differences in the

capacities of the imaginations of different people. It is not possible for the imaginations of a multitude of people to evoke the same impression and response at the same time. Hence, the assumption of different forms by Jibraeel (alayhis salaam) (for example) is on account of the special ability granted to him by Allah Ta'ala.

By virtue of some types of Mukaashafah, distant objects in far away places on earth become visible. When Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) proclaimed the event of Mi'raaj, the kuffaar of Makkah refuted it and they retorted:

“If you are true (in your claim), tell us how many pillars are there in Musjid-e-Aqsa.”

The veils were immediately lifted and Musjid-e-Aqsa became visible to Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). He counted the pillars and informed the kuffaar of the number.

On another occasion Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was asked about the whereabouts of the caravan which had gone to Mulk-e-Shaam. He replied:

“Between Makkah and the caravan is the distance of one manzil (16 miles).”

This was confirmed by the arrival of the caravan in Makkah the following morning.

Of the same kind of Mukaashafah is the statement of Hadhrat Siddique (radhiyallahu anhu):

“It has been inspired to me that Binti Khaarijah (his wife) is bearing a girl.”

Hence, a girl was born.

Of similar kind was the Mukaashafah of Hadhrat Umar Farooq (radhiyallahu anhu) when he had despatched the army under Hadhrat Saariya (radhiyallahu anhu) towards Nihaawand. The battle took place on a Friday. A section of the kuffaar army was lying in ambush behind a mountain. On this occasion while Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) was on the mimbar reciting

the Jumu'ah Khutbah in Madinah Munawwarah, this distant scene of the impending ambush was revealed to him. From the mimbar during the course of the Khutbah, Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) exclaimed: "O Saariyah! The mountain!" In other words, beware of the danger from the mountain side. Hadhrat Saariyah (radhiyallahu anhu) miraculously heard the exclamation of Umar and took steps to foil the ambush.

There are innumerable and famous episodes of this type of Mukaashafah of the Mashaa-ikh.

As a result of the Mukaashafah of Alam-e-Waaqiah the Saalik is apprized of the evils of his nafs and of the condition of his progress or retrogress during the period of his spiritual journey. Mukaashafaat are a cause for solace of the heart. By virtue of these revelations, the Saalik acquires the ability to distinguish between truth and falsehood, and shaitaani, bestial, angelic and spiritual (roohani) events. When the Nafs is overwhelmed by the evil attributes of greed, jealousy, stinginess, etc., then the imagination presents each of these evil qualities in the form of the animal in which that specific quality dominates. Thus, hirs (greed) becomes visible to the Saalik in the forms of a mouse and an ant; an evil intention assumes the form of a pig; pride takes the form of a khars; bukhhl (stinginess) appears like a dog and a monkey; malice becomes visible in the form of a snake and anger also assumes the form of a monkey; zulm (oppression) appears in the form of a lion or some other beast; lust in the form of a monkey while animality has the form of a goat.

The satanic attributes such as defrauding and trickery assume the form of devils, jinns and ghoul (evil beings inhabiting desolate wildernesses); pretence and deception come in the form of a fox and rabbit.

When these forms appear, the Saalik should know that these despicable attributes are dominant in him. He should strive to purify himself of these traits. If he sees these forms in submission to him, he should understand that he is in the process of

transcending them. If he sees himself fighting, killing and capturing these bestial forms, he should know that he is being released from these attributes.

When the Saalik perceives himself engaged in battle and struggle against these animal forms, he should not become complacent and careless. He should not rest until he has not achieved complete purification and salvation from these bestial and satanic attributes. And Allah knows best.

Spiritual Nourishment for Novices

In some stages (Maqaamaat) of Sulook, these affairs of the Ghaib constitute nourishment for the novices of Tariqat. Through the medium of these acts, the infants (novices – beginners) of Tariqat are nourished and developed. Their eagerness and enthusiasm are maintained.

“Verily, everyone knew his place of drinking.”

Some Akaabir claim that when Shaitaan discovers that a Saalik is ignorant of Deeni Knowledge and that certain affairs of the Unseen Realm are being revealed to him, then he (Shaitaan) mocks and jeers at him. He entraps him with amazing and marvellous acts. He sprinkles over the Saalik urine which the Saalik believes to be rose water. Shaitaan, the accursed one, fixes this jaahil (ignoramus) as a medium for deceiving and misleading numerous people. Thus, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“One faqih is sterner on shaitaan than a thousand Aabideen.”

Besides the Hadith, even intelligence bears testimony to this fact because an Aalim even if he is careless in his practical life, and is therefore described as ignorant, he guides with his knowledge numerous people. He teaches people the Masaa-il of the Deen. On the contrary, this jaahil, because of his corrupt acts of worship and his adorned baseless and deceptive Mukaashafaat, will lead astray a whole world of people.

In the initial stage of the relationship which the shaitaan strikes up with these types of ignoramuses, he casts into their hearts the idea that Allah Ta'ala manifests Himself in various physical forms and that in actual fact, all these forms are Allah's forms. When this belief becomes entrenched in the ignoramus, he joins the ranks of the anthropomorphists and believes that Allah has form and dimension. He thus, destroys himself with this belief and becomes a kaafir.

