

دستور السالکین

A MANUAL FOR SPIRITUAL SEEKERS

Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qamar az-
Zamān Sāhib Allāhābādī

Translated by
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TRANSLATOR'S FOREWORD 6

SULŪK IN THE QUR'ĀN AND HADĪTH 8

SELECTED POEMS 10

INTRODUCTION 12

The fundamental objective 17

Definition of the Sharī'at, Tarīqat and Haqīqat 19

IMPRESSION 22

TAS-HĪL QASD AS-SABĪL 26

First Guideline: The Sharī'at and Tarīqat 27

Contemplation of death 30

Spiritual affiliation 35

Tenth guideline: Advice to non-'ulamā' 37

Advice to women 39

Advice to those who are affiliated to a shaykh 41

TAS-HĪL TARĪQ SULŪK 44

A treatment for shortcomings in controllable matters 44

The essence of tasawwuf 46

The blessing of du'ā' in rectification 47

The shaykh's duty is to show the path 49

The issue of choice is clear 50

Rectification of natural blameworthy qualities 52

Noteworthy points 53

The essence of rectification 53

The essence of the Sufi path 55

Types of the Tarīqat 57

The reality of spiritual affiliation 61

The reality of striving 62

Statements of 'Allāmah Ibn Taymiyyah and 'Allāmah
Ibn Qayyim 66

Sharī'at, Tarīqat, Haqīqat and Ma'rifat 69

The comprehensiveness of Hadrat Thānwī 71

The spirituality of Maulānā Fadl Rahmān Ganj
Murādābādī 75

Statements of Maulānā Fadl Rahmān Ganj Murādābādī
77

Spiritual conditions of Hājī Imdādullāh Sāhib 80

The comprehensiveness of the Sahābah 84

AN-NASĪHAH LI AL-MUSTARSHIDĪN 89

TEN PRINCIPLES FOR PURIFICATION OF THE SELF 95

Prelude 95

Foreword 96

Introduction 98

First principle: Tauhīd 101

Second principle: Du'ā' 109

Third principle: Reading the Qur'ān 114

Fourth principle: The perfect example of Rasūlullāh ﷺ
119

Fifth principle: Divesting and embellishing 123

Sixth principle: Locking entrances which remove man
from purification and cast him into evil 125

Seventh principle: Remembrance of death 130
Eighth principle: Selecting the right company 133
Ninth principle: Abstaining from egotism 137
Tenth principle: Recognition of the self 140
Conclusion 145

EXPOUNDING THE PATHS TO ALLĀH 152

PRINCIPLES OF THE TARĪQAT 161

Five principles of our path 161
Five principles for the above five 162
Principles for interactions 163
Principles for treating ailments of the carnal self 164
Five conditions for a shaykh 170
Five conditions which invalidate a shaykh 170
Etiquette for a murīd 171
The Tarīqat is based on five things 172

THE REALITY OF TASAWWUF AND SULŪK 177

TASAWWUF WA NISBAT SŪFĪYYAH 185

Introduction 185
The root of tasawwuf 186
The reason behind naming it tasawwuf 189
The corroboration of tasawwuf 190
Further clarifications 192
The need for companionship 193
Hadrat Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn and Asmuʿī 196
The fear and submission of Sayyidunā ʿAbd al-Qādir
200

**SPIRITUAL PURIFICATION AND FOLLOWING THE
SUNNAH AND SHARĪ'AH 201**

Purification of the heart, a means for acquiring
spiritual bliss 203

TASAWWUF – A DIVINELY-INSPIRED SYSTEM 206

QUOTATION FROM MINHĀJ AL-'ĀBIDĪN 213

Promises and warnings about the Hereafter 213

The spiritual path is traversed by the heart 232

The forty bestowals of Allāh 237

Four things are essential for a servant. 245

CONCLUSION 252

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE 253

GLOSSARY 254

TRANSLATOR'S FOREWORD

As the title suggests, *Dastūr as-Sālikīn* is essentially a guidebook for those treading or intending to tread the spiritual path. It contains extracts from several books which have been written by experts in the field. Foremost among them is Hakīmul Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānwī Sāhib rahimahullāh. His *Qasd as-Sabīl Ilā Maulā al-Jalīl* (Seeking The Path to The Grand Master) is well-known. In it, the Sharī‘at, Tarīqat and Haqīqat are explained in a manner which is appreciated by the novice and expert. It also contains practical guidelines for a person who is affiliated to a spiritual master.

An-Nasīhah Li al-Mustarshidīn is another practical guidebook for the spiritual seeker. One of its chapters is titled, *Bāb al-Wasīyyah Li al-Murīdīn* – the chapter on pieces of advice for disciples. It was translated by Hadrat Khwājah ‘Azīz al-Hasan Majdhūb rahimahullāh and Hadrat Muslihul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib rahimahullāh under the instruction of Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānwī rahimahullāh. It addresses a spiritual seeker directly, and steers him along the path of spirituality.

‘Ashara Qawā‘id Fī Tazkiyah an-Nafs (Ten Principles for Purification of the Self) by Shaykh ‘Abd ar-Razzāq ibn ‘Abd al-Muhsin al-Badr rahimahullāh is another primer for the one seeking to purify his carnal self. The author lists ten essential principles without which a seeker will not be able to fulfil his quest.

The article *Tasawwuf-A Divinely Inspired System* by Hadrat Maulānā Abul Hasan ‘Alī Nadwī rahimahullāh is a must-read for anyone who doubts the legitimacy of the Sufi system.

Several other articles pave the way for the seeker and make the journey to Allāh ta‘ālā an easy and enjoyable one.

We praise and thank Allāh ta‘ālā for having inspired Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib to compile this manual which can unquestionably be classified as essential reading for the educated and uneducated, the initiated and uninitiated, the convinced and the sceptic, and the scholar and the laity on the subject of Sufism.

May Allāh ta‘ālā shower His mercy on the compiler and bless him with long life and good health. May Allāh ta‘ālā accept this translation, enable us to practise on it, include it in our book of good deeds, and proliferate its benefit for eternity. Āmīn.

Mahomed Mahomedy
30 Rabī‘ al-Ākhir 1443 A.H.
05 December 2021

SULŪK IN THE QUR'ĀN AND ḤADĪTH

Allāh ta'ālā says:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا.

He who purified it has indeed achieved his goal. He who leaves it buried in the dust has indeed failed.¹

A Ḥadīth states:

عن أبي أمامة قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ما تحت ظل السماء من إله يعبد من دون الله أعظم عند الله من هوى متبع.

Ḥadrat Abū Umāmah radiyallāhu 'anhu narrates that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said: From all the gods which are worshipped to the exclusion of Allāh, the worst god is following the carnal desires.

قال الشاه ولي الله: فإن قلت بما أركى نفسي؟ قلت: بلزوم الذكر. قال تعالى: أنا عند ظن عبدي بي، وأنا معه حين يذكرني. فعلى حسب الذكر يكون تطهير

¹ Sūrah ash-Shams, 91: 9-10.

² المعجم الكبير: ج ٤، ص ١٠٣.

النفس وتزكيتها. "قد أفلح من تزكى وذكر اسم ربه
فصل". وعلى حسب التزكية يكون شهود المعية.¹

Hadrat Shāh Walī Allāh rahimahullāh said:
If you were to ask me: "With what should I
purify my self?", I will reply: "By adhering to
Allāh's remembrance." Allāh ta'ālā says: "I
treat My servant as per his thoughts about
Me. I am with him when he remembers Me."
Thus, the cleansing and purification of the
self is dependent on adhering to Allāh's
remembrance. Allāh ta'ālā says:
"Successful indeed is the one who has
become pure, remembers his Sustainer's
name, and performs ṣalāh." Experiencing
the close proximity of Allāh ta'ālā is also
dependent on purification of the self.

¹رسالة قلبي، حضرت شاه ولي الله.

SELECTED POEMS

إِنَّ لِلَّهِ عِبَادًا فُطْنًا – طَلَّقُوا الدُّنْيَا وَخَافُوا الْفِتْنَا

Allāh ta'ālā has servants who are intelligent.
They divorced the world and feared temptations.

نَظَرُوا فِيهَا فَلَمَّا عَلِمُوا – أَنَّهَا لَيْسَتْ لِحَيٍّ وَطَنًا

They looked at the world and, when they realized that it is not an abode for the living,...

جَعَلُوهَا حُجَّةً وَاتَّخَذُوا – صَالِحَ الْأَعْمَالِ سُفُنًا

...they considered it to be a deep ocean
[which can only be traversed by ship] and
adopted good deeds as ships in it.

Bahār Gulistān:

A person's good qualities can be identified in just one day, and what level his academic capability has reached. Despite this, do not be without fear about the condition of his heart, and do not be deceived because the filthiness of the carnal self cannot be ascertained even after many years.

The nightingale said to a flower which had just bloomed in the morning: "Do not be proud because many flowers like you bloomed in this garden and

withered away.” The flower smiled and replied: “We are not disturbed by the truth. However, to this day, no lover ever spoke harshly to his beloved.

INTRODUCTION

الحمد لوليه، والصلوة والسلام على نبيه، وآله
وأصحابه.

As regards the statement of Allāh ta'ālā: "He who purified it [carnal self] has indeed achieved his goal," it has been noted repeatedly that success in both worlds can only be achieved through purification of the carnal self. I hope this point has settled in the hearts of the readers. I do not see the need to write further on it. However, when I thought about the subject matter of the following verse, a door of rectification was opened. The verse reads:

فَلَا تَرْكُؤْا أَنْفُسَكُمْ. هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ اتَّقَى.

So do not boast about your purity. He knows fully well the one who is pious.¹

This means that no matter what level of rectitude and righteousness a person reaches, he must not boast about his excellence. Instead, he must be forever mindful of his defects. If the claim to excellence comes to his mind, then instead of progress, it will lead him towards retrogression. Maulānā Rūm raḥimahullāh makes reference to the repugnance of this quality as follows:

The one treading the path to Allāh ta'ālā is not advancing because he has thoughts about his own merit.

¹ Sūrah an-Najm, 53: 32.

I was overjoyed when I became alert to the meaning of this verse – as though I had found a lost wisdom. I was considerably fulfilled after checking several commentaries of the Qur’ān. I am quoting the translation and explanation so that you [the reader] may benefit and take pleasure from them.

في تفسير الجيلاني: (فلا تزكوا) ولا تنزهوا وتطهروا
(أنفسكم) إذ لا علم لكم بتفاصيل أحوالكم
وأعمالكم مطلقاً، بل (هو) سبحانه (أعلم بمن
اتقى) وحفظ نفسه عن مساخطه سبحانه، واحترز
عن منهيّاته.

Do not think of yourself to be pure and spotless because you have no knowledge whatsoever about the details of your conditions and actions. Allāh ta’ālā knows best who is pious, protected his self against His displeasure and abstained from His prohibitions.¹

وفي تفسير القشيري: يقال تزكية النفس من
علامات كون المرء محجوباً عن الله، لأن المجذوب
إلى الغاية والمستغرق في شهود ربه لا يزي نفسه. (هو
أعلم بمن اتقى) لأنه أعلم بكم منكم، ويقال: من
اعتقد أن على البسيطة أحد أشد منه فهو متكبر.

¹ *Tafsīr Jīlānī*, vol. 5, p. 85.

ويقال: المسلم يجب أن يكون بحيث يرى كل مسلم خيرا منه، فإن رأى شيخا، قال هو أكثر مني طاعة وهو أفضل مني، وإن رأى شابا قال: هو أفضل مني لأنه أقل مني ذنبًا.

When a person considers himself to be pure and untainted, it is a sign that he is accursed in Allāh's court. The person who is totally immersed in Allāh's presence never thinks of himself as pure. This is because Allāh ta'ālā knows you better than you know your own self. It is said that if a person thinks that there is someone in the world who is worse than him, then he is a proud person. It is essential for a Muslim to consider every Muslim to be better than his own self. If you see a senior person, you must be convinced that he has done more pious deeds than you. He is therefore superior to you. If you see a youngster, then think to yourself that he is superior to you because he has committed fewer sins than you.¹

وفي تفسير الكبير للفخر الرازي: (فلا تزكوا أنفسكم) إنه إرشاد للمؤمنين فخاطبهم الله وقال: هو أعلم بكم أيها المؤمنون، علم ما لكم من أول خلقكم إلى آخر يومكم، فلا تزكوا أنفسكم رياءً

¹ *Tafsīr Qushayrī*, vol. 6, p. 54.

وخيلاء ولا تقولوا لآخر: أنا خير منك، وأنا أزكى منك وأتقى، فإن الأمر عند الله، ووجه آخر: هو إشارة إلى وجوب الخوف من العاقبة أي لا تقطعوا بخلاصكم أيها المؤمنون فإن الله يعلم عاقبة من يكون على التقى، وهذا يؤيد قول من يقول: أنا مؤمن إن شاء الله للصرف إلى العاقبة.

This verse contains a guideline for the believers. Allāh ta'ālā addresses them and says: O believers! Allāh knows more about you. He has knowledge of you from the time you were born to the last day of your life. So you should not be ostentatious and proud into thinking yourself to be sanctified. Do not tell anyone: "I am better than you. I am more chaste than you. I am more pious than you." This is because everything is in Allāh's control. Another explanation is that this points to the obligation of fearing one's end. In other words, O believers! Do not make any absolute claims about your rectitude because Allāh ta'ālā alone knows the end of those who are pious. This supports the statement of those who say: "As regards my end, I am a believer – inshā Allāh."¹

In his commentary to this verse, Maulānā Idrīs Kāndhlawī rahimahullāh writes:

¹ *At-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, vol. 29, p. 272.

He is fully aware of your external and internal actions. Therefore, you should neither flaunt your purity nor make claims of your piety. Allāh ta'ālā knows best who has piety. Hadrat Hasan Baṣri raḥimahullāh said:

علم الله من كل نفس ما هي صانعة وإلى ما هي
صائرة، فلا تزكوا أنفسكم ولا تطهروها من الآثام
ولا تمدحوها بأحسن الأعمال.

Allāh alone knows every person – what he is to do and what is going to happen to him. Therefore, you should neither consider yourself to be pure, make claims of piety, nor sing the praises of your good actions.

Hadrat Abū Bakr radiyallāhu 'anhu narrates that a person was praised in the presence of Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. To prevent the person from falling into arrogance and deception, Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said to the one who praised the person:

ويلك قطعت عنق أخيك.

How unfortunate! You have chopped off your brother's neck.

Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam repeated this statement several times and then said: "If anyone wants to praise the good of another, all he should say is: 'This is what I think of him, and Allāh knows best about him. I cannot claim the piety of anyone in opposition to Allāh ta'ālā.'"¹

¹ Quoted from Saḥīḥ Bukhārī and Saḥīḥ Muslim.

Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib rahimahullāh used to say: “Making a claim to excellence is the most harmful thing on this path.” Hadrat Dhun Nūn Miṣrī rahimahullāh was advising Yūsuf ibn Husayn thus:

وإياك أن تدعي في ما ليس لك، فما أهلك عامة
المريدين إلا الدعاوى.

Beware of making claims to what you are not because nothing but false claims destroyed the majority of disciples.¹

The fundamental objective

Our fundamental objective is to present the short monographs, papers and articles of our seniors on the subject of purification of the self. This is done to collate the sciences and rare treasures of our seniors in one place. To this end, I felt it would be best to start the book with *Tas-hīl Qaṣḍ as-Sabīl* of Hadrat Ḥakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānwī rahimahullāh who is a reviver especially in the field of Sufism.

Hadrat ‘Allāmah Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī rahimahullāh writes with reference to Hadrat Thānwī rahimahullāh:

His gaze went on every type and group of the Muslim nation. He went to the extent of focussing on weddings, happy and sad occasions, other functions and gatherings. He then tested them against the Shari‘at and separated the

¹ *Ma‘ārif Muṣliḥul Ummat*, vol. 1, p. 323.

genuine from the counterfeit. He removed every harmful pebble and rock of fabricated customs and innovations from the straight path. Wherever he saw shortcomings – whether in the fields of propagation and education, politics, economics, morals, worship or beliefs – he rectified them. He prepared the “goods” for new juridical issues and the new needs which were faced by Muslims. Most of all, he revived the science of *sulūk wa ihsān* which is well-known by the name of *taṣawwuf* (Sufism)

This is the personality of Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānwī rahimahullāh. He established the reality of Sufism through Ahādīth in detail in his voluminous *at-Tasharruf*, and concisely in his *Haqīqat at-Tarīqat*. He proved the issues of Sufism from the Qur’ān in his *Masā’il as-Sulūk Min Kalām Malik al-Mulūk*. In addition to this, he explained Sufism clearly in several of his other works and lectures. He says:

The Shari‘at refers to the collective obligatory injunctions. This includes the internal and external actions. Internal actions are not excluded from the Shari‘at. The Shari‘at has a subsidiary which is referred to as the Tarīqat. Allāh is the One who inspires to what He loves and what pleases Him.¹

¹ *Āthār al-Ihsān Fī Siyar as-Sulūk wa al-‘Irfān*, vol. 1, p. 519.

I quote the following from the periodical, *Ma'ārif*, which is published by Dār al-Muṣannifīn, A'zam Garh:

From the books written in India in the 16th century (A.D), two held a distinguished position, viz. *Qaṣīdah Wird al-Murīdīn* and *Dastūr as-Sālikīn*. Their author is Maulānā Dāwūd Khākī who was the first khalīfah of the great Sufi, Shaykh Hamzah Makhdūm Kashmīrī raḥimahullāh. He used to refer to his mentor as a mujtahid in the Tarīqat.¹ The following is a couplet from *Qaṣīdah Wird al-Murīdīn*:

You are a helper of the Sharī'at, an
imām of the Tarīqat. Your heart has
become a repository of Allāh's
mysteries.

Definition of the Sharī'at, Tarīqat and Haqīqat

The following is quoted from *Shamā'il al-Atqiyā'*:

الشريعة أقوال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم مع الخلق،
والطريقة أفعال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم مع
النفس، الحقيقة أحوال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم
مع الحق.

The Sharī'at refers to the words of Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam with the creation. The Tarīqat refers to the

¹ I also say with reference to my mentor, Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat raḥimahullāh: I do not say that he is a mujaddid, but I will certainly say that he is a mujtahid in the Tarīqat. This fact becomes clear after reading his *Ifādāt*. (Qamar az-Zamān)

personal actions of Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. The ḥaqīqat refers to Rasūlullāh's conditions with Allāh ta'ālā.

The person who practises on one of the three will be possessing one quality. The person who practises on two, will be possessing two qualities. And the person who practises on three, will be possessing all three qualities. This is how a complete human is identified. The criterion for a complete human is restricted to four things:

1. Pious words.
2. Pious actions.
3. Pious character and mannerisms.
4. Pious condition.

The person who possesses all four is the real leader and the one to be followed.¹

For further clarification, we quote the definition of the above three from *Tadhkirah Ḥadhrat Bhalwī*:

Those who claim that Sufism is one thing and the Sharī'at is something else are in clear error. Some cynical 'ulamā' also say that Sufism is not found in the Qur'an and Ḥadīth. Allāh ta'ālā says:

أَقِمُوا الصَّلَاةَ.

Establish ṣalāh.

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ. الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ.

¹ *Ma'ārif*, September 2020.

Successful indeed are the believers. Who are humble in their ṣalāh.¹

Ṣalāh is the Sharī'at, while humbleness in ṣalāh is the Tarīqat.

A Hadīth states:

أَنْ تَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ كَأَنَّكَ تَرَاهُ، فَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ تَرَاهُ فَإِنَّهُ يَرَاكَ.

Worship Allāh in a way that you are seeing Him. If you cannot see Him, He is certainly watching you.

Experiencing this level in ṣalāh is known as iḥsān.

To sum up: Ṣalāh is the Sharī'at, humbleness in ṣalāh is the Tarīqat, and the level of iḥsān is the Haqīqat. No one can refuse to accept any of the three as the Sharī'at. When ṣalāh having the attributes of humbleness and iḥsān is referred to as taṣawwuf, it becomes clear that taṣawwuf is exactly the Sharī'at, and Sharī'at is taṣawwuf.²

I express my heartfelt gratitude to my assistants who assisted me according to their capabilities. May Allāh ta'ālā reward them.

Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī
Bayt al-Adhkār, Waṣīyyābād, Allāhābād
Dhū al-Hijjah 1441 A.H.

¹ Sūrah al-Mu'minūn, 23: 1-2.

² *Tadhkirah Ḥaḍrat Bhalwī*, p. 185.

IMPRESSION

Maulānā Muftī Zayn al-Islām Qāsimī Allāhābādī
Muftī – Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband

The great scholar and Sufi, Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib Allāhābādī needs no introduction. His services in the fields of Allāh-recognition, taṣawwuf and the Tarīqat are well-known. He is recognized as a shaykh of the Tarīqat and a luminary in Allāh-recognition.

He was attached to the Sharī'at and jurisprudence from a tender age. During the same period, he had the good fortune of directing his attention to spiritual jurisprudence and the Tarīqat, and to absorb its teachings and blessings. This was an opportunity which is availed to few people.

He had a devotional and student-type relationship with his first mentor, Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib raḥimahullāh. In turn, the latter showered him with affectionate and fatherly training, and prepared his heart to absorb spiritual teachings from the very first day. In this way, the latent talents of his heart and mind were trained to acquire the highest levels of excellence.

Maulānā spent his youth in the company of Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh Sāhib raḥimahullāh, and his middle-age in the company of Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Sāhib Partāb Garhī raḥimahullāh for a long period of time. While under the latter's tutelage, he went through spiritual striving and developed high levels of virtuous character. The path to acquiring saintly levels and ranks was paved for him. In this way, he is traversing

the path of the Tarīqat. His time is almost entirely spent in training seekers and conveying spiritual teachings. Unravelling the complexities of the Tarīqat, illuminating the path, making it easy, and preparing a programme which is as simple as possible; have become the temperament and system of Hadrat. Consequently, the seekers are able to traverse the stations as quickly as possible, and cross the passes easily.

A special feature of Hadrat is that he had the best opportunities of deriving benefit from the masters of the Tarīqat and selecting the pearls of cognition and spirituality from their company. As for those masters from whom he could not benefit directly, he did his utmost to study their books and lectures.

The essence of all Hadrat's efforts is to make the Tarīqat easy and to proliferate it. Together with wanting to derive benefit for himself, Hadrat established a long programme of writing and compiling books so that it may be easy for others to benefit. Consequently, in addition to benefiting from Hadrat's company, a large group of the Muslim masses and a considerable number of scholars are benefiting from his written works.

Assemblies and spiritual lectures are continually delivered in Allāhābād. Thousands of people from near and distant areas, from within the country and from foreign countries benefit from his lectures. After listening to the unique and priceless methods of rectification, they plan a course of action for themselves. Through his spiritual focus, they traverse the paths of the Sharī'at and Tarīqat, and cross the stations of Allāh-recognition.

From among his many written works, *Dastūr as-Sālikīn Li Qurb Rabb al-'Ālamīn*, is a fresh and

valuable work which is in my hands. It would be appropriate to refer to it as a summary of the Tarīqat, the core of Sufism and the soul of spirituality. It is actually a treasure of several priceless collections and articles. Today – 16 Jumādā al-Ukhrā 1442 A.H. – I had the honour of hearing some of the subject matter of this book from the blessed tongue of Hadrat. What were the themes? They were steps towards spiritual heights which a seeker feels as though he is climbing towards.

After the assembly, Hadrat requested me to pen my impressions about this fresh publication. It is possible to describe a beloved's external features. But it is impossible for even a factual person to describe his airs and graces. The same can be said about this book. Its lofty themes and the emotions and effects which they evoke cannot be described by the pen. Nonetheless, the principles and formula for reaching Allāh ta'ālā as presented in this book are such that its comprehensiveness and usefulness have got to be applauded. The book deserves to be made into a guiding lamp, because this is the path of love. It is impossible to experience the joy of beholding the True Beloved [Allāh ta'ālā] without genuine love for Him.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ لَذَّةَ النَّظَرِ إِلَى وَجْهِكَ وَالشَّوْقَ إِلَى
لِقَائِكَ.

O Allāh! I beg You for the joy of being able to behold Your countenance, and the yearning to meet You.

The book has been prepared with all its excellent qualities. Apply the antimony of divine love and understand the reality of Sufism by studying the

pages of this book. And acquire the honour of realizing deep impressions and spiritual conditions.

May Allāh ta'ālā reward Hadrat with the best of rewards, crown this book with acceptance and inspire as many people to benefit from it. Āmīn.

وصلی اللہ تعالیٰ علی خیر خلقہ محمد وعلی آلہ وأصحابہ أجمعین.

Zayn al-Islām Qāsimī Allāhābādī

Muftī – Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband

16/6/1442 A.H.

30/01/2021

TAS-HĪL QASD AS-SABĪL

Hakīmul Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānwī

الحمد لله الذي كفى وسلام على عباده الذين اصطفى

This book is concise but comprehensive on the subject of taṣawwuf. It is certainly the gist of countless books on taṣawwuf. It has encapsulated an ocean in a cup. Why should it not be so when it has been written by not just a mujaddid but a convenor of mujaddids. It was written at a time when fabricated customs and innovations had become so widespread that the reality of taṣawwuf had become obscured. In fact, even its outer form had changed. In such a situation. Hadrat Maulānā Thānwī raḥimahullāh made changes to it and amended it, and then presented it to the Muslim nation in its original form. The genuine scholars – who are worthy of being referred to as the witnesses of Allāh ta‘ālā on earth – then testified in favour of Hadrat Thānwī’s presentation.

I now take the opportunity of presenting – in full – the first and tenth guidelines contained in it. As for the remaining eight guidelines, only their headings will be quoted.

Inspiration is from Allāh.

Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī

First Guideline: The Shari'at and Tariqat

The reality of the Tariqat – which is commonly known as tasawwuf – is that a Muslim should embellish his internal and external selves with good actions, and save them from evil actions. Details in this regard are as follows:

The fundamental objective is to please Allāh ta'ālā. The means to do this is to act totally on the injunctions of the Shari'at. Some of these injunctions are related to the external self, e.g. ṣalāh, fasting, hajj, zakāh, marriage, divorce, spouses fulfilling each other's rights, oaths, expiation of oaths, buying and selling, obeying court ordinances, giving testimony, writing a will, distribution of one's estate, manner of greeting and speaking, eating, sleeping, sitting, standing, hospitality, etc. Injunctions related to all this are known as 'ilm-e-fiqh (jurisprudence).

Other injunctions are related to the internal self. For example, love for Allāh ta'ālā, fear of Him, remembrance of Allāh ta'ālā, reducing one's love for this world, being pleased by His will, abstaining from greed, having presence of heart in acts of worship, carrying out these actions with sincerity and for Allāh's pleasure, abstaining from scorning anyone, abstaining from egotism, controlling one's anger, and so on. These are known as sulūk, Tariqat and tasawwuf.

Just as it is obligatory to carry out the external actions – ṣalāh, fasting, etc. – it is obligatory to carry out the internal actions as stated in the Qur'ān and Sunnah. It is more important to abstain from internal vices because they have an effect on the external actions. For example, decreased love for Allāh ta'ālā causes one to become lazy in ṣalāh, and

he performs the bowing and prostrating postures hastily. Miserliness prevents him from paying his zakāh or performing hajj. He is ruled by his pride and anger, thereby causing him to commit excesses against others. In short, the Shari'at and Tariqat are not separate entities. Rather, practising on all the external and internal injunctions of the Shari'at is actually the Tariqat. Imām Abū Hanīfah rahimahullāh defined the science of fiqh in such a way that it includes the internal and external actions.

However, to make matters easy, the latter day scholars collated the external actions like salāh, fasting, hajj, zakāh, marriage, divorce, trade, hiring, etc. separately and named them fiqh. They collated the internal actions like sincerity, patience, thankfulness, abstinence, etc. separately and named them tasawwuf and the Tariqat. According to this definition, we could also separate one from the other. For example, salāh and fasting are two separate forms of worship just as man's hands and legs are different body parts. The eyes are separate from the ears just as the heart is separate from the kidneys. However, man in his complete form can only be complete when he has all these body parts and organs. He cannot take one part and be independent of the other.

In the same way – as per the definition of latter day scholars – the science of beliefs, jurisprudence, Sufism, etc. are undoubtedly separate and distinguished sciences, but a complete believer can only be one when he possesses all these collectively. Following the Qur'ān and Sunnah can be realized by acting on all these sciences. Selecting one and disregarding the others is just as destructive as

protecting one's ears while disregarding one's eyes and causing their destruction. Or, observing the fast while destroying salāh.

Hadrat Shāh Walī Allāh Sāhib rahimahullāh said:

The Shari'at without the Tarīqat is mere philosophy, and the Tarīqat without the Shari'at is freethinking and heresy.

Hadrat Qādī Thanā'ullāh Pānīpattī rahimahullāh said:

If a person's external self is not pure,
his internal self can never be pure.

Purity of the external self refers to adhering to the outward actions which are explained by the science of fiqh. Purity of the internal self refers to adhering to the internal actions which are explained by the science of taṣawwuf.

Hadrat Imām Sahrawardī rahimahullāh said in '*Awārif al-Ma'ārif*' with reference to the spiritual conditions which will be experienced by the Sufis, that Hadrat Sahl ibn 'Abdillāh rahimahullāh said:

كُلُّ وَجِدٍ لَا يَشْهَدُ لَهُ الْكِتَابُ وَالسُّنَّةُ فَبَاطِلٌ.

Any spiritual ecstasy which cannot be verified by the Qur'ān and Sunnah is baseless.

He added:

This is the extent of the Sufis' emulation of the Sunnah. Therefore, those ignorant Sufis who claim spiritual conditions which are contrary

to it have fallen into tribulation and are fabricators.¹

A famous scholar of the fourth century of the Hijrah, Imām Abul Qāsim Qushayrī raḥimahullāh, wrote a letter to the Sufis of his time. It is titled *Risālah Qushayrīyyah*. In it, he states emphatically that following the Sunnah is the fundamental practice of all the Sufis.

Some ignorant claimants to taṣawwuf say that the Shari‘at and Tarīqat are two separate paths. Something which is unlawful in the Shari‘at could be lawful in the Tarīqat. This is outright deviation and heresy, and in conflict with the creed of all the Sufis.

Second guideline: Repentance

Third guideline: Acquiring knowledge of Dīn

Fourth guideline: The need for a mentor

Fifth guideline: The objective of a mentor/disciple relationship

Sixth guideline: Course of action for a disciple

The sixth guideline contains a discussion on “contemplation of death” and “spiritual affiliation”. Many people inquire about these two, so I feel it will be appropriate to mention them in some detail.

Contemplation of death

Contemplation of death refers to sitting in solitude and thinking about the things which will happen after death. In fact, a person should imagine them as though they are happening right now. Abundant remembrance of Allāh ta‘ālā will develop love for Him

¹ *‘Awārif*, in the marginalia of *Iḥyā’ al-‘Ulūm*, vol. 1, p. 280.

and create disinterest in the world. This very same love and disinterest will – Allāh willing – be sufficient for his success. The remaining time – whether walking, sitting or lying down – should be spent in *durūd* and any other form of *dhikr* which a person is inclined to. *Pās anfās* – which is quite well-known – means that no breath of a person should be absent of Allāh’s remembrance. A person may adopt any form of *dhikr*. It is not necessary to adhere to the popular manner of *pās anfās*. Instead, it is one of the many ways. If he finds that he is experiencing concentration which is increasing by the day, stray thoughts are decreasing, and he is inclined to *dhikr*; then I believe that there is no need for further spiritual practices. As long as a person is Allāh-conscious all the time and contemplates death as explained, then this will suffice. He may continue with it for the rest of his life. He will certainly receive its fruits in the Hereafter. Anyway, the original promise of receiving fruits is in the Hereafter. Nonetheless, if Allāh ta’ālā wills to give him some of the fruits in this world, he will develop unique points of knowledge and cognition in his heart, and he will experience new spiritual conditions. Sometimes it will be enthusiasm and yearning, sometimes love and affinity, and at other times it will be awe. The wisdoms and mysteries of the injunctions of the Shari’at will be exposed to him. His relationship with Allāh ta’ālā, and Allāh’s relationship with him will be straightened. He will be made vigilant over matters which require vigilance, and he will realize that a certain matter was not fulfilled properly by him. As for things in which there is enjoyment, he will consider them to be far superior to the kingdom of the entire world. These are known as spiritual conditions.

Since every person experiences new and different conditions, it is not possible to write them. It will be necessary for the person to come to his shaykh who will then explain the reality of those conditions. If the shaykh sees a need, he will make changes to the dhikr and spiritual practices which the disciple is presently engaged in. The benefits of remaining in the company of one's shaykh will be explained at the end.

These points are known as *kashf-e-ilāhī* (divine exposition). As for *kashf-e-kaunī* (knowledge of concealed things or what is to happen in the future), it is neither equal to *kashf-e-ilāhī*, there is no enjoyment in it, nor can proximity to Allāh ta'ālā be acquired through it. Mūsā 'alayhis salām possessed more *kashf-e-ilāhī* while Khidr 'alayhis salām had more *kashf-e-kaunī*. The one who was higher in rank is well-known [i.e. Mūsā 'alayhis salām].

Someone may ask: If Mūsā 'alayhis salām was of a higher rank, why did Allāh ta'ālā order him to go to Khidr 'alayhis salām? It was to teach him that a person should not blurt out anything without thinking about it carefully. Someone had asked him: "Presently, who is the most knowledgeable as regards Dīn?" He replied that he was the most knowledgeable. His reply was correct to the extent that he possessed the most knowledge which was necessary to know. However, the manner in which he had answered the question could give the impression that he was claiming knowledge of all branches of knowledge. This is why Allāh ta'ālā showed him that Khidr 'alayhis salām is superior to him as regards *kashf-e-kaunī*. Although the latter is not of the same level as *kashf-e-ilāhī*, it was wrong to unilaterally say that he was the most knowledgeable. He ought to

have said that he does not surpass everyone in *kashf-e-kaunī*.

If a person possesses *kashf-e-ilāhī* and is also given the ability to serve in the field of spiritual rectification and training of disciples, then he is referred to as a *qutb al-irshād*. If a person possesses *kashf-e-kaunī* and is given the ability to serve the creation by training them in worldly matters, then he is referred to as a *qutb at-takwīn*.

The remaining time must be spent in verbal dhikr with concentration of the heart. This could take the form of *durūd* – and I consider this to be the best – or it could be *istighfār*, the kalimah *ṭayyibah* or any other dhikr to which the heart is inclined. Do not restrict yourself to dhikr with the heart because a person is quite often deceived. He is not conscious of the fact that he did not remember Allāh ta’ālā with the heart at the present moment. A worse deception is when a person forgets to remember Allāh ta’ālā and assumes that he is totally immersed in His remembrance.

A person must be forever mindful of abstaining from two things: (1) He must not allow his heart to be distant from Allāh’s remembrance for a single moment. To achieve this, he must occupy himself in His remembrance all the time. (2) He must do his utmost to abstain from sin, whether major or minor, with the heart or the tongue, or with the hands, legs, eyes or ears.

When Allāh is not remembered, the effulgence of the heart disappears. The same can be said when a person commits sins. It also causes a person to get further away from Allāh ta’ālā, and this is a major loss. If he commits a sin incidentally, whether unwittingly or due to the mischief of the carnal self,

he must repent immediately with utmost shame and submission, and beg Allāh ta'ālā to pardon him for the sin. There are certain sins which are especially harmful in this path.

- (1) Ostentation. That is, to do an action with the intention of showing people.
- (2) Pride – to think of one's self as superior. When there is pride in a person, he sometimes becomes haughty and sometimes considers himself superior, whether in worldly excellences of Dīnī matters.
- (3) Verbal backbiting, complaining about another, castigating him or making objections against him. In fact, excessive futile and useless discussions are harmful to the effulgence of the heart. This is why the person who sets foot on this path must avoid unnecessary intermingling with people.
- (4) To look at a strange woman or boy with desire, or to bring thoughts of them into the heart.
- (5) Unbridled anger, being discourteous or speaking harshly.

In the same way, certain things are more harmful when a person does not engage in Allāh's remembrance. This category refers to worldly relationships and cannot be removed even through dhikr. When a person is engaged in dhikr, he will be drawn to them repeatedly.

An important point in this course of action is that as long as this person does not acquire a strong spiritual affiliation (which is explained further on), he must not busy himself in conveying benefit to others – neither external nor spiritual benefit. In other

words, he should neither teach students, deliver lectures to the laity, treat sick people, write ta'wīdh, nor tutor disciples. Instead, he must remain anonymous in one corner. Yes, it is a different matter if he is compelled to do any of the above-listed works.

Spiritual affiliation

There are two signs which indicate the acquisition of spiritual affiliation.

- (1) Allāh's remembrance becomes so firmly embedded in the heart that it does not leave the heart for a single moment. Furthermore, the person does not need to over exert himself in trying to remain focussed on Allāh ta'ālā.
- (2) He has a desire to carry out Allāh's orders irrespective of whether they are related to teaching him how to worship Allāh ta'ālā, how to conduct dealings with fellow humans, how to develop good habits, how to interact with people, or how to behave in all situations.