In view of his belief that Allah Ta'ala has material form, should he at anytime see some manifestation of Allah Ta'ala in the metaphysical realm (Aalam-e-Waaqiah), then his belief becomes even more solidified. He thus, becomes confirmed for Jahannam. Now shaitaan prevents this deviate from the suhbat of the Ulama and the pious Mashaa-ikh who are the guides of truth and the criteria of Haqq and Baatil. Shaitaan dupes him by whispering to him:

“There is none like you on earth. You have no need to follow anyone. In fact, even the Ambiya (alayhis salaam) did not acquire your degree of spiritual purity and glitter because Allah Ta'ala has manifested Himself to you and has illumined you without your request. Despite Musaa (alayhis salaam) having asked to see Allah, he was told: “Never can you see Me !”

“Why would you want to go to any Aalim or Aarif? There is no greater Aalim than Allah Jalle Shanhu. He, Himself is bestowing His Bounties in abundance to you. Perhaps you are labouring under the notion that some Shaikh or Aarif is more aware of your requirements than Allah Ta'ala. Perhaps you feel that a Shaikh can protect you against Shaitaan and sustain you better than Allah Ta'ala. You entertain such ideas whereas Allah Ta'ala is Azeez, Baseer, Hakeem, Aleem, Qawi and Mateen. Therefore, never can others serve you better than Allah Ta'ala. Allah is sufficient for you. Besides Him, you need no one else.”

By means of such deceptive arguments, Shaitaan lures and dupes the jaahil. Thus, Shaitaan himself becomes the murshid of this

ignoramus. He becomes his instructor and succeeds to erect a barrier between this jaahil and Allah Ta'ala. Wherever it pleases Shaitaan, he sets up his throne in space and casts over this jaahil his manifestations in a variety of hues and forms. Whenever Shaitaan desires, he conceals himself. In this manner, Shaitaan drowns the jaahil in an ocean of deviation and deception.

Thereafter, Shaitaan adorns and advertises the sainthood of this jaahil among the masses. He calls all people to love and follow this deviate, thus, destroying them all. We seek Allah's protection from the evil of the accursed shaitaan.

After considerable trial and experience the Mashaa-ikh have pronounced:

“Whoever has no Shaikh, Shaitaan is his shaikh.”

Allah Ta'ala says:

“If you have no knowledge then ask the People of Thikr (viz. the Ulama and the Mashaa-ikh).”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“My Sahaabah are like the stars. Whomever (among them) you follow, you will be on guidance.”

The need for appointing the Ulama and Mashaa-ikh as guides is thus obvious.

In the Qur'aan Majeed in many places, Allah Ta'ala has warned His servants against befriending Shaitaan. In this regard Allah Ta'ala says:

“Undoubtedly, Shaitaan is your enemy. Therefore, regard him as an enemy.”

“O Sons of Aadam! Do not allow Shaitaan to throw you into corruption like he had expelled your parents (Aadam and Hawwa) from Jannat...”

Numerous ayats confirm that shaitaan is man's avowed enemy.

The plot which shaitaan had devised for Adam (alayhis salaam) should not be overlooked. When even Adam (alayhis salaam) was ensnared by the deception of Shaitaan, how is it possible for an ignoramus to remain safe from satanic ploys?

A Ploy of Shaitaan

Understand well, that Shaitaan often introduces the ignorant worshipper to the math-hab of Ibaahat*. He presents deceptive arguments to the jaahil. He puts forward the bait of false loves and desires, convincing him that the Mushaahadah of these objectives is the ultimate goal of Shariat and Tariqat. "You have now attained that goal. Just as the impositions of the Shariat come to an end with death, so to do they end on attainment of the goal. You are now free to do as you please."

Sometime Shaitaan whispers to the jaahil:

"Allah Ta'ala does not care for your ibaadat and obedience. The impositions of the Shariah are only for the achievement of moral purification. Now that you have acquired moral purification, you are perceiving roohaaniyat. Therefore, there is no longer the need for ibaadat."

Sometimes Shaitaan involves this jaahil in sin. In the very state of commission of sin, Shaitaan presents to him false rays of illumination in a variety of alluring forms. At this juncture, Shaitaan casts into the jaahil's heart the idea that the impositions of the Shariah are no longer applicable to him (i.e. the jaahil) and that sinful deeds will not harm him. He tells the jaahil: "In fact, your sins too are virtues." The deceptive shaitaani 'tajalliyaat' (manifestation of celestial lights) convinces the jaahil to accept this shaitaan reasoning.

The illustrious Ulama have designed ways of safety against all these deceptions and ploys of Shaitaan, e.g. (1) It is known that the people are the followers of the AMBIYA (alayhimus salaam) who enjoyed higher stages of Qurb-e-Ilaahi and Mushaahadah than anyone else. In addition, the AMBIYA had greater knowledge of spiritual affairs. But, despite such lofty ranks, the AMBIYA never

* Ibaahat: Ibaahat is the idea of the permissibility of sins.

were lax regarding Taa'at (obedience and ibaadat) nor did they ever venture near to even the most insignificant act of sin. They were exceptionally cautious as regards sin and most resolute in Mujaahadah with regard to Ibaadat. How then can the concept of Ibaahat be lawful for others?