The person must be so desirous of carrying out those orders as he has a desire for good things. And he must detest evil actions as he detests bad things. Furthermore, worldly greed must come out of his heart and all his habits must be in line with the Qur'ān. However, if he experiences a natural laziness in carrying out an order or an evil whispering enters his heart, and he does not act on it, we will not say that he has not developed a desire to carry out the injunctions of the Sharī'at and a hatred for what it prohibited. Acquiring this level of Allāh's remembrance and obedience to Him is referred to as the acquisition of spiritual affiliation. It is known as love for Allāh ta'ālā. If, together with spiritual affiliation, a person starts to receive some knowledge

of the unseen in his heart and learns certain mysteries, then he will be referred to as an 'arif.

Once spiritual affiliation has been acquired, there is no objection to teaching, delivering lectures and writing books. In fact, serving Dinī knowledge is the most superior form of worship. If the person's shaykh permits him to induct murīds and to show them different forms of dhikr and other spiritual practices, he must not be miserly in conveying these benefits to Allāh's servants. At the same time, he must not consider himself to be superior. Instead, he must believe himself to be the servant of the creation. If his shaykh does not permit him to do this, he must never assume the audacity of doing it, nor should he ask his shaykh for permission because this amounts to hankering after prominence. If the shaykh gives him permission after he asked for it, then this concession-permission is of no benefit. In fact, it is better for him to remain small than to become great. At the same time, it is not good to disobey the shaykh after he issues the permission. If everyone were to decline the permission, this entire system of Sufism would cease to exist.

A shaykh should never expect any monetary benefit from his murīds. In fact, if a person offers anything at the time of becoming a murīd, the shaykh must flatly decline it because it appears to be a recompense. If, at any other time, a murīd gives something happily from his lawful earning, and an amount which will not cause him any distress; then it will be Sunnat to accept the gift. Refusing the gift in such a situation will result in breaking the heart of a Muslim and smack of ingratitude to Allāh ta'ālā even if the gift is small. If the murīd offers the gift in the presence of others, the shaykh must not feel

ashamed to accept it because this shame stems from pride.

Seventh guideline: Concentration

Eighth guideline: Actions which are within one's control and those which are not

Ninth guideline: Customs of the Sufis

Tenth guideline: Advice to non-'ulamā'

1. Make it a point of meeting 'ulamā' and asking them rules and regulations.
2. If you are literate, study the books *Bahishtī Zewar*, *Bahishtī Gauhar*, *Safā'ī Mu'āmalāt* and *Miftāḥ al-Jannah*. And practise accordingly.
3. Abstain from wearing garments which are against the Sharī'at. For example, a trousers which is below the ankles, Western style clothing, garments made of silk, brightly coloured clothes and garments containing silk brocades.
4. You should neither shorten nor shave your beard. However, you could shorten it if it is more than a fist-length.
5. Abstain from customs and practices which are in conflict with the ways of Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam and the Saḥābah radiyallāhu 'anhum. Give up customs whether they are in the name of worldly activities and in the name of Dīn. Examples of the latter: maulūd; fātiḥah; 'urs; certain wedding customs; feeding people for the sake of name and fame; assembling people on the occasions of 'aqīqah, circumcision, and when commencing maktab education. Give up these

customs. You should neither observe them yourself nor attend functions where these customs are observed.

6. Abstain from the 3-day, 10-day and 40-day customs which are observed after the death of a person. Refrain from preparing sweetmeats on the night of Barā'at and from mourning in the month of Muḥarram. You should not go to places where these customs are observed, do not send your children there, nor provide any financial assistance to those who want to observe them.
7. Do not occupy yourself with kite-flying, toys with images of animate things, and so on.
8. Restrain your tongue from backbiting, vulgar language and hurling verbal abuses.
9. Perform the five daily ṣalāhs with congregation.
10. Do not look at a woman or boy with an evil gaze.
11. Do not listen to music.
12. Do not ask your shaykh for ta'wīdh and amulets for anything and everything. You should rather learn matters of Dīn from him. However, there is no harm in requesting him to make du'ā' for you.
13. Do not think that because you do not have anything to offer your shaykh, you cannot go to him.
14. Do not assume that your shaykh knows everything, so you do not have to inform him.

15. Do not read books of dervishes nor ask about them.
16. Do not fall into discussions on fate and destiny. Do what your shaykh asks you to do.
17. Do not accept bribes and interest. Income from mortgage is also interest. Refrain from it and all other transactions which are in conflict with the Shari'at.
18. Do not act on a dream without asking about it first.
19. If you go to your shaykh and find him occupied in some work, do not disturb him. Do not sit in such a place where he becomes aware of your presence and gets agitated. Sit at a distance, and go to him when he completes whatever he was busy with.
20. Study the following books: *Ta'lim al-Maṭālib*, the first four parts of *Ta'lim ad-Dīn* and *Jazā' al-A'māl*.

Advice to women

1. Do not even approach anything which amounts to polytheism.
2. Do not involve yourself in witch-craft and superstitious remedies to conceive children or to keep them alive (when they are ill or in the throes of death).
3. Do not ask for events to be foretold.
4. Do not observe fātiḥah and nayāz ceremonies for saints.
5. Do not take oaths in the name of pious people.

6. Do not prepare special breads on the nights of Barā'at, Muḥarram, 9th Dhū al-Hijjah, etc., nor should you prepare roasted gram seeds for the 13 of Dhū al-Qa'dah.
7. Observe hijāb with all those whom the Sharī'at has stipulated hijāb. This is irrespective of whether the person is your spiritual guide or a close relative such as your husband's elder brother, your maternal and paternal cousins, sister's husband, husband of your husband's sister, or someone whom you address as your brother or father (despite them not being so in reality).
8. Do not wear clothing which is contrary to the Sharī'at. Such as pants with panels; a dress which exposes the stomach, the back, the forearm or the sides. Do not wear flimsy clothing whereby the body or hair of the head can be discerned. Make dresses with long sleeves and thick material. Your head-covering should also be of a thick fabric. Be cautious about your head-covering slipping off your head. However, if there are only women, your parents or brothers in the house, there will be no harm in uncovering your head.
9. Do not peep at anyone.
10. Do not attend the following ceremonies: weddings, the Hindu ceremony of shaving the child's head for the first time, forty days after child birth, six days after child birth, circumcision, 'aqīqah, proposal, mehendi, etc. Nor should you invite anyone to such ceremonies.
11. Do not do anything for name and fame.

12. Safeguard your tongue from cursing, accusing, backbiting, etc.
13. Offer the five daily ṣalāhs at the beginning of the time. Read with concentration and without rushing. Execute the rukū' and sajdah in the proper manner.
14. Once you become purified from your menses, be particular about performing ṣalāh and do not allow yourself to miss any ṣalāh.
15. If you have jewellery, broad gold or silver brocades, narrow gold or silver brocades, etc. calculate the value of these items and pay the zakāh for them.
16. Continue reading or listening to the *Bahishtī Zewar* and act according to it.
17. Be obedient to your husband. Do not spend his wealth secretly.
18. Do not listen to music.
19. If you know how to read the Qur'ān then read it daily.
20. If you wish to purchase or read a certain book, consult an 'ālim first. If he approves of it, you may purchase it. If not, abstain.
21. Do not go to places where customary sweetmeats and other items are distributed. Nor should you take part in distributing these items at such functions and customs.

Advice to those who are affiliated to a shaykh

1. Check the above-listed pieces of advice.

2. Make it a duty to follow Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam in everything. This develops effulgence in the heart.
3. If anyone does anything contrary to your nature or temperament, exercise patience. Do not blurt out things in a rush especially when you are angry.
4. Never consider yourself to be perfect.
5. If you wish to say or utter anything, think about it first. Once you are convinced that it will not be harmful, it is necessary, and has worldly or Dīnī benefit; you may utter it.
6. Never talk ill of a person even if he is an evil person.
7. If a dervish is overcome by a certain state or trance and therefore does something which in your opinion is contrary to the Sharī'at, do not censure nor criticize him.
8. Do not look down on a Muslim even if he is of a lower status.
9. Do not have a desire and greed for wealth and honour.
10. Do not involve yourself in amulets and charms. People generally become engrossed with them.
11. As far as possible, remain in the company of those who engage in the remembrance of Allāh. This fills the heart with effulgence, courage and an enthusiasm [to do good].
12. Do not involve yourself excessively in worldly affairs.

13. Do not intermingle excessively with people when there is no need or no benefit in doing so. If you have to meet them, do it in a pleasant way and separate yourself from them once you have completed your work with them. Be especially guarded with acquaintances. You should either seek the company of those who engage in the remembrance of Allāh or meet with simple people whom you do not know. There is less harm in meeting such people.
14. If a strange condition overcomes your heart or you learn something strange, inform your shaykh.
15. Do not request any specific form of dhikr from your shaykh.
16. If you experience a certain effect from your dhikr, do not mention it to anyone other than your shaykh.
17. If you have an interest in reading books on Sufism, you should first read part five of *Ta'lim ad-Dīn* and *Kalīd Mathnawī* provided you have knowledge of the rational and traditional sciences.
18. Do not try to defend or justify your actions. Instead, admit your mistake once you have realized it.
19. Have trust in Allah at all times. Present your needs to Him and ask Him to keep you steadfast on Dīn.

That is all. Was salām.

The condensed version of *Qaṣḍ as-Sabīl* ends here.

Muḥammad Shafī' - Jumādā ath-Thānīyah 1394 A.H.

TAS-HĪL ṬARĪQ SULŪK

As-Salsabīl Li 'Ābirī as-Sabīl

Hakīmul Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī

These are statements which Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī rahimahullāh made in response to a question asked by Hadrat Khwājah 'Azīz al-Hasan Sāhib Majdhūb rahimahullāh. I take the opportunity to quote them.

A treatment for shortcomings in controllable matters

Question:

Hadrat constantly says that actions which we have been ordered to carry out are within man's choice, and that the only treatment for shortcomings in this regard is for a person to pluck the courage and utilize his choice. This appears to be a simple matter. What, then, will be the need for the Ṭarīqat?

Answer:

It is certainly simple and easy. However, people do not pay attention to it whereas all rectification is based around it, and it is the fundamental treatment for all shortcomings.

Question:

Only when a person fails in his rectification despite making efforts in this regard will he ask for a treatment for it. Now when he asks for a treatment, he is told to pluck the courage and resort to his own choice. How can this answer suffice when he is not even inspired to take the courage and make a choice?

Answer:

We have to see whether he has the ability to resort to his choice or not. He certainly has that ability or else it will entail belying the clear texts. Since he has the ability to resort to his choice, he must take the courage and use it. When he does this, he will certainly experience success. There is no question of failure, even though it is difficult and distressing.

Question:

We cannot deny the presence of ability and choice, but if a person cannot even resort to them because of the difficulty and distress, how can that choice be of use to him? After all, the result is the same as in the absence of a choice. In other words, the person will still not carry out the actions.

Answer:

When the person asks for a treatment, he will be given the same answer which is essentially the treatment. As for the difficulty in utilizing the treatment, I will answer that when I am asked about it.

Question:

Okay, I am asking about it now.

Answer:

The only treatment for shortcomings in matters which are volitional is for a person to pluck the courage and utilize his choice. But difficulty and distress are certainly experienced. So the treatment is the same – that despite the inconvenience, the person must pluck the courage, make the choice, and continually impose on himself to carry out the actions. The distress will gradually turn to ease. All

the spiritual exercises and strivings are done for the same reason, i.e. so that it becomes easy for the person to carry out orders and abstain from prohibitions.

The essence of taṣawwuf

I always say that sincerity and determination – these two – are the essentials of taṣawwuf and the entire shaykh/murīd relationship. If a person does not have the determination, there will be no action. If there is no sincerity, the action will be defective. If both are combined, there will not be a need for a shaykh because a shaykh teaches just two things: how to remove distress and how to acquire ease.

A few lines before this, Hadrat had said:

...despite the inconvenience, the person must pluck the courage, make the choice, and continually impose on himself to carry out the actions. The distress will gradually turn to ease.

While on this subject, Hadrat added: In the beginning, every task is difficult. Once it is done repeatedly, a person becomes adept at it and is able to carry it out easily. For example, a lesson is initially difficult. When it is studied repeatedly, a student memorizes it. If he gives up the courage by focusing on the initial difficulty, there is no way he can succeed. But if he bears the difficulty, the action will become easy within a few days. As the saying goes:

Strive for a few days, and you can laugh after that.

When Hadrat said that sincerity is also within one's control, a person asked: "Is sincerity also within one's control?"

Hadrat replied:

Whatever we have been ordered to do are certainly within our choice and control. The Sharī'at did not make us accountable for anything which is beyond us. Is it not within our power to maintain the purity of ghee? If fat and oil is not added to it, it will remain pure. When our worship is kept pure (*khālīs*), it is called *ikhhlās*.

The blessing of du'ā' in rectification

Question:

Do the du'ā's and blessings of the shaykh play a major role in spiritual rectification?

Answer:

We cannot deny blessing, but its level has to be established. Its level is only as much as the essence of fennel in a laxative. The essence of fennel certainly aids in the digestive process, but can it work without the laxative? Can it work as a laxative on its own? Certainly not.

Question:

One perceives immense changes in one's condition through the du'ā' and focus of the shaykh.

Answer:

A person drinks the essence of fennel and he immediately starts experiencing motions in his bowels. Does it mean that the essence of fennel is enough? As long as a person does not put his own choice into motion, nothing happens with du'ā' alone. There can be no one who is more blessed than Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam nor one whose du'ā's are most accepted. His uncle, Abū

Tālib, loved him intensely and Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam made du'ā' in his favour with his heart and soul that he becomes a Muslim. He also asked him persistently to embrace Islam. But because he himself did not will it, he was not blessed with īmān. The same example can be given of a doctor and his patient. If the latter does not take his medicine, will he get better by the mere kindness and focus of the doctor? He will regain good health only if he takes the medicine which the doctor prescribed for him. In the same way, if a child does not learn his lesson, how will he know it? He cannot know it by the mere focus of his teacher. He will have to learn it and memorize it if he wants to know it.

Question:

Doesn't a person get the inspiration and ability through the blessing of his shaykh?

Answer:

I already said that blessing is certainly an aid but it is not enough. Its influence is one of assistance; not of sufficiency. In fact, the blessing alone of the shaykh can certainly not be enough; whereas if the person resorts to his courage and choice alone, it will be enough for him. I explain these points openly. I do not want to confine my associates to myself [by giving them the impression that they are dependent on me]. If a person can undertake his rectification by himself, it will be a source of joy for me because he has lightened my burden.

Question:

Will this not be against what someone said:

The one who walks the path of Allāh's
love without a companion would spend

his entire life without getting any knowledge of what love is.

Answer:

How can it be in conflict? In fact, it supports what I said. The poet said “knowledge of love”. In other words, he will not know what love is without the shaykh bringing it to his attention. He will not reach the level of knowledge of love. I do not deny this. The shaykh will show the way; it does not mean that he will drag the person onto the path. A person who has eyesight shows the way to the blind man; he does not carry him and take him. He will traverse the path by walking on his own. It is certainly the shaykh’s duty to show the path, but it is each one’s responsibility to traverse it.

The shaykh’s duty is to show the path

The compiler [Khawājah ‘Azīz al-Hasan Majdhūb Sāhib] says: I recall an old statement of Hadrat. After explaining in detail the reality of the Sufi path to a person, Hadrat said: All praise is due to Allāh, I convey a seeker to Allāh ta‘ālā in a single sitting. Teaching the reality of the objective is akin to conveying a person to the objective. If someone gives directions to another by saying, “Look, a lamp is burning there,” then it is as though he conveyed him to the lamp. All that is left for him to do is walk on the path. It is now left to the choice of the seeker – if he lifts his legs and walks forward, he will reach the objective.

(Placing the lamp is likened to the Shari‘at. The seeker walking to it is the Tariqat. Reaching the lamp and taking benefit from its light is the Haqiqat.)

The issue of choice is clear

When Hadrat was asked about the issue of choice, he replied:

Choice is from among the glaringly obvious things (*badīhiyyāt*). In fact, it is from among the things which are perceptible by the senses (*maḥsūsāt*). And there is no need for the *badīhiyyāt* and *maḥsūsāt*. The presence of self-choice is so obvious that let alone humans, even animals perceive it. If a person strikes a dog with a rod, it will attack the person holding the rod and not the rod itself. The dog too can distinguish between who has the choice [the person in this case] and the one who has no choice [the rod in this case]. Each person can gauge his own emotions and conclude that when he commits a detestable action, he feels ashamed about it. Had he believed himself to be compelled, why would he feel that shame? A person can only feel ashamed over an action which is within his control. This proves that man certainly has the choice.

The issue of choice is so clear that every person can perceive this quality either emotionally or naturally within himself. So much so, that even a fatalist is a fatalist verbally only; he too believes within himself that he has the choice. No one has the room to deny it.

The other point is that no one knows the reality of this issue nor can it be learnt by anyone. At the same time, if the reality of a thing cannot be learnt, it does not mean that its existence can be denied. For example, no one knows the reality of light, but its existence is brilliantly clear and observed. Can anyone deny the existence of light? Hadrat Maulānā

Rūmī rahimahullāh explained the issue of fatalism and choice in a simple and easy manner. He says:

Our crying is proof that we are compelled. Our shamefulness is proof of our choice.

If there is no compulsion, what is the reason for this crying? And if there is no choice, why are we feeling ashamed?

In short, we are neither entirely compelled, nor do we have total and absolute choice. The absence of absolute choice means that we are under the choice and control of Allāh ta‘ālā.

No matter what, the presence of choice in man is an absolute fact. If this is the case, a person has to resort to this quality in his program of rectification. As long as he does not do this, rectification will not be possible. For example, a person is miserly. Does he think this evil quality will be removed from him merely through dhikr, or the du‘ā’ and blessings of his shaykh? Definitely not. It will only be removed when he strives against his carnal self. Yes, the dhikr and other spiritual practices will certainly help and assist him; but they definitely cannot be enough.

Hadrat Shaykh ‘Abd al-Quddūs Gangohī rahimahullāh writes time and again in his *Maktūbāt*:

Strive continuously. Give up mere talking. This path requires striving. One will progress through striving. Nothing can be achieved by hopes and du‘ā’s alone.

Question:

The spiritual focus of some of the saints caused many obsessive sinners to be reformed automatically.

Answer:

This is a type of *taṣarruf* which is neither within one's control nor an essential for saintliness. Many saints have no *taṣarruf* whatsoever. Furthermore, the effects of *taṣarruf* are by and large temporary. On the other hand, the effect which is acquired through courage and good actions is long-lasting. The effect of the focus of a saint is similar to a person sitting near an oven. As long as he remains sitting there, his entire body will become warm. The moment he moves away, his body will turn cold. The effect which is acquired through actions is like a person who consumes a *kushta-e-tilā* (a heat-generating mixture) and creates intense heat within himself. Even if he goes to the Shimlah mountains, the heat will remain in his body.

The real benefit is the one which remains. The point I am making is that it is wishful thinking to rely on *du'ā'* and spiritual focus of the shaykh, while not doing anything for one's rectification.

Hadrat then said jokingly: It is as though I am presenting the supreme medical theory to people, but you want to stick pieces of paper on these pages and keep these themes concealed.

Rectification of natural blameworthy qualities

Question:

The natural disposition of a person cannot be changed. How, then, can the rectification of natural blameworthy qualities be within one's control?

Answer:

I am astonished that you still have these doubts. Tell me, is the essential element natural, or is it the

action which is natural? We accept that the essential element is not within one's control. However, the action is within his control; it is not natural. The essential element can certainly not be removed, but it is within one's choice if he wants to act or not act according to its demands. And this is what man is liable for. When he acts against its demands repeatedly, then the essential element also becomes weak.

Noteworthy points

These are immeasurably useful points. In fact, these are what need to be taught. However, nowadays I do not see them mentioned anywhere; neither by the 'ulamā' nor by the Sufis. Sufism has been reduced to a vague image. This is why its reality has remained concealed for quite some time. All praise is due to Allāh ta'ālā, it has become so clear that there remains no ambiguity and confusion. All praise is due to Allāh ta'ālā, I have no doubt or misgiving about any issue related to Sufism – neither in fathoming any condition of a seeker nor in recommending a plan for his rectification. No matter how complex a person's condition may be, I say to you while desiring your wellbeing, that you must appreciate this clarity in today's times and take benefit from it.

The essence of rectification

The compiler states:

A seeker had related to Hadrat that he had countless faults and had given up hope in his rectification. Hadrat explained the essence of rectification to him by saying that it was nothing but consciousness and courage. The seeker benefited tremendously from

this. The gist of the prescription and explanation is the same. They both express the same theme. Even in sincerity and courage, the fundamental thing is courage because if a person wants to develop sincerity, he will need to pluck the courage for it. And consciousness is the aid to courage. There are different forms of consciousness. The seeker must act on what the shaykh prescribes for him. For example, he will have to perform ten rak'ats of optional ṣalāh for every shortcoming as a fine. This is done so that when he is confronted with another occasion for committing the wrong, he will fear the fine and develop a sense of consciousness. Once he has the consciousness, he must resort to courage immediately and overpower the demand of the carnal self. If he is particular about consciousness and courage, he will – inshā Allāh – be protected against shortcomings and his rectification will be realized gradually. Apart from the above-mentioned fine which I had laid down for the seeker under question, I had asked him to study the book *Nuzhah al-Basātin* daily. It contains one thousand stories of the auliya'. In addition to the many blessings from it, the reader will develop strength, consciousness and courage.

The compiler adds: I found this prescription of Hadrat on the subject of consciousness and courage to be extremely beneficial. I therefore preserved it in a couplet. It reads as follows:

The gem which Hadrat described about
consciousness and courage is an
absolute elixir for the rectification of
the ummat.

The evidence has been established.
Our duty is to convey the message.
7 Muḥarram 1345 A.H.

The addendum to this statement which is also a summary of the above, is a reply to a letter in which a seeker asked for a wazīfah or method through which he could progress in obedience and abstain from disobedience. The reply reads as follows:

Obedience and disobedience are both within one's control. A wazīfah therefore has no influence in this regard. Thus, the method of doing/abstaining from actions which are within one's control is to make use of your choice and your control. There is nothing else. Yes, striving is needed to make the choice easy. The reality of striving is to constantly act against the carnal self. If you do this, you will acquire ease gradually. I have written the entire science here.

Note: The shaykh has two remaining tasks: (1) Diagnosing certain carnal illnesses. (2) Prescribing some methods of striving which are the treatments for the illnesses.

Written by Ashraf 'Alī.

Observe additional statements of Hakīmul Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī rahimahullāh:

The essence of the Sufi path

(1)

This is the real way of reaching Allāh ta'ālā: Blameworthy qualities must be removed, praiseworthy qualities must be developed, sins must be given up, inspiration to do good must be acquired, heedlessness towards Allāh ta'ālā must be eradicated, and focus on Him must be developed.¹

¹ *Kamālāt Ashrafīyyah*, p. 771.

(2)

I said this to students on many occasions, and also to people in general: Become firm on two things and I guarantee you will reach Allāh ta'ālā. (1) Abstain from sins. (2) Speak less. And set aside a little time for solitude (to engage in Allāh's remembrance and contemplation).¹

(3)

The object of sulūk is to obtain Allāh's pleasure. After it, there are two things:

1. Knowledge of the Tarīq.
2. Practising on it.

The Tarīq is one, viz. adhering to the external and internal injunctions. There are two aids to the Tarīq. One is dhikr which can be done continuously. The other is the company of the Ahlullāh as much as possible. If one does not have enough time for the latter, then the alternative is to study the lives and writings of the saints. There are two obstacles to the Tarīq or to the realization of the objective; one is sinning and the other is preoccupation with futile activities. The precondition for all the above to be beneficial is for one to be strict in informing one's shaykh of one's conditions.

After this, it depends on personal capabilities. The objective will be realized quickly or after some time as per differences in capabilities of people. This is the essence of the Tarīqat.²

¹ Ibid.

² *Kamālāt Ashrafīyyah*.

We take the opportunity of quoting certain points from *Sharī'at Wa Tarīqat* of Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī rahimahullāh.

Types of the Tarīqat

The Tarīqat is divided into two categories. One is called tarīq-e-jadhb and the other is tarīq-e-sulūk. Sometimes, a person reaches Allāh first, and then he develops a desire for worship and spiritual practices. This is known as tarīq-e-jadhb. At other times, a person has to undergo spiritual practices first, and then he is able to reach Allāh ta'ālā. This is called tarīq-e-sulūk.

Sulūk is divided into two categories; sulūk-e-nubūwwat and sulūk-e-wilāyat. The effects and peculiarities of each one are different. They are presented in tabular form. From the Auliya', some are overcome by fayḍ-e-numūwwat at certain times, and fayḍ-e-wilāyat at other times.

Effects of <u>sulūk-e-wilāyat</u>	Effects of <u>sulūk-e-nubūwwat</u>
1. He imposes on himself to reduce his eating and drinking.	1. He does not reduce it wilfully. He is content with whatever he receives.
2. He dislikes the creation.	2. He yearns for the creation so that he could benefit them, but he does not attach his heart to them.
3. He neither enjoins good nor prohibits evil as	3. He enjoins good and prohibits evil.

long as it does not become obligatory.	
4. He is satisfied with his investigations and spiritual expositions, and practises on them if they are not in conflict with the Sharī'at.	4. He is overwhelmed by reverence. He does as prescribed by Rasūlullāh <u>sallallāhu</u> 'alayhi wa <u>sallam</u> without adding anything of his own which he may have fathomed through kashf, even if the addition is not against the Sharī'at.
5. He is overwhelmed by enthusiasm and yearning. He experiences natural joy in worship.	5. He is not overwhelmed by enthusiasm and yearning. In fact, he does not even experience natural joy in worship, i.e. if he does not experience it, he does not lose heart. He accepts it as an order of Allāh and engages in worship.
6. He is not overly particular about making du'ā'.	6. He considers it obligatory to make du'ā' as per Allāh's order: "Call upon Me and I will respond to you."
7. He disregards the outward and external means.	7. In comparison to others, he holds on more strongly to external means, but without being immersed in them. He does this in emulation of Rasūlullāh <u>sallallāhu</u>

	'alayhi wa sallam who had worn two armours in a battle.
8. His love for <u>H</u> adrat 'Alī <u>ra</u> ḍiyallāhu 'anhu is naturally more, but his belief in which <u>S</u> ahābī is superior is as per the sequence of the righteous caliphate.	8. He loves <u>H</u> adrat Abū Bakr and <u>H</u> adrat 'Umar <u>ra</u> ḍiyallāhu 'anhumā more.
9. He believes his shaykh to be the most superior, and is enamoured by him.	9. He does not believe in the superiority of his shaykh; he loves him.
10. He overlooks the rules of the Shari'at sometimes, and he is excused in this regard.	10. He practises fastidiously on the Shari'at.
11. He is overcome by ecstasy.	11. He is overcome by vigilance.
12. Sometimes, some of those who are spiritually overcome, flee from the congregation because they want to keep their condition concealed. However, we learn from this that <i>ghayr</i> ¹ still remains in their sight.	12. They adhere to the congregation. They have completely negated <i>ghayr</i> from their objective.
13. If the shaykh	13. If the shaykh

¹ Ghayr refers to all apart from Allāh ta'ālā.

instructs him to do something which is against the external Shari'at, he does not consider it to be against the Shari'at. He will rationalize it and carry it out, but this is only in matters which are not absolute.	instructs him to do something which is against the external Shari'at, he will refuse to do it, but will decline respectfully.
14. He is overcome by amatory love.	14. He is overcome by creedal love.
15. He is sometimes overcome by <i>tashbih</i> (comparison).	15. He is always overcome by <i>tanzih</i> (infallibility of Allāh).
16. The peak of sulūk-e-wilāyat is the station of <i>radā</i> or <i>fanā' al-fanā'</i> (total and absolute self-obliteration).	16. The peak of sulūk-e-nubūwwat is the station of <i>'ubūdiyyat</i> (servitude).

Note:

From the above details, one should not assume that the Auliya' act against the Shari'at. Firstly, the text has an obvious message which the scholars of Hadīth practise on. Secondly, it has a meaning which makes up purely injunctions, and these are practised by the jurists. Thirdly, the texts have a meaning beyond the obvious meaning. Some of these injunctions are practised by the Sufis. However, the path of the jurists is the safest because derive and extract reasons solely from the Shari'at and then make a ruling transitive. The Sufis sometimes make a ruling transitive by extracting a reason on the basis of their personal inclination. Examples of making a ruling

transitive by extracting the reason from the Sharī'at used to be found in the era of the Sahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum. The fact that this is an evidence is clearly established. On the other hand, there is no example of making a ruling transitive by extracting a reason on the basis of one's personal inclination. Also, it is apparently against يتدبرون ويتفكرون (pondering and reflecting).¹

The reality of spiritual affiliation

Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat rahimahullāh says that spiritual affiliation (nisbat) refers to a general bond with Allāh ta'ālā. Based on its generalness, every believer is a person of nisbat even if he is a flagrant sinner and a morally depraved person. This is because the bond with Allāh ta'ālā is affirmed by the mere presence of imān.

In the definition of the Sufis, nisbat refers to that bond with Allāh ta'ālā which contains two essentials:

1. Abundant dhikr.
2. Continuous obedience.

Without these two, the definitional nisbat cannot be realized. This definitional nisbat is – by itself – not within one's control. However, it is dependent on the fulfilment of actions which are within one's control:

فكانها إختيارية، ولا يخفى أن كثرة الذكر والمحافظة
على العبادة أمران إختياريان لأن صدورهما عن
الإختيار من البديهيات الأولية.

¹ Sharī'at Wa Tarīqat.

It is as though nisbat is within one's control. We know with certainty that abundant dhikr and obedience are both within one's control because they emanate by choice. This is from among the foremost obvious things.

When the definitional nisbat is acquired, the seeker develops a strong and deep bond which rarely permits forgetfulness – whether in quantity or quality.

In short, the person of nisbat experiences a natural aversion for acting against Dīn, just as the normal believers experience a rational aversion for it. No matter what, the main objective of the different forms of dhikr is solely to acquire the definitional nisbat. And it is obligatory to acquire it because abundant dhikr is the opposite of meagre dhikr for which the hypocrites were castigated.

The reality of striving

We were saying the spiritual practices, contemplations, etc. are not the objectives of Sufism; they are measures. The same can be said about striving (mujāhadah) and severing ties – they are not objectives. The reality of mujāhadah is acclimatizing and habituating one's self to act against the carnal self. In the face of Allāh's pleasure and His obedience; the person must be able to subdue and overpower the personal, monetary and egotistical desires of the carnal self. The Qur'ān expresses this concisely by referring to it as:

جهاد بالأنفس والأموال

It makes an absolute promise of guidance for this mujāhadah:

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا.

Those who strove in Our cause – We shall show them Our paths.¹

Hadrat Jāmi' al-Mujaddidīn explains this mujāhadah comprehensively:

The carnal self has two types of demands, viz. huqūq and huzūz. Huqūq refers to what maintains the body and the continuation of one's life. Huzūz refers to anything that is more than that. Thus, the essence of mujāhadah is for a person to maintain the huqūq and obliterate the huzūz.

Excesses in the huzūz entail devoting one's entire life to them. Shortcomings in this regard have caused many to misconstrue the meaning of mujāhadah and to live like yogis who deny the rights of their own selves. In fact, they feel that spiritual salvation means salvation from this material and physical body while living in this material and physical life.

Nowadays, the Sufis are also caught up in this delusion into thinking that the more one acts against the carnal self, the happier Allāh will be; even if it entails acting against the Sharī'at. Some of them have been deluded into making meat haram on themselves. Others refuse to drink cold water. Some of them do not sleep on a bed. Yet others who are not Muslims have gone to the extreme of drying up their own body parts. I saw a non-Muslim sitting in the

¹ Sūrah al-'Ankabūt, 29: 69.

hot sun, with a fire burning all around him. These are acts of ignorance.

However, the above examples of excesses should not cause a person to have doubts about those who bore severe striving for the sake of the rectification of the carnal self. Firstly because they would not transgress the limit of permissibility. Secondly because they went through the mujāhadah as a spiritual treatment; they did not believe it to be a worship and means of closeness to Allāh ta'ālā. Like a sick person who abstains from certain foods for a few days – he does not believe this to be an act of worship. Rather, he believes that it is part of his treatment to restore his good health. If a person does this while believing it to be an act of reward, then he is certainly a sinner. This is because he would have added something to the Shari'at. This is the reason behind the despicability of bid'at. The genuine Sufis abstained solely as a treatment, while the ignorant Sufis abstain while believing it to be Dīn, worship and a means of proximity to Allāh ta'ālā.

It is necessary to convey comfort to the self and to fulfil its rights. This is why the Shari'at laid down a limit for everything. Hadrat Abū Dardā' radiyallāhu 'anhu used to spend the major portion of the night in worship. Hadrat Salmān radiyallāhu 'anhu stopped him. When the matter was presented before Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam, he said that Salmān radiyallāhu 'anhu is correct. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam added:

إن لنفسك عليك حقا.

Your self has a right over you.¹

How sorrowful! Those ignorant Sufis have ruined Sufism. They say: “Go into seclusion for forty days, divorce your wife, lock your door, take forty chick peas and eat one daily. You cannot acquire asceticism without all this.” I say: “By Allāh, you can acquire asceticism even by wearing two shawls, having pillows and mattresses, having a kingdom, and eating the most exotic foods. But not at your house. You will get all this in the service of a spiritual master.”²

A dervish does not need a duvet and mattress. But if Allāh ta‘ālā gives him, he can acquire saintliness with even a shawl provided he acquires it in the proper manner.³

An erudite person rightly said that the Sufism of Hadrat [Thānwī] is a royal Sufism. He neither asks his disciples to undergo spiritual exercises and striving, to sever ties, nor to give up pleasures and permissible things. Instead, he says to them:

Be completely relaxed so that Allāh’s love develops in the heart and you feel energized – these are aids in your worship. However, do not go near sin and be wary of your carnal self all the time.⁴

¹ *Ar-Rafiq Fī Sawā’ at-Tarīq*, pp. 23-24.

² *Ashraf as-Sawānih*, vol. 2, p. 161.

³ *Sawānih*, pp. 33-34.

⁴ *Irshādāt Ḥakīmul Ummat*.

Statements of 'Allāmah Ibn Taymīyyah and 'Allāmah Ibn Qayyim

قال لي يوما شيخ الإسلام ابن تيمية قدس الله روحه في شيء من المباح: هذا ينافي المراتب العلية، وإن لم يكن شرطاً في النجاة، أو نحو هذا من الكلام.¹

One day, Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymīyyah rahimahullāh said to me with regard to a mubāh item: "This item negates the reaching of lofty heights, although abstaining from it is not a precondition for salvation." Or he said some other similar words.

An invocation for a vibrant and living heart:

يقول من واطب على "يا حي يا قيوم لا إله إلا أنت" كل يوم بين سنة الفجر وصلوة الفجر أربعين مرة أحيي الله بها قلبه.²

He used to say: If a person strictly adheres to reading "Yā ḥayyu yā qayyūm, lā ilāha illā anta" forty times between the Sunnah and fard of the fajr salāh, Allāh ta'ālā will revive his heart through it.

A Qur'ānic treatment for ostentation, pride and other similar ailments:

¹ مدارج السالكين، ج ٢، ص ٣٦.

² مدارج السالكين، ج ٣، ص ٢٦٤.

Hadrat 'Allāmah Ibn Qayyim rahimahullāh writes with reference to ostentation and pride:

وكثيرا ما كنت أسمع شيخ الإسلام ابن تيمية قدس
الله روحه يقول: "اياك نعبد" تدفع الرياء و "اياك
نستعين" تدفع الكبر، فإذا عوفي من مرض الرياء
(باياك نعبد)، ومن مرض الكبر والعُجب (باياك
نستعين)، ومن مرض الضلال والجهل (باهدنا
الصرط المستقيم) عوفي من أمراضه وأسقامه ورفل
في أثواب العافية وتمت عليه النعمة، وكان من المنعم
عليهم (غير المغضوب عليهم) وهم أهل فساد
القصد الذين عرفوا الحق وعدلوا عنه (والضالين)
وهم أهل فساد العلم الذين جهلوا الحق ولم يعرفوه.¹

Very often I heard Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymīyyah saying: "You alone we worship" repulses ostentation, and "You alone we ask for help" repulses pride. If a person is cured from ostentation through "You alone we worship", from pride and conceit through "You alone we ask for help", and from misguidance and ignorance through "Guide us to the straight path", he experiences wellness from other illnesses and ailments as well. He is covered with the garment of wellness, the bounty is completed on him,

¹مدارج السالكين، ج ١، ص ٥٤.

and he becomes of “those who earned His favour”, not “of those who earned His wrath” – whose objective it is to spread corruption. They are the ones who recognized the truth but deviated from it. As for those “who are astray”, they are the ones whose knowledge is corrupt – they are ignorant of the truth and do not even know it.