(2) There is no support whatsoever for this baseless concept in the Qur'aan and Hadith. No one has been granted the permission for committing sin, no matter in what condition of spiritual elevation he may be. On the contrary the Qur'aan, Hadith and Ijma-e-Ummat very sternly rebuke and warn a person who is guilty of infringing even slightly any of the impositions and laws of the Shariat. The Qur'aan and Hadith emphasise to a great degree respect for the laws of the Shariah and abstention from its prohibitions. Hence, Ibaahat can never be permissible for anyone.

The Ulama and the Mashaa-ikh have many similar other arguments to negate the math-hab of Ibaahat (which the jaahils duped by shaitaan, subscribe to).

Shaitaan the accursed one succeeds in enlisting most of these ignoramuses to the Mujassamah sect (i.e. those who subscribe to the belief that Allah Ta'ala has material form – Nauthubillah!) He convinces them initially that the various forms which become visible to them are in fact the forms of the Zaat of Allah Ta'ala. Thereafter, Shaitaan makes visible to them baseless things and solidifies in them the belief that these are the forms of Allah Ta'ala – Nauthubillah!

Sometimes Shaitaan reveals himself sitting on a throne in space. These ignoramuses believing that this spectacle of Shaitaan is their Rabb, prostrate themselves to him. Shaitaan ties the knot of his doctrines by way of the math-hab of Mujassamah. In fact, this episode had occurred to a person journeying in Egypt. In a wilderness he saw shaitaan on a throne suspended in space. Since this person believed in material form for Allah Ta'ala, he was led to believe that Shaitaan was Allah Ta'ala – Nauthubillah! He thus performed Sajdah. When he reached Baghdad he narrated his

experience to the Mashaa-ikh who told him that it was Shaitaan who has a throne which he suspends between heaven and earth. It is Shaitaan who was seen seated on the throne. The man's eyes then opened. Realising his folly, he renewed his Imaan, repented and, made qadha of his past Salaat. He then, travelled to the place where he had seen the mal'oon (accursed Shaitaan), profusely showering curses on him. He proclaimed:

“Undoubtedly, you are Shaitaan Mal'oon. I curse you and I profess my Imaan in Allah, The One, The Unique.”

The illustrious Ulama have many proofs to refute the calamity of Tajassum (the belief that Allah Ta'ala has material form). Among these proofs is the unanimous belief of all the Ambiya, the Mu'mineen – past and present – all the Mashaaikh and Ulama, great and small, that Allah Ta'ala is devoid and pure of physical form. His Zaat and Sifaat are without any physical form. Nothing in creation is like Him. He is the Creator of all things. He is Eternal. He neither has a beginning nor an ending.

It is quite obvious that it is not possible for the accepted and holy servants of Allah to unite on a baatil view. It is, therefore, only logical that the belief of the ignoramus is baatil.

Shaitaan also introduces numerous ignoramuses to the doctrine of Hulool (Incarnation). He casts baseless arguments into their hearts to convince them of this doctrine. He then begins to expound his baatil concepts. For example, he whispers to them:

“Whatever spiritual manifestation becomes perceptible to you, is in fact, your own internal (baatini) possession, hence it is not visible externally.”

Afterwards, when the jaahil experiences some Mushaahadah, he believes that it is a manifestation of his own nafs. He, thus, entertains the belief that whatever becomes visible in the state of Mushaahadah is, in fact, his own nafs. Hence, Allah Ta'ala too is 'our nafs' – i.e. He has entered into our nafs – Nauthubillah!

Many a time when a haal (spiritual condition) settles over some jaahil, it dominates him. As a result of the force of the haal, miraculous demonstrations emanate from the jaahil. At this juncture shaitaan impresses on his mind that the haal which he (the jaahil) is experiencing is Allah Ta'ala who is demonstrating His power by the display of the marvellous deeds. The jaahil is, thus, bowled over and he becomes a firm adherent of the doctrine of incarnation (hulool). However, he can be saved from this calamity by simply reflecting and understanding that the miraculous display is the effect of the haal. Haal, in fact, is a glance of grace which Allah casts on a bandah. The glance is not the being who glances. This is quite obvious which does not need any proof.

Sometime the Saalik who is yet dwelling in the state of the lowly nafs and desires, sees in either a dream or in a haal that he is Allah. This leads him to believe that, in actual fact, he is Allah – that Allah has descended into him – that he has become god-incarnated. But, he has failed to understand that the dream requires interpretation. The meaning of this dream is that the Saalik is still the slave of his nafs. He loves his nafs and regards it as an object of worship. He, therefore, misinterprets this type of dream.

The treatment for this serious malady is to abandon subservience to the nafs. He should sever every desire of the nafs by means of mujaahadah and riyadhah.

One should not believe such occurrences to be impossible. The imagination produces such figments to even the Saalik who is still in the sphere of his desires because such a Saalik is a layman just as others are laymen. Others too see in dreams that they are Adam or Nooh or Isaa or Musaa or Jibraeel or Mikaeel or some other angel or some beast, etc. Sometimes they (laymen) see themselves flying in dreams. Sometimes, in their dreams, they see other marvellous things. All these dreams require interpretation.

Sometimes the error of hulool is created when the Sufi, after transcending the sphere of nafs and desire, enter Alam-e-Haqiqat

and Fana. In this very lofty state he perceives nothing but Allah Ta'ala. He knows nothing but Allah. He becomes oblivious of everything, even of his own nafs. Therefore, whenever he perceives Allah, everything else vanishes into oblivion. He then formulates the belief that there is nothing existing besides Allah Ta'ala, and I am Haqq (Allah), hence he proclaims "Anal Haqq" (I am Allah) and the like. Those who hear such proclamations issuing from the Sufi, begin to subscribe to the doctrine of hulool. To be saved from this calamity the Sufi should understand that the cause of this deception is the state of obliviousness which settles over him. He forgets everything of this world and the Hereafter, even his ownself, and with his baatin becomes engrossed and annihilated in the Mushaahadah and Knowledge of Allah. While this is his state of annihilation, all things remain in existence as they were prior to his acquired state. While this lofty stage is a wonderful achievement, it does hold the aforementioned danger because sometimes the Sufi himself, on account of his jahl (ignorance), subscribes to the doctrine of hulool after having emerged from the state of annihilation. In view of this danger, it is imperative to have a Shaikh-e-Kaamil at this juncture so that the ignorant Sufi is saved from this calamity.

Sometimes, it happens that the Sufi on attaining a certain elevated stage sees Allah Ta'ala in everything on which his gaze falls. This Mushaahadah is, in fact, Ma'rifat. It is from this stage that the Sufi proclaims: "In everything I see, I see Allah."

Some have said: "In whatever I saw, I saw Allah first."

When the Sufi experiences such states, he forms the belief that Allah Ta'ala is incarnate in all things. But, Allah Ta'ala is far above such ideas.

Salvation from this baseless concept is to believe with yaqeen that this is a manifestation of the Veil of Azmat (Divine Splendour) and Kibriya-i (Divine Greatness) which has become discernible everywhere. It is apparent that Allah Ta'ala encompasses entire creation and has an association and closeness with everything.

Not an atom in the heavens and earth is hidden from Him. In spite of this closeness, Allah Ta'ala is separate from all things. Creation is something completely apart from Him. Thus, creation becomes incarnate in Allah or He becoming incarnate in creation are both impossibilities.

All the Ambiya, Auliya and Ulama unanimously refute the belief of Hulool. Remember this belief well because in the lofty stage (mentioned above) there exists the grave danger of the misconception of Hulool.

Fasl Twenty

Know, that of all Ummats, the Ummat of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is the noblest and most accepted (Maqbool) by Allah Ta'ala. Allah Ta'ala says:

“(O Ummat of Muhammad!) You are the best of Ummats...”

“We have made you the balanced Ummat.”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“There will ever remain in my Ummat a group steadfast and dominant on the Haqq. Those who refrain from helping them will not be able to harm them.”

The Ulama unanimously assert that this Hadith refers to the Jamaat of those who are the bearers of Deen and its Knowledge. For these people Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) supplicated:

“May Allah keep prosperous and successful the man who heard my words, remembered them and delivered them just as he had heard them.”

Such persons have been described as ‘udool’ (pious, just) by Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) who has ordered them to propagate the Ahkaam of the Deen. Hence he said:

“Those of you who are present should deliver (my words) to those who are absent.”

It is apparent that Tableegh by the Muballigh who is not uprighteous and just, is not correct.

The noblest in this Ummah are the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu anhum), then the Taabi-een and after them the Tab-e-Taabieen (rahmatullah alayhum). In this regard Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“The noblest age is my era, then the next age, then the next age.”

It is narrated that when Ibraahim (alayhis salaam) observed the excellence and praises of this Ummat (of Muhammad –) in the Saheefah (Divine Manuscripts) he supplicated: “O Allah! Let it be my Ummat.”

The Divine answer came: “I shall not make them your Ummat because they will be the Ummat of My Beloved (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam).”

Ibraahim (alayhis salaam) then made dua:

“O Allah! If You will not make them my Ummah, then keep their tongues proclaiming my truth.”

This dua of Ibraahim (alayhis salaam) was accepted, hence the entire Ummah of Muhammad (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) testifies to the Nubuwwat of Ibraahim (alayhis salaam) in particular. Precisely for this reason did Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) by the command of Allah, instruct the recitation of Ibraahim’s name in the Durood after At-tahiyat. Whatever Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) instructed was by order of Allah Ta’ala, hence the Qur’aan says:

“He does not speak because of desire. It (his speech) is only revelation, which is revealed (by Allah).”

On other occasions too, Ibraahim (alayhis salaam) has been combined in the dua.

Similarly, when Musaa (alayhis salaam) saw the excellence and praises of this Ummah mentioned in the Taurah, he wished that it be his Ummat. The Divine Answer was the same as received by Ibraahim (alayhis salaam). Musaa (alayhis salaam) then supplicated: "Make me a member of that Ummat."

The Divine Answer came: "Your appearance is long before that Ummat. You will not reach its era."

Isaa (alayhis salaam) too, when he observed the excellence of this Ummat in the Injeel, supplicated: "O Allah! Make that Ummat my Ummat."

He too received the same answer. He then made dua: "O Allah! Enter me into that Ummat."