An explanation of taubah naṣūh:

والتوبة النصوح ، قال محمد بن كعب القرظي
يجمعها أربعة أشياء: الاستغفار باللسان، والإقلاع
بالأبدان، وإضمار ترك العود بالجنان، ومهاجرة سيئ
الإخوان.¹

The meaning of taubah naṣūh: Muḥammad ibn Ka'b al-Qurazī said: Taubah naṣūh encompasses four points: (1) seeking forgiveness verbally, (2) complete physical separation from the sin, (3) a firm determination of the heart not to return to the sin, (4) staying aloof from evil companions.

Note: Glory to Allāh! ‘Allāmah Ibn al-Qayyim rahimahullāh added a unique point when he said “staying aloof from evil companions”. The ‘ulamā’ really appreciate it whenever I quote this. May Allāh ta‘ālā reward them with the best of rewards. (compiler)

¹مدارج السالكين، ج ١، ص ٣١٠.

Shari'at, Tarīqat, Haqīqat and Ma'rifat

The Shari'at refers to the collected form of imposed injunctions. This includes the internal and external actions. In the definition of the early scholars, the word “fiqh” was considered to be its synonym. For example, Imām Abū Hanīfah rahimahullāh defines fiqh as:

معرفة النفس ما لها وما عليها.

Recognition of whatever is beneficial and harmful to the self.

Subsequently, the latter day jurists referred to the external actions as “fiqh” and the internal actions as “taṣawwuf”. The ways in which the internal actions are carried out are referred to as the Tarīqat. When these internal actions are performed correctly, they result in an effulgence in the heart. This heart is then exposed to certain conceptual realities related to tangible and intangible things – especially good and evil actions – divine attributive and practical realities – especially the relationships between Allāh ta'ālā and the servant. These expositions are known as the Haqīqat, and the act of exposition is known as Ma'rifat. The person who experiences the exposition is known as a “Muḥaqqiq” and “Ārif”.

We conclude that all the above is linked to the Shari'at. A misconception which has become common among the laity is that the Shari'at refers solely to the exterior actions. This definition has not been given by any of the scholars. The source of this – in relation to the laity – is not correct because it entails belief in a contradiction between the exterior and interior. Allāh ta'ālā knows best.

The correct principles of taṣawwuf are all to be found in the Qur'ān and Hadīth. Those who assume that taṣawwuf is not in the Qur'ān and Hadīth are totally wrong. This is the belief of extremist Sufis and cynical 'ulamā'. They feel that the Qur'ān and Hadīth are devoid of taṣawwuf. Both groups are wrong.

Cynical 'ulamā' say that taṣawwuf is nothing and that it entails fanciful imaginations. Salāh, fasting, etc. are established from the Qur'ān and Hadīth, and a person needs to do them only. Where did the Sufis come up with all this? So in their opinion, taṣawwuf is not found in the Qur'ān and Hadīth.

As for extremist Sufis, they say that the Qur'ān and Hadīth contain external injunctions while taṣawwuf is a science of the internal self. Allāh forbid, they feel that there is no need for the Qur'ān and Hadīth in the first place.

In short, both groups assume that the Qur'ān and Hadīth are devoid of taṣawwuf. Thereafter, each group – according to its own assumption – either cast aside taṣawwuf, or left out the Qur'ān and Hadīth.

Friends! What an outrage you are committing! Fear Allāh! I wrote two books on this subject. One is titled *Ḥaqīqat at-Tarīqat* in which the issues governing taṣawwuf are proven from Aḥādīth. The other is *Masā'il as-Sulūk* which clearly proves that the issues governing taṣawwuf are established from the Qur'ān. By studying these two books, you will conclude that the Qur'ān and Hadīth are filled with taṣawwuf. And that the taṣawwuf which is not in the Qur'ān and Hadīth is not really taṣawwuf. In short, the correct

and genuine issues related to tasawwuf are all found in the Qur'ān and Hadīth.¹

The comprehensiveness of Hadrat Thānwī

Hadrat Thānwī rahimahullāh experiences the perpetual presence of Allāh ta'ālā. Even when he has to turn to the creation for the sake of propagation, his focus remains on Allāh ta'ālā through propagation. His focus on the creation does not come as a barrier to his focus on the Creator. This is similar to when a person can see his beloved in the mirror. Although he is also looking at the glass of the mirror, his focus is on the beloved. Moreover, the gaze of the Sufi masters is more on the supervision of the heart so that it does not become heedless.

It is very difficult for us to identify the Sufi masters. It is even more difficult to recognize a genuine heir of the Prophets. People used to say with reference to the Chief of Prophets ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam:

مَا لِهَذَا الرَّسُولِ يَأْكُلُ الطَّعَامَ وَيَمْشِي فِي الْأَسْوَاقِ

What kind of Messenger is this who eats food and walks about in the market places?²

Who was an example of:

لَا تُلْهِهِمْ تِجَارَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ

Men whom neither trade nor sale can divert from the remembrance of Allāh.¹

¹ *Sharī'at Wa Tarīqat*, p. 35.

² Sūrah al-Furqān, 25: 7.

Who was a manifestation of:

وَاذْكُرْ رَبَّكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ تَضَرُّعًا وَخِيفَةً وَدُونَ الْجَهْرِ مِنَ
الْقَوْلِ بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ

Continually remember your Sustainer in your heart with humility and awe, and without raising your voice. [Remember Him] by morning and evening.²

Whose condition is such that his heart is focused on Allāh ta'ālā while his hand is extended, is focused and aloof at the same time, is spiritually in the presence of Allāh ta'ālā while his physical activities do not prevent him from being conscious of Him.

What can be said of the one who turned thousands of people into ascetics, into those who are constantly engaged in Allāh's remembrance and occupied in His worship while he himself does not appear to engage in a lot of remembrance nor in too much of worship!? Rather, he is always found to be engrossed in some sort of outward occupation.

Self-obliteration

His loftiest and highest spiritual action and condition was that of obliteration and servitude which pervaded him with absolute severity all the time, and by which he was so affected that he used to often say: "I consider myself to be worse than dogs and pigs. If anyone does not believe me, I can take an oath and say it."

¹ Sūrah an-Nūr, 24: 37.

² Sūrah al-A'rāf, 7: 205.

Genuine humility

Allāh is the greatest! Look at the level of his humility. This is what you call genuine humility. Really, the one to whom Allāh's greatness is exposed will most certainly have this quality. A person wrote a letter to Hadrat Wālā and included the following line of verse:

How marvellous is His grandeur and
generosity and how strange is my
meekness and humility.

He wrote in reply to it: "This verse shook me from head to toe. Could I obtain the entire poem?"

From this incident we can gauge the extent to which Allāh's greatness and his own servitude was exposed to Hadrat Wālā. Only then could this verse which combines both conditions have had such an effect on him.

A secret

Here, read the following incident which is a greater proof in this regard. He confided in me on one occasion and spoke extremely softly. He said: "Although it is not appropriate for me to expose my condition, what can I hide from you? I am saying it on condition you do not mention it to anyone as long as I am alive. All praise is due to Allāh ta'ālā, in the beginning I was convinced according to the Sharī'at but could not understand it emotionally that although the greatness of Allāh ta'ālā and matters of the Hereafter were exposed to Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam – and that too matters of immense terror and fear – how did Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam converse and joke with his Companions? How was he able to interact with his wives? How was he able to carry out domestic tasks? How was he able to eat, drink and sleep? All praise is

due to Allāh ta'ālā, I have now come to understand it emotionally as well and I realized that yes, it is possible; the two can be found together.” The supreme loftiness of this most special of conditions becomes clear.

An earthquake had struck the region of Bihar and many terrifying incidents occurred. Hadrat Wālā who possessed an extremely perceptive, soft and affectionate heart was severely grieved when he heard these incidents. There was a time when he used to even make du'ā' for animals but then stopped it when he did not come across any texts [from Qur'ān and Hadīth] to support this practice. Together with his grief over the events in Bihar, he used to say: “I fear grieving too much lest it may affect my acceptance of Allāh's decree. If the heart is not grieved by such events, one will not be fulfilling the rights of one's fellow creatures. And if one grieves too much, he will be acting against the rights of the Creator. It is a perplexing situation where a person must neither trample the rights of the creation nor those of the Creator. It is certainly very difficult to remain steadfast on the straight path which is the path of moderation and which is presented in the physical form of the *pul sirāt*. However, when a person makes efforts in this direction, Allāh ta'ālā helps him on every occasion and the severest of hardships become easy.”¹

¹ *Ashraf as-Sawānīh*, vol. 4, p. 53.

The spirituality of Maulānā Faḍl Raḥmān Ganj Murādābādī

We take the opportunity of relating some of the lofty spiritual conditions of Hadrat Maulānā Faḍl Raḥmān Sāhib Ganj Murādābādī raḥimahullāh.

(1)

Maulānā Tajammul Husayn Sāhib writes:

Maulānā Muḥibbullāh Khān Sāhib Amrauhah related:

Nawāb Kalb ‘Alī Khān, the governor of the district of Rāmpūr, was quite friendly with us and loved us a lot. One day he expressed his wish to me by saying: “I really wish Maulānā Faḍl Raḥmān Sāhib Muḥaddith could visit us here in Rāmpūr. Scholars of the various sciences are assembled here; he is the only one who is left who had spent time in the company of Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Sāhib.” The Maulwī Sāhib asked the Nawāb: “What will you give him if we are able to bring him here?” The Nawāb replied: “I will offer 100 000 rupees to the Maulwī Sāhib.” Maulwī Muḥibbullāh Khān Sāhib relates:

We went to Ganj Murādābād and met Hadrat raḥimahullāh. We spoke about tauḥīd and various other topics. We then said to him: “Will you come to Rāmpūr with us? Nawāb Kalb ‘Alī Khān is anxious to meet you, and will present 100 000 rupees to you.” Hadrat raḥimahullāh continued speaking as he had been, and deferred my offer as though it was of no significance. He then said: “Miyā! Throw sand on the 100 000 rupees and listen:

When we look at His [Allāh’s] kindness and generosity on our heart, we find it filled to the brim.

Hadrat rahimahullāh then continued talking about the love of Allāh ta'ālā and other related topics.¹

(2)

When the greatness of Allāh ta'ālā is exposed to a servant, and he cuts off his hopes from the wealth and riches of worldly people, then the greatness of government officials and people of authority does not remain in his heart. He is never intimidated by them. There are times when the most powerful rulers appear like ants and flies to them.

Some people probably still remember the high rank and immense awe which were enjoyed by the District Collector in the beginning of British rule [in India]. The Governor and Lieutenant Governor commanded even more authority. However, the spiritual masters and men of spiritual insight attached no importance whatsoever to these superficial and superfluous positions. They would treat these people like any other ordinary person. The Lieutenant General of the Āgrā and Ūdh districts came to Hadrat rahimahullāh on two occasions. Hadrat rahimahullāh received him without any formalities. In fact, he met him in an abstinent manner. Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī rahimahullāh describes one of these visits:

The Lieutenant General sought permission to meet Maulānā Fadl Rahmān Sāhib. He addressed the people: "I am a poor man, what arrangements should be made to receive him? Very well, get a chair for him." The date and time was conveyed to Maulānā rahimahullāh by the Lieutenant General. In the meantime, Hadrat rahimahullāh forgot about what

¹ *Tadhkirah Maulānā Fadl Rahmān Ganj Murādābādī*, p. 71.

he had said to the people. The Lieutenant General arrived with some other dignitaries. They were all standing. A madam was also with them. Maulānā rahimahullāh pointed to an earthen pot which was placed upside down, and said to the madam: “Bībī! You may sit there.” The Lieutenant General requested Maulānā rahimahullāh for some tabarruk. He addressed one of his attendants: “See if there is anything in the earthen cauldron, and give it to him.” A few bits of sweetmeat were found in it. A small amount was distributed among all who had come to visit him. They accepted it respectfully and happily. After sitting for a little while, they sought his leave and departed. When they were about to leave, they requested him for advice. He said: “Do not commit oppression.”

Note: The fact of the matter is that because these personalities are the beloveds of Allāh ta‘ālā, they do not bother about whether the creation likes them or not. (compiler)

Statements of Maulānā Faḍl Raḥmān Ganj Murādābādī

We now quote some of the statements and teachings of Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Shāh Faḍl Raḥmān Ṣāhib Ganj Murādābādī rahimahullāh.

(1)

It is not something to say, but I am saying it to you: When I go into prostration, I feel as though Allāh ta‘ālā has kissed me.

(2)

The pleasure of Paradise is in its place. The pleasure of the fount of Kauthar is in its place. However, there

can be no pleasure like the one which is experienced in ṣalāh.

(3)

Brother! We will continue performing ṣalāh when we are in our grave. We pray to Allāh ta'ālā to permit us to perform ṣalāh in our grave.

Hadrat Maulānā Hakīm Sayyid 'Abd al-Hayy rahimahullāh writes:

It was the time of 'aṣr ṣalāh when I went to meet him on the third occasion. After the ṣalāh, it was his habit to sit outside the masjid courtyard in line with his room. He sat down and began speaking with much love and affection. He continued speaking about his life for quite some time. While speaking in this vein, he quoted this couplet:

It will be most wonderful if I were to
find my heart in my chest. O Allāh! It is
a heap of ash beneath which a fire is
subdued.

Note: This couplet testifies to the level of his self-obliteration.

Similarly, Hadrat Khwājah Muḥammad Ma'sūm rahimahullāh writes in a letter to Mīr 'Abd al-Fattāh rahimahullāh:

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

All praise is due to Allāh ta'ālā. Salutations to Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. Our daily conditions are worthy of praise. I pray you are well, that you are steadfast on the Sunnat and Shari'at, that you have not divested yourself of the essentials of seeking Allāh ta'ālā, and that you are forever

restless in His quest. A saint said that taṣawwuf entails restlessness. Once a person experiences restfulness, taṣawwuf no longer remains. A murīd ought to have this quality:

حَتَّى إِذَا ضَاقَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَرْضُ بِمَا رَحُبَتْ وَضَاقَتْ
عَلَيْهِمْ أَنْفُسُهُمْ وَظُنُّوْا أَنَّ لَّا مَلْجَأَ مِنَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا إِلَيْهِ

...until the land became constricted upon them, despite its vastness, and their own lives became constricted upon them and they realized that there was no refuge from Allāh except towards Him.¹

When a genuine seeker acquires this quality, there is hope for the ocean of pardon to burst forth and:

ثُمَّ تَابَ عَلَيْهِمْ لِيَتُوبُوا

He then turned in kindness to them so that they may turn [to Him in the future as well].

The seeker may hear the above glad tiding and take from the treasures of Allāh ta'ālā. It is astonishing to see the fortunate youngster dreaming like the proverbial hare, is lagging behind in seeking what he ought to, and – like a child – is occupied with a few broken pieces of earthenware instead of priceless jewels. A saint rightly said:

The beloved is present in the world but we are totally carefree and blithe with regard to Him. In the same way, the

¹ Sūrah at-Taubah, 9: 118.

goblet of love is present but we do not
become intoxicated by drinking it.¹

Spiritual conditions of Hājī Imdādullāh Sāhib

We now take the opportunity of quoting some of the lofty spiritual conditions of Hadrat Hājī Imdādullāh Sāhib rahimahullāh.

(1)

Hadrat rahimahullāh said:

I am not inconvenienced in the least by the coming and going of crowds of people here. Even if I feel discomforted, so what? I ought to bear it for the seekers of the truth. Anyway, what do I own? I do not have any wealth of this world. People come to me solely because of their good thoughts about me. I myself am not good at all, but there is no doubt about the goodness in these people because they take the pain to lift their feet and come to me. I therefore consider the visit of the feet to be a means of salvation for me.²

(2)

There were certain endowments attached to the mausoleum of Hadrat Sultan Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham rahimahullāh, and astronomical amounts of income were received from them. The trustee of these endowments passed away, and some Sufis decided to allocate the funds to Hadrat Hājī Sāhib rahimahullāh because he himself was a trustee and because he could use it in a lawful manner for himself. Furthermore, Hadrat rahimahullāh did not have any

¹ *Maktūbāt Ma'sūmiyyah*, register three, p. 72.

² *Kamālāt Imdādiyyah*.

income of his own. If this was allocated to him, it will be a source of tranquillity for him. There was no need for Hadrat to go and live there. A deputy would work on his behalf, who would receive instructions from Hadrat Hājī Sāhib rahimahullāh. When this proposal was presented to him he immediately replied: “If this trusteeship has been given to me on the basis that I am from his progeny, then bear in mind that Hadrat Sultan had cast aside the sultanate of Balkh. If I were to choose this world, how can I attribute myself to him and claim to be from his progeny? It is essential for a rightful deputy to render this service, and if I want to become a deputy for him, it will be essential for me to follow his ways.”

Note: Glory to Allāh! Look at his level of reliance on Allāh ta’ālā!

If this was the comprehensiveness of the friends of Allāh ta’ālā, what can be said of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam.

These are the servants of the Sharī‘at
who are deputies of the Prophet. What
can be said of that ocean of whose
drops these are rivers!

This is why Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam never experienced any difference in his bond with Allāh ta’ālā, and the perfect and perpetual consciousness of Allāh ta’ālā despite the many afflictions which he had to endure. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam said:

لي مع الله وقت لا يسعني فيه ملك مقرب ولا نبي
مرسل.

I have a time with Allāh wherein neither a close angel nor a Prophet can interrupt me.

It is related that Hadrat ‘Ā’ishah radiyallāhu ‘anhā sought permission to present herself before him. He asked: “Who are you?” She replied: “I am ‘Ā’ishah.” He asked: “Which ‘Ā’ishah?” She replied: “The daughter of Abū Bakr.” He asked: “Who is Abū Bakr?” She replied: “The son of Abū Quhāfah.” Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam still could not recognize her.

Hadrat ‘Ā’ishah radiyallāhu ‘anhā used to be with him all the time, but his heart was empty of her as well. Due to this, he could not recognize her. From this, we can gauge his other conditions and how he had acquired the perpetual presence of Allāh ta’ālā. No Muslim can even imagine it.

This is why whatever a person acquires – whether he is a walī, a qutb or a ghauth – he does it through the blessings of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam as his heir; not independently of him. This is supported by the following text of *al-Muwāfaqāt*:

أن جميع ما أعطيته هذه الأمة من المزايا والكرامات
والكشافات والتائيدات، وغيرها من الفضائل، إنما
هو مقتبسة من مشكاة نبينا صلى الله عليه وسلم،
لكن على مقدار الاتباع. فلا يظن أنه حصل على
خير بدون وساطة نبوته. كيف وهو السراج المنير

الذي يستضيء به الجميع، والعلم الأعلى الذي به
يهتدى في سلوك الطريق.¹

All the peculiarities, supernatural feats, spiritual expositions, evidences and other virtues which have been given to this nation have been acquired from the lamp of our Prophet sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. However, this is dependent on the level of emulation (the more a person emulated him, the more he received). Therefore, no one should assume that he acquired any good independently of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. How could he when Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam is the glittering lamp from which everyone derives light, and the highest milestone through which guidance is obtained when treading the path.

أله) أنه فيه: إذا وقع في الهانية الرب لم يجد أحدا
يأخذ بقلبه، هو فعلائية من الإلاهية وهي عظمة
الله من أله ياله إذا تحير، يريد إذا وقع العبد في عظمة
الله وجلاله وغير ذلك من صفات الربوبية وصرف
همه إليها أبغض الناس حتى لا يسلو قلبه إلى أحد.²

When a servant falls into the divinity of his Sustainer, he does not find anyone to whom

¹الموافقات، ج ١.

²مجمع بحار الأنوار، (النج، اله)، ج ١، ص ٩٤.

his heart can become attached. The word فعلانية is a verbal noun on the scale of الإلاهية. It refers to the greatness of Allāh ta'ālā. The root of this word is أَلِهْ يَأْلِهْ – when a person is astounded. This means that when a person loses himself in Allāh's greatness, sublimity and other divine attributes; and focuses his attention on them; then people become detestable in his sight and his heart finds no consolation in anyone (apart from Allāh).

Observe the following couplets to understand the spiritual condition and rank of the Auliya'.

The true lover expresses through his spiritual condition: In what should I occupy myself when my heart seeks to look at you and my eyes are desirous of beholding you?

The Auliya' have the goblet of the Sharī'at in one hand and the anvil of love in the other hand. How can every avaricious person play with the delicate goblet and the iron anvil of love?

Note: We pray to Allāh ta'ālā to honour us with the comprehensiveness of our pious predecessors. Āmīn.

The comprehensiveness of the Sahābah

We will now describe the comprehensiveness of the Sahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum and conclude this discussion. They were the first students and disciples of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. There can be no one in the ummah who is more comprehensive than them.

‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Utbah relates that on the day Hadrat ‘Uthmān radiyallāhu ‘anhu was martyred, he owned 150 000 dīnārs, one million dirhams, and some plots of land in the areas between Arīs, Khaybar and Wādī al-Qurā which were valued at 200 000 dīnārs.

One eighth of the estate of Hadrat Zubayr radiyallāhu ‘anhu was valued at fifty thousand dīnārs.

Note: His entire estate was valued at 400 000 dīnārs.

He also left behind one thousand horses and one thousand slaves. ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ radiyallāhu ‘anhu left behind 300 000 dīnārs. As for ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn ‘Auf radiyallāhu ‘anhu, his affluence is so well-known that there is no need to mention it. The world was in the hands of these people, but not in their hearts. When they did not have it, they remained patient. When they had it, they expressed their gratitude. In the beginning, Allāh ta‘ālā caused them to suffer poverty. When the spiritual effulgence reached its peak and their inner selves were purified, Allāh ta‘ālā showered the world onto them. Had they received it in the beginning, it would have probably affected them. When they received it after faith and conviction were firmly embedded in their hearts, they used of the world as would a trustworthy treasurer, and fulfilled the following order of Allāh ta‘ālā:

وَأَنْفِقُوا مِمَّا جَعَلَكُمْ مُسْتَخْلِفِينَ فِيهِ.

Spend of that which He has made you trustees.¹

¹ Sūrah al-Hadīd, 57: 7.

Note: This means that they did not exercise their will on their wealth as though they were its owners, but as though they were employees.¹

عَنِ ابْنِ مَسْعُودٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ مَنْ كَانَ مُسْتَنَّاً
فَلَيْسَتْ يَمَنُ قَدْ مَاتَ فَإِنَّ الْحَيَّ لَا يُؤْمَنُ عَلَيْهِ
الْفِتْنَةُ، أَوْلَيْكَ أَصْحَابُ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ،
كَانُوا أَفْضَلَ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ، أَبْرَهَا قُلُوبًا وَأَعَمَّقَهَا عِلْمًا،
وَأَقْلَهَا تَكَلُّفًا، اخْتَارَهُمُ اللَّهُ لِصُحْبَةِ نَبِيِّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَلِإِقَامَةِ دِينِهِ، فَاعْرِفُوا لَهُمْ فَضْلَهُمْ
وَاتَّبِعُوهُمْ عَلَى أَثَرِهِمْ، وَتَمَسَّكُوا بِمَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ
أَخْلَاقِهِمْ وَسِيرِهِمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا عَلَى الْهُدَى الْمُسْتَقِيمِ.²

Hadrat 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd radiyallāhu 'anhu said: The one who wants to adopt a certain way must adopt the way of those who have passed on because there is still the possibility of a living person slipping up (a living person's way can be adopted as long as he remains on the path). Those whose path can be permanently adopted are the Sahābah of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. They were the most superior of this nation. They were the most pious of heart, the deepest in knowledge, and the least pretentious. Allāh selected them for the companionship of His Prophet

¹ *Al-Iksīr Fī Ithbāt at-Taqdīr*, p. 83.

² *تخريج مشكاة المصابيح: ١٩١.*

and the establishment of His Dīn. Therefore, acknowledge their merit, follow in their footsteps, and - as far as possible - make their [Sahābah's] character and habits the standard because they were on true guidance.

Appreciate the greatness and merits of these personalities. The purpose of Hadrat Ibn Mas'ūd radiyallāhu 'anhu in saying these words was to teach us to respect the Sahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum. We must not have the slightest evil thought about them. We must not show any disrespect for them. We must love them, we must adopt their ways and mannerisms. We must take lessons from their lives. We must accept them as our leaders and follow them.

This Hadīth establishes the virtue and excellence of the Sahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum. Because they were the most superior after the Prophets 'alayhimus salām and possessed the perfect aptitude for the acceptance of guidance; Allāh ta'ālā selected them for the companionship of His Final Messenger sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. Allāh ta'ālā makes reference to this in the Qur'an:

وَأَلَزَمَهُمْ كَلِمَةَ التَّقْوَىٰ وَكَانُوا أَحَقَّ بِهَا وَأَهْلَهَا.

...and kept them steadfast on the spirit of piety. And they were most worthy and deserving of it.¹

Some narrations state that Allāh ta'ālā looked at the hearts of all His servants and found the heart of Muhammad sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam to be the

¹ Sūrah al-Fath, 48: 26.

purest and the most effulgent. So He placed the light of prophet-hood in his heart. He then found the hearts of the Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum to be extremely pure, clean and eligible; so He selected them for the companionship of His Prophet sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam.¹

Hadrat Sufyān Thaurī rahimahullāh relates from Hadrat Hudhayfah ibn al-Yamān radiyallāhu ‘anhu who said that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam said:

اقتدوا بالذين من بعدي أبي بكر وعمر، واهتدوا
بهدي عمار، وتمسكوا بعهد ابن أم عبد.

Follow these two after me: Abū Bakr and ‘Umar. Emulate the ways of ‘Ammār and hold on firmly to the covenant of Ibn Umm ‘Abd (‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd).²

¹ *Mazāhir-e-Haqq*, vol. 1, p. 250.

² *Tārīkh Islāh Wa Tarbiyyat*, vol. 2, p. 242.

AN-NASĪHAH LI AL-MUSTARSHIDĪN

Imām Abul Qāsim ‘Abd al-Karīm Qushayrī Nīshāpūrī
Raḥimahullāh

It is my heart’s desire to present to you the last part of *Risālah Qushayriyyah* of Ḥaḍrat ‘Allāmah Qushayrī raḥimahullāh. It is titled *Bāb al-Waṣīyyah li al-Murīdīn* – the chapter on pieces of advice for disciples. It was translated by Ḥaḍrat Khwājah ‘Azīz al-Ḥasan Majdhūb raḥimahullāh and Ḥaḍrat Muṣliḥul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Waṣiyyullāh Sāhib raḥimahullāh under the instruction of Ḥaḍrat Ḥakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānwī raḥimahullāh. We quoted it verbatim in *Ma‘ārif Sūfiyyah*. After making a few alterations, I am quoting some of the pieces of advice here so that I may have the honour of making them a part of this book.

(1)

Sincerity has to be the first step of a murīd in this path.

O Farīd! Remain true to your intention
so that you obtain the key to Allāh’s
recognition.

(2)

Once a murīd makes firm his belief in Allāh ta‘ālā, it becomes obligatory on him to acquire the necessary knowledge of the Shari‘at. He could do this by self-study or by consulting the ‘ulamā’. He must acquire that much of knowledge through which he can fulfil his obligations. If the verdicts of the jurists are diverse, he must select the one in which there is

most caution. He must always try to abstain from differences.

(3)

After this, it is essential for a murīd to learn manners from a shaykh. This refers to rectifying his character. If he does not have a teacher to guide him, he will never find success.

Anyone who treads the path of love without a companion will expend his life without having an inkling of Allāh's love.

(4)

Once he makes up his mind to tread the path, then after following the previously mentioned pieces of advice, it becomes necessary for him to repent to Allāh ta'ālā for all his sins. He must then give up all sins whether external, internal, major or minor. The first thing which he will have to do is please those who have rights over him. If not, this path will not open up to him. This is the way of the seekers.

(5)

Once he has detached himself from his wealth, it is necessary for him to detach himself from name and fame because this is a major obstacle in the path. As long as the acceptance and rejection of people are not equal in the sight of a murīd, he cannot realize any success. In fact, the most harmful thing for him is when people look at him with reverence and believe him to be blessed. The reason for this is that people in general are not aware of his condition. If he has not even rectified his intention as yet, how can it be correct for them to consider him to be blessed!? It is

therefore obligatory for a murīd to detach himself from name and fame. It is a toxic poison for him.

(6)

It is extremely harmful for a murīd to sit in the assembly of fakirs and people of the Tarīqat at the very beginning. If he finds himself in such a situation, he must show due reverence to the seniors, serve them and abstain from acting against their orders. In this there is comfort for the fakirs. He must strive not to cause any shaykh's heart to become averse to him.

(7)

Excessive verbal forms of dhikr is not from among the etiquette of murīds. Instead, they remain occupied in divesting themselves of sins, rectifying their character and removing heedlessness from their hearts. They do not occupy themselves in excessive good actions. What is really essential for them is adherence to the obligatory actions and those which are Sunnah mu'akkadah. As for excessive supererogatory actions such as optional salāhs, then in comparison to them, continuous dhikr with the heart is a superior condition for them.

Note: This is a special piece of advice. Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat raḥimahullāh would make it a point of relating it to us. Read it carefully. (compiler)

(8)

If a person does not find a shaykh in the place where he resides, he must emigrate to a person who has been appointed by Allāh for the guiding and steering of murīds. He must live with him and must not leave until he is permitted to leave.

(9)

A murīd should not believe that the shaykhs are free from sin. It is obligatory on him to leave them to their spiritual conditions and to have noble thoughts about them. (In other words, if he occasionally observes the shaykh saying or doing something which seems to be beyond the limits, he must not sever ties from him solely on this basis, provided the shaykh does not transgress the limits often. The murīd should not pass any judgement on these issues. If he cannot, he should courteously separate himself from him).

(10)

The company of young boys is one of the most difficult tribulations of this path. If a person gets caught up with them, then all the Sufis concur that Allāh ta'ālā has disgraced such a person.

(11)

Another tribulation for a murīd is when subtle jealousy towards the brethren of this path enters his heart. If Allāh ta'ālā has conferred distinction to any of his peers while he himself does not enjoy that distinction – and this is affecting him – then he must realize that everything has been decreed. (What, then, is the benefit of jealousy?)

(12)

A murīd should not hanker after leadership nor should he desire anyone to become his student and murīd. When a murīd becomes a shaykh before obliterating his humaneness and before removing the dangers of being a murīd, then he is blocked off from the reality. His counsel and teaching will not be of benefit to anyone.

(13)

The basis of this path revolves around preserving the etiquette of the Sharī'at, safeguarding the hand from extending towards unlawful and doubtful things, saving the senses from the prohibitions of the Sharī'at, diverting his every breath from heedlessness and connecting himself to Allāh ta'ālā. It is dependent on not considering even a doubtful sesame seed to be lawful even at the time of dire need. As for occasions when there is no real need, we cannot even talk about them.

It is the duty of a murīd to strive perpetually to give up desires. The person who follows his desires has in fact wiped out his seniority. The worst thing for a murīd is to return to a desire which he had given up for Allāh's sake.

(14)

The mark of a murīd – in fact, of all those treading this path – is to decline the advances of women. If it is prohibited to accept their advances, what can be said of the one who chooses the means for acquiring women? This has always been the creed of the Sufis and they promulgated rules accordingly. The one who trivializes this matter will soon be faced with situations due to which he will be disgraced and humiliated.

(15)

Another mark of a murīd is that he remains aloof from materialistic people. Their company is a poison which has been tested. Worldly people benefit from them [murīds] while they fall from grace. Allāh ta'ālā says:

وَلَا تُطِيعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَنْ ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ
أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا.

Pay no heed to the one whose heart We
rendered heedless of Our remembrance,
who follows his own lusts and whose case
exceeds all bounds.¹

Note: Glory to Allāh! These are excellent pieces of
advice which ought to be adhered to. This is why
Hadrat Thānwī rahimahullāh had them translated.
Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat rahimahullāh used to read
them to us repeatedly. Inspiration is from Allāh ta'ālā
alone. (Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān)

¹ Sūrah al-Kahf, 18: 28.

TEN PRINCIPLES FOR PURIFICATION OF THE SELF

Shaykh ‘Abd ar-Razzāq ibn ‘Abd al-Muhsin al-Badr
Raḥimahullāh

Prelude

الحمد لله وكفى وسلام على عباده الذين اصطفى.

Maulānā Muḥammad Fārūq Bhattay who resides in South Africa sent me a beneficial and impressive book titled *‘Ashara Qawā’id Fī Tazkiyah an-Nafs*, written by Shaykh ‘Abd ar-Razzāq ibn ‘Abd al-Muhsin al-Badr. The theme and purpose of the book are clear from its title. According to Maulānā ‘Abd ar-Rashīd Bastawī raḥimahullāh, it has encompassed an ocean in cup.

I was overjoyed after having studied it. In fact, I learnt a lot about sulūk. I felt that if it was translated into Urdu, it will be useful and enlightening to Urdu readers.

With this in mind, I began translating it. Around the same time, Maulānā Muftī Mushtāq Aḥmad Sāhib, a teacher of Ḥadīth at Dār al-‘Ulūm Weysh Nagar, visited us at the khānqāh in Allāhābād. I took the opportunity of handing over the remainder of the translation to him, and he did an excellent job. Subsequently, Maulānā ‘Abd ar-Rashīd Bastawī visited us at the khānqāh. By Allāh’s grace, he is a senior scholar and author. I requested him to check the translation of Maulānā Mushtāq Aḥmad Sāhib and to fill any shortcomings which he found. The two scholars discussed the matter and Maulānā Bastawī

edited the translation. He also noted his observations which are gratifying to us. After that, Maulānā Iqbāl Sāhib Tankārwi, the principal of Dār al-‘Ulūm Mātli Wālā Bharūch, paid particular attention to the typesetting of the book. May Allāh ta‘ālā reward him with the best of rewards.

I then read the book and – wherever I considered it suitable - made additions to it from the statements of Mujaddid Alf Thānī rahimahullāh, Hadrat Hakīmul Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānwī rahimahullāh and Hadrat Musliḥul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Waṣiyyullāh Sāhib rahimahullāh. Allāh willing, the reader will approve of this.

I pray to Allāh ta‘ālā to make this translation beneficial to the masses and to accept it. Āmīn.

Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī

Foreword

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلاة والسلام على رسوله الصادق الأمين،
وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين.

Purification and rectification of the self are extremely necessary for every believer. It is one of the most important objectives of the commissioning of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam as a Messenger. The Qur’ān itself testifies to this:

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ
آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ.

It is He who raised among the unlettered people a Messenger from among

themselves, reciting to them His verses and purifying them.¹

This is why the Allāh-fearing scholars and Sufi masters of every era made it the centre of their efforts.

Personalities of the past and latter generations devoted their entire lives for the fulfilment of this objective. They extracted treatments from the Qur'ān, Sunnah and lives of the pious; and provided effective prescriptions for it.

Presently, Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Sāhib Allāhābādī has been given a revivalist passion in writing books and articles on taṣawwuf and self-purification, presenting summaries of them, annotating them, and having them translated into various languages. Before the present book, many books on this subject have been published through Hadrat's efforts and have proved beneficial to all sections of the community. There are several more books which are waiting to be printed and published.

The book before you contains ten fundamental principles. It has in fact encompassed an ocean in a cup. These principles encapsulate Sufism in its entirety. Hadrat's disciple, Maulānā Mushtāq Aḥmad Sāhib Gujarātī translated a major portion of this book. The first few pages were translated by Hadrat himself. Acting under Hadrat's instruction, I edited the book and did my utmost to ensure that no serious error or cause of error remains in it.

May Allāh ta'ālā reward the author, Hadrat Shaykh 'Abd ar-Razzāq ibn 'Abd al-Muḥsin al-Badr, Hadrat

¹ Sūrah al-Jumu'ah, 62: 2.

Wālā, and the translator, Maulānā Mushtāq Aḥmad Sāhib. May Allāh ta'ālā cover me with His mercy on the day of Resurrection through the righteous deeds of these personalities.

‘Abd ar-Rashīd Bastawī¹

Khānqāh Dār al-Ma‘ārif, Allāhābād, U.P.

8 Ramaḍān 1439 A.H.

Introduction

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلاة والسلام على رسوله الصادق الأمين،
وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين.

The matter of the self which lies within man's bosom is of paramount importance, and it holds a great status. Allāh ta'ālā took an oath on several of His great creations in Sūrah ash-Shams, on the self which is successful and the one which is unsuccessful. He says:

وَالشَّمْسِ وَضُحَاهَا (١) وَالْقَمَرِ إِذَا تَلَاهَا (٢) وَالنَّهَارِ
إِذَا جَلَّاهَا (٣) وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَاهَا (٤) وَالسَّمَاءِ وَمَا
بَنَاهَا (٥) وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا طَحَاهَا (٦) وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا

¹ Sadly, after rendering various similar religious and academic services, Hadrat Maulānā passed away on 25 October 2018/15 Ṣafar 1440. To Allāh we belong and to Him is our return. May Allāh ta'ālā shower him with abundant rewards and resurrect him with Allāh-fearing and practising 'ulamā'. Āmīn. (Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī)

(٧) فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا (٨) قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا
(٩) وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا (١٠)

By the oath of the sun and its rising brightness. By the moon when it appears after the sun. By the day when it brightens it. By the night when it covers it. By the sky and as He created it. By the earth and as He spread it. By the self and as He proportioned it. He then inspired it with the understanding of evil and righteousness. He who purified it has indeed achieved his goal. He who leaves it buried in the dust has certainly failed.¹

Allāh ta'ālā says:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا

The word zakāh actually means “an increase in good”. The meaning of the verse is that when a person strives to purify, rectify and elevate his self by abundant acts of obedience and good deeds, and staying away from mischief and evil deeds, then his success is certain.