This dua of Isaa (alayhis salaam) was accepted. He was lifted alive into the heaven and he will descend to earth towards the end of the world. He will then join the ranks of this Ummat.

Sahaabi and Taa-bi-eeen

According to some Ulama, a Sahaabi is a Muslim who saw Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) even if he did not enjoy the fortune of sitting in his company (suhbat). Some Ulama claim that sitting in the company of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is a condition. This appears to be the best version, viz. to be a Sahaabi, sitting in the suhbat of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) is a requirement.

A Taa-bi-ee, according to some is a Muslim who saw a Sahaabi even if he did not enjoy the company of a Sahaabi. However, some assert that companionship is necessary.

Wilaayat

Wali means friend of Allah. Friendship with Allah Ta'ala means belief in Him. Allah Ta'ala says:

“Allah is the Wali (Friend) of those who have Imaan.”

Some Akaabir divide Wilaayat into two kinds.

(1) Wilaayat-e-Ammah (General Wilaayat). This refers to the friendship of Allah Ta'ala acquired when one has emerged from the confines of kufr and nifaaq. With kufr and nifaaq one becomes the enemy of Allah. Wilaayat-e-Ammah is enjoyed by all the Mu'mineen. Allah Ta'ala says:

“Allah is the Friend of those who have Imaan. He takes them out from the darkness (of kufr) towards the light (of Imaan).”

(2) Wilaayat-e-Khaassah (Special Wilaayat). This Special Divine Friendship is restricted to those whose Ibaadat and obedience are constant and free of defect. When Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was asked for the definition of a Wali-e-Khaas, the questioner said:

“O Rasulullah! Who are the Auliya?”

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) replied:

“They are such people who induce in you the remembrance of Allah, when you see them.”

This riwaayat has been narrated by Abu Na-eem in Hulyatul Auliya. In a Hadith-e-Qusdi it is said:

“In My creation, My Beloved and My Auliya are those who are remembered together with My remembrance and I am remembered with their remembrance.”

In Haqaa-iq-e-Aslami it is narrated that Isaa (alayhis salaam) said:

“Join the company of those who induce you to remember Allah when you see them and create in you desire for the Akhirah.”

This, in fact, is Wilaayat-e-Khaassah. May Allah Ta’ala bless all true searchers with this treasure.

Wilaayat-e-Khaassah will remain in this Ummah until the Day of Qiyaamah. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“There are many people with dishevelled hair and two old items of dress on them. On account of their external condition of poverty no one cares about them. If they take an oath in the Name of Allah (that a certain thing will happen in this particular way), He will most certainly ensure that their oaths materialise.”

According to some Sufiyah this Hadith proves that on earth there will always be Auliya and the special servants of Allah Ta’ala. Although the carpet of Nubuwwat has been rolled up, the carpet of Wilaayat remains spread open.

The Qutb

In the entire world, in every age, there is a man who is on the heart of Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). He is known as the Qutb. Some people are of the opinion that the rank of a Qutb by Allah is equal to that of a Nabi. Listen attentively! This is a grave error. A Nabi has numerous ranks higher than a Qutb. A Qutb is not a person with an independent Shariat, while a Nabi is a Saahib-e-Shariat (one who brought a Shariat). If all the virtues and excellencies of all the Aqtaab, Autaad, Abdaal and the pious Mu’mineen are gathered and cast into the ocean of the Nubuwwat of a single Nabi, then all their accumulated excellences and virtues will be scattered and annihilated just as a drop will disappear in the ocean. It, therefore, does not behove an intelligent man to engage in nonsensical talk like ignoramuses do, thereby removing the yoke of Islam from his neck and destroying himself.

A Nabi is called ‘Nabi’ because he is higher than the entire Ummah. The word Nabi is derived from the root term *nabw* which means elevation. Allah Ta’ala says:

“Remember Idrees in the Kitaab. Certainly he was a Siddique Nabi. We elevated him to an elevated abode.”

While he was in this earthly life, Idrees (alayhis salaam) was raised to the highest stage of Il-liyyeen. Regarding Isaa (alayhis salaam), Allah Ta’ala says:

“I am raising you unto Me and purifying you from those who disbelieve.”

Allah Ta’ala also says in regard to the Ambiya:

“We have distributed among them their sustenance and have elevated some above others.”

This implies that the Ambiya have been given a status above the Auliya while the Auliya have been elevated above the ordinary Mu’mineen. The ordinary Mu’mineen have been elevated above the kaafireen. The aforementioned verse is a categoric assertion of the superiority of the Ambiya over all others. Regarding Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), Allah Ta’ala says:

“He (Allah) revealed to His Servant whatever He had revealed.”

In other words, Allah Ta’ala revealed His mysteries to His Habeeb (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) directly, without any medium. No one else is aware of these secrets.

Allah Ta’ala also says about Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam):

“The heart did not reject whatever it saw. What! Are you doubting him regarding the realities he saw (about His Rabb)?”

Never should you doubt. According to the most authentic view, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) saw the Divine Vision with his physical eyes.

Explaining the meaning of the Aayat, “*Then he (Muhammad) approached nearer*”, Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Abbas (radhiyallahu anhu) said that Muhammad (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) approached Allah Ta’ala and reached the closest proximity.