Allāh ta'ālā says:

وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا

The actual meaning of *tadsiyah* is “to conceal”. A sinner conceals his noble self by committing sins, subdues it with evil and wicked actions, and uproots and destroys it with flawed actions until it becomes

¹ Sūrah ash-Shams, 91: 1-10.

ignoble, reprehensible and lowly. In this way, the person becomes eligible for failure and loss. We seek refuge in Allāh ta'ālā.

A noble self is only pleased with things which are of the highest level, the most superior and whatever brings the most praiseworthy results. On the other hand, an ignoble self hovers around despicable things and falls upon them just as a fly falls upon filth. A noble and lofty self will never be happy with wrongdoing, immoral acts, stealing and treachery because it is greater and more exalted than that. As for the self which is ignoble, despicable and wicked; it is the opposite of all that. Thus, each self inclines to what it has affinity with.¹

Now that we have learnt the importance of purification of the self, it is obligatory on every Muslim who desires his wellbeing to pay extraordinary attention to it. He will have to strive throughout his life to realize this praiseworthy objective so that he may succeed in this world and in the Hereafter, and he may enjoy true and genuine happiness.

The self has a right over a person as stated by Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam:

وَإِنَّ لِنَفْسِكَ عَلَيْكَ حَقًّا.

Your self has a right over you.

The person who assumes that the right of the self is to impose hardship on it and deprive it of its rights which Allāh ta'ālā has made it naturally in need of has certainly erred. Likewise, that person has also

¹ Ibn al-Qayyim: *al-Fawā'id*, p. 178.

erred who thinks that the right of the self is through negligence, disregarding its supervision and leaving it immersed in its desires.

The purification of the self is certainly not done like that. Rather, it is by following the guidelines of the Shari'ah, and pursuing a course of moderation which is devoid of excesses and shortcomings. In fact, one has to adhere strictly to the way of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam and his upright system.

In this monograph, I will list ten important principles which will assist a Muslim in purifying, elevating and cleansing his self from everything that would soil and defame it.

I beg Allāh ta'ālā to purify our selves, to rectify our actions, to enable us to say the right things, to show us the truth, to permit us to follow Him, to guide us to the noblest characteristics and actions, to turn us away from evil character, and to protect us against obvious and hidden tribulations. Peace and salutations to our Prophet Muḥammad, his family and his companions.

First principle: Tauḥīd

Tauḥīd is the reason for which Allāh ta'ālā created us and gave us existence. Allāh ta'ālā says:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ.

I created jinn and man solely for My worship.¹

It is also the axis for the call of the Prophets and Messengers. Allāh ta'ālā says:

¹ Sūrah adh-Dhāriyāt, 51: 56.

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَّسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا
الطَّاغُوتَ.

We sent to every community a Messenger
[proclaiming]: “Worship Allāh and abstain
from all false deities.”¹

Tauhīd is the first obligation on a person for admission into Islam. It is also the first obligation on the one who invites to Allāh ta‘ālā – he has to teach it to the people. Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam said to Hadrat Mu‘ādh ibn Jabal radiyallāhu ‘anhu when he sent him to Yemen:

You will meet some people of the Book.
The first thing you must invite them to
is belief in the Oneness of Allāh ta‘ālā.²

Allāh ta‘ālā threatens those who do not purify themselves with tauhīd and imān of a severe punishment on the day of Resurrection:

وَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُشْرِكِينَ، الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ
بِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ كٰفِرُونَ.

Destruction to the polytheists who do not
give the zakāh and who reject the
Hereafter.

Ibn Taymiyyah rahimahullāh says in his commentary to the above verse:

¹ Sūrah an-Nahl, 16: 36.

² أخرجه البخاري في صحيحه، رقم: ٧٣٧٢.

It is tauhīd and īmān with which the heart is purified because it entails refuting the divinity of everything except Allāh from the heart, and affirming the divinity of Allāh alone in the heart. This is the reality of *Lā ilāha illallāh* and it is the basis for the purification of the hearts.¹

Ibn al-Qayyim rahimahullāh said:

The majority of the exegists of the past and those who came after them said: This refers to tauhīd – testifying that there is none worthy of worship except Allāh – and īmān with which the heart becomes pure...it is the basis for every increase and growth...²

Just as tauhīd is the basis for the purification and cleansing of the self, polytheism is the worst thing to tarnish and defile the self. In fact,

وَلَقَدْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ لَئِنْ أَشْرَكَتَ
لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ وَلَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ.

It has already been revealed to you and to those before you: If you ascribe partners, your actions will go in vain and you will be among those who have fallen into loss.³

¹ مجموع الفتاوى: ج ١٠، ص ٩٧.

² إغاثة اللهفان: ج ١، ص ٧٩.

³ Sūrah az-Zumar, 39: 65.

It is a sin for which Allāh ta'ālā will never pardon a person if he dies on it. Allāh ta'ālā says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ.

Surely Allāh does not pardon the one who ascribes a partner to Him and pardons sins below that of whomever He wills.¹

Allāh ta'ālā has made Paradise unlawful to anyone who ascribes any partner with Him. He says:

إِنَّهُ مَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَهُ النَّارُ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ.

Surely whoever has ascribed a partner to Allāh, Allāh has made Paradise forbidden to him and his abode is Hell. There is no helper for the sinners.

Once a person has realized and affirmed tauhīd, he has acquired complete purification. He has also acquired total guidance and peace in this world and the Hereafter. Allāh ta'ālā says:

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوا إِيمَانَهُمْ بِظُلْمٍ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمُ الْأَمْنُ وَهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ.

Those who have conviction and did not adulterate their conviction with any defectiveness - it is for them that there is

¹ Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 48.

security and it is they who are on the straight path.¹

Once a person's submission before and love for Allāh is genuine, his actions will be pure and correct. His self will be pure and wholesome. But when he admits any of the grime of polytheism into it, filth and muck will enter his self proportionately.

Thus, purification of the self cannot be realized without the realization of tauhīd, worshipping Allāh ta'ālā alone, and doing actions solely for Him. Allāh ta'ālā says:

أَلَا لِلَّهِ الدِّينُ الْخَالِصُ

Listen! For Allāh alone is absolute devotion.²

Purification of the self is not possible without purifying it from all forms of polytheism and emptying it of everything that fragments and weakens tauhīd.

Hadrat Thānwī's investigation on the subject of tauhīd

Hadrat Thānwī rahimahullāh wrote an insightful point in his *Furū' al-Īmān*. Two meanings of tauhīd have been established from Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. One is:

لَا مَعْبُودَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ.

The other is:

¹ Sūrah al-An'ām, 6: 82.

² Sūrah az-Zumar, 39: 3.

لَا مَقْصُودَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ.

The affirmation of the first meaning is more glaring than the sun, i.e. there is none worthy of worship except Allāh. The evidence for the second meaning is that Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam referred to ostentation as a minor form of polytheism. He said:

أَنْ يَسِيرَ الرِّيَاءُ شَرْكَ.

Even a little ostentation is polytheism.

When a person does something for show, anyone then those for whom he did it do not become a deity; they become the objective. Now that making someone other than Allāh the objective is classified as polytheism, the reality of tauhīd – which is the opposite of polytheism – will be that Allāh ta‘ālā alone must be the objective. Anyone other than Allāh should not be the objective. This is the meaning of:

لَا مَقْصُودَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ.²

Note: The two meanings of tauhīd as established from Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam have been explained beautifully by Hadrat Thānwī rahimahullāh. It points to his knowledge and wisdom. Just as we believe that Allāh ta‘ālā alone is worthy of worship, it becomes essential for us to realize that when we do good actions, our objective

¹ تهذيب الكمال عن معاذ بن جبل: ج ١٤، ص ٥٥٦، مشكوة المصابيح: حديث ٥٢٥٧، باب الرياء والسمعة.

² *Furū’ al-Īmān*, p. 16.

must be nothing but Allāh's pleasure; and not anyone or anything else. If we do this, we will be protected against subtle polytheism and acquire pure tauhīd. (Qamar az-Zamān)

Hadrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī's letter on the virtues of kalimah ṭayyibah and tauhīd

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Lā Ilāha Illallāh – there is nothing more beneficial than this to cool Allāh's anger. Since this kalimah ṭayyibah quells Allāh's anger which could have become the cause of casting a person into the Hell-fire, it will be more effective in quelling other angers which are of a lesser level than it. Why would this kalimah not quell Allāh's anger when a servant reads it repeatedly, rejects everything apart from Allāh, turns his attention from everything else, and makes Allāh ta'ālā the centre of his focus. A person's attention to various things was the cause of Allāh's anger. Once he turned his attention from all of them and came to a central point [Allāh], His anger also dissipated.

One can observe this reality in this ephemeral world. Take the example of a master who is displeased with his slave and vents his anger on him. The slave resorts to his sound nature, turns his attention from everything else and focuses on his master alone. The master will inevitably develop affection towards his slave and his anger will be quelled. A fakir perceives the kalimah ṭayyibah to be the key to the ninety-nine treasures of Allāh's mercy, and believes it to be a treasure for the Hereafter.

There is no better intercessor than the kalimah ṭayyibah to remove the pitch darkness of unbelief

and the filth of polytheism. When a person affirms this kalimah and acquires even an iota of īmān, then even if (due to his misfortune) gets caught up in certain customs of unbelief and evils of polytheism, there is hope that he will eventually come out of the punishment through the intercession of kalimah ṭayyibah, and be saved from remaining in the Hell-fire forever.

Blessings of kalimah ṭayyibah

Here are some of the blessings of this kalimah. Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam said that the person who reads *Lā Ilāha Illallāh* with sincerity shall enter Paradise. Those who are short-sighted express astonishment at this and ask: “How can a person gain admission into Paradise merely by saying *Lā Ilāha Illallāh!*?” The fact of the matter is that they do not know the reality of this kalimah. I feel that even if the entire world were to say the kalimah ṭayyibah once, there is room for them to be admitted into Paradise. I am also of the view that if the blessings of this sanctified kalimah were to be distributed to the entire world, it will suffice everyone forever, and it will satiate all of them. When the second part of this kalimah is attached to it – i.e. *Muḥammad Rasūlullāh* – then we cannot even imagine its immense blessings.

The combination of both – i.e. *Lā Ilāha Illallāh Muḥammadur Rasūlullāh* – integrates the excellences of the special friendship of Allāh ta‘ālā and prophethood, and these two are the harbingers of all success. O Allāh! Do not deprive us of the blessings of kalimah ṭayyibah. Keep us steadfast on it. Cause us to die while we affirm it, and resurrect us with those who affirm it. Grant us admission into Paradise through this kalimah and through the honour and

sanctity of those who conveyed it – peace and salutations to them.

The greatness of this kalimah manifests itself according to the ranks of those who read it. The higher a person's rank, the more the greatness of this kalimah will be displayed.

يزيدك وجهه حسنا إذا ما زدته نظرا.

The more you look at his countenance, the more beautiful his face will appear to you.

While living in this world, I do not know if there is any wish which is greater than the ability to sit in solitude in one corner and to enjoy repeating the kalimah ṭayyibah. But what can I do, one cannot realize all one's wishes. We become negligent at times and we are forced to interact with the creation for the fulfilment of their rights.

ربنا أتمم لنا نورنا واغفر لنا، انك على كل شيء قدير. سبحان ربك رب العزة عما يصفون. وسلام على المرسلين. والحمد لله رب العالمين.¹

Second principle: Du'ā'

Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

ليس شيء أكرم على الله تعالى من الدعاء.²

There is nothing nobler in Allāh's sight than du'ā'.

¹ *Tajalliyāt Rabbānī, Tarjumah wa Talkhīs Ḥadrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī*, vol. 3, p. 30.

² أخرجه الترمذي في الجامع، رقم ٣٣٧٠، وابن ماجه في سننه، رقم ٣٨٢٩.

Du‘ā’ is one of the most superior forms of worship in Allāh’s sight. This is because it is a demonstration of one’s incapability, need, submission and surrender; an acknowledgement of Allāh’s might, power, independence and greatness; and a joining of the broken hearts of not only His beloveds and friends, but His enemies as well.¹

Du‘ā’ plays a major role in opening the doors of goodness. Shaykh al-Islam said in his advice to Abū al-Qāsim al-Maghribī:

الدعاء مفتاح كل خير.²

Du‘ā’ is the key to every good.

Thus, no matter what good of this world or the Hereafter you hope for, ask of it from Allāh ta‘ālā. Beg and beseech Him for its acquisition. Allāh ta‘ālā promised to accept the du‘ā’ of the one who calls to Him, beseeches Him and begs of Him:

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ.

Your Sustainer says: “Call to Me so that I may respond to your call.”³

قال أمير المؤمنين عمر بن الخطاب رضي الله عنه:
إني لا أحمل هم الإجابة ولكن هم الدعاء، فإذا
ألهمت الدعاء فإن الإجابة معه.

¹ مرقاة المفاتيح شرح مشكاة المصابيح، ج ٤، ص ١٥٢٧.

² مجموع الفتاوى، ج ١٠، ص ٦٦١.

³ Sūrah al-Mu‘min, 40: 60.

Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Umar ibn al-Khattāb radiyallāhu 'anhu said: I do not bear the worry of acceptance but the worry of du'ā'. Once I have been inspired to make du'ā', it will be accompanied by its acceptance.

Muṭarrif ibn ash-Shikhkhār said: "I thought of the thing which combines all good. I concluded that there are many acts of goodness such as fasting and ṣalāh. Also, it is solely in Allāh's hand and you cannot get what is in Allāh's hand unless you ask Him for it. Thus, du'ā' is the thing which combines all good."¹

As regards purification, there is an authentic Ḥadīth which states that Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said the following in his du'ā':

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّ نَفْسِيْ تَقْوٰهَا، وَرَزَكْهَا اَنْتَ خَيْرُ مَنْ رَزَكْهَا،
اَنْتَ وَلِيُّهَا وَمَوْلَاهَا.

O Allāh! Give piety to my soul and purify it –
You alone are the best to purify it, You
alone are its owner and master.

This du'ā' draws our attention to the fact that purification of the self is in the hands of Allāh ta'ālā – the knower of the unseen; and that its greatest key is du'ā' and beseeching Allāh ta'ālā.

This is why Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam used to make this du'ā' quite often:

يَا مُقَلِّبَ الْقُلُوْبِ ثَبِّتْ قَلْبِيْ عَلٰى دِيْنِكَ.

¹ أخرجه الإمام أحمد في الزهد، رقم ١٣٤٤.

O turner of hearts! Keep my heart firm on
Your Dīn.¹

When a person has presence of heart, his need is genuine, his hope is strong, he is not hasty in the acceptance of du‘ā’, and he makes it a point to make du‘ā’ at the most recommended times; then his du‘ā’ will not be rejected.

The greatest thing to help you in du‘ā’ is your realization that the purification of your self is in Allāh’s hand. He is the one who purifies whomever He wills. Everything is in His control and under His will:

بَلِ اللّٰهُ يُزَكِّي مَن يَّشَاءُ.

In fact, it is Allāh who purifies whomever He wills.²

وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ مَا زَكَا مِنْكُمْ مِّنْ
أَحَدٍ أَبَدًا وَلَكِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُزَكِّي مَن يَّشَاءُ ط وَاللّٰهُ سَمِيعٌ
عَلِيمٌ.

Were it not for Allāh’s favour upon you and His mercy, not a single one of you would have ever been purified. However, Allāh purifies whomever He wills. Allāh hears everything, knows [everything].³

¹ أخرجه مسلم، رقم ٢٧٢٢.

² Sūrah an-Nisā’, 4: 49.

³ Sūrah an-Nūr, 24: 21.

يقول ابن عباس رضي الله عنه في تفسير قوله تعالى ﴿ما زكى منكم﴾: ما اهتدى أحدٌ من الخلائق لشيء من الخير ينفع به نفسه، ولم يتق شيئاً من الشر يدفعه عن نفسه.¹

Hadrat Ibn 'Abbās radiyallāhu 'anhu says in his explanation of the words “not a single one of you would have ever been purified” – not a single person would have been guided to goodness with which he could have benefited his self, nor would he have been able to save himself from any evil which he could have repulsed from his self.

In other words, all this is solely through the grace of Allāh ta'ālā.

وقال البراء رضي الله عنه: كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يوم الأحزاب ينقل معنا التراب، ولقد وارى الترابُ بياضَ بطنه، وهو يقول:
والله لو لا الله ما اهتدينا – ولا تصدقنا ولا صلينا.²

Hadrat Barrā' radiyallāhu 'anhu said: Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam was moving the soil with us on the day of Ahzāb. The soil covered the whiteness of his stomach, he was saying: “By Allāh! Had

¹أخرج ابن جرير الطبري في تفسيره، ج ١٧، ص ٢٢٢.

²أخرجه البخاري في صحيحه، رقم ٤١٠٤، ومسلم في صحيحه، رقم ١٨٠٣، واللفظ له.

Allāh not guided us we would neither have given in charity nor performed ṣalāh.”

We learn from this that guidance, īmān and all other good are solely in Allāh’s control. Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam had been embedding this in the hearts of the Ṣahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum, and emphasising on them to continue in this way. He used to commence his sermons with the words:

من يَهْدِهِ اللهُ فلا مُضِلَّ لَهُ، ومن يُضِلِّ فلا هادي لَهُ.

The one whom Allāh guides, none can lead astray. And the one whom Allāh causes to go astray, none can guide.

This principle is the greatest door to the purification of the self. The person who realizes that the righteousness, purification and steadfastness of his self are in Allāh’s control; will seek refuge in Him. He will fall at His threshold and beseech Him alone. He will focus all his hopes and wants on Him so that he may realize the purification of his self from Him, and its salvation and success in this world and the Hereafter.

Third principle: Reading the Qur’ān

Allāh ta‘ālā says:

لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ

¹أخرجها مسلم في صحيحه، رقم ٨٦٨.

Allāh bestowed a favour on the believers when He sent in their midst a Messenger from among themselves - he recites to them His verses and purifies them [from polytheism and other evils], and teaches them the Book and things of benefit.

The Qur'ān is one of the greatest things for the purification of the self. After all, it is a book of purification, its source, its fountain and its basis. The person who wants purification for his self should seek it in the Qur'ān.

Hadrat Ibn 'Abbās radiyallāhu 'anhu said:

ضمن الله لمن اتبع القرآن أن لا يضلّ في الدنيا، ولا
يشقى في الآخرة. ثم تلا: فَمَنِ اتَّبَعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا يَضِلُّ
وَلَا يَشْقَى^١.

Allāh ta'ālā guarantees the person who follows the Qur'ān that he will not go astray in this world nor suffer misery in the Hereafter. He then read the words: "then he who follows My guidance will neither go astray nor fall into misery."²

Allāh ta'ālā says:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَتْكُمْ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَشِفَاءٌ
لِّمَا فِي الصُّدُورِ لَا وَهْدَىٰ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ.

¹ أخرجه ابن أبي شيبة في المصنف، رقم: ٣٥٩٢٦.

² Sūrah Tā Hā, 20: 123.

O people! An admonition has come to you from your Sustainer, a cure for the disease that is in the hearts, a guidance and a mercy for the Muslims.¹

قال ابن القيم: القرآن هو الشفاء التام من جميع الأدواء والقلبية والبدنية، وأدواء الدنيا والآخرة.²

Ibn al-Qayyim said: The Qur'ān is a complete cure from all spiritual and physical maladies of this world and of the Hereafter.

Allāh ta'ālā says:

الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَتْلُونَهُ حَقَّ تِلَاوَتِهِ ط أُولَٰئِكَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ.

Those people to whom We have given the Book, they recite it as it ought to be recited. It is they who have conviction in it.³

Reciting the Qur'ān as it ought to be recited entails: reading it, reciting it from memory, understanding it, pondering over it and practising on it. This is how it was explained by the Sahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum and the Tābi'ūn.

¹ Sūrah Yūnus, 10: 57.

² زاد المعاد، ج ٤، ص ١١٩.

³ Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: 121.

قال ابن مسعود رضي الله عنه: كان الرجل منا إذا
تعلم عشر آيات، لم يجاوزهن حتى يعرف معانيهن
والعمل بهن.¹

Hadrat Ibn Mas'ūd radiyallāhu 'anhu said:
When one of us [Sahābah] learnt ten
verses, he would not learn any more until
he knows the meaning of these ten and
practises on them.

Reading the Qur'ān without understanding its
meaning or practising on its teachings is not
considered to be reading in the true sense of the
word. This is why Fuḍayl ibn 'Iyād rahimahullāh
said:

إنما نزل القرآن ليُعملَ به، فاتَّخَذَ الناسُ قراءته
عملًا.²

The Qur'ān was sent down so that it may be
practised upon, but people made its reading
an action in itself.

When Allāh ta'ālā honours his servant with the
ability to read the Qur'ān, ponder over it, and impose
on his self to practise on it; he will acquire a full
share of purification.

¹ أخرجه الإمام أحمد في المسند، رقم: ٢٣٤٨٢.

² أخرجه الآجري في أخلاق حملة القرآن، ص ٤١.

Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Wasīyyullāh Sāhib rahimahullāh writes in *Tilāwat-e-Qur'ān*:

The 'ulamā' say that even if the Qur'ān is read without understanding, it will earn its reader rewards. Hadrat Mullā 'Alī Qārī rahimahullāh said:

وقال ابن حجر: أما الثواب على قراءته فهو حاصل
لمن فهم ولمن لم يفهم بالكلية للتعبد بلفظه بخلاف
غيره من الأذكار، فإنه لا يثاب عليه إلا من فهم ولو
بوجه ما. وفيه نظر لأن نفي الثواب يحتاج إلى نقل
حديث أو كتاب. والقياس أن لا فرق بينهما في أصل
الثواب وإن كان يتفاوت بين القرآن وغيره، وبين من
فهم ومن لا يفهم.¹

'Allāmah Ibn Hajar rahimahullāh said: Every person is rewarded for reading the Qur'ān irrespective of whether he understands it or does not understand at all. This is because he is, after all, uttering the words of the Qur'ān with his tongue, and this is an act of worship in itself. But this does not apply to other forms of dhikr; only that person will be rewarded for them who understands what he is reading. However, this point is questionable because rejecting reward (for general forms of dhikr which are read without understanding) requires proof from the Qur'ān or Hadīth. If not, qiyās (logic)

¹مرقاة المفاتيح، ج ٥، ص ٨٣.

demands that there be no difference between them in the reward itself, even if there are differences in reward between reading the Qur'ān and reading something else, and reading with understanding and without understanding.

‘Allāmah Ibn Hajar raḥimahullāh was a distinguished and eminent scholar whose opinions are furnished by scholars as evidences, and quoted in their writings. Mullā ‘Alī Qārī raḥimahullāh quoted his statement and did not refute it as he normally does. He maintained this view. This shows that Mullā ‘Alī Qārī raḥimahullāh holds the same view, i.e. a person receives reward for the actual reading of the Qur’ān, even if it is without understanding. Yes, it is another matter that he will receive more rewards if he reads it with understanding. No matter what, the actual reward for reading cannot be denied.¹

Fourth principle: The perfect example of Rasūlullāh ﷺ

Allāh ta‘ālā says:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ
يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا.

There is a good example for you in the Messenger of Allāh for him who hopes [to meet] Allāh and [fears] the Last Day, and remembers Allāh a lot.²

Ibn Kathīr raḥimahullāh said:

¹ *Tilāwat-e-Qur’ān*, p. 112.

² Sūrah al-Ahzāb, 33: 21.

هذه الآية الكريمة أصل كبير في التأسّي برسول الله
صلى الله عليه وسلم في أقواله وأفعاله وأحواله.¹

This verse is a major principle for emulating
the words, actions and life conditions of
Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam.

قال الحسن رحمه الله: قال قوم على عهد النبي صلى
الله عليه وسلم إنا نحب ربنا، فأنزل الله تعالى هذه
الآية: قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ.

Hasan Baṣrī raḥimahullāh said: Some
people in the time of Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu
'alayhi wa sallam said: "We love our
Sustainer." Allāh ta'ālā revealed this verse:
Say: If you love Allāh than follow me; Allāh
will love you.

Following Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam
and emulating him is a proof of the genuineness of
one's love for Allāh ta'ālā. This is because following
Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam, walking in
his footsteps, and moving on his fixed course are the
essences of purification. It is not possible to acquire
it without adopting whatever Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu
'alayhi wa sallam brought.

In every era, the chiefs of iniquity have been
innovating incorrect ways which claimed to purify the
selves, culture the hearts, strengthen the bond with
Allāh ta'ālā, and making various other claims. They
advise severing one's bonds with congregations and

¹تفسير ابن كثير، ج ١١، ص ١٣٣.

groups, and living in solitude in dark places. They prescribe the repetition of certain forms of dhikr, specific words which claim to purify, culture and nurture the self; and various other baseless claims.

يقول العلامة ابن القيم رحمه الله: تزكية النفوس
أصعب من علاج الأبدان وأشدّ، فمن زكّى نفسه
بالرياضة والمجاهدة والخلوة التي لم يجئ بها الرسل
هو كالمريض الذي يعالج نفسه برأيه، وأين يقع رأيه
من معرفة الطبيب؟! فالرسل أطباء القلوب، فلا
سبيل إلى تزكيتها وصلاحتها إلا من طريقهم، وعلى
أيديهم، وبمحض الانقياد التسليم لهم، والله
المستعان.¹

'Allāmah Ibn al-Qayyim rahimahullāh said:
The purification of the self is more difficult
and more arduous than physical treatment
of the body. The person who tries to purify
himself through spiritual exercises, striving
and solitude which was not done by the
Messengers is like a person who tries to
treat himself through his own opinions. How
can his opinion ever compare with the
knowledge of a doctor!? The Messengers
are physicians of the hearts. They cannot
be purified and rectified without following
the path of the Messengers and placing
one's hand in theirs, and by submitting

¹ مدارج السالكين، ج ٢، ص ٣٠٠.

one's self to them alone. We seek Allāh's assistance.

وأيضا فجميع الأعمال التي ليس عليها أمر النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم مردود على صاحبها كما قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: من عمل عملا ليس عليه أمرنا فهو رد.¹ أي، مردود على صاحبه.

Furthermore, all actions which are not in line with the way of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam are flung back onto the person who does them. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said: "Anyone who does something which is not of our way is rejected." It will be flung back at him.

قال الإمام سفيان بن عيينة رحمه الله: إن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم هو الميزان الأكبر، فعليه تعرض الأشياء، على خلقه، وسيرته وهديه، فما وافقها فهو الحق، وما خالفها فهو الباطل.²

Imām Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah rahimahullāh said: Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam is the greatest scale [criterion]. Everything is presented to that criterion. That is, everything is compared to his character, life

¹ أخرجه مسلم في صحيحه، رقم: ١٧١٨.

² أخرجه الخطيب في مقدمة كتابه "الجامع لأخلاق الراوي وآداب السامع"، ج ١، ص ٧٩.

and ways. Whatever corresponds with it is the truth. Whatever opposes it is falsehood.

Anyone wanting to purify his self will have to impose compliance, emulation and following Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam on his self. He will have to be guarded against innovations, fabrications and innovated ways which their proponents claim to purify the selves.

Fifth principle: Divesting and embellishing

The reality of self-purification is to first divest the carnal self of all evil traits, acts of disobedience and sins. After that, to embellish it by doing acts of obedience and everything else which would draw a person closer to Allāh ta‘ālā. He says in this regard:

خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ بِهَا وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ.

Take zakāh from their wealth so that you may purify and cleanse them thereby, and pray for them.¹

The words “purify [them]” make reference to divesting them of evils by purifying them from sins. The words “cleanse them” make reference to embellishing them with virtues and good actions. The mention of purification before cleansing shows that the act of divesting takes place before embellishing.

The person who wants to purify his self will first have to uproot sins and evils which corrupt the heart and

¹ Sūrah at-Taubah, 9: 103.

prevent the light of guidance and īmān from entering it. Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: إِنَّ الْعَبْدَ إِذَا أَخْطَأَ خَطِيئَةً
نُكِّتَتْ فِي قَلْبِهِ نُكْتَةٌ سَوْدَاءٌ، فَإِذَا هُوَ نَزَعَ وَاسْتَغْفَرَ
وَتَابَ سُقِلَ قَلْبُهُ، وَإِنْ عَادَ زِيدَ فِيهَا حَتَّى تَعْلُوَ قَلْبُهُ،
وَهُوَ الرَّانُ الَّذِي ذَكَرَ اللَّهُ: كَلَّا بَلْ رَانَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ مَا
كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ. (المطففين: ١٤).¹

Hadrat Abū Hurayrah radiyallāhu 'anhu narrates that Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said: When a believer commits a sin, a black spot appears on his heart. If he repents and seeks forgiveness, his heart is cleansed. But if he commits another sin, another black spot appears. This is the rust which Allāh ta'ālā makes reference to in this verse:

كَلَّا بَلْ رَانَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ.

No such thing. Rather, that which they were earning has covered their hearts with rust.²

The person must then strive excessively against his self by carrying out many good actions through which his self can be purified. Allāh ta'ālā says:

¹ مسند أحمد: ج ١٣، ح ٧٩٥، والترمذي: ج ٥، ح ٣٣٤، وابن ماجه: ج ٢، ح ٤٢٤٤؛ (فؤاد).

² Sūrah al-Muṭaffifin, 83: 14.

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا، وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ
الْمُحْسِنِينَ.

Those who strive for Our sake, We will certainly show them Our paths. Surely Allāh is with the righteous.¹

قال ابن تيمية رحمه الله: فالتزكية وإن كان أصلها
النماء والبركة وزيادة الخير، فإنما تحصل بإزالة الشر،
فلهذا صار التزكي يجمع هذا وهذا.²

Ibn Taymīyyah rahimahullāh said: Although tazkiyah actually refers to an increase, blessing and an abundance of good; it is acquired by the removal of evil. This is why purification combines both – divesting and embellishing.

Sixth principle: Locking entrances which remove man from purification and cast him into evil

A person is in a dire need to shut the windows which sully and trample his self. The Sunnah presents a parable to us which explains how dangerous it is for a person get occupied in anything which destroys his Dīn. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam said:

ضرب الله مثلا صراطا مستقيما، وعلى جنبتي
الصراط سوران فيهما أبواب مفتحة، وعلى الأبواب

¹ Sūrah al-‘Ankabūt, 29: 69.

² مجموع الفتاوى، ج ١٠، ص ٩٧.

ستور مرخاة، وعلى باب الصراط داع يقول: يا أيها
الناس، ادخلوا الصراط جميعا ولا تعوجوا، وداع
يدعو من فوق الصراط، فإذا أراد الإنسان أن يفتح
شيئا من تلك الأبواب، قال: ويحك، لا تفتحه؛ فإنك
إن تفتحه تلجه . فالصراط الإسلام، والسوران
حدود الله، والأبواب المفتحة محارم الله، وذلك
الداعي على رأس الصراط كتاب الله، والداعي من
فوق الصراط واعظ الله في قلب كل مسلم.¹

Allāh sets forth the example of a straight path which is walled on both sides. The walls have doors which are open, and over which curtains have been suspended. There is a person at the entrance of the path who is announcing: "O people! All of you enter this path, and do not wander about." Another person is announcing from above the path. When a person tries to open any of the doors, the announcer says: "Woe! Do not open it because if you do, you will enter through it." The path refers to Islam, the two walls refer to the limits set by Allāh ta'ālā, the open doors refer to the prohibitions of Allāh, the caller at the entrance of the path refers to the Qur'ān, and the one above the path refers to the

¹أخرجه الإمام أحمد في المسند، رقم: ١٧٩٠٩.

admonisher who is present in the heart of every Muslim.

قال الحافظ ابن رجب الحنبلي: ومن كان في الدنيا قد خرج عن الاستقامة على الصراط، ففتح أبواب المحارم التي في ستور الصراط يمنة ويسرة، ودخل إليها - سواء كانت المحارم من الشهوات أو من الشبهات - أخذته الكلايب التي على ذلك الصراط يمنة ويسرة، بحسب ما فتح في الدنيا من أبواب المحارم ودخل إليها^١.

Ibn Rajab Hambalī rahimahullāh said: The person who is in this world has left steadfastness on the path, opened the doors of prohibition which are in the walls on either side of the path, and entered them either by committing unlawful desires or doubtful actions. The spiky hooks which are on either side of the path have hooked him in relation to how many doors of prohibitions he opened and entered in the world.

Allāh ta'ālā says in this regard:

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ
ط ذَلِكْ أَرَزَكِي لَهُمْ ط إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَيْرٌ مِمَّا يَصْنَعُونَ.

Say to the believers to lower their gazes and to safeguard their private parts. In this

¹مجموع رسائل ابن رجب، ج١، ص ٢٠٦.

there is much purity for them. Surely Allāh knows whatever they do.¹

قال أبو حيان الأندلسي: قُدِّمَ غَضُّ البصر على حفظ
الْفَرْجِ لأن النظر بريد الزنا، ورائد الفجور، والبلوى
فيه أشدّ وأكثر.²

Abū Hayyān al-Andalūsī rahimahullāh said:
Lowering of the gaze is mentioned before
safeguarding of the private part because
the gaze is the precursor to adultery, the
one which steers a person towards
immorality; and its tribulation is severer and
excessive.

قال الشيخ السعدي: فإن من حفظ فرجه وبصره،
طهر الخبث الذي يتدنس به أهل الفواحش، وزكت
أعماله، بسبب ترك المحرم، الذي تطمع إليه النفس
وتدعو إليه، فمن ترك شيئاً لله، عوضه الله خيراً
منه.³

Shaykh as-Sa'dī rahimahullāh said: The
person who safeguards his private part and
gaze, the filth with which immoral people
are sullied will be purified and his actions
will be cleansed by virtue of abstaining from

¹ Sūrah an-Nūr, 24: 30.

² البحر المحيط، ج ٨، ص ٣٣.

³ تيسير الكريم الرحمن، ص ٦٦٠.

the unlawful which the carnal self hankers after and invites him to. Whoever desists from something for Allāh's sake, He recompenses him with something better.

من حسن اسلام المرء تركه ما لا يعنيه.

This is why “the beauty of a person’s Islam lies in his discarding whatever does not concern him,” applies to futile speech, futile casting of the gaze, and so on.

قال ابن القيم: وأكثر المعاصي إنما تولدها من فضول الكلام والنظر، وهما أوسع مداخل الشيطان فإن جارحتيهما لا يملان ولا يسأمان.¹

Ibn al-Qayyim rahimahullāh said: Futile speech and futile casting of the gaze are the propellants of most evil actions. These two are the largest entrances for Shayṭān because they neither get tired nor fed-up.

A person should therefore remain sharp and intelligent. He must ask Allāh ta‘ālā for patience and salvation. He must sever every path which would contribute to the destruction and depravation of his self. The Dīn of a person is his capital. If it is lost, he will suffer loss in this world and in the Hereafter. This is more so in our times where temptations are falling on people like raindrops. The doors of doubts and desires have opened wide through these modern gadgets, dubious internet sites, and deviated programs which have driven many people towards

¹ بدائع الفوائد: ج ٢، ص ٨٢٠.

eternal destruction and diverted them away from guidance. We beg Allāh ta'ālā for soundness. Āmīn.

Seventh principle: Remembrance of death

Allāh ta'ālā says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ
لِغَدٍ.

O believers! Continue fearing Allāh and every self should look to what it is going to send for tomorrow.¹

Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

أَكثَرُوا ذَكَرَ هَادِمِ اللذات. يعني الموت.

Engage in the excessive remembrance of the destroyer of pleasures. That is, death.

Death is the turning point between this world and the next, the delineating mark between the time for action and being recompensed for it. It is the separating point between sending forth provisions and receiving the rewards for them. After death, there is no room for repentance and seeking forgiveness for sins. Nor is there any way to increase good actions. Allāh ta'ālā says:

وَلَيْسَتْ التَّوْبَةُ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ حَ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا
حَضَرَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ إِنِّي تُبْتُ الْإِن.

¹ Sūrah al-Ḥashr, 59: 18.

² أخرجه ابن ماجه، رقم: ٤٢٥٨.

Repentance is not for those who go on committing evil acts till death presents itself before one of them then he says: "I repent now".¹

Death will inevitably catch up with every person. There is no doubt that it will meet them. Allāh ta'ālā says:

قُلْ إِنَّ الْمَوْتَ الَّذِي تَفِرُّونَ مِنْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مُلْقِيكُمْ.