According to some Akaabir, the meaning of having ‘reached close’, is the lifting of the veils which resulted in the revelation and Divine Vision being seen with the greatest clarity. He traversed all veils and mounted the stage of Wisaal from the position of the closest proximity. In the Hadith the closeness is likened to a distance of two bow-lengths or even less.

While the reality of a difference of two-lengths in this context is clear to the Aarif, it can create doubts in the jaahil (ignoramus), leading to his destruction. Tadalli (تَدَلَّى) the term mentioned in the aayat to signify the approach into Divine Proximity) means the lifting of the veil. When the veil was lifted, proximity was attained. Ignoramuses have understood this Qurb (Divine Proximity) to mean hulool (incarnation) when in reality it means the lifting of the veils for Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). And Allah knows best.

Fasl Twenty One

Know that the acquisition of Sêr Fillaah (Sojourn in the Divine Zaat) occurs when the Nafs of the Saalik attains the stage of Mut-mainnah and has become bright as a candle. In this state of elevation its rays are in the Roohaani Realm. The fruit of the Naf’s journey is that it becomes holy and honourable. Its holiness and honour are in proportion to the progress of the Naf’s journey. The journey of the Nafs into the lofty realm is dependent on Muraaqabah (meditation) resignation, humility and Uboodiyat (total submission to Allah) and tasleem (total resignation with contentment to the Will of Allah). There are numerous Ahaadith in this regard. Among these, is the Hadith in which Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), the intercessor of the Day of Qiyaamah, said:

It is narrated that Allah Ta’ala said to Musaa (alayhis salaam):

“O Musaa! Do you know why We have elevated you above all creation and made you the Kaleem (i.e. the one who spoke directly with Allah Ta’ala)?”

Musaa (alayhis salaam) replied: “O My Rabb! I do not know.”

The Divine response came: “We observed you laying humbly on sand in Our lofty Court, hence We elevated you over all men.”

Hadhrat Siddique Akbar narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Do not despise any Muslim because an insignificant Muslim is also great by Allah.”

Ibn Abbas (radhiyallahu anhu) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“In the head of every son of Adam are two chains. One chain links into the seventh heaven and the other remains dragging on earth. If the son of Adam adopts humility, then Allah Ta’ala draws him by the heavenly chain above the seven heavens. If he becomes proud and arrogant, Allah Ta’ala drags him by the earthly chain below the depths of the earth.”

Abu Hurairah (radhiyallahu anhu) narrates that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that Allah Ta’ala said:

“Whoever adopted humility for Me, is kind and tender towards creation, and while living in My earth he is not proud, then I shall elevate his rank, taking him into A’laa Il-liyyeen (the Loftiest spiritual realms).”

There are many similar Ahaadith which indicate that man has freewill and latitude in the matter of Uboodiyat and purification of the Nafs. Hence, Allah Ta’ala explicitly says:

“Undoubtedly, he who has purified his Nafs has attained success.”

Such a man has smitten the corruption and contamination of the Nafs by means of the sword of Mujaahadah and opposition.

On account of this spiritual sojourn, the Nafs of man becomes nooraani (imbued with celestial light). It is precisely this fact which Allah Ta'ala asserts regarding His Habeeb (Beloved) :

“Undoubtedly, there has come to you from Allah a Noor and a clear Book.”

The Noor in this verse refers to Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Allah Ta'ala also says in this regard:

“O Nabi! Verily We have sent you as a Witness, a Bringer of glad tidings, a Warner, a Caller to Allah with His permission and as a glittering lamp.”

The terms, Siraajan Muneeran (glittering lamp) is a Noor which reflects Noor to others. If it was impossible for man to brighten others, then Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) would not have been imbued with this excellence because, after all, he too was of the progeny of Adam (alayhis salaam).

Although, a human being, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had purified himself to such an extent that he became pure Noor. Allah Ta'ala described him as a Noor. It is also reliably proven that Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had no shadow. It is obvious that besides Noor, every body necessarily has a shadow.

Similarly, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had purified his followers so much that they too became Noor. The Kitaabs are replete with the episodes of their karaamaat (miraculous demonstrations). These are so well-known that there is no need to mention them here.

Allah Ta'ala says:

“Those who have accepted Imaan with him, their Noor runs ahead of them and on their right side.”

“(Remember) That Day you will see the Believing men and the Believing women, their Noor running ahead of them and on their right. The munaafiqeen and munaafiqaat will say to the Believers: ‘Look to us so that we may take some of your Noor.’”

It is clear from these two verses that by following Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam), both Imaan and Noor are acquired.

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Allah Ta’ala has created me from His Noor and the Mu’mineen from my Noor.”

He also made dua as follows:

“O My Allah! Make my hearing, sight and heart Noor.”

In fact, he had also supplicated:

“Make me Noor.”

Thus, if it was not possible for man’s Nafs to become bright, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) would not have made this dua because to supplicate for an impossible thing is unanimously prohibited.

It has been narrated that Abul Hasan Noori (rahmatullah alayh), was named Noori because Noor was seen on him on many occasions. Also, Noor arises from the graves of many pious people and martyrs. This is the Noor of their purified Nafs.

When the Nafs becomes elevated, then its Noor permeates the body and it becomes the disposition and nature of the physical body. Thereafter, even if the Nafs becomes separated from the body, then too, the body remains the fountain for the movement of Noor just as it was during the subsistence of the life of the Nafs.

Conclusion

It is incumbent on the bandah to be fully concerned with the Uboodiyat of his Nafs, its protection and Muraaqabah. He should not be indolent and neglectful for even one moment. To be

concerned with the protection of the Nafs is the duty of the servant and it is related to his effort and violation. On the other hand, to grant Taufeeq for the spiritual journey is within the power of Allah Ta'ala. The acquisition of this Taufeeq (from Allah Ta'ala) relies on the bandah's adoption of Uboodiyat with wholehearted enthusiasm. It is, therefore, said that Allah Ta'ala has elevated numerous people to the loftiest spiritual mansions on account of their Mujaahadah and Riyaadhat, and they joined the association of the Mala-ikah and Ambiya just as a chosen and close slave is perpetually in the company of his master. In contrast, many landed in the lowest pits of Jahannam on account of their indolence.

It will be correct to say that Wusool Ilallaah is the fruit of Divine guidance and grace. Without this Divine Taufeeq there cannot be courage (which is essential for this sojourn). It will also be correct to say that Wusool is the fruit of riyaadhat and mujaahadah. The grace (fadhl) of Allah Ta'ala settles only on those who have courage.

In short, illuminating the Nafs, submitting it for purification, making it obedient for commands and to be happy and pleased with this slavery and service are essential conditions. In fact, man should be proud of this slavery and should consider obedience to be his pride and honour.

“O Allah! Grant us Your Love and the love of Your Beloved (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam). All these achievements are the branches of Muhabbat which is not attainable without Your Taufeeq.”

Musaa's Rolling in the Dust

The Hadith pertaining to Nabi Musaa (alayhis salaam) rolling in the dust (which has been mentioned earlier) requires some elaboration. It was mentioned in the Hadith that as a result of Musaa's rolling in the dust, he was elevated above all mankind. This rolling was not in this earthly dust and sand. This display of humility by Musaa (alayhis salaam) occurred in the spiritual realm

where the Nafs and Rooh rolled themselves in spiritual dust. This action is by the effort of the bandah.

The method of the spiritual rolling is known to only one who is travelling along or who has already traversed the spiritual realm (Alam-e-Arwaah). Whoever desires to learn this form of rolling in the dust should acquire it from those who are versed in it. The need is, therefore, imperative to take hold of the mantle of a Shaikh for travelling along this Road. The Shaikh has already reached the spiritual world, hence only he can direct one along this Path.

Initially, Musaa (alayhis salaam) would roll in the spiritual dust once a day. On the attainment of elevated stages, he rolled a thousand times a day in this dust. One who has ascended to lofty heights should, therefore, not think of himself as someone who has achieved greatness. The higher the ranks achieved by man and the purer and brighter his being and attributes, the more will be his ibaadat, praise of the Creator, beauty of character, sincerity and Ubodiyat.

Shaikh Abu Saeed Abul Khair (rahmatullah alayh) said:

“Beneficial knowledge is such knowledge which endows the man of knowledge with humility after the elimination of pride; with solitude after association and with abstinence (zuhd) after desire. The knowledge which brings pride after humility and fame after obscurity is the type of knowledge from which Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) sought Allah’s protection. He said:

‘O Allah! I seek protection from knowledge which is not beneficial.’

Shaikh Abu Saeed (rahmatullah alayh) also said:

“In the initial stage Ma’rifat shines like the stars. Its middle stage glitters like the moon and its final stage dazzles like the sun which dispels all darkness, substituting it with Noor. It purifies from all faults and adorns the breast and heart with the tajalliyaat (illumination) of Yaqeen.”

May Allah Ta'ala bestow these states to us and all searchers. May He arouse us from the slumber of the negligent ones and the dreams of the immature ones. All praises are due to Allah, Rabbul Alameen. May peace and perfect blessings descend until Qiyaamah on His beloved, the Chief of all the Ambiya, on his noble family and pure Companions and on those who followed and loved them. May Allah be pleased with them and us. Ameen. Yaa Rabbal Alameen.

BACKGROUND OF IRSHAADUL MULOOK

More than 60 years ago Imaan-e-Rabbaani, my Shaikh, Hadhrat Maulana Muhaddith Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh), on the instructions of Hadhrat Haafiz Dhaamin Shahid Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh), translated the treatise, Risaalah Makkiyyah into the Farsi language. In memory of his Shaikh, Haaji Imdaadullah Shaah Saahib, Muhaajir-e-Makki (rahmatullah alayh), he (Maulana Gangohi) named his translation, Imdaadus Sulook. In the introduction of Imdaadus Sulook, Hadhrat Imaan-e-Rabbaani wrote in a few lines:

“On the instruction of my spiritual uncle, Hadhrat Haafiz Dhaamin Saahib and taking aid from the mantle of spiritual blessings of my spiritual father, the guide and mentor, Hadhrat Haaji Imdaadullah Shaah Saahib, I embarked on the translation of Risaalah Makkiya. I, in actual fact, lack the ability for this task. I am really unable to set my foot in this Road. It is hoped that these two illustrious seniors, in particular, and whoever reads this book, in general, will not forget this deprived one in their blessed dua. They should rectify any error they detect. I do not set myself free from error. However, I am not concerned with the jealousy of the jealous one.”