Say: That very death from which you flee shall certainly meet you.²

Allāh ta'ālā says:

أَيْنَ مَا تَكُونُوا يُدْرِكُكُمُ الْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُرُوجٍ مُشَيَّدَةٍ.

Wherever you may be, death will overtake you even though you may be in reinforced forts.³

Despite this, death comes upon man all of a sudden:

فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَجْلُهُمْ لَا يَسْتَأْخِرُونَ سَاعَةً وَلَا يَسْتَقْدِمُونَ.

When their promised term approaches, they will neither be able to pull back a single moment nor be able to advance.¹

¹ Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 18.

² Sūrah al-Jumu'ah, 62: 8.

³ Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 78.

Many a person left his house driving his vehicle and returns home while he is carried on the shoulders of people. Many a person said to his wife: "Prepare my food," but he passed away without having eaten it. Many a person wore his clothes and buttoned them, but the one bathing him ended up unbuttoning his clothes.

There is immense benefit in man thinking of death. Through it, negligent hearts are awakened, dead hearts are revived, a person turns with goodness to Allāh ta'ālā, and his heedlessness towards Allāh's disobedience is removed.

Sa'īd ibn Jubayr raḥimahullāh said:

لو فارقَ ذكرُ الموتِ قلبي خَشِيتُ أن يفسدَ عليَّ قلبي.^٢

If the remembrance of death separates from my heart, I fear that my heart will cause me to become corrupt.

A person will remain safe as long as he visualizes the time when he will be standing in front of Allāh ta'ālā on the day of Resurrection, and his eventual destination after death.

Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah raḥimahullāh said:

قال سفيان بن عيينة رحمه الله: يقول إبراهيم التيمي: مثلت نفسي في الجنة، أكل ثمارها، وأشرب

¹ Sūrah al-A'rāf, 7: 34.

² أخرجه الإمام أحمد في الزهد، رقم: ٢٢١٠.

من أنهارها، وأعانق أبكارها، ثم مثلت نفسي في النار، أكل من زقومها، وأشرب من صديدها، وأعالج سلاسلها وأغلالها، فقلت لنفسي: (أي نفسي! أي شيء تريد؟)، قالت: (أريد أن أرد إلى الدنيا، فأعمل صالحاً) قال: قلت: (فأنت في الأمنية فاعلمي).¹

Hadrat Ibrāhīm at-Taymī rahimahullāh said: I imagined my self in Paradise: eating its fruit, drinking from its rivers and embracing its damsels. I then imagined my self in the Hell-fire: eating its zaqqūm,² drinking its pus and suffering in its chains and shackles. I then addressed my self: “O self! What do you want?” It replied: “I want to go back to the world to do good deeds.” I said: “You are merely hoping; you will have to do the actions now.”

You should also say to it: O self! If I were to die now, who is going to perform salāh on my behalf? Who will fast for me? Who will repent on my behalf for my sins and shortcomings?

Eighth principle: Selecting the right company

Allāh ta‘ālā says:

¹ أخرجه ابن أبي الدنيا في محاسبة النفس، ص ٢٦.

² A bitter-tasting fruit of Hell.

وَاصِرٍ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْعَدْوَةِ
وَالْعِشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنِكَ عَنْهُمْ ^ج تُرِيدُ
زِينَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ^ح وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَن
ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا.

Keep yourself with those who invoke their Sustainer morning and evening, seeking His countenance. Let not your eyes overlook them, seeking the adornment of this worldly life. Pay no heed to the one whose heart We have rendered heedless of Our remembrance, who follows his own lusts and whose case exceeds all bounds.¹

قال السعدي في تفسير الآية: فيها الأمر بصحبة
الأخيار، ومجاهدة النفس على صحبتهم ومخالطتهم
وإن كانوا فقراء، فإن في صحبتهم من الفوائد ما لا
يحصى.²

As-Sa'dī rahimahullāh said: This verse instructs us to be in the company of good people, and to impose on the self to remain in their company and intermingle with them even if they are poor. This is because there are countless benefits in being in their company.

Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

¹ Sūrah al-Kahf, 18: 28.

² تفسير الكريم الرحمن، ص ٥٤٧.

الرجل على دين خليله فلينظر أحدكم من يخال.

A person follows the ways of his friend. You should therefore be vigilant on whom you befriend.

Abū Sulaymān al-Khattābī rahimahullāh said:

قال أبو سليمان الخطابي: قوله (المرء على دين خليله) معناه لا تخال إلا من رضيت دينه وأمانته، فإنك إذا خالته قادك إلى دينه ومذهبه، ولا تغرر بدينك ولا تخاطر بنفسك فتخال من ليس مرضيا في دينه ومذهبه.¹

This means that you should befriend the person whose religiosity and trustworthiness you are satisfied with. When you befriend him, he will inevitably draw you towards his religion and creed. Do not be deluded into having confidence about your own religiosity nor put your self into danger by befriending someone whose religion and creed is disliked.

ولهذا يقول ابن مسعود رضي الله عنه اعتبروا الناس بأخدانهم فإن المرء لا يخادن إلا من يعجبه.²

¹ أخرجه أبو داؤد في السنن، رقم: ٤٧٣٣.

² العزلة، ص ٥٦.

³ أخرجه ابن بطة في الإبانة الكبرى، رقم: ٣٧٦.

This is why Ibn Mas'ūd radiyallāhu 'anhu said: You may gauge people by the friends they keep because a person only befriends someone whom he likes.

عَنْ أَبِي مُوسَى قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: مَثَلُ الْجَلِيسِ الصَّالِحِ وَالسُّوءِ كَحَامِلِ الْمِسْكِ وَنَافِخِ الْكَبِيرِ، فَحَامِلُ الْمِسْكِ إِمَّا أَنْ يُخَذِّيكَ وَإِمَّا أَنْ تَبْتَاعَ مِنْهُ، وَإِمَّا أَنْ تَجِدَ مِنْهُ رِيحًا طَيِّبَةً، وَنَافِخُ الْكَبِيرِ إِمَّا أَنْ يُحْرِقَ ثِيَابَكَ وَإِمَّا أَنْ تَجِدَ مِنْهُ رِيحًا خَبِيثَةً.¹

Hadrat Abū Mūsā radiyallāhu 'anhu narrates that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said: "The similitude of a good companion and an evil companion is like that of a perfumer and an iron-monger. The perfumer will either give you some perfume, you may purchase it from him, or you will at least inhale a good fragrance from him. As for the one who blows the bellows, he will either burn your clothes or you will inhale a foul smell from him."

Qāḍī 'Iyād rahimahullāh said in his explanation of this Ḥadīth:

فيه تجنب خلطاء السوء ومجالسة الأشرار وأهل البدع والمغتربين للناس، لأن جميع هؤلاء ينفذ أثرهم

¹ صحيح البخاري: ٥٥٣٤. صحيح مسلم: ٢٦٢٨.

إلى جلسهم والحض على محالسة أهل الخير وتلقي العلم والأدب وحسن الهدى والأخلاق الحميدة.^١

This Hadīth teaches us to abstain from intermingling with evil people, sitting in the company of mischief mongers, those who introduce innovations in Islam, and people who backbite. This is because the influence of all these will penetrate the one who sits in their company. The Hadīth encourages us to sit in the company of good people from whom we could acquire knowledge, etiquette, good manners and praiseworthy characteristics.

It is therefore a person's duty to seek out friends who will help him in doing good. They are one of the greatest means for the purification and rectification of the carnal self. He must be wary of intermingling with evil people and corrupt company because they are more dangerous to him than scabies.

Ninth principle: Abstaining from egotism

فَلَا تُزَكُّوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ اتَّقَى.

Do not boast about your purity. He knows fully well the one who guarded himself.²

Allāh ta'ālā prohibits praising one's self in a manner which would exhibit its purity and righteousness. This is because the place of piety is the heart. Allāh

¹ إكمال المعلم بفوائد مسلم، ج ٨، ص ١٠٨.

² Sūrah an-Najm, 53: 32.

ta'ālā knows best who has acquired piety. Praising one's self causes egotism to enter the heart. It is also a cause of ostentation which causes the downfall of good actions.

No matter how much a person endeavours to do good deeds and abstain from prohibitions, he will always fall short; he will wrong himself. Hadrat Abū Bakr radiyallāhu 'anhū was the siddīq of this nation and the best person after the Prophets 'alayhimus salām. Despite this, when he asked Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam to teach him a du'ā' which he could make to Allāh ta'ālā in his salāh, Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam taught him to say:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِيْ ظُلْمًا كَثِيْرًا، وَلَا يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوْبَ
 اِلَّا اَنْتَ، فَاغْفِرْ لِيْ مَغْفِرَةً مِّنْ عِنْدِكَ، وَارْحَمْنِيْ اِنَّكَ
 اَنْتَ الْعَفُوْرُ الرَّحِيْمُ.¹

O Allāh! I have wronged my self excessively. None but You forgives sins. Forgive me, then, a forgiveness from Yourself. Have mercy on me for You alone are all-forgiving, all-merciful.

Hadrat 'Ā'ishah radiyallāhu 'anhā asked Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam about the following verse:

وَالَّذِيْنَ يُؤْتُوْنَ مَا اَتَوْا وَقُلُوْبُهُمْ وَجَلَّةٌ اَنْهُمْ اِلَى رَبِّهِمْ
 رٰجِعُوْنَ.

¹ أخرجه البخاري، رقم: ٨٣٤، ومسلم، رقم: ٢٧٠٥.

Those who give whatever they [have to] give with their hearts trembling because they have to return to their Sustainer.¹

She asked: “Are they the ones who drink wine and steal?” He replied: “No, O daughter of Siddiq! Rather, they observe the fast, perform ṣalāh, give in charity; and they fear that these good actions will not be accepted.”²

‘Abdullāh ibn Mulaykah rahimahullāh said:

أدركت أكثر من ثلاثين صحابيا كلهم يخاف النفاق
على نفسه.³

I met more than thirty Sahābah – each one feared hypocrisy on himself.

قال الحسن البصري: المؤمن جمع إحسانا وشفقة
والمنافق جمع إساءة وأمناء، ثم تلا الحسن: إِنَّ الَّذِينَ
هُمْ مِنْ خَشِيَةِ رَبِّهِمْ مُشْفِقُونَ.⁴

Hasan al-Baṣrī rahimahullāh said: “A believer is one who does good yet fears [Allāh]. A hypocrite does evil but is

¹ Sūrah an-Nūr, 23: 60.

² أخرجه الترمذي في الجامع، رقم: ٣١٧٥.

³ أخرجه البخاري في صحيحه تعليقا مجزوما به، قبل رقم: ٨٣٤.

⁴ أخرجه الطبري في تفسيره، ج ١٧، ص ٦٨.

fearless.” He then read this verse: “Those who tremble in fear of their Sustainer.”¹

Tenth principle: Recognition of the self

An essential point with regard to purification of the self is recognizing the reality of this self and knowing its attributes so that it becomes easy to supervise it, control it, and treat it from the maladies which afflict it.

Allāh ta‘ālā describes the self with three attributes which are well-known. Each of them revert to the conditions of the self. The three attributes are:

An-nafs al-muṭma’innah

This is the self which is content with īmān, Allāh’s remembrance, His worship, and turning to Him with goodness. Allāh ta‘ālā says in this regard:

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ^ط أَلَا بِذِكْرِ
اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ.

Those who believed and whose hearts find tranquillity in the remembrance of Allāh. Behold! It is only through the remembrance of Allāh that the hearts find tranquillity.²

Allāh ta‘ālā says:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ. ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً
مَّرْضِيَّةً. فَأَدْخِلِي فِي عِبَادِي وَادْخُلِي جَنَّتِي.

¹ Sūrah al-Mu’minūn, 23: 57.

² Sūrah ar-Ra’d, 13: 28.

O the self which has acquired tranquillity.
Return to your Lord – you pleased with Him,
He pleased with you. Join, then, My
servants and enter My Paradise.¹

An-nafs al-lawwāmah

This is the self which castigates a person when he commits a wrong, falls short in fulfilling an obligation or goes beyond the limit in obedience. Allāh ta‘ālā says:

وَلَا أُفْسِمُ بِالنَّفْسِ اللَّوَّامَةِ.

I take an oath by the soul which reproaches
at evil²

An-nafs al-ammārah bi as-sū’

This is the self which urges a person to commit prohibitions and sins, it steers him towards places of immorality, contemptible situations, and propels him to commit repugnant actions. Allāh ta‘ālā says in Sūrah Yūsuf:

وَمَا أُبْرِئُ نَفْسِي ۚ إِنَّ النَّفْسَ لَأَمَّارَةٌ بِالسُّوءِ إِلَّا مَا
رَحِمَ رَبِّي.

I do not absolve my self; surely the self
teaches evil except those upon whom my
Sustainer has mercy.³

¹ Sūrah al-Fajr, 89: 27-30.

² Sūrah al-Qiyāmah, 75: 2.

³ Sūrah Yūsuf, 12: 53.

These three attributes of the self are actually situations related to it. This is why these situations are in constant change according to whatever enters the self. It could well happen that all three attributes will be found in a person on a single day.

Scholars have presented parables which expound the condition of the self with relation to man so that it becomes easy for a Muslim to understand them, and so that he can then strive to rectify and purify the self.

I will confine myself to presenting two examples as explained by two eminent scholars.

First example

Imām al-Ājurī rahimahullāh presents the following example in *Adab an-Nufūs*:

Let me give you an example which – Allāh willing – you will understand quite well. The self is like a beautiful foal. A person looking at it is overtaken by its beauty and splendour. Those who are equestrians will say: “It will be of no use unless it is trained and disciplined properly. Only then can it be of real benefit. It can then be used for searches and gallops. Its rider will speak highly of its discipline and training. If it is not disciplined, its beauty and splendour will be of no benefit, and its rider will not take kindly to its ill-discipline.”

If the owner of the foal accepts the advice of these experts, he will realize that they are correct. He will hand it over to a trainer who will then train it. The trainer will have to be fully conversant with the methods of training horses and he must have patience in this discipline. If his knowledge is coupled with patience, and he trains the foal

accordingly while desiring its wellness, the owner of the foal will benefit from it.

But if the trainer has no knowledge of this field nor does he know how to discipline a horse, he will spoil the foal, tire himself, and the rider will not appreciate it.

If the trainer knows how to train horses, but is not prepared to bear hardships in the training of this foal, prefers a lackadaisical attitude, is not concerned about the wellbeing of the foal; then too he will spoil the foal. It will neither respond to any call nor have the ability to gallop. It will appear splendid but it will be devoid of any good.

If the owner of the foal is the one who trains it, he will regret his negligence on a day when regret will not avail him. He will see others calling their horses, and the latter responding to their call; and galloping when they are asked. On the other hand, his foal neither responds to his calls nor gallops when asked. All this is because of his negligence, and lack of patience despite having the knowledge.

He then castigates and reprimands his self, asking: “Why did you fall short? Why did you lag behind? My impatience has caused me to suffer everything which I hate.”

May Allāh have mercy on you. I ask you to learn and understand this example. You will succeed and triumph.

This is the first example in which Imām al-Ājurī rahimahullāh explains the condition of the human self. It is like a foal which needs patient training. The person has to have knowledge of what would rectify and purify the self. If he falls short in knowledge of it and in training it, he will regret severely.

Second example

The second example is presented by Imām Ibn al-Qayyim rahimahullāh. He says:

The self is a mighty mountain which is difficult to climb in the path towards Allāh ta'ālā. No traveller can traverse it except via that mountain. He will have to reach it. However, it is difficult for some people; easy for others. It is certainly easy for those on whom Allāh ta'ālā makes it easy.

The mountain is interspersed by valleys, passes, ravines, gorges, thorns, thorny trees, wild grass, creeping and spreading plants, robbers who attack travellers especially at night.

If they do not have the weapon of īmān and lamp of conviction which is ignited by the oil of humility, those obstacles will cling to them and those thieves will attack them and prevent them from moving forward.

Most of the travellers will turn on their heels when they fail to traverse the mountain and face its challenges.

Shayṭān is waiting at the top of that mountain. He warns people against climbing it and instils fear in them of its dangers. The gruelling climb, the terrorizing bully at the top, and the weak resolve of the traveller – all combine to make the traveller to give up and return. Only the one whom Allāh ta'ālā protects will remain protected.

The higher the traveller climbs that mountain, the more threatening the warnings of the bully [Shayṭān]. But once he traverses the path and reaches the peak, all the fears are turned into safety and peace. It becomes easy for him to proceed. The obstacles of the

path and its difficult ravines move away. He sees a wide and safe road which conveys him to rest-places and oases. The road has signs and directions to show him the way. It has lodges which have been prepared for the caravan of the merciful Allāh.

The following are the things which are between man and success: resoluteness, patience, fortitude and firmness of heart. And all grace is in Allāh's hand; He confers it on whomever He wills. Allāh possesses mighty grace.¹

This example also explains to us the condition of the self. It teaches us that a person has to supervise, manage and treat his self. If he does not impose on it as prescribed by the Shari'ah, and is not patient in this regard, it will slip away from him and he will lose it.

Conclusion

After explaining these principles which assist a person in rectifying and purifying his self, it becomes clear that the self needs constant supervision as long as it is in this world of respite and action – before man stands in front of Allāh ta'ālā on the day of Resurrection, and before he disregards the rectification of his self, which then becomes the cause of his destruction.

The pious predecessors used to remind people and advise them on the need to take stock of the self and to rectify it before the opportunity passes, and before death descends. In concluding this monograph, I think it will be appropriate to quote some of the pieces of advice related from our predecessors on this

¹ مدارج السالكين لابن القيم، ج ٢، ص ١٠.

subject. The four rightly guided caliphs are at the head of this list.

The first caliph, Hadrat Abū Bakr radiyallāhu ‘anhu, said:

إعلموا عباد الله أنكم تغدون وتروحون في أجل قد
غيب عنكم علمه، فإن استطعتم أن تنقضي
الآجال وأنتم في عمل الله فافعلوا، ولن تستطيعوا
ذلك إلا بالله، فسابقوا في مهل آجالكم، قبل أن
تنقضي آجالكم فيردكم إلى أسوأ أعمالكم، فإن
أقواما جعلوا آجالهم لغيرهم ونسوا أنفسهم،
فأنهاكم أن تكونوا أمثالهم، فالوحي الوحي، ثم النجا
النجاء، فإن وراءكم طالبا حثيثا، مره سريع - يعني
الموت.¹

O servants of Allāh! Know well that you are spending your mornings and evenings in a life whose knowledge is concealed from you. If you can spend your lives doing good for Allāh ta‘ālā, then do it. But you will never be able to do it without Allāh’s help. Hasten while you have been given the respite before your life comes to an end, and you are then returned to your evil actions. There are people who made their lives for others while forgetting their own selves. I prohibit you from being like them. Hurry up! Hurry

¹ أخرجه ابن شيبه في المصنف، رقم: ٣٥٥٧٢.

up! Seek deliverance! Seek deliverance!
There is a swift seeker behind you; he
moves extremely fast. He is death.

The second caliph, Hadrat 'Umar radiyallāhu 'anhu,
said:

حاسبوا أنفسكم قبل أن تحاسبوا، وزنوا أنفسكم
قبل أن توزنوا، وتزينوا للعرض الأكبر، يوم تعرضون
لا تحفى منكم خافية¹.

Take stock of yourself before you are taken
to account. Weigh the level of your actions
before you are weighed. Embellish yourself
for the greatest presentation – the day when
you will be presented [before Allāh] and
nothing will be concealed from you.

The third caliph, Hadrat 'Uthmān radiyallāhu 'anhu,
said:

ابن آدم، اعلم أن ملك الموت الذي وكل بك لم يزل
يخلفك ويتخطى إلى غيرك مذ أنت في الدنيا، وكأنه
قد تخطى غيرك إليك وقصدك، فخذ حذرک،
واستعد له، ولا تغفل، فإنه لا يغفل عنك.

¹أخرجه ابن شعبة في المصنف، رقم: ٣٥٦٠٠.

واعلم ابن آدم إن غفلت عن نفسك ولم تستعد لها،
لم يستعد لها غيرك، ولا بد من لقاء الله، فخذ
لنفسك ولا تكلها إلى غيرك.¹

O man! Know well that the angel of death who has been appointed to you is forever behind you. He goes to others as well for as long as you are in this world. As though he is going to others and has the intention of coming to you. You should therefore be on your guard. Be ready for him. Do not become heedless of him because he never becomes heedless of you.

O man! Know well that if you become negligent about your own self and do not prepare it, no one else is going to prepare it for you. The meeting with Allāh is inevitable. Protect your self then, and do not leave it to others.

The fourth caliph, Hadrat 'Alī radiyallāhu 'anhū, said:

يا أيها الناس، إن أخوف ما أخاف عليكم طول
الأمل، واتباع الهوى، فأما طول الأمل فييسي
الآخرة، وأما اتباع الهوى فيضل عن الحق.

ألا إن الدنيا قد ولت مدبرة، والآخرة مقبلة، ولكل
واحدة منهما بنون، فكونوا من أبناء الآخرة، ولا

¹ أخرجه أبو بكر الدينوري في المجالس والجواهر، رقم: ٢٠٧.

تكونوا من أبناء الدنيا، فإن اليوم عمل ولا حساب،
وغدا حساب ولا عمل.¹

O people! The thing which I fear most for you is high hopes and the following of desires. High hopes cause one to forget the Hereafter. Following of desires leads one away from the truth.

Listen! The world has turned around and is moving back. The Hereafter is approaching. Each one of them has devotees. Become the devotee of the Hereafter and do not be a devotee of this world. Today is the opportunity to do actions, while there is no accounting of those actions. Tomorrow will be the accounting while there will be no actions.

Hadrat Hasan al-Basri rahimahullāh said:

المؤمن قوام على نفسه، يحاسب نفسه، وإنما خف
الحساب يوم القيامة على قوم حاسبوا أنفسهم في
الدنيا، وإنما شق الحساب يوم القيامة على قوم أخذوا
هذا الأمر من غير محاسبة.²

A believer supervises his own self. He takes stock of his self. Those who take stock of their selves in this world will have an easy

¹ أخرجه البخاري في صحيحه تعليقا مجزوما به، قبل رقم: ٦٤١٧.

² أخرجه ابن المبارك في الزهد، رقم: ٣٠٧.

accounting on the day of Resurrection. Those who disregarded accounting of their selves in this world will suffer a difficult reckoning on the day of Resurrection.

Hadrat Maymūn ibn Mihrān rahimahullāh said:

لا يكون العبد تقيا حتى يكون لنفسه أشد
محاسبة من الشريك لشريكه¹.

A person cannot be truly righteous until he is more strict in taking account of his self than a partner is of his partner.

ولهذا قيل: النفس كالشريك الخَوَّان، إن لم تحاسبه
ذهب بمالك.

It is said that the self is like a treacherous partner; if you do take stock of him he will steal your wealth.

Imām ‘Abdullāh ibn Mubārak rahimahullāh who was from among the most senior Tābi‘īn ‘ulamā’ said:

إن الصالحين فيما مضى كانت أنفسهم تواتيهم على
الخير عفواً، وإن أنفسنا لا تكاد تواتينا إلا على كُرٍّ،
فينبغي لنا أن نكرهها².

The selves of the righteous of the past used to prompt them willingly towards good.

¹أخرجه الوكيع في الزهد، رقم: ٢٣٩.

²أخرجه ابن الجوزي في ذم الهوى، ص ٤٧.

Whereas our selves do not prompt us unless we are forced. We should therefore compel our selves.

Ibn Mubārak raḥimahullāh was talking about his time. What, then, can be said of the situation in our time!?

We beg Allāh ta‘ālā – through His beautiful names and lofty qualities – to set right for us our Dīn which guarantees our protection, to set right for us our worldly activities in which lies our livelihood, and to set right for us our Hereafter to which we have to return. We beg Him to make life a means for increasing in every good, and death a break from every evil.

O Allāh! Give piety to our selves, purify them for You are the best to purify them. You are their guardian and master.

Peace and salutation to our Prophet Muḥammad, his family and his companions.

EXPOUNDING THE PATHS TO ALLĀH

A translation of *Tabyīn at-Turuq ilā Allāh*

Shaykh ‘Alī ibn Husām ad-Dīn Muttaqī rahimahullāh
Hadrat Shaykh ‘Abd al-Haqq Muḥaddith Dehlawī rahimahullāh writes in his *Akḥbār al-Akhyār* (p. 524) with reference to *Tabyīn at-Turuq ilā Allāh* of Shaykh ‘Alī ibn Husām ad-Dīn Muttaqī:

His first written work is *Tabyīn at-Turuq* for which he used to receive inspiration from the unseen when writing it. His second book is *Hikam Kabīr* which is immensely beneficial and is the essence of Sufism. He used to say to his friends: “The greatness of this book is that no matter how difficult an issue on the subject of taṣawwuf is, you will find its solution in this book. When anyone asks you any question about taṣawwuf, refer to this book and you can give him an answer.”¹

Tabyīn at-Turuq ilā Allāh and *Uṣūl at-Tarīqah* are two books which were presented to me by Dr. Imdād ‘Alī Sāhib Balārī of Karnataka. May Allāh ta‘ālā reward him. These are important and beneficial works. After presenting the translation of ‘*Ashara Qawā‘id Fī Tazkiyah an-Nafs*, I felt I should present, at least the translation of these two books so that people can benefit from them.

Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī
Bayt al-Adhkār, Waṣṣiyyābād, Allāhābād

¹ *Akḥbār al-Akhyār* (Persian), p. 242. Urdu translation by Maulānā Muḥammad Fāḍil Sāhib, Dār al-‘Ulūm Karachi, p. 524.

18 Shawwāl 1441 A.H.

O Allāh! You are most pure. We have no knowledge except what You bestowed onto us. All praises are due to Allāh who guides to the straight path. Peace and salutations to Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam who calls to the straight path, to his family and companions who tread the path of Dīn.

'Alī ibn Husām ad-Dīn Muttaqī says:

O you who are treading the spiritual path and seeking closeness with Allāh ta'ālā. May Allāh ta'ālā guide you and me to all that pleases Him. Understand well that any person who is desirous of achieving a major objective and acquiring a lofty rank has to first know the means through which he can realize all this. The person traversing the path of the Tarīqat has to first understand the meaning of *taqarrub* and identify the path of the Tarīqat. This monograph contains these two themes and, in line with these themes, has been named *Tabyīn at-Turuq ilā Allāh* (*Expounding The Paths To Allāh*).

The least benefit to the person who studies this monograph is that he will be able to differentiate the correct and straight path from the incorrect and crooked one. Allāh ta'ālā will then inspire him to traverse the path of sulūk.

Know well that the path to reaching Allāh ta'ālā is through worship. The Qur'ān conveys this to us in the following way:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ رَئِيٌّ وَرَبُّكُمُ فَاعْبُدُوهُ ط هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ.

Surely Allāh is my Sustainer and your Sustainer, so worship Him. This is the straight path.¹

There are two types of worship, obligatory and optional. Obligatory is subdivided into those which have to be implemented and those which have to be desisted. The same can be said of optional worship. After the obligatory duties, optional acts of obedience are also means for acquiring proximity to Allāh ta'ālā. A Hadīth states:

Hadrat Abū Hurayrah radiyallāhu 'anhu narrates that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam said: Allāh ta'ālā says: I declare war on the one who bears animosity towards My friend. When My servant acquires closeness to Me through something which I made obligatory on him and through optional acts, I love him. When I love him, I become his ears and eyes through which he hears and sees.”

Even the obligatory duties cannot be the means for proximity to Allāh ta'ālā without the optional acts. Obligatory duties are solely for salvation. An obligatory duty is not on the same level as the obligatory duty which was the means for proximity through optional acts. You can understand it like this:

A person started performing a fard salāh. He read only that amount of the Qur'ān which is obligatory to read, and sufficed with the minimum ruku', sajdah and qa'dah akhīrah. In other words, he did not recite the prescribed amount of the Qur'ān – sufficed with one long verse or three short verses (as per the different views of the Imāms), his rukū', qaumah and

¹ Sūrah Āl 'Imrān, 3: 51.

sajdah were equal to the duration of only one tasbīḥ; and he sat in the qa'dah akhīrah only to the extent of the tashahhud. With regard to this ṣalāh, we can say that it is a cause for the salvation of the person from the Hell-fire, but it will not provide him with proximity to Allāh ta'ālā as would have been the case had he performed it while observing the Sunnah and recommended actions.

Now that it has become clear that an "incomplete" obligatory duty is a cause for only salvation alone, and that additional optional acts are essential for acquiring proximity to Allāh ta'ālā, it becomes necessary for us to know the types and levels of optional acts.

Know well that there are countless types of optional acts, but their fundamental categories are two:

- (1) *Imtithālī* – those which have to be implemented.
- (2) *Ijtinābī* – those which have to be desisted.

By *imtithālī*, we refer to those optional acts which are carried out physically/practically, e.g. supererogatory acts, desirable acts, etiquette, mannerisms, doing what is preferable. This is because the lexical meaning of *nawāfil* is taken here. *Ijtinābī* means desisting or abstaining from carrying out a certain action. For example, desisting from makrūh acts, being cautious in matters which could cast a person into danger, e.g. an unmarried person must abstain from eating to his fill, and abstain from applying perfume so that he does not fall into committing the unlawful.

Hadrat Najm al-Kubrā said: "The paths leading to Allāh ta'ālā are as many as the breaths of all the creations." A Hadīth states: Allāh ta'ālā has a tablet

of chrysolite under His Throne. The following is written in it:

I am Allāh, there is none worthy of worship except Me. I am the most merciful. I have created more than 310 characteristics. If a person comes with kalimah shahādah (Lā ilāha illallāh) together with some of those characteristics on the day of Resurrection, I will admit him into Paradise.

This Hadith makes reference to excessive *imtithālī* optional acts. For example, the dhikr of *Lā ilāha illallāh*, optional ṣalāhs, reading the Qur'ān, seeking forgiveness, glorifying Allāh ta'ālā, du'ā', sending salutations to Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam, optional fasting, optional tawāf, optional charity, optional hajj, enjoining good and forbidding evil, other recommended actions, acquiring Dīnī knowledge, all ways of helping fellow Muslims – the lowest of which is removing harmful objects from the path – and countless other actions which cannot be listed. If a person desists from all that is forbidden and devotes all or most of his time to even one of the optional acts, he will be able to achieve his goal. It is not required of him to act on all the *imtithālī* optional acts because this is impossible. Adopting one practice and continuing with it will suffice for him.

However, if a person wants to gain proximity to Allāh ta'ālā, he will have to abstain from all prohibitions. This is a prerequisite. This is because prohibitions are unlawful and it is possible to abstain from them. As for the required optional acts, they are general in nature. A person may practise on one type or just one act, and devote all or most of his time to it.

Alternatively, he could focus on a few and change from one to the other. He continues carrying it out even when his self is disinterested. In such a case, it will be as if he carried out various types of optional acts. We could therefore say that there are various paths to reaching Allāh ta'ālā or that all those who are treading these paths are one; there are no differences among them. This means that although the ways of the Sufis may differ as regards certain optional acts and forms of dhikr – as is the case with the Qādirīyyah, Sahrawardīyyah, Shādhilīyyah, Naqshbandīyyah and others – the reality of all is one, and that is, worship, piety, and following the Qur'ān and Sunnah.

Someone may ask: Why did the Sufis prefer the dhikr of *Lā Ilāha Illallāh* over all the other forms of dhikr and optional acts? The answer to this is that the immense rewards, presence of heart and other benefits which can be acquired through *Lā Ilāha Illallāh* cannot be imagined through other optional acts. Yes, optional ṣalāh is certainly superior to dhikr because it requires more striving by the self, and it also contains dhikr. Sometimes, helping a Muslim becomes superior to optional ṣalāh because it is a transitive action; and a transitive action is superior to an intransitive one.

Another point which you must remember is that if you want to gain proximity to Allāh ta'ālā, the *ijtinābī* angle is superior to the *imtithālī* one. This is especially so when the intention is correct. The person who focuses on the *ijtinābī*, while striving and spending his time in its supervision, suffices with fulfilling obligatory duties, and does not turn his attention to *imtithālī* optional acts; then he too will acquire proximity with Allāh ta'ālā. On the other

hand, if a person strives steadfastly on the *imtithālī* while committing makrūh actions as well, then he will experience a defect in realizing Allāh's proximity. As for the one who practises on the *imtithālī* and *ijtinābī*, he – Allāh willing – will acquire Allāh's proximity within a short time.

He is like a sick person who has two options before him: (1) *Ijtinābī*: Abstaining from harmful foods, whether sweet or sour. (2) *Imtithālī*: Consuming beneficial foods and drinks. It is more important for the patient to abstain from harmful foods than to consume beneficial medicines. In other words, if a patient makes a determined effort to abstain from all harmful things without consuming any beneficial medicines, there is a strong possibility of recovery and restoration of good health after some time. But if he took all the beneficial medicines steadfastly, but did not abstain from harmful foods, then in most cases, there is no hope of recovery. And if a person adheres strictly to both, there is a strong possibility of quick recovery by the will of Allāh ta'ālā.

Allāh ta'ālā says:

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ.

Surely the noblest of you in the sight of Allāh is the most righteous of you.¹

This verse also expresses the importance of the *ijtinābī* angle. The lexical meaning of *taqwā* contains the element of abstention. The Sharī'ah definition also includes the *imtithālī* angle.

¹ Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt, 49: 13.

When we said that abstention is more important than compliance, it is because repulsing harm is superior to acquiring benefit. In other words, abstaining from *makrūh* and disliked actions is more important than carrying out optional actions. For example, a person's clothes have become quite dirty and grimy, and it is disliked for him to perform *ṣalāh* with those clothes. It will be better for him to spend his time cleaning his clothes than occupying himself in optional actions. (Explanation of the paths leading to Allāh ta'ālā is now concluded. If a person remains firm on these paths, he will reach the stations of *waṣl* and *qurb*).

Waṣl refers to the distancing of a seeker from all besides Allāh ta'ālā. *Qurb* refers to a seeker severing ties from all besides Allāh ta'ālā. *Ghayrullāh* (all besides Allāh) applies to the *mahzūr* and *mubāh*. *Mahzūr* refers to all forms of prohibitions. *Mubāh* refers to utilizing the creations of Allāh ta'ālā and other means of life, e.g. the skies, the earth, mountains, trees, rocks, etc. When a seeker remains independent of the *mubāhāt* and distances himself from the *mahzūrāt*, then it is referred to as *qurb-e-tāmm* (total proximity). The more he is distant from *ghayrullāh*, the closer he will be to Allāh ta'ālā. We learn from this that the meaning of *qurb* also expresses the importance of the *ijtinābī* angle.

Opposing *ghayrullāh* could be understood as follows: There are four things which are obstacles to reaching Allāh ta'ālā, viz. the world, the creation, the carnal self and Shayṭān. The method for removing these is explained in the book *Minhāj al-'Ābidīn*.

Now that we learnt that proximity to Allāh ta'ālā is acquired through optional obedience after having fulfilled the obligatory duties – even if the optional

obedience is from one category only or just a single act – the acquisition of abundant knowledge must also be on this restricted level. Man's preoccupation is confined to two things; worship and habitual practice. Each of these inevitably has two qualities; it either occurs often or on few occasions. Hajj, zakāh, jihād, etc. are acts of worship which happen on few occasions.

From the habitual practices, marriage, divorce, buying and selling happen on few occasions. Those that occur often are: eating, drinking, sleeping, wearing clothes. If a person wants to acquire Allāh's proximity, it is of paramount necessity for him to carry out optional actions from both categories. In fact, all his time must be spent in optional actions. To realize this objective, it will suffice him to read the book '*Ayn al-Ilm*' and other similar monographs. As for the one who wants more details, he should study *Ihyā' 'Ulūm ad-Dīn* and other books of jurisprudence. The reality of Allāh's proximity and the ways of acquiring it as explained in this book will suffice the reader.

However, if he wants to acquire the Tarīqat and to reach Allāh ta'ālā quickly, he will most certainly need a shaykh, a mentor and a teacher. Although one can achieve success in the Tarīqat without a mentor and teacher – that is, if Allāh ta'ālā inspires and helps him – it will require long and arduous striving. And it is very rare. Allāh ta'ālā says:

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا.

Those who strove in Our cause – We shall show them Our paths.

Allāh ta'ālā knows best.

PRINCIPLES OF THE TARĪQAT

Shaykh Abul ‘Abbās Aḥmad Zarrūq al-Fāsī

Hadrat Shaykh ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq Muḥaddith Dehlawī rahimahullāh writes in his *Akḥbār al-Akhyār* (p. 531) with reference to Shaykh ‘Alī ibn Ḥusām ad-Dīn Muttaqī Qādirī Shādhilī rahimahullāh:

Shaykh ‘Alī Muttaqī rahimahullāh wrote a commentary to *Uṣūl at-Tarīqah* of the famous scholar of al-Maghrib, Shaykh Aḥmad Zarrūq rahimahullāh. We are quoting the text of this monograph with its translation for general benefit. It contains many useful points.