My aim underlying this translation from Arabic into Farsi is precisely the same as the author of the treatise, Risaalah Makkiyyah has stated, viz.:

“If a true searcher (of Allah Ta'ala) studies this treatise with sincerity and Allah Ta'ala bestows insight to him, he will become aware that the Divine Court is extremely pure and absolutely free of any contamination. A person soiled in the contamination of sins does not deserve admission into

the Majestic Court of Allah Ta'ala. Allah Ta'ala desires obedience and submission to His Commands from His servants. He prohibits the commission of sins. By implication He says:

'O Son of Adam! I am indispensable to you. I have assumed responsibility for your sustenance and have made incumbent on you My obedience. Therefore, fulfil your obligations (towards Me) and I shall be adequate for you in all affairs. On the other hand, nothing besides Me, can suffice for you. If you have found Me, you have then attained everything. On the contrary, if you have failed to find Me, then the whole world will not avail you in the least bit.'

With this degree of knowledge engross yourself in the process of zaahiri and baatini purification. Gradually learn the Tareeq (the Path of Tasawwuf) until you become Waasil (attain the Divine Presence) and become a Muqarrab (one who enjoys Divine Proximity) as Allah Ta'ala has said:

'I am the Companion of those who engage in My Thikr.'

Thus, attain love and companionship in the eternal Court of Allah Ta'ala.' ”

In view of the extensive dearth of knowledge in this age, there remain very few versed in Farsi. Therefore, Muslims in general, are unable to derive benefit from this priceless treasure. Friends have repeatedly requested that I render the Farsi version into Urdu. However, what can I say of my inability when such an ocean of knowledge as Imaam-e-Rabbaani had said:

“I lack the ability for it (i.e. to translate the original treatise from Arabic to Farsi).”

What then is the position of this humble one who is a total stranger in this Path? Nevertheless, finally Allah Ta'ala willed that this service be recorded in my Naama-e-A'maal (Record of Deeds) so that it constitutes the medium for my salvation (in the Aakhirah). Undoubtedly, speaking of virtue and writing of goodness are not without beneficial effect. Therefore, taking the Name of Allah Ta'ala I mustered up courage to effect the translation.

Following the example of my Shaikh, I have named this translation IRSHAADUL MULOOK after him. Seeking protection in his ocean of Ma'rifat and holding onto his mantle of Atifat (spiritual grace), I have commenced this translation.

I am grateful to Allah Ta'ala, the Most Merciful Who has bestowed to me the Taufeeq to accomplish this work successfully just as He had granted me the Taufeeq to begin it. It is now in your hands (O reader!). Error and fault are integral parts of human nature. I, therefore, hope that readers will overlook the errors of this humble one, and inform him thereof. I also request those who derive benefit from this translation to remember this worthless servant in their supplications – that I be blessed with acts which bring about the Divine Pleasure and that I depart from this world with the love of Allah and His Habeeb (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

وَآخِرُ دَعْوَانَا أَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى
رَسُولِهِ سَيِّدِنَا وَشَفِيعِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَاصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ بِرَحْمَتِكَ
يَا أَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِينَ ط



Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) translated a few *fasls* (sections) of the treatise, (*Risaalah Makkiyyah*, naming it (i.e. the translation) *Imdaadus Sulook*. *Risaalah Makkiyyah* is the work of Shaikhul Mashaa-ikh Shaikh Qutbuddin (rahmatullah alayh). Alas! Until now I have been unable to find a detailed account of the life of Hadhrat Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh). In *Kashfuz-Zunoon* it appears that *Ar-Risaalatul Makkiyyah* is the work of Imaam Qutbuddin Abdullah Bin Muhammad Bin Aiman al-Asfahidi. The Faarsi *sharah* (of *Risaalah Makkiyyah*) says that *Risaalayah Makkiyyah* is the writing of Shaikh Qutbuddin Damashqi (rahmatullah alayh). In the Faarsi *sharah* (explanatory composition), the following appears: "I have written this book in Makkah – May Allah honour it (i.e. Makkah)."

From this it is learnt that the name, *Rasaalah Makkiyyah*, was adopted because it was commenced in Makkah Mukarramah. It is also learnt from the *sharah* that the honourable author while having commenced the treatise in Makkah Mukarramah, added to it and checked it in Damascus.

During the time of Shaikh Qutbuddin, the teaching of *Risaalah Makkiyyah* was given considerable prominence by a famous *buzrug* (saint), Hadhrat Jalaaluddin Bukhaari who was well-known by the name Jahaaniya Jahaa' Gasht (died 785 Hijri). His *Malfoozaat* compiled by someone and titled, *Malfoozul Makhdoom* whose Urdu translation, *Ad-Durrul Manthoom*, was published in 1209 Hijri by Ansaari Publishers of Delhi, also mentions *Risaalah Makkiyyah* several times.

Published by:
Young Men's Muslim Association
P.O Box 18594, Actonville, 1506 South Africa

Printed by: As Saadiqeen Islamic Centre (A.S.I.C)
Web: www.asic-sa.co.za