A person had asked Shaykh Aḥmad Zarrūq rahimahullāh about the principles of the Tarīqat. The following is his reply:

Five principles of our path

قال الشيخ أحمد الشهير بزروق رضي الله عنه عنا به
محبيا لمن سأله عن أصول طريقته. أصول طريقتنا
خمسة أشياء، تقوى الله في السر والعلانية، واتباع
السنة في الأقوال والأفعال، والإعراض عن الخلق في
الإقبال والإدبار، والرضى عن الله في القليل والكثير،
والرجوع إلى الله في السراء والضراء. فتحقق التقوى
بالرجوع والاستقامة. وتحقق السنة بالتحفظ وحسن
الخلق. وتحقق الإعراض عن الخلق بالصبر والتوكل.

وتحقق الرضى بالقناعة والتفويض. وتحقيق الرجوع
بالحمد والشكر في السراء والضراء إلى الله في الضراء.

Our path has five principles: (1) Fear of Allāh in privacy and public. (2) Following the Sunnah in our words and actions. (3) Remaining independent of people whether they embrace us or turn away from us. (4) Being pleased with Allāh's decree whether we are in poverty or prosperity. (5) Turning to Allāh in comfort and discomfort.

Fear of Allāh will be realized through turning to Allāh and remaining steadfast on obedience. The Sunnah will be realized by upholding it and through sound character. Independence from people will be realized through patience and reliance on Allāh. Being pleased with Allāh's decree will be realized through contentment and handing one's matters to Allāh. Turning to Allāh will be realized through praising Him and being grateful to Him during comfort, and beseeching Him at times of calamity.

Five principles for the above five

وأصول ذلك كله خمسة: علو الهمة، وحفظ الحرمة،
وحسن الخدمة، ونفوذ العزيمة، وتعظيم النعمة. فمن
علت همته ارتفعت رتبته، ومن حافظ حرمة الله
حفظت حرمة، ومن حسنت خدمته وجبت
كرامته، ومن انفذ عزمته دامت هدايته، ومن

عظمت النعمة في عينه شكرها استوجب المزيد من
النعم بها حسب وعده الصادق.

The above five principles are based on five principles. (1) Lofty courage. (2) Protection of sanctity. (3) Laudable service. (4) Total resoluteness. (5) Magnifying bounties.

The person of lofty courage will enjoy a lofty position. The one who preserves the sanctity of Allāh will have his own sanctity protected. The one who renders laudable services will enjoy honour and reverence. The one who remains resolute will enjoy perpetual guidance. The one who considers the bounties of Allāh to be magnificent will thank Him for them. He will then be eligible for more bounties as per Allāh's promise:

لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ.

If you are thankful, I will give you more.¹

Principles for interactions

أصول المعاملات خمسة:

طلب العلم للقيام بالأمر، وصحبة المشايخ والإخوان
للتبصر، وترك الرخص والتأويلات للحفظ، وضبط
الأوقات بالأوراد للحضور، اتهام النفس في كل شيء
للخروج عن الهوى والسلامة عن الغلط.

¹ Sūrah Ibrāhīm, 14: 7.

(1) Seeking knowledge to practise on Allāh's commands. (2) Remaining in the company of seniors and brothers in the path to acquire insight. (3) Abstaining from concessions and rationalizations to preserve Dīn. (4) Setting aside time for Allāh's remembrance to acquire presence of heart. (5) Being wary of the carnal self in every matter for salvation from carnal desires and safety from error.

Principles for treating ailments of the carnal self

وأصول ما تداوي به علل النفس خمسة أشياء:

تخفيف المعدة من الطعام، واللجوء إلى الله مما يعرض
عند عروضة، والفرار من مواقع الفتن من مواقف
ما يخشاه وقوع الأمر المتوقع فيه، ودوام الاستغفار
مع الصلاة على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بجلوة
وانجماع، وصحبة من يدل على الله تعالى أو على أمر
الله تعالى وهو معدوم.

The ailments of the carnal self are treated in five ways: (1) Lightening the stomach of food. (2) Holding on to Allāh ta'ālā when faced with a calamity. (3) Distancing one's self from places of temptation when there is a fear of falling into them. (4) Constant istighfār coupled with salutations to Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam in privacy and public. (5) Remaining in the company of someone who would steer one towards Allāh ta'ālā or towards an order of

Allāh ta'ālā. Finding such a person is quite rare.

وقد قال الشيخ أبو الحسن الشاذلي رضي الله عنه أوصاني حبيبي فقال: لا تنقل قدميك إلا حيث ترجوا ثواب الله تعالى، ولا تحبس إلا حيث تأمن غالبا من معصية الله تعالى، ولا تصحب إلا من تستعين به على طاعة الله تعالى، ولا تصطف لنفسك إلا من تزداد به يقينا، وقل ما هم، أو كلاما هذا معناه.

Shaykh Abul Hasan Shādhilī rahimahullāh said: "My beloved advised me thus: Do not walk to any place except where you hope for Allāh's reward. Do not confine yourself to a place unless you feel you are most likely to be safe from disobeying Allāh. Do not be in the company of anyone except the one who will help you in obeying Allāh. Do not select anyone as a bosom friend except the one who will increase your conviction [in Allāh]. Such people are very few." Or he said something similar in meaning.

وقال أيضا رضي الله عنه: من ذلك على الدنيا فقد غشك، ومن ذلك على العمل فقد نصحك. وقال أيضا رضي الله عنه: اجعل التقوى وطنك ثم لا

يضرّك مرج النفس ما لم ترض بالعيب أو تصر على
الذنب أو تسقط منك الخشية بالغيب.

The Shaykh also said: "The one who directs you to the world has deceived you. The one who directs you towards good actions has desired your wellbeing." He added: "Make piety your homeland. If you do, the rebelliousness of your carnal self will not harm you as long as you are not happy with your faults, you do not persist in sin, or you no longer fear the unseen [Allāh]."

قلت: وهذه الثلاثة هي أصول البلاء والآفات وقد
رأيت فقراء هذا الوقت ابتلوا بخمسة أشياء: إيثار
الجهل على العلم، والإغترار بكل ناعق، والتهور في
الأمر، والتغرر بالطريق، واستعجال الفتح دون
شرطه.

I say: These three are the sources of misfortunes and calamities. I observed the dervishes of our time being caught up in five things: (1) Giving preference to ignorance over knowledge. (2) Being deceived by all and sundry. (3) Carelessness in matters of the Sharī'ah. (4) Being conceited by their ways. (5) Seeking success without having fulfilled its prerequisites.

فابتلوا بخمسة: إيثار البدعة على السنة، واتباع
الباطل دون الحق، والعمل بالهوى في كل أمر وحمل

الأمر، وطلب الترهات دون الحقائق، وظهور
الدعوى دون صدق.

Consequently, they have succumbed to five additional things: (1) Giving preference to bid'ah over the Sunnah. (2) Casting aside the truth and following falsehood. (3) Acting on desires in every matter. (4) Seeking futile things to the exclusion of realities. (5) Making claims without honesty.

فظهر بذلك خمسة: الوسوسة في العبادات،
والاسترسال مع العادات، والسماع، والاجتماع في
عموم الأوقات، واستمالة الوجوه بحسب الأماكن،
وصحبة أبناء الدنيا حتى النساء والصبيان. واغترؤا
في ذلك بوقائع القوم وذكر أحكامهم، ولو تحققوا
لعلموا أن الأسباب رخصة الضعفاء والمقام بها بقدر
الحاجة من غير زيادة، فلا يسترسل معها إلا بعيد
من الله. وأن السماع رخصة المغلوب أو الكامل وهو
انحطاط في بساط الحق إذا كان بشرطه من أهله في
محله وأدبه. وأن الوسوسة أصلها جهل بالسنة وخيال
في العقل. وأن التوجه لاقبال الخلق إدبار عن الحق
سيما قاري مداهن أو جبار غافل وصوفي جاهل. وأن

صحة الأحداث ظلمة وعار في الدنيا والدين، وقبول
أرفاقهم أعظم وأعظم.

These five have led to another five: (1) Experiencing whisperings in acts of worship. (2) Following habits without hesitation. (3) Listening to singing. (4) Intermingling with people in normal times and trying to incline them to one's self. (5) Remaining in the company of worldly people; even women and children.

They have been deceived by stories and statements of the Sufis. Had they investigated, they would have realized that these are concessions for the weak ones, and opting for them is only permissible to the extent of necessity without any excesses. Thus, only that person who is far from Allāh ta'ālā will practise on them. Furthermore, *samā'* (listening to music) is a concession only for the one who is in a state of ecstasy or for the one who has reached a state of spiritual perfection. It entails a fall from the level of truth, provided full consideration is given to its people, the place and the etiquette. Ignorance of the Sunnah or corrupt thoughts in the mind are the fundamental reasons for experiencing whisperings. Directing people towards one's own self entails turning them away from Allāh. This is especially so when it is done by a flattering scholar, a heedless tyrant and an ignorant Sufi. Remaining in the company of young boys is a darkness and a blight on one's worldly and Dīnī life.

Accepting their sweet and soft words and nuances is a major temptation and tribulation.

قال سيدي أبو مدين رضي الله عنه الحدث من لم يوافقك على طريقك ولو كان ابن سبعين سنة. قلت: وهو الذي لا يثبت على حال ويقبل كل ما يلقي إليه فيولع به، وأكثر ما تجد هذا في أبناء الطوائف وطلبة المجالس، احذرهم بغاية جهدك. كل من ادعى حالا مع الله ثم ظهرت منه إحدى خمس فهو كذب أو مسلوب: إرسال الجوارح في معاص الله، وتصنع في طاعة الله، والطمع في خلق الله، والوقية في أهل الله، وقّل ما يختم له على الإسلام.

My master, Abū Madyan rahimahullāh said: "A youngster is one who does not comply with your path even if he is a seventy-year old man." I say: A youngster is one who does not remain firm on one condition. He accepts everything which is offered to him and is then enamoured by it. You will find this quality mostly in the children of immoral women and students of majālis (madāris, pl. of madrasah). You must do your utmost to be on your guard with them. Anyone who claims to enjoy a special spiritual condition with Allāh, and then one of the following five traits manifest themselves in him, you must conclude that he is a liar or one who is divested of good. (1) He has given free rein

to his body parts in Allāh's disobedience. (2) He is deceitful in his obedience to Allāh. (3) He hankers after what people have. (4) He is critical and censorious of the Ahlullāh. (5) Rarely do such people depart from this world with īmān.

Five conditions for a shaykh

وشروط الشيخ الذي يلقي إليه المرید نفسه خمسة:
علم صحيح، وذوق صريح، وهمة عالية، وحالة
مرضیة، وبصيرة نافذة

A shaykh to whom a disciple reverts must fulfil five conditions: (1) Correct knowledge. (2) A clear and lucid orientation. (3) Lofty courage. (4) An acceptable spiritual condition. (5) Insight which is effective (in the rectification of disciples).

Five conditions which invalidate a shaykh

ومن فيه خمس خصال لا تصح مشيخته، الجهل
بالدين، واسقاط حرمان المسلمين، ودخول ما لا
يعني، واتباع الهوى في كل شيء، وسوء الخلق من غير
مبالاة.

The one who does not have the above five qualities, but has the following five, then his sheikdom is not valid. (1) Ignorance of Dīn. (2) Trampling on the sanctity of Muslims. (3) Occupying one's self in futilities. (4) Following the carnal desires in everything. (5) Audacious bad character.

Etiquette for a murīd

وآداب المرید مع الإخوان والشيخ خمسة:

اتباع الأمر وإن ظهر خلافه، واجتناب النهي وإن كان فيه حتفه، وحفظ حرمة غائبا وحاضرا وحيا وميتا، والقيام بحقوقه حسب الإمكان بلا تقصير، وعزل عقله ورياسته وإلا ما يوافق ذلك من مشيخته.

A murīd has to observe five etiquette with his shaykh and brothers in the path: (1) He must follow his order even if it may appear to be against him. (2) He must abstain from his prohibitions even if he perceives danger in it. (3) He must preserve his sanctity whether he is absent, present, alive or dead. (4) He must fulfil his rights as much as he can, without any shortcomings. (5) He must set aside his intellect and own management unless they are in line with the sheikdom of his shaykh.

انتهت الأصول المذكورة بحمد الله وحسن عونه وينبغي لك أيها الطالب مطالعتها في كل يوم مرتين أو مرة، وإلا ففي جمعة حتى ينطبع معانيها في النفس ويقع تصرفك في مقتضاها، فإن فيها غنية عن كثير من الكتب والوصايا، فقد قيل إنما حرموا الوصول لتضييع الأصول. من تأملها عرف ذلك ثم لا يزال

بعد ذلك يتعهدا قصد التذكر بها، وفقنا الله وإياك
لمرضاته إنه ولي ذلك والقادر عليه، وحسبنا الله
ونعم الوكيل.

These principles are now concluded through the praise of Allāh ta'ālā and His excellent help. O seeker! It is essential for you to study them once or twice daily; if not, then at least every Friday. This is so that their meanings become embedded in your heart and your actions come in line with their demands. These principles will enable you to dispense with many books and admonitions. It is said that people were deprived of reaching Allāh because they disregarded the principles. The one who ponders over this will realize its factualness. After this, you must constantly bear them in mind so that you are reminded by them. May Allāh inspire you and me to do all that pleases Him. He alone is the upholder of this and He alone can do it. Allāh is sufficient for us, and what an excellent dispenser of affairs He is!

The Iarīqat is based on five things

وقال رضي الله عنه: مبنى الطريقة على خمس:
التحقيق في التقوى بحفظ ما لا يعنيه، ولا يطلع
عليه إلا الله والتحقيق في اتباع السنة بحيث لا
يتوجه في أمر من الأمور لا مجازاة فلا يلزم مانعا من

حيث هو ولا يمدح محسنا من حيث هو بل من حيث أمر الله فيه والتسليم للخلق من حيث ما هم فيه بابقاء شرورهم وإيثار السلامة والعافية معهم والاسلام للقدر في جميع الأحوال بالصبر والرضا والشكر والعمل على قول الشيخ إبي الحسن الشاذلي رضي الله عنه اجعل التقوى وطنك ولا يضرك مرج النفس ما لم ترض بالغيب أو تصر على الذنب أو تسقط منك الخشية بالغيب ورجوعا إلى قوله صلى الله عليه وسلم، اتق الله حيث ما كنت واتبع السيئة الحسنة تمحها وخالق الناس بخلق حسن، وإيثارا لقوله صلى الله عليه وسلم: إذا رأيت شحا مطاعا وهوى متبعا وإعجاب كل ذي رأي برأيه فعليك بخاصة نفسك وترى طاعة أولي الأمر وعدم الاعتراض عليهم بالظاهر كيف كانوا والله حسبهم.

وتصلي الضحى وتفطر وتقصر في السفر ولا يقول بصلوات الأسبوع والليالي والأيام الفاصلة وتعمل بصلوة التسبيح وتوثر ما فتح الله به من تجريد أو أسباب من غير اختيار لأحدهما عند وجود الآخر وتأخذ لكل مباح لا يلحقه نقص في المروة، فلا ضرر

في الدارين، وتذكر بالجمع ويجتمع للذكر لا على وجه أنه أفضل ولكن لما فيه راحة النفس وصورة الطريق، وترى الزيارة للأحياء والأموات ما لم تضيع واجبا أو مندوبا متأكدا، وترى لكل مومن بركة إلا من خالف السنة، ولا تقتدي إلا بمن صح علمه وورعه، وأصل كل خير الرضا عن الله بما قسم الله والدعاء إلى الله في كل شيء فهي مفتاح كل حاجة عند الفقير، وهروبه من شر الخلق وأعظم من كل حصن.

(1) Remaining steadfast on īmān while protecting one's self from futilities. None apart from Allāh must know of it. (2) Adhering strictly to the Sunnah in such a manner that he does not turn his direction towards anything else unless he is compelled. He should neither accuse the one who rejects because of who he is, nor praise the one who does good because of who he is. Rather, he should do it because it is Allāh's order. (3) Accepting people as they are notwithstanding their evils, and desiring peace and wellness for them. (4) Accepting Allāh's decree with patience and gratitude. (5) Practising on the teaching of Shaykh Abul Ḥasan Shādhilī rahimahullāh: "Make piety your homeland. If you do, the rebelliousness of your carnal self will not harm you as long as you are not happy with your faults, do not persist in sin, or no

longer fear the unseen [Allāh].” Practise on these teachings while reverting to the statement of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam: “Fear Allāh wherever you are. Follow an evil with a good deed; the latter will wipe out the effects of the former. Interact with people by adopting sound character.” And by giving preference to this statement of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam: “When you see greed being obeyed, carnal desires followed, and every person voicing his own opinion; then confine yourself to yourself. (Leave people to themselves.) Impose obedience to the leader and abstain from outward objections against him no matter how he is. Allāh will suffice him.”

Be regular in performing the chāsht salāh, do not fast when on a journey and perform the shorter salāh [when travelling]. Do not believe in dedicating certain nights and specific days for certain salāhs. Get in the habit of performing salāt at-tasbīh. Give preference to whatever Allāh’s opens up to you – be it deprivation or provision of means - without desiring the other in the absence of either one. Use every permissible thing which does not cause a decrease in your dignity. In this way, you will not suffer harm in both worlds. Engage in Allāh’s dhikr with a group, and attend collective dhikr gatherings – not because it is superior to individual dhikr but because it brings comfort to the self and is an outward appearance of the Tarīqat. Make it a point to visit the dead and the living provided it does not cause you to leave out an

obligatory or sunnat-e-mu'akkadah action. Have the belief that there is blessing in every believer except the one who is against the Sunnah. Follow only that person whose knowledge and piety are genuine. The basis for all good is to be pleased with what Allāh decreed for you and to cling to Him in every matter. I believe this to be the key to the fulfilment of every need, protection against every evil and the most fortified of all forts.

تمت الأساس التي عليها مبنى الطريقة ومن معانيها
إن شاء الله تعالى بتوجه الفتح للحقيقة وصلى الله
على سيدنا محمد وآله وسائر الأنبياء وسلم.

An explanation of the principles on which the Tarīqat rests is now concluded. Allāh willing, the doors of the Haqīqat (reality) will open from these facts.

THE REALITY OF TAṢAWWUF AND SULŪK

Shaykh al-Islām Hadrat Maulānā Husayn Ahmad
Madanī rahimahullāh

نحمده ونصلي على رسوله الكريم، أما بعد!

My honourable elders and brothers. I have been asked to speak about bay'at, sulūk and the Tarīqat. People are of the view that these things are in conflict with the Shari'ah and that Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam did not teach them. Furthermore, those who are in positions of authority in the field of Sufism are found to do things which are against the Shari'ah. This creates a suspicion that this is against the ways and teachings of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. Whereas the fact of the matter is different. Bay'at refers to making a pledge. A pledge is taken from a person that he will carry out a specific task of the Shari'ah – it is then referred to as bay'at.

Acting under the order of Allāh ta'ālā, Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam also did this on many occasions. On the occasion of Hudaybiyyah, he took a pledge from the Sahābah radiyallāhu 'anhum that if it comes to fighting the enemy, they will not flee. Instead, they will fight to the end and give preference to death if they have to. The Qur'an makes reference to this as follows:

لَقَدْ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ الشَّجَرَةِ فَعَلِمَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَثَابَهُمْ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا.

Allāh was certainly pleased with the believers when they began pledging their allegiance to you under the tree. He knew what was in their hearts. He then sent tranquillity upon them and rewarded them with a near victory.¹

For what were they pledging allegiance? Hadrat Salamah ibn Akwa' radiyallāhu 'anhu was asked: "For what reason did you pledge allegiance under the tree at Hudaybiyyah?" He replied: "For death." This means, we will rather die than flee from the battlefield. Allāh ta'ālā gives them glad tidings that He is pleased with them. Since He knows what is in their hearts, He cast tranquillity and peace in them. In return for this, He rewarded them with victory. The verse up to this point makes reference to bay'at.

Then in the very same sūrah, Allāh ta'ālā says:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ اللَّهَ يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ فَمَنْ نَكَثَ فَإِنَّمَا يَنْكُثُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ أَوْفَى بِمَا عَاهَدَ عَلَيْهِ اللَّهُ فَمَ يَزِيدْهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا.

Surely those who pledge their allegiance to you, they pledge allegiance to Allāh. The hand of Allāh is above their hands. Now

¹ Sūrah al-Fath, 48: 18.

whoever breaks his word does so to his own detriment. And whoever fulfils whatever He has pledged to Allāh, He will give him a great reward.¹

The bay'at which was given on the blessed hand of Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam was a bay'at for jihād.

Allāh ta'ālā instructs women to give bay'at:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِذَا جَاءَكَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتُ يُبَايِعَنَّكَ عَلَى أَنْ لَا
يُشْرِكَنَّ بِاللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَسْرِقْنَ وَلَا يَزْنِينَ وَلَا يَقْتُلْنَ
أَوْلَادَهُنَّ وَلَا يَأْتِينَ بِبُهْتَانٍ يَفْتَرِيَهُ بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِنَّ
وَأَرْجُلِهِنَّ وَلَا يَعَصِيَنَّكَ فِي مَعْرُوفٍ فَبَايِعِهِنَّ
وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُنَّ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ.

O Prophet! If believing women come to you in order to pledge to you that they will not ascribe any partners with Allāh, they will not steal, they will not commit adultery, they will not kill their children, they will not fabricate a slander between their hands and their feet, and that they will not disobey you in any good deed, then accept the pledge from them and seek forgiveness for them from Allāh. Surely Allāh is forgiving, merciful.²

This bay'at was enacted by Allāh's order. Before the Hijrah, Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam met twelve leaders of the Anṣār in Makkah and taught

¹ Sūrah al-Fatḥ, 48: 10.

² Sūrah al-Mumtaḥinah, 60: 13.

them about Islam. One of the leaders was Haḍrat ‘Ubādah ibn Sāmit raḍiyallāhu ‘anhu. He relates: Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam said to us:

بايعوني على أن لا تشركوا شيئاً ولا تسرقوا ولا تزنوا.

Pledge to me that you will not ascribe any partner to Allāh, you will not steal and you will not commit adultery.

He asked us to pledge allegiance to him on various things about Islam. To help him, to protect him and so on. He said: “If any of you remains loyally steadfast on these things, Allāh will admit him into Paradise and forgive him. If anyone acts to the contrary and is punished in this world, then the punishment of the Hereafter will be raised from him. But if he is not punished for his sins in this world, then Allāh may punish him in the Hereafter or He may pardon him.”

There are several incidents of this nature where Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam took a bay‘at for specific matters and sometimes for general matters, i.e. for the entire Shari‘at. The instruction of bay‘at is explained in detail in the Qur’ān and Hadīth. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam took bay‘at from certain Sahābah raḍiyallāhu ‘anhum solely on the point that they will not ask for anything from anyone. There was a Sahābī who had given a pledge of this nature. Subsequently, he would not ask anyone for anything, so much so that if he was mounted on a horse and his whip had to fall down, he would dismount and pick it up himself; he would not ask anyone to pass it to him.

Haḍrat Jarīr ibn ‘Abdillāh Bajalī raḍiyallāhu ‘anhu says: “Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam took

bay'at from me on the point that I will desire the wellbeing of every Muslim.” Subsequently, he would always give the best advice to any Muslim who needed it.

We conclude that bay'at is not something new. Many incidents in the Qur'an and Ahādīth prove that bay'at had been in existence from the time of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. The bay'at of the Tarīqat is included in the Sunnah bay'at which has been coming down to us from the time of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam.

The bay'at of the Tarīqat refers to: Adhering strictly to the Shari'at, abstaining from whatever the Shari'at prohibits, and focusing totally on Allāh's remembrance and His obedience. This is the bay'at which has been coming down through the generations. Special servants of Allāh ta'ālā accepted this bay'at from the Muslim masses. What is sometimes referred to as pīrī/murīdī is the same method of bay'at.

However, every person does not have the right to accept bay'at. In the past, bay'at was given to a person who possessed the following qualities: He adhered strictly to the Shari'at. He abstained from innovations, flagrant sinning and immorality. He remained in the company of a saint and acquired spiritual affiliation. And he chose to live a life of poverty. Only a person who possesses these qualities is eligible to accept bay'at.

The Ṣaḥābah raḍiyallāhu 'anhum used to accept bay'at. This system was adopted by the Rightly Guided Caliphs, and was proliferated extensively by Hadrat 'Alī raḍiyallāhu 'anhu. After him, it was Hadrat Hasan Baṣrī raḥimahullāh. This system then

continued and expanded through his spiritual deputies.

The one who accepted the bay'at is referred to as a pīr. The lexical meaning of which is “an old man”. In Arabic he is referred to as a shaykh. A person who is senior in age, spent more days in Allāh's obedience and remained firm in following Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam is more entitled to accept allegiance from others. This is why he is referred to as a shaykh in Arabic and a pīr in Persian. He is a man who is experienced. He has spent his life in Allāh's obedience. So he is called a pīr. It is not the name of any specific person. It does not refer to a specific lineage. It does not refer to practising in a particular way. Rather, the one who adheres to the Sharī'at, has engaged in spiritual exercises and Allāh's dhikr for a long time, has developed a bond with Allāh ta'ālā, is not attracted to the world, has done so much of worship that he has developed affinity with Allāh ta'ālā – then he is a pīr, he is a shaykh.

Just as there are genuine and fake people in every group, the same can be said about people in the Tarīqat. The person who does not practise on the Sharī'at and does not follow the Sunnat of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam is most certainly not eligible to accept bay'at, he is definitely not qualified to be a pīr. The Qur'ān states:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ.

O believers! Continually fear Allāh and remain with the truthful.¹

¹ Sūrah at-Taubah, 9: 119.

We learn from this that a pīr is only appointed from those who are truthful. A truthful person is one who is truthful to Allāh ta‘ālā and truthful to Allāh’s servants. He is the one who does not have the qualities of envy, jealousy, pretension and offensiveness in him. He is true in his submission to Allāh ta‘ālā. This is why Allāh says: “remain with the truthful”. The Qur’ān says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَابْتَغُوا إِلَيْهِ الْوَسِيلَةَ
وَجَاهِدُوا فِي سَبِيلِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ.

O believers! Continually fear Allāh and search for a means [of access] to Him. And wage jihād in His path so that you may attain happiness.¹

The person who is a means of your pleasing Allāh, making Him happy and earning His mercies is known as a murshid (mentor). Erudite scholars are of the opinion that the words “search for a means [of access] to Him” refer to a murshid. In the previous verse this was expressed by the words “remain with the truthful”.

Mention is first made of īmān and then taqwā. After these two, “search for a means”, i.e. search for a murshid and do as he says. This is the third instruction. The fourth instruction is “wage jihād in His path”. In other words, strive in Allāh’s path, wage jihād against your self, strive against your personal comforts.

Undoubtedly, the demand of “search for a means” which is an additional thing after īmān, which we

¹ Sūrah al-Mā’idah, 5: 35.

refer to as a search for a mentor and doing as he says, and then striving in every possible way to acquire Allāh's pleasure have been mentioned in this verse.

Thus, these rulings of the Tarīqat or Sufism are not something new. They are ancient; they have been coming down from the era of prophet-hood. The dhikr and other spiritual exercises of Sufism have also been coming down since that time.

TASAWWUF WA NISBAT SŪFĪYYAH

Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh
Sāhib rahimahullāh

Introduction

نحمدہ ونصلی علی رسولہ الکریم

Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat Maulānā Shāh Waṣīyyullāh
Sāhib rahimahullāh wrote this book after intense research and investigation when he observed a general rejection of *taṣawwuf*. This book proved to be immensely beneficial and influential. It was applauded by senior scholars. Hadrat Shaykh al-Ḥadīth Muḥammad Zakariyyā Sāhib rahimahullāh expressed his approval and made it a point of having it read in his assembly.

Similarly, Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Ḥasan ‘Alī Nadwī rahimahullāh (d. 22 Ramaḍān 1420 A.H.) praised this book highly. When Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat rahimahullāh passed away, Hadrat Maulānā came to Allāhābād to offer his condolences. He delivered a powerful speech which has been published in the periodical *Ma‘rifat-e-Ḥaqq*. In his speech, he placed great importance on this book and said:

Hadrat Maulānā’s book *Taṣawwuf Wa Nisbat Sūfiyyah* is an excellent work on this subject. I had said this previously as well – that this book ought to be translated into Arabic so that Arab ‘ulamā’ may study it.

I felt that quotations from this important book be included in the present book so that I may have the good fortune of propagating this important work of Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat rahimahullāh. Inspiration is from Allāh ta'ālā alone.

Muḥammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī
Muḥarram 1442 A.H.
September 2020

The root of taṣawwuf

Hadrat Abū Yahyā Zakarīyyā Ansārī Shāfi'ī rahimahullāh says that the origin of taṣawwuf lies in the Hadīth popularly known as Hadīth-e-Jibra'īl:

ما الإحسان؟ قال: أن تعبد الله كأنك تراه فإن لم
تكن تراه فإنه يراك.

What is iḥsān? He said: It is to worship Allāh as though you are seeing Him. If you cannot do this, then know well that He is watching you.

Taṣawwuf is another name for iḥsān. We learn from this that a Sufi is one who is *muqarrab* (close to Allāh) and a *muḥsin* (one who has the quality of iḥsān).

A further explanation of this is that we learn from the Qur'ān that there are different levels of people in the Muslim nation. Some are referred to as *as-hāb al-yamīn* (people of the right side) while others are known as *muqarrabīn* (those who are close to Allāh). A person who corrects his īmān and practises according to the orders and prohibitions of the Sharī'at is of the *as-hāb al-yamīn*. If a person is of this group and then has the following qualities in

him, then he is known as a *muqarrab* and a *muhsin*. He is also called a Sufi. The additional qualities are: (1) His heedlessness is less. (2) His optional acts of obedience are more. (3) The remembrance of Allāh has overwhelmed his heart. (4) He is constantly in private conversations with Allāh ta'ālā.

We now quote the exact words of Hadrat Abū Yahyā Zakarīyyā Anṣārī Shāfi'ī rahimahullāh in this regard:

وهؤلاء الموصوفون بما ذكرهم المقربون المتصوفون
بالإحسان في الخبر الصحيح، قال: أن تعبد الله كأنك
تراه فإن لم تكن تراه فإنه يراك.

Those who possess the above-mentioned qualities are known as the *muqarrabūn*. They are the ones who have the quality of *ihsān*. An authentic Hadīth states that [Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam] said: "Ihsān means to worship Allāh as though you are seeing Him. If you cannot do this, then know well that He is watching you."

والأمة درجاتهم متفاوتة ينقسمون إلى أصحاب
اليمين وإلى المقربين، كما دل عليه الكتاب العزيز،
فمن صح إيمانه وعمل بما أمر به شرعا فهو من
أصحاب اليمين. ومن قلت غفلاته وتوالت منه
نوافله وطاعاته وتوالت على قلبه ذكره ودعواته فهو
المقرب والمحسن. ويعبر عنه بالصوفي الذي صفا عن

الأخلاق المذمومة وتخلق بالأخلاق المحمودة حتى
أحبه الله تعالى وحفظه في جميع حركاته وسكناته كما
جاء في الخبر ما تقرب المتقربون إليّ بمثل أداء ما
افترضت عليهم ولا يزال العبد يتقرب إليّ بالنوافل
حتى أحبه، فإذا أحسنته كنت سمعه الذي يسمع به
وبصره الذي يبصر به. الحديث¹.

We learn from the Qur'ān that there are different levels of people in the Muslim nation. Some are referred to as *as-hāb al-yamīn* (people of the right side) while others are known as *muqarrabīn* (those who are close to Allāh). A person who corrects his *īmān* and practises according to the orders the Sharī'at is of the *as-hāb al-yamīn*. If a person is of this group and then has these qualities in him: (1) His heedlessness is less. (2) His optional acts of obedience are more. (3) The remembrance of Allāh has overwhelmed his heart. (4) He is constantly in private conversations with Allāh ta'ālā - then he is known as a *muqarrab* and a *muḥsin*. He is also called a Sufi. That is, a person who is pure from blameworthy characteristics and embellished with praiseworthy characteristics to the extent that Allāh loves him and protects him in all his activities and moments of inactivity. As stated in a Hadīth: "The best way in which

¹ حاشية قشيرية: ٤.

My close servants can get closer to Me is by carrying out whatever I made obligatory on them. A servant will continue getting closer to Me through optional devotions until I love him. Once I love him, I become his ears with which he hears and his eyes with which he sees.”

The reason behind naming it taṣawwuf

After the blessed era of Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam, the higher-ranking Muslims did not have a specific name apart from the title of “Sahābī-e-Rasūl” (companion of Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam). After all, there was no virtue and honour greater than Sahābiyyat (being from among the Sahābah). When the era of the Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum ended and the next era arrived, the people who enjoyed the company of the Sahābah radiyallāhu ‘anhum came to be known as Tābi‘īn. This title was accepted as the greatest accolade for that time. Those who came after them were given the title of Taba‘ Tābi‘īn. Subsequently, people were divided into various levels. Those who were extremely strict in their adherence to Dīn were referred to as “zāhid” and “‘ābid” (ascetics and worshippers). When innovations (bid‘āt) crept into Dīn and proliferated, the various groupings began competing against each other. The situation deteriorated to the extent that each group claimed that zāhids and ‘ābids are to be found within its ranks alone. On seeing this, the seniors of the Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah who imposed affinity with Allāh ta‘ālā on themselves and safeguarded their hearts against the causes of heedlessness, decided to name their special orientation “taṣawwuf”. The

seniors of this group became known by this name at about 200 A.H. and they were referred to as Sufis.¹

The corroboration of taṣawwuf

Although the name “taṣawwuf” came into use after a long period of time, its corroboration was found in the first century. The author of *al-Ibdā'* writes:

ظهرت التصوف في القرون الأولى للإسلام فكان له
شأن عظيم، وكان المقصود منه في أول الأمر تقويم
الأخلاق وتهذيب النفوس وترويضها بأعمال الدين
وجذبها إليه وجعله وجدانا لها وتعريفها بحكمه
وأسراره بالتدريج.

When taṣawwuf appeared in the first centuries of Islam, it enjoyed a magnificent status. In the beginning, its objective was to set right character, culture the selves, train them to carry out actions of Dīn, attract them to it, to make Dīn a natural sentiment of the selves, and to acquaint them [selves] of the wisdoms and mysteries of Dīn gradually.

Each of these objectives were obviously correct, essential, and exactly in line with the Shari'at. Therefore, no one ought to differ with them nor reject them. However, because the 'ulamā' of the external sciences considered Dīn to be restricted to rules related to dealings and transactions, and actions of the external body parts; they rejected the genuine

¹ *Risālah Qushayrīyyah*, p. 8.

Sufis and went to the extent of labelling them deviates and heretics. Since the rulers and sultans were dependent on the 'ulamā', they supported the latter while the Sufis were left unsupported and helpless. They feared their opponents and were compelled to conceal their orientation. They felt that outsiders will not understand their speech, so they formulated expressions and terminologies which were peculiar to them.

This is why when they admitted a person into their Tariqat, they did so after laying down many conditions and putting him through a long period of tests and examinations. They said: "If any person wants to join us, he will have to prove himself to be a genuine seeker. Only then can he become a murīd and then a sālik (one treading the path)."

The crux of this entire discussion is that it was due to their highest level of integrity, honesty and sincerity that these Sufis observed and tested the sincerity of a seeker. They did this so that they could conclude whether he is true and firm in his quest, and whether he has a genuine resolve or not. In other words, was it Allāh's love that brought him to their path or does he want to creep in surreptitiously so that he may learn their secrets and then divulge them to others?

Taṣawwuf was a magnificent concept which has been defined by the 'ulamā' of taṣawwuf as:

هو علم تعرف به أحوال تزكية النفوس وتصفية
الأخلاق وتعبير الظاهر والباطن لنيل السعادة
الأبدية.

It is a science through which the purification of the self, the rectification of character, and the development of the external and internal could be learnt so that eternal happiness may be acquired.¹

Further clarifications

Hadrat Muslihul Ummat rahimahullāh said: A person has to have high courage and lofty aspirations for this work. Accumulating of this world and confining one's self to external actions are not marks of lofty aspiration. Rather, it entails severing one's link with all unnecessary relationships and establishing a bond with Allāh ta'ālā and acquiring affinity with Him. However, the severing of ties is like death to these people. This is why they neither sever them nor do they develop a bond with Allāh ta'ālā. To Allāh alone we belong and to Him is our return. We present our complaint to Him alone. We cry to Him alone. Any way, this work is not for all and sundry. Someone rightly said:

How can every avaricious and unworthy fellow discard the world!? It requires the courage of a lion and the heart of an ocean.

He added: Just as it is the duty of 'ulamā' to acquire knowledge of beliefs and jurisprudence, they have two other obligations. The first is to acquire love and affinity with Allāh ta'ālā. The other is to rectify the evils of the carnal self. They have to impose on the nafs-e-ammārah to follow the Shari'at and Sunnat,

¹ *Majmū'ah Ta'lifāt Muslihul Ummat*, pp. 105-108.

and turn it into nafs-e-muṭma'innah. This is the objective of taṣawwuf and the Tarīqat; this is its goal.

Since we have established that it is essential to remove the evils of the carnal self and acquire affinity with Allāh ta'ālā, the easiest way of achieving this is to hand yourself over to an expert. It is the norm of Allāh ta'ālā that spiritual treasure cannot be acquired without the company of the true men of Allāh – the Ahlullāh.

The need for companionship

Whether you are a hard rock or marble,
when you go to a man of spirituality,
you will become a pearl.

The need and importance of remaining in the company of spiritual masters has been explained by Shaykh 'Abd al-Haqq Muḥaddith Dehlawī rahimahullāh in his introduction to *Akḥbār al-Akhyār*:

All praise is due to Allāh ta'ālā. Peace and salutations to Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. This insignificant servant, 'Abd al-Haqq ibn Sayf ad-Dīn Turk Dehlawī Bukhārī states: All erudite and insightful scholars who are listed among the enlightened and reliable personalities accept that the most effective – in fact, the most superior – form of worship is the companionship of the Ahlullāh and remaining in the company of the close servants of Allāh ta'ālā. When a seeker observes their steadfastness, firmness and unity of purpose, he develops strength and courage. Consequently,

the fatigue of worship and the difficulties of spiritual exercises, which are essentials of this path, become easy for him. In fact, when he beholds their beauty, his heart develops a special effulgence. As a result, the darkness of doubts and misgivings – which is the real cause behind the barrier between him and Allāh ta'ālā – is removed from his heart.

Look! Shaykh Muḥaddith raḥimahullāh is saying that the companionship of spiritual masters is one of the most superior forms of worship. The proof he is giving is that when a seeker observes their firmness and steadfastness, it gives him courage and strength. This enables him to bear the difficulties of doing good actions. When he beholds their beauty, his heart develops enlightenment which removes the darkness of doubts and the veil is raised.

The same theme is expressed by Ḥadrat Qāḍī Thanā'ullāh Ṣaḥīb Pānīpattī raḥimahullāh:

A group comprising countless people of whom it is conceivable that they will concur on fabricating a lie, and whose every member is on such a level of piety and knowledge that it is impermissible to accuse him of lying have stated in their writings and speeches that the company of the spiritual masters created a new condition in their hearts. This condition caused them to love Allāh ta'ālā and His friends, created an enthusiasm for good actions, conferred them with a divine inspiration for righteous deeds, and entrenched true

and correct beliefs in them. This is a condition which ought to be referred to as perfection. It is a condition which is a catalyst for many other perfections and excellences.

The Qādī Sāhib presents a striking and cogent proof for the blessings and benefits of the company of spiritual masters. Namely, countless people developed a new spiritual condition which they did not have previously. He then describes the group wherein every member is on the highest level of piety and knowledge, making it impossible to accuse them of fabricating a lie. If this is the condition of every member of a group, it will obviously be immensely dependable and reliable. And if its members pass a unanimous decision on a certain matter, it will certainly be an absolute and definitive decision. As though Qādī Sāhib is saying that such a large number of people in every era have been speaking and writing on this, that it has reached the level of *tawātur*. Now there is no room for rejection by anyone. The new condition which develops in the heart by virtue of the company of the spiritual masters refers to *nisbat-e-ihsān* which is mentioned in the Hadīth-e-Jibra'il: That you worship Allāh as though you are seeing Him.

I do not think there is any need to speak further on the need and importance of good company. If anyone wants details, he may study the monograph *Fawā'id as-Suhbah* of Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat raḥimahullāh. It will certainly be enlightening and it will help the reader to understand this subject.

I make an earnest appeal to those who – by Allāh's grace – are able to be in the company of an expert shaykh, should do so with a genuine intention and

sound conviction. Whatever time they can spend with him should be considered to be a boon, and they must acquire spiritual blessings from him.

I request you to make du‘ā’ for me as well. That Allāh ta‘ālā enables me to rectify my character, makes purification of the self easy, and confers me with His love and affiliation. Āmīn. May Allāh ta‘ālā bless me, you and all Muslims with this.

Hadrat Zayn al-‘Ābidīn and Aṣmu‘ī

Hadrat Muṣlihul Ummat rahimahullāh Ummat rahimahullāh says: Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam described his condition as follows in a Hadīth:

أنا البائس الفقير.¹

I am the one who is afflicted, the one who is in need.

Now observe an explanation of this Hadīth from a senior member of Rasūlullāh’s family and a saint belonging to a spiritual order.

Aṣmu‘ī *rahimahullāh* relates: “I was performing ṭawāf of the Ka‘bah one night when I saw a youngster holding on to the ghilāf (cover) of the Ka‘bah and saying these couplets:

يَا مَنْ يُجِيبُ دُعَاءَ الْمُضْطَرِّ فِي الظُّلَمِ – يَا كَاشِفَ الصَّرِّ وَالْبَلْوَى مَعَ
السَّقَمِ

¹ وَأَنَا الْبَائِسُ الْفَقِيرُ، الْمُسْتَغِيثُ الْمُسْتَجِيرُ، الْوَجِلُ الْمُسْفِقُ، الْمُفَرُّ الْمُعْتَرِفُ بِذَنْبِي. أَسْأَلُكَ مَسْأَلَةَ الْمُسْكِينِ، وَأَبْتَهِلُ إِلَيْكَ ابْتِهَالِ الْمَذْنِبِ الدَّلِيلِ. وَأَدْعُوكَ دُعَاءَ الْحَائِفِ الصَّرِيرِ، وَدُعَاءَ مَنْ خَضَعَتْ لَكَ رَقَبَتُهُ، وَقَاضَتْ لَكَ عِبْرَتُهُ، وَدَلَّ لَكَ جِسْمُهُ، وَرَغِمَ لَكَ أَنْفُهُ. (فيض القدير، ج ٢، ص ١١٧)

O the Being who accepts the supplication of the restless in the darkness. O the One who removes affliction and grief from the sick.

قَدْ نَامَ وَفُدَكَ حَوْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَأَنْتَهُبُوا - وَأَنْتَ يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ لَمْ تَنَمْ

The delegation which came to You walked around the Ka'bah, then slept, and woke up again. But You, O the Living, the Upholder of all, never sleep.

أَدْعُوكَ رَبِّي حَزِينًا هَائِمًا قَلَقًا - فَارْحَمْ بُكَائِي بِحَقِّ الْبَيْتِ وَالْحَرَمِ

O my Allāh! I am beseeching You while I am in a state of worry, distress and anguish. So show mercy to my crying by virtue of the Ka'bah and the Haram.

إِنْ كَانَ جُودُكَ لَا يَرْجُوهُ دُوْسَفُهُ - فَمَنْ يَجُودُ عَلَى الْعَاصِيْنَ بِالْكَرَمِ

If a foolish person [sinner] cannot have hope for Your pardon, who is going to pardon the sinners with kindness?

The person read the above couplets, cried profusely, and then made the following supplication:

أَلَا أَيُّهَا الْمَقْصُودُ فِي كُلِّ حَاجَةٍ - شَكَوْتُ إِلَيْكَ الصَّرَّ فَارْحَمْ شَكَايَتِي

O You who are the objective for every need! I described my problem to You, so remove my problem.

أَلَا يَا رَجَائِي أَنْتَ تَكْشِفُ كُرْبَتِي - فَهَبْ لِي دُنُوِي كُلِّهَا وَافْضِ حَاجَتِي

O the Being in whom I placed all my hopes!
You alone can remove my worry and grief.
Pardon all my sins and fulfil my needs.

أَتَيْتُ بِأَعْمَالٍ قَبَاحٍ رَدِيَّةٍ - وَمَا فِي الْوَرَى عَبْدٌ جَنِي كَجِنَايَتِي

I have come before You with despicable
and contemptible sins. I do not think there is
anyone in the world who is a worse sinner
than me.

أُحْرِقُنِي بِالنَّارِ يَا غَايَةَ الْمُنَى - فَأَيْنَ رَجَائِي ثُمَّ أَيْنَ مَخَافَتِي

O the end of all my hopes! Are You going to
burn me in the Fire? If this were to happen,
of what benefit would my hopes have been,
and of what benefit would my fear have
been? [in other words, my hopes in You and
my fear of You did not benefit me].

After saying the above, the person lost consciousness
and fell to the ground.

Asmu'ī rahimahullāh relates: "I went close to the
youngster and realized he was Hadrat Zayn al-ʿAbidīn
ʿAlī ibn Husayn ibn ʿAlī ibn Abī Tālib rahimahullāh.
On seeing this, I raised his head, placed it in my lap,
and began crying myself. A few drops of my tears fell
on his cheek. This caused him to open his eyes, and
he said: 'Who is this person who has become an
obstacle between me and my Allāh? And is crowding
me?' I replied: 'Hadrat, I am your servant, Asmu'ī.' I
added: 'O our master! You are from the family of the
Prophet and from the fountainhead of messenger-
ship, why, then, are you so fearful? Did Allāh ta'ālā
not say:

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ
وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا.

Allāh only wants to remove loathsome things from you O family of the Prophet, and to completely purify you.¹

He replied: “O Aṣmu’ī! What are you saying? Allāh ta’ālā created Paradise for His obedient servants even if they are Abyssinian slaves, and Hell for the sinners even if they are free Quraysh people. Did Allāh ta’ālā not say:

فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَلَا أَنْسَابَ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَلَا
يَتَسَاءَلُونَ. فَمَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ
الْمُفْلِحُونَ. وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ
خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ فِي جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدُونَ.

Then when the trumpet is blown, neither will there be any kinship on that day nor will they ask about one another. Then he whose scales are heavy – it is they who are successful. And he whose scales are light – it is they who squandered their own selves, abiding in Hell forever.²

Glory to Allāh! Look at the pure condition of his pure heart! At the same time, he followed the Sunnah strictly by demonstrating the condition of Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam for future generations

¹ Sūrah al-Aḥzāb, 33: 33.

² Sūrah al-Mu’minūn, 23: 101-103.

through his own condition. How many people he must have influenced and impacted through his spiritual condition? That is known to Allāh ta'ālā alone. This chain continued and will continue even if it is in miniscule amounts.

The fear and submission of Sayyidunā 'Abd al-Qādir

Now observe the fear and submission of Hadrat Sayyidunā 'Abd al-Qādir rahimahullāh.

Hadrat Shaykh Sa'dī rahimahullāh writes in his *Gulistān* that Hadrat Shaykh rahimahullāh went for hajj one year. People saw him placing his forehead on the pebbles which were in the Haram of the Ka'bah, and he was making this du'ā: “O Allāh! Pardon me. If I am deserving of punishment, then raise me on the day of Resurrection as a blind person so that I do not have to feel ashamed in front of the pious ones.”

Glory to Allāh! What a beautiful condition of hope and fear. We always hear the words hope and fear being uttered, but we are able to understand their real meaning by observing the spiritual condition and actions of these personalities.

SPIRITUAL PURIFICATION AND FOLLOWING THE SUNNAH AND SHARĪ'AH

Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Sāhib Partāb
Garhī raḥimahullāh

After quoting the themes of my first mentor, Hadrat Muṣliḥul Ummat raḥimahullāh on the subject of purification of the self, my heart desires that I quote something from the pen of my second mentor, Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Sāhib Partāb Garhī raḥimahullāh. Allāh willing, after reading it, the concern for rectification of the heart and purification of the self will become firmly embedded. This, as per the Qur'ān, is a guarantee for success. It is certainly not difficult for Allāh ta'ālā.

I mentioned previously that Hadrat Maulānā continually encourages us towards following the Sharī'at and adhering to the Sunnah. He says that the descent of the Sharī'at is a major favour for the believers. He writes:

Had we been free, Allāh alone knows
how far we would have strayed.
Congratulations to the true lovers who
have a path laid out before them.

Hadrat Maulānā would also instruct 'ulamā' to acquire true love and spiritual strength, and illuminate their chests by coupling the knowledge of prophet-hood with the light of prophet-hood. Look at the beautiful and loving manner in which he says:

I cannot say from what to what a person can become when he loses his graduation turban in the turban of love for Allāh.

Glory to Allāh! The beauty and finery which is contained in the summation of “from what to what a person can become” cannot be explained. Those who have a taste for such finery can appreciate it. The words “when he loses his graduation turban in the turban of love” is a complete new and innovative way of encouraging towards the spiritual path. It is certainly a gratifying and beautiful manner of expression which deserves the most praise.

In this couplet, Hadrat Maulānā instructs the ‘ulamā’ not to remain cynical scholars. Rather, they should also fill their bosoms with the effulgence and love of Allāh ta‘ālā. If they do, they will become the true heirs of the Prophets ‘alayhimus salām and the Auliya’.

The same advice was given by Maulānā Rūm rahimhullāh in his own unique way:

Do not restrict yourself to words;
become a man of spiritual affiliation as
well. The only way to do this is to
obliterate yourself before an expert
mentor.¹

¹ *Faydān-e-Muḥabbat Sharḥ ‘Irfān-e-Muḥabbat*, p. 98.

‘Irfān-e-Muḥabbat is a collection of gnostic poems of Hadrat Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥmad Sāḥib Partāb Garhī rahimhullāh. Selected poems were explained by myself in *Faydān-e-Muḥabbat*. (Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī)

Purification of the heart, a means for acquiring spiritual bliss

صل يا رب على من لأويس منه-طهر القلب والقلب من الأدناس

O Allāh! Send salutations to the one through whom the internal and external selves of Hadrat Uways Qarnī were purified of all impurities.

Hadrat Maulānā rahimahullāh said:

As long as the purification of the self is not realized, there will be nothing but danger. One's entire life will be spent entrapped by Satanic thoughts.

Hadrat expresses the importance of purification of the self in the above couplet. The purification of the self is from among the highest objectives behind the commissioning of Prophets 'alayhimus salām. Allāh ta'ālā says in this regard:

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِن قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ.

It is He who raised among the unlettered people a Messenger from among themselves, reciting to them His verses, purifying them, and teaching them the Book and wisdom. Before this they were lying in manifest error.¹

¹ Sūrah al-Jumu'ah, 62: 2.

In fact, if were to think about it, we will realize that purification of the self is the objective of the Sharī'at and the fundamental purpose of commissioning the Prophets 'alayhimus salām. Purification means that people's minds, actions and character be purified of those germs which are the causes of spiritual and moral ailments. At the same time, the internal selves must be sowed with good actions which would straighten their internal and external selves, and culture their habits and mannerisms.

The education and training of Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam changed an entire nation which was sullied with every type of immorality into a nation which not only became cultured, but a teacher of culture and morals. Those who had succumbed to all spiritual ailments not only became healthy; rather they became successful and expert physicians. Unfortunately, we are flagrantly unmindful of this important obligation. The consequences of it are before us. Hadrat Maulānā makes reference to this in the following verse:

As long as the purification of the self is
not realized, there will be nothing but
danger.

You can gauge the importance of purification of the self from the fact that Allāh ta'ālā made success dependent on it. He says:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا.

He who purified it has indeed achieved his
goal.¹

¹ Sūrah ash-Shams, 91: 9.

As long as purification of the self is not effected, then instead of success, a person will experience nothing but failure and loss. This is why Allāh ta'ālā says:

وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّهَا.

He who leaves it buried in the dust has certainly failed.¹

In other words, when a person does not make his carnal and wrathful powers subservient to his intellect and the Sharī'at, he has cast himself into destruction and dropped himself lower than animals. We seek refuge in Allāh ta'ālā.

Man has to make his carnal and wrathful desires subservient to his intellect, and his intellect subservient to the Sharī'at so that his heart and soul may be illuminated by divine effulgence. Only such a person can be superior to and higher than angels.²

¹ Sūrah ash-Shams, 91: 10.

² *Faydān-e-Muḥabbat Sharḥ 'Irfān-e-Muḥabbat*, p. 141.

TAṢAWWUF – A DIVINELY-INSPIRED SYSTEM

Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan ‘Alī Nadwī
rahimhullāh

Allāh ta‘ālā blessed this ummat with the wealth of collective inspiration which is protected against every type of danger, harm, individual weakness and misunderstanding.

An elucidation of the above statement is that when Islam and Muslims are faced with a delicate and important issue, and it becomes difficult to make a decision about it and reach a result; or the changing times and demands of conditions present a new need, then Allāh ta‘ālā creates an urgency in the hearts of a considerable number of ‘ulamā’ and devoted people who possess pure selves and strong willpower to fulfil this new need. Allāh ta‘ālā directs them towards this totally to the extent that they believe that they have been ordered to carry out this task and that they are accountable to Allāh ta‘ālā for it. We then clearly see divine help and assistance coming to them from the unseen for the completion of this task. They perceive from the depths of their hearts that they are being drawn towards it. This is that reality which we expressed as “collective inspiration” or a collective guidance. Islamic history is filled with examples of this nature.

This inspiration is sometimes experienced by a few companions, as was the case with the incident related to the commencement of adhān. Hadrat ‘Abdullāh ibn Zayd radiyallāhu ‘anhu and Hadrat ‘Umar radiyallāhu ‘anhu saw a similar dream and

both were taught the words of the adhān in their dreams. Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam affirmed both of them and adhān was given a status in the Sharī‘ah which prevails throughout the Islamic world today. Or as it happened with regard to Laylatul Qadr (the night of power) about which Imām Bukhārī rahimahullāh and Imām Muslim rahimahullāh relate on the authority of Hadrat ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar radiyallāhu ‘anhu: A few Companions came to Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam and related to him that they saw a dream in which Laylatul Qadr was shown to them in the last seven nights of Ramaḍān. Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam said to them: “I see that you all saw the same dream which makes reference to the last seven nights. Thus, whoever wants to search for it [Laylatul Qadr] should search for it in these seven nights.”

Similar to this is the issue of the tarāwīḥ ṣalāh whose origin is established from Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa ṣallam. After performing it for three nights, he stopped out of concern that it will become compulsory on the ummat and could be a cause of hardship for them. The Muslims began performing it individually. Hadrat ‘Umar radiyallāhu ‘anhu then promulgated it in congregation. This action of Hadrat ‘Umar radiyallāhu ‘anhu was a result of divine inspiration and heavenly guidance. Immense good was hidden in it. Allāh ta‘ālā created in the hearts of the Muslims a concern to perform this ṣalāh with congregation and an enthusiasm to read the Qur’ān in it. This proved to be the foremost means for the memorization and preservation of the Qur’ān. Subsequently, it created a spirit of competition and a desire to remain awake in the nights of Ramaḍān. In this regard, we see a glaring difference between the

Ahl as-Sunnah who adopted the tarāwīḥ ṣalāh and other groups who rejected it – where there is an abundance of Qur’ān memorization among the Ahl as-Sunnah, and due importance to its study.

This inspiration is sometimes experienced by a large group of Muslims. Their unanimity on a certain issue or focusing on a specific need can neither be said to be coincidental nor the result of a conspiracy. Their effort in this regard brings immense benefit to Islam and the Muslims, fills a certain vacuum in their lives, comes as a barrier to a terrifying tribulation, seals off a fissure, or realizes a major objective of Islam.

Examples of a blessed collective inspiration (which was experienced by countless erudite ‘ulamā’ and devoted practical personalities) include: Compilation of the Qur’ān during the era of Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr radiyallāhu ‘anhu, the collection and compilation of Aḥādīth in the first two eras of Islam and in the succeeding centuries, the extraction of rulings by the Muḥtāhidīn, the examination of juridical rulings, the sciences of grammar and recitation, the principles of jurisprudence and the Qur’ān, and preservation of its language, the codification of all beneficial sciences, the construction of madāris, the printing and publishing of books and so on. These are excellent examples of this collective inspiration through which the most important needs of Islam and Muslims were fulfilled, and future dangers were sealed off.

Another example of this collective inspiration is the task of refuting and disproving deviated sects, atheists and agnostics, philosophies which proclaim idleness, and destruction-seeking movements. Muslims possessing extraordinary and phenomenal knowledge and intelligence, mental acumen and strong īmān came onto this field and completely

exposed these movements and philosophies, and saved the Muslims from their evil influences.

All these achievements are manifestations of divine inspiration with which a large group of Muslims was honoured in every stage of Islamic history in centres of knowledge and culture. This in itself is a proof of Allāh's favour on this ummat and the high rank it holds in His sight. This uninterrupted inspiration and continuous divine help is a glaring proof of the seal of prophet-hood, and the termination of revelation after Muḥammad ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam. We do not find such a clear and unending parallel in the previous nations. Bearing in mind that the system of prophet-hood was still continuing, they did not even need it.

The broad and well-established system of purification of the self and culturing of character which in the later centuries took on the form of an independent science, identifying the plots of the self and Shayṭān, treating carnal and moral ailments, explaining and systemizing the means of acquiring a bond with Allāh ta'ālā and spiritual affiliation whose origins was already found in the traditional and Shar'ī words of "tazkiyah wa iḥsān" and later came to be known as "taṣawwuf" or Sufism is another glittering example of collective inspiration. The masters in this field gradually conveyed it to the level of ijtihād and classified it as a major service to religion and a jihād of the time through which Allāh ta'ālā revived the dead orchards of the hearts and cured those who were patients of the soul. Through these devoted Allāh-conscious 'ulamā' and disciples who were trained by them, Islam spread to distant lands and vast countries (like India, the eastern Indian islands and the African continent). Millions of people were

guided and such men and women were born through their training who – in their respective times – blew the spirit of īmān, conviction and good deeds in Muslim society; and they played key and leading roles on the fields of jihād on countless occasions. None can deny the usefulness of this group and its services except the one who has no knowledge of Islamic history or whose eyes are covered with a band of prejudice and bigotry.

While defining a mutawātir Hadīth and providing a proof for its absolute authenticity, the scholars of Hadīth principles state: “Such a large number of people in every era must have reported it that a sound mind and human practices refuse to accept that such a large number of people could have related it incorrectly, concurred on fabricating it, or that it was the result of a conspiracy.”

Even through a cursory glance at history, this point becomes clear that from the second century to the present age, a large number of Allāh’s devoted servants in every era and every country – uninterruptedly and without exception – adopted this way and invited others to it. They benefited from it and conveyed its benefit to others as well. They remained occupied and engrossed in its propagation throughout their lives, and they were fully convinced of and satisfied by its correctness and effectiveness. These men were the core elements of their respective societies – not only as regards their righteousness, sincerity, selflessness, purity of their selves and internal piety – but also in their knowledge of the Qur’ān and Sunnah, ardent love for the Sunnah, and dislike and abhorrence for innovations. They surpassed their contemporaries in these qualities. It is possible for one or two, or five or ten to err in

judgement or succumb to a conspiracy. This is not far-fetched. However, for millions of personalities who are seen at the forefront of the ummat even in their knowledge and practical application, to remain in error for century after century, to insist on that system, to call towards it, and to remain firm and steadfast on it with resoluteness is most certainly illogical, irrational and abnormal. Furthermore, millions of people finding guidance through these pure souls, and reaching the peaks of spiritual excellences is a continuous piece of information which is impossible to reject. It is rationally and traditionally impossible that despite differences in times and climes, this massive group of truthful and devoted personalities to be caught up in a continuous and unending error and misjudgement. And for Allāh ta'ālā – who is all-merciful, all-wise and the absolute guide – and who made the following promise to not expose this misunderstanding of theirs and to not steer them correctly! Allāh ta'ālā says:

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ
الْمُحْسِنِينَ

Those who strove in Our cause – We shall show them Our paths. Surely Allāh is with the righteous.¹

Remove these genuine and devoted servants from Islamic history – each one of whom was the best flower of his time, a lighthouse, and a source of honour and pride for the human race – and see what remains without them! If we cannot have confidence

¹ Sūrah al-'Ankabūt, 29: 69.

and faith in them, which other group can there be which is worthy of our confidence and a source of pride for us!?¹

¹ *Tazkiyah Wa Iḥsān*, p. 31.

QUOTATION FROM MINHĀJ AL- 'ĀBIDĪN

Hadrat Hujjatul Islām Imām Ghazzālī rahimahullāh *Minhāj al-'Ābidīn* is the last written work of Hadrat Hujjatul Islām Imām Ghazzālī rahimahullāh. It is the essence of his other books and he himself approved of it.

I take the opportunity of quoting the third principle which is on promises and warnings, and the last section (the spiritual path which a walī treads). There is a famous maxim:

ما لا يدرك كله لا يترك كله.

What cannot be done in its entirety should not be left out in its entirety.

Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī

Promises and warnings about the Hereafter

We will discuss five types of situations:

1. Death.
2. The grave.
3. The Resurrection.
4. Paradise.
5. Hell.

Death

Keep in mind the condition of two people. One is the person who is described by Ibn Shabramah. He relates: Sha'bī and I went to visit a sick person. He

was already experiencing the pangs of death. Someone was sitting next to him and reading the kalimah – *Lā Ilāha Illallāh Wahdahū Lā Sharīka Lahu* – aloud to him. Sha‘bī said to him: “You must be soft and kind to the sick.” Just then, the sick man got up and said: “Whether he dictates the kalimah to me or not, I will certainly read it.” He then read these words of the Qur’ān:

وَأَلْزَمَهُمْ كَلِمَةَ التَّقْوَىٰ وَكَانُوا أَحَقَّ بِهَا وَأَهْلَهَا.

...and kept them steadfast on the spirit of reverence. They were most worthy and deserving of it.¹

Sha‘bī said:

الحمد لله الذي نجا صاحبنا.

All praise is due to Allāh who saved our friend.

The second incident is related by Hadrat Fudayl ibn ‘Iyād rahimahullāh. He went to one of his students who was on the verge of passing away. He sat at his head side and began reciting Sūrah Yā Sīn. The student said: “Stop reading Sūrah Yā Sīn.” Hadrat Fudayl then began reading the kalimah – *Lā Ilāha Illallāh* – but the student said: “I will not read this kalimah. I have nothing to do with it.” He passed away after uttering this statement.

Hadrat Fudayl was severely disturbed by the bad death of his student. He did not leave his house for forty days. He remained sitting and crying. After forty days, he saw a dream in which the angels were

¹ Sūrah al-Fath, 48: 26.

dragging the student towards Hell. He asked: “What was the reason behind Allāh ta’ālā snatching away your spiritual cognition? After all, you were my most knowledgeable and most worthy student?” He replied: “On account of three faults. (1) I had the defect of carrying tales. I used to say one thing to my classmates and something else to you. (2) I was jealous of my classmates. (3) I had a certain physical illness. My doctor prescribed that I drink a glass of wine once a year. He said that if I do not, my health will not be restored. And so, I used to drink a glass of wine once every year.”

May Allāh ta’ālā save us from His displeasure, for we certainly cannot bear it.

Note: A person may remain in the company of the greatest of saints, but as long as he does not undertake his own rectification, he will have to suffer the consequences. A student of a senior scholar like Hadrat Fudayl ibn ‘Iyād rahimahullāh had to meet the above-described fate on account of his evil qualities. He left this world without īmān. We seek refuge in Allāh ta’ālā. (compiler)

Now ponder over the condition of two other persons.

When Hadrat ‘Abdullāh ibn Mubārak rahimahullāh was in the final moments of his life, he lifted his gaze towards the sky, smiled and said:

لِيُثَلَّ هَذَا فَلْيَعْمَلِ الْعَامِلُونَ.

It is for such things that those who endeavour should endeavour.¹

He passed away after reading the above verse.

¹ Sūrah as-Sāffāt, 37: 61.

I heard my teacher Hadrat Imām al-Haramayn rahimahullāh relating a story which he heard directly from his teacher, Hadrat Abū Bakr rahimahullāh: When I was a student, I had a classmate who was studying the primary books. He worked hard in his studies, was a righteous person and spent time in worship. Despite all his efforts, he progressed very little in his studies. We used to be surprised by his condition. He suddenly fell ill and went to live in the khānqāh of one of the Auliya'. He did not admit himself into any hospital. Despite his chronic illness, he continued his efforts in studying. His condition became critical. I went to visit him when he suddenly raised his gaze to the sky and said to me: "O Ibn Faurak!

لِمِثْلِ هَذَا فَلْيَعْمَلِ الْعَامِلُونَ.

It is for such things that those who endeavour should endeavour.¹

He said these words and passed away.

The second story is related by Hadrat Mālik ibn Dīnār rahimahullāh. He says: I visited a neighbour at the time of his death. The pangs of death had overtaken him. He looked at me and said: "O Mālik! I can see two mountains of fire in front of me, and I am being told: 'Climb them!'"

Mālik ibn Dīnār continues: I asked his family people about him. They said: "He has two scales for weighing grain. One scale is for receiving grain, and the other is when he has to give grain." I asked for the scales and broke their markers. I then asked

¹ Sūrah aṣ-Ṣāffāt, 37: 61.

him: “How are you feeling now?” He replied: “The matter is getting worse.”

The grave

In this chapter also, the story of two people is noteworthy. One is related by a saint who said: I saw Hadrat Sufyān Thaurī raḥimahullāh in a dream after his death. I said: “O Abdullāh! How have you fared?” He turned away from me and said: “This is not the time to address me by this title.” I said: “O Sufyān! How have you fared?” He recited these couplets in reply:

نظرت إلى ربي عيانا فقال لي - هنيئا رضائي عنك يا ابن سعيد
لقد كنت قواما إذا الليل قد دجا - بعبرة مشتاق وقلب عميد
فدونك فاختر أي قصر تريده - وزرني فأني عنك غير بعيد

After I passed away, I beheld Allāh directly in front of me. He said to me: O Ibn Saʿīd! Congratulations to you for you have earned My pleasure.

You used to stand up in My remembrance in the darkness of the night. Your eyes would tear with yearning, and your heart used to be focused completely on Me.

The palaces of Paradise are now before you. You may choose whichever one you want. You can enjoy the benefit of visiting Me whenever you want because I will be near you all the time.

The story of the second person is the one whom some people saw in a dream. His complexion had changed and his hands were tied to his neck. He was asked:

“O person! How did Allāh treat you?” He replied with the following couplet:

تولى زمان لعبنا به – وهذا زمان بنا يلعب

The time which we spent playing around
has turned away. Now it is time which is
playing with us.

The condition of two other persons is also worth mentioning. The son of a saint was martyred. His father never saw him in a dream. Only one day did he see him, and that was the day when Sayyidunā ‘Abd al-‘Azīz rahimahullāh passed away. When his father saw him, he said: “O son! Has death not overtaken you?” He replied: “I am not dead. Rather, I was blessed with martyrdom. I am alive in the close proximity of Allāh ta‘ālā. I am receiving a variety of dishes and meals to eat.” The father asked: “How did you come this way today?” He replied: “An announcement was made to all those in the heavens: ‘Today, no Prophet, siddīq and martyr should remain here. All of you must attend the funeral of ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz.’ So I too came this way to attend his funeral. Once the janāzah salāh was completed, I came by to offer salām to you.”

The second story has been related by Hadrat Hishām ibn Hassān. He says: “One of my children passed away at a tender age. I saw him in a dream, but he had grown into an old man. I asked: ‘O son! How did you become so old?’ He replied: ‘When such and such person passed away and came near us, the Hell-fire set eyes on him and went into a rage. It took a deep breath due to which we all became terrified and turned old in that very moment.’” We seek refuge in Allāh ta‘ālā from the painful punishment.

The Resurrection

The condition of people on the day of Resurrection is described in the following verse:

يَوْمَ نَخْشُرُ الْمُتَّقِينَ إِلَى الرَّحْمَنِ وَفْدًا. وَنَكْسُوفُ
الْمُجْرِمِينَ إِلَى جَهَنَّمَ وَرْدًا.

The day when We shall gather the righteous ones before the Merciful as guests. We shall drive the sinners towards Hell in a thirsty state.¹

A person will get up from his grave and will see a mount waiting for him. The moment he emerges from his grave, a glittering crown will be placed on his head and he will be made to wear the most exotic garments. He will be seated on the mount and taken towards Paradise.

Another will get up from his grave with the chains of Hell around him. Various types of torments will inflict him and he will not be given a chance to even walk towards Hell. Instead, the moment he emerges from his grave, he will be dragged with his face down and cast into Hell. We seek refuge in Allāh ta'ālā from His wrath.

I heard this Hadīth from some 'ulamā':

إذا كان يوم القيامة يخرج قوم من قبورهم لهم نجب
يركبونها، لها أجنحة خضر فتطير بهم في عرصات
القيامة حتى إذا أتوا على حيطان الجنة، فإذا رأتهم

¹ Sūrah Maryam, 19: 85-86.

الملائكة قال بعضهم لبعض: من هؤلاء؟ فيقولون ما ندري لعلهم من أمة محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم. فيأتيهم بعض الملائكة فيقول: من أنتم ومن أي الأمم أنتم. فيقولون نحن من أمة محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم. فتقول لهم الملائكة هل حوسبتم؟ فيقولون لا، فتقول الملائكة هل وزنتم؟ فيقولون لا. فتقول الملائكة هل قرأتم كتبكم؟ فيقولون لا. فتقول الملائكة ارجعوا فكل ذلك ورائكم. فيقولون هل أعطيتمونا شيئاً فنحسب عليه شيئاً. وفي خبر آخر: ما ملكنا شيئاً فنعدل أو نجور ولكن عبدنا ربنا حتى دعانا فأجبناه، فينادي مناد: صدق عبدي، ما على المحسنين من سبيل، والله غفور رحيم.

Some people will emerge from their graves on the day of Resurrection. Mounts with green wings will be waiting for them at their grave side. They will ride them and these mounts will fly with them beyond the field of Resurrection. They will reach the walls of Paradise. When the guard-angels of Paradise see them, they will ask each other: "Who are these people?" They will reply: "We do not know. They are probably from the followers of Muḥammad ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam." An angel will go to them

and ask: "Who are you and which nation do you belong to?" They will reply: "We are from the nation of Muḥammad ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa ṣallam." The angels will ask: "Has your accounting of deeds been done?" They will reply in the negative. The angels will ask: "Have your deeds been weighed?" They will reply in the negative. The angels will ask: "Did you read your book of deeds?" They will reply in the negative. The angels will say: "Go back. All these formalities are to be fulfilled." They will say: "Did you give us anything for which we will be taken to account?" Another narration states: "We did not own anything in the world whereby we could act justly or unjustly. We occupied ourselves in worshipping our Sustainer until He called us here today; and so we came." Just then, an announcement will be made: "My servants have spoken the truth. Those who spent their lives doing good deeds with sincerity will not be taken to account. Allāh is all-forgiving, most merciful."

Have you not read this proclamation of Allāh ta'ālā:

أَفَمَنْ يُلْقَى فِي النَّارِ خَيْرٌ أَمْ مَنْ يَأْتِي آمِنًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.

Is he who is cast into the fire better or he who shall come secure on the day of Resurrection?¹

Just imagine the grand status of the person who, despite seeing all the terrifying scenes of the Resurrection, frightening occurrences and fearsome

¹ Sūrah Hā Mīm Sajdah, 41: 40.

incidents, does not experience any fear, trepidation and burden in his heart. Instead, through the mercy of Allāh ta'ālā, he spends his time at peace with himself and proceeds towards Paradise.

We beseech Allāh ta'ālā to include me and you among those fortunate people. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh ta'ālā.¹

Paradise and Hell

Consider the following two verses of the Qur'ān:

وَسَقَاهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ شَرَابًا طَهُورًا. إِنَّ هَذَا كَانَ لَكُمْ جَزَاءً
وَوَكَانَ سَعْيُكُمْ مَشْكُورًا.

Their Sustainer will make them drink a purifying drink. This is your recompense, and your endeavour has been accepted.²

The second verse describes the condition of the Hell-dwellers:

رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْهَا فَإِنْ عُدْنَا فَإِنَّا ظَالِمُونَ. قَالَ اخْسِئُوا
فِيهَا وَلَا تَكَلِّمُونِ.

O our Sustainer! Remove us from it. Then if we revert [to sinning], we are certainly sinners. [Allāh] said: "Remain there in shame and do not speak to Me."³

¹ *Minhāj al-Ābidīn*, pp. 242-247.

² *Sūrah ad-Dahr*, 76: 21-22.

³ *Sūrah al-Mu'minūn*, 23: 107-108.

It is related that they will be turned into dogs and they will move around barking like dogs. We seek refuge in Allāh the most-kind, the most-merciful from His painful punishment.

The matter is as stated by Hadrat Yahyā ibn Mu'adh Rāzī rahimahullāh:

We do not know which of the two calamities is worse – to give over Paradise or to go into Hell. There is no room for patience from Paradise and there is no way we can bear the punishment of Hell. However, to miss out on the bounty is comparatively easier than having to bear the pains of Hell. Furthermore, remaining in Hell forever is the worst and most catastrophic calamity. If the punishment was to come to an end at some time, we would feel some level of ease. But it is going to remain forever and is not going to end at any point. This is why Hadrat 'Īsā 'alayhis salām said: “Any mention of the eternal punishment renders the hearts of fearful people into smithereens.”

The last person to be released from Hell will be Hannād. He will be punished for a thousand years. He will emerge from Hell while calling out “Yā Hannān, yā Mannān!” When Hadrat Hasan Baṣrī rahimahullāh heard about his condition, he broke down crying and said: “I wish I was Hannād.” People expressed astonishment at his statement. He said: “I am disappointed at your lack of understanding. At least he will come out of the punishment at some time or the other.” I say that this entire fear and dread points to a fundamental principle. It is what breaks the backs and turns faces yellow. Merely thinking of it breaks the hearts to bits and causes the criers to shed tears of blood. The point I am referring to is the snatching away of the recognition

of Allāh ta'ālā. The fear of it remains with those who have true fear, and causes them to shed tears all the time.

A saint said: There are three types of distress:

1. Distress over acts of obedience – that they may not be accepted.
2. Distress over acts of disobedience – that they may not be pardoned.
3. Distress over Allāh-recognition – that it may be snatched away.

In reality, there is just one type of distress, and that is the distress over the snatching away of Allāh-recognition. All other forms of distress are of a lower level because they can cease at some point or the other. As for the snatching away of Allāh-recognition, this distress can never be removed.

Yūsuf ibn Asbāṭ rahimahullāh related to us that he went to Hadrat Sufyān Thaurī rahimahullāh. He continues: I observed Sufyān Thaurī crying the entire night. I asked him: “Are you crying out of fear for your sins?” He picked up a blade of grass and said: “A sin is more insignificant in Allāh’s sight than this blade of grass. What I really fear is Allāh ta'ālā snatching away the treasure of Islam from me.”

We beg Allāh ta'ālā not to test us through any tribulation, to complete His favours on us through His grace, and bless us with death on Islam. He is the most merciful of those who show mercy.

We explained the meaning and reason for a bad death in our book *Ihyā' al-'Ulūm*; you may refer to it. If I were to start this topic, it will require a lengthy discussion which this book cannot accommodate. Understand this concise treatise because lengthy

discussions sometimes create unintended doubts. I am confining myself to a short discussion; perhaps you will acquire success through Allāh's help and inspiration.

Question: You may ask: Which path should we choose; the path of fear or the path of hope?

Answer: You will have to choose a path which is in-between these two. It is said that if a person is overwhelmed by hope, he becomes a Murjiyah. In most cases, such a person is in danger of losing his belief-system. The one who is overwhelmed by fear becomes of the Khawārij. This statement means that you should not give preference to one over the other. The fact of the matter is that neither is genuine hope separable from fear, nor is genuine fear separable from hope. This is why it is said that hope in its entirety is for people of fear; they have no peace. And fear is for the people of hope; they have no hopelessness in them.

Question: Can one be given preference over the other in different times and situations? Or is it necessary to maintain a middle path at all times?

Answer: When a person is strong and healthy, he must have more fear in him. When he falls ill and becomes weak and frail, he must be hopeful. This is especially so when the time to journey to the Hereafter draws near. When a person is strong and healthy, and he is overtaken by fear, then Allāh says to him:

لَا تَخَافُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا.

Neither fear nor grief.

Question: Aren't there many traditions and Ahādith which state that a person should have noble thoughts about Allāh ta'ālā? Aren't there many traditions encouraging towards having noble thoughts?

Answer: Having noble thoughts about Allāh ta'ālā means that a person must abstain from His disobedience, he must fear His wrath and punishment, and he must strive to serve and worship Him.

There is a powerful principle and important point regarding which most people err, viz. that hope is a baseless and unsubstantiated thing.

Take the example of a person who plants seeds, tends to the plantation, strives and works hard at it, harvests it when it matures, and stores it in his granary. He then says: "I hope to get a hundred harvests from it." This is called hope. Another person does not plant the seeds at the correct time, does not work on his farm for a single day, spends his entire time in his house, and passes the entire year in total disregard. When the time for harvesting arrives, he says: "I hope to harvest a hundred tons of grain." We will say to such a person: "Your hope is not a hope in reality; it is wishful thinking."

In the same way, when a person strives in good actions and desists from sinning, he can say: "I hope Allāh ta'ālā will accept my services, fill my deficiencies, reward me immensely and pardon my shortcomings. I have noble thoughts about Allāh ta'ālā." We will say that his hope is genuine and correct; and laudable according to the Sharī'at. On the other hand, if a person is heedless and careless, does not go towards good actions, commits sins and acts of disobedience, does not bother about Allāh's

wrath and displeasure, does not think about His promises and warnings; and then says: “I have hope that Allāh ta’ālā will bless me with Paradise and save me from the punishment of the Hell-fire.” This is wishful thinking; it is not true hope. It is an unattainable thing to which he has given the name of hope and noble thoughts. He is astray in this regard and has fallen into error and misunderstanding. A poet expresses this theme as follows:

ترجوا النجاة ولم تسلك مسالكها – إن السفينة لا تجري على اليبس

You are hopeful of salvation without having
trod its paths!? A ship cannot sail on dry
land.

This principle is supported by a Hadīth of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam:

الْكَيْسُ مَنْ دَانَ نَفْسَهُ وَعَمِلَ لِمَا بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ،
وَالْعَاجِزُ مَنْ أَتْبَعَ نَفْسَهُ هَوَاهَا، وَتَمَنَّى عَلَى اللَّهِ.

The intelligent person is the one who takes stock of his self and does actions for what is to follow after death. The weak person is he who follows the desires of his carnal self but still has hopes in Allāh.

Hadrat Hasan Basrī rahimahullāh said: There are some people who live in the hopes of pardon and forgiveness, but do not good works. They leave this world and go to the Hereafter while they are spiritually penniless. They have done no good actions, yet they say: “We have noble thoughts and

¹ سنن الترمذي، رقم: ٢٧٩٩.

good expectations about our Allāh (that He will treat us kindly).” They are liars because if they did have noble thoughts about Allāh ta’ālā, they would have done good deeds as well. Hadrat Hasan Baṣrī raḥimahullāh then read this verse of the Qur’ān:

فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا
يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا.

Hence, whoever hopes to meet his Sustainer should do righteous deeds and should not ascribe anyone as a partner in the worship of his Sustainer.¹

He then read this verse:

وَذَلِكُمْ ظَنُّكُمُ الَّذِي ظَنَنْتُمْ بِرَبِّكُمْ أَرَدَاكُمْ،
فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ.

This is that very assumption of yours which you made about your Sustainer. He has ruined you, so you have been left among the losers.²

Ja’far Sabghī raḥimahullāh says: I saw Abū Maysarah, the ardent worshipper. His ribs were sticking out because of his excessive worship and spiritual striving. I said: “May Allāh have mercy on you. Allāh’s mercy is vast.” He became angry when he heard this and said: “You saw in me something which shows that I am despondent of Allāh’s mercy.

¹ Sūrah al-Kahf, 18: 110.

² Sūrah Hā Mīm Sajdah, 41: 23.

Allāh's mercy is extremely close to His pious servants."

Ja'far Sabghī rahīmahullāh relates: I burst out crying when I heard this and addressed myself: "What do you think? The Prophets, the saints and the pious servants of Allāh ta'ālā strive in His worship and abstain completely from sins. Despite this, they are filled with fear and submission. Do you think they do not have noble thoughts about Allāh ta'ālā even though they have full conviction in His mercy and have good thoughts about His generosity and clemency?" The fact of the matter is that they knew that noble thoughts without striving in Allāh's obedience are not possible. Such thoughts are deceptions.

Take admonishment from this point, ponder over the lives of the righteous and wake up from your dream of heedlessness. Inspiration is from Allāh ta'ālā alone.

The gist of the discussion is that when you think of Allāh's mercy which supersedes His wrath and which encompasses all creations, you must also think of the fact that He created you in this blessed ummat. Then think of His magnanimity, generosity and clemency. Thereafter think of the Book which He sent for your guidance and which He started with *Bismillāhir Raḥmānir Raḥīm*. In other words, this statement in itself makes mention of Allāh's beneficence and mercy. Then think over the fact that Allāh ta'ālā showered you with countless internal and external mercies and favours without your having requested them via an intercessor and without your having rendered any service to Him. He did this solely out of His grace and kindness.

Then think about the opposite. Think about Allāh's perfection, might, greatness, power, awe, intense wrath and anger before which the skies and the earth cannot remain stable. Think of the delicate situation of the Hereafter with all its dangers in the face of your heedlessness, your countless sins and your hard-heartedness. Thereafter think about the point that Allāh ta'ālā is fully aware of all your moments of activity and inactivity, all your faults, and all your hidden matters.

Bring to your mind His genuine promises and rewards which are beyond man's imagination. Then ponder over His severe warnings and painful punishments which human hearts will not be able to endure. If you bear in mind His grace and kindness in comparison to His punishment, then His mercy and affection, followed by the excesses of your carnal self, deviation, crimes and sins – then all these things will create fear and hope within you. You will tread the middle path. You will separate yourself from the two destructive paths of fearlessness and despair, and remain aloof from those who are wandering aimlessly in these two valleys [of fearlessness and despondency]. You will satiate yourself with the balanced drink of fear and hope – you will neither be destroyed by the coldness of hope nor the heat of fear.

You have now achieved your goal and saved yourself from both destructive ailments. You will find that your self is ready for obedience and submission, and it will occupy itself in serving Allāh ta'ālā by day and night without heedlessness and laziness. In this way, you will be protected against sins, and base and dishonourable activities. You would have acquired total detachment from evils.

Hadrat Nauf Bakkālī rahimahullāh said: “When Nauf thinks of Paradise, his heart experiences a yearning for Paradise. When he thinks of Hell, he loses his sleep out of fear for it.”

After developing this correct state of hope fear and hope, you will become from among the chosen and selected worshippers of Allāh ta’ālā regarding whom He says:

إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْحَيْرَةِ وَيَدْعُونَنَا رَعَبًا
وَرَهَبًا ط وَكَانُوا لَنَا خُشِعِينَ.

They used to hasten in doing good deeds and they used to call to Us with hope and fear. And they were humble before Us.¹

Now that you have crossed this dangerous pass through Allāh’s permission and His inspiration, you will experience a lot of purity and sweetness in your life. You have accumulated an immense treasure and great rewards for the Hereafter. We pray to Allāh ta’ālā to help me and you through His inspiration and steering. He is certainly the most merciful of all who show mercy, and the most generous of all. There is no power and might except through Allāh, the most-high, the most magnificent.²

My heart desires to quote the last section of this book of Hadrat Hujjatul Islām Imām Ghazzālī rahimahullāh.

¹ Sūrah al-Ambiyā’, 21: 90.

² *Minhāj al-‘Ābidīn*, pp. 248-254.

The spiritual path is traversed by the heart

This entire path – as regards whether it is a long or short one – is not like the distances which a person covers with his feet. He traverses it through the strength or weakness of his self. In fact, it is a spiritual path which is traversed by the heart. A person treads it according to his creed and insight. Its basis is a heavenly light and divine gaze which falls into the heart of a person. He then ponders over the two worlds factually. It is a light which a person searches for a hundred years but still does not find, nor does he receive any sign of it. This is due to a deficiency in his quest and his immaturity in this path. There are some who find it within fifty years, others within ten years and others within a day. Then there are those who – through the bestowal of Allāh ta'ālā – acquire it in a single moment. After all, Allāh ta'ālā alone is the regulator of guidance. Despite this, man has been ordered to strive, and it is essential for him to carry out this order. The order is understood and is according to the decree of the just ruler of this universe [Allāh]. He does as He wills and issues whatever order He wills.

If you were to ask me about the extent of this danger, the severity of this matter, the extent of this weak human's destitution, and what is the reason for this entire action and endeavour with its prerequisites; then I will say to you that you are absolutely correct in your question. That the matter is certainly difficult and it is definitely fraught with danger. This is why Allāh ta'ālā says:

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي كَبَدٍ.

We have certainly created man into toil.¹

Allāh ta‘ālā says:

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ
فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّهُ
كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا.

We offered the trust to the heavens, the earth and the mountains but they refused to bear it and they were afraid of it. Man undertook to bear it; he is very merciless, immature.²

This is why Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam said:

لو علمتم ما أعلم لبكيتم كثيرا وضحكتم قليلا.

If you only knew what I know, you will cry a lot and laugh little.

It is said that an announcer in the heavens calls out: “If only the creation were not created. Now that it has been created, if only it understood the purpose of its creation. If it has understood the purpose, if only it acted accordingly.”

The pious predecessors also used to say this.

Hadrat Abū Bakr radiyallāhu ‘anhu said: “I wish I was a blade of grass so that an animal could eat me.” He used to say this out of fear for the punishment.

¹ Sūrah al-Balad, 90: 4.

² Sūrah al-Ahzāb, 33: 72.

Hadrat ‘Umar raḍiyallāhu ‘anhu was also heard expressing a similar wish when he recited this verse:

هَلْ أَلَى عَلَى الْإِنْسَانِ حِينٌ مِّنَ الدَّهْرِ لَمْ يَكُنْ شَيْئًا
مَّذْكُورًا.

Has there [not] come upon man a period of time when he was not a thing mentioned?¹

Abū ‘Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāh raḍiyallāhu ‘anhu said: “I wish I was a sheep of my family. I would have been slaughtered, my meat distributed among people and people would drink the soup which was made with my meat. And I was not brought back to life on the day of Resurrection.”

Fuḍayl ibn ‘Iyād raḥimahullāh said: “I am not envious of any angel, Prophet and pious servant. Will they not be taken to account on the day of Resurrection? I am only envious of those who have not been born.”

‘Atā’ Sulamī raḥimahullāh said: “If a fire is ignited and it is said: ‘Anyone who casts himself into it will be terminated forever,’ then I fear that I will die out of happiness before reaching that fire.”

O man! The issue is certainly very serious as you yourself said. However, it is far more serious and sombre than what you can ever imagine. It is something which has already been decreed since eternity. The all-powerful and all-knowing [Allāh] promulgated it. Man therefore has no alternative but to become a slave of Allāh ta‘ālā and to hold on to Allāh’s rope with submission and humility. After

¹ Sūrah ad-Dahr, 76: 1.

that, it is possible that Allāh ta'ālā will show mercy to him and he will be saved through His grace.

As for your asking the reason for all this? This is a question which points to your heedlessness. The more correct thing would have been to ask about the reality of this. A lesser demand is two things: (1) To be safe in both worlds. (2) To be a king in both worlds.

Safety in this world is such that the world, its miseries, its calamities, and the veils of negligence could not be avoided by even the closest angels. You must have heard the story of Hārūt and Mārūt.

It is said that when a person's soul is taken up to the heavens, the angels of the heavens say in astonishment: "How did he save himself from the world and come here when even our best angels were destroyed!?"

As for the terrors and horrors of the Hereafter, they are so severe that even the Prophets 'alayhimus salām shouted out:

نفسى نفسى، لا أسئلك اليوم إلا نفسى.

Save me! Save me! I ask You nothing today
but to give sanctuary to my life.

It is said that if a person has good deeds equal to those of seventy Prophets, he will think that salvation is difficult. If a person wants to be protected against these tribulations, he must ensure that he lives this world with Islam accompanying him. He will go across safely without any calamity befalling him. He will be saved from the terrifying scenes of the Hereafter and enter Paradise peacefully. He will not

experience any discomfort. Now think about it; is it a small task?

As for governance, it entails man exercising his will and control. The reality of it in this world is for the friends of Allāh, His chosen ones, and those who are pleased with his decree. For them, the jungles, the oceans and the lands are a single step. And rocks and stones are gold for them. The jinn, humans, birds and animals are subservient to them. Whatever they will, happens because they only will what Allāh ta'ālā wills. And we believe that when Allāh ta'ālā wills something to happen, it happens. These people do not fear any creation while all creations fear them. They do not submit before anyone besides Allāh ta'ālā, while everything in this world submits before them. The kings of this world do not enjoy even one percent of what they have. In fact, they are few and despised.

As for kingship of the Hereafter, Allāh ta'ālā says:

وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَ ثَمَّ رَأَيْتَ نَعِيمًا وَمُلْكًا كَبِيرًا.

When you look there, you will see bliss and a great kingdom.¹

When Allāh ta'ālā refers to it as a “great kingdom” we cannot even imagine how great it is. You yourself know that this world is little. From its beginning to its end, it is little. And the share of one single human is even more miniscule. Despite this, some of us are able to acquire of it. The lifespan of this world is also short. If anything is acquired of it, people become deceived by it. In fact, they become proud of it. Then

¹ Sūrah ad-Dahr, 76: 20.

they feel that they have spent a lot of their lives, wealth and resources in acquiring of this world. The poet, Imru'ul Qays said:

بكى صاحبي لما رأى الدرب دونه – وأيقن أنى لاحقان بقيصرا

فقلت له لا تبك عينيك إنما – نحاول ملكا او نموت فنعدرا

When my friend saw the narrow path in front of him, he cried and was convinced that we would meet Qaysar. I said to him: "Do not let your eyes cry. We will make some plan to obtain the king's treasure or die in the process. The world will excuse us."

What can be said of the condition of the person who desires a great kingdom in the eternal Paradise! In comparison to it, he considers two rak'ats of ṣalāh, two dirhams spent in charity or remaining awake in worship for two nights to be sufficient!? Certainly not. In fact, if he had millions of bodies, souls and lives; and each life was equal to the life of this world or even more, and he spends them all for that grand objective; it will still be very little. If he happens to realize his objective after all this, then it will be a mighty grace and huge bounty from Allāh ta'ālā.

O you poor fellow! Wake up from this sleep of heedlessness.

The forty bestowals of Allāh

I then pondered over the servant who is obedient to Allāh ta'ālā, believes that it is essential for him to serve Allāh ta'ālā, and treads this path throughout his life. Whatever Allāh ta'ālā confers to him comprises of forty bestowals; twenty in this world

and twenty in the Hereafter. The twenty of this world are:

1. Allāh ta'ālā makes mention of him and speaks highly of him. Imagine how honoured that person will be about whom Allāh ta'ālā speaks highly!

2. Allāh ta'ālā is appreciative of him and shows honour to him. If someone were to thank and honour you, you will consider it to be an immense honour. If the Allāh of past and future generations honours you, can you imagine how you would feel!

3. Allāh ta'ālā loves the person. If the mayor of your town were to love you, you will feel proud and use it to your advantage. Now imagine when Allāh – the Sustainer of the universe – loves you!

4. Allāh ta'ālā becomes his administrator – He plans everything for him.

5. Allāh ta'ālā takes the responsibility for his sustenance. He conveys sustenance to him without the person having to strive and toil for it.

6. Allāh ta'ālā becomes his helper, and He prevents every enemy and detractor from harming him.

7. Allāh ta'ālā becomes his intimate friend. He never feels lonely and never fears a change in attitude in such a friend.

8. Self-pride. This means that he does not have to suffer the disgrace of the service of worldly people. In fact, he does not approve of even kings and tyrants serving him.

9. Lofty courage. He is beyond the filth of the world and worldly people. He does not pay any attention to their play, amusement and fabrications.

10. Richness of the heart. He is wealthier than the wealthiest person of the world. He is always clean-hearted and open-hearted. No accident stresses him and he is not bothered by the loss of anything.

11. Effulgence of the heart. He is able to fathom the sciences, mysteries and wisdoms by virtue of the spiritual light in his heart. Knowledge of these things is generally acquired after eons and much effort.

12. Satisfaction of the heart. His heart is not constricted by the miseries and calamities of the world, nor by the criticisms and plots of people.

13. Awe which is cast into the hearts of people. All types of people – the pious and the wicked – respect him. Every Pharaoh and tyrant fears him.

14. Love of the hearts. Allāh ta'ālā instils love for him in the hearts of people. Everyone is compelled to love him, and all people respect him instinctively.

15. General blessing which develops in his speech, self, actions, clothing, house and virtually everything. So much so that people consider the soil under his feet to be blessed, the place where he happened to sit on some day to be blessed, and people who saw him and spent some time in his company are also considered to be blessed.

16. Subjugation of the jungles and oceans; in fact, everything to the extent that if he wants he can fly in the air, walk on water or traverse the entire earth in a single moment.

17. Subjugation of animals whether they are animals of prey, wild animals or other creatures. Wild animals love him and animals of prey lick him.

18. Ownership of the treasures of the earth. He can place his hand on the ground, and extract whatever

treasures he wants. When he strikes his feet on the ground, water gushes forth when there is a need for it. No matter where he goes, he receives food whenever he wants.

19. Leadership and seniority at the doors of Allāh ta'ālā. The creation serves him and seeks him as an intermediary in Allāh's court. People ask Allāh ta'ālā for their needs through his blessings.

20. Acceptance of his du'a's by Allāh ta'ālā. Allāh ta'ālā gives him whatever he asks for. If he intercedes on behalf of anyone, Allāh ta'ālā accepts his intercession. When he takes an oath in Allāh's name, the oath is fulfilled. So much so, that if he points to a mountain, it moves from its place. He does not have to ask with his tongue; he merely thinks of a thing and it is presented to him. He does not even have to point with his hand.

Twenty bestowals in the Hereafter:

21. Allāh ta'ālā makes the pangs of death easy for him. This is something regarding which the hearts of even the Prophets trembled. They even beseeched Allāh ta'ālā to lighten the pangs of death for them. Some of them considered death to be more satisfying than water is to a thirsty person. Allāh ta'ālā says:

الَّذِينَ تَتَوَفَّيْهُمْ الْمَلَائِكَةُ طَيِّبِينَ.

Those whose lives the angels take away
while they are in a pious state.¹

22. Firmness on īmān and Allāh-recognition. This is something which causes intense fear and

¹ Sūrah an-Nahl, 16: 32.

restlessness, and regarding which people are impatient. Allāh ta'ālā says:

يُثَبِّتُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِالْقَوْلِ الثَّابِتِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا
وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ.

Allāh strengthens the believers with the firm word in the life of this world and in the Hereafter.¹

23. The conveying of glad tidings, pleasure and security by the angels. Allāh ta'ālā says:

أَلَّا تَخَافُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنتُمْ
تُوعَدُونَ.

Do not fear, nor grieve! Listen to the glad tiding of Paradise which you were promised.²

The person does not fear the forthcoming terrors of the Hereafter, nor does he grieve over whatever he left behind in the world.

24. Eternal dwelling in the gardens of Paradise and the companionship of Allāh ta'ālā.

25. His soul is taken away secretly. The angels of the heavens and earth raise it reverentially. In the meantime, his body enjoys respect in the course of his funeral. Large crowds attend his janāzah ṣalāh. They complete the funeral arrangements – bathing, enshrouding, burying, etc. – quickly. People consider

¹ Sūrah Ibrāhīm, 14: 27.

² Sūrah Hā Mīm Sajdah, 41: 30.

it a their good fortune at being able to attend his funeral.

26. Safety from the tribulation of questioning in the grave. He is at peace with himself in this regard, and the correct answers are inspired into his mind.

27. Expansion and effulgence of the grave. He remains in one of the gardens of Paradise until the day of Resurrection.

28. Honouring of the soul. It is placed in the belly of green birds. The person lives with his pious brethren. They are all happy over whatever Allāh confers on them out of His grace.

29. Being raised with honour and dignity. The person is made to wear a crown and exquisite garments, and he is made to ride a burāq.

30. The faces are illuminated and resplendent. Allāh ta'ālā says:

وُجُوهُ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَّاضِرَةٌ. إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ.

Many faces on that day will be fresh.
Looking at their Sustainer.¹

Allāh ta'ālā says:

وُجُوهُ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُّسْفِرَةٌ. ضَّاحِكَةٌ مُّسْتَبْشِرَةٌ.

Many faces on that day shall be beaming.
Laughing, rejoicing.²

¹ Sūrah al-Qiyāmah, 75: 22-23.

² Sūrah 'Abasa, 80: 38-39.

31. Safety from the terrors of the Resurrection. Allāh ta'ālā says:

أَفَمَنْ يُلْفَى فِي النَّارِ خَيْرٌ أَمْ مَنْ يَأْتِي إِمْنًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ.

Is he who is cast into the Fire better or he who shall come secure on the day of Resurrection?¹

32. Receiving the book of deeds in one's right hand. There will be some for whom there will be no need for accounting of their deeds.

33. Ease in the reckoning.

34. Good deeds becoming heavy. Some deeds will become so heavy that it will not be possible to lift them for the weighing.

35. Presenting one's self before Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam at the Kauthar pond. A person will take just one sip from it and will never feel thirsty again.

36. Crossing the Ṣirāṭ and acquiring salvation. Some people will not even hear its sound. They will remain eternally in bounties which they desire, and the fire will be extinguished for them.

37. The permission to intercede on the field of Resurrection similar to how the Prophets will intercede.

38. Eternal kingdom in Paradise.

39. Allāh's grand pleasure.

40. Meeting with Allāh ta'ālā who is the true deity of all past and latter generations.

¹ Sūrah Hā Mīm Sajdah, 41: 40.

I listed the above according to my understanding and the extent of my knowledge, even though my knowledge is deficient and wanting. I listed it concisely – presenting principles. If I were to go into details, this book would not suffice.

Have you not thought over the fact that I listed eternal kingship as a single point. If I were to explain it in detail, this one point would become more than the entire list of forty. For example, the effulgence of the doe-eyed damsels, the palaces and garments of Paradise and so on. Each one has so many more details which are known to none but Allāh ta‘ālā – the one who created them and the one who is their master. How can we expect to know those details when Allāh ta‘ālā says:

فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهَا مِنْ قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ.

So no soul knows what bliss is in store for it.¹

Rasūlullāh ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam said:

خلق فيها ما لا عين رأت ولا أذن سمعت ولا خطر
على قلب بشر.

Allāh ta‘ālā created in Paradise that which no eye has seen, no ear has heard about, and which no human heart has imagined.

The exegists say with reference to the following verse:

¹ Sūrah as-Sajdah, 32: 17.

لَتَفِدَ الْبَحْرُ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَتَّفَدَ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّي.

Surely the sea will be consumed before the speech of my Sustainer can be completed.¹

It refers to the words which Allāh ta'ālā will say to the Paradise-dwellers with kindness and affection. If this is the state of His speech, how can man fathom even a thousandth portion of it? How can the creation ever encompass His knowledge? It can never. The fact of the matter is that our resoluteness gives up and our intellects fail. And this is how it ought to be. It is merely a bestowal through the demands of the mighty grace and eternal generosity of the all-powerful and the all-knowing.

Beware! People will have to work for this grand objective and they will have to spend their energies for it. They must realize that all this is insignificant in comparison to what they are in need of, which they ask of Him and for which they extend their begging hands.

Four things are essential for a servant.

The four things are knowledge, practice, sincerity and fear. With knowledge, the person will find out the path. If not, he will be a blind person. He will then practise according to that knowledge. If not, he will be prevented from proceeding. He will then purify his actions [make them sincere], or else, he will suffer loss. He will be forever fearful of calamities until he acquires peace and security. If not, he would have fallen into deception.

¹ Sūrah al-Kahf, 18: 109.

Ḥaḍrat Dhun Nūn Miṣrī raḥimahullāh correctly said that all the creations are dead except for the ‘ulamā’. The ‘ulamā’ are asleep except those who are practising ‘ulamā’. Those who are practising are in deception except those who are sincere. And all the sincere ones are in grave danger.

I say: I am astonished at four types of people.

(1) An intelligent person who is not an ‘ālim. Can he not pay attention to learning those things which are to occur in the future? Can he not learn those things which he will witness after death? He ought to learn the proofs and admonitions, listen to the verses, and ponder over those thoughts which cause restlessness to the heart, and fathom the imaginations of the self. Allāh ta‘ālā says:

أَوَلَمْ يَنْظُرُوا فِي مَلَكُوتِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا خَلَقَ
اللَّهُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ.

Have they not looked into the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and all that Allāh created?¹

Allāh ta‘ālā says:

أَلَا يَظُنُّ أُولَئِكَ أَنَّهُمْ مَبْعُوثُونَ لِيَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ.

Do those people not think that they are to be raised for that mighty day?²

(2) An ‘ālim who does not practise on his knowledge. Is he not convinced that there are major terrors and

¹ Sūrah al-A‘rāf, 7: 185.

² Sūrah al-Muṭaffifin, 83: 4-5.

difficult obstacles before him? And that he is turning his face away from this?

(3) The one who does good deeds but is not sincere. Has he not pondered over this statement of Allāh ta'ālā:

فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا
يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا.

Hence, whoever hopes to meet his Sustainer should do righteous deeds and should not ascribe anyone as a partner in the worship of his Sustainer.¹

(4) The sincere one who has no fear. Has he not reflected over what Allāh ta'ālā says with respect to His friends, chosen ones and servants who are means between Him and His creation, and who have been referred to as His most honourable creation? Allāh ta'ālā says:

وَلَقَدْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ لَئِنْ أَشْرَكَتَ
لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ وَلَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

It has already been revealed to you and to those before you: If you ascribe partners, your actions will go in vain and you will be among those who have fallen into loss.²

There are other verses similar to this. Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam used to say: “Sūrah Hūd and sūrahs like it have made me old.”

¹ Sūrah al-Kahf, 18: 110.

² Sūrah az-Zumar, 39: 65.

The summary of the above details is as explained in the following verses by Allāh ta'ālā:

(1)

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ.

Did you think that We created you in [idle] play and that you will not be returned to Us?¹

(2)

وَلْتَنْتَظِرْ نَفْسُ مَا قَدَمَتْ لِغَدٍ، وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ. إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ.

...and every soul should look to what it is going to send [present] for tomorrow. Continue fearing Allāh. Surely Allāh knows whatever you do.²

(3)

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا.

Those who strove in Our cause – We shall show them Our paths.³

¹ Sūrah al-Mu'minūn, 23: 115.

² Sūrah al-Hashr, 59: 18.

³ Sūrah al-'Ankabūt, 29: 69.

(4)

وَمَنْ جَاهَدَ فَإِنَّمَا يُجَاهِدُ لِنَفْسِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَغَنِيٌّ عَنِ
الْعَالَمِينَ.

Whoever strives hard does so for his own self. Allāh is not in need of the [people of the] world.¹

ونحن نستغفر الله تعالى من كل ما زل به القدم أو
طغا به القلم، ونستغفره من كل أقاويلنا التي لا
توافق أعمالنا، ونستغفر الله تعالى من كل ما ادعينا
وأظهرناه من العلم بدين الله تعالى مع التقصير فيه،
ونستغفره من كل خطرة دعتنا إلى تصنع وتزين في
كتاب سطرناه أو كلام نظمناه أو علم أفدناه، ونسأله
أن يجعلنا وإياكم يا معشر الإخوان بما علمناه
عاملين ولوجهه مريدين، وأن لا يجعله وبالا علينا،
وأن يضعه في ميزان الصالحات إذا ردت أعمالنا
إلينا، إنه جواد كريم.

We seek forgiveness from Allāh ta'ālā for every slip up by our feet and pen. We seek His forgiveness from our words which do not concur with our actions. We seek His

¹ Sūrah al-'Ankabūt, 29: 6.

forgiveness from all claims to and displays of knowledge of Allāh's Dīn while we fell short in it. We seek His forgiveness from every whispering which prompted us towards adornment and embellishment in any book which we wrote, speech which we compiled or knowledge whose benefit we conveyed. We beg Allāh ta'ālā to make us and you – O brothers – practise on whatever knowledge we have, and to seek His pleasure alone in it. We beg Him not to make it a misery against us, and to place it in our scale of good deeds when our deeds are presented to us. Surely Allāh ta'ālā is most generous, most kind.

قال الشيخ رضي الله عنه فهذا ما أردنا أن نذكره في شرح كيفية سلوك طريق الآخرة وقد وفينا بالمقصود، والحمد لله الذي بنعمته تتم الصالحات، وبفضله تنزل البركات، وصلى الله على خير مولود دعا إلى أفضل معبود محمد النبي وآله وسلم تسليما كثيرا طيبا مباركا فيه على كل حال.

The Shaykh – may Allāh be pleased with him – said: This is what we had intended to present on the manner in which one ought to tread the path towards the Hereafter. We fulfilled our objective. All praise is due to Allāh ta'ālā through whose favour good deeds are concluded, and through whose grace blessings descend. Salutations to the best creation who was born, who invited to the best deity – Muḥammad ṣallallāhu

'alayhi wa sallam – and to his family.
Salutations which are abundant, pure and
blessed in every situation.¹

¹ *Minhāj al-Ābidīn*, p. 326.

CONCLUSION

All praise is due to Allāh ta'ālā. I had intended to explain the principles of the Tarīqat and the rules of purification of the self, and to expound on its etiquette and injunctions. Allāh ta'ālā enabled me to realize this objective from the writings and speeches of my seniors. No matter how much I thank Allāh ta'ālā for this favour, it will not be enough. May Allāh ta'ālā inspire me to carry out more Dīnī and academic works. Āmīn.

I beseech Allāh ta'ālā to inspire all of us to practise on these principles and rules, and to enable us to rectify, cleanse and purify our selves. May He honour us with His pleasure and acceptance. May Allāh ta'ālā enable me, my children and family, and all my Dīnī associates to practise on these teachings. Āmīn.

وآخر دعوانا أن الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلوة والسلام على سيد
خلقه خاتم النبيين، وعلى آله وأصحابه وصلاح أئمة وسائر اتباعه
ياحسان إلى يوم الدين أجمعين، برحمتك يا أرحم الراحمين.

Muhammad Qamar az-Zamān Allāhābādī
10 Muḥarram 1442 A.H.
30 August 2020
Bayt al-Adhkār, Waṣīyyābād, Allāhābād.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

All praise is due to Allāh ta'ālā translation of this book was completed on 9 Rabī' al-Ākhir 1443 A.H./14 November 2021. We pray to Allāh ta'ālā to accept this humble effort and to make it a source of our salvation in this world and the Hereafter.

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ، وَثُبْ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ
الرَّحِيمُ

As with all human endeavours, there are bound to be errors, mistakes and slip-ups in the translation. I humbly request the reader to inform me of them so that they could be corrected in future editions. Constructive criticism and suggestions will be highly appreciated. I can be contacted via e-mail: maulanamahomedy@gmail.com

Was salām
Mahomed Mahomedy

GLOSSARY

Note: The explanations or definitions given below are meant to merely facilitate an understanding of the words used in the book. They are, by no means, full definitions. Consult the ‘ulamā’ for detailed explanations.

Ahlullāh: Literally “the people of Allāh”. Another name for the Sufis, saints and true servants of Allāh ta’ālā.

‘Ālim: An Islamic scholar. One who is well versed in the various Islamic sciences

‘Aqīqah: Slaughtering of an animal/s on the seventh day after the birth of a child.

‘Ārif: A person who has acquired true recognition of Allāh ta’ālā.

Auliya’: The special friends of Allāh ta’ālā.

Bid‘at: An innovation in Dīn.

Burāq: Name of a celestial animal.

Chāsht: An optional ṣalāh performed at mid-morning.

Dīn: Religion. Islam is referred to as a Dīn because it is not merely a religion but a complete way of life.

Dīnī: Pertaining to Dīn.

Du‘ā’/s: A supplication, invocation or prayer.

Fātiḥah: Literally means “opening”. In most contexts in this book it refers to making du‘ā’ at the grave of a saint.

Fiqh: Islamic jurisprudence.

Hijāb: Also known as purdah. It refers to a woman covering her body from head to toe when in the presence of strange men. There are different levels of purdah, refer to the ‘ulamā’ for details.

Imām: A leader. The one who leads the congregation in ṣalāh is called an imām. The senior scholars and jurists of Islam are also known as imāms.

Īmān: Faith. Belief in Allāh ta‘ālā.

Istighfār: Seeking forgiveness.

Kalimah ṭayyibah: Literally “a pure word”. It refers to the statement of testifying Allāh’s Oneness and the prophet-hood of Muḥammad ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam.

Kashf: A spiritual exposition.

Khalīfah: A caliph or successor. In Sufi terminology it refers to the spiritual successor of a Sufi master.

Khānqāh: A Sufi lodge.

Madāris: Plural of madrasah. A school for higher Islamic education.

Majālis: Plural of majlis. An assembly.

Maktab: A school for primary Islamic education.

Maulūd: Celebrating the birth of Rasūlullāh sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam.

Mubāḥ: A permissible act.

Mujaddid: A reviver of Dīn.

Mujtahid: A scholar who has the qualification to make ijtihād.

Murīd: A disciple of a spiritual mentor.

Nayāz: An offering made in the name of a saint.

Nisbat: Spiritual affiliation.

Pul Sirāt: The bridge which extends over Hell.

Qaumah: The standing posture in salāh.

Qutb: A high ranking saint.

Rak'at/s: A unit of salāh. The standing, bowing and prostrating postures make up one unit of salāh.

Rukū': The bowing posture in salāh.

Sajdah: The prostration posture in salāh.

Salāh: Literally "a prayer". Salāh is one of the five pillars of Islam, performed in a particular manner having certain prerequisites.

Sharī'at: The Islamic law.

Shaykh/s: In Sufi terminology it refers to one's spiritual mentor.

Sulūk: Spiritual wayfaring.

Tabarruk: An item from which blessings are derived.

Tarīqat: The spiritual path.

Taṣawwuf: Sufism.

Tashahhud: Name of a certain du'ā' which is read in the sitting posture of ṣalāh.

Ta'wīdh: An amulet hung around the neck or tied around the arm in which Qur'ānic verses are written.

Ummat: The Muslim nation or community of believers.

'Urs: Anniversary of a saint.

Walī: Plural of auliya'